



NEWSLETTER

Membership Renewal - Details P8

Christmas Lunch

52 members, partners and friends sat down to another superb 'Greenacres Christmas Lunch' on Wednesday 12th December. The format was the usual one and the event was enjoyed by all, as these photos show:



The hardworking Greenacres staff



Ron Doble enquires after Jack Easter's 'doggy bag'!

AGM Wednesday 16th January 2013

We are holding our **AGM** during the first meeting of the year on **16 Jan 13**. The Agenda is as follows:

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

Top: Chairman brings us to order

Below: Table 6. The McKay's, George's with the Haddenham Mafia

A Tail Story from Reg White

Ed: *Here is Reg's story held over from the last Newsletter*



Reg joined the RAF in February 1943 having briefly experienced what it was like to fly during a visit to Cobham's Flying Circus at Harrow. He like everyone else wanted to be a pilot but was told the only vacancies were for Air

Gunners, so it was off to Air Gunnery School. He was thrown in a hall with all the other aircrew categories and told to 'Crew Up'. The pilot's checked the people they liked the look of and an Australian said 'do you have a crew yet?', Reg replied 'Do you know the right way up to fly?'

So Reg ended up serving with 460 Squadron Royal Australian Air Force based at RAF Lindholme tasked with dropping propaganda leaflets over France in a Wellington Bomber before moving on to Lancasters completing 7 missions over Germany, just one in 10 airman survived to 30 missions.

Missions typically lasted between 6 and 11 hours and for Reg this was spent in a cramped compartment at the rear of the aircraft. Reg describes his job as 'At that age life's a big giggle- I look back and think how bloody stupid but at the time I thought it was great. Your job was to search for enemy aircraft. It's not until you got to the target that you saw any lights. He recalls returning from one raid as the sun rose over the North Sea. 'As it got light, there was an aircraft, then another, and another. By the time we got to the coast there were

aircraft were all over the place, across the horizon. It was amazing to be sat in the rear turret.

However disaster struck on his 7th mission in January 1944 as he returned from from a raid on Stettin in modern day Poland, they were under attack from a German night fighter. 'When we were shot down they didn't play the game-he attacked from the side rather than the rear as they usually did and put my turret out of action with no intercom or hydraulics. I managed to get a burst of fire across his wing but he came back again and I was sitting there looking at him 100 yds away with shells going either side of me!'

'It all happened so quickly I don't remember being frightened but I must have been. Suddenly the radio came back and I heard the mid-upper gunner say 'bail out, skipper' The pilot answered 'Get out of it, it won't stay up much longer'

With his fellow crew members unaware he was still alive Reg used a fire axe to extricate himself. I still don't know how I did it, pausing only to grab his chute, he followed his crew ibn bailing out. He blacked out, regaining his senses as he drifted towards the ground. 'At that moment I went crashing through some trees until my feet were six inches from the ground.

I started to head for Switzerland, which was stupid as it was a bloody long way and it was 24 hours before they caught me. I was walking through a field when a farmer with a gun said 'it's time to give up'. He told me he had been a prisoner in the first war and so I asked how he was treated and he said 'very well'.

Reg, his mid-upper gunner and wireless operator were the only crew members to survive and spent the rest of the war being shunted around 6 POW camps in central europe. He came home on 8 May 1945 - VE Day itself and was demobbed in 1946. Nowadays he remembers the 55,000 that were not so lucky and did not return.

"That was too close for MY laundry!"*'Shuttle Atlantis' aboard the NASA 747*

Triple Nickel was the pilot of the 747 that flew the shuttle back to Florida after the Hubble repair flight. A humorous and interesting inside look at what it's like to fly two aircraft at once . . .written just after the flight.

Well, it's been 48 hours since I landed the 747 with the shuttle Atlantis on top and I am still buzzing from the experience. I have to say that my whole mind, body and soul went into the professional mode just before engine start in Mississippi, and stayed there, where it all needed to be, until well after the flight...in fact, I am not sure if it is all back to normal as I type this. The experience was surreal. Seeing that "thing" on top of an already overly huge aircraft boggles my mind. The whole mission from takeoff to engine shutdown was unlike anything I had ever done. It was like a dream...someone else's dream.

We took off from Columbus AFB on their 12,000 foot runway, of which I used 11,999 1/2 feet to get the wheels off the ground. We were at 3,500 feet left to go of the runway, throttles full power, nose wheels still hugging the ground, copilot calling out decision speeds, the weight of Atlantis now screaming through my fingers clinched tightly on the controls, tires heating up to their near maximum temperature from the speed and the weight, and not yet at rotation speed,

the speed at which I would be pulling on the controls to get the nose to rise. I just could not wait, and I mean I COULD NOT WAIT, and started pulling early. If I had waited until rotation speed, we would not have rotated enough to get airborne by the end of the runway. So I pulled on the controls early and started our rotation to the takeoff attitude. The wheels finally lifted off as we passed over the stripe marking the end of the runway and my next hurdle (physically) was a line of trees 1,000 feet off the departure end of Runway 16. All I knew was we were flying and so I directed the gear to be retracted and the flaps to be moved from Flaps 20 to Flaps 10 as I pulled even harder on the controls. I must say, those trees were beginning to look a lot like those brushes in the drive through car washes so I pulled even harder yet! I think I saw a bird just fold its wings and fall out of a tree as if to say "Oh just take me". Okay, we cleared the trees, duh, but it was way too close for my laundry. As we started to actually climb, at only 100 feet per minute, I smelled something that reminded me of touring the Heineken Brewery in EuropeI said "is that a skunk I smell?" and the veterans of shuttle carrying looked at me and smiled and said "Tyres"! I said "TYRES??? OURS???" They smiled and shook their heads as if to call their Captain an amateur...okay, at that point I was! The tyres were so hot you could smell them in the cockpit. My mind could not get over, from this point on, that this was something I had never experienced.

The flight down to Florida was an eternity. We cruised at 250 knots indicated, giving us about 315 knots of ground speed at 15,000'. We were burning fuel at a rate of 40,000 pounds per hour or 130 pounds per mile, or one US gallon every length of the fuselage. The vibration in the cockpit was mild, compared to down below and to the rear of the fuselage where it reminded me of that football game I had as a child where you turned it on and the players vibrated around the board. I felt like if I had plastic clips on my boots I could have vibrated to any spot in the fuselage I wanted to go without moving my legs...and the noise was deafening. The 747 flies with its nose 5 degrees up in the air to stay level, and

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when you bank, it feels like the shuttle is trying to say "hey, let's roll completely over on our back"..not a good thing I kept telling myself. SO I limited my bank angle to 15 degrees and even though a 180 degree course change took a full zip code to complete, it was the safe way to turn this monster.

Airliners and even a flight of two F-16s deviated from their flight plans to catch a glimpse of us along the way. We dodged what was in reality very few clouds and storms, despite what everyone thought, and arrived in Florida with 51,000 pounds of fuel too much to land with. We can't land heavier than 600,000 pounds total weight and so we had to do something with that fuel. I had an idea...let's fly low and slow and show this beast off to all the taxpayers in Florida lucky enough to be outside on that Tuesday afternoon. So at Ormond Beach we let down to 1,000 feet above the ground/water and flew just east of the beach out over the water. Then, once we reached the NASA airspace of the Kennedy Space Center, we cut over to the Banana/Indian Rivers and flew down the middle of them to show the people of Titusville, Port St.Johns and Melbourne just what a 747 with a shuttle on it looked like. We stayed at 1,000 feet and since we were dragging our flaps at "Flaps 5", our speed was down to around 190 to 210 knots. We could see traffic stopping in the middle of roads to take a look. We heard later that a Little League Baseball game stop to look and everyone cheered as we became their 7th inning stretch. Oh say can you see...

After reaching Vero Beach, we turned north to follow the coast line back up to the Shuttle Landing Facility (SLF). There was not one person laying on the beach...they were all standing and waving! "What a sight" I thought...and figured they were thinking the same thing. All this time I was bugging the engineers, all three of them, to re-compute our fuel and tell me when it was time to land. They kept saying "Not yet Triple, keep showing this thing off" which was not a bad thing to be doing. However, all this time the thought that the landing, the muscling of this 600,000 pound beast, was getting closer and closer to my reality. I was pumped up! We got back

to the SLF and were still 10,000 pounds too heavy to land so I said I was going to do a low approach over the SLF going the opposite direction of landing traffic that day. So at 300 feet, we flew down the runway, rocking our wings like a whale rolling on its side to say "hello" to the people looking on! One turn out of traffic and back to the runway to land...still 3,000 pounds over gross weight limit. But the engineers agreed that if the landing were smooth, there would be no problem. "Oh thanks guys, a little extra pressure is just what I needed!" So we landed at 603,000 pounds and very smoothly if I have to say so myself. The landing was so totally controlled and on speed, that it was fun. There were a few surprises that I dealt with, like the 747 falls like a rock with the orbiter on it if you pull the throttles off at the "normal" point in a landing and secondly, if you thought you could hold the nose off the ground after the mains touch down, think again...IT IS COMING DOWN!!! So I "flew it down" to the ground and saved what I have seen in videos of a nose slap after landing.



One final flyby before landing

Then I turned on my phone after coming to a full stop only to find 50 bazillion emails and phone messages from all of you who were so super to be watching and cheering us on! What a treat, I can't thank y'all enough. For those who watched, you wondered why we sat there so long. Well, the shuttle had very hazardous chemicals on board and we had

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to be "sniffed" to determine if any had leaked or were leaking. They checked for Monomethylhydrazine (N₂H₄) and nitrogen tetroxide (N₂O₄). Even though we were "clean", it took way too long for them to tow us in to the mate-demate area. Sorry for those who stuck it out and even waited until we exited the jet.

I am sure I will wake up in the middle of the night here soon, screaming and standing straight up dripping wet with sweat from the realization of what had happened. It was a thrill of a lifetime. Again I want to thank everyone for your interest and support. It felt good to bring Atlantis home in one piece after she had worked so hard getting to the Hubble Space Telescope and back.



Slowly but surely

The United States (US) space shuttle began its final journey a few days later, at the less-than rocket-propelled speed of 3.2 kmh, in a meticulously planned trip through the streets of Los Angeles.

Some 400 trees have had to be cut down - provoking initial protests from locals - and power lines turned off to make way for the 79,000kg vehicle on the two-day, 19 km journey to the California Science Centre.

The California Science Center has opened its doors to the display pavilion housing the retired orbiter. The 18,000-square-foot building will showcase the mu

seum's prized exhibit until a new air and space wing opens in about five years.



The crowds watch in awe

Museum visitors won't be able to go inside the 122-foot-long Shuttle, but they can virtually navigate the flight deck, mid-deck and payload bay by using a touch-screen display. Officials also removed the shuttle's galley and toilet to show separately.

Also on display will be one of the massive engines that propelled the Shuttle into space — designed, built and tested by Canoga Park-based Rocketdyne — and the support center from which Rocketdyne crews would monitor the engines prior to and during launches. Oh yes, and then there's Shuttle itself.

Ed: *I make no apologies for taking 3 pages to tell this fascinating story. For those with access to a computer do look on UTube for the film of the last flight. I found one which lasts 18 mins and had some amazing shots over Los Angeles and Hollywood, plus of course the final landing. The other thing worth looking at are the 'time lapse' photos of the final road journey.*

It all seems a long while since Leica went into space let alone Neil Armstrong landing on the moon. Can you remember what you were doing that day in 1969, well I was covering the Moon Landing and broadcasting it to an audience in what was then known as The Persian Gulf, on Forces Radio Sharjah and I for one will never forget it!

Ted Bunn

Bill Hyland, on his friend and fellow Air Traffic Controller:

Ted Bunn passed away on Monday 26th November. Ted was a big, jovial character who joined the Royal Air Force shortly after leaving school. He initially hoped for Cranwell but was instead offered a short service commission.

Including training he spent nine years in the service moving to his beloved Shackletons on 206 Squadron where he spent all his time climbing to fifty feet and coming back tomorrow.

After the RAF he joined the Civil Aviation Authority and the National Air Traffic Service. Following the normal round of training at Hurn and various airfields he was posted to Stansted. This was very much in the formative years of civil aviation at the airfield and he was involved in various well known instances when hi-jacked aircraft were diverted there. In the late 70's he was posted to that vast black hole known as the London Air Traffic Control Centre at RAF West Drayton, where he remained until retirement. He held several posts in the organisation as an active controller and was perhaps best known as a very able instructor and examiner, eventually taking charge of the Training Section. Ted always seemed relaxed at work even when confronted with a 'face full' of traffic on his radar screen and instilled confidence in his trainees and was greatly respected by his peers.

He was a member of the Freemasons and spent a great deal of time and effort within that organisation. It was considered that he was destined for very high office until his health began to fail some years ago and he spent the last four years in a nursing home.

Our thoughts are with Christina and the family.

Treasurer

You may have heard that Ian Nelson will shortly be moving to the Horsham area and will thus be relinquishing his post as our Treasurer.

It is therefore a matter of some urgency that we appeal for a volunteer to take on this post. It does not require massive training nor is it particularly time consuming. Previous experience in the Banking Industry is not essential, in fact is not desirable!

Your Committee is a small one and each member has a specific task, we hold meetings after lunch at our monthly meetings, so very little time is required. We do however wish to avoid 'doubling up' on posts and thus we see it as essential that we replace Ian with a new Committee Member rather than adding to a current members portfolio.

Please therefore think if you could help. Other Branches have folded due to the lack of committee members, do not let that happen to us.

If you are interested or would like to know more please talk to a committee member or even better give the present incumbent a call. Ian's telephone number is: 01727 856677. **Don't delay do it today, you know it makes sense!**

20 February 2013

Wg Cdr Paul Hewson MBE RAF (Ret'd)
Regional Director London, Home Counties and South England
RAF Benevolent Fund

Hear about the work the modern day-Fund is doing and if we prod him gently he might tell us some tales from his time as a Hercules Navigator

Programme

All events at 1030 for 1100 at Greenacres unless advised (*)

16 Jan	AGM & Member's Meeting
20 Feb	RAF Benevolent Fund Paul Hewson
20 Mar	The Rudolph Hess cover up - Tony Eaton
17 Apr	Fly Girl - Anita Mays
15 May	Guest's Lunch* 1200 Noon
19 Jun	Aeronautical Artist - Chris Sprent

Your Committee
Chairman**Geoff Hulett**

11 Pearsewood Gardens, Stanmore, Middx HA7 1NU
Tel: 0208 952 4092
Email: banghulett@btinternet.com

Newsletter Editor/Secretary

Graham Laurie 19 High St, Prestwood, Gt Missenden,
Bucks HP16 9EE
Tel: 01494 863492
Email: graham@kitty4.co.uk

Membership Secretary**Gerry Sealy-Bell**

31, Hempstead Road, Kings Langley, Herts, WD4 8BR
Tel: 01923 262707

Treasurer**Ian Nelson**

13, Mentmore Road, St. Albans, Herts., AL1 2BG
Tel: 01727 856677
Email: ian6304@googlemail.com

Welfare**Bill Hyland**

57, Limes Avenue, Aylesbury, Bucks., HP21 7HD
Tel: 01296 415386
EMail: johnhyland228@btinternet.com

Programme Secretary**Bill George**

Blossom Cottage, 54, Green End Street, Aston Clinton,
Bucks, HP22 5EX
Tel: 01296 630998
Email: bill.bbgi@btinternet.com

Welfare
Bill Hyland reports:

Not a great deal of news over the holiday period but

will report fuller at the AGM and in the meantime A Happy New Year.

Bill
Membership

You will have seen the news of **Ted Bunn** passing away after a long illness. Also I have to report that **Tony Stephen's wife Verna** passed away on 12 Dec and the funeral will be held at Garston Crematorium on 2 Jan 13 at 1140. Our thoughts are with the families.

We are pleased, however, to welcome a new member **Andy Hardy**, a Private Pilot from Project Propeller whose details are as follows

265 **HARDY A (Andy)** 2 Cheyne Walk, Chesham, Bucks
HP5 1AY 01494 773705 **GL**

Andy now flies a PA28 from Booker but also served with the Australians, 486 Maintenance Sqn, and 2 Aircraft Depot RAAF both based at Richmond NSW, where he flew in Hercules.

I am now taking subscriptions due January so please help the admin by paying up promptly, it is £10 for the year. Do not worry if you cannot find your membership card but please enclose SAE please. Could you all please fill in the form on Page 8 even if you are paying at the AGM.

Gerry
Treasurer

Thanks to the Editor mentioning it in the last newsletter you will be aware that I intend to resign at the end of the year. The reason is that Maureen & I plan to downsize to a property near Horsham where our widowed daughter lives; this will not happen until well into 2013.

However I am writing to apologize for my non appearance at the AGM. This is because we are committed to a special family birthday event in Bournemouth on the 16th. The double booking was not appreciated until we started our calendar for 2013. I will of course prepare everything as normal and if no one has come forward to take over I am sure (Graham) will read out my notes.

Ian

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
(Please use capital letters)

SURNAME:

CHRISTIAN NAME

(Known As:)

ADDRESS

POSTCODE:

TEL NO:

MOBILE:

EMAIL:

DATE OF BIRTH:

RANK & SERVICE

**SERVICE NO or
LICENCE NO:**

AIRCREW CATEGORY

EXPERIENCE (inc SQN's)

TYPE OF AIRCRAFT FLOWN or OPERATED IN:

DECORATIONS, MEDALS etc:

CIVILIAN OCCUPATION

LEISURE PURSUITS & INTERESTS

MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER SERVICE OR FLYING ORGANISATIONS:

Would you allow your name, address, telno to be shown on the Membership List (YES / NO)
PLEASE RETURN TO MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY Gerry Sealy Bell, 31, Hempstead Road,
Kings Langley, Herts, WD4 8BR