

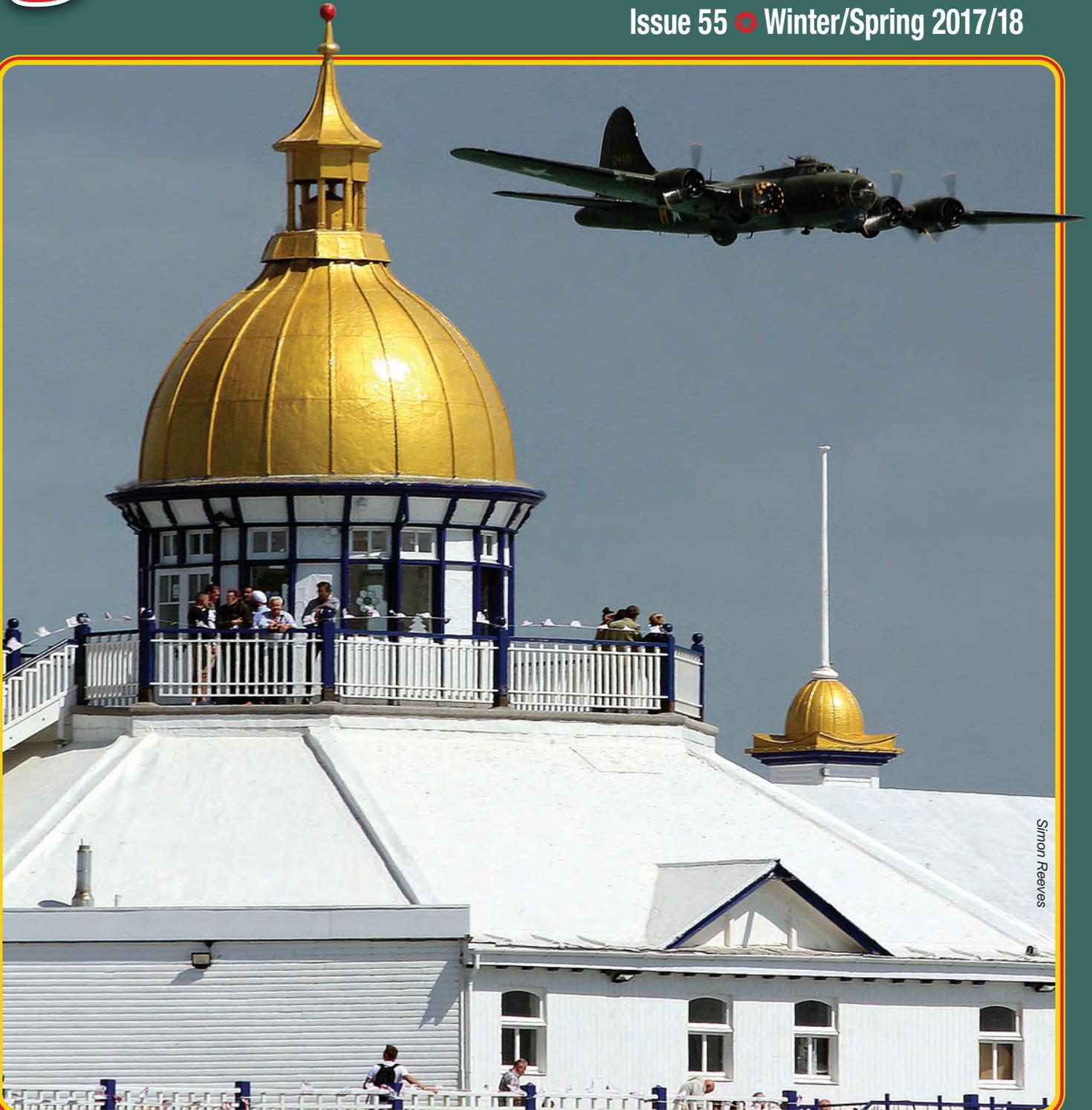
Sally B

NEWS



Incorporating USAAF WWII Memorial Flight

Issue 55 • Winter/Spring 2017/18



Simon Reeves

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For more details, go to our website www.sallyb.org.uk under 'Have your name on Sally B' or telephone (01638) 721304 or e-mail b-17preservation@sallyb.org.uk

You can also send your donation to: The B-17 Charitable Trust, PO Box 92, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP28 8RR

* Participants must be 18 or over



SALLY B ROLL OF HONOUR 2017-2018

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BERTIE WALTER ASHBY

B-17 Team Leader for 30 years from 1980
Derek Smith, Mike Stubbins, Andrew Jackson, Steve Carter



Sally B NEWS

Sally B News is published by B-17 Preservation and is circulated among the Supporters Club membership, sponsors, patrons and other interested parties. It is also the voice of the B-17 Charitable Trust, Registered Charity 1079007. Contributions to Sally B News are always welcome.

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TED WHITE – FOUNDER OF B-17 PRESERVATION

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Accountable Manager** Elly Sallingboe

Chief Engineer Peter Brown BEM

Quality Manager Nick Parker

Pilots

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Training Captain	Roger Mills
Captain, Liaison & Safety Officer	Peter Kuypers
Pilot	Daryl Taplin
Pilot	Bill Tollett

Sally B Volunteer Support Team Leaders

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Deputy Engineering Supervisor	Steve Carter
Sales Team Leader	John Owen
Walk Through Team Leader	Andy Jackson
Sales Team Liaison	Jo Redfarn

Membership Secretary Karen Irons

Cover: Sally B displaying at Eastbourne seafront on 19th August.
Photo: Simon Reeves

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For advertising rates in Sally B News contact Elly Sallingboe

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Dear Friends

It is difficult to comprehend that another display season for our B-17 has now passed into history. It was wet, but, as you will read within the pages of this magazine, it was another excellent year for our aircraft. **Thank you all for helping make this possible.**

Your response to our 2017 Appeal has, once again, been terrific. To the end of October, donations to the B-17 Charitable Trust total £81,372; mainly from the Member's Appeal and Roll of Honour contributions.

We are indeed grateful for your continued support, and we could not have survived without it, but the fact is that we do now need to raise more funds if we are to continue with Sally B beyond 2018. None of us underestimate the importance of this unique aircraft as a flying memorial to all those who sacrificed their lives during WWII, and to this end we shall continue with the annual Spring appeal and the Roll of Honour day. However, we now intend to extend our fund-raising ability by encompassing Social Media to spread our message to a wider public. The format for the campaign is still being worked out, but remember if you see it online or on our website, that it is not aimed at you.

To help me with the massive job of operating and running our organisation, Captain Peter Kuypers has volunteered to be our Safety Officer. His job is to ensure we keep up-to-date with our Safety Culture regarding safety issues for the aircraft and B-17 Preservation. Thank you, Peter, for undertaking yet another job for me and Sally B.

We welcome Jon Corley, our newest pilot, to the Sally B family. Jon has comprehensive experience on vintage aircraft and will start his co-pilots training in the Spring. Also, a warm welcome to James Langley, who is learning the tricks of the trade from Chief Engineer Peter Brown.

There are many expressions of thanks in this magazine, but I must add just one more, to the wonderful **Levy Restaurant Team** at Duxford who looked after us so splendidly in the AirSpace Suite at the Roll of Honour event during August. Thank You to Lottie Armes, Chefs Jason Vinall, John Evans, David Cuffley and Rebecca Smith for your outstanding service and most delicious food – all served with huge smiles and professionalism.

And finally...if you look at the back cover you will see details of a Children's book named "Sally B...& Me!..." and yes, it is about Sally B and me! What about that then? For each book sold a donation will be made to Sally B. You can get it online now at www.fairyfayepublications.co.uk. Or you can buy it from Waterstones and Amazon.

Elly Sallingboe

REFLECTIONS ON THE 2017 DISPLAY SEASON

By B-17 Operator Elly Sallingboe

Another display season has come to a close and as I write this I reflect on just how successful the 2017 season actually was. We did have more rain than I can remember but, most of it was during weekdays and nearly every time there was an airshow the weather miraculously cleared. We were lucky, both with the weather, and with *Sally B* not having any serious mechanical problems so we were able to display at almost all our booked venues. Looking back, it was a very good season.

Late September saw *Sally B* towed into her winter home in Hangar T2. It was good to have her back under cover once again protected from the harsh winter weather.



How the season began

After the Spring Air show at Duxford and our annual pilgrimage to the American Cemetery at Madingley, June was a quiet month, with just one display booked for RAF Cosford. Displaying at Cosford proved to be one of the great highlights of the season. Peter Kuypers who was the display pilot on this flight explains why, "Turning in for our last pass, we spotted a USAF B-52 Stratofortress running into our display area. The American Air Force bomber was starting his display before we had even finished ours! As it passed us, I was able to turn in behind this huge jet bomber and follow for an impromptu two

bomber pass with us smoking on the two-left side radial engines while they smoked black smoke from all eight jet engines – what a sight that must have been: to put these two historic Boeing bombers in the same piece of sky was an opportunity not to be missed". Will we ever again see a B-17 and a B-52 in the same piece of sky in the UK; probably not?

More on the season

July and August were busy months. During July we displayed at Old Warden, Cleethorpes, Duxford Flying Legends, RAF Fairford, Sunderland and Old Buckenham. Sadly, we missed out on East Fortune and one display at Sunderland on the Saturday because of bad weather. During August we displayed for our very special Roll of Honour day as a thank you to those who support *Sally B*; Biggin Hill followed, then Dunsfold and Bournemouth. September saw *Sally B* displaying at RAF Scampton, Southport and the Battle of Britain show at Duxford. For *Sally B*, the display season was quite a busy one, and as is the norm, began and ended at a Duxford show – long may that continue.



I visited the Old Buckenham airshow on 30 July where the crowd were treated to a solo display by *Sally B*, with Roger Mills putting our lady through her paces in typically dignified fashion. This nostalgic little gem of a show is brilliantly organised by Matt Wilkins, a great friend of *Sally B*. In 2018 the show will be on 28 and 29 July.



Sally B chasing the B-52 at Cosford



All three *Sally B* Captains flying in formation at the Battle of Britain Airshow at Duxford in September. Leading in *Sally B* was Captain Roger Mills. Flying the two Dakotas were Captain Andrew Dixon and Captain Peter Kuypers – what about that then!

Steve Carter



These days (post Shoreham) the display line is 230 metres away from the public and is normally marked with coloured signs. When approaching Southport, we were surprised when we saw how the organisers had solved marking the display line. They had carved out two huge lines in the sand with the wording 230M and 150M. Some pièce de résistance and they even had the words "MIND THE PIER" carved out with an arrow pointing to the pier – as if we could have missed it! This was a really clever touch by TSA, the organisers.

Sally B needs a new coat of paint

This brings me to the subject of hangarage for our aircraft at Duxford. Just imagine how wonderful it would be if *Sally B* could be under cover all year round! This way she would escape the elements which are seriously damaging her skin and paintwork: the sunlight is fading her exterior coat of paint whilst the rain is dripping through and damaging her interior. But, and here is the big BUT, even if the Museum allowed us hangarage all year round, it is just not possible because the hangar doors in Hangar T2 do not open sufficiently enough to let the B-17 in or out without removing the wingtips. To remove and replace the wingtips before and after each flight is, in practice, not possible!

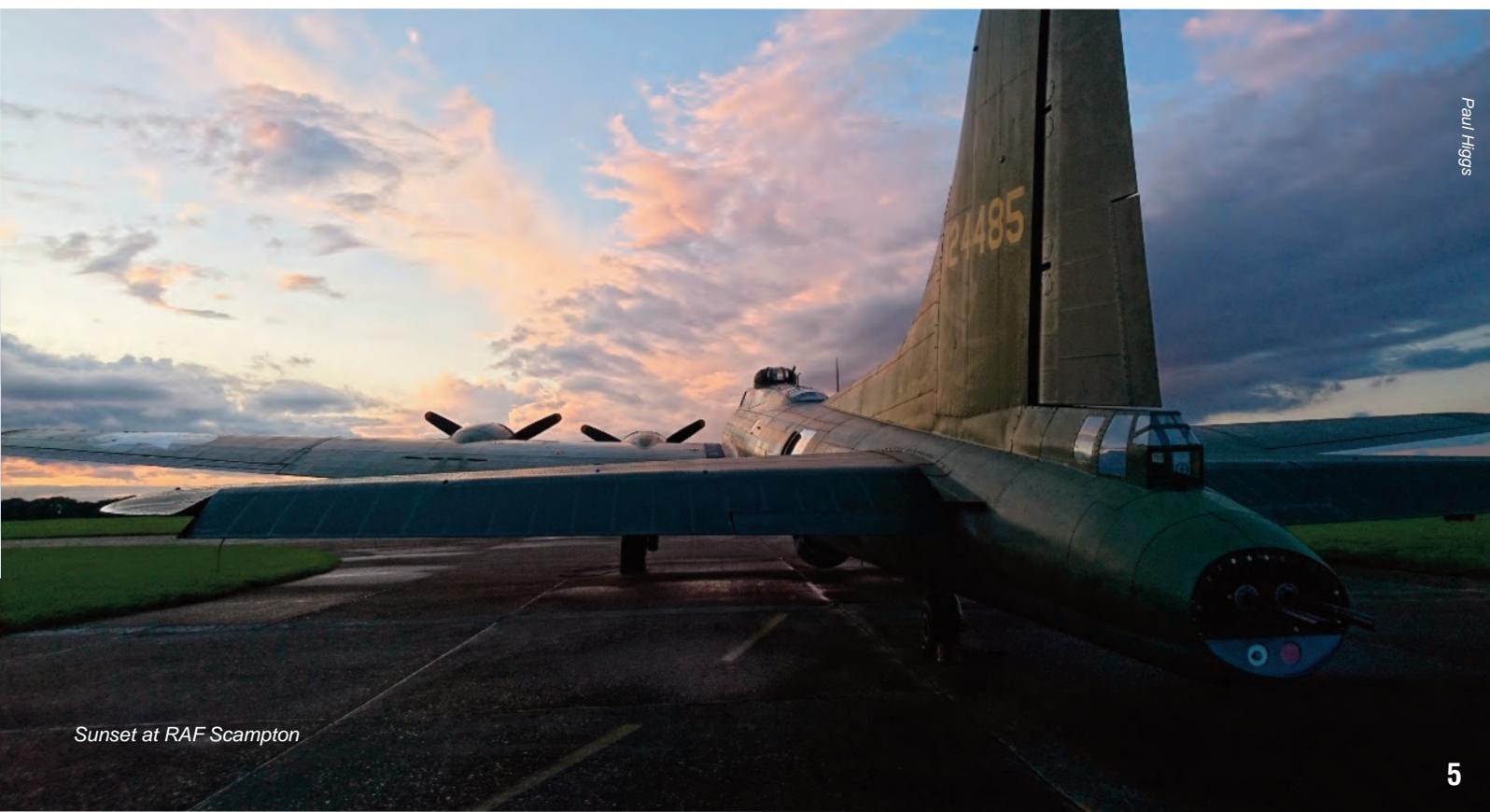
Also, as far as I am aware, there is no other hangar big enough to house *Sally B* at Duxford, or at least none we could possibly use. I really don't know what the solution is, unless the hangar doors are fixed, which I believe is very expensive if not impossible, or another hangar is built, and that really is unthinkable. Another fact is that with *Sally B* being outside every summer, she now needs another repaint. This, together with the expected cost and difficulties in changing engine no 3, 'Smokey Joe', means that this is now a major issue and we need to raise more funds and need more help.

As I mentioned in the Summer bulletin, keeping *Sally B* flying for one year, let alone for forty-two, is incredible

– aviation costs a vast amount of time and money and when your aim is to keep this mammoth four engine aircraft flying, the costs and time involved are staggering. For me personally, the work never stops, and at times it really does seem 'Impossible'. Help is always needed to continue to allow this critical piece of living history to continue – and luckily help is never far away...

Thank You All

When we desperately needed to replace some parts on *Sally B*, friends came to our rescue: **Adams Aviation** sponsored two new Directional Gyros and **Tatenhill Aviation** an Electrical Horizon, and when our old tow vehicle



Sunset at RAF Scampton

Paul Higgs

broke down **Kubota** came to our aid with the loan of a brand-new tractor. This huge new Kubota tractor has been in constant use throughout the summer, not without some initial teething problems I hasten to add, but Peter Brown and his main team have now got the hang of it and it works perfectly.

Your donations, help and support enabled us to pay for the overhaul of one engine **and** to buy a fuel Booster pump, an Engine Driven Fuel pump, and many new spare parts. When these needed shipping and importing our old friends at **Fistral Impex** did this for us again, free of charge. **Kearsley Airways** are continuously supporting our aircraft, as are **Sean Donelan** and his team who repainted the cockpit last winter. With your help we recently also bought a carburetor which Peter Brown will change this winter.

Thank you all, members, friends and sponsors for coming forward when I asked for help, and I know you will be there to help overcome the many future problems so that we can keep the operating costs down and continue to keep *Sally B* flying.

Members please note

Whilst *Sally B* is under maintenance there will be no access inside or around the aircraft. Members exclusive free access to *Sally B* will begin on the first Sunday after she leaves the hangar, which will be around the middle of May. From then on, a team member will be at Duxford from 11am to 4pm every Sunday during the summer to show you in and around the aircraft. Dates will be on our website as soon as they become available next year. Here again, please



Steve Carter

During the 2017 Duxford September Airshow, Sally B was visited by a very special group of people – eleven US WWII veteran servicemen.

The group consisted of a mix of two US Navy veterans, one had been involved in the European Theatre and one in the Pacific Theatre; there were also three US Army veterans, who had taken part in the Normandy Landings including a few as engineers.

The remaining veterans were a composite group of both 8th and 15th US Army Air Force veterans, most of whom flew the B-17's other 4-engined stablemate, the B-24 Liberator.

A couple of the veterans had been shot down and taken as prisoners of war. One had flown the C-46 Commando and the B-29 Superfortress, followed by flying in the Korean War. Lastly, a couple of the veterans had received the Purple Heart.

Many interesting and enthusiastic conversations took place between the veterans and the *Sally B* team. It was an honour and privilege to be in the company of what can only be considered an unusually large group of extraordinary WWII veterans, all of whom are now in their 90s.

We thanked them for their service.
Steve Carter

do remember that for health and safety reasons, **no children under 10 years of age will be allowed** through or around

the aircraft and those that are **must** be escorted by an adult.

Towed by Peter Brown and new Kubota tractor, Sally B enters Hangar T2 for her winter maintenance



David Whitworth

KEITH SISSONS A TRIBUTE



Left to right: Clive Denny,
Keith Sissons, Ted White,
Chris Bevan and
John Littleton

We were incredibly saddened by the news that Keith Sissons died on 26 October.

Keith became involved with *Sally B* in 1975 through his close friend and then B-17 display pilot, Don Bullock. Following the untimely death of Don Bullock in the Invader crash at Biggin Hill in September 1980, Keith took over his role of main display pilot of *Sally B* and remained so until 1998.

Keith was a key player of a great period of flying displays in the UK and was a huge part of *Sally B*, for example his B-17 Flight Procedures and Throttle Handling Notes are still being used today. Our deepest condolences go to his wife Shirley and his family.

In Keith's memory we bring you this short story on how he became a pilot of *Sally B*.

FROM THE FLIGHT DECK

Extracts from Captain Keith Sissons write up in issue 2 of B-17 News August 1981

Captain Keith Sissons describes what flying *Sally B* means to him – a love affair with four engines...

I first saw her gleaming in the sunshine at Biggin Hill in 1975. My old friend and flying colleague of airline days, Don Bullock, had brought her in for the Air Fair but had left her locked so all I could do was to admire her classic external lines. I felt that I would love to know her more intimately, but the prospect seemed remote – little did I know!

I should say that most modern-day adventures start with a telephone call and it was such a call that initiated my association with this lovely old aeroplane and this I regard as something of an adventure.

One day in 1976, out of the blue, Don phoned me and said *Sally B* needed another pilot with a fair amount of heavy, piston, four-engine time and tail-wheel experience to fly as co-pilot but with a view to commanding *Sally B* when he became too busy. Would I be interested? "Would I?", I repeated the question incredulously. What a question to ask – I'd give my proverbial right arm to fly that beautiful old bird.

And so, on 6 August 1976, I found myself in the co-pilot's seat en route from Duxford to Woodbridge in a genuine

World War II bomber. Thus began an association which I value greatly and which I hope will continue for a long time to come.

In due course I graduated to the left seat doing my first 'show' at Mildenhall in 1978 and as Don became more involved with his lovely Invader, I became more so with *Sally B*, during the following year.

Although the crew enjoy the camaraderie and the bonhomie of airshows we get the greatest satisfaction from the occasional fly pasts we are asked to do for the veterans who visit this country. I consider it a great privilege to fly this old bomber, and to display it in front of those airmen who went to war in B-17's forty years ago is something of an honour. There have been occasions when we have flown for them as they stand around their old control tower at some disused airfield in East Anglia and tough old Texans have been seen to wipe the tears from their cheeks at the sight of *Sally B* sweeping past – often the first time they have seen a B-17 since they left East Anglia all those years ago. Such emotions are quite moving and make the privilege of flying *Sally B* a unique and much valued experience.

The sight of *Sally B* evokes all kinds of unexpected emotions and reactions and I

think that is worth recording some of them, particularly as she is a 'Memorial Flight' aircraft. One bright summer's day in 1978 we were returning to Duxford after displaying at Seething and drifting over East Anglia's carpet of cornfields, many of the old wartime airfields passed beneath our equally old but faithful wings and each of the crew gazed out on them bemusedly. After a time, Chris Bevan, who was my co-pilot turned to me and really summed it up for all of us – he said: "You know, flying over all these old USAAF air bases all these years later in a B-17 is flying to the "sound of Freedom". And as one of our engineers, Clive Denny, said, when we debriefed the flight – if ever a name for *Sally B* was more apt it would be – "The Sound of Freedom". For me it says it all.





TRIUMPH OVER

This article first appeared in the August 2017 edition of FlyPast magazine and is reproduced here

Sally B has been delighting crowds for over four decades, Chris Gilson learns what keeps her in the air.

It is late afternoon at Duxford, and **Elly Sallingboe**, the operator of Boeing B-17G Fortress 44-85784 *Sally B* is relaxing with a coffee following a hard day's preparations for the following weekend's airshow. It's the first of the season, and today's schedule has included two check flights for the aircrew involved, as well as a practice display.

Elly has been involved with the Fortress for an incredible 42 years, essentially from the moment it touched down at Duxford on March 15, 1975, becoming the largest privately-operated warbird in the UK and Europe at that time and starting a new and illustrious chapter in the history of the Fort'. The aircraft was named after Elly by Ted White, her partner and prime mover in bringing the B-17 across the channel from Creil, where it had been used as a survey aircraft by the French-owned Institut Géographique National (IGN). To those familiar with the aircraft, Elly and *Sally B* are indivisible – it is impossible to think of one without the other.

What makes the story of *Sally B* even more praiseworthy, is that the aircraft keeps flying despite a complete lack of institutional funding. While the home of 44-85784 is at the Imperial War Museum

(IWM), Duxford, there is no government, or lottery support at the time of writing. Add to this elements of personal tragedy, including bereavement and illness, then it becomes clear just how much the story of one aircraft is also a tale of triumph over adversity.

Learning to fly

Hailing from a small village in the south of Denmark, Elly – a shortened version of Ellinor – has had a long involvement with aviation, being selected at 18 to work as an air stewardess for the now defunct Trans World Airlines. The post, however, turned out to be based in Ethiopia, not the expected Paris, which provided no end of adventures for the young Dane. The flying bug had well and truly bitten by now, and soon Elly was working to achieve her private pilot's licence (PPL).

During this period, Elly met businessman Ted White, who was a fellow aviator and enthusiast. It was not long before she and Ted became partners, and were gaining their PPLs at Biggin Hill. Shortly afterwards both Elly and Ted gained their commercial licence and air transport pilot's licences respectively and Ted formed an air ferrying company called Euroworld, with former colleague Don Bullock.

Initially Ted was kept busy with the

purchase and ferrying of surplus North American T-28D Trojan trainers previously flown by the Force Aérienne Zairoise, the air force of Zaire, but when the opportunity arose to acquire a true classic in the shape of a B-17, Euroworld's interest was piqued.

By 1975, the IGN had no use for its fleet of veteran B-17s, preferring instead to continue with the unusual Hurel-Dubois HD.34s alone and more modern types, including a Fokker F-27 Friendship. As the veteran Boeings came up for tender, Euroworld purchased two – 44-85784 (F-BGSR), which was quickly re-registered as N17TE – and spares aircraft, 44-83735 (F-BDRS). Retaining its natural-metal finish, but painted by a group of volunteers with the markings of the Glatton-based 749th Bombardment Wing, 457th Bomb Squadron, *Sally B's* debut was at the 1975 Biggin Hill Air Fair. Also inaugurated was the distinctive nose-art of a reclining nude, which had been applied by Ted in honour of Elly.

A new home

It was also around this time that communication began between Euroworld and the fledgling IWM operation at Duxford, which expressed an interest in housing the bomber. One of the conditions of the move was the passing to the IWM



ADVERSITY

with the kind permission of the author, Editor of FlyPast Chris Gilson



Elly with some of her team. Left to right Peter Kuypers, Peter Brown, Bill Tollett, Elly Sallingboe, Steve Carter, Roger Mills and Mike Stapley

Chris Seeger

of stripped parts donor 44-83735, which was restored as *Mary Alice*. From initially being a one-off airshow participant as Elly mentioned, the B-17 was here to stay and was registered G-BEDF on August 5, 1976, with the last two letters standing for 'Duxford Fortress' in recognition of its new home.

Even at this early stage, the cost of running such a big aircraft was apparent, and Euoworld began to consider selling the aeroplane on. This was anathema to Elly, who said she would do what was necessary to keep 'her' Boeing in the UK.

"I started selling T-shirts," she recalls with a smile, "I did anything I could to help

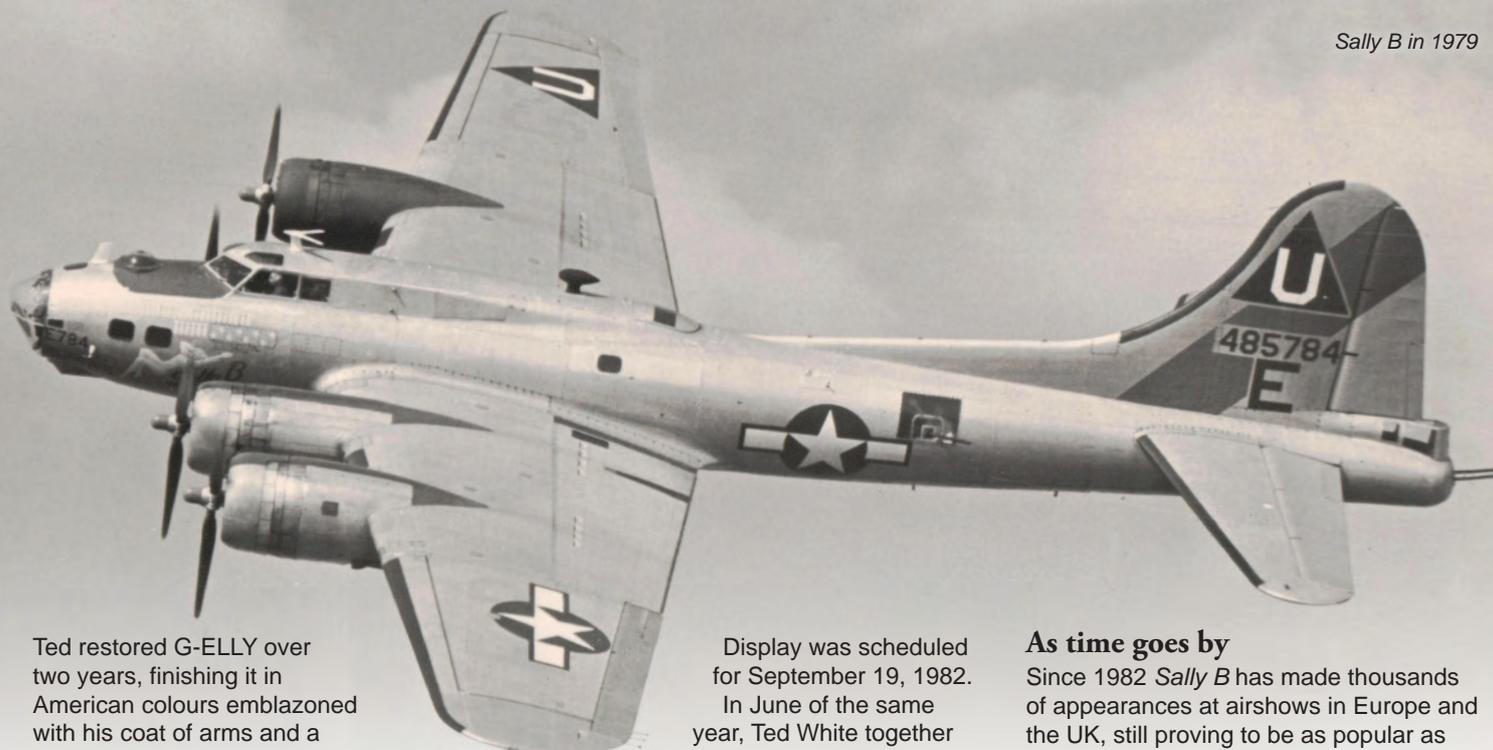
her stay, and Ted said he wouldn't let her go just yet."

Having already been immortalised in paint on the side of the 'Fort', Elly made her mark on the sales front, becoming the public face of the veteran bomber, and displaying the legendary dynamic energy and singularity of purpose for which she is justly respected.

In the relaxed airshow atmosphere of the 1970s, the B-17 proved to be a popular attraction, although the death of Don Bullock on September 21, 1980, threw a shadow over things. Having moved apart from the Euoworld banner to concentrate on his own activities, he was killed in his Douglas A-26C Invader N3710G at Biggin Hill.

Despite the shock of Don's death, Euoworld moved from strength to strength, supporting the B-17 and being involved in other projects. One such enterprise was the acquisition of ten North American AT-6D Harvard IIIs from the Portuguese Air Force. Eight were ferried on, but two were kept back by Ted and his friend Mark Campbell. Mark's example registered G-SUES after his wife, while Ted's – naturally – became G-ELLY.

Always insisting on calling his Harvard a Texan despite its British provenance,



Ted restored G-ELLY over two years, finishing it in American colours emblazoned with his coat of arms and a distinctive black and yellow checked cowling.

Mixed emotions

By now, a B-17 on the UK warbird circuit was big news, and the veteran became a regular attraction at displays in both the UK and on the continent. In 1979, B-17 Limited was formed to cater for *Sally B* in her own right, while at the same time the idea of having a supporting club was suggested given the level of public interest. In a short airshow career, 44-85784 had come to represent the fallen American airmen of the Eighth Air Force and had gained the unofficial status of a flying memorial.

The profiles of both the aircraft and company were raised in 1981, with the filming of London Weekend Television's series *We'll Meet Again* which looked at the 8AF in the UK and starred Susannah York. Filming began in May 1981 at West Malling in Kent – a former RAF airfield probably best-known until that point as being used for the rear cover of Pink Floyd's 1969 *Ummagumma* album, and filming with the Beatles. *Sally B* gained fibre glass replica turrets and replica armament improving her appearance, together with the temporary moniker *Ginger Rogers* and a welcome injection of cash. In April 1981, just before television work commenced, the first edition of the *Sally B News* was sent out, heralding the start of the *Sally B* Supporters Club.

It was at this point that the idea of having a purely warbird-based airshow, with the B-17 as the centrepiece started to take hold. The format had proved to be very successful in the United States with the events hosted by the Confederate (now Commemorative) Air Force, for example, and it was felt that similar success could be found in the UK. As the filming had shown, West Malling had proved to be a suitable location and after negotiations the first Great Warbirds Air

Display was scheduled for September 19, 1982.

In June of the same year, Ted White together with Mark Campbell visited Malta for the annual Air Rally

in Ted's pristine G-ELLY. Ted invited Mark up for a flight on June 22; tragically the aircraft crashed near Rabat, killing both pilots instantly. Ted will always be remembered as one of the UK warbird scene's pioneers, but more importantly as a kind and generous man, who left behind two sons, his relatives and Elly. The loss was, and remains, devastating.

Having been dealt a terrible hand by Fate, the grief-stricken Elly courageously decided to carry on with the operating of *Sally B*. Had she walked away at that point, then no-one would have blamed her, but that was not the way of her thinking, and she bravely carried on.

"I just wanted to do what was right by him," she says 35 years later, "after Ted's crash we went ahead, but it was very difficult for me personally.

"I was never going to let it [the B-17] go though," she adds, with a sweeping gesture at the airfield around us, "She belongs here."

Under the subdued circumstances, the first Great Warbirds took place at West Malling. One aspect of the event is still clear in Elly's mind: "I had no idea about traffic planning, nothing", she laughs, remembering, "but people walked along the motorways to come and see the show. For me, that was enough to know that we had done the right thing by continuing."

That year also saw the forming of B-17 Preservation Ltd, to operate the big warbird. Elly herself was also the co-ordinator for the growing Supporters Club, which also boasts a healthy international following to this day.

Ted's legacy still lives on, not only in the continued existence of *Sally B*, but also in the subtle tribute of having the cowling of the port inner engine painted in the distinctive yellow and black checked markings he used on his Texan.

As time goes by

Since 1982 *Sally B* has made thousands of appearances at airshows in Europe and the UK, still proving to be as popular as ever. By April 1984, the big warbird had lost her original natural metal scheme for a more practical olive drab and neutral grey set of colours, and has remained that way ever since.

As you would imagine, a B-17 is a thirsty machine, with four gas-guzzling Wright Cyclone radials to keep alive. Free fuel donations were instrumental in helping, as was the never-ending drive to gain more funding from the public via the Supporters Club, while at the same time raising the profile of the aircraft through the costly, but at the same time necessary, annual Great Warbirds Air Displays.

One event to push the aircraft into the public eye was the 1989 filming of the box-office smash *Memphis Belle*, much of which was shot at Duxford and Binbrook, in Lincolnshire. Being the home-based example of the five Fortresses that were used, *Sally B* took much of the limelight, while her devoted **Chief Engineer Peter Brown** adopted that role for all the aircraft used.

Since then, her film fame has firmly stuck, with one side of the aircraft bearing its *Memphis Belle* nose-art to this day. Questions about the role the aircraft played in the movie are also one of the most popular subjects with the guides who shepherd a lucky few round the interior of the aircraft when it's open to the public at events.

But, as with everything, there have been the hard times. An air display at Guernsey Airport in September 1998 saw the B-17 stranded on the island with engine failure, for nine long months. No flying took place during 1999. The situation had become critical. The money had all but run out and the future of 44-85784 was probably more in doubt than than at any other time.

Once again coming to the rescue of her beloved namesake, Elly, with the help of advisers created the B-17 Charitable Trust, a registered charity. Donations,

including a very welcome £20,000 from the IWM, managed to keep the veteran machine in the air. The new millennium had started on a hopeful note for Elly and her B-17.

Engine trouble reared its head again with a series of failures, four in all, during 2008. These kept *Sally B* on the ground that year, and well into the next. Incredibly, the situation was saved by the generous donation of £360,000 by Norfolk businessman Bertie Ashby, with *Sally B* taking to the skies once more.

"It's such a good thing to keep something like this alive," Elly stated passionately on that May evening. "This is a big piece of history." She stops for a moment, lost for words, as she tries to describe what the 25-tonne machine means to her, and has done for the past four decades.

"It's my baby." She says simply at last, and sits back.

The roar of the crowd

With Elly on the day I meet her at Duxford is the B-17's captain, **Peter Kuypers**. An Airbus A330 pilot with Dutch flag carrier KLM in his day-to-day life, Peter is at the helm of the Fortress when she is put through her paces in front of the crowds. What's it like to fly from both an emotional and physical standpoint, I ask.

"Firstly, it's very different from a modern aircraft," Peter smiles. "It's big and heavy, and while it's not a difficult aircraft to fly, you do have to stay one step ahead as she often does the complete opposite of what you expect her to do.

"It's simple and has four engines," he laughs, "But I love flying it, and it's important for me to remember what it represents."

Along with Elly, Peter is one of the small knot of people who comprise the *Sally B* team, ranging from aircrew, to long-serving volunteers and familiar faces such as Peter Brown, Mike Stapley and Steve Carter and the devoted events team who operate the stand at airshows.

Her team is a source of pride to Elly, who freely acknowledges the hard work they put in. "It's difficult to get good people

though," she says, "and my team is like a family.

Her words are echoed by **Chief Engineer Peter Brown**, who after Elly herself, has been with the B-17 the longest time. "Our biggest challenge is labour," he explains during a brief hiatus in the hectic schedule of the weekend. "Spares are easily available, but people to come and work on the aircraft is what's needed most of all."

With a punishing winter maintenance regime to manage, Peter's words are heartfelt. When the airshow season ends, the big bomber is immediately moved inside to begin the necessary tasks that keep her flying. It's not much time at all, and at the start of the season the B-17 moves outside once again, remaining there for the duration of the summer until the cycle starts again with the next bout of maintenance.

Having worked with *Sally B* for so long, Peter is used to the ways and quirks of this individualistic aircraft. "It's the non-flying parts that are hardest to get," he says. "Guns and that sort of thing. They always command high prices. Engines are a relatively easy to find, but you need good ones, and that makes the task a lot harder."



An RAF veteran who worked on Avro Lincolns among other things during a lifelong career in aviation, Peter agrees with pilot Peter Kuypers about the B-17's main attribute. "It's a relatively simple airframe," he acknowledges. "If you've worked on a [Douglas] DC-3, or DC-6 then it's familiar to you. It's a very rugged aircraft, but you never stop learning with it."

He smiles wryly, "Old aircraft always have a few shocks to give you."

A bright future

It's the opening morning of the May airshow at Duxford, and already the B-17 has attracted a crowd with cameras and questions. Among them are four serving USAF fighter pilots who talk to the team, and are only too happy to have their pictures taken in front of the familiar warbird.

At the same time, the sales team is seeing brisk trade, despite an unseasonal downpour that shatters the blue skies for a while. All are smiles, and each enquiry from the public is welcomed. On the apron to greet the masses are **Andy Jackson** and **Dominic Ivaldi**. Both work as guides, patiently fielding a thousand and one questions about the aircraft and its intricacies to the curious.

During a lull in the show, Andy shows me around the immaculately-kept interior of the Boeing. Despite having seen the aircraft at countless airshows, it's a thrill to climb inside and experience the atmosphere. If an aircraft can soak up emotions and experiences, then *Sally B* must run with them, and you wonder what stories the olive drab-painted fuselage would tell if they could.

Both Andy and Dominic are immensely proud of the part they play in the saga of the aircraft. "This is a genuine honour for me," says Andy, resting for a moment against the waist gunner's position. "It never gets boring, and the best part is seeing the reactions of the people as you show them around the 'plane. For many it's a lifetime's ambition or dream, and I'm happy to help with that."

As the day progresses, Elly is a whirlwind of activity. In her distinctive baseball cap and flight suit, she cuts a busy figure, moving from one issue to the next and offering solutions and remedies.

Yet even though she is rapidly marked out and questioned by an adoring public, she is generous with her time. "These are the people who keep us going," she says proudly with a nod at the crowds looking at the aeroplane. "Without them we wouldn't be here, you can't thank them enough."

Her voice quietens: "Everything is getting more complex these days. They support us when we need it, and they've been here for us, some right from the start. That's special to me, and of course the aircraft."

Later, when the display is taking place and the B-17 is put through its paces on the circuit, Elly looks at me and smiles wistfully: "Even with the best will in the world you cannot go on forever, you know."

I stop taking notes and look up at her, to be the recipient of a dazzling smile from the woman who has become indistinguishable from the aircraft that bears her nickname.

"But I'm not going anywhere just yet," she laughs.

Andy Jackson and Dominic Ivaldi



A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CHIEF ENGINEER

by Chief Engineer Peter Brown



On the 4th October our aircraft went back in the hangar, in readiness for her reward after a busy flying season.

We flew some 28 hours. This may not seem a lot for our B-17, but it is not too bad either, and she did not miss any venue because of technical problems – always good news for us all.

Those of you who were at the Roll of Honour event in August will know of our plan A... for 'Smokey Joe', our number 3 engine, (see write up on page 14). We had hoped to change the engine for our spare which was on overhaul, but sad to say, it did not perform to our standard.

The initial plan had been to change the engine just before this winter's maintenance and then do all the ground runs and air test before she went in the hangar. This way we would have run the new engine before the winter's

maintenance, which would have been a huge help.

So now here is the big question, what is plan B? If our spare engine is serviceable and ready it will now be fitted

after the maintenance is complete. If not, we may have to change to plan C, which would be to leave 'Smokey Joe' on the wing for another season. I'm sure she

will not mind and will even be happy to fly for another year. To quote Robert Burns "The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry"...We shall wait and see.

Another piece of good news is that B-17 Engineering has acquired a manually operated crane we can use for both engines and propeller changes. This has been donated to us by IWM Duxford, which we appreciate very much, so thank you IWM. Before we use it, we need to get it serviceable and tested which is on the way.



Winter maintenance has begun

David Whitworth



Jo Radlam

James Langley is welcomed to the team by Chief Engineer Peter Brown

On Sunday 15 October work began in earnest by jacking the aircraft up and doing all the landing gear checks and inspections. We also removed the right-hand wing leading edge, so by the time you read this we are well on our way.

Over the winter months we will carry out all the usual maintenance requirements, I am sure most of you know what those are.

The wing spar FAA Airworthiness Directive may be changed soon as the B-17 Co-Op, of which we are a member, is seeking some alleviation to the inspection. If this happens it will save us a lot of time, so let's hope they make some progress.

I would like to welcome James Langley to the engineering team. James has been with us a year or so and has proved to be a very good budding engineer. He is now on an apprenticeship with Monarch (which is not affected by the sad news about the airline) so we all wish him the very best for the future.

This is where we are with the updates on the engineering side of *Sally B*. We all keep plodding on and keeping this great aircraft in the air which is not easy I can tell you and as our leader Elly knows only too well. But, we are still there so we must be doing something right.

Ken Read at work finding spares



My closing part of this write up is to thank one and all for the great support you have given over the many years to keep *Sally B* in the air, because without you all – where would we be?

THANK YOU

Thank You to the following companies and individuals for their invaluable help and support in 2017

Friends and staff of IWM Duxford
 Algar Signcraft Services (Cambridge)
 Cambridge Marketing
 Sean & Mike Donelan
 Simon Howell
 Kearsley Airways
 Kubota
 Steve Langston, Adams Aviation
 Levy Restaurant
 Wim Van Malcot – Bella Services BVBA
 Marshalls Cambridge Airport
 Paul Shelton, Tatenhill Aviation
 Marketa Vyetovo
 James Walker

New Tow vehicle for *Sally B* thanks to Kubota

By Geoff Smith
Sally B Engineering Team

For decades, *Sally B's* tow vehicle has faithfully towed the B-17 in and out of the hangar at Duxford, not to mention from so many A's to B's across the airfield; last year it finally succumbed to the rigors of time, so the search was on for a solution to this problem. Elly Sallingboe approached me as the company I work for, Kubota; manufacture a range of machines

including tractors and asked if they would be willing to help us out.

I approached the managing director of **Kubota** Dave Roberts and asked whether there was any possibility that he would consider loaning *Sally B* a tractor. Dave immediately said he was sure that something could be done and tasked me with identifying a suitable size tractor. The

Lancaster 'Just Jane' at East Kirkby is towed by one of the smaller tractors that Kubota make but the requirements at Duxford for *Sally B* are very different as we often have to tow her on grass and therefore need a machine with suitable power and traction specifications. I went back to Dave with what I thought would be a suitable model; he kindly agreed and a plan was put into action.

On Friday, 31st March *Sally B's* new tug, a 60hp four-wheel drive **Kubota** tractor was delivered to Duxford. There to receive it with me was Chief Engineer Peter Brown, Captain and Trustee Peter Kuypers. Rob Fox from Kubota and Tim Ibbetts the local dealer from St Neots then gave us full instructions on how to operate the tractor, so now we are all set to go and tow!

"We are hugely grateful to Managing Director Dave Roberts of Kubota and to our own team member Geoff Smith for their much-needed generous support"
 Elly Sallingboe, B-17 Operator and Chairman of Trustees



Rob Fox and Geoff Smith hand over the new Kubota tractor to Peter Brown at IWM Duxford

A most enjoyable gathering!

By David Mills

Yes, incredibly, *Sally B* is now the only flying World War II B-17 Flying Fortress outside of the USA. However, another incredible fact is that this would not be happening were it not for the long and loyal support of the *Sally B* Family of Supporters, Sponsors and of course those who make it happen: Elly Sallingboe, and her dedicated team of Pilots, Engineers and Ground Crew.



The 2017 Roll of Honour participants

I was privileged, yet again, to be present on Sunday 13th August 2017, at Duxford, for yet another Roll of Honour day. This year, even more names were stencilled onto the rear fuselage to fly with this very special aircraft over the coming year, with many returning again and again because they value what this aircraft stands for. The format provides a happy, relaxed and informative atmosphere in which to meet those who operate and fly the aircraft and to find out a few interesting facts from their experiences and, of course, we get to see our favorite aircraft fly.

Having refreshed ourselves over coffee or tea following our journey to Duxford, we all assembled in the AirSpace Auditorium for individual presentations and latest news from *Sally B's* operator and pilots.

B-17 Operator Elly Sallingboe

welcomed everyone and thanked those present for their invaluable support: she also thanked those many supporters who were not present and recognised the importance of their continued loyalty: she also thanked her team, all of whom make up the *Sally B* Family; a family that makes the whole *Sally B* experience so very special. She was proud that in her team she can count the most experienced of four engine tail dragger pilots.

Elly moved on to say that the continued operation of the aircraft is not becoming easier due to ever increasing costs, some of which reflect the changing European situation, legislation and world events. Furthermore, it has now become necessary to replace No. 3 Engine, affectionately known as 'Smokey Joe', which in itself is a big risk. The last time they changed an engine, with many new complications such as foreign bodies in engines and oil coolers, it resulted in the

changing of four engines until it finally became sorted; build quality and the quality of spares not being as good as in days of old.

Pilot Andrew Dixon

was the first to speak, giving us an informative dialogue about training. Since Shoreham, this has become an even more important issue due to the need to regularly hold refresher training to gain and maintain the CAA Display



Steve Carter

Steve Carter

Authorization. Andrew explained the handling differences between tricycle undercarriage and tail dragger aircraft: the first has a centre of gravity at the centre of the aircraft, whereby the tail dragger has a centre of gravity between the centre and rear of the aircraft. If anything happens during takeoff or landing, the tricycle aircraft carries on but, the tail dragger wants to turn around, with alarming consequences.

The B-17 is a heavy aircraft to handle so pilot experience is important, for two reasons: 1) Training flights are non-revenue earning, so each flight adds to the net operating cost. 2) It is important that pilots have previous experience and the operator has always sought out pilots who have had previous DC3 or similar flying experience, which shortens the training period. Andrew informed us that they must have been doing something right as this is now the route that the BBMF follows when selecting pilots for the Lancaster.

Andrew goes on to say that they are fortunate in having a stable pilot group so most training is recurrent on emergency procedures. These are mainly about stalling and system failures such as losing an engine on take-off: when you progress to Captain training it then involves losing two engines which of course unbalances the aircraft further. However, as they always operate at a low weight, unlike fully laden military operations, this is much easier. Andrew cited one training session involving Peter Kuypers which became too realistic. As they took off Peter went to reduce power but, on one engine the Constant Speed Unit had failed so the engine speed continued to increase: it was important to quickly shut down this engine and land otherwise it might have resulted in not one but, two new engines. Upon landing they handed the aircraft back to Peter Brown who commented to the fact that "Always keep pilots away from the aircraft".

Pilots Peter Kuypers and Roger Mills

told us about their recent experiences at the Cosford and Sunderland airshows.

How, at Cosford, an USAF B-52 bomber was expected to display just after *Sally B* had completed her display. However, when Peter turned in for the final pass, he saw the B-52 in the distance running in early. As *Sally B* was unable to communicate directly with the B-52, Peter decided to follow it and completed his display with the usual smoke tribute. The event was captured on video by an observer, which Peter showed us, and it looks just like *Sally B* is chasing the B-52.

At Sunderland, due to bad weather on Saturday, *Sally B* was unable to fulfil its obligations. Elly was able to re-negotiate a special deal, but she wanted to provide added value. An agreement was reached



that both *Sally B* and the Blenheim would fly in formation thus providing a spectacular display. It was emphasized here how important trust is between airshow pilots and that *Sally B* would only fly in formation with experienced pilots such as John Romain who is of course very well respected.

Chief Engineer Peter Brown

was now given the stage to tell us about the planned change of engine and then a brief history of 'Smokey Joe'. The engine is 40 years old and was originally fitted to Water Bombers, completing some 40 hours. It arrived in the UK as a result of an aircraft exchange whereby a Vulcan was exchanged for a B-17. Of the four engines that arrived, No. 4 was fitted to a B-17 used in the filming of *Memphis Belle* and returned to the USA when the aircraft finished filming; B-17 Preservation had No. 3 engine. On *Sally B* this engine has flown hundreds of hours and completed almost 2000 take offs and landings without any problems. Peter said this proves that the older engines are much better than those now available: this applies equally to the spare parts. Peter advised there is no such thing as a quick engine change (QEC) on B-17s because all the parts are located differently e.g. oil tanks are at the back of the engine and oil coolers are in the leading edge and all pipes and fittings have to be changed: inboard engines are not quite so difficult but, difficult it is. Apparently, it is not possible to pre-build an engine and just fit it to the

airframe as each engine has different needs, so building to order is a must.

The end of another enjoyable gathering

A brief Question and Answer session then followed to conclude the Auditorium presentation and then we all gathered at *Sally B* and Elly asked Geoffrey Lynch, owner of Great Buckingham Airfield, to unveil the Roll of Honour on behalf of Matt Wilkins whose support has been outstanding. After the lucky draw we adjourned for an enjoyable buffet lunch.

Following lunch, it was again time for *Sally B* to start engines, with 'Smokey Joe' living up to its name. The display was flown by Andrew Dixon assisted by Bill Tallett and as usual provided a spectacle for both the assembled Members and the general public, finishing with the signature pass of the smoking engines for *Sally B*'s members and supporters.

Finally, as all things must, we were coming to the end of yet another enjoyable gathering of Supporters and Crew. Speaking to Peter Shepherd as he left, this having been his second unveiling, it was evident that he, like all of us in the unique and special *Sally B* family enjoyed the day immensely and viewed this as a very special event where friendships are formed over a common purpose, which is to keep this very special aircraft in the air so that the memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice is never forgotten and that, with hope, a younger generation will come to support *Sally B* and understand the futility of war.

This and that AND YOUR LETTERS

Dear Elly

Roll of Honour

My brother Greg and I truly had the most AMAZING day with you all on the Roll of Honour day at Duxford. We had heard that it was a very special day, but we had no idea just how special until we were there ourselves... from start to finish it was incredible. Literally from the way we were greeted in the car park when we arrived to the way we said goodbye at the end was simply spectacular and we could not have asked for more.

Getting to speak with you and your fabulous crew was our dream come true. You are all so down-to-earth and so humble, considering the work you have done for so many decades to keep *Sally B* where she is today, and the fact that to us (joe public) you are like royalty. To get to chat with all of you freely and mingle was beyond a treat. The day was so relaxed and informal which made it feel like we got to be part of the amazing family you have created. We felt like everyone welcomed us from the very start – the beautiful Danni Owen gave us such a warm welcome when we arrived (and we had a lovely long chat with her later on in the afternoon), then we met gorgeous Jo Redfarn who (excuse the pun) took us under her wing and was so beautifully bubbly and kind to us, Jo also introduced us to the lovely Steve Carter who had yet another knockout personality and (like everyone in your crew) the gracious and welcoming spirit that we now associate with the *Sally B* family.

We later got to chat with... YOU! You were so interested in us and we just felt special and instantly part of the amazing bond you all have. Thank you for taking the time with my brother and me, you really looked after us and we appreciate your kindness. We also wanted to point out how impressive it is that you constantly thank your members and donors – you are always so grateful, humble and incredibly warm – which shines through even in your correspondence and roller banners! It is truly admirable what you all do and yet you and your crew always remain so down-to-earth and grateful.

As we had told you upon meeting you, we were there not only to support *Sally B* (the Queen and true star of the show of course) but to honour and remember our father who first introduced us to *Sally B* some 30 odd years ago. Our Dad was an avid aviation fan and your *Sally B* was his true favourite... What better way to honour what would have been his 70th Birthday by being as close as possible to his favourite 'gal'.

The fly past of course, was breath taking as always. Her beauty outshines all other planes and her story makes her even more special. To hear her engines roar and watch her so gracefully kiss the skies is a sight to behold. We shed so many tears watching her fly and knowing all the hard work that Ted put in to bring her to the UK and all the hard work you all continue to put in to carry on the legend, and we were beaming with immense pride to be a part of it.

I could go on forever about how amazing you all are and how spectacular the day was but I shall close here by saying, from the bottom of my heart and my brothers THANK YOU for all that you do to keep such a beautiful true flying legend in our skies, we know it is not easy and we will do all we can to support you throughout the coming years...and THANK YOU for one of the best days of our lives since we lost our father, you will never truly know how much it meant to us.

With the upmost respect and love for you and everyone in the crew.

Lindsay and Greg Noles

(What praise indeed! – thank you Lindsay for your wonderful tribute to our work)

Hi all

Unexpected overflight

I have just seen your magnificent B-17 fly over my home town (Nuneaton) and wanted to let you know how happy it made me to get an unexpected but very much welcome sight of her, really made my day. Thanks for keeping her flying.

Craig Godwin



Jennifer Watson
in Sally B

Hi Elly

Seeing *Sally B* up close

On July 8, I attended the "Flying Legends" air show at Duxford, along with several family members. We were in the UK as part of a tour sponsored by the 401st Bomb Group Association. My father, Richard Little, piloted several B-17s in the war, and was based at Deenethorpe.

To say this trip was moving to me is an understatement. As a child, I attended many air shows with my family, dutifully taking pictures of all sorts of aircraft. However, I lacked both the maturity and the patience to understand and appreciate the role this aircraft played in our nation's history. That all changed when I was at Duxford, and your most amazing volunteers got us aboard the B-17. Seeing the *Sally B* up close after having the opportunity only days earlier to stand on the runway from which my father took off for his 35 missions was incredibly profound.

Thank you to all of the hard-working volunteers of your organization (and a special thanks to Danni) for preserving the *Sally B*, and the history of the B-17s.

Jennifer Watson, Missoula, Montana, USA



**Dear Team Sally B
Cosford Display**

I cannot tell you how delighted I was to see you at Cosford. When I was 15 years old I was delighted to see you – but took you for granted. Now I am 38 I realise what an important symbol you are. When I see certain scenes from *Memphis Belle* my heart cracks wide open, knowing the sacrifice young American men made for our freedom. Having read the Jablonski book on the subject it makes it all the more heart-breaking. There but for the grace of God go I. The team who keep *Sally B* in the air have my long-standing respect and my heartfelt admiration. For as long as I can spare anything it will be toward the finest people, and the finest aircraft ever to grace our skies.

Peter North

Cockpit repaint almost completed. Thanks to Sean Donelan and your team, Sean O'Sullivan and Marketa Vyetova. Marketa flew over from the Czech Republic three times, just to work on this!



Sean Donelan

Congratulations to Kate Irons on your wedding



Cake for Martin Johnsons 50th birthday – Congratulations Martin!



Sally B...& me!

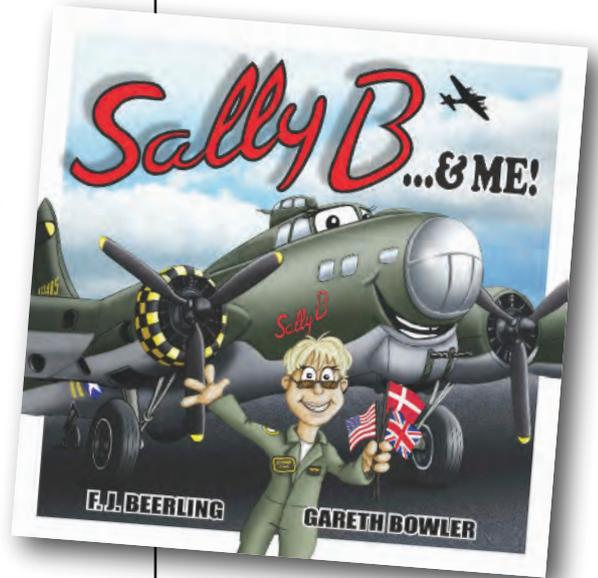
It is designed as a children's book; to keep the memory alive and teach future generations the importance of the B-17's role during WWII. How *Sally B* is a flying memorial to the American and allied airmen who lost their lives fighting to save Europe from enemy invasion and above all sharing, with this extraordinary lady, this amazing journey to keep *Sally B* flying.

24 pages of beautifully illustrated text, perfectly sized for small hands to hold and is priced at just £5.99.

For each book sold a donation will be made to *Sally B* via the Registered Charity – The B-17 Charitable Trust.

You can order your copy online at www.fairyfayepublications.co.uk and from the dropdown box click 'shop.'

You can also buy online from Waterstones.com and Amazon.co.uk and it will soon be available to buy from most aviation museums and heritage centres throughout the UK and beyond.



Flying Legends



Phil Glover

Lottie Armes trying out the guns



MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

As a special perk, **only YOU (members)** can enjoy **exclusive, free access to the inside of Sally B**. The general public cannot go inside unless they join up! You can visit *Sally B* at Duxford on **any Sunday during the summer months, from May to end September at Duxford**, where a team member will show you inside the aircraft between 11am and 3pm. Do please note that young children **will not be allowed** through or around the aircraft; they must be at least 10 years old and **must** be escorted by an adult. Also, children are not allowed across the bomb bay.

For health and safety reasons, there will be **no access to Sally B while she is undergoing winter maintenance**, but you are more than welcome to watch her from the gangway.



Jo Redfiam

A Huge Big THANK YOU!

The names listed below have donated to *Sally B* since the last issue of *Sally B News*. Over the past twelve months our charity has received a total of £81,372 in donations, the majority from the annual Members Appeal.

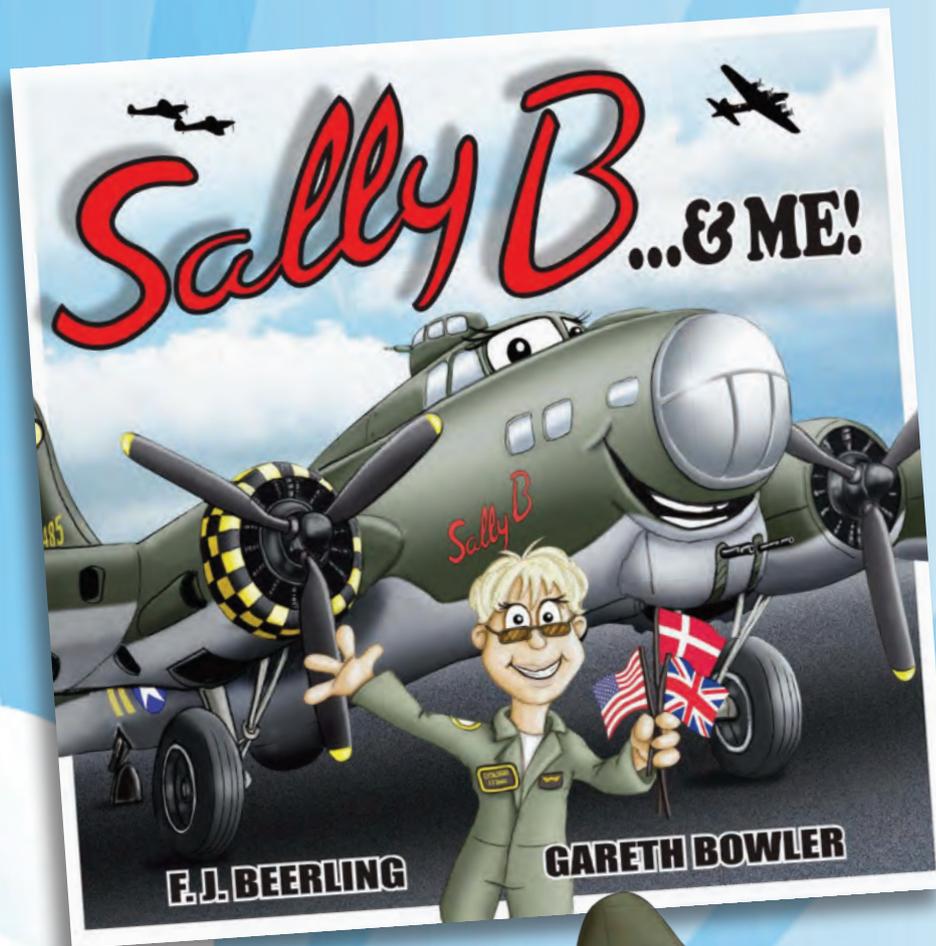
A very special Thank You to: Airfield Warehousing Ltd, Lesley Bray, Paul Edwards, Brenda Epps, Geoffrey J Hart, Linda Tunstall-Jackman, David Gwyn Jones, Kurt Lang, Paul T Makin, Derek P Moss, Karen & Paul Munton, Vladimir Plouzhnikov, Stephen Towsey and David Whitworth.

We also received Legacies from the late Frederick Albert Boulton and John Michael Perrior.

Donations received by The B-17 Charitable Trust

John Anderson	Tony Emmerson	Norman Knock	Tony Pither	Egbert Theune
Julian Barnett	Dionys Eusebio	Kurt Lang	Nigel Plumley	Jenifer Towndrow
Mike Blackburn	Richard Gale	Anne Lee	Jo Redfarn	Judith Turner
Geoffrey Boyes	Geoffrey Hart	P C Lee	Chris Roberts	Geoffrey Warhurst
Gordon Bruce	Julian Harwood	John Macklin	David Rutnam	Joan & Leslie Watkins
John Buchan	William A Headde	Eileen Mason	Graham Scott	Paul Whitaker
Brian K Burgess	J R Higgs	Linda McDermid	John Sharman	Lauren Witty
John Buswell	Daniel Holdener	Don McNaught	Martin D Shaw	David Wood
Martin Collins	John M Hooper	Keith Mews	Peter Shepherd	Bryan Yates
Paul Cooper	Arthur Jackson	Raymond Money	Michael Spurling	
Brian Crysell	Georgina James	Alastair Monk	Leslie Strong	
John Denney	Grant & Janet Jukes	Jayne Newcombe	Nicky Sullivan	
Raymond Eeles	John P Killer	Lindsay Noles	George Tarver	

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