

THE  
LEIGH FOX  
AWARD



ROYAL AIR FORCE  
VALLEY

# THE LEIGH FOX AWARD

Flight Lieutenant Leigh Fox was born in Epping on 4 January 1962. He attended Davenant Foundation Grammar School and, in 1979, he was one of only 30 students in Britain selected to receive a Royal Air Force Flying Scholarship, which led to him attaining his Private Pilots' License at the age of 17. Leigh was awarded a Royal Air Force University Cadetship at Southampton University, where he became an active member of the University Air Squadron, gaining some 125 hours on the Bulldog. He graduated in 1983 with an Honours Degree in Physics.

Following his flying training, Leigh was selected as a first-tourist flying instructor on the Jet Provost at Cranwell. After becoming a Deputy Flight Commander at No 3 Flying Training School, he was posted to the Tornado F3. Excelling as an air defence pilot, Leigh became a Squadron Instructor, Instrument Rating Examiner and Standardizer. He was then selected to attend the French Test Pilot Course at Epner, and graduated to an excellent standard, showing great potential. His first assignment was to Boscombe Down, where he became the Tornado F3 and Trainers Project Test Pilot for Fixed Wing Squadron. He was selected for an exchange tour in 1996 and arrived at Edwards Air Force Base to begin a 3-year tour as an F-15 Test Pilot. He qualified on all models of the F-15 Eagle and T-38 Talon and was selected as the lead propulsion test pilot, executing numerous elevated risk tests on 3 different F-15 engines. He was also the Project Manager for the T-38 Avionics Upgrade Programme and led a major redesign of the cockpit instrumentation.

On 22 October 1997, Leigh was flying a T-38 in an exercise that involved a B1 bomber and a F-16 fighter. The F-16 pilot thought he saw a flock of birds and made an emergency break. During that manoeuvre, his left wingtip and missile rail collided with the T-38's cockpit, killing Leigh and his passenger instantly.

Leigh was the consummate professional who, although endowed with a good deal of natural flying skill, succeeded because of his commitment to excellence. He achieved as much as he achieved because of his determination and tenacity: qualities that we hold extremely dear in our trainee pilots and which are often the key to success on this highly demanding course.

Leigh was honoured in the United States in many ways, including a posthumous award of the Meritorious Service Medal. His last Squadron, the 445<sup>th</sup>, named their conference room in his memory. The first T-38 off the production line with his avionics upgrade was also emblazoned in his honour. Until April 2003, however, he had no memorial in this country and in this Service.

In honour of her son, and our fallen comrade, his mother Mrs Fleur Fox therefore commissioned this silver trophy, to be presented at the end of the Tactical Weapons Phase of each course to the student who has shown the most improvement over both phases of fast jet training at Royal Air Force Valley and therefore, irrespective of the final course placings, has achieved the most. The trophy was presented for the first time by Mrs Fox herself at a Ladies' Guest Night at Royal Air Force Valley on 25 April 2003 to Flight Lieutenant Glyn Gogerty of TW6 Course.

# LEIGH FOX

## AWARD WINNERS

TW6	Flight Lieutenant G P Gogerty RAF
TW7	Lieutenant M Humphreys RN
TW8	Flight Lieutenant S A Fortune BSc RAF
TW9	Not Awarded
TW10	Flight Lieutenant H L White BSc RAF