

The Armstrong-Isaacs Scholarship was set up some years ago with legacies bestowed by David Armstrong, an original member of the Association and a former Chairman, and John Isaacs, designer of the Isaacs Fury and Spitfire. Initially it was used to fund a single NPPL scholarship every other year for a deserving under-30 year old. In 2017 however, it was decided to change the remit to funding a number of £1,500 bursaries, again for those up to 30 years of age, to assist post-solo students who were facing the most expensive part of their training – the dual and solo cross countries.

For 2019 we had the pleasure of awarding five bursaries, a difficult selection as we had no less than 48 applications. Whilst it is unfortunate that we cannot help every deserving case, it is encouraging to see that there is clearly a healthy number of younger people taking up flying for recreation or as a potential career.

The 2020 scheme will get underway at the LAA Rally in September, with entries closing at the end of November. Meanwhile, we present below a brief resume of each of the five 2019 bursary recipients, who I am sure we would all like to wish the very best of good fortune as they continue their adventures in aviation.

Sam Smith | Aged 16 from Buckinghamshire

I feel really honoured to have been awarded an Armstrong-Isaacs Bursary, I can't stress enough how thankful I am to the LAA. I was bitten by the aviation bug at a very young age, being fortunate enough to have a dad as a pilot I enjoyed many memorable flights and knew that I'd always be hooked on flying. When I turned 12, I joined the RAF Air Cadets, which allowed me to join the RAF Gliding and Soaring Association Chilterns Centre at RAF Halton and learn to glide. I did my first solo when I was 14.

Last year I started having official PPL lessons under instruction from my dad, and after three hours and 45 minutes dual, he sent me solo on my 16th birthday. Currently I have just over 10 hours on powered aircraft and have flown three further solos – the last off circuit into the local area. This bursary means I can push forward to hopefully realise my goal of having a PPL issued on my 17th birthday in August.

I currently work part-time at an aviation art gallery to help fund my gliding and flying. Part of my role is looking after the veterans who come to the gallery's signing events. I'm fortunate to have met many aircrew from WWII, including Geoffrey Wellum, Bud Anderson, Eric 'Winkle' Brown and George 'Johnnie' Johnson, who were all very remarkable people.

After I've finished my A levels next year, I'd like to find a way into an airline training academy to obtain a frozen ATPL and fly in the airline industry or join the Royal Air Force as a pilot. My first steps into the aviation world have been helped by the LAA awarding me this bursary and I would like to thank you for inspiring the next generation of aviators.

Ellie Carter | Aged 16 from Devon

I have wanted to fly for as long as I can remember. I used to look up at the sky when I was a toddler and think wow – I wish I was up there!

I also build model aircraft, designed new concepts and used the dolls that my gran bought me as crash test dummies. Mum and dad don't fly and there is no

Brian Hope introduces the recipients of the 2019 Armstrong-Isaacs Bursary Awards

FIVE OF THE BEST



Above Sam Smith and Ellie Carter.

aviation in my family, so they thought I was odd. When I was nine, I wrote a letter to the USAF because I was fascinated with the U2 spy plane. The crews took me to see it and have been encouraging me ever since – they follow my career and are still supportive.

My first solo flight was on my 14th birthday on gliders, and I flew solo on powered aircraft three days after my 16th birthday. I owe a lot to kind LAA pilots Martin Kellett and Richard Horner, who have given me flights and helped me along the way. I am now at the early stages of my cross-country solos and really looking forward to landing at lots of different airfields and meeting new people.

I am aiming for a career in aviation. I am good at maths and science and love the idea of flight testing as well as flying larger aircraft. Flying for me is just the most amazing thing and I clearly knew it was going to be my world from being that toddler.

As well as progressing my own career I also want to be an inspiration to other kids who want to fly – especially girls who feel they won't be accepted. I want to do for others what others have done for me and give them that first-ever flight.

■ Editor's note. Subsequent to winning the Armstrong-Isaacs Bursary, Ellie has been taken under the wing of easyJet, providing her mentoring with Line Training

Captain Zoe Ebrey, as part of the airline's laudable efforts to attract more women into the profession.

Jordan Fuller | Aged 22 from Yorkshire

Since the age of 10 I have been fascinated by flying, not just by the freedom it offers but also in the high precision of aviation engineering.

In my early years I spent hours online, researching how aeroplanes are constructed and what enables them to fly. I also touched on this in an engineering course that I studied during my college years.

As I grew older, I looked for a route into the industry but due to financial reasons and the lack of pilots being taken on by the military, I struggled to find a viable route. I started learning to fly at 21 and almost a year later, I am taking my flying exams part-time at Full Sutton while working as a smart home engineer. To me flying is



everything – it's the one thing I've always dreamed of doing. I want to work my way up the qualifications ladder until I can use my license to ultimately make a career out of flying; even if it is a modest one.

It's true that financial challenges can provide plenty of reasons not to become a pilot, but my passion is in aviation and I cannot dismiss the idea. The progress I have made so far has given me more determination than ever to continue. One day I can see myself passing on these skills and helping others to achieve their dreams too. This is something I'm passionate about.

I appreciate how fortunate I am in being awarded an Armstrong-Isaacs Bursary, which will be a massive help. Ultimately, it means I will be able to progress with my dreams – it will provide the much-needed financial assistance that will help me to continue with my flying qualifications.

Max Tams | Aged 25 from Sussex

I have been longing to fly since watching the aircraft on approach into Manchester Airport as a young child and scoured the charity shops in the village I grew up in for aviation books.

For years it never got any further than that, I continued to be earth-born, watching the world of aviation from afar, and hoping one day to be a part of it.

Above Jordan Fuller, Max Tams (middle) and Jack Giles.

This happened when, at the age of 20 I departed for the Antarctic on a British Expedition, when I got not only to see a lot of aircraft, but also to fly in a lot of aircraft.

Years went by but I still had not found the finances to learn to fly, but after an accident that left me unable to walk for months on end, I decided that if I were to recover enough to get a flying medical, I would do the crazy thing – learn by paying for it with loans and credit cards! As my instructor at Goodwood so rightly said, 'at some point it moves from not being able to afford to fly, to not being able to afford NOT to fly'.

It all came together, and I am now the holder of a LAPL. I am indebted to the LAA for the bursary, which will help me to top up my licence to the next level, a full EASA PPL. My long-term goal is of becoming a Flying Instructor. Thanks to all at the LAA for all you do in the aeronautical world.

Jack Giles | Aged 20 from Bedfordshire

I have just received my letter from you (LAA) informing me that I have been successful in my application for the Armstrong-Isaacs Bursary. Can I start by saying thank you so much, and this has come at a critical time in my training. I'm currently a student at Henlow Flying Club with around 35 hours' flight time and now in the final stages of completing my PPL training.

The dream is to become a commercial airline pilot but the conventional way of training through Integrated ATPL courses isn't an option for me, purely due to the up-front costs involved. Therefore, I have decided to take the modular route and fund my training by myself as much as possible. At the moment I work two jobs to fund this training, one as a delivery driver, working five days a week, the other job as a security guard in the retail industry.

I took naturally to the practical side of training, but the theory is slightly more challenging for me. However, with hard studying I've done notably well in my exams, which I am quite proud of.

I think the bursary scheme is a wonderful idea, it means a lot to me knowing there is support for those seeking a career in aviation. Providing the weather stays good I'm looking to do my qualifying cross-country flight very soon. ■