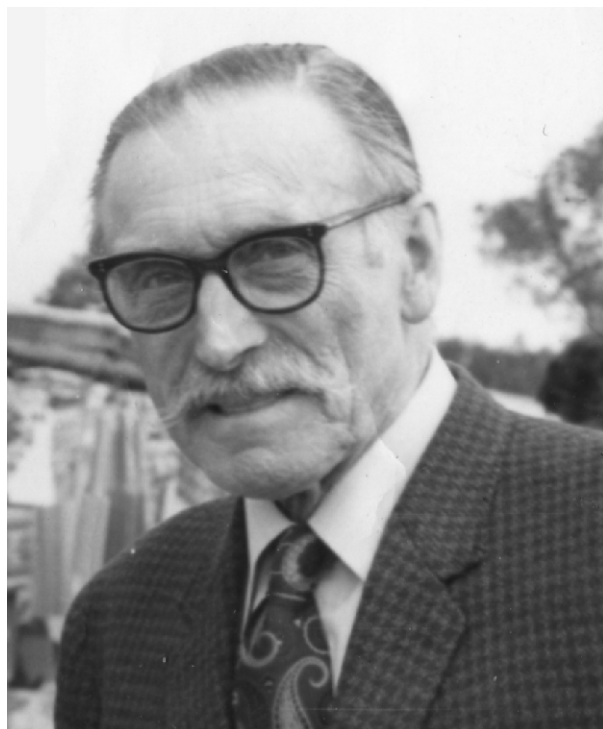




*Albert aged 27*



*Albert aged 70*

## **ALBERT CODLING**

### **Career profile**

**CHIEF INSPECTOR - Taylorcraft Aeroplanes (England) Ltd.,  
Auster Aircraft Aircraft Ltd., Beagle Aircraft Ltd. 1939 to 1968**

Albert Codling was born on May 26 1903 and grew up in Yorkshire, just a mile from the one-room school house Capt. Cook attended as a small boy. Whether this inspired Albert to succeed is not known, but he did apply himself to learning all he could about aircraft when the time came to settle upon aviation as a career. Too young to join the air force after leaving school at 14 he became apprenticed to:

J Carling & Son,  
Motor, laboratory and general engineers  
and machine and tool dealers  
Middlesborough, Yorkshire.

On Aug 3 1921 after three years making "good progress as an apprentice turner and fitter", he enlisted in the Royal Air Force. There he underwent training at R.A.F. Manston from Aug 3 1921 to Apr 7 1924 as a "Fitter Aero Engine". Upon finishing his training he was employed in this grade with ability assessed as "superior". He was released to the reserve on Aug 23 1929 with the rank of Leading Aircraftsman after receiving his A. B. C. maintenance engineer ratings on Aug 6 1929 (Licence No.1336).

He next joined Airwork Ltd. at Heston airport, Hounslow, Middlesex, upon their startup in 1929. He stayed with them until Dec 28 1932. His release document assured any prospective employer that "Mr. A. Codling had been employed on a large number of

different types of aircraft and engines including aircraft built in practically every country" and stated that "he had been sent abroad and about the country on operations which have required individual initiative".

Early in Jan 1933 Albert joined the maintenance staff at Ratcliffe Aerodrome as Head Ground Engineer. Ratcliffe Aerodrome was founded in 1930 by Sir Lindsay Everard, who was not only a patron of aviation but a member of parliament and executive of the family brewery.

When Albert started work at Ratcliffe, Miss Winifred Spooner was Sir Lindsay's aerodrome manager and private pilot. She was the first woman to be employed in such a capacity in England. She had previously won the Harman Trophy as the world's outstanding aviatrix in 1929. In 1931 she had taken fifth place in the King's Cup air race.

Soon after Albert joined Sir Lindsay's organization both Albert and Miss Spooner were stricken with influenza. Albert recovered and returned to work only to learn that Miss Spooner had died. Later in 1933 he travelled to Egypt to maintain Sir Lindsay's entry in the Circuit of the Oasis. This aircraft, DH Dragon G-ACKU, won the event. It was the #2 prototype on loan to Sir Lindsay and was fitted out with luxury interior. Albert won the award for the best maintained aircraft.



*Albert in the desert with Dragon G-ACKU which won the Circuit of the Oasis.*

1934 saw Albert learning to fly in Gypsy Moth 60G-III G-ACBX. His first lesson was taken on Aug 1 1934. He received his pilot's licence on May 27 1935, after 26 flights totalling 11 hrs. 35 min. His instructor was Lt. Cmdr. Phillips who had replaced Miss Spooner as Sir Lindsay's personal pilot and aerodrome manager.

1937 proved to be an interesting year for Albert. He was on duty for the Federation Aeronautique Internationale fly-in on Jun 27 when pilots from all over Britain and the continent flew in for lunch after their London conference. The variety of aircraft present was a showcase of the state of private aviation of the time.

Aircraft owned by Sir Lindsay and serviced by Albert and his staff:

- Gipsy Moth DH 60G 111 G-ACBX (Leicestershire Foxhound I)
- DH 84 Dragon G-ACEK (Leicestershire Vixen I)
- DH 84 Dragon G-ACKU (on loan from De Havilland Aircraft Ltd).
- DH 85 Leopard Moth G-ACKM (Leicestershire Foxhound II)
- DH 87B Hornet Moth G-ADLY (Leicestershire Foxhound III)
- DH 90 Dragonfly G-ADXM (Leicestershire Vixen II)
- Percival Vega Gull G-AELE (Leicestershire Foxhound IV)



*Albert and Lt. Cmdr. Phillips flying DH 87A Hornet Moth G-ADLY*



*Albert and Mr. Macpherson pose with DH87B. Mr. Macpherson was the pilot of the DH Dragon G-ACKU which won the Circuit of the Oasis in 1933.*

The DH 87 Hornet Moth is of particular interest. This aircraft started life in 1935 as an 87A with pointed wing tips and was changed to the 87B configuration early in 1936. Albert has an entry in his log book dated Mar 21 1936 - - first solo in G-ADLY with square wings. This aircraft was later impressed into the R.A.F. It served throughout the war and survives to this day as a serviceable aircraft. (2011)

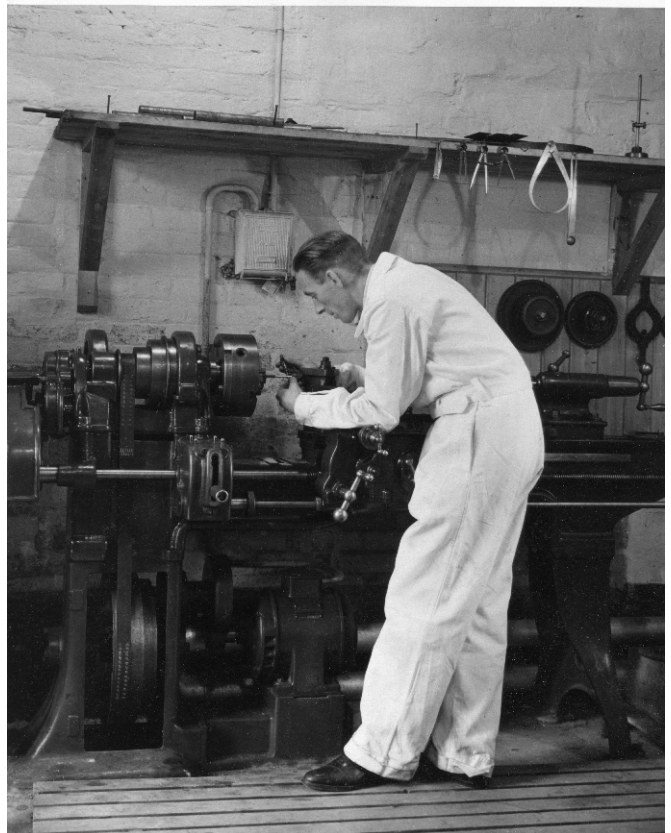




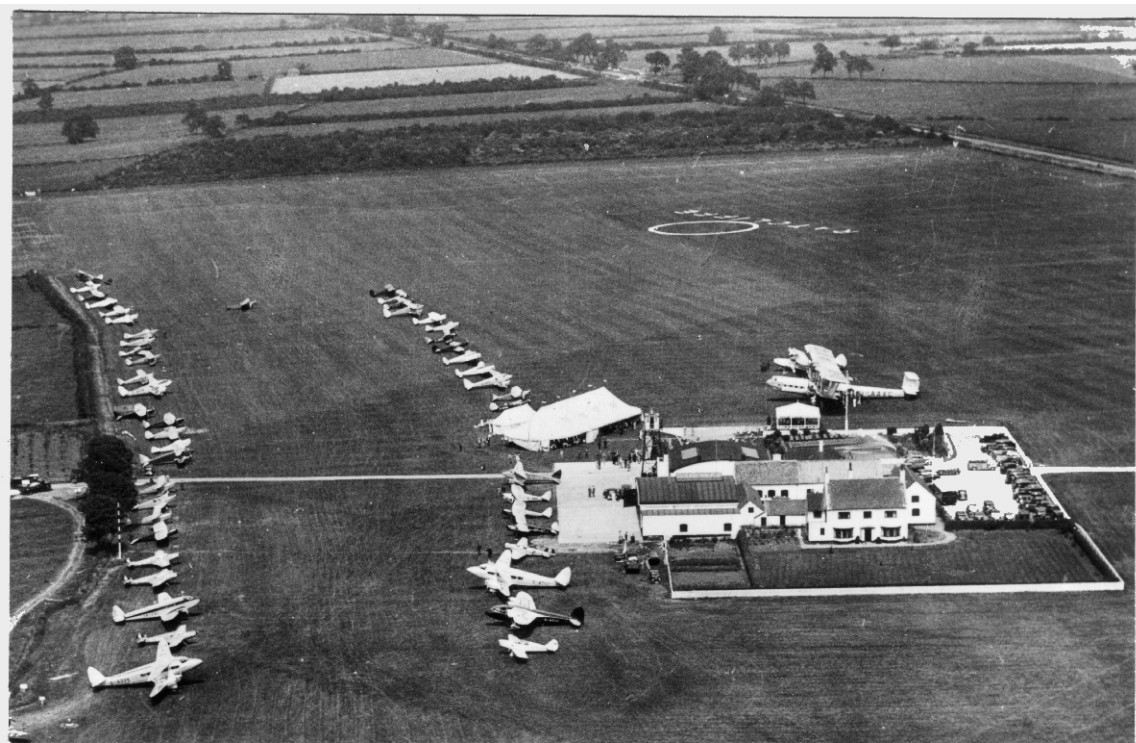
*A modern photograph of G-ADLY with wings folded.  
This feature enabled more storage solutions.*



*Sir Lindsay's entry into the 1937 Kings Cup air race,  
Leicestershire Fox IV, Percival Vega Gull  
G-AELE. Pilot, Flying-Officer A.H. Hole on the left,  
Albert centre and Jack Bell on the right.*



*Albert at work in the well equipped workshop at  
Ratcliffe Aerodrome.*



**FÉDÉRATION AÉRONAUTIQUE INTERNATIONALE, RATCLIFFE AERODROME, 1937**



*This photograph shows Albert being caught by a gust of wind at Ratcliffe aerodrome. Identifiable is Joe Eames, Albert's assistant on the right, Ken Sharp (third from right), and A.L. Wykes on his right. This meeting was to see the flight test of the first production Taylorcraft G-AFNW which Albert had assembled at Ratcliffe after its road delivery.*

Jul 18 1937 was the first contact Albert had with a Taylorcraft aircraft. This was Cub G-AEXY imported from America and purchased by the Leicestershire County Flying Club. He flew it from their newly acquired airfield at Rearsby for 10 minutes solo followed by two flights with a passenger. This was the first of the three Taylor Cubs owned by the flying club. This small 40 H.P. two seat aircraft was the inspiration for Mr. A.L. Wykes to form Taylorcraft Aeroplanes (England) Ltd. in 1939. At this time Albert was on loan to the club by Sir Lindsay Everard to maintain the club's machines.

Albert met Mr. Wykes while carrying out these duties with the club. He was impressed by the enthusiasm shown by him and joined his company at the earliest opportunity as Chief Inspector. He became one of the so-called 39 club, the nickname given to the original company employees. Setting up an inspection department from scratch was an extremely important job from the outset of the company.

This was accomplished with the help of Mr. N. B. Doggerel from the Air Registration Board. All items made in-house had to be checked for compliance with design specifications before being incorporated into the next higher assembly. All vendor items had to be vetted before acceptance. Manufacturing processes had to comply with Air Ministry regulations.

The Second World War was declared as Albert and family were vacationing in Great Ayton, Yorkshire. He was still an R.A.F. reservist and was summoned back to the service immediately as an aero engine fitter. He was to serve from Aug 25 1939 until Nov 22 1940. He was "released to industry" to resume his job with Taylorcraft.

His first task upon returning was to build up the inspection department to handle the Tiger Moth repair contract the company had been awarded. This was no problem for Albert as he had been servicing DeHavilland products for the previous 6 years at Ratcliffe. His next major assignment was to travel to Larkhill for service trials for the Air Observation Post aircraft for the army. He flew down in Taylorcraft G-ABDG (powered by a 100 H.P. experimental Cirrus engine). Mr. A.L. Wykes shared the piloting with him.

Two trips were recorded again with A.L. (who was by now generally referred to by his initials). These two flights were dated Jun 17 1941 and Jun 24 1941. Early 1942 had Albert flying to Old Sarum and Boscombe Down in HH984 (with Cirrus 90 H.P. engine), ES959 (with Lycoming 55 H.P. engine) and Auster 1 LB264 (with Cirrus 90 H.P. Engine).





*Ken Sharp, A. L. Wykes and Peter Bostock discuss business with (unidentified man) and Mr. Love (test pilot) In front of Taylorcraft Auster Mk 1 LB 282*

These flights were shared with Mr Love who was the company test pilot at that time and A.L. as the company expanded to fulfill its commitments to Auster 1 production and repairing Tiger Moths and subsequently Hawker Hurricanes and Typhoons. The design department, headed by Mr. Peter Bostock, was busy upgrading the basic design of the Auster 1 to satisfy the ever-increasing demands of the Services.

Nov 11 1942 Taylorcraft Model D G-AFWN with Cirrus 100 was flown by Albert for 15 minutes listed as a test flight. This began a long association with this aircraft lasting until Aug 28 1945 where his flight is listed again as a test flight. This aircraft was used as a test bed and also as the company taxi with such log book entries as, tail trim check, flow running test, shock cord test, test after C of A., Taking Mr. Sharp to inspect Auster III M2332 at Clifton Yorks, petrol consumption test etc.

G-AFWN was a true workhorse and its registration was later re-applied to its rebuilt and much modified remains as an Auster J1 prototype.

His last flight with A.L. was also listed in this aircraft on Aug 8 1943. Sadly A.L. Wykes was killed on May 14 1944 whilst exhibiting an Auster at a fund raising show at the Abbey Park grounds in Leicester.

A.L. Wykes, Albert and Miss Toni Strodl were the pilots at the start up of the company. Mr. Wynne Eaton was employed as sales manager and test pilot soon after the company was formed.

Miss Strodl was an original 39 member. She did some test flying, but left soon after war was declared and joined the Air Transport Auxiliary, an organization formed to deliver aircraft from factories around Britain to their operational squadron airfields. Ratcliffe aerodrome became a large part of that organization very early in the war.



*This photograph of A.L. Wykes hung in Albert's office along with an autographed photograph of Miss Winifred Spooner.*

More engine power was needed to accommodate the design changes requested by the army. Better cruise speed, tighter turns, quicker climb, shorter take-off and increased equipment all demanded a bigger engine. To accomplish this the 125 H.P. Lycoming was used in the proposed Auster Mk 2 LB352 which Albert and A.L. had flown together for 30 minutes (Nov 11 1942).

The only reason given at the time for not proceeding with this combination was the acute shortage of the engine. It was an American product that had to be imported in the middle of the battle of the Atlantic, so its delivery was considered unpredictable.

The De Havilland Gypsy Major of 130 H.P. was subsequently chosen to power what was to become the Mk III, which was also given wing flaps, increased visibility and integral trim tabs in the elevators. The Gypsy Major had been proposed earlier in the war but was not then available as this engine was used to the full extent of production capacity, being the most used engine in the R.A.F.'s inventory of trainer aircraft.

Later versions of the Auster (Mks IV and Mks V) were able to use the American flat four Lycoming as supply problems eased.

With the end of the Second World War the Air Ministry started to sell off its fleet of earlier model Austers. Albert was given the task of assessing their condition for the company. The Air Ministry did not want a repeat of the problems that surfaced after the First World War when so many aircraft were virtually dumped onto the civil market thus depressing the aircraft manufacturing industry.

Many of the aircraft were purchased by the Auster company (as it was now known). These ex-military aircraft were rebuilt as various civilian models. Kits were also made available to enable individual purchasers to do their own modifications.

However once again engine supply became a problem. All new production and ex-military rebuilds were powered by Gypsy Major, Cirrus Minor I or Cirrus Minor II engines, because the Lycomings were Lend Lease supplies and remained the property of the American government. It took some time before this problem was sorted out so that Mk IV and Mk. V surplus aircraft could be made available for the civil market.

Soon after the war Albert became involved in the newly formed Auster Flying Club. This was set up to encourage employees to learn to fly. Among many members of the club and staff relatives that Albert gave joy rides to were Miss M. Wykes, A.L.'s daughter and company director Frank Bates' aunt who was 83 years old. Taking her for a flight was a big boost to Albert's ego as she insisted that Albert should be her pilot (Jul 28 1946 experimental two seat G-AGPS with 65 H.P. Lycoming). He also gave flying lessons to members.

One unusual task he was asked to perform was to supervise the setup of an Auster for the production of the film Glass Mountain in 1948. This was a studio prop for the flying scene which showed the aircraft flying through clouds and subsequently crashing in the Alps.

He also organized annual trips to the Society of British Aerospace Companies show at Farnborough. These were always an occasion for high spirits (and a few bottled ones). However, the one exception was the tragic day on Sep 6 1952 when John Derry's DH110 disintegrated during a high speed turn towards the spectators. There were many deaths among the casualties. The atmosphere on the Auster Club's bus returning home was tense but all passengers were safe and accounted for.

Flying displays were also part of the Auster tradition. One year they experienced an accident when an Autogyro crashed on takeoff. Upon arriving at the crash site and learning that the pilot was safe and uninjured Albert took a pair of pliers and closed the fuel line to make sure that no fuel could drip on to the hot engine. Just the sort of action that showed Albert's professional regard for safety.



1950 proved to be one of the most interesting periods in his career as he was loaned to the Iraq Aeroplane Society (in Baghdad) to oversee the assembly of aircraft they had purchased.

Albert trained the staff in maintenance procedures and test flew each machine as it was assembled. His log entries for this period show many local flights to accomplish this. This trip also made a good friend of the president of the club who visited Albert every year after the S.B.A.C. Show, appearing at his home in the largest American automobile he could rent.



*Albert with one of the Iraq Aeroplane Society's J1 Autocrats*

1951 proved to be the end of his flying career as he did not renew his pilot's licence. It did not stop his travels for the company however as the following year he was loaned to the Desert Locust Control to assist in the maintenance and operation of aerial spraying equipment for locust control. Swarms were plaguing Kenya and neighbouring countries.



*Albert outside hotel room at Arusha Hotel, Nov 30 1952 on the slopes of the Kilimanjaro and Mead mountains.*



*Albert outside Namanga River Hotel, Nov 30 1952 on the way from Nairobi to Arusha.*



*UP*



*UP*



*AND AWAY*

Albert enlists the help of the army to load this Mk V Auster G-ANIH (TW 449) on to a lorry ready for transporting to Rearsby. This aircraft belonged to the United Steel Co. Ltd. These photographs were taken on Mar 22 1956 at Workington and illustrate some of the jobs Albert was called upon to do. It is interesting to note that this aircraft was de-registered on Jan 28 1972 and taken to Singapore.



Perhaps the biggest event in the life of all at Auster Aircraft was the arrival of Beagle Aircraft Limited to take over the stable. The first order of concern was to completely revise the Auster design. This was done with the Airedale, Terrier and Husky models, most noticeably with engine power upgrades and dropping the name Auster. The Beagle Airedale emerged sporting a tricycle undercarriage. These were intermediate products which filled the time before introducing the Beagle 206 and Beagle Pup.



*The evolution from Auster Aircraft to Beagle is evident as Albert ponders a problem with an Airedale (top). The photograph below shows the completely modern concept that was in production when the financial bell tolled for the company. Above the Beagle 206 aircraft on the assembly line are Auster fuselage frames stored in the roof structure.*





*Albert (centre) and Mr. C.H.Green (on his right) celebrate their final day at Beagle Aircraft.*

1968 was Albert's retirement year. His send off was attended by a large gathering of company employees, unaware of the impending demise of Beagle Aircraft, which sadly ceased to operate soon after. Mr. C.H. Green also retired at that time. Their official retirement dinner was held on May 31 1968 when gold watches from Beagle Aircraft Limited were presented along with gifts from fellow employees.

Albert's retirement was really a change of scenery for along with Gus Morris (a fellow 39er) they formed their own partnership to overhaul and service aircraft. Albert also got his X licence to add to his A.B.C. ratings. He was informed that he was the oldest person to be granted this rating (compass instruments).

One of the jobs that Albert and Gus Morris secured was the recovering of Auster J5K G-AMMS. This aircraft began life as a J5F. It was registered to Auster Aircraft on Oct 10 1951, and became the Aiglet trainer test aircraft. It had an engine swap to install a Gypsy Major 10 of 145 H.P. to become a J5L. This improved speed and the climb rate improved to 840 feet per minute. Its next change was also an engine change to the 155 H.P. Cirrus Major 3. As a result it was now a

J5K. The other J5K (G-AMYI) subsequently became a J5L with improved flap operating gear.

G-AMMS was originally finished in red with yellow flashes on the fuselage and leading edge of the fin. It was used by Ronald Porteous as an aerobatic aircraft at many air shows. It was sold by the company on Aug 8 1954. It is interesting to note that a Caudron monoplane with the registration F-AMMS competed in the 1933 Circuit of the Oasis (won by Sir Lindsay Everard).

Albert and Gus purchased a Piper Colt registration G-ARNI on Nov 25 1974 and completely rebuilt it. They sold it on Jan 30 1978 to a well-satisfied customer. Gus left the partnership and retired completely soon afterward, Albert however continued and also took on the responsibility of Inspector for the Popular Flying Association.

It is interesting to note that the Auster Company borrowed a Piper Tri-Pacer (VP-KMY) in 1956 to assess the handling of the tricycle undercarriage. This was part of the research preceding the development of the Auster Atlantic, which sported a similar layout. Although this design did not reach production it was the forerunner of the Beagle Airedale.



*Albert and Gus secure G-AMMS on to a transport. It is not known whether this is the aircraft before recovering or for delivery after completion. This photo shows its silver and black finish before reverting to the red with yellow flashes it had when being used as the company demonstrator by Ranald Porteous.*



*Albert with G-ARNI Piper Colt (precursor to the Tri Pacer) completed and waiting delivery.*





*Albert's crop of 'Syston Cross' tomatoes carefully tied to stop the weight of them breaking off the stems.*

Albert's lifelong hobby was gardening and he excelled at producing tomatoes. This he accomplished by building a large greenhouse heated by a coke-fired boiler which distributed hot water underneath the tomato beds. He aimed to pick his first produce on his birthday (May 26). The photo shows a new crop which was an experimental variety provided by Harrison's Seeds who had a trial ground on the Melton road between Syston and Queniborough. Albert had befriended the foreman and was given a packet of Syston Cross tomato seeds. The picture shows his crop of this experimental variety. The weight of each tomato was so heavy that all the trusses had to be tied with raffia string in stop them from breaking off. On average one large plus one small weighed about a pound. They were not deemed to be marketable. He also tried his hand at growing chrysanthemums The largest one he grew measured 22 inches in circumference.



*Albert died on Nov 29 1980*

# POPULAR FLYING ASSOCIATION APPROVED INSPECTOR

This is to certify that A. Codling  
is approved as a P.F.A. inspector for  
all airframes and engines

Valid until 31 Dec 1980 No: 01061

Signed *[Signature]* Chief Inspector

## A. CODLING

*Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineer A.B.C. & X  
P.F.A. Class I Inspector  
Fabric Recovering a Speciality*

44a Avenue Road, Queniborough, Leicester LE7 8FA  
Telephone: Leicester 606813 (STD 0533)  
Before 9.15am or After 6.00pm

Albert's memory lives on with the trophy shown below awarded annually by the light aircraft association to recognize the best workmanship in a homebuilt aircraft under construction.

The evolution of the complete range of designs from the inspirational American 40 H.P. Taylor Cub to the Beagle 206 and Beagle Pup was experienced by Albert. Coupled with his previous experience before joining Taylorcraft Aeroplanes (England) Ltd. his knowledge of the industry spanned from Avro 504 K which he serviced in the R.A.F. in the 1920s to the technology of today's stressed skin aircraft.

The following testimonial sums up his career and dedication to the products he helped to produce and maintain.

From: Mark Miller

Albert Codling (Licence No. 1336) really was one of the greatest Auster engineering hands of them all. He signed the Certificate of Manufacture for our Autocrat - the first production aircraft for a customer - in December 1945. Over 20 years later G-AGTO was quite badly damaged and although sensibly a write-off was repaired by Beagle at Rearsby. I have been told that Albert Codling had a hand in this uneconomic decision because he recognized the value of preserving such an early example. I have seldom if ever studied an Auster logbook without encountering his name!





# ALBERT CODLING TROPHY Winners

Note:- The 1973 awards were retroactively presented for aircraft with the same scope but prior to the establishment of the trophy.

YEAR	PLACE	REG	TYPE	WINNER
1973	1	G AXKH	LUTON MINOR	MIKE VAISEY
1973	2	G BABE	TAYLOR TITCH	PAT BARKER
1982			TROPHY FIRST AWARDED	
1982	1	G BIAU	SOPWITH PUP	TIM MOORE
1983	1	G BNJB	W.A.R. CORSAIR	TONY FRANCIS
1984	1	G PENY	SOPWITH TRIPLANE	JOHN PENNY
1985	1	G BGPI	PLUMB BGP1 BIPLANE	BARRY PLUMB
1986	1	G BDWE	FLAGLOR SCOOTER	DENNIS EVERNDEN
1987	1	G BKRH	BRUGGER MB 2 COLIBRI	MIKE BENWELL
1987	CM		WOLF BOREDOM FIGHTER	PETER GRONOW
1988	1		KFZ 1 TIGERFALK	LYNN WILLIAMS
1989	1		TWO SEAT GYRO	S. MONTGOMERIE
1990	1	G BJLC	SONERAI 2L	PETER ROBINS & RICHARD KING
1991	1	G MWIC	WHITTAKER MW 5	IAN CROFT
1992	1	G YURO	SHAW EUROPA	IVAN SHAW
1992	CM		SISLER CYGNET	BARRY BROWN
1993	1		ISAACS FURY II	DUDLEY PATTISON
1994	1	G-PIET	PIETENPOL AIRCAMPER	NIGEL MARSHALL
1995	1	-	PIETENPOL AIRCAMPER	JOE CRONK
1996	1	G-FOPP	LANCAIR 320	MICHAEL FOPP
1997		not awarded		
1998	1	-	MICKLEBURGH SPARROW	DAVID MICKLEBURGH
1999	1	G-EBJI	HAWKER CYGNET	COLIN ESSEX
2000	1		ZENAIR CH701	ERNEST BROWN
2001		No Rally due to	Foot & Mouth outbreak	
2002	1		MURPHY RENEGADE	EFFION HOWELLS
2002	CM	G-SLIP	EASY RAIDER R100	JEREMY HARRIS
2003	1		MINI MAX	JIM TAYLOR
2003	CM		STAACKEN ZZ1 FLITZER	RUPERT WASEY
2004	1	G-GERT	VANS RV7	MARK CASTLE SMITH & PTNRS
2004	CM		STAACKEN SK26 FLITZER	VIC LONG & JEREMY MOORE
2005	1	G-BZVC	LEEBURG SPARROW	DAVE MICKLEBURG
2006	1		STUMMELFLITZER	DUDLEY PATTISON

CM = Commendation.