

Official Opening of GATWICK AIRPORT

(SURREY)

by the

Right Hon. the Viscount Swinton, G.B.E., M.C.
(His Majesty's Secretary of State for Air)

with

BRITISH AIRWAYS

on

Saturday, 6th June, 1936

OFFICIALS FOR THE DAY

British Airways Ltd. Administrative Officers

<i>Air Superintendent</i>	...	...	P. Lynch-Blosse, Esq.
<i>Secretary</i>	...	...	D. S. S. Macdowall, Esq.
<i>Traffic Manager</i>	...	...	L. S. Banks, Esq.
<i>Publicity Manager</i>	...	...	J. D. Little, Esq.

Airports Ltd. Administrative Officers

<i>Joint Managing Directors</i>	...	...	A. C. M. Jackaman, Esq. A. M. Desautter, Esq.
<i>Airport Control Officer</i>	...	...	W. E. Symmonds, Esq.
<i>Secretary</i>	...	...	S. A. Gordon, Esq.

Southern Railway—Station Master, Gatwick Airport Station.

Chief Control Officer in charge of Flying

<i>Operations</i>	...	...	Capt. James Jeffs.
<i>Assistant Control Officer</i>	...	...	Flight-Lieut. G. Hill.
<i>Judge for Arrival Competition</i>	...	...	Air-Marshal Sir John Higgins.
<i>Committee for Arrival Competition</i>	...	...	F. Rowarth, Esq., W. Dancy, Esq., Capt. Rupert Preston.
<i>Official for Private Owners, etc.</i>	...	...	Capt. A. G. Lamplugh, F.R.Ae.S., M.I.Ae.E., F.R.G.S.
<i>Assistants to Display Organization</i>	...	...	Hwfa Lane, Esq., Leslie Castlemaine, Esq.
<i>At the Microphone</i>	...	...	William Courtenay, Esq., A.R.Ae.S.I.

The Official Opening Ceremonies and the Aviation Display have been organized by Mr. William Courtenay, Aeronautical Adviser to Airports Ltd., and to British Airways Limited.

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS



Hours.

- 11.00 **GATES OPEN** at Gatwick Airport. Public admitted.
'Joyriding' on aircraft of British Airways Ltd.
Enclosures 1s. 2d. and 5s., including tax.
- 11.20 Guests of Airports Ltd. ; British Airways Ltd. ; and Southern Railway assemble at No. 15 Platform, Victoria Station, London, to embark on the 'Gatwick Airport Special' train.
- 11.40 'Gatwick Airport Special' leaves Victoria.
- 12.00 Private owners' aircraft taking part in the 'Arrival Competition' (for Gatwick Cup, cash prizes and souvenirs) arrive from all parts of Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Irish Free State and the Continent of Europe.
- 12.10 Guests arriving by air land at Gatwick Airport.
- 12.16 'Gatwick Airport Special' arrives with guests at the new Gatwick Airport station (formerly Tinsley Green station).
- 12.30 Guests inspect the 'Martello Tower' Administrative Buildings, hangars and Airport.
- 12.45 Guests take up their places in the Guests' Enclosure to await the arrival of the Air Minister.
- 12.55 **Arrival by air of Air Commodore The Right Honourable the VISCOUNT SWINTON, P.C., G.B.E., M.C.** (His Majesty's Secretary of State for Air).
Lord Swinton will have left York during the morning and will arrive by air in the Air Ministry D.H. Rapide, piloted by Squadron Leader H. K. Goode, A.F.C.
- 13.00 The Secretary of State will be received by the Viscount Goschen, Chairman of Airports Limited, who will present his fellow directors ; the Directors of British Airways Ltd. ; Directors of the Southern Railway ; the Director-General of Civil Aviation and Lady Shelmerdine ; and the distinguished guests from Europe.

Hours.

13.05 Guests leave their Enclosure and take their places for luncheon. Luncheon will be served in the Private Owners' Hangar.

The Secretary of State for Air, accompanied by the Directors; will inspect the Airport before proceeding to the Luncheon Hangar where the guests will be at their tables awaiting the Air Minister's party.

13.15 LUNCHEON.

14.00 **Toast List.** The following toasts will be proposed :

"**H.M. The King**" proposed by The Viscount Goschen (Chairman of Airports Limited).

"**The Air Minister,**" proposed by The Viscount Goschen ; responded to by The Viscount Swinton (Secretary of State for Air).

"**The Visitors,**" proposed by W. D. L. Roberts, Esq. (Chairman of British Airways); responded to by Lieut-Col. Sir Francis Sheldermine, C.I.E., O.B.E., Director-General of Civil Aviation.

14.40 Guests adjourn to their Special Enclosure.

14.50 The Secretary of State for Air will advance to the Microphone and in a speech which will be relayed to the spectators in the Distinguished Visitors' and the Public Enclosures, will declare **Gatwick Airport** open.

14.50 **AIR DISPLAY**, including demonstration of 1936 models of to civil aircraft.

18.00 **ROYAL AIR FORCE DISPLAY** item, provided by No. 19 (Fighter) Squadron (Glbster Gauntlets), and *Daily Express* presentation of **Mr. Clem Sohn**, the 'human birdman.'

17.15 Tea Interval. Guests will take tea in the Private Owners' Hangar.

18.00 Departure from Guests' Enclosure of the Secretary of State for Air ; distinguished foreign visitors ; Air Attachés and other guests, to their train (the Gatwick Airport Special).

18.26 '**Gatwick Airport Special**' train leaves with guests for (approx.) Victoria.

18.00 'Joyriding' in British Airways aircraft continues all evening to with further flying display items and a final parachute descent
22.00 before dusk.

22.00 End of Programme. Gates closed.

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME OF FLYING EVENTS

Hours.

14.50 **OFFICIAL OPENING OF GATWICK AIRPORT** by Right Honourable Viscount Swinton, P.C., G.B.E., M.C.

The Secretary of State for Air will speak through the microphone. His speech will be relayed to the spectators. He will declare the Airport open for public air traffic.

The flags of all nations on British Airways' routes will be unfurled at the masts erected in front of the Guests' Enclosure.

Flight-Lieutenant Gerald Hill, who will have ascended in a British Aircraft "Swallow" monoplane provided by the British Aircraft Manufacturing Co. Ltd., of Hanworth Airpark, Feltham, Middlesex, will descend by parachute. He will bear a message of congratulations and greetings to Lord Swinton—from the air. A "G.Q." parachute will be used.

15.00 "Goodwill Flights" from several light aeroplane clubs will arrive and will land by flights of three machines. The under-mentioned Clubs have kindly arranged to send machines: Brooklands Flying Club; Cardiff Aeroplane Club; Cinque Ports Aero Club; Eastbourne Flying Club; Household Brigade Flying Club; Leicestershire Aero Club; Norfolk and Norwich Aero Club; Northampton Aeroplane Club; Southend Flying Club.

The 27 aircraft of these Clubs will be seen in the air together. As each flight lands and taxis towards the Guests' Enclosure, the Flight Leader will hand to the Air Minister a letter of greetings and congratulations on the opening of Gatwick Airport from the Club's President, Committee and Members.

15.10 Demonstration by the British Aircraft Manufacturing Company's "Double Eagle." First public appearance of this twin-engined monoplane. Six-seater machine with two D.H. Gipsy Major (130 h.p.) air-cooled engines or two 200 h.p. Gipsy Six engines. For private owners, air line operators, or air taxi firms. The high speed of 190 m.p.h. is attained for the remarkably small power of 400 h.p. This allows 165 m.p.h. cruising speed and 65 m.p.h. landing speed. Range 600 miles. Ceiling 19,000 ft. Can operate in all countries.

The B.A. "Eagle" will take off simultaneously with the B.A. "Double Eagle." The "Eagle" cruises at 130 m.p.h., seats three persons and is fitted with retractable undercarriage.

15.20 "Crazy flying" item by Flight-Lieutenant Gerald Hill, flying solo in a British Aircraft Manufacturing Company's "Swallow." This remarkable machine has a top speed of over 100 m.p.h. on an 85 h.p. Pobjoy radial air-cooled motor. It cruises at

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98 m.p.h., yet is controllable all the way down to 20–25 m.p.h. It cannot spin. It is the ideal for speedv and safe tuition and for private ownership. Flight-Lieut. Hill will demonstrate its ability to assume droll and alarming attitudes bordering on the incoherent without loss of control at all speeds.

- 15.30 Mr. R. A. C. Brie, of the Cierva Autogiro Company, will demonstrate the C.30A direct control model. In the autogiro lies a great hope for the future of private ownership, especially when the 'direct take-off' type is marketed together with a gearing device to enable it to be used for driving to town to garage. Unstallable at all speeds, yet controllable at all speeds, the Autogiro is in a class by itself and can land in the smallest of fields.
- 15.40 Mr. Hall will demonstrate the new Hillson Praga light cabin monoplane. Mr. H. L. Brook has just set up a new record for this type of aircraft by flying from London to Cape Town in 18 days. The Hillson Praga sells at £385 and uses a 20/40 h.p. J.A.P. engine. It consumes only one gallon of petrol for 40 miles in still air and on Mr. Brook's flight only 200 gallons have been used, which at English rates makes the cost only £15. The machine cruises at 85 m.p.h., and is built by J. Hill & Sons, Manchester.
- 15.50 Another record breaker. Flight-lieutenant T. Rose, D.F.C., in the Miles Falcon VI (a three-seater low wing cabin monoplane, with 200 h.p. Gipsy engine) in which he set up records to and from England and the Cape. Winner of the King's Cup Air Race, 1935, in which Flight-Lieutenant Rose averaged over 176 m.p.h. Cruising speed 150 to 155 m.p.h. Landing speed 42 m.p.h. (Supplied by Phillips and Powis Ltd., Reading.)
- A Miles Whitney-Straight monoplane will be flown at the same time. This is a new side by side two-seater cabin monoplane with a top speed of 155 m.p.h., cruising speed of 132 m.p.h. and a landing speed of 40 m.p.h. This machine is to be used extensively for training purposes. This machine is built by Phillips & Powis, of Reading, and sells for £950.
- 16.00 **ROYAL AIR FORCE DISPLAY.** (By kind permission of the Air Council.)
- No. 19 (Fighter) Squadron from Duxford Station, Royal Air Force under the command of Squadron-Leader Purton Jones, will give an exhibition of Squadron drill and aerobatics. Machines: Gloster Gauntlets. Engines: Bristol Mercury. Performance: top speed, 230 m.p.h. Manufacturers—Aircraft: Gloster Aircraft Co. Ltd. Manufacturers—Engines Bristol Aeroplane Co. Ltd.

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- 16.10 Flying Officer David Llewellyn will demonstrate the new Aeronca light cabin monoplane in which he flew solo from Hanworth to Johannesburg in 20 days. Like the Hillson Praga this machine caters for a new class of private owner and is on sale at £395 and is built by the Aeronautical Corporation of Great Britain, and is shown by Aircraft Exchange & Mart Ltd.

The B.2 Trainer will take off at the same time, and a commentator will explain the advantages of side by side tuition. This machine is built by the Blackburn Aeroplane Co., and is powered by a Hermes engine.

- 16.20 Herr Robert Kronfeld in a B.A.C. Super Drone. This is the ultra-light class aeroplane and is 'decontrolled' from the Air Ministry. Single-seater monoplane with 750 c.c. Douglas twin-cylinder engine. Cruising speed: 60 m.p.h.; landing speed 22 m.p.h. (B.A.C. Ltd., Feltham.)

A Topsy "S" monoplane will be flown at the same time. This machine is a single seater low wing light cantilever monoplane fitted with an 18 h.p. Douglas engine. It has a top speed of approximately 90 m.p.h., and can land at 40 m.p.h.

- 16.30 Mrs. Amy Mollison, C.B.E., B.A., the world's greatest airwoman, will fly past in a Percival Gull similar to the one in which she regained from Flight-Lieutenant T. Rose the double Cape record. Her times were:

Outward: 3 days, 6 hours, 25 minutes.

Homeward: 4 days, 16 hours, 18 minutes.

- 16.40 Capt. E. W. Percival will, a moment later, take off in the "Mew Gull" and a third pilot will fly the "Vega Gull." The "Vega Gull" is a four-seater monoplane fitted with split trailing edge flaps and wheel brakes. It is powered with a 200 h.p. Gipsy engine and has a maximum speed of 170 m.p.h. and a cruising speed of 150 m.p.h. The use of the flaps brings the landing speed down to 44 m.p.h.; standard range, 630 miles. (Percival Aircraft Co. Ltd., Grosvenor Place, W.1.)

- 16.45 The Monospar "Croydon" air liner and the Monospar de luxe model. Built by General Aircraft Ltd., of Feltham, these machines follow the single-spar method of construction which makes for light but strong structure. The Monospar "Croydon" is the newest air liner of high speed yet launched in Great Britain. Powered with two Pratt & Whitney 400 h.p. Wasp Junior engines, it achieves 207 m.p.h. and cruises at 192 m.p.h. Landing speed, 64 m.p.h. Range 660 miles. It seats 10 passengers and two crew. Sold as standard with

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wireless and all modern fittings. The de Luxe model has two economical Pobjoy Niagara engines each of only 90 h.p. It cruises at 123 m.p.h. and lands at 54 m.p.h. Range, 496 miles.

- 17.00 **MR. CLEM SOHN** will drive round the enclosures wearing his wings and equipment including Irvin Air Chutes, prior to his ascent. This item is being given by arrangement with the "Daily Express."
- 17.00 Bell's Asbestos and Engineering Supply Ltd. will prepare their fire-fighting apparatus. This will demonstrate how an aircraft which has caught fire after a crash can be dealt with and the crew rescued from amid the flames. The Monospar Red Cross Ambulance will take part in this event. This is the first machine built as an air ambulance and the British Red Cross Society will co-operate in its use.
- 17.05 Weather permitting, Mr. Clem Sohn will take-off in the *Daily Express* D.H. Dragon air liner and the pilot will climb to 10,000 ft. This takes about 25 minutes. Bell's Asbestos Co. will carry out their item while Mr. Sohn's machine is gaining the requisite altitude.
- 17.30 **Mr. Clem Sohn's Exhibition of 'Human Flight.'** He will first fall from the air liner at 10,000 feet and after attaining a speed of 85 m.p.h. will open his wings, first releasing a smoke-bomb which will indicate the course of his descent. At 1,000 feet he will release a parachute and will endeavour to land in the centre of the aerodrome. **After the event, Mr. Sohn will drive round the aerodrome.**
- 17.40 Departure of the Royal Air Force aircraft.
- 17.45 Heston Phoenix five-seater high-wing monoplane; wooden construction with monocoque fuselage; fitted with retractable undercarriage hydraulically operated; the Gipsy Six engine gives maximum speed of 148 m.p.h., cruising speed 128 m.p.h., landing speed 55 m.p.h. Range, 500 miles. Supplied by Heston Aircraft Ltd.
- 18.00 'Joy-riding' in British Airways air liners will continue until to dusk with an additional parachute descent during the evening.
- 22.00
- 22.00 End of Programme. Gates closed.

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Frequent electric trains will take visitors to Victoria.

THE "DAILY EXPRESS" AND CLEM SOHN

One of the wonders of 1936 is the advance towards 'human flight' free from the use of auxiliary power. Mr. Clem Sohn, the young parachutist from U.S.A., has conducted remarkable experimental flights with wings attached to his arms and webbing between his legs to which a fin is attached as a rudder.

At the age of twenty-five, Mr. Sohn had already given 500 parachute displays at aviation meetings in the United States. Later, he decided that if he could attach wings to his arms and extend them after dropping from an aircraft, he could check his fall and prolong it and, given sufficient speed, could carry out simple turning exercises until stalling point was reached, when 'power dives' could be made to gather more speed for further manoeuvres. As a result he gave nearly 150 demonstrations of 'birdlike flight' in America and his fame spread beyond his own country.

The *Daily Express* decided that England should see something of this remarkable young man and invited him here as its guest. He has given exhibitions at seven centres in Great Britain so far, and up to 500,000 people have witnessed his thrilling performance.

Today the *Daily Express* contributes Mr. Clem Sohn to the programme of the opening of Gatwick Airport especially to enable distinguished guests from overseas to see the possibilities of human flight. His wing equipment weighs only 18 lbs, but he carries two Irvin air chutes weighing together 57 lbs. His wings are thus heavily loaded per square foot. This gives him high stalling and landing speeds. The wing span is 8 feet 10 inches. He thinks that it may be possible (and contemplates experiments to this end) to work without parachutes. He will then be much less heavily loaded and more free to carry out exercises; and may even reduce his stalling speed to about 5 m.p.h., which would enable landing to be made at speeds not much higher than that of a running man. Who shall say that in these novel experiments there is not the germ of a great possibility?

British Airways are indebted to the *Daily Express* for Mr. Clem Sohn's presence at this Display.