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The Altimeter Volume Twelve - July 2003

The Altimeter Magazine is a publication of the
Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing

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Front Cover

JDF Air Wing and Coast Guard conducting search and rescue training at sea. (Photo by Bryan Cummings)

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The views expressed in The Altimeter do not necessarily reflect those held by the Minister of Defence, The Defence Board, The Ministry of National Security, The Chief of Staff or the Commanding Officer, Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing.

Visit the Air Wing Page on the JDF Website at
www.jdfmil.org

Editorial

It is indeed an honour to have been asked to edit this twelfth volume of

The Altimeter magazine, depicting forty years of professional military aviation in the Jamaica Defence Force. Looking back at the previous eleven volumes of the Altimeter, I was amazed at the countless tales of dedication, camaraderie, and daring exploits that have characterized this unit.



In the words of Major Whittingham-Jones in 1963 (the first Regular Officer Commanding the Unit), 'the variety of tasks is endless'. In 2003, such is still the case. The current Pilots, Technicians, Crewmen, Air Traffic Controllers, Firemen and other Ground Support Crew continue the path started by those Jamaican military aviators who set us off on this great journey. We hope that this edition of the Altimeter brings back memories for some, and builds hope in others.

For the first time, we have decided to do a joint publication with the JDF Coast Guard, with whom we share so much in common, operationally and administratively. The amalgamation of **The Altimeter** and **The Seawatch** allows for there to be no back cover to this publication, a concept which we hope you appreciate. Congratulations to the JDF Coast Guard for forty glorious years serving Jamaica as well as they have.

Finally, we must extend a big thank you to all of our generous sponsors, to those who have contributed articles, as well as to the Altimeter production team, which includes Lithographic Printers Ltd. We hope that you will enjoy this publication as much as we in the Air Wing have enjoyed these last forty years.

Major David A Cummings
Editor



The previous eleven volumes of The Altimeter

Message from the Chief Of Staff



To the officers, enlisted ranks and civilian personnel of the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing and the Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guard, I offer my heartiest congratulations on the excellent record of service you have given to Jamaica and the JDF over the past forty years. As members of the JDF Air Wing and the JDF Coast Guard you have consistently lived up your respective mottos: "We Fly For All" and "Service - For the Lives of Others".

Inherent in your respective mottos is a commitment to a great humanitarian endeavour, that of saving lives. For your services on this great mission and other missions I say "BRAVO ZULU". You have responded to the challenges of the past four decades with selfless sacrifice and professional-

ism.

The period ahead will be even more challenging and demanding than the past. Notwithstanding, I am confident that having carefully preserved the good from the past, you are now poised to build on the solid base of those experiences, whilst effecting the necessary changes to the status quo. I know you will meet those challenges. To you the readers, I trust that you will not only enjoy what you read, but that you will learn much more about the great works of your Air Wing and Coast Guard.

Finally, I salute all the members of the Air Wing and Coast Guard, past and present, for your service to country and to this force. As you reminisce and celebrate the milestone reached, go forward with pride and with renewed energies to serve in the manner as exemplified in our core values, Courage, Commitment, Honesty, Integrity, Loyalty and Discipline. Happy 40th Anniversary.

H M LEWIN
Rear Admiral
Chief of Staff

Message from the Commanding Officer

This edition of the Altimeter commemorates the fortieth anniversary of the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing. These forty years of service to the Nation have been achieved by the sheer professionalism and dedication of the many men and women who have flown, maintained and provided support for the assets of the Unit over the years.

Whether it be Fixed Wing, Rotary Wing, day, night, rain, hurricane or sunshine, the JDF Air Wing has continually deployed its assets (human and machine) in service to the Jamaica Defence Force, the Nation and the Caribbean. Most of the missions that we fly never make the news, but when your efforts save hundreds of lives each year, that is not important.

As the current Commanding Officer, I feel confident that the JDF Air Wing will rise to even greater heights over the next forty years and beyond, crossing new frontiers as we continue upon the path laid by our founders back in July 1963. To all past, present and future members of the JDF Air Wing, we salute you.



A B ANDERSON
Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

When Jamaica attained Independence in 1962, one of the responsibilities that the new nation acquired was that of Defence. It was soon realized that the newly formed Jamaica Defence Force needed air support. The Jamaica Air Squadron was therefore formed in early 1963 as a part of the Jamaica National Reserve by the then Chief of Staff Brigadier P E CROOK (Parachute Regiment), and hence became the first flying entity of the Jamaica Defence Force. Its first four pilots (Captains Garth Drew, Robert 'Bobby' Dixon, John Harrison and Jack Oliphant) were enlisted from the Jamaica Flying Club, all of whom had been Commissioned Royal Air Force pilots (Dixon and Oliphant saw active service), and were the first flying instructors in Jamaica. They were later joined by Lieutenants Derrick Ffrench and Paul Stockhausen (both locally Commissioned Officers). The first Officer Commanding was Major Basil Thornton, who at the time was the Chairman of the Jamaica Flying Club. These initial pilots had to fly their own aircraft, as at that time the JDF had none.

On Wednesday 3rd July 1963, the Jamaica Air Wing was officially formed with Captain Victor Beek (on secondment from the Ministry of Education) as its first and only member. On 9th July 1963, Jamaica received four Cessna 185B aircraft through a Military Assistance Package from the US Government. These aircraft were painted white with blue trimmings, and had the national colours painted in bands over the wings. These aircraft were commissioned as JDF A-1, A-2, A-3 and A-4, and had arrived with two US Air Force pilot instructors (Captains Ban Hubbard and Gene Terry) for conversion training. The first notable mission was flown on 17th August 1963 in search of a Ganja boat registered as 'NANA'. It wasn't until September that the first enlisted soldier (Lance Corporal Scott) was posted to the unit (as a driver), and hence became the first airman.

The Jamaica Air Squadron initially operated these aircraft upon their arrival in Jamaica (since there was only one pilot in the Jamaica Air Wing at the time), until they were eventually painted olive drab and taken over by the Jamaica Air Wing once additional Regular Force pilots were trained. The Jamaica Air Squadron then reverted to flying private aircraft belonging either to the Club or to its members.

Due to the mountainous nature of the island, it soon became apparent that helicopters would become a necessity for use by the JDF (and other government departments). On 11th October 1963 the first regular Officer Commanding arrived in Jamaica, Major Leslie Whittingham-Jones (along with his infamous dog 'Boots'). He was a British Army Air Corps (AAC) helicopter instructor

History of the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing

by Major D Cummings

pilot whose task was to train helicopter pilots and organize the Jamaica Air Wing. Shortly thereafter, the first helicopter (JDF H-1, a Bell 47G-3B-1) was delivered, and it was assembled in the JDF Workshop and pushed down the road to the Air Wing. A second helicopter (JDF H-2) was collected by JDF pilots (Robert Neish and George Brown) from Fort Worth, Texas in March 1964 and on a 1,900-mile journey back to Jamaica, amassing 40 flying hours (averaging 47.5 miles per hour).

It was Major Whittingham-Jones who had instituted the wearing of the current distinctive light blue beret, and Captain Victor Beek (with his prior RAF service, and whom had previously started the Jamaica Combined Cadet Force Air Section in 1961) who had insisted on the wearing of RAF wings with 'JDF' (as opposed to 'RAF') inscribed, as remains the case today.



Left to right: Lt George Brown, Capt Victor Beek, LCpl Scott, Maj Whittingham-Jones, Lt Bob Neish, Cpl Mulings and WO I Ashcroft - the first members of the Jamaica Air Wing.

The initial establishment (not then filled) was 6 pilots and 5 Technicians (1 WO1 Artificer, 1 Sgt Technician and 3 Technicians), and it was not long before the regular pilots became fully operational. The Jamaica Air Squadron then became the (current) Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing (National Reserve), and they continued to fly their own or rented aircraft.

Throughout the years they have been providing sterling support to the operations of the regular JDF Air Wing. They now fly JDF aircraft and in fact provide many of the instructors for upgrading the regular Force pilots. Most of them currently fly for Air Jamaica.

On 17th May 1967 Major Robert 'Bob' Neish and Lieutenant Andrew Bogle (among the first JDF helicopter pilots) embarked on a very dangerous mission in the Blue Mountains to rescue a seriously injured soldier (Fusilier Hobbs). The area was so hilly and windy that the helicopter could not land, and during the ensuing rescue attempts, they lost control of the helicopter which resulted in them having to fly backwards in circles until they could conduct a safe run-on landing some ten miles away with the patient safely aboard the aircraft. They were then able to tie the patient down and fly on to a hospital. For this outstanding act of courage, skill and concentration, Major Neish was awarded the Air Force Cross (AFC), the highest flying award in the Commonwealth, and Lieutenant Bogle the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air.

Having completed a decade of service with the initial fleet, and with an ever-increasing role for military aviation, the early seventies saw the Air Wing expanding its role with additional aircraft and pilots. Some Bell 206 (Jet Ranger) helicopters (which doubled the speed and seating capacity of the Bell 47G's), and a De Havilland Twin Otter were acquired, which gave new meaning to Search and Rescue. The further acquisition of some much larger Bell 212 Helicopters, as well as two Islanders and a King Air now meant that overseas missions soon became commonplace for the Air Wing (almost a weekly occurrence).

The Jamaica Air Wing had remained all along a sub-unit of the Garrison Administrative Unit (which became the current Support and Services Battalion in 1973), and was to remain so until 1st April 1977 when it became an autonomous, self accounting Unit (The Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing) with its own Commanding Officer and commensurate establishment. The first Commanding Officer of the JDF Air Wing was Major Effiom B. Whyte. Other Commanding Officers over the years include Colonel AC 'Bunny' dev STERN (who logged more than 6,000 flying hours) who had for many years toiled to bring about the formation of the JDF Air Wing as an autonomous and professional unit and whose flying exploits and leadership are legendary (A detailed chronology of Commanding Officers over the years is on page 9).

The Fixed Wing flight (No. 1 Flight) moved their operations from Up Park Camp to the Norman Manley Airport (JDF Air Wing Manley Base or 'A1') in May 1981 due mainly to flight safety concerns, and to reduce the general wear and tear on the aircraft from continuously operating from an unpaved airstrip. The new 'Eagles Nest' hangar was officially opened on 12th February 1988.

Throughout the years the JDF Air Wing has benefited from the professional services of various training institutions in the UK, Canada and the USA. Initially, along with Major Whittingham-Jones from the Army Air Corps came an Artificer (WO1 Ashcroft) to conduct training for the technicians. Since then a long association has developed with the AAC for the training of the technicians (up to the Artificer level) and pilots at Middle Wallop in England. Concurrently the pilots were also receiving training from the Canadian Forces Flight Training School initially in Rivers, Saskatchewan (on Hilliers aircraft) and then in Portage-La-Prairie, Manitoba. Pilots started going regularly to Portage in 1972 and are still so sent.

The Canadian Forces Central Flying School sends a team to Jamaica on an annual basis to assess the standards of the flying, maintenance and ground operations (ensuring that we maintain the same standards as other military aviation units throughout the world). The technicians also have been traveling to Canada for their basic and upgrade training since 1981. Initially the school was based at CFB Chatham and then at CFB Bagotville but moved to CFB Borden in Ontario in 1995 (its current location). The JDF AW's requirement for specific avionics training has also

prompted the evolution of an avionics course including a POET course (Performance Oriented Electronics Training) held at CFB Kingston and a specialized avionics module held at CFB Borden, which continues to this day.

The JDF Air Wing has flown tens of thousands of hours on countless missions since its formation forty years ago, including flying royalty and several heads of states (including HRH Prince Phillip, and HRH Prince Charles), flying countless search and rescue missions, transferring thousands of critically injured patients across the Jamaica (and from Grand Cayman and St Kitts), participated in the interdiction of hundreds of millions of (US\$) dollars worth of narcotics, and found many lost (and subsequently grateful) fishermen.

The Air Wing has also provided disaster relief for thousands of Jamaicans both during and after natural disasters, assisted in General Elections in Haiti, moved many other thousands of soldiers, policemen, cameramen, journalists, national and JDF athletes (including the JDF team to the International Military Boxing Competition in Panama in October 1981), parachutists, doctors, blood (including flying urgently needed blood to Grand Cayman on Christmas morning in 1963), foreign investors, surveyors and town planners, countless VIP's and international personalities (including General Colin Powell, Johnnie Cochran, Patrick Ewing, and Henry Kissinger, Lord Louis Mountbatten), as well as lifting special equipment into difficult areas (JPSCO light poles, air conditioning units on top of the Bank Of Jamaica and the Courtleigh Hotel). Several large government infrastructure projects have utilized the assets of the Air Wing, including the Yallahs Pipeline and the Hermitage Dam to name a few.

To accomplish all of the above (and much more), the JDF Air Wing has trained many pilots (see page 21), maintenance and ground crew to support its operations over its forty-year existence. Many of these individuals continue to make major contributions to the aviation community in Jamaica (and overseas), especially at Air Jamaica and Air Jamaica Express. Additionally, the Air Wing has seen various Fixed and Rotary Wing aircraft in its fleet over the years (see page 6 for details), and now maintains a fleet of nine aircraft including seven helicopters acquired new in 1998, which have revolutionized the capabilities of the unit.

From carrying one patient at a time in a wire basket hanging on the outside of the skid of a Bell 47G helicopter (with the wind blowing on them) and sometimes following railway lines into Kingston in 1963, to being able to winch six patients on stretchers into a Bell 412EP helicopter (whilst filming it with Infra-Red equipment) and navigating through IFR conditions with 4-axis autopilot, EFIS, Doppler and a colour weather radar in 2003, the JDF Air Wing has come a long way. The unit currently averages 2,100 flying hours per year, and thanks to our founders in 1963, the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing continues to move forward as a JDF and national asset. *We fly for all.*

your view*



* from the Ecureuil AS 350 B3

their view



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The Old Fleet

Helicopters

	Manufacturer/Type	Service Entry	Service Exit
JDF H - 1	Bell 47G-3B-1	October 1963	March 1973
JDF H - 2	Bell 47G-3B-1	March 1964	1974
JDF H - 3	Bell 206A	June 1971	1973
JDF H - 4	Bell 206A	March 1973	1989
JDF H - 5	Bell 206A	May 1973	1974
JDF H - 6	Bell 212	June 1973	December 1998
JDF H - 7	Bell 212	October 1973	December 1998
JDF H - 8	Bell 212	December 1973	December 1998
JDF H - 9	Bell 205A	August 1974	1975
JDF H - 10	Bell 205A	August 1974	1975
JDF H - 11	Bell 205A	August 1974	1975
JDF H - 12	Bell 205A	August 1974	1975
JDF H - 14	Bell 206B	March 1975	December 1998
JDF H - 15	Bell 206B	March 1975	December 1998
JDF H - 16	Bell 206B	May 1976	December 1998
JDF H - 17	Bell 206B	May 1978	December 1998
JDF H - 18	Bell 222UT	February 1987	May 1988
JDF H - 19	Bell UH - 1H	January 1989	December 2002
JDF H - 20	Bell UH - 1H	January 1989	March 1997
JDF H - 21	Bell UH - 1H	January 1989	December 2002
JDF H - 22	Bell UH - 1H	January 1989	December 2002

Fixed Wing (Single Engine)

JDF A - 1	Cessna 185B	July 1963	1972
JDF A - 2	Cessna 185B	July 1963	1965
JDF A - 3	Cessna 185B	July 1963	1977
JDF A - 4	Cessna 185B	July 1963	1977
JDF A - 5	Cessna 210T	1984	1985
JDF A - 6	Cessna 210M	1984	July 1986

Fixed Wing (Multi Engine)

JDF T - 1	DHC-6-100	March 1967	May 1977
JDF T - 3	Beech 100	April 1975	December 2002
JDF T - 4	Beech 60	July 1974	1979
JDF T - 5	BN-2A-21 Islander	May 1977	April 1994
JDF T - 6	DHC-6-300	May 1977	May 1978
JDF T - 7	Cessna 337	1983	1994



JDF H-1 being flown by Lt Bob Neish



JDF A1, A3 and A4 flying in formation



JDF H-18 being presented to the Air Wing in February 1987



JDF T-1 in September, 1967



JDF H-14



One of the JDF Bell UH-1H's

The Current Fleet



H - 24
(Bell 412EP)



H - 27
(Eurocopter AS355N)

Helicopter

Manufacturer/Type

Service Entry

JDF H - 23	Bell 412EP	December 1998
JDF H - 24	Bell 412EP	December 1998
JDF H - 25	Bell 412EP	April 1999
JDF H - 26	Eurocopter AS355N	March 1999
JDF H - 27	Eurocopter AS355N	February 1999
JDF H - 28	Eurocopter AS355N	July 1999
JDF H - 29	Eurocopter AS355N	July 1999

Fixed Wing

JDF A - 7	Cessna 210M	July 1992
JDF T - 2	BN-2A-8 Islander	June 1974



T - 2
(BN-2A-8 Islander)



A - 7
(Cessna 210M)

JDF Air Wing Organizational Chart



The Scroll of Commanding Officers

Captain Victor Beek

July 1963 - Oct 1963

(Although never officially appointed OC, he was the only pilot and officer in the Jamaica Air Wing during this period)

Officers Commanding The Jamaica Air Wing

Major Leslie Whittingham-Jones	Oct 1963	-	Apr 1965
Major Robert Neish	Apr 1965	-	Sept 1969
Major George Brown	Sep 1969	-	Jan 1971
Major AC dev Stern	Jan 1971	-	Apr 1977



Whittingham
-Jones



Neish



Brown

Commanding Officers The Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing

Major Effiom Whyte	1977 - 1979
Colonel AC dev Stern	1979 - 1980
Lieutenant Colonel T D G Lewis	1980 - 1982
Lieutenant Commander John McFarlane	1982 - 1985
Major Errol Alliman	1985 - 1987
Major Oscar Derby	1987 - 1991
Lieutenant Colonel Stewart Saunders	1991 - 1995
Lieutenant Colonel Oscar Derby	1995 - 2000
Lieutenant Colonel Antony Anderson	2000 - present



Stern



Whyte



Lewis



McFarlane



Alliman



Derby



Saunders



Anderson

Officers Commanding The JDF Air Wing Aircraft Workshop

*Which became 1 Field Workshop (Aircraft)
on 26th July 1978*

Engineering Officers

Lieutenant Brian Tapper	1974
Lieutenant Phillip Burnett	1974-1975
Lieutenant John Brandt	1975-1977

Officers Commanding

Captain Neil Lewis	1977-1980
Captain Oscar Derby	1980-1981
Captain Gary Hosue	1981-1985
Major Leo Campbell	1985-1988
Major Neil Lewis	1988
Captain Trevor Bogle	1988-1989
Lieutenant Oswald Brown	1989-1992
Captain Antony Anderson	1992-1993
Captain Oswald Brown	1993-1995
Major Antony Anderson	1995-1997
Captain Oswald Brown	1997-1998
Major David Cummings	1998-present

Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA)...Jamaica 580 Branch

The Royal Air Forces Association (Jamaica 580 Branch) was established in 1946 and is a branch of the RAFA established in England in 1943 with branches throughout the British Commonwealth. Membership comprises retired and present servicemen of the Commonwealth air forces. The patron of the Jamaican Branch is His Excellency the Governor General of Jamaica.

The major mission of the RAFA is to provide comfort and aid for the men and women of the air forces. One of the leading service charities, the RAFA provides under its Royal Charter a framework of comradeship and specialist care for serving personnel and their families; elderly and disabled ex-servicemen personnel and RAFA pensioners, widows and widowers. Support is not confined to members but to all who qualify by virtue of service.

Although not known to many of our younger generation, to those people who lived through the years 1939 to 1945 and who know about the struggle of World War II, the Jamaican Branch remains the symbol of the courage of a group of young Jamaicans who were brave enough to risk their lives in mortal combat.

Over its fifty-six years of existence the Jamaican membership has been involved in various aspects of nation-building and their deeds and contributions to our society span inter alia the fields of medicine, commerce, law, engineering, religion, diplomatic corp, politics and agriculture. The

Regimental Sergeant Majors of the JDF Air Wing

WO I Gerry Sherras	1977 - 1979
WO I Rayo Forbes	1979 - 1979
WO I Herman Campbell	1979 - 1989
WO I Donald Spence	1989 - 1993
WO I Owen Smith	1993 - present

Did You Know

The first edition (volume) of **The Altimeter** magazine was entitled 'The Jamaica Air Wing Aviation Information Booklet' and it was published on the tenth anniversary of the Unit in 1973. The second volume of the magazine was entitled '**The Altimeter**', and it was intended to promote the JDF Air Wing in particular, and flying in general. The name '**Altimeter**' was chosen as it represents our aspirations to reach for the stars.

Association boasts Prime Minister, ambassadors, cabinet ministers (from both major political parties) and senior executives in both the private and public sectors, high court judges and consultants.

Notable among the achievements of the Association have been the winning of the Hong Kong Trophy (for the highest collections in the Wing Day Appeal) for six consecutive years and the Shakespeare Trophy for the most efficient overseas branch, its linkage with the No. 139 (Jamaica) Squadron of the Royal Air Forces as well as its contribution to the Jamaica Constabulary Force and to the formative years of the Jamaica Defence Force, the present members who will be their successors.

True to its motto Non Nobis sed Vobis (Not for Ourselves Alone), the Association is involved in welfare work not only among the less fortunate Ex-servicemen but also among the society as a whole.

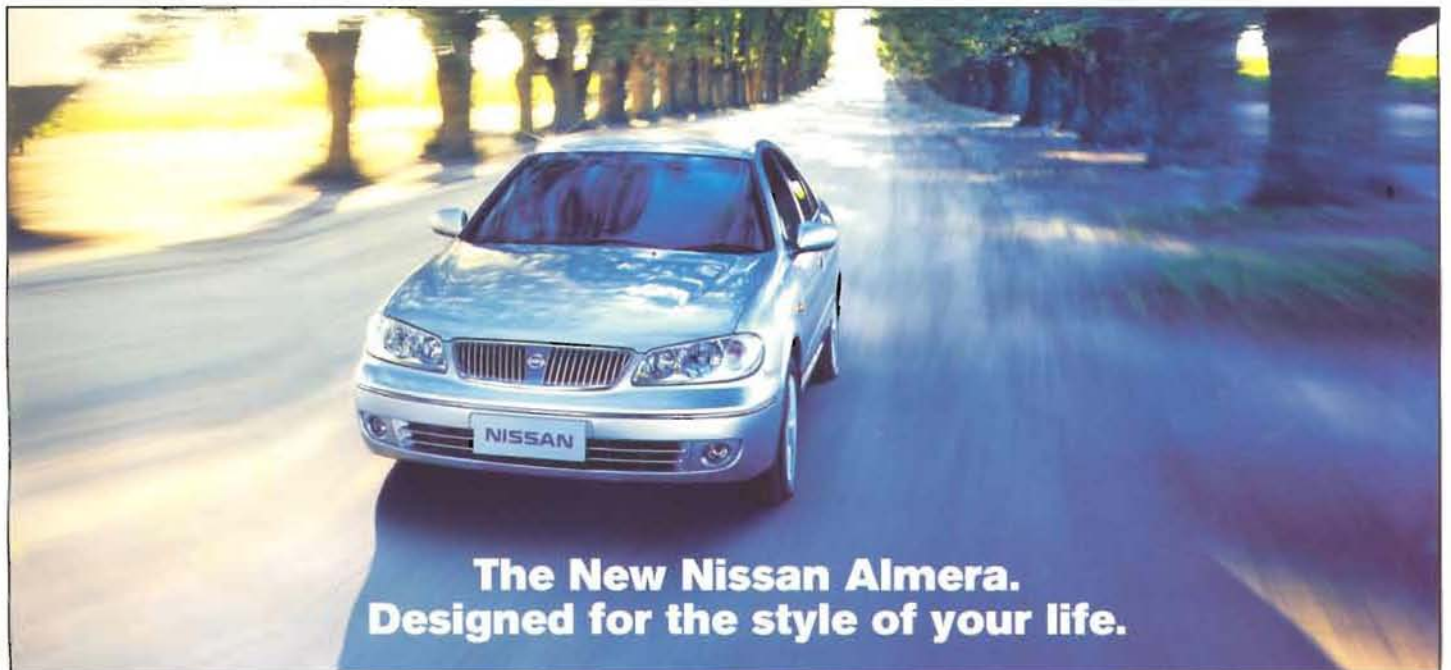
Worthy of mention is the donation in 1975 and its ongoing maintenance regarding the very first of the 20 homes in the Cheshire Home Jamaica Village for disabled individuals, hand in hand with the Jamaica Legion the Association assists in the maintenance of Curphey Home and its residents. Assistance is also provided to other needy veterans outside of established nursing homes.

Funding of the Association's activities is through membership subscriptions, charity appeals, corporate gifts, trusts, legacies and various fund-raising events (e.g. golf tournaments, bingo parties, concerts, dinner/dances etc.)

Of course RAFA members could not always do it alone and recognise the assistance given from groups such as Friends of RAFA, Wives of RAFA, individuals, organisations and companies.

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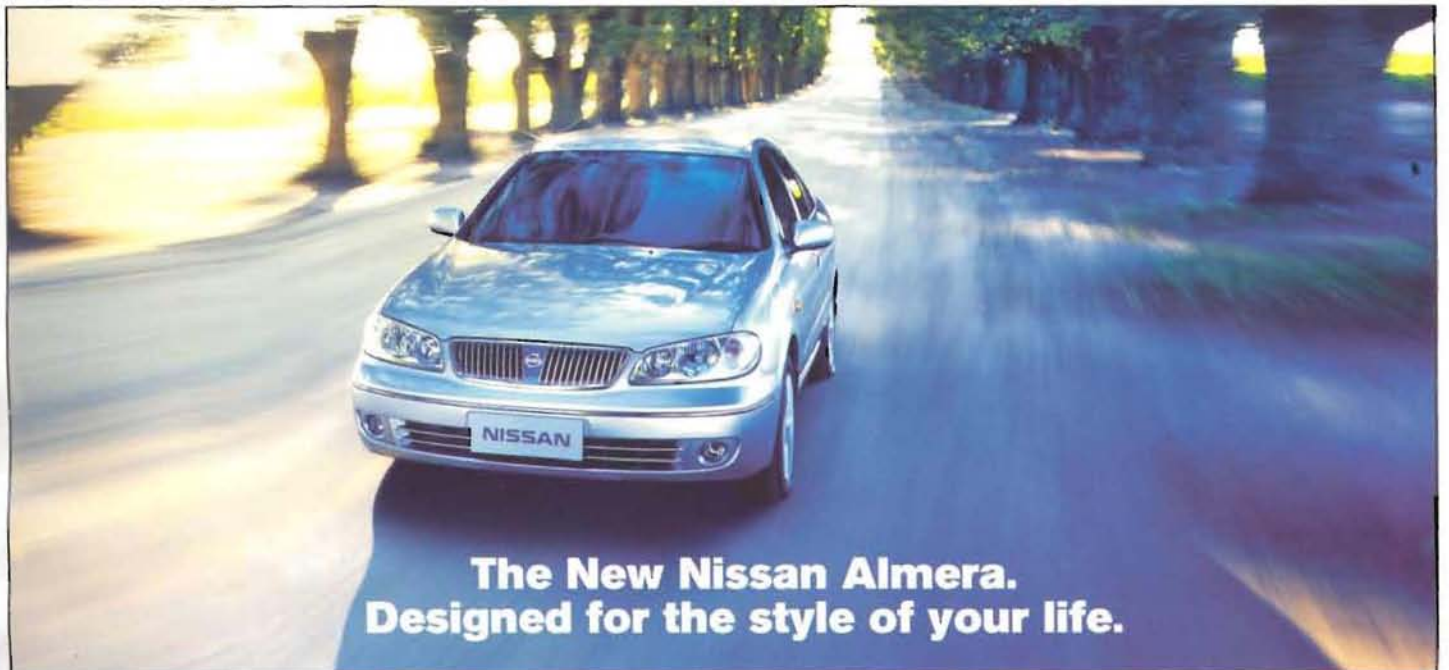


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We Do Fly For All

By: Lieutenant C J REID

One of the most popular questions regarding my job that I am asked by friends and other curious parties is "Apart from carrying the Prime Minister and other VIPs around what do you guys do." Some are hesitant to ask, as they fear that I may be offended by what the question implies but contrary to what they think I actually enjoy responding to this question. I enjoy responding because usually by the time my response is complete the questioner is typically satisfied that we at the JDF Air Wing actually do work for our pay on a daily basis. Let us explore just a few of the multiplicity of missions that are conducted by the pilots of the JDF Air Wing.

When a life threatening fire rages through the hills and presents a non-negotiable hurdle to Fire Fighters due to its often inaccessible location, it is often the JDF Air Wing which comes to render vital assistance to save life and property with our Fire Fighting Equipment, the Bambi Bucket. This device can drop up to 2000 lbs for water on a fire and has aided in the suppression of many fires, which threaten residential property typically during the dry months.

When we're not in the midst of a blazing inferno we may be surrounded by miles and miles of ominous tides with ten foot swells while attempting a risky Search and Rescue (SAR) mission at sea. These missions require expert training, constant practise and steel hard nerves, as any mistake or miss-communication on the part of the crew can easily result in a disaster at sea and loss of life.

Another very significant role, which the Air Wing plays, is in giving assistance to both JCF personnel and JDF troops on operations. With surveillance equipment such as Forward Looking Infra Red (FLIR), pilots can be the eyes in the sky for Security Force personnel in the constant fight against crime in Jamaica today.

This innovation in surveillance technology also gives Commanders the ability to see what is happening as it occurs, therefore providing the real-time information required to make critical decisions which can directly



Search and Rescue Training with the Bell 412EP

affect the outcome of the situation. All this is done through the expertise of Air Wing personnel, the same ones who do the VIP missions.

Casualty Evacuation (CASEVAC) is another crucial role fulfilled by the JDF Air Wing as many lives have been saved due to the timely response of aircrews to requests from Doctors Island wide.

Each CASEVAC is treated with the utmost urgency as aircrews are always cognizant of the fact

that any delay on their part could be critical to the condition of the patient and could ultimately influence the outcome of his or her medical condition.

Let us also not forget that in times of Natural Disaster, when the Island has been ravaged by torrential rains and flood waters have succeeded in cutting off communities from crucial food and medical supplies, the Air Wing has stood up to the challenge in ensuring that these critical supplies reach their intended destination regardless of there sometimes remote location.



The Bambi Bucket used for Firefighting Operations

Although VIP missions generally account for approximately thirty percent (30%) of the missions flown by the Air Wing annually, it is simply an injustice to say that this is all we do. I have highlighted just some of the varied taskings the Air Wing

receives on a daily basis in an attempt to indicate the diversity

of the Unit and it's personnel. All who know us will agree that our Motto has and always will stand true, "*We Fly For All.*"



1 Field Workshop (Aircraft)

By Major David Cummings
Officer Commanding

"Aviation in itself is not inherently dangerous. But to an even greater degree than the sea, it is terribly unforgiving of any carelessness, incapacity or neglect" (Source Unknown)

1 Field Workshop (Aircraft) has been providing maintenance support to the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing for the past forty years. Equating that to flying hours over just the last five years, the Air Wing has completed 10,000 safe flying hrs and counting, with no major incidents or accidents ever attributable to a maintenance error. This is all down to one factor. The skills and dedication of the men and women who have done the training and apply it every time they touch one of the aircraft.

every time, the men and women in it rise to the challenge and maintain the aircraft to impeccable standards. From JDF H-1 to H-29, from JDF A-1 to A-7, and from JDF T-1 to T-7 (and hopefully JDF J-1 one day), 1 Field Workshop can truly be proud of the first forty years, as it looks forward to its next forty. This article is a salute to all JDF Aircraft Technicians, past, present and future.

Well done!

Our all-important training starts from evaluating and selecting the right soldiers. They then do training at the University of Technology before proceeding to the Canadian Forces School of Aerospace Technology and Engineering at the Canadian Forces base Borden in Ontario, Canada (it started out in the UK, and then Bagotville, Canada). Numerous other specialist courses are added as well as extensive on the job training, and even then every time a technician touches an aircraft, somebody else checks it. The pilots also do their own checks as well before they sign out the aircraft to go flying, which is yet another layer of flight safety insurance.



Performing engine maintenance on one of the Bell UH-1H's

Did you Know

Flying Hours

The Air Wing flew a whopping 612.5 hrs during the month of July 1976 (during the State of Emergency), and 554.8 hrs during the preceding month (June 1976). Other notable months in our history are July 1973 (411.9 hrs) April 1974 (537 hrs) and May 1974 (489.4 hrs). The Air Wing currently flies an average of 175 hours per month (2,100 per year), though with a smaller fleet. At one point, the JDF Air Wing had 19 aircraft in its fleet. JDF H-1 completed 3,600 flying hours when it was retired in March 1973. In 1979, the JDF Air Wing flew 4,858 hours.

In the first five months of 1964, the Air Wing flew 1015hrs with 4 pilots and 6 aircraft (JDF A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, H-1 and H-2).

1 Field Workshop (Aircraft) has also undertaken a number of projects over the years. These include the recent restoration of JDF T-2 (new engines, new interior, overhauling the landing gear, overhauling the propellers and installing a moving map GPS navigation system), the installation of a new filtered fuel hydrant system (no more bowser reliance), moving and upgrading the technical stores including the implementation of materials management software, implementing the Helicopter Engine Condition Trend Monitoring Software (HECTM), as well as installing and commissioning a new FLIR system on one of the Bell 412EP helicopters.



Arrival of the Eurocopter AS355N helicopters from France, which were reassembled by 1 Field Workshop Aircraft Technicians

Many an aircraft type has been introduced to the Workshop over the years, but each and

The operation of a military aviation unit is sustained not only by the efforts of aircrew and technicians. There is a group of men and women who provided services that are essential to the efficient and sustained operations of the JDF Air Wing. These are the members of the Support Flight and they make their contribution...behind the scenes.

Its 0300 hrs, the duty rotary wing pilot has been contacted to execute a CASEVAC mission from Cornwall Regional Hospital. Having completed his pre-flight he starts the helicopter and prepares to depart Up Park Camp. He calls up Zero Alpha (0A) to give his flight details. He knows that there is one person who will be counting the minutes until he returns to base. It is the responsibility of the Air Traffic Control (ATC) Department to note and report aircraft that are overdue. The ATC Department has a controller on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. He is responsible for supervising the movement of aircraft in the military airspace, is the first point of contact for pilots relaying messages to the Operations Cell and is a critical link in the coordination of flight operations.



Its 0445 hrs, the duty pilot is returning to Up Park Camp and calls up that he 's entering the Up Park Camp circuit. The fire crew is alerted. Statistically most aircraft accidents occur during takeoffs and landings. Even though the probability of an incident is low, aircrew posses the confidence that there is an alert, capable and equipped group of men ready to assist if there is an emergency. In the world of aviation it is reassuring to know that things are stacked in your favour.

Its 0555 hrs, as the morning is making it acquaintance with the Earth, as Up Park Camp begins to stir, two men are reporting to the Guard Commander on the events of their tour of duty. These are members of the Protection Platoon and it is their responsibility to ensure the security of the aircraft, buildings and persons of the JDF Air Wing. They carry out this duty on a continuous basis.

They say, "An Army marches on its stomach". This may be debated but it is clear that without appropriate attention to the feeding requirements of the Unit, something is going to give! As well as ensuring that the feeding requirements of the Unit are met, the Quartermaster's Department is also responsible for the storage and issue of items of uniform and equipment.

Support Flight..... Behind the Scenes!

By Major A B Campbell
Officer Commanding

They are the "guys in the rear with the gear!"

The role of transporting manpower and supplies in any military operation cannot be overlooked. It is the Motor Transport (MT) Department that provides the remainder of the Air Wing with its transport requirements. Movement of aircraft spares and personnel from the JDF Manley Base are just some of the missions the MT Department performs on a daily basis.

The clerical staff in the Unit are also members of Support Flight. Providing more than just typing and filing services, they also are capable advisors on military administrative procedures and regulations.

The efforts and activities of the Support Flight are sometimes unseen and subsequently unnoticed, however they are essential and the members of Support Flight will continue to serve professionally and loyally, making our contribution to the operations of the JDF Air Wing.....*behind the scenes!*

Did you know

The JDF Air Wing Regimental March

The JDF AW Regimental March '**SKY WAGGONS**' came into being when then OC Major 'Bunny' STERN sought about getting a march for the JDF AW. Jamaica Air Squadron pilot LT Jon EBANKS came up with two short snippets of music which when played for the other officers of the unit left them undecided as to which one to choose. The OC then called for the services of the Band Master Major J B WILLIAMS, who delivered the solution by combining the two and giving us '**SKY WAGGONS**', a March variation with strains of 'Fly Me To The Moon'. The Regimental March is normally played at parades where an Air Wing guard is participating. It is also played at Air Wing functions or Mess Dinners and at these times members of the Air Wing are expected to recognize and acknowledge their March.



The Eagles Still Soar

by: Capt Sean Reid

The landing of four Cessna 185 aircraft in Jamaica in 1963, heralded the birth of Number One Flight. "The Eagles", as the elite group is known, continue to be the maritime specialists of the Air Wing.

Nestled at the Norman Manley International Airport, the flight continues to conduct Long Range Maritime patrols, some Operational Support to the Infantry Units, VIP transport, Search and Rescue and Pre Ab Initio training.

Of special note, efforts in fisheries protection, in conjunction with JDF Coast Guard continue to lead to the arrest of several foreign fishing crews, who if left unchecked will continue to pirate our waters.

The Eagles continue to assume the lead where airborne Search and Rescue is demanded. Fishermen continue to sing praises of how comforting it is to see a JDF fixed wing aircraft appear on the horizon when there is no sight of land. This certainly assures them that in times of trouble the JDF Air Wing will be there to locate them and effect a rescue when needed.

Number One Flight's capability to provide comfortable VIP transport was somewhat enhanced recently with the BN2A islander benefitting from a new interior retrofit and a few other touches. The relentless efforts of the Air Wing's tech-

nicians on this project have certainly not gone unnoticed as JDF T-2 still continues to turn the heads of fellow civilian Islander fans.

The Flight has in recent times experienced a contraction in aircrew strength and in the number of airframes. It now continues to boldly fulfill its role with two (2) Regular pilots and three (03) Reserve Pilots, operating one BN2A islander, "the work horse" and a Cessna 210 training aircraft. Even with these constraints the flight has conducted between January and May 2003, 143 sorties totaling 347 flying hours, with many successes.



Parachuting from the Islander

As the Eagles advance into the 21st century, more challenges will be anticipated requiring us to go higher, further and faster.

The requirement for a more modern fleet and more efficient ways to conduct our missions continue to be at the forefront of our minds. It is good to say that positive steps have been made with a view to achieving this goal.

The Eagles continue to remain committed to the Air Wing's motto "*We Fly for All*".



JDF T-2 landing in Up Park Camp in July 2003

Did you know

First Flight and VIP's

In February 1970, The JDF Air Wing flew Princess Alice to Newcastle for her very first helicopter flight. The Air Wing has also flown the Governor General of Bermuda, the Presidents of Tanzania, Costa Rica, Panama, and Botswana, as well as the Prime Ministers of Canada, Guyana and Barbados (to name a few).

Mercy Missions

The Air Wing has on several occasions flown urgently needed blood to Grand Cayman, and has evacuated patients from Grand Cayman and St Kitts. The very first mission to Grand Cayman was at 0300hrs on Christmas morning 1963 (Major Whittingham-Jones was the pilot). On another occasion, a girl was airlifted from Grand Cayman with a bullet lodged in her heart.

Overseas Missions

In 1971 JDF T-1 flew 14 Jamaican Athletes to the CAC games in Santo Domingo, and in 1974 the Prime Minister of Jamaica to Santo Domingo and St Lucia. These overseas missions were monthly occurrences, including countless trips ferrying JDF Aircraft to the US for maintenance.

"IT'S A SAD FACT that when the helicopter really proves it's value, either few people are around to see it or else the activity is classified" - Elfan ap Rees (Editor - Helicopter International)

THE BELL 412EP

The Pride of Number Two Flight (Scorpions)

By Captain George Barnes

The old fleet, consisting of the Bell 206B Jetrangers and the single and twin hueys had certainly done their time. They had, since the 1960s onwards, facilitated legendary exploits, heroic deeds, and life-saving missions far too numerous to mention. That beautiful synergy of man and machine had ensured that the Air Wing, and in particular Number Two Flight (the Scorpions), had secured their place as outstanding institutions in the annals of Jamaican history. Alas, however, having soundly established their worth and usefulness, they were now beginning to show signs that the years had indeed taken their toll.

The year was 1998. The atmosphere at the JDF Air Wing was charged with an almost palpable sense of excitement. Change, very great change was just over the horizon. With great anticipation we awaited her advent....and come she did.

She was a smooth mélange of myriad superb qualities; elegance, technological sophistication, versatility, to name a few. She was as at ease in the presence of the Prime Minister, or even Prince Charles and other visiting heads of state as she was with a sick child from a humble rural town. Change was powerful yet pliant, wild and aggressive in one moment yet gentle in the next...The one constant being her ability to induce great excitement wherever she went. Change absolutely loved adventure and was quite happy to be with you in the darkest of nights in diverse places...and with a skilled pilot inside; she gave one hell of a ride! Change was the epitome of versatility... and we called her the Bell 412EP.

The pride and joy of the rotary fleet, the Bell 412EP has since 1998 firmly cemented her place as both a nemesis and a saviour. As a saviour she is known to numerous fishermen who, having been rescued from the clutches of the beautiful but unforgiving Caribbean Sea, will never forget her. So too she will never be forgotten by the hundreds who have been safely rushed from rural facilities to receive more sophisticated medical care in our urban centres. As a nemesis, she has terrified, horribly exposed and brought to ruin, some of those who would wish to use our shores as a transshipment point for the illegal narcotic trade. Like the mythical Greek goddess Athena, beautiful yet terrible, she continues

to save and to protect.

Her home, Number Two Flight, has therefore continued to be an integral part of the whole that is the JDF Air Wing. With a performer par excellence as is the Bell 412EP, coupled with the dedication, professionalism, and commitment of the pilots, Number Two Flight is assured of its continued pride of place. Long and outstanding has been the history of the flight, and yet.... As we speak, a greater chapter is being written....

Did you know

Search and Rescue

In April 1976, eight aircraft from the JDF Air Wing took part in a massive search for 6Y-JHN, with the search area spanning from Port Antonio to Moneague. The crashed aircraft was eventually located by the crew of JDF H-8 (Captains Chung and Beek), who were able to pick up the survivors from an extremely confined area at the top of Mount Telegraph. This became known as the 'Easter Miracle', and the survivors were Prince Eudes Braganza and Princess Mercedes of Brazil, along with their pilot Mr Ronald Fletcher.

Operation Kilowatt

After Hurricane Gilbert struck Jamaica in 1988, the JDF Air Wing assisted the Jamaica Public Service Company in replacing light poles in some areas inaccessible by road. Over 300 hours were flown, and more than 100 poles were installed using JDF H-6 (a Bell 212 helicopter). Some of the poles weighed as much as 3,600 lbs, and were 60-65 feet in length.



The small gathering of pilots, technicians and air-men watched expectantly as its sleek lines traced a green path across the pale blue Kingston sky. The sun glinted off the high-gloss finish as it turned into wind and began its downward journey...slowly descending to the airfield. Majestic, elegant, pure poetry in motion... It was the first of the newly acquired AS355N Ecureuil helicopters. The future had arrived.

That the arrival of the AS355N helicopters in 1999 was a quantum leap forward in technology is quite an understatement, for with these aircraft came the ability to literally see in the dark. Forward Looking Infra Red (FLIR), the technology with which our AS355N helicopters are fitted, enables the observer to see objects which would have otherwise been indiscernible to the naked eye, due to poor ambient lighting. This unique ability, coupled with normal video capability therefore renders the AS355N a formidable observation platform by both day and night.

The Air Wing's gain in capability has, however, been the bane of many a criminal element in our society. Darkness, it is said, covers a multitude of sins. The threat of our ever-poised all-seeing eye in the night sky has at least made it a little more difficult for this criminal element to 'sin' with the regularity and impunity hitherto employed. Unofficially then, the motto of Number three flight (the Air Wing's Light Observation flight) could well read; You can run...but you can't hide!

Light Observation is, however, not the only role in which these aircraft have since been used. Two of the four AS355N that arrived are fitted for light observation (with the FLIR), while two are designed for the light utility role. The AS355N has therefore performed various duties ranging from light liaison, through VIP transport, to casualty evacuation, to its primary role...aerial surveillance.

Peppy, skittish, manoeuvrable, quick, fun to fly, are just some of the many adjectives used to describe the AS355N. If the larger, four-axis autopilot equipped, SAR capable, VIP-ready Bell 412EPs can be described as the luxury sedans of the rotary fleet, then the AS355Ns can certainly claim to be the sport cars thereof. Kingston to Montego Bay in just over thirty minutes is not at all unusual for this aircraft.

In conclusion, one thing is certain. Having gotten used to

FLIR...The New Sting Of The Scorpion (No. 3 Flight)

By Capt George Barnes

such sophisticated technology, there is no going back! The challenge will be to continue to find new and innovative ways of employing this technology to greater effect. We must also strive to remain abreast of other technological advancements in the field of airborne surveillance. Thanks to the FLIR, airborne law enforcement has been given a much needed 'shot in the arm'. Where the FLIR is concerned it is only fair to say; the scorpion has sprouted a brand new sting!



One of the FLIR Aircraft being test flown in the UK prior to delivery in 1999

Ode to Ground Crew

Reprinted from Volume 4 (1975)

Here's to the men with greasy hands
 Who fuel our planes when we come in to land,
 Who fix the canopies, stop the leaks,
 Change the tyres, oil the squeaks,
 Tend to the rigging to make them fly straight,
 Stand by the planes when the pilots are late;
 Who smooth the scratches, rivet the panels,
 Check 'loud and clear' on the radio channels;
 Who read the write-ups and make the repairs,
 Check lines and wires for chafing and tears,
 Who pull the chocks and walk our wings,
 And do a million and one little things,
 That make the airplane safe to fly.
 So here's a salute to the hard-working guys,
 From a group of flyers who do seldom ponder
 The men who keep us in the wild blue yonder.

Training Flight Report

By Major G Roper

This Flight has no aircraft under command, no operational role, and a current strength of two persons, yet it has the vital task of ensuring that aircrew standards in particular are maintained.

The skills required to perform the roles of the Air Wing vary significantly from one mission profile to another. Flying search and rescue over the sea requires different procedures to a fire fighting mission in Jacks Hill or lifting electrical poles in Westmoreland.

Yet, we must be ready to respond at a moments notice. Preparing and maintaining pilots standards for these missions falls to the instructor pilots and Standards Officer who test in accordance with the Training Standards set out by Training Flight. Reserve pilot Captain John REID has long referred to these instructor pilots as the "Flying Auditors".

The Training Flight also coordinates the Annual Standards Visit by the Canadian Forces Central Flying School. The Central Flying School, who check standards in the Canadian Air Force, are well placed to audit Jamaica Defence Force pilots because our pilots do their basic training and some advanced training with the Canadian Armed Forces.

They, the CFS, come down yearly to test and assess the pilots, the maintenance operations and safety operations of the JDF Air Wing. They are our "external auditors".

These last few years have been busy and exciting. The purchase of a new helicopter fleet has required many long and hard hours of training to get the Regular and Reserve pilots qualified on these aircraft and mission ready. That we have been able to respond to a number of missions (which will, no doubt, be documented in the other flight reports) without major accident or any loss of life is a testimony to the high standard of the pilots, aircrewmen and the maintenance technicians.

In order to support the task of maintaining flying standards, the Flight has a number of documentary jobs to do. It has reviewed the Force Flying Orders and the Unit Flying Orders, written and updated various checklists for the aircraft and written a number of Course Training Standards for various pilot qualifications.

We continue to support the Nation with our aircraft. Our pilots are the best in Jamaica because of the high standards to which we train and operate. Training Flight - maintaining standards so that ...

"We Fly for All"



Captain Brian Creary in the EFIS cockpit of the Bell 412EP helicopter



The traditional dousing of a new aircraft captain after his first solo in a JDF aircraft.

JDF Air Wing (National Reserve)

By Lt. P. A. Beswick,
Adjutant, JDF AW(NR)

The Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing (National Reserve) is comprised of up to 15 Pilot Officers ranging in rank from Lieutenant to Major. The members of the Air Wing Reserve are qualified on all fixed wing and rotary aircraft currently utilized by the JDF Air Wing and fly duties concurrently with the regular Pilot Officers.

The historical roots of the Air Wing Reserve can be traced back to the formation of the Air Wing itself. In 1963 when the Air Wing was created, several private pilots who either owned or had access to aircraft on which they were qualified to fly, were invited to assist the fledging Jamaica Air Wing unit. Their response formed the Jamaica Air Squadron, the forerunner for the current Air Wing Reserve, which continues to this day, albeit in a drastically changed format.

In a real sense, Pilot Officers in the Air Wing Reserve are not so much 'reserve' soldiers as are their counterparts in an Infantry Regiment. Air Wing Reserve pilots must comply with the same stringent proficiency and currency requirements which regular Pilot Officers are subject to, and must maintain their currency on JDF aircraft by participating in regular flying operations, training flights, and continuing ground school proficiency examinations. It helps to have a flexible civilian avocation! In actual operations, the unit is also fully integrated into all Air Wing systems and procedures, duty pilot rostering, etc.

The qualification for entry to the Air Wing Reserve is a minimum of a private pilot's licence. While there is no set number of hours for entry, it is unlikely that a sufficiently high standard of flying proficiency will have been achieved before about 200 hours of flying experience to justify the selection of an entrant. For those officers who have not served as regular officers in any branch of the JDF prior to being commissioned in the Air Wing Reserve,



Left to right: Lt Douglas, Capt Millwood, Maj Beek (OC), Lt Beswick, Lt Mackay and Lt Smith. Missing are Capt Webster, Lt Barrett, Lt Reid, Lt Sutherland, Lt Jackson and Lt Morris



Major Basil Thornton

it will be necessary for them to spend approximately 1 year with the 3rd Battalion the Jamaica Regiment (National Reserve). During this period, they will be trained in all aspects of soldiering as required by JDF standards and policies. This ensures that when a new Pilot Officer is transferred to the Air Wing Reserve, he is fully capable of interfacing with all aspects of military operations as he will certainly be required to do, considering that one of the principal purposes of the Air Wing is to support the Infantry Regiments in their operations.

Over the years, many regular officers, having retired their commissions, have chosen to continue to serve with the Air Wing Reserve. This has produced significant benefits for the entire Air Wing, as thereby many thousands of hours of flying experience and accumulated training continue to be made available to new entrants to both the regular and reserve arms of the Air Wing.

In fact either because of previous military flying or their regular commercial aviation avocation, today's reserve pilots have between fifteen hundred to twenty five thousand flying hours, with the majority of the pilots having an average of over eight thousand hours-- a lot of flying and a lot of experience.

The JDF Air Wing Reserve unit prides itself on its commitment to the

same ideals and standards, which the regular Air Wing upholds. We believe in the motto: "There are not great men except those who have rendered service to mankind". Like the regular Air Wing, "we fly for all". Our officers throughout the years and to the present time have served with pride and distinction, and continue to make themselves ready and available at a moment's notice for duties with the Air Wing. We proudly join in this 40th anniversary of the creation of the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing.

Officers Commanding (The Jamaica Air Squadron)

Major Basil Thornton	1963 - 1972
Major John Harrison	1972 - 1981

Officer Commanding (The Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing (National Reserve))

Major Winston Dwyer	1981 - 1996
Major Dudley Beek	1996 - present

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JDF Air Wing Pilots Over the Years



1960s

Victor Beek
Leslie Whittingham-Jones
Robert Neish
George Brown
Andrew Bogle
A C dev Stern
Bobby Dixon
Dennis Walcott
Brian Chung
Anthony Robinson
Peter Whittingham
Dudley Beek
Effiom Whyte
Jon Banks

1970s

Donovan Wright
Peter Rennie
Anthony Thwaites
David Bicknell
Errol Alliman
Kevin Frater
Chris Kircaldy
Donovan Stockhausen
Winston Marshall
Cecil Sutherland
Micheal Benjamin
Everald Brown
Chris Naylor
Franklin Smith
Tyrone Chuck
Norman Crawford
Louis McLaren
David Fernandez
Ralph Royes
Christopher Dixon
Syddie Chin-Sim
Gary Hoyen
Paul Williams
Brian Scott
John Harris
Lansford Shearer
Brian Tapper
Robert Maxwell
John Brandt
Lascelles Samms
Oscar Derby
Keith White

Frank McCaulsky
Nigel Watt
Frank Gayle
Chris Ritch
Mark Thwaites
Brian Haddad
Wendel Day
John McFarlane

1980s

Francis Millwood
Tal Stokes
Johanna Lewin
Greg Webster
Harold Wilson
Don Rennalls
Paul Mackay

Helicopters versus Airplanes

The thing is, helicopters are different from airplanes.

An airplane by its nature wants to fly, and if not interfered with too strongly by unusual events or an unusually incompetent pilot, it will fly.

A helicopter does not want to fly. It is maintained in the air by a variety of forces and controls working in opposition to each other, and if there is any disturbance in this delicate balance the helicopter stops flying, immediately and disastrously.

There is no such thing as a gliding helicopter. This is why being a helicopter pilot is so different from being an airplane pilot, and why, in general, airplane pilots are open, clear-eyed, buoyant extroverts and helicopter pilots are brooders, introspective anticipators of trouble.

They know if something bad has not happened, it is about to.

Attributed to Harry Reasoner

John Reid
Omar Parkins
Richard Lewis
Vivian Thomas
Trevor Barrett
Dudley Chin
Phillip Smith
Rocky Meade
Brian Anderson
Joseph Bolton
Andy Irons
Timothy Royes
Nicholas Wiltshire
Geoffrey Roper
Mark Robinson
Allan Toppin
Christopher Douglas
Martin Sutherland
Kevin Burke
Raymond Carter
Trevor Leckie
Wayne Longmore
Robert Gordon
Jason Morris
Howard Williams

1990s

John Chambers
Norman Cobrand
Micheal Johnson
Lloyd Phillips
Brian Campbell
Charlton Jackson
Duane Barnes
Paul Brown
Paul Bolt
Troy Coley
George Barnes
Terrence Muir
Gary Watson
Sean Reid
Martin Beek
Jeremy Mullings
Brian Creary

2000s

Carlington Reid
Omar Clarke



JDF T-1 in it's new life in Canada registered as C-GJAW (note the "JAW" in the registration signifying the new owners maintaining the 'Jamaica Air Wing' link).

The Transition

By Ex Sergeant JAMES, R

We have been able to make a smooth transition into the Civil Industry primarily because of our work attitude as engineers, and the fact that we enjoyed the challenge of working on 'snags,' to the extent we were dubbed the "SNAG KILLERS". We were not hesitant to go on test flights whenever we changed major components on the aircraft. We constantly engaged in discussions with the pilots regarding aircraft defects, as they too help in the development of our troubleshooting skills. We have great respect for established forecasts, and when aircraft are down for servicing we try to complete the work within the shortest possible time. Major scheduled maintenance work (such as engine changes etc.), are marked on our yearly calendar in-order to facilitate planning and our involvement in the process.

Moving from Military Aviation to Civil Aviation can sometimes be challenging if one is not prepared mentally, physically and physiologically for this new environment.

Military Aviation is not regulated by the Jamaica Civil Aviation Authority (JCAA), hence, laws imposed by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) do not dictate Military operations.

Having worked on both sides of the fence I have come to realize that the rules and regulations that are found within the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR's), Canadian Aviation Regulations (CAR's) and the Jamaica Civil Aviation Regulations (JCAR's) are practically the same as those found in the military.

The Military is a non-profit organization, and its engineers must ensure that established maintenance forecasts are met when aircraft become unserviceable, whether scheduled or unscheduled. In doing so, one will be preparing himself for the challenges that the Civil Industry will require of him, since aircraft down time will not generate profit.

The Board of Directors of any Civil Aviation Company expect its engineers to keep "down time" to a minimum, and in doing so allow for the growth for the organization. If an engineer is unable to establish himself as a person who is capable of making a meaningful contribution for any company, his time with such company is usually limited.

My tour of duty in the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing (JDF AW) has benefited me tremendously during my transition into Civil Aviation, I must confess that the high standards set by my predecessors caused me to work feverishly to reach and surpass their level. I took this high standard to my Civil Aviation career, which was recognized, respected and rewarded.

The JDF Air Wing has a remarkable training programme for aircraft technicians. After obtaining the guidance from the training program, one has to nurture the information that has been imparted by spending quality time working on aircraft so that the skill and expertise required to make this smooth transition can be achieved. I now challenge all aircraft technicians to embark upon the same quest.



Life as an Air Traffic Controller

By Sergeant Vassell, T

At first when I heard the phrase Air Traffic Controller, the first thing that came to mind was of those people on the ground marshalling aircraft to their various parking areas at an airport, or marshalling them on the ramp for a departure.

It was in October of 1983 when I joined the Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing that I realized that there was a career waiting for me as an Air Traffic Controller.

It all began when I noticed a group of six immaculately dressed soldiers in a glass room marked "ATC Department". I noticed that whenever an aircraft was about to take off or land, the pilot would always make contact with this department. Upon investigating I was really impressed with the things they did. It was explained to me that Air Traffic Control promotes the safe, orderly and expeditious movement of aircraft, and prevents collision between aircraft in the air and on the ground. They also assist aircraft pilots by providing such information as may be useful for the safety and efficiency of a flight. Confused by all these explanations, I decided to become an Air Traffic Controller. Thinking it was just that easy, an ATC course commenced in December and I was nominated as a successful candidate. As the course went on I realized that I had taken on something more than I had bargained for because we were also required to learn about



Meteorology, Navigation, Theory of Flight Search and Rescue and Air Traffic Control in general. My dream was steadily being realized as we got into the meat of our objective.

The theoretical phase of the training was soon completed, and the desire was burning inside me to put all of this into practice. On 3rd January 1984, the JDF Air Wing set out for Annual Camp training in the valleys of Portland (Ken Jones). I was overwhelmed with anxiety as I looked forward to seeing the difference which operating in the field makes. We designated the area to the west of the airfield as our control tower on top of a hill so we could have clean view of the landing and take off area. The operation was very different compared to the 'luxurious' tower in Up Park Camp. Despite the different situation and inadequate facilities, we all maintained an orderly flow of air traffic.

There is indeed a wealth of information that an ATC has to know and to pass on. Our skills and knowledge are tested by each and every pilot, and regardless of the (sometimes) atrocious weather conditions, the ATC must assist in ensuring safe landings and take offs. It did not end there, as I was soon sent to Fort Rucker Alabama USA (on two different occasions), as well as to Canada to further my skills and knowledge in this fascinating world of Air Traffic Control. There is now a new set of Air Traffic Controllers, some of whom are now trained by me, and I am happy to pass on the wealth of knowledge to these young, vibrant and excited ATCs.

You too can make this job your career. Whenever you see an Air Traffic Controller from the JDF Air Wing just don't go by, ask him or her about this fascinating world of Air Traffic Controlling. I can assure you that you will learn something you have never known before.

1976 State of Emergency

Officers from the Jamaica Air Squadron were in charge of the Wire Fence and Red Fence Detention Centres in Up Park Camp during the 1976 State of Emergency.

Cloud Seeding

The JDF Air Wing used to conduct cloud seeding operations starting in 1975, a year in which the Corporate Area was in the grip of a serious drought. JDF T-1 was flown to Miami and modified for the operation, which entailed flying into clouds and electrically firing silver iodide flares (and hope that the rain would fall in the target area).



Maj Gen Simmonds and Adm Brady being shown the controls of the new 412EP by Maj Williams.



HRH Prince Charles being strapped into his seat by Majors Roper (Pilot) and Carter (ADC)

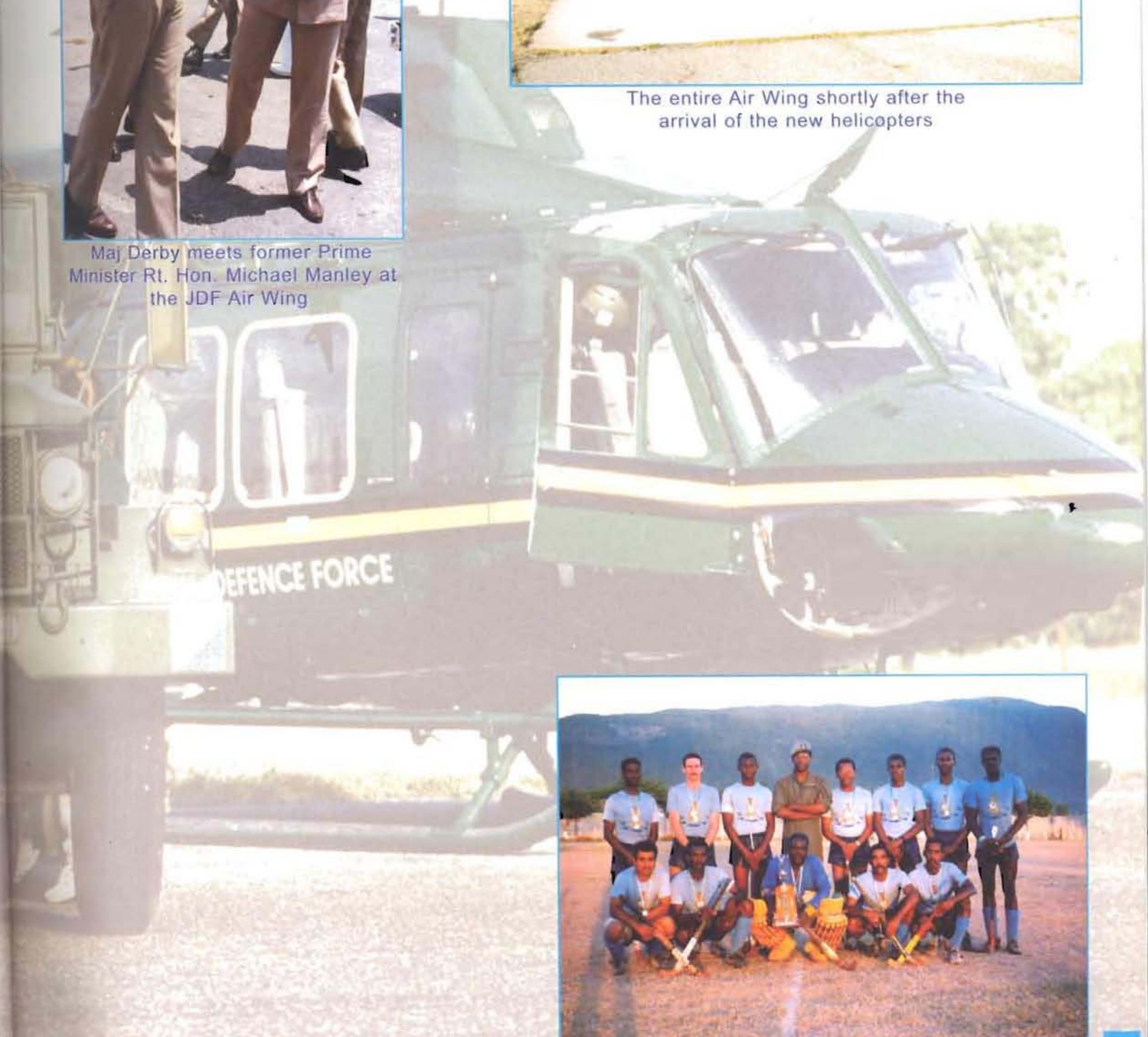




Maj Derby meets former Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Michael Manley at the JDF Air Wing



The entire Air Wing shortly after the arrival of the new helicopters





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Email: aviation@saywell.us

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Aircraft Engineer....

A Glorious Profession

By Ex-Sergeant JAMES, R

Looking at aeroplanes they seem glamorous, but to accomplish such remarkable results takes dedication, motivation, discipline and last but by no means least, love for the prestigious trade of Aircraft Maintenance. Aircraft Technicians are special people, their minds and thoughts are moulded and shaped to specification. The dedication and discipline they possess enable them to perform at a margin of error close to zero. The nature of the technicians job enhances and motivates them so that the words "exciting" and "interesting" can easily be used to describe this profession which satisfies and gives a feeling of accomplishment and responsibility. It is indeed a remarkable trade, and Technicians, recognize the need for personal growth in our profession and act accordingly.

Quality time spent troubleshooting and reading about the various aspects of different aircraft, boosts our knowledge greatly. As a famous philosopher once stated "knowledge acquired and not being shared, is knowledge wasted". Therefore, sharing knowledge in aviation maintenance is extremely important; and in doing so we improve the efficiency and the effectiveness with which our jobs are done.

A Technician's training at the JDF Air Wing begins where young enthusiastic minds are tested at various occasions during On the Job Training (OJT). During this training programme, the trainees are tested both in theory and practical by skilled and well-trained Technical Staff. Having met the required standards, they are recommended to attend the University of Technology for a Pre-Engineering course. If successful, the 'ordeal' is then continued in Canada, the United States of America or England. There the Potential Technicians are introduced to Aircraft Systems and Principles of Operation in greater detail.

The successful training of a Technician depends greatly on the interest of the individual being trained. A high level of intelligence and skill is required. This means that skill and intelligence combined with focus, gives the basis for a successful Aircraft Technician. Once trained, the technician is returned to the Unit where he/she stands up to the challenge of maintaining aircraft safely. Without complete focus, problems can affect the reliability of their work, but motivation should enable them to function at an acceptable standard. This kind of focus combined with integrity in the field of Aviation should make one aware of one's own competence. The ability to admit that they are wrong, taking nothing for granted, reading the relevant information before they start working and making sure to check and double check a job after completion is

essential as it is that which saves lives.

Aircraft Technicians are doctors, not of the human anatomy, but of the aircraft systems. It is their job to make sure that the aircraft is operating at the required level. In other words they correct and prevent faults before it's too late. The records speak for itself at the JDF Air Wing; after maintaining a fleet of approximately ten (10) Helicopters, and four (4) Fixed Wing aircraft for over a period of twenty (20) years we have not had an accident resulting from a maintenance error. This is truly an outstanding achievement. Appropriately then, Technicians must be given the glory, they deserve, they often put their integrity on the line for their work, as they are professionals.

A professional Technician once wrote an excerpt called; The Conscience Of the Aviation Maintainer. It goes like this:

I AM A PROFESSIONAL

I know I am a Professional because I've been taught by those who will accept nothing less. I have been given the fundamentals, and by using those fundamentals correctly, I will become more proficient as time goes on; but even now, I am a Professional.

When working on aircraft, I will always know when I am right because I have the integrity and the honesty to admit that I don't know and to seek out the correct manuals for the answers even after a non-professional tells me "how they used to do it".

Yes, I am a Professional, and as long as I work on aircraft, I will remain one; because I know that I am partly responsible to every crewmember that will ever fly on that aircraft.

As a Professional, I have pride in my work, and satisfaction in knowing that my skills are an important and integral part of aviation, because, I AM A PROFESSIONAL.

The above excerpt speaks for itself, any individual who has the desire to become an Aviation Technician, what better example could he ask for.

Did you know

Air Wing Officer Training

JDF Air Wing Officers have been trained at several Officer training institutions around the world over the years, including RAF Henlow, RAF Cranwell, RMA Sandhurst and RM Lymstone in the UK, CFB Gagetown in Canada, and the IMA in India.

RAF Service

More than 4,600 Jamaican Men and Women saw service with the Royal Air Force (compared to 66 in the Navy and 628 in the Army).

Returning JDF T-2 to the Sky

By Sergeant ALLEN, G

There are millions of people flying on several thousand aircraft every year, from small Cessna aircraft to the very large jumbo jets. Most of them think that they are putting their lives in the hand of the pilots. What they don't realize is that their lives along with the pilots are also put in the hands of the individuals behind the scene. Aircraft Technicians have the important responsibility of keeping airplanes in a safe condition to fly. Aircraft Technicians often perform what is called line maintenance work.

One of the most fulfilling and satisfying things to an Aircraft Technician, is to see an aircraft flying in the sky. This feeling is even better when he or she was involved in the repair and rectification of this aircraft to an airworthy standard.

The Jamaica Defence Force Air Wing currently operates one Britten Norman Islander aircraft in its fleet. The registration of this aircraft is 'JDF T-2'. This airplane is sometimes affectionately referred to as the 'JDF bomber'. This aircraft became unserviceable in June 2001 because there was a need to carry out various major maintenance activities.

To bring back this aircraft to airworthiness status would require extensive maintenance. The entire interior, including seats, side panels, would have to be removed

Working in JDF Air Wing can sometimes be very demanding. Yet, the experiences to be gained from this situation are most of the time satisfying.

Night flying in an aircraft operational Unit is unavoidable. There are times when training, CASEVAC, aerial patrol, VIPs mission etc. are necessary. The immediate situation determines whether or not an aircraft flies.

Although night flying may be a nuisance to some residents of the community in which the Unit is located, the residents have to realise that this is not a deliberate act, but a cause of national requirements.

To maintain a fleet of helicopters to a serviceable status

to expose the aircraft structure for detailed inspections to be done. Over time, almost every rivet, wire, and component would be looked at, tested, repaired, or replaced to ensure it will not fail in flight. Subsequently, the aircraft would have to be reassembled and the entire exterior painted. Additionally, the engines were replaced and properly rigged to manufacturers specification.

The project took dedication and a lot of time away from our families. At times, the team worked throughout the night until wee hours in the morning. The entire interior has been refurbished; the seats have been re-upholstered. The floor carpet, side panels and roof are all brand new.

In February 2003 T-2 was flight tested and thereafter rendered serviceable (airworthy). We now have a 100 per cent mission capable aircraft that can deliver air-support when and where needed. The team stands with pride when T-2 taxied out for the first flight after its major inspection, knowing that the engines, airframe and avionics and other aircraft systems were ready.

Working in the JDF Air Wing

By Sergeant ALLEN, G

is by no means an easy task. On a good day, though rare, all aircraft will complete the day's mission with no faults and all that is required, is to have them prepared for the next day's mission.

On the majority of days however, there are bound to be snags on the aircraft which have to be rectified in time for the following day's operation. It sometimes take the technician many hours to troubleshoot and rectify a fault, which sometimes involve's working through the entire night.

Nevertheless, when a Crew Chief hands over a serviceable fleet of helicopters to the relieving crew, that crew is shadowed by a great feeling of satisfaction and achievement. It is always delightful to see an aircraft that you rendered serviceable carry out a mission.



Sgt Nicholson (during his Artificer Training in the UK) meeting HRH Queen Elizabeth II at a ceremony in London on 5th November 2002



Maj Victor Beek, Lt Col Oscar Derby, Lt Col Tony Anderson, Col Stern and Maj Errol Alliman at the 2003 church service and brunch

Did you know

Beeks

There have been over 13 members of the Beek family involved in flying in Jamaica, and at one point in 1998 three generations were flying together in formation for the Battle of Britain Celebrations in Jamaica. Three generations of Beeks have been members of the JDF Air Wing.

The First Air Wing Offices

The first Air Wing Offices were housed in the eastern section of the present Administrative Unit Office Building (formerly the telephone exchange), and the aircraft used to be hangared under those large trees adjoining Flagstaff Officers Mess. The current Air Wing hangar (on the Western side of the airfield) was completed in August 1973.

First Air Wing Exercise

The very first exercise that the JDF Air Wing (then Jamaica) took part in was called Auchindown

Operation Pipelift

On Tuesday 8th April 1977, the JDF Air Wing used a Bell 212 helicopter to airlift 17 pipes (each weighing 3,200 lbs, 32 feet long, with a 24 inch diameter) up into the Hermitage Dam area for urgently needed repairs to the pipeline.



Major Whittingham-Jones flying the Bell 47G over Up Park Camp in the 1960s

Casevac

In December 1977, JDF H-7 (piloted by Lieutenants Marshall and Dixon) once performed an evacuation of a heart attack patient from the deck of a passenger ship, but due to the confined area, they had to perform a very daring landing on some deck chairs in order to pick up the patient.

Search and Rescue

A JDF 412EP crew rescued two Frenchmen from their stricken vessel 130 miles offshore, winching them to safety from 20 foot seas in May 2002. Their vessel had been taking on water and was sinking.



The original car parking sign which was found intact in May 2003 by the Military Records Section

THE JDF AIR WING



Invites

**suitably qualified candidates
to be trained as pilot officers**

Successful applicants will:

- Receive valuable military, technical and academic training locally and overseas.
- Receive an opportunity to develop leadership skills in a uniquely challenging and exciting career.

Minimum Requirements:

Nationality	Jamaican Citizen
Age	18 – 23 years old
Marital Status	Single
Educational Standard	Two (2) 'A' Levels or equivalent and five (5) CXC or GCE passes at 'O' Levels to include Mathematics and English Language

Interested persons are to:

Send application and resume in writing to

Staff Officer Administration (SO1 G1)
Headquarters Jamaica Defence Force
Up Park Camp
Kingston 5

Candidates must have originals and copies of their examination certificates prepared when called in for initial interviews.

The Green Eagle Code of Ethics

Reprinted from: Flight Comment No. 3 1998

Don't sleep while your Captain is.

Encourage your Captain to smoke.

It's hell to fly with a nervous Captain, especially if you're the one making him nervous.

Don't interfere if your Captain absolutely insists on making a fool of himself.

Copilots Catch 22:

You are damned if you ignore your Captain's mistakes.

You are damned if you do something about them.

Keep your lousy attitude a secret.

Survival Rules:

Don't fly with a Captain nicknamed "Lucky";

Don't fly at night;

Don't fly in bad weather;

Don't mess with the red switches;

Never, ever eat a crew meal in the dark.

Speak very, very softly when you speak to your Captain.

Don't make better landings than your captain, until the last trip of the month.

The two basic rules of a Captain's authority:

Rule One. The Captain is always right.

Rule Two. If the Captain is ever observed making a mistake, see Rule One.

When you upgrade to Captain, you must:

1. Accept responsibility for being right all of the time.
2. Compensate for all of those inept and disrespectful Copilots

Keep your Captain out of the morgue, jail, FAA hearings and Chief Pilot's office.

It's better to be down here, arguing about how you are going to do it up there; than be up there arguing.

Always let your Captain be the first out the door of the airplane. After all, there may not be any stairs.

Buy your Captain scuba gear, skateboards, power tools and hot dog ski lessons.

As a Copilot, our primary job is to detect and correct mistakes:

1. First, your own mistakes.
2. Second, your Captain's mistakes.
3. Finally, everybody else's mistakes.

Never, ever awaken your Captain when he's smiling in his sleep.

Talk up the advantages of early retirement.

Don't expect your Captain to:

1. Pick up the meal check on a layover;
2. Be impressed with your flying background;
3. Think flying is more fun today than it was in the good old days;
4. Hear and understand the ATC request the first time;
5. Believe the FAA is doing a satisfactory job;
6. Buy anything without asking for an airline discount;
7. Wear a small-sized or a low-priced wrist watch;
8. Wear expensive uniform shoes;
9. Respect the competency of senior airline management;
10. Purchase his own newspaper to read on a trip.

A look into the future for the JDF Air Wing

By Major D A Cummings

July 2013 (our 50th anniversary), and what is the Air Wing doing...

The Commanding Officer (CO) walks out onto his office balcony that overlooks the new hangar facility at Vernamfield, and gathers his notes as he prepares to give a short address to soldiers from Belize, Trinidad, Guyana, Barbados, Bahamas and Antigua, who are with the Air Wing for Aircraft Technician OJT. He can't be too long, as he has to be in Kingston for a meeting with RAFA in an hour. Thank god for Highway 2000, as it is now only a short drive into Kingston with his staff car. The journey back will be even better, as JDF J - 1 (the sleek new jet) has just returned from Washington with the Minister of Finance, and will pick up the CO and fly him back to Vernamfield. After a quick turnaround and change of crew, J - 1 will be off later that night to Toronto with His Excellency The Governor General.

Almost into Kingston, the staff car pauses in a short line of traffic, and the driver uses the time to find change for the toll (ah yes, we were not exempt). His phone rings with the news that one of the CN235 Maritime Patrol Aircraft (JDF T - 9) has just found those fishermen from Pedro Cays who were lost at sea. Their boat had capsized, and the new SeaVue Radar and Star Safire III FLIR system on the CN235 had located them bobbing in the water in record time (125 miles offshore). The rescue (by one of the new SAR helicopters) is being carried live on the local television stations, thanks to the real-time video downlink from the aircraft. This 'breaking news' stuff really has the country going these days. You just never know what the Air Wing will allow to be broadcast. Darn good investment those CASA 235s were (he thinks to himself), as he remembers that whilst he was leaving the base, he had just spotted the other one (JDF T - 10) as it was rolling down the runway on its way to Martinique with 2JR soldiers for Exercise French Commando. Hope those pilots are able to

collect those medical supplies for the Ministry of Health in Miami on their way back from Martinique, and wont be diverted to chase any suspected drug boat. These drug chases are happening much less these days (in fact have just about dried up), but every now and again those illegal traders take a chance. The news of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) trials by the JDF Air Wing seemed to have finally convinced them to try somewhere other than Jamaica for their transshipment.

The meeting with RAFA was smooth, and the ride back to Vernamfield was even smoother in J - 1. The advance party from the Red Arrows is on board as well, and they brief the Commanding Officer on the plans for the spectacular 50th Anniversary airshow that will be put on at Vernamfield for all of Jamaica to see. The ten (10) helicopters of the Wing wont be as spectacular as the Red Arrows, but the No. 1 Flight fly past should be quite good with those four new trainers included. It's a good thing

these new trainers can do aerobatics, unlike the last set of trainers that were just traded in. Must remember to check once more on the revised traffic plans, as this airshow is fast becoming the event of the decade. The Cricket World Cup had been a huge success for Jamaica and the West Indies in 2007 (what a thrilling final it had been at Sabina Park), and now, though many years later, every one is still expecting nothing but the very best

with these large events. **2013, We will still be flying for all.**





Air Wing Members who died whilst flying on JDF operations

1963 - 2003

Lieutenant Brian Scott
Lieutenant Everal Brown

17 May 1978
17 May 1978

Both died in a training accident in JDF T-6 in Up Park Camp

Captain Harold Wilson
Lieutenant Donald Poulton

22 July 1986
22 July 1986

Both died in JDF A-6 trying to prevent an illegal aircraft from taking off with narcotics, a supreme sacrifice so that good could triumph over evil

Lieutenant Brian Anderson

21 May 1988

Died from injuries received in an accident in JDF H-18 in Up Park Camp

Captain Dudley Chin

21 May 1990

Died trying to recover a seized illegal aircraft to JDF Air Wing Manley Base

We will never forget them



THEIR NAME LIVES FOR EVERMORE.