

The Society's Library Aviation posters

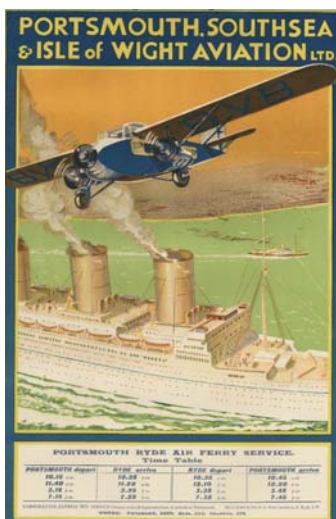
The 1920s and 1930s witnessed a 'golden age' of flying as major advances in air travel and in the design of aircraft brought aviation to the forefront of the public imagination, reflected in the posters, magazine covers and air displays of the time.

The Royal Aeronautical Society Library holds an important collection of around 150 aviation posters of the 1920s and 1930s which were originally folded and housed in one large scrapbook — a private collection which had

been presented to the Society many years ago. In recent years — funded by income derived from the sales of merchandise (produced in conjunction with RAF Benevolent Fund Enterprises) based on original material held in the Society's Library — the Library's notable collection of posters relating to the operations of Imperial Airways, KLM, Lufthansa, Air France and Railway Air Services and those relating to the Royal Air Force air displays at Hendon were individually encapsulated into an archival inert polyester film housed in archival storage boxes, so that they can be handled and studied without damaging the originals.

This left from the collection over 60 miscellaneous large posters and numerous smaller examples of contemporary aviation ephemera (timetables, luggage labels, tickets, dustjackets, etc.) still to be conserved.

All this material has now been individually repaired and archivally encapsulated by the conservators Riley Dunn & Wilson Ltd of Falkirk, the archival work being funded by



The Foyle Foundation.

It is a significant collection for current and future generations of both art and aviation historians, for it was a time when a number of leading artists moved into the field of commercial poster art. A number of the posters are particularly large, the largest

example in the Library's collection being by the Italian graphic artist Plinio Codognato (1878-1940) measuring 70cm x 100cm.

The posters also reflect a period of social history when air travel — due to its cost — was restricted to a privileged class of society and airlines tried to reflect the luxurious

Above: Air Race for the King's Cup, Hatfield, 1934. The King's Cup held at Hatfield, 13-14 July 1934 was won that year by Captain Geoffrey de Havilland in a DH85 Leopard Moth in which he averaged a speed of almost 140mph.

Top left: I'm going by Jersey Airways. Lawson Wood produced a number of posters for Jersey Airways which, from its formation in December 1933, proved to be popular with air travellers. One of the airline's six four-engined DH86s can be seen in the background of this c.1937 poster.

Far left: Cobham Air Routes Ltd — 'Guernsey by Air in Two Hours' (1935). This short-lived airline — operating an Airspeed Courier and a Westland Wessex — ceased trading following a fatal accident on 3 July 1935 involving the Wessex over the English Channel and was subsequently acquired by Olley Air Services Ltd.

Left: Poster for Portsmouth, Southsea and Isle of Wight Aviation Ltd (c.1935). The Library holds a number of posters of this airline which ceased trading on the outbreak of WW2.

RAeS Library photos.



standards of comfort they were accustomed to enjoy, and for air transport historians offer a mine of information about the development of air routes and how they were promoted.

All enquiries concerning this collection should be directed to: Brian Riddle, Librarian, Royal Aeronautical Society, No.4 Hamilton Place, London W1J 7BQ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7670 4362. e-mail: brian.riddle@aerosociety.com

Above left: Plinio Codognato — Poster for the First International Aircraft Exhibition, Milan, 12-18 October 1935. Over 400 aircraft firms exhibited at this event at which 40 aircraft and 70 aero engines were statically displayed.

Above right: British Airways Ltd — To Scandinavia between Breakfast and Tea (c.1936). British Airways Ltd was formed in October 1935 and began operations to Malmo in 1936, later to be extended to include Copenhagen and Stockholm.

Far right: KLM Royal Dutch Airlines — The Flying Dutchman. Original poster (c.1935) depicting the four-engined Fokker F.XXXVI operated by KLM on the Amsterdam-Berlin-London route. The aircraft incorporated a high level of passenger comfort which resulted in it being nicknamed The Flying Hotel.

Right: Travel Luxuriously in the World's largest air liners. Original poster (c.1934) depicting a Handley Page HP42E G-AAXC 'Heracles' operated by Imperial Airways. Pioneers in the development of international civil aviation, the airliners and flying boats of Imperial Airways during the 1920s and 1930s linked the far corners of the British Empire during the 'golden age' of air travel.

RAeS Library photos.

