

January 13, 2012

Fellow Twirly Birds:

Please mark your calendar. The 2012 Twirly Bird reception will be at *HELI-EXPO* in the Dallas Convention Center on February 12, at 17:00. The room is Ballroom A Section 1. We felt that it would be easier to meet immediately following the show in the Convention Center because of the scattered hotel accommodations in Dallas. This will give you the opportunity to enjoy an adult beverage with old friends before some of the other evening events.

We appreciate the cash contributions to help fund the reception from Twirly Birds, *Mel O'Reilly* of Eagle Helicopters Ltd. in Calgary, and ***Sharon and Barry Desfor***, owners of the Helicopter Blue Book.

This year we are pleased to announce that two associate members will be brought in to the Twirly Birds. Many of you are aware of their important roles in the vertical world and contributions to our industry.

Don Lambert is well known for his work on the support and service side for manufacturers, operators and repair stations. Don has been in the helicopter business for forty years, now serving as Senior Director Technical Services with Air Methods Corporation. Don is currently serving on the HAI Technical and Safety committees. Don's father in law, Wes Moore, was a well known Twirly Bird.

The second soon to be associate member is ***Bob Lannerd***. After serving as a helicopter crew chief in Vietnam, he too worked his way up the ladder through repair stations, manufacturers, and operators. As the Director of Maintenance for ERA in the Gulf Bob played an important role in the expansion of ERA's Gulf operation. Bob's long lasting legacy to the Helicopter Industry was his important role in promoting and developing the HAI Maintenance Malfunction Information Report (MMIR) in 1987. Bob was also responsible for convincing the HAI Board to offer the Maintenance Management course at *HELI-EXPO*.

This year we are pleased and proud to announce that ***Elfan ap Rees*** is the recipient of *The Les Morris Award* for his tremendous and ever growing list of contributions to the Helicopter Industry. Elfan soled in 1964 in a Bristol Sycamore. I wonder how many other TB's have flown a Sycamore? In addition to his publication of the award winning Helicopter International magazine, Elfan is also the founder and Chairman of The Helicopter Museum.

The origins of the Helicopter Museum goes back to 1958, when Elfan began to build up a private collection of rotorcraft documentation and artifacts. Over the next 10 years his collection grew and in 1969 he acquired his first complete helicopter, a Bristol Sycamore Mk.3. In 1974 his purchase of a Bristol Belvedere, built at Weston-super-Mare, motivated the formation of a volunteer group to restore the aircraft. In the following

years more acquisitions were made and the volunteer group expanded to start preserving the collection. In December 1976 an ex Royal Navy Westland Whirlwind HAS Mk.7 was acquired and in July 1977 an ex Royal Air Force Bristol Sycamore HC Mk.14 was added to the growing collection, increasing the number of aircraft in the collection to eight. 1977 also saw the formation of the Museum as a registered charity with the primary aims of further developing the collection and opening it up to the public. Opened by *HRH The Duke of York* in 1989 and continuously under Elfan's leadership, this has grown into the world's largest rotorcraft collection and a major visitor attraction for his home town of Weston-super-Mare, England.

Recognized world-wide the museum has converted thousands of visitors to the understanding and enjoyment of helicopters through its historical and educational programs and regular air experience flights. In 2008 the Museum gained funding to open a new Conservation Wing and slowly but surely Elfan's extensive archive of helicopter magazines, books, press releases, photographs, log books, manuals etc. are being moved into a climate controlled atmosphere to preserve them for future generations. Elfan continues to keep his ears and eyes open for possible new exhibits for the museum – currently on the must-have list is an Agusta A109 and a Westland Sea King (Sikorsky S-62).

Since 1991 Elfan has also organized a unique helicopter fly-in event actually held on the sea front at Weston-super-Mare every year, allowing the general public to get up close and familiar with military and civil helicopters and their crews, and incidentally raising over half a million pounds to date for local charities, including the museum. Elfan has provided all the administration support and personal financial guarantees over the past 20 years for this event which has become a major show on the aviation calendar.

With deep regret and condolences to the family, we note the death of a Twirly Bird Founder member. ***Paul Theodore Choate***, of Tryon Estates, Columbus, N.C. died November 4th. Born December 25, 1915 in Lawrence, MA. he was the son of the late Charles Henry and Pauline Culver Choate. A textile executive, he retired after 41 years of service with The Kendall Company in Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Massachusetts. From 1964 to 1967 he was manager of Kendall's Bethune, S.C. plant. Paul attended Lawrence Academy. He was a 1939 graduate of Harvard College with a B.S. degree in Engineering Sciences. **A pilot in the Army Air Corps and World War II veteran, he was a founding member of "Twirly Birds", an international organization of pioneer helicopter pilots.** A resident of Camden, S.C. for 33 years, he was a founding director of the Kershaw County Economic Development Board and served as its Chairman. He was active in wildlife preservation, an avid golfer, and a member of The Camden Country Club, Grace Episcopal Church, and the Harvard Club of S.C.

Remember ,,,, Dallas Convention Center 17:00, February 12 in Ballroom A.

We will have some folks standing by before 17:00 to sign you in early, and update your personal information. Please bring a friend who soloed more than twenty years ago.

Please send me your news, and updates for this newsletter. Your fellow pioneer helicopter pilots would appreciate hearing from you.

KEEP YOUR ROTOR IN THE GREEN!

Steve Sullivan

If you receive this newsletter by regular mail and have an e-mail address please send me your e-mail address: srs@jma.com

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