
Pilot Profiles

Honorary President: **Brian Jones** (UK)



Born in 1947, [Brian Jones](#) started gliding when he was 16. A year later he joined the Royal Air Force and served for 13 years as a Loadmaster on Hercules C130 aircraft and on Puma helicopters as a crewman and winch man. After leaving the RAF in 1977, he took up gliding again and gained an instructor rating, teaching Air Cadets to fly. He started ballooning in 1986 and became an instructor in 1988. Appointed as a CAA balloon examiner in 1991, he was the UK's Chief Flying Instructor for 6 years from 1994 until 2000 and was responsible for the selection and training of all UK balloon flight instructors.

Brian joined the Breitling Orbiter team in 1997 as an advisor and instructor on survival training and techniques and, in 1997/8, was deputy to the Flight Director for the flight of Breitling Orbiter 2. In March 1998 he was invited to project manage the Breitling Orbiter 3 attempt and nominated back-up pilot. In November he was selected as operating pilot and completed the first round the world balloon flight with Bertrand Piccard in March 1999. In 2000 Brian was team leader and flight director for the first balloon flight to the North Pole by David Hempleman-Adams. He gained a power pilot licence in 2001. In 2003, he was Mission Control Director of an unsuccessful attempt to beat the balloon altitude record of over 40,000 metres. Brian is currently working on the [Solar Impulse](#) project to design, build and fly a solar-powered plane around the world. [Honours and Awards](#).

Patron: **Dorine Bourneton** (F)



35 years old, mother of 5-year-old Charline. Honorary President of the French Aero-Club Disabled Pilots Association, Dorine is the author of the book: «La couleur préférée de ma mère». At the age of 16, she was the only survivor of a plane crash in which she was a passenger, and she lost the use of her legs. After passing her private pilot's licence in 1995, with her friends in the «[Mission Bleu Ciel](#)», Dorine spearheaded the campaign to allow paraplegics to obtain a professional pilot's licence. In December 2003, this campaign succeeded. Dorine totals up more than 700 flying hours. She was made Chevalier de L'Ordre National du Mérite in January 2009.

Guest of Honour: **Yves Rossy** (CH)



52 years old, [Yves Rossy](#) is the first person to achieve sustained human flight using a jet-powered fixed wing strapped to his back. He developed and built a system comprising a back pack with semi-rigid aeroplane-type carbon-fiber powered by four attached jet engines modified from model aircraft engines. His first flight occurred in November 2006 in Bex. Yves later successfully flew across the English Channel on 26 September 2008. On 5 November 2010, he flew a new version of his jet-powered flight system and successfully performed aerial loops. He launched from a hot air balloon piloted by Brian Jones. On 7 May 2011, Rossy flew across the Grand Canyon in Arizona, after the United States Federal Aviation

Administration classified his flight system as an aircraft. Yves served as a fighter pilot in the Swiss Air Force, flying Mirage IIIs, Northrop F-5 Tiger and Hawker Hunters. He flew Boeing 747s for Swissair and now pilots an Airbus A320 for Swiss International Air Lines.

Guest Pilots



Mike Miller-Smith (UK)

41 years old, married with a son of 17, Mike formerly worked as a business consultant. He recently accepted the position of Chief Executive with the [Aerobility](#) Association. Mike has been Chairman of the BDFa for the last three years and has been flying for 24 years. He has 1300 hours flying powered aircraft and 1500 hours flying gliders. He was a commercial pilot, gliding instructor, member of the British Gliding Team flying in international competitions and has flown all around Europe and in the USA. Mike currently flies the BDFa Bulldog and his Nimbus 3DT glider from Lasham, 70 km west of London. Mike has muscular dystrophy.



Richard Fucci (USA)

Is the President and Program Director of [Freedom's Wings International](#), a non-profit organization which provides soaring opportunities to persons with disabilities. A graduate of McGill University and The University of Connecticut he is self-employed as an insurance and financial services professional. Richard has volunteered his time to various charitable organizations in his community to include the Sail Connecticut Access Program, The National Spinal Cord Injury Association and Easter Seals. Also, he served in the United States Navy as an A-7 Corsair pilot with Attack Squadron 46 aboard the carrier U.S.S. John F. Kennedy. Richard and his wife, Ilona, make their home in Guilford, Connecticut.



Rob Rickards (Australia)

54 Years old, married, with two grown up children. Rob has been flying for over 33 years. He flies the Qantas B 737 Fleet and is a Senior Check and Training Captain. He enjoys recreational flying and intends to start building an RV 7 this year. Way back in 1977, whilst serving in the Rhodesian Army, he lost his lower left foot which was blown off by an "AP" mine. He has long been supportive of disabled flying and is Chairman of [Wheelies with Wings](#) an Australian charity founded by Suzi Duncan. They provide scholarships for flying courses for people with lower limb disabilities. Rob is a member of the recently formed (informal) Disabled Pilots Association of Australia.



Tim Ellison (UK)

52 years old, married with one child. RAF pilot, victim of a crash when, in 1992, the engine of his vertical take-off Harrier jet failed. He was left paraplegic and fighting to carry on flying and to keep his professional pilot's licence. He is the co-founder of the [British Disabled Flying Association](#) (BDFa) and, in 2001, he completed a round the world trip, flying his Bonanza. He has more than 5,200 flying hours, 2,800 of which have been made since his accident.



Steve Derwin (UK)

60 years old, married, he is the chairman of the Scottish gliding club [Walking on Air](#) and ex-president of the [British Disabled Flying Association](#) (BDFa). Steve is also an instructor with the Scottish Gliding Centre at Portmoak. He began flying hang-gliders in 1991, and is also a microlight pilot. He has almost 1000 flying hours of which more than 600 are power. He also practises paragliding and has made a sky-dive jump. Steve became paraplegic following a motorbike accident.



Maria Duncan (UK)

63 years old, retired from work as a secretary. Maria has two children who, of course, are adults now. She has spinal damage, which limits the distance she can walk, even using two crutches. She took up gliding only one year ago, but love the sense of freedom it gives. She heard about the [Walking on Air](#) Club through her friend Leslie who shares an interest in disabled rambling, and to whom she introduced wheelchair curling. Maria like to keep as busy as possible which includes time spent visiting with her daughter, her husband and their 3 year old child Joshua.



Leslie Barr (UK)

Born in 1939. Married with 3 children and 5 grandchildren. In 2000 Leslie was diagnosed with a rare neurological condition with seriously impaired mobility and a limited life expectancy. Following an unexpected improvement in health, he started gliding in 2009 with [Walking on Air](#). He is a novice pilot with 15 hours flying. Other interests include wheelchair curling, rambling for the disabled and more recently sailing with 'Fife Sailability'. 'Seize the Moment' has been one of his mottoes and to participate in this international event he regards as being an extraordinary opportunity and privilege.



Brian Catchpoole (UK)

63 years old, married with a grown up daughter, Brian contracted polio in 1949. Most of his working life has been spent in the IT industry. Has worked for the last 15 months as a Coordinator for [Aerobility](#). Brian started flying in 2006 and qualified NPPL in 2010. He has flown in excess of 200 hours, much of this with Aerobility in their Warriors and Archers using a Visionair hand control.



Trish Amess (UK)

51 years old, lives in Gloucester. Trish served in RAF unfortunately invalidated out after 15 years, sadly through an accident which resulted to a major back operation and other medical problems. In the early 80's she flew gliders and became solo. After her accident Trish didn't think she would be able to fly again until she discovered [FSD](#) and achieved a 10 hours scholarship that inspired her to try and achieve more of her life goals which led onto [Aerobility](#). Trish is very outgoing, love flying, enjoy social events, travelling meeting new people, singing and theatre.



Adam Czeladzki (Poland)

45 years old, married with two daughters. Glider pilot, victim of a crash during Polish 18m Glider Championship in 2009 on his LS8. Also flying planes, PPL. Adam is paraplegic and carries on flying international glider competitions. In this season long distance flights of 888km in Africa and 752 km on Fatra Challenge Cup Slovakia. Holder of "The Best Male Sport Performance" cup City of Prievidza. Flying a single seat, Discus 2ct with Manual Rudder Control. More than 2200 flying hours, 150 of which have been made since his accident.



Jędrzej (Andy) Jaxa-Rozen (Poland)

Born in 1970, started parachuting in 1986. Having over 900 jumps and two national records, in 1993 Andy switched to paragliding. Almost instantly became a competitor and instructor, as a translator and publisher playing some role in development of the sport in Poland. In 1998 he broke his spine in a paragliding accident. Soon returned to flying paragliders, Andy is one of the paraplegics (if not the only one) competing at an international level. After a brief encounter with microlights he is now involved in a project of acquiring a hand-controlled sailplane for Aeroclub of Poland. In addition to active cross-country flying, serves as Polish NAC delegate to paragliding commission of the FAI.



Michael Amtmann (Deutschland)

60 years old, private pilot since 1992, Michael has 650 flying hours. He is a mathematician and teaches at the Aschaffenburg College in Germany. Michael lost the use of his legs at the age of 5, after poliomyelitis. A flying enthusiast for many years, Michael took part, as a navigator, in several national contests and powered aircraft world championships before getting his private pilot's licence. He is the designer of hand control equipment, which he uses in his own aircraft. www.rollieflieger.de



Harald Weber (Deutschland)

50 years old, married with 2 children, a 18 year old son and a 14 year old daughter. Paraplegic since 1988 after surgery for a spinal cord tumour, Harald started gliding in 1994 and got his licence in 1996. He usually flies at Grünstadt in Germany and has completed more than 800 flying hours in his club's ASK 21 and Duo Discus. www.rollieflieger.de



Wolfgang Alpers (Deutschland)

56 years old, an electronics engineer, paraplegic since 1977 after a road traffic accident, Wolfgang made his first glider flight at the age of 14 and now practises both gliding and power flying. After his accident, he was no longer able to fly in Germany, so he joined the [Aéro-club Paul Louis WEILLER](#) and got his French licence. Thanks to the practice gained in France, he managed to change the mind of the German aviation authority. He now flies a Piper Arrow PA 28RT-201T and has more than 350 hours of flight on instruments. He is a "[rollieflieger](#)".



Kris Van Nuffel (Belgium)

43 years old engineer, married, with 3 children. Kris got his private pilot's license in 2000 and flew 150 h. on PA28, DR400 and C172. Paraplegic since a car accident in 2001. Kris regained his wings in 2005 and so became the first paraplegic pilot with a Belgian License. Clocked another 250 h. on his Ecolight FK9 Paraplegic. In May 2009 he funded the Belgian Handflight Fund to launch adapted flight in Belgium. In September 2009, Handflight adapted a Piper P28A in Flanders and in March 2011 an ASK21 glider in Wallonia. A Flemish Duo Discus XLT is planned for March 2012.



Anita Verschueren (Belgium)

49 years old. Married & mother of one son. Had a job in the Belgian Army until 2007. In that same year she became paraplegic due to complications after an operation at the spine. Since then, sit skiing is her biggest passion. She quickly joined competition and now also is an instructor. Starting this year she also is trying out adapted flight in the ASK21 with hand controls of the Tournai Air Club in Maubray.



Hans Claes (Belgium)

45 years old, Hans lives in Belgium. At the age of 16 he soared for the first time as a member of the Belgian Air Cadets. In 1997 he became paraplegic due to a motor-bike accident. In 2002 he tasted of flying with disabilities when he heard about the [Rolliflieger](#) in Germany. Finally he could pick up gliding again when the Belgian Handflight Fund adapted an ASK 21 in the Tournai Air Club in Maubray, early 2011



Dieter Andries (Belgium)

24 years old. Became paraplegic after a car accident. Had a job in the building industry. Big passions are competition level hand biking, driving on road and off-road with his quad and sit skiing. Since an initiation flight in the adapted ASK21 of the Tournai Air Club in Maubray at its' inauguration in March this year, Dieter immediately became really passionate about gliding and now is flying almost every week when weather permits. Dieter is already looking forward impatiently to his first mountain flight.



Guillaume Féral (France)

51 years old, married, with 3 children, Guillaume works in the financial market with a major French bank. He got his private pilot's licence in 1981. Paraplegic after a gliding accident in 1985, Guillaume regained his licence in 1991 and has 1130 flying hours. President of the French aero-club's disabled pilots' association, he has developed hand controls for various aircrafts and gliders and gave demonstrations at the latest "Salon du Bourget". He was made "Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur".



Claude Maltese (France)

55 years old, Claude is a high-ranking official in the Criminal Investigation Department. Paraplegic because of a motorbike accident in 1987, he got his private pilot's licence in 1994 at the [Aéro-club Paul Louis WEILLER](#) of which he is now the vice-president. He has more than 470 flying hours. With the aviation authority, he plays an active part in drawing up the regulations for private and professional pilots' licences for paraplegic pilots. He was made «Chevalier de la légion d'honneur».



Ludovic Bejot (France)

39 years old, single. Cost controller in a big French firm in the banking and insurance field. Ludovic has about 200 flying hours. He has been disabled since birth with arthrogryposis, a rare disorder, which meant a long delay before he could obtain his medical exemption. Thanks to his tenacity and to the help and support of the whole team of the [Aéro-club Paul Louis WEILLER](#) Ludovic got his private pilot's licence in June 2008. He flies at Mureaux' airfield near Paris and is the President of the «[Mission Bleu Ciel](#)».



Eric Gorgeaux (France)

42 years old, single, an engineer in a research and development department in the radio communications industry. Paraplegic after an accident in 1990. Nine years later, Eric discovered flying by going through the door of the [Aéro-club Paul Louis WEILLER](#). He got his private pilot's licence in August 2001 and has 220 flying hours. He runs the aero-club's website, and is also a member of the «[Mission Bleu Ciel](#)» association.



Jérôme Cougnaud (France)

37 years old, single, Jerome lives in Nantes and is accountant in french customs. He has been disabled since birth with Strumpel-Lorrain's syndrom, a disorder affecting its legs muscles. Jerome had the dream to fly since he was 5 years old. In 2006, he went to the [Aéro-club Paul Louis WEILLER](#), and started to fly. Then the dream came true. In 2010, he started flying lessons at the Aéroclub de l'Estuaire, near Nantes, on the MCR4S. His medical exemption has been refused in 2009 but he will try again until he got it, thanks to its tenacity. He is also member of the [Europilote association](#), working on adapting ULM.



Antoine Motillon (France)

27 years old. Paraplegic after a motorbike accident. Antoine obtained his glider pilot's licence in 2008 at the Beynes' Aeronautical Center and thne his private pilot's licence in 2010 at the [Aéro-club Paul Louis WEILLER](#). He also participates in the development and realisation of a single seat glider's hand control (Pegase).



Marie-Catherine Bonnat (France)

46 years old, Marie-Catherine, who has been disabled for twenty years by a progressive disease, has been in a wheelchair for 3 years. She has always been attracted by all the flying machines and she discovered 6 years ago the existence of the flying club Paul-Louis Weiller. Since then, she has been flying regularly, always with an instructor or a pilot. For many years her dream has been to fly in the Gruyere area and also to have the chance to make a gliding flight in this amazing place.



Alessandro Paleri (Italia)

38 years old, engineer he is the founder of the "[WeFlyTeam](#)" association created with Fulvio Gamba in 2005 and today equipped with Texan microlights. He invented the hand control equipment for this model. Alessandro has been quadriplegic since 1987. He got his pilot's licence in 2000 and has about 1000 flying hours. Alessandro is the team manager and technician of "[WeFlyTeam](#)" which is also the official team of [Fly Synthesis](#).



Marco Cherubini (Italia)

38 years old, single, left wingman of the "[WeFlyTeam](#)" association. Marco has been paraplegic since 2007, after a car accident. He got his pilot's licence in 2006 and has about 500 flying hours. He is in charge of promotions and contacts with the sponsors.



Jens Sternberg (Sweden)

44 years old, lives with his wife in Sweden and works as an electrical engineer at a steel company. Paraplegic since 2004 after an accident. Jens started with glider flying in 2004 and got his licence in 2006. He usually flies the ASK21 at [Västra Gästrike Flygklubb](#) in Sweden and has about 120 hours of flying.



Jean-Michel Secondi (France)

44 years old. Paraplegic since 1992 following a motorbike accident. Fascinated by aviation since his childhood, Jean-Michel did his first flights in 1990 at Lognes airfield and took the necessary steps to pursue his powered aircraft pilot's training at Aéroclub Castel Maubousin. Jean-Michel works in the DGAC, the French Directorate for Civil Aviation since 2008. Very sportive, he has, since his accident, taken part in various handibasket national championships and European championships.



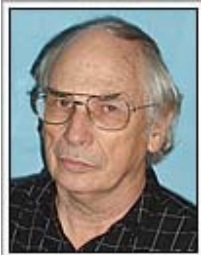
Thierry Jolet (France)

48 years old, one son of 22. Thierry obtained his FAA CPL in 1995. He left USA for Africa where he worked as a business and bush pilot. Those flights in this inhospitable area were dangerous and as he flew on a large fleet of aircrafts, from the single engine piston to business twinjet, the pressure was always felt. In May 2000, he crashed on a BE1900 after a short career of 3200 hours and ended up paraplegic. Today, Thierry is an instructor for a major french company and psychotherapist, expert on pilot's psychological problems.



Eddy Barbey (Canada and Switzerland)

56 years old, married. Technician and Instructor PHTLS (Prehospital Advanced Trauma Life Support) on cardiomobile, helicopter and jet ambulance. CPL / IR Aircraft since 1987 and license of helicopter in Canada in 1990. Human Factors, CRM and Safety Management Instructor. 3500 missions national, and international MEDEVAC, 21.600 hours combining Flight and Medical Crew. Following a serious car accident in 2000, amputated over the knee and two more other serious accidents in 2005 and 2007. Renewal of license PPL-A in November 2010 at Gruyères.



Greg Douglas (New Zealand)

65 years old, single. Greg lives in Auckland, New Zealand. A motorcycle accident in 1966 resulted in spinal cord injury. Although not confined to a wheelchair he has only very limited mobility. His main goal is to make gliding accessible for the disabled. Founder of "Glide Freedom" [Gliding for the disabled in New Zealand]. Vice President of the Auckland Gliding Club. Membership Secretary/Treasurer of the Vintage Gliding Club of New Zealand [Vintage Kiwi]. Greg has 900 hrs in gliders and 100 hrs in power aircraft and holder of a PPL.



Arthur Williams (UK)

25 years old, Arthur is an ex royal marines commando, who became paralysed after a road traffic accident in 2007. He holds a JAR PPL with 135 flying hours experience and is currently working towards his IMC rating. he currently works as a Sports Presenter for Channel 4 television



Roger Dickson (UK)

Roger started flying during World War II and has been a keen glider pilot, power pilot and aircraft owner all his life. Roger lost his arm in a road traffic accident and has developed various adaptations and technical modifications to allow limbless pilots to fly using his CAP10 as a development platform. Roger is a long time supporter and member of [Aerobility](#), former vice-chairman and leader of the Bulldog restoration project.



Christopher Lynch (USA)

58 years old, is a member of of [Freedom's Wings International](#) (FWI), a non-profit organization, which provides soaring opportunities to persons with disabilities. Chris suffered a spinal cord injury in 1979 in a construction accident. As a result, he started Alternatives to Barriers, Inc., a company that specializes in the design of wheelchair accessible homes throughout the USA. He grew up flying in his father's Cessna 172 & 310 and got his private glider aerotow rating in 1990 through FWI. He is a member of United Spinal Association and works with several peer and mentoring programs. He also enjoys snowmobiling, boating, waterskiing, scuba diving, snow skiing and is a high performance driving instructor.



Nathan Doidge (UK)

Nathan lives in Cornwall, in the far southwest of England and is profoundly disabled with cerebral palsy. He has been flying with [Aerobility](#) since September 2009 after being awarded a scholarship from Flying Scholarships for the Disabled (FSD). Since then, he has logged around 90 hours flying, 6 hours 35 minutes of which were solo. According to the August 2010 issue of Flyer Magazine, he is already thought to be the UK's most disabled solo pilot but is determined to go on to gain his NPPL in the not too distant future.



Doros Michaelides (CH)

42 years old, single, Doros was a software engineer, then from 1993 to 2001, an airline pilot with Swissair on Airbus A319/320/321 and Boeing 757/767. . Doros, who regained his private pilot's licence in 2003, now has 3200 flying hours. He is very active in the field of mechanised sports, and his company specialises, amongst other things, in the organisation of shows and events. www.doros.ch



Martin Cotting (CH)

41 years old, Martin is a teacher. Paraplegic since 1988 after a moped accident, Martin, who flies within the [groupe de vol à voile de la Gruyère](#), started his training in 2003 and got his glider pilot's licence in 2006, thus becoming the first paraplegic pilot in Switzerland to have completed all his training on an adapted glider. He has more than 100 flying hours.

Simon Smith (South Africa)