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## CAT and the Hamsters



The history of Hamble College of Air Training

By **STUART LOGAN**

The College of Air Training (C.A.T.) was set up at the historic airfield of Hamble in 1960 to train commercial pilots for BEA and BOAC (later British Airways) and was jointly owned by the airways corporations and the British Government. Although internationally renowned for its high standards, its story has never been told before.

Over the 24 years of its operation, the college trained the pilots who flew the first passenger carrying jet aircraft, the latest Boeings and the iconic Concorde. Most of them had no previous flying experience and many came straight from school into the College.

From the earliest days of commercial aviation, through the glory days of Imperial Airways and the post-war years when ex-military aircrew comprised the bulk of the airline's pilot force it is fascinating to read how, for the first time, the college trained cadets specifically to be airline pilots.

The story draws on historic archives, eyewitness reports and rare, previously unpublished photographs. The author has interviewed some of the last surviving Hamble instructors and many of his fellow Hamble graduates.

There is no other volume covering C.A.T. and its special place in British aviation history in so much detail, accordingly it has been afforded the highest quality production values.

### The Author



Stuart Logan was a cadet at Hamble in the mid-1960s and went on to fly for BEA and BA for nearly 35 years, latterly as a senior captain on Boeing 777s, so can describe himself as a wide-bodied pilot in more ways than one.

Bored of sitting around swimming pools with pretty stewardesses, he began studying horticulture on night-stops and earned the prestigious RHS Master of Horticulture qualification.

He married one of the pretty stewardesses 20 years ago, after which she took up the post of his head gardener. Stuart has two children —Anna is a doctor and Andrew runs his own business — And two very special stepsons, Ben and Andrew.

In retirement he writes regular features for local and national publications and is officially the Gardening Correspondent of the Newbury Weekly News, although they don't pay BA rates.

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