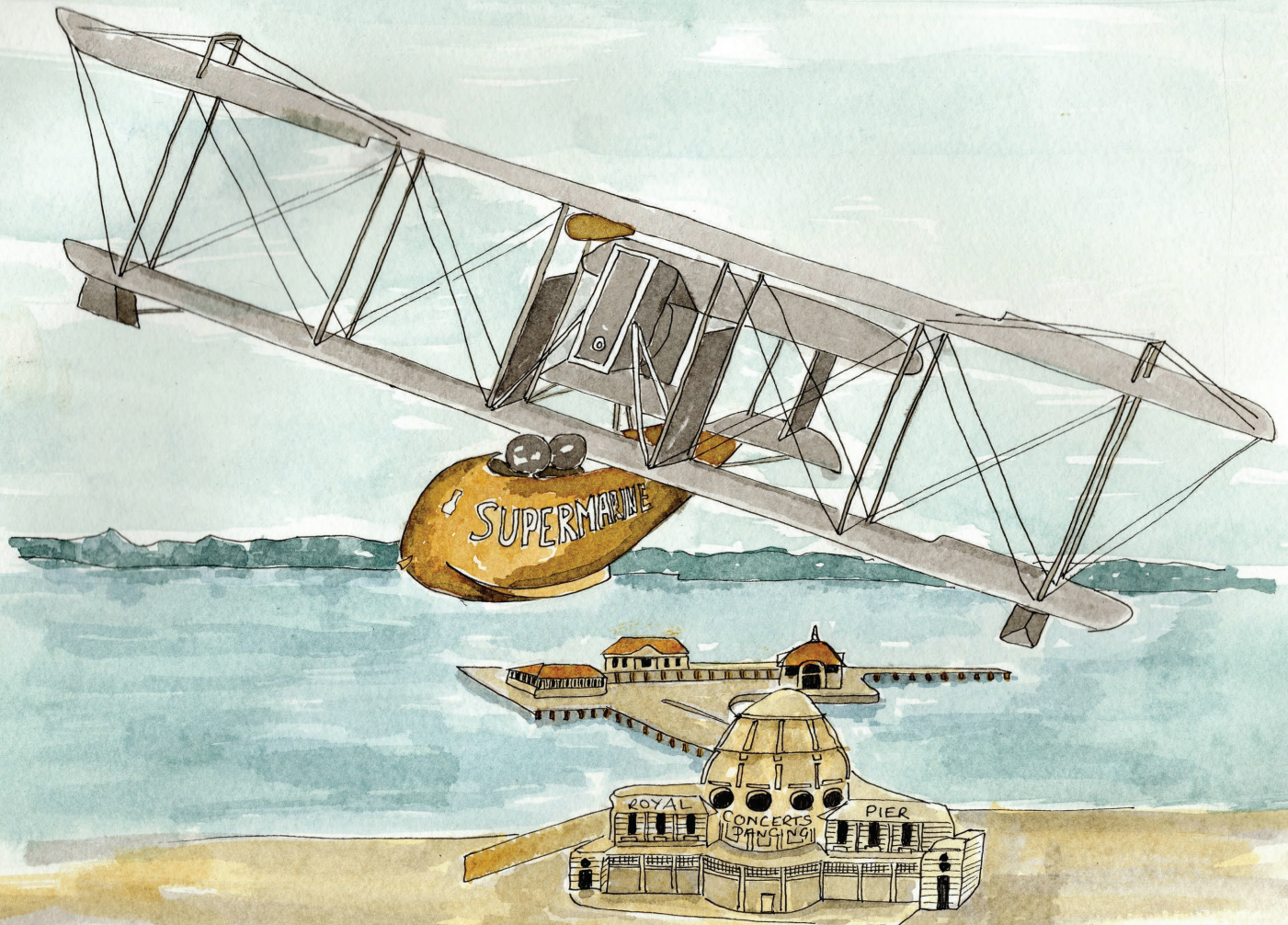


# A Centenary Celebration



## 100 years of Southampton as the home of the World's First Air Port

1919 - 2019

Souvenir Edition



## **SOUTHAMPTON – THE WORLD’S FIRST AIR PORT**

Southampton was the Silicon Valley of its age. In the latter years of the First World War, aviation replaced shipbuilding in terms of innovation and modernity. The centre of his industrial and technological drive was the flying boat, which for two glorious decades would set the records and write the chapters of aviation history. Front and centre of this work was a small, agile company based at Woolston called Supermarine after its telegraphic address.

Funded by the controversial politician and businessman, Noël Pemberton-Billings, Supermarine had built coastal flying boats for the Admiralty during the war and now, with the war over, set its sights on commercial aviation. Without purpose-built runways and terminal buildings, the logic was to use harbours and shipping terminals for passenger travel. The aircraft designers of France, Italy and the United States were also determined to develop commercial passenger services. The race was on.

Using its skill and experience of the Admiralty flying boats for war service, Supermarine converted ten naval flying boats to passenger machines. Creature comforts were in short supply in these open cockpits but at least goggles and thick coats were provided.

On 16 August 1919, the first service between Southampton’s Royal Pier and Cowes slipway was inaugurated by two machines, named Channel flying boats. One of the pilots was Henri Biard who made history winning one of the Schneider Trophy speed races in a Sea Lion flying boat designed by the legendary R J Mitchell.

This splendid occasion in 1919 was marked by the appearance of Southampton’s Mayor, Sidney Kimber who brought the City Corporation, the Mayor of Winchester, Arthur Dyer and other prominent local figures to the Royal Pier to witness the Southampton-Cowes flying boat service. The councillors were flown around and over Southampton in the Channel flying boats. When he landed Councillor Kimber declared that Southampton Water was the world’s first Air Port. Within days, the Channel flying boats were taking passengers to Bournemouth, Southsea and a few weeks later, the Channel Islands and France. Air travel seemed to have arrived!



**PAUL BEAVER, HISTORIAN**



**SIMON WITTS**

## **2019 - 2119 – THE NEXT 100 YEARS**

Southampton is at the heart of exciting plans to create the next generation of aviation professionals in the region. We want to see the world's aviation people coming from this region that has done so much in the past to create the future of an industry where the UK has become a leading global player.

Aviation, in its broadest sense, is the operation of aircraft, civil and military, aeroplanes and helicopters, manned and unmanned. It encompasses all aspects of a normal business including management, finance, insurance, legal, sales & marketing, interiors, customer service & catering and such like. On top of that, it extends to the more specialist areas including all aspects of flight, engineering and ground operations, air traffic controllers and support staff.

In the world today, around 4 billion people fly annually for business and leisure. This is forecast to double in the next twenty years. On top of that, we need aviation to become more sustainable and ambitious targets have been set by airlines and operators worldwide. On the military side, we need skilled professionals across all areas who protect us and stand ready to defend at any time.

The years ahead present huge and exciting opportunities for people in the area. Plans have recently been announced to create a complete revival of training for aviation in the City and the wider region with local, regional and national partners. This will present opportunities for all people in the region across all parts of the region and at all levels. The next 100 years will be exciting and busy!

### **Celebrations of Aviation events in the Southampton Area**

Marking this centenary is the first of many events and activities planned with our Partners to mark the amazing and rich aviation history that Southampton and the Solent Area have to offer.

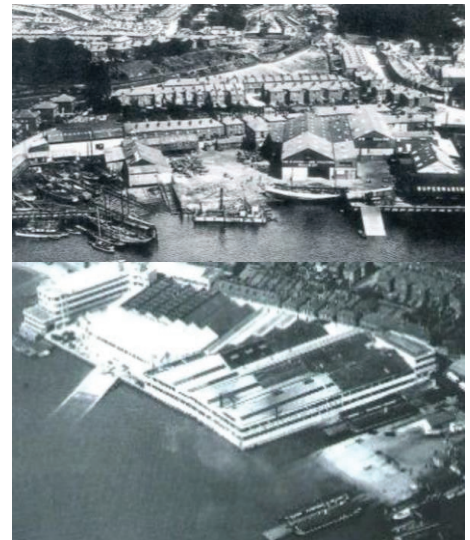
Our aim is to inspire people to join the industry based on what has been achieved by the people in the area for the country in peace and conflict. We intend to ignite the interest in STEM and allied subjects in the curriculum and to integrate aviation subjects into schools, colleges and universities. Working with all types of Partners across the region, we will be marking significant events in history.

### **The 100 years celebration was held at Chamberlayne College for the Arts on Wednesday 4th December 2019**

The School is located in the area that used to have the biggest concentration of aircraft designers and manufactures in the world as well as premier flight and technical training schools.

The event was held at a time when the aviation industry is critically short of the right people with the right skills at all levels.

The Next Generation of Aviation Professionals starts here!



## Southampton - the home of the World's First Air Port and the Next Generation of Aviation Professionals!

1919 – 2019 - 2119



We need your help in inspiring and energising people from all stages in life and from all backgrounds to consider a career in aviation!

If you would like to receive further details of the exciting plans to create the next generation of aviation professionals in Southampton and the surrounding region with local, regional, national and international partners, contact:

[SOU@aviation360.co.uk](mailto:SOU@aviation360.co.uk)