



Obituary

J A McMULLEN, M B E

Pioneer of Rotary Wing Flying

August 15th marked a very sad day for members of the Association and all other rotary wing enthusiasts, in that our oldest and most respected Founder Member passed away as the result of a serious operation at the age of 84

Mr McMullen, or "Mac" as he was affectionately known, will be remembered by all rotary wing devotees as the first pupil of the Autogiro Flying School and the first private owner of an autogiro in

this country. In fact, it was as the result of his purchasing a C 19 Mk IV autogiro, that the School was formed and "Mac" and I taught each other to fly the aircraft

During the 1914-18 war he was a Navigation Instructor in the R A F and was made an M B E for his services. He did not take up flying on his own account until 1932 and qualified for the first *ab initio* Autogiro "A" Licence in July, 1932, at the age of 69. His affection for the autogiro was unbounded and he made use of his aircraft to visit friends and relatives in all parts of this country and also Ireland. Some of his navigation ideas were unorthodox and he published a little book on this subject in the early 30's. I well remember the preparations for his trip to Dublin, which amounted to serious study of maps, drawing a few diagrams on plain postcards, then discarding the maps and setting off, but the fact remains that the trip was 100% successful including a forced landing in Cumberland due to fog. A "mock trial" was held on him for this episode which ended by the presentation of a silver tankard from his friends to mark the occasion. His C 19 flying was marred by one serious accident when landing at Hanworth one Sunday with a passenger on board. Looking out to one side he omitted to notice a high tree which caught the opposite side stub wing and the aircraft fell into a pond. Both "Mac" and his passenger had to be fished out, luckily with only a few bruises and a shaking up.

He continued to use a C 19 until about 1937, when the type became extinct, and then bought a BAC Drone and carried on his aerial trips in much the same way. Needless to say, 1939 put a stop to his flying but he took it up again in 1946. The medicos would not pass him for an "A" Licence, but even so he flew around the country visiting with a safety pilot whose sole job was to satisfy the regulations, as "Mac" was perfectly competent to handle the aircraft.

Everyone who had the privilege of knowing "Mac" and being counted amongst his friends will wholeheartedly agree with me that he was one of nature's real gentlemen in every respect. On behalf of the Association I

tried to arrange for a suitable floral tribute, but this was not possible In response to my wire to General McMullen, Mr McMullen's only son, I received the following reply —

“Your telegram deeply appreciated Cremation took place Tuesday and ashes were taken by air from Broxbourne Aerodrome and scattered at sea There were no flowers by request but very many thanks for kind thought McMULLEN”

I should like to end by saying “And so passes a Grand Person”

H A MARSH

18th August, 1948

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It is with regret that we also have to announce the death of two other members of our Association

Mr P W Howes—in an aircraft accident on July 2nd, 1948,

and

Lt (A) E J Ockelford, R N—in an aircraft accident, July, 1948

IMPORTANT NOTICE

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Thanks to the generous response of the Aircraft Industry to an appeal for funds made on behalf of members by our Chairman, the Association has now been able to acquire its own office accommodation

The appeal of our Chairman was made for the specific purpose of obtaining enough funds to establish our own offices, made necessary by the increase in the Association's activities Great inconvenience was found in sharing the original office accommodation at Finsbury Circus House

The Association would like to place on record its appreciation for the generosity displayed by the following firms

The Bristol Aeroplane Co	Firth Helicopter Ltd
The Cierva Autogyro Co	Irvin-Bell Helicopter Sales Ltd
The Fairey Aviation Co	Pest Control Ltd
The Westland Aircraft Co	

The request was a specific one for £50 per annum for three years from the larger firms and £25 per annum from the smaller ones The majority of those approached have guaranteed the sum requested, the others will review the situation annually Mr J G Weir, on behalf of the Cierva Autogyro Company, sent a cheque for £250 to cover the request and the remainder as a contribution to the Reserve Fund

Members should note that as from August 1st, 1948, the Association's Offices have been moved into Londonderry House, 19 Park Lane, London, W 1, the new telephone number being GROsvenor 1771

Members are reminded that they are welcome to call at the offices at any time, and it is hoped that soon there will be a small library of helicopter literature besides the usual selection of aeronautical magazines, etc

It should be noted that the registered address of the Association remains at Finsbury Circus House, but that all future correspondence should be addressed to the new premises at Park Lane