

The Future Flyer

“The occasional newsletter of Wings for Warriors!”

CHRISTMAS 2017

Finishing on a high! Foreword (and rest of newsletter) by Mark Radcliffe

This edition of the Future Flyer is coming from a place of great excitement and optimism for the future.

We’ve had a tough year, which has been fraught with difficult decisions and new directions however Christmas 2017 sees the charity close play in a pretty good place with several of our ‘warriors’ well on track for some pretty spectacular jobs in 2018.

Worthy of particular mention before further ado are a few individuals who have made enormous impact on our ‘warriors’ this year – Stuart Gruber, James Winspear, Charlie Marshall and Harm Bos, thank you for everything you’ve done for us!

So here’s the roundup:



Above left - Pvt Nathan Forster and Mne Marc Goddard pose for a photo at an interview preparation course donated by ‘Airline Prep’.

Above right – Sgt Lee Jordan (RAF) smiles proudly next to his examiner as he successfully completes his Private Pilot’s License (Aeroplanes).

Above centre – A force for good, children from ‘Make a Wish’ foundation smile next to our aeroplane after spending the day flying with one of our warriors.

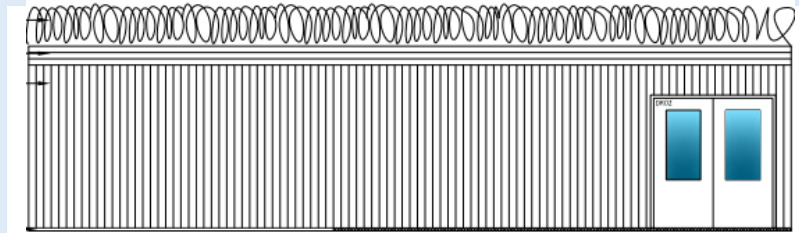
The Wings for Warriors centre for wounded, injured and sick veterans who want to learn to become professional pilots (TWFWCFWIASVWWTLTBPP) by Mark Radcliffe again

Ok so perhaps the name needs a little work, however the sentiment remains a good one in that, for the first time ever we're getting our very own home!

I won't lie, as both the author and editor of this newsletter I thought long and hard about claiming credit for this exciting piece of news, however tragically my conscience got the better of me.

For the last 12 months, the load bearing ox that is Charlie Marshall (I'm going to have new business cards made for him to that extent) has been beavering away behind the scenes to garner support for this new venture, which has been nothing short of spectacular.

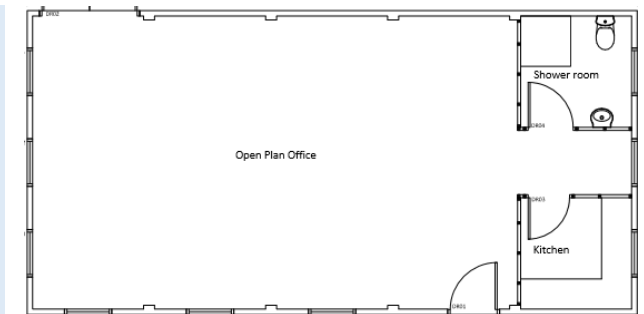
Although designed by the same team that did Alcatraz, our new home will consist of 5 x 'modular utility structures' (can't say portacabin due to copyright issues), which will allow us to install our own classroom, office, kitchen and bathroom, including land/airside access right at the heart of Aberdeen International Airport.



Not only will this allow the charity the space and freedom to work with more veterans at any one time, it will allow us to finally establish and operate WFW as a stand-alone, legally recognised flight training establishment.

"What's the big deal?" do I hear you ask?

Well, with a bit of strategic planning it will enable the charity to do several things:



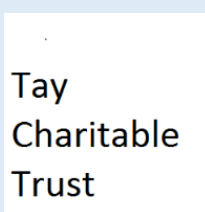
1. We can sell our services to the public – a course of action well familiar to some of our Royal Marines, offering our services to the paying public will enable the charity to generate income away from charitable grants and donations, reducing our reliance of grants (slightly) and creating employment opportunities for graduate instructors.

2. It will enable the charity to host more outreach programmes, reaching out to more veterans who are suffering from psychological or physical injuries precluding them from full-time flight training.

3. It will bring increased independence to the charity making us more flexible and better equipped to react to market changes, placing graduates where they need to be and at the right time.

Installation of the new school is due to begin early in 2018 and of course there'll be plenty more news on it's progress as we move forwards and into a bright new future.

Before then however we need to say a huge thank you to the following organisations that have made our dream possible:



Paratrooper finally lands (the big one) by the same bloke who wrote the last one

In the summer of 2016 a young man by the name of Nathan Forster (Pvt Ret'd, Parachute Regiment) came to visit us in Aberdeen after applying to the charity for fixed-wing flight training in pursuit of his goal to become an airline pilot.

A bright, athletic and presentable chap we hated him instantly, however his scores during our selection tests were impressive, so we turned a blind eye.

Although unable to offer him what he wanted at that time (we didn't even have a plane), we told Nathan to crack on with his theory exams and we'd be in touch in the future if we could help.

Well he did just that and so did we, so here's a little more from Nathan on how the charity has helped him:

"I started dreaming of a career in aviation pretty much as soon as I could get out of a bed for the first time after being blown up by an IED whilst on patrol in Afghanistan.

After spending months confined to a bed waiting to see if my left leg could be saved (it was) I was itching to get outside in my wheelchair and do something other than stare at the same four walls, wondering and worrying what my future was now going to be like.

For me personally this was the most difficult time during my transition into civilian life, mainly because of the complete uncertainty it brings. It's an immediate change from having a career, drive and a purpose to not knowing if I'd not only be able to do things I once took for granted, but also what my life and future was going to look like without a job.

I spent the next three years in and out of rehab and hospital while the medical teams rebuilt my leg, cauterized damaged nerves and strengthened my bones until I was eventually able to walk again unaided. Then I was finally discharged from the Army.

I had already researched the route to becoming an airline pilot and discovered it would take lots of theory exams, flying tests and most of all a huge financial investment. I had no idea how I was going to do it but I decided to at least take the first step and set out on gaining a Private Pilots Licence. At least this would allow me to fly for fun and hopefully fill the gap in my life left from not being able to do the sports I once loved.

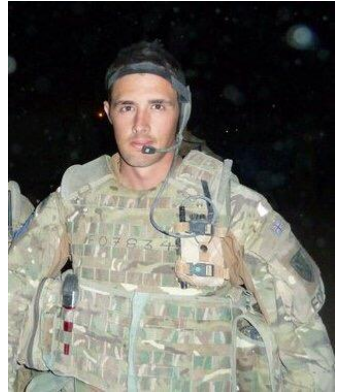
So I turned up at Newcastle airport and with a lot of hard work, just over three and a half weeks later walked away with a huge hole in my bank account and a Private Pilot's licence.

Far from being something which would be an appeasement though, getting my licence and flying aeroplanes just made my desire to fly for a living even stronger!

Fast forward a few years and I'd managed to build more flying hours in any way I could, as well as passing my 14 x professional theory exams (with a 93% average).

Not knowing how I was going to achieve the remainder of my dream I was then lucky enough to meet Wings for Warriors...

They literally gave me the keys to their newly acquired aeroplane and told me not to bring it back until I'd completed the additional 40 hours I needed to qualify for the commercial pilot's course. Not only this, they then told me they'd sourced





funding to pay for a commercial pilot's course (and instrument rating), which they had booked at a flight school in Exeter, again using their aircraft to keep the cost to a minimum.

During the entire process Wings for Warriors even provided me with accommodation and equipment but more importantly they supported me personally through every stage of training.

Often the most difficult and important part of a pilot's life is finding a job and I was expecting, like many pilots, to have a long wait. Yet again Wings for Warriors stepped in though and, although I can't talk too much about it at this stage (after passing the required tests) I have been lucky enough to be offered a position at a world leading airline, doing a dream job in a brilliant company that offers a career for life.

My journey from the battlefield to the airfield has been a phenomenal one. The support and opportunities given to me by both wings for warriors and TUI Airways have allowed me to achieve something I could only have dreamed of even before I injury. Through this encouragement I have been able to go beyond just rebuilding my life and get back on track before Afghanistan, and instead forge a new path to a place where I feel better than at any other stage in my life".



Nathan is due to begin his new life in May 2018 as a First Officer with Tui (formerly Thomson Airways) flying the Boeing 737.



Boeing 737 – 800 Next Generation:

Length – 129ft

Seats: 160-189 (dependant on fit-out options)

Max Weight: 79 tonnes

Cruise Speed: 78.9% speed of sound

CONGRATULATIONS NATHAN!

Air Jordan! By...you guessed it....Mark Radcliffe

Lee Jordan grew up in Anfield, a pretty tough part of Liverpool which inspired him to go out and see the world. Passing out into the Royal Airforce at just 17 years of age he achieved just that, serving in exotic locations like the Falklands, Iraq and Afghanistan during a 15-year career whilst working his way up to becoming a senior training sergeant.

The future certainly looked bright for Sgt Jordan until, during a surgical procedure some medical material (cotton wool to be precise) was left behind resulting in a severe infection, multiple further surgeries, 2 years of physio, a healthy dose of pain and the end of his career.

Luckily however his love of flying has brought this highly capable and likeable chap to the attention of Wings for Warriors where, with the help of our friends at Help for Heroes and the RAF Benevolent Fund we've already got him well on track to becoming an airline pilot.

So, in the spotlight this edition is Lee Jordan with questions taken from our favourite publication 'Modelling magazine':

WFW: Hi Lee and welcome to the future flyer. Tell us, how did you get into modelling?

LJ: Well my Scouse tones make me borderline unemployable, so I thought a role where I did not have to speak would be just the ticket.

WFW: Yes that makes perfect sense Lee, thank you for sparing us all. What do you do when you're not modelling though?

LJ: I like nothing more than a bit of walking, which considering how much time I spend on the catwalk you would think I would just rather stay home and chill. Moving to Scotland for the flight training has been great for this, there's so much beautiful countryside for me and Fay (my wife) to walk the dog in. She's also a top-class mountain bike racer so we absolutely love it!

WFW: With all that walking Lee, you must be surprised when people describe you as a plus-sized model. How does it make you feel?

LJ: Probably a fair comment. But I suppose it depends on how you look at it. If we apply a glass half full attitude you could say that I'm offering more value for money. Just as long as I don't exceed the PA28's max take-off weight I'm happy!

WFW: Thanks Lee, some important questions answered there! Before we leave you in peace, as it's Christmas - what's the greatest Christmas tune of all time?

LJ: Hmmm..... if we were talking about the greatest tune of all time I would have to say 'Invincible' by Muse.

But since it's Christmas it's got to be 'Jingle Bell Rock' by Bobby Helms.

WFW: Thanks Lee, you can get back to studying hard now!

Thanks to WFW Lee has already completed his Private Pilot's License at Aviation Southwest in Exeter where he spent several months living in his campervan to attend school.

With the WFW training academy due for build next year though he's since re-located to Aberdeen where his head is well and truly into the books, preparing for the professional pilot's theory exams.

His dream is to fly turbo-props around the highlands and islands of Scotland and we're certainly hoping we can play a small part in making it happen.

Keep up the good work Lee!



A happy Christmas for Clifford O'Farrell by Mark Radcliff

After almost two years of hard graft, nights away from home and well....stress....Clifford O'farrell has an extra present in his stocking this year in the form of a brand new commercial pilot's license (helicopters).

Cliff joined us at the beginning of 2016 after his wife Amanda heard about WFW and recommended he apply. Now finally he can call himself a professional pilot!

We're not done with him yet of course and have been quietly beavering away behind the scenes to find Clifford that all important first job.

Before he can qualify for serious consideration however he'll need to learn to fly large, twin-turbine helicopters in poor weather (without visual reference to the earth's surface). Thankfully for him though, WFW has teamed up with Help for Heroes and the Household Cavalry Foundation to make it possible for him.

Clifford starts his 'instrument rating' on January 4th at Castle Air in Staverton Gloucester and will be learning to fly the Augusta 109 light-twin helicopter (a Ferrari of helicopters). This will be the last helicopter training package the charity will facilitate before focusing our efforts on fixed-wing!

With any luck we'll be able to write about Cliff's experiences both in training and at his first job next year, however for now wish him and everyone who helped us on his journey a Merry Christmas.



Pics from top left (clockwise) – Clifford working hard on his CPL course, night flying over Reading, nothing like watching a student sweat!, Augusta 109 Clifford will now learn to fly, the handshake he'd be waiting 2 years for!

CONGRATULATIONS CLIFF!

G-WFWA takes to the skies! By Mark Radcliffe

In January 2017 Chris Kirk and I were fortunate enough to travel to Lelystad in the Netherlands where, thanks to grants from the Crerar Hotels trust and The Clothworker's Foundation we'd been able to purchase our first ever aeroplane!

The machine, a PA28 Warrior 2 looked after us well during our ferry flight, which took us through the Netherlands before turning left along the Belgium coast, passed Dunkirk (very sobering) and across the channel into good old Blighty!

Once in its temporary home in Exeter we turned her over to Iscavia Engineering who set about the lengthy process of ensuring it had the correct paperwork and authorisations to fly in the UK whilst 'Dave's custom covers' made her a rather snazzy set of pyjamas ready for the Aberdonian winters to come.

Assorted small grants and donations meant we were also able to upgrade the avionics to ensure she was 8.33Mhz compliant (will make sense if you're an aviation geek) and we even purchased a Garmin Aerad 600 to help bring a little 21st century navigational capability into the mix.

The newly registered G-WFWA has already made it possible for both Lee and Nathan to get well and truly stuck into their training and we hope is just the first in a growing fleet of charity aeroplanes!



The contents of my iphone from 2017 by Mark Radcliffe



From top left (clockwise): Chris Kirk walks Ash Ebeid through the H225 simulator during an outreach programme, RM Marc Goddard takes the 'ATIS' at EGEA Helipad, Mark and Chris in survival suits before crossing the English channel, WFW's youngest instructor prepares to demonstrate advanced autorotations, (panoramic) view on final approach into Glasgow international, Clifford O'farrell poses with the Help for Heroes Polo team after flying in the match ball, Lee Jordan proudly shows off his newly issued WFW flight suit, new trustee Harm Bos shows us the pistol the Airforce trusted him with on his multiple combat missions.

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Find us on Facebook under 'Wings4Warriors'

Or visit our website www.wings4warriors.org.uk

CHARITY WRISTBANDS

To get one of our lovely sky blue and white charity wristbands (available in child and adult sizes) in exchange for a £3 donation, please visit

<http://www.wings4warriors.org.uk/donate>

GET INVOLVED

If you would like to get involved with fundraising for Wings for Warriors please contact us using any of the methods above. We couldn't do what we do without our volunteers and fundraisers and every penny raised makes a huge difference. From a cake sale to a sponsored run, please get in touch if you would like to discuss your fundraising idea.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY 2018 FROM US ALL!