



# NEWSLETTER

**Subscriptions for 2018 are now due please send to Ian Mason**

## Christmas Lunch

A party of 54 attended a splendid Christmas Lunch on Wednesday 13 December 2017 at The Greenacres Tavern. As usual **Stephanie and her team** did a fantastic job of decoration and catering.

We were joined by our friends, **Tony Boxall, Bill Moore, Eric Smith and John Austin from Woking ACA**. It was also great to see **Oxford veteran Jim Wright AFC and his son Neil**, Jim at the ripe age of 95 was in fine form. We were also joined by some of our widows and not forgetting our Members, full marks go to **Roy Briggs** for filling a table all of his own guests. Despite the poor weather we only had four cry offs, which was very creditable.

**Pre Lunch drinks were donated by the family of the late Jim Copus** and it was lovely to see some of his family there. Ian Mason said Grace and then it was down to the Christmas Fare. It was not long before Ian's wartime music was drowned out by chatter, as the hangar doors were opened wider and wider!

The raffle saw our guests do as well as members, which was nice. Here there must be a 'thank you' for all those who donated prizes, we now have a stock for months to come. The toasts followed and all then it was all to quickly time to say farewells. There was a well deserved round of applause for our **Chairman Geoff Hulett**, who was presented with a bottle of whisky, as he has announced he is standing down at the AGM in January.

## This is formal notice of our AGM for 2018

to be held at Greenacres on Wednesday 17th January 2018 at 11.00am

1. Chairman's opening remarks
2. Committee reports
3. Election of Officers
4. Any other business

If you have any matters for 'Any Other Business' please ensure they are with the Secretary by Monday 8th January 2017.

## 'DCO'

On the cusp of 95 and after 30 plus years on the Committee, the time has come to climb out of the cockpit and hand the 'joystick' to another member.

From 1984, when Chiltern ACA was re-born under the able leadership of Maurice Buttler, it has prospered free of turbulence and it has been my pleasure to serve alongside so many dedicated members.

I offer my thanks for the support I have received over the years and wish the new pilot happy landings.

**Geoff**

**Ed:** *So, as you can see we need a volunteer to serve as our new Chairman. The remainder of the committee are willing to continue but it would be unfair to ask them to take on yet more duties. So please if you feel willing to put something back into Chiltern ACA, now is the time. Contact a Committee member for details.*



**Remember 17th January 2018**

**Join us for our AGM**

**10.30 a.m. for 11.00 a.m.**

**The First World War Pilot J M (Jack) Mason**  
**Part 5**

**Ed:** Here we continue further extracts from Jack's First World War Logbook, on Active Service including 2 crashes and 2 forced landings !

21	DH4	60 mins (P1)	Local. Formation practice.
22	DH4	93 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Glistelles Aerodrome. Had three Huns on my tail practically all the way. Drew them off after dropping bombs and going out to sea.
22	DH4	70 mins (P1)	Local. Practice flight showing F.S.L. Playford the lines & coast. Ran into a sign post on landing & <b>crashed</b> .
23	DH4	71 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Hauttave Aerodrome. Machine would not climb above 10500ft. Dropped bombs in the sea to lighten weight but made no difference, so returned. <b>Crashed on landing.</b>
25	DH4	48 mins (P1)	Attempted Bombing Raid on Varsennaere Aerodrome. Given up owing to bad weather.
SEPTEMBER 1917			
1	DH4	25 mins (P1)	Attempted Bombing Raid on Varsennaere Aerodrome. Abandoned owing to bad weather.
3	DH4	111 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Varsennaere Aerodrome.
4	DH4	120 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Bruges Docks. Bombs dropped with very good results.
9	DH4	128 mins (P1)	Attempted Bombing Raid on Bruges Docks. Abandoned on account of clouds. 65lbs dropped in sea – all 16 brought home.
10	DH4	122 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Bruges Docks. Bombs dropped on objective. No results observed. Engine konked on way home & I had to <b>land in a cornfield</b> .
10	DH4	11 mins (P1)	Flying machine back from cornfield to aerodrome.
11	DH4	111 min (P1)	Bombing Raid on Sharappelhoek Aerodrome. Bombs dropped on objective. No results observed.
14	DH4	44 mins (P1)	Attempted Bombing Raid on Bruges Docks & Hostile Shipping. Abandoned owing to bad weather.
15	DH4	127 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Hostile Shipping. Bombs dropped on enemy destroyer. No results seen.
16	DH4	96 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Bruges Docks. Abandoned owing to mistake of the leaders signals

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16	DH4	93 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Glistelles Aerodrome. Bombs dropped on a house & by the side of a large hangar on NE side of the aerodrome.
20	DH4	60 mins (P1)	Joy flip. Local.
21	DH4	109 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Sharappelhoek Aerodrome. Beacoup de Huns. Attacked one and chased him off another DH4. Playford (pilot) brought down.
23	DH4	80 mins (P1)	Local. Engine test.
25	DH4	58 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Sharappelhoek Aerodrome. Engine hammered & was forced to return without getting across the lines. 2X65lbs dropped in sea & all 16s brought home.
25	DH4	10 mins (P1)	Local. Engine test.
27	DH4	40 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on St Dennis Western Aerodrome. Returned with leaking radiator & a bath of oil. Two 65s dropped in sea, all 16s brought home. Did not cross the lines.
28	DH4	61 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Huttave Aerodrome. Again forced to come home with same engine trouble. Two 65s dropped in sea & all 16s brought home.
29	DH4	150 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on St Dennis Western Aerodrome. Bombs dropped with good results. Two direct hits on sheds on NW side of the aerodrome. Two holes from AA in tail.

## OCTOBER 1917

1	DH4	155 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on St Dennis Western Aerodrome. Machine would not climb but nevertheless carried on about 1000ft below the formation All bombs fell on or near the barracks in the wood on NW side of the aerodrome.
2	DH4	180 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on St Dennis Western Aerodrome. Machine climbed much better & held her own with the rest. No results observed. Water system broke on the way home and was <b>forced to land on the beach.</b>
3	DH4	20 mins (P1)	Flying machine back from beach to aerodrome.

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**Gefanganenschaft or Imprisoned**

This delightful poem written by Brian Walley and published in the Summer Newsletter (their Summer, our Winter!) of The Bomber Command Association of Australia Newsletter. I am grateful to their editor Geoff Raebel and the author Brian Walley for permission to publish it.

**GEFANGANENSCHAFT – A poem by Brian Walley of W.A. and his War**

At seventeen I joined the fray,  
Then got my wings – hip-hip-hooray.  
A year of learning how to fly  
Look out Germany – it's do or die.

First "Op" Stettin – eleven hours long  
Piece of cake – not a thing went wrong  
Le Havre next, a 'nursery run'  
Bombed the harbour used by the Hun.

Next trip – the Frankfurt railway yards  
Knocked about like a pack of cards.  
We got home safely once again,  
A gardener trip without pain

Change of target – the Hamburg docks.  
Their master searchlight on us locks.  
Corkscrewed out – lost eight thousand feet  
To get back home was quite a feat.

Then the 'big smoke' - Berlin or bust.  
Shocking weather – in God we trust.  
But we can't have prayed half enough,  
One engine gone – it's getting tough.

Got half way home – things looking grim.  
Ditched in the sea – went for a swim.  
Launched our dinghy – all five aboard.  
Prayed once more and thanked the Lord!

Two days later, only me alive  
Two were drowned- dinghy capsized.  
The other two died, one by one  
With me left behind now all alone.

A seaplane landed to rescue me.  
Just alive – no longer free.  
Black crosses nearly broke my heart.  
Years of misery about to start.

Stretchered ashore on Nordeney.  
Hospitalised – I didn't die!  
New status now – Prisoner of War.  
Recuperation was the score.

Six weeks - lazarette in Hohemark.  
Regained a little of my spark.  
Then moved to Stalag VII A .  
Tried to escape – didn't want to stay

Crept underground via camp's main drain  
Our friends all thought us quite insane  
Soon recaptured to the bunker went  
Four weeks there in misery spent

The next move was to Hohenfels  
A 'holiday camp without the gels'  
Red Cross parcels now kept us fit.  
Nothing to do but hit the pit.

Hohenfels – Stalag 383,  
An army camp. 'Twas plain to see  
We hundred airmen had to go.  
Kreutzberg – and Stalag Luft VII's snow.

We, in the bag since forty-one  
Now heard the war was almost won,  
Of thousand bomber raids and more.  
The second front made it quite sure.

In January forty-five  
Ruskis pressing - To stay alive  
Our hosts marched us out on foot  
Through snow knee deep – nix so gut.

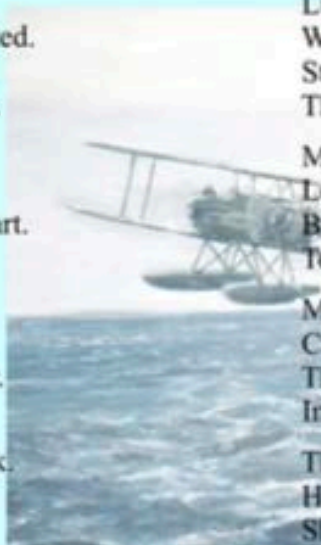
Three weeks later – weary – footsore,  
Not another yard – that's for sure  
Very thin – not enough to eat.  
Glad of the chance to rest our feet.

Luckenwalde – Stalag III A  
With food so scarce – no strength to play.  
Stayed in bed to recuperate.  
The war would end – just have to wait.

Mid April saw the Ruskis come  
Left in camp – did not go home.  
By May the fifth I thought it best  
To go AWOL and headed West.

May the seventh reached the US lines,  
Crossed the Elbe – freedom defined.  
Three days later waved the magic wand  
In England's green and pleasant land.

The homecoming not yet complete;  
Home to Wales, by train, not by feet  
Shutdown this time by Cupid's bow  
To a life still governed by our vow.





**Edward "Ted" Matthews**

2 Sep 25 - 16 Nov 17

Ted was born on 2 September 1925 in Worthing, the only child of Edward and Violet Matthews. He grew up in Sussex and went to the local schools. Ted had some serious health issues when he was younger and spent a lot of his time bedridden, but he was a diligent student and carried on with his studies. This is also when he started his love of science fiction, that he would devour in any magazines or books that he could. He also read the complete works of Charles Dickens.

The family moved to London, to South Norwood, just before the start of the Second World War. Ted went to the Stanley technical college in Croydon, but was briefly evacuated to Devon. He found it too boring so he soon returned! Whilst going through his effects, David unearthed a school report from 1941 concerning Ted's performance at Stanley Tech. It reads: '...he was an excellent pupil in every way' and 'the standard of his Mathematics and Science was well above average for the form'.

Quite profoundly the Headmaster (Mr EW Dixon BSc ENG) goes on to say:

'He was keen, intelligent and responsible' and 'His character and general bearing were excellent at all times'.

Growing up on the South Downs, he had developed a love of aeroplanes and flying so just 17 he lied about his age and joined the RAF in 1944. He did his basic training in Weston-super-Mare and then St Athan, training as a flight engineer for the heavy bombers. He

commenced operational flying in 1945, undertaking 13 sorties (ops) in Halifax's flying from RAF Full Sutton in Yorkshire with No 77 Squadron. The conditions there were very basic and harsh.

Following the war he was transferred to Germany until he was demobbed in 1947. Rumours that he was making a few bob extra supplying 'spare' rations to the civilians are unsubstantiated... Even during his service he had continued to study so that he could obtain his chemistry degree – virtually all by correspondence course.

He started working for the Ministry of Supply at St Helens, working on the early development of chemical warfare, at the Sutton Oak Chemical Defence Research Establishment – the existence of which was denied by the MoD until 1985.. One of the local girls working in the canteen caught his eye. They went to a couple of dances together, love blossomed, and they were married on 13 November 1954. The girl was May Ashcroft.

The "poison gas works" as it was known locally was then relocated to Cornwall and the newlyweds moved too. Although dangerous, like all chemists they also took the opportunity to use the equipment to make cocktails and have some really wonderful parties! In 1958 he transferred to Westcott where work had moved on to rocket propulsion, working on many ground-breaking missile and rocket science projects. He would remain there until his retirement at the age of 70.

Ted had so many interests – he loved amateur radio – taking the call sign G3NPL. This remained a passion of his and he would still be building radios throughout his life. Even in hospital he was worried about getting back for the parcels that would be arriving with all of the components have been ordering on the Internet. He was a member of the British Interplanetary Society as well.

In his mid 50s he started running and again would compete in marathons in London, New York, Amsterdam, Berlin and many others. Squadron reunions became important and something that Ted would always look forward to, becoming more involved with in the 77 Squadron Association.

**Ed:** *Our condolences to David and the family. The Chiltern ACA were represented by Ron Doble, Sandy Lowe, Ian Mason and Graham Laurie at the funeral.*

**Tales from the Tower**  
by  
**Tony Brown MBE**

*You may think the life of an Air Traffic Controller is very pleasant, whatever the weather you are in a nice warm control room, chatting to aircrew,,,,,and then.....!*

I know that BA are getting a bit of stick at the moment, but all the crews I have ever flown with have been great, especially those ones I fly with on a Saturday! On a serious note BA has a very good reputation with ATC. I would like permission to bore you with a little story which might explain our loyalty.

Many years ago before all the procedures were put in place to deal with the security problems we now face, incidents were dealt with more or less off the cuff. I was the approach radar controller at Manchester and took a phone call from the London Air Traffic Control Centre supervisor at West Drayton. " Hello " he said "We have heard from the Home Office that they have had a phone call that an explosive device has been placed on the Shuttle 2 Victor. The caller gave an agreed password and it is considered genuine. The aircraft is just south of you.

We haven't told the pilot and as he will probably want to land with you rather than continue to London we are going to let you tell him !!" "Thanks a lot" was my muttered reply. The pilot called up saying "This is Shuttle 2V at Flight Level 310 and we have been transferred to you for some reason". I had no option but to go straight in.

"Shuttle 2V.You are identified. We have had a phone call saying there's a bomb on your aircraft"

His reply in a very upper class voice will stay with me forever. **"Well if there is, it certainly hasn't gone off"**

He then orbited, losing height, landed and was remotely parked. Two hours later and an explosive device was found. From that day on I have always said that if you are on an aircraft that has a problem then make sure it's BA.

***This event Tony remembers was, very much, for real:***

On 23 July 1974, a small bomb was found aboard a British Airways flight from Belfast to London, following a telephoned warning. The flight made an emergency



*A Trident similar to the aircraft involved*

landing at Manchester Airport. The Provisional IRA claimed it had planted the bomb as a symbolic act, and that it had not been set to explode. It is the only time that the IRA has planted a bomb aboard an aircraft, and was the second terrorist incident involving a bomb aboard an aircraft in the UK,

The flight took off from Belfast to London. As the flight was over the Irish Sea a phone call was made to the Irish News warning that a bomb was on board and would explode. The flight crew diverted and made an emergency landing at Manchester. All 85 passengers and crew were removed from the aircraft. Police found the bomb in a plastic bag under one of the seats. The bomb had 2 kg (4.4 lb) of explosives and was removed where a controlled explosion was carried out.

The Chief Constable of Northern Ireland, James Flanagan together with his wife and two police officers with their families were traveling to London to attend an investiture; the two officers were to receive the British Empire Medal from HM The Queen for their work during the ongoing Northern Ireland conflict. The Provisional IRA claimed that they had put the bomb on the aircraft. The IRA said the bomb was not primed and was not meant to detonate, but that it had been planted as a symbolic act, to show that they could get through the security at Belfast Airport. It is unknown how the bomb made its way on board.

The British Airline Pilots' Association called for sterner security measures at Belfast Airport, such as banning hand luggage, banning cleaners from boarding the aircraft during the turn-round, and not taking on catering supplies at Belfast.

**So what does this picture have to do with our Christmas Lunch?**



This picture first appeared in the Bucks Free Press in 1946 and this copy was reprinted in the same paper in 1997. It was brought to my notice by my guest at the Christmas Lunch Mrs Posy Clark who you may remember was our guest at our lunch in April 17 along with her childhood friend, the daughter of "Bomber" Harris, The Hon Jackie Assheton

The picture was taken 4 February 1946 when Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Arthur T Harris received a case in which was the scroll, making him an Honorary Freeman of the old Borough of Chepping Wycombe. To the right of the Marshal is the Lord Mayor Charles Lance, the Town Clerk MR B B Beecroft, Lady Harris and in the front row her daughter Jaqueline and Air Marshall Sir Norman Bottomley, successor to Arthur ' Bomber' Harris as Commander-in-Chief of RAF Bomber Command in 1945.

A 9ft bronze statue of 'Bomber'Harris founded at Burghfield Arts Ltd, London Road, Loudwater was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother on 13 May 1992



*HM The Queen Mother and MRAF Sir Michael Beetham*

The photographer, the late Ronald Goodearl, born on 31 October 1909. In the early 30s Ron decided to turn his hobby of photography into a new career, working as a freelance photographer. His parents allowed him to convert one of their rooms into a darkroom. His association with the Bucks Free Press (BFP), which was to last throughout his career, started shortly after this. In WW 2, in 1940 Ron enlisted in the Royal Air Force. After training at the RAF's School of Photography, Farnborough, he spent most of the war in in the Middle East, installing and maintaining the photographic equipment, and processing the film. But records show he took many photos himself. After the war he became a full time photographer



**Programme 2018**

Events at 1030 for 1100 at Greenacres unless (\*)

**2018**

17 Jan AGM

21 Feb Travels of a Nat Service airman - John Dicks

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**Welfare**

May I wish you all a Happy New Year. It was good to see so many at the Christmas Lunch, particularly those who had previously been poorly during the year, Des Richard, Dennis Swains and Ron Doble have all been hospitalised, although a few weeks ago. They are progressing and trust 2018 will improve them greatly. It was also good to see Charlie Flint, Derek Gurney and of course Jo Laurie.

**David**

**Membership Secretary**

There is a saying "All I want for Christmas is my....."

In my case all I want from you is a cheque or those of you 'digitally equipped' may prefer to do it by BACS, to  
I M Mason 09-01-28 41009326

please in the Reference section put 'CACAA Membership'. For those who prefer to do it by Post please make cheques payable to Chiltern Aircrew Association for £10 and don't forget to include your membership card (if you can find it) and a stamped addressed envelope. When all is done I can also have a Happy New Year!

**Ian**

**Secretary/Editor**

The annual thank you to those who have contributed to the Newsletter and of course to Stuart McKay for his production of the postal copies.

Just to reiterate Ian Mason's plea, please, please send him your membership now and do not leave it in the piles of mail to be answered after Christmas.

May I finally thank Stephanie and all the staff at Greenacres for their superb support during 2017 culminating in that magnificent Christmas Lunch.

**Graham**

**Chairman**

Our Christmas gathering was a great success and my thanks to all who made it possible. I hope those unable to attend due to ill health are now fit and well

With all good wishes for the year ahead

**Geoff**