



NEWSLETTER

A frightening experience with a happy ending Page 5

Guest's Lunch

45 members and guests met on 21 May for another successful Buffet Lunch. It was heartening to be joined by six of our colleagues from Woking: Bill Moore, Laurie Taylor, Eric Smith, John Austin, Tony Boxall and **Terry Rourke** who kindly took the photos for us.



Eric Smith (Woking) - right, joins our team

Before the lunch we stood in memory of our member **Jim Tomlinson**, who had sadly passed away the day before (see Page 6).



Roger Miller being admired by the ladies!

As usual Greenacres did us proud. They added additional sweets which were all consumed with gusto.

June Meeting

Our June speaker as you see below is Malcolm Clouett and he comes highly recommended by Bill George. If I have the right man much of his tale will feature Burma and a tragic crash there. It should be a fascinating story. Do join us.



LOTTERY FUNDED

Remember 18 June 14

**“Malcolm’s War
a presentation by Malcolm Clouett**

Greenacres 10.30 for 11.00am.

My Memories of WW 2

Part 3 of Harold Purver's story

Ed: *The story of the Whitley landing at Aberdeen continues:* From being too high and too fast, with full flaps and full brakes, we landed some halfway down the runway, accompanied by the station fire engine and ambulance. Towards the end of the runway the Skipper swung the plane on to the grass verge and slowly sank to a muddy halt. As we climbed into the ambulance for a quick check up, we could see otherwise we would have written off several Photographic Unit Mosquitoes in their pristine pale blue, quite a contrast to the old black Whitley squatting there in the early morning sunshine! But in the hangers Rolls Royce Merlin engineers were delighted to be repairing the elderly models they apprenticed on, as opposed to the spanking new models on the Mosquitoes!

However, their expertise ensured that after a debrief, breakfast and a quick lunch, by 1500 hours we were airborne again in the Spring sunshine, enjoying a low level 'beat up' of anything that moved, finishing with a text book landing at Kinloss 45 minutes later. The Skipper and crew were commended on their handling of an emergency situation. A grand total of 110 hours day flying and 61 night hours, plus some 'porky pies' regarding the number of Dinghy Drills and the number of 'parachute' practices undertaken, the RAF decided to train a broad shouldered, six foot Yorkshireman and his valiant crew to be entrusted with a four engined Halifax 'bomber, and posted us all to 1658 CU at RAF Riccall, just a month before D-Day 6 June 1944.

It was an eventful month of achievements and mistakes, which involved the loss of our Halifax II and a crew due to turning over the plane at low level due to unaccustomed hydraulic assistance to the controls. With a total of 135 days and 71 night hours we arrived at 77 Bomber Command Control at RAF Full Sutton and by 8 June 1944 we took off in our Halifax III en route to Alencan with 15x500 lbs General Purpose bombs for the marshaling yards supplying traffic to the Invasion Coast of Normandy. Returning to Base after a seemingly successful trip we were rudely diverted to RAF Cos-

ford due to bad visibility, which according to the pilots was pretty grim as well. It would have been safer to land at a known aerodrome in bad weather. Now the invasion proceeded with raids on several marshaling yards completed successfully including destroying a Panzer Division HQ at Evrecy.

Our luck ran out on the 8th trip to oil installations at Sterkrade in the Ruhr. As we settled down for the couple of hours for the run home after leaving the target area we were located by radar. A twin engined Dornier on one quarter who talked in a canon firing FW 190 on the opposite quarter, which gave him a minimum deflection shot, put us into a 'corkscrew' defence. This led to a call from the rear gunner who had been hit in the right arm and simultaneously the attack was broken off. As we all recovered our composure, the Skipper straightened up into normal cruising at 8,000 feet, having lost some 10,000 feet from the previous bombing height due to the several 'corkscrews' to shake off the fighters.

The Skipper requested a course to fly to base, which heightened my confusion because having recovered the computer from behind the Gee set, which had stopped working, I couldn't get a radar fix! Whereupon we decided with an injured gunner we would set course to the nearest bit of England - requiring me to modify the known 18,000 feet wind with the MET forecast for 8,000 feet winds. Meanwhile the WOP had given the gunner a morphine injection, 'Switched on and declared the aircraft IFF Officially Open', I called for 'Emergency QDM's', to let all defence organisations know, that we were approaching Great Britain on a course that was in the wrong place, at the wrong height and at the wrong time that had been planned (or a 'UFO' in modern parlance!).

So we settled down to the odd hour's cruise, chatting away on the intercom discussing our individual 'line-shoots' until, with the coast in sight, the Skipper again called on the 'Darkie' procedure and after a few anxious minutes a charming WAAF's voice replied "Hello Darkie V-Victor, this is Little Snoring, how do you read me?" As before the pilot and flying control WAAF entered into the intimate

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essentials needed to land a strange aircraft onto the home runway, heightened by the presence of the injured gunner.

In contrast to the difficult landing at Dyce, now followed a neat normal landing and, as before, we were accompanied down the runway by the fire engine and ambulance, as the Erk in dispersal signaled 'Cut Engines', the ambulance drew up to the fuselage door and off loaded the rear gunner. We missed him for a week or two and on his return he sported a couple of 'Wound Chevrons' reminding him to look after The King's Property, he had embedded in his elbow pieces of cartridge case from his own ammunition, blown there when the enemy had struck the ammunition tracks to the rear turret.

During that time we flew with a spare rear gunner several three hour trips, bombing rocket plane bases in Northern France before they needed intercepting by Spits, Hurricanes and AA guns over Southern England. On one occasion whilst on the 'run in' the bomb aimer was shocked to see a Halifax beneath us lose a wing by a stick of bombs from above, even more so when we realised they must have passed us on the way down!

We welcomed our gunner's return by a seven hour trip to Plainville marshalling yards using 'Broadcast Winds' listened for by the W/Op, after he had sent the previous 30 minute's winds we had found using Gee radar fixes - an act of faith if ever there was! But it was never used again although it appeared quite successful.

During the summer following D Day we continued bombing several V1 rocket launching pads, and troops and armour concentrations in Northern France in daylight, initially with some anxiety since our firepower was .303 calibre guns designed for night warfare, whilst the Yanks used 'Fortresses' with more crew and 0.5 calibre guns.

However losses were minimal on our squadron. One summer's afternoon eight went sight-seeing over Ostende and were lost to AA fire and we were warned that all channel ports were to be by passed and left for Marines to clear up. An early morning

trip gave the Skipper the opportunity to date his 'Yorkish' girlfriends, and we went rowing together at Stamford Bridge in the afternoon, a pleasant contrast to the welcome which enemy AA guns had given us that morning. Such 'jollys' came to an abrupt halt with a carefully planned night trip for eight hours direct to Stuttgart, at 18,000 feet with the return journey after a dog-leg from the target area, to fly at 10,000 feet due West to a point in France, then due North to base. We were assured that as we lowered to cruise at 10,000 feet diverting raids would be made elsewhere, to attract the night fighters away from the targeting 'morsels' of hundreds of heavy bombers all cruising along steadily at 10,000 feet silhouetted by bright moonlight on 10/10 cloud below us; which had been forecast to be above us!

As far as we knew this military gamble paid off, but as a solitary crew our troubles were not over yet. For a planned eight hour trip, each Halifax carried an auxiliary fuel tank in the bomb bay with an immersion fuel pump to feed the wing tanks. When the F/E started the wing balancing procedure and switched on the fuel pump, nothing happened. So again I was asked to find a course and ETA for England, but this time with normal G-fixes, so we set course for RAF Tangmere. As we approached the coast we came upon an unknown four engined bomber at a low height, although our IFF was on and the W/Op had exchanged identification, all hell broke out as the Royal Navy at the Isle of Wight and Southampton took advantage of this 'Target for Tonight' and the F/E had fired off all the 'colours of the day' with his Very Pistol! Again the beautiful Flying Control WAAF and the Skipper entered into the intimate essentials needed to land a heavy bomber, on what turned out to be a runway of a fighter squadron, and short of fuel to boot. Prior to landing, I had efficiently 'homed' the aircraft to what appeared to be Tangmere from the outer circle to the centre of the aerodrome, necessitating the Skipper to 'go round again'. My explanation of the accuracy of the G lines in the South West approaches being far more accurate than those on the Yorkshire East coast was not understood and cost me the price of a barrel of bitter at Base the following day!

(to be continued)

Tiger Moths to Lancasters

Tom Payne's flying experiences from 1942 to 2008 Part 2

After being demobbed in 1946 I applied for and was accepted by BEA for Commercial Pilot training, by this time my wife who I married in December 1944, had produced a daughter in July 1946 and was reluctant to have me flying off to Europe with overnight stops. Whilst stewardesses were at the back of my mind, they were at the front of hers, so I did not proceed with flying as a career.

However in 1949 I joined the week-end flyers of the RAFVR, this involved travelling to Panshanger Number 1 R.F.S. where I flew Tiger Moths that August getting in over 25 hours including trips to Rochester, Cambridge and Hamble, still without radios

In 1950 we received Chipmunks, these needed only an hour dual before going solo, it was pleasant in rainy weather to have a canopy but whilst they had a cartridge start system the cost, we were told was 2s.6d (12.1/2p today), was too much for regular use so props had to be swung by hand!!! Only on away flights could we obtain a cartridge for the return flight. Had an enjoyable September, including flights to Hamble, Shoreham & Rochester.



DHC Chipmunk

Had a small shock in 1951, due to a shortage of pilots with instrument flying capabilities, I and 17 other pilots in the RAFVR were called up for 3

months to obtain instrument rating flying Certificates. The RAF had recently introduced a rating system grading pilots with a white, green or Master Green Card. The rating levels being calculated against tests and the number of flying hours under instrument and night flying experience. The first month was spent flying Oxfords the other 2 months on Wellingtons.

Instructors turned out to be fellow RAFVR members who were called up for 18 months, it was quite an intensive course, about 25 hours on Oxfords and 55 on Wellingtons, most done "under the hood" or at night. By late February 1952 we qualified with our precious White or Green Cards, mine a Green but only on a flimsy piece of paper marked "Substitute R.A.F. Form 5214A" some how dated 18th December 1951. All the time efforts were being made by full time serving Officers to tempt us to join them as permanent RAF Officers. (Without any success). Returning to Panshanger was a joy, on days when the sky was overcast the management would try to get us airborne by saying "You have your cards now there isn't any excuse not to fly" our response if it was a bit dodgy was "Yes but mine has a yellow streak on it". We still flew without radios, cross country flights by map reading alone, during May I did trips to Cambridge and Derby on Tiger Moths.

In addition to flying hours, I managed to accumulate 115 hours in the Link Trainer, which only had a basic 6 instrument panel for a pilot to use and "fly" a set pattern. The modern machine, a "Flight Simulator", can train crews to operate in any theatre of war in the world replicating even the position of the stars for that global position and, with the use of GPS, pinpoint a target accurate to within the wingspan of their aircraft.

Finally our happiness stopped as the RAFVR was disbanded, our flying and getting paid to do it had ended, now in the Air Crew Association and the Moth Club I get one or two flights a year. Being grateful for small mercies I appreciate and gratefully accept every offer and long may it continue

Tom Payne

Airbus A330 with Contaminated Fuel



The decorated crew, Capt Waters(L) & FO Hayhoe

The Hong Kong Airline Pilots Association (HKALPA), in conjunction with the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations, recently announced that IFALPA's Polaris Award was presented to two of its members, Captain Malcolm Waters and First Officer David Hayhoe, at the IFALPA Annual Conference in Panama on 29 March 2014.

The Polaris Award is the highest honor associated with civil aviation awarded by IFALPA. It is presented to airline crews in recognition for acts of exceptional airmanship, heroic action, or a combination of these two attributes.

On 13 April 2010, Captain Waters and First Officer Hayhoe, in a twin engine A330, were faced with a totally unexpected inflight emergency involving loss of power on one engine and degraded power on the other. In addition, they had no control over the amount of thrust produced by the operating engine and indications on the flight deck gave no clue as to what the problem was or how to resolve it.

Since this was a completely unexpected situation, they had little guidance from existing procedures or checklists. Instead, drawing on their piloting experience, skill, and judgment, they safely landed their aircraft and its 322 passengers and crew. This was accomplished in spite of an approach and landing in Hong Kong that, by necessity, was 110 miles per hour above the normal landing speed.

The cause of the loss of power in both engines was discovered to be fuel, contaminated with seawater, that had been uploaded from the airport's fuel hydrant system at Surabaya, the flight's departure point.

Throughout the emergency, they acted with calmness and professionalism, keeping the cabin crew, passengers, and ATC aware of their situation whilst handling a complex and unforeseen emergency, and piloting the aircraft in a critical situation.

As a direct result of Captain Waters' and First Officer Hayhoe's professionalism and skill, the flight ended with a safe landing from a situation which could easily have produced a far worse outcome.



The ill fated A330 on the runway at Hong Kong

Presenting the award, IFALPA President Captain Don Wykoff praised Malcolm and Dave in undoubtedly saving many lives and acting in a manner to which all professional pilots could aspire.

For Waters and Hayhoe, the greatest testament to the actions that day is the lives still being lived. "I think about all the people running around the airport that day," says Waters. "All those kids on board can grow up and have kids of their own. I've had a child myself since. I look at him and I think, 'What a precious gift'."

Ed: *An amazing story, with a happy ending. Cathay Pacific are an airline with one of the best training systems in the world. It paid off that day!*

Are these a 'Fire Hazard'



Tom Payne lives in sheltered accommodation in Hemel Hempstead. He has finally decided to give up driving and obtained a scooter similar to the one in the photograph.

Now after receiving permission to park this inside the accommodation overnight, he has been sent another letter saying it will have to be removed as it causes a 'fire hazard'. No it is not blocking a fire exit nor does it contain a Boeing 787 Battery, it is a simple mode of disability transport, found all over the country.

Many veterans are in a similar state in that the disability scooter is their lifeline. It means they stay independent and stay physically much fitter than if they were marooned in their home. So why has this come about, it appears that the same organisation has done a U Turn (something Tom finds difficulty on the pavements of Hemel!).

Tom has contacted his MP who happens to be Mike Penning, a former member of the British Army retiring in 1980. Penning subsequently worked as a firefighter for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, but wait for it...he is now since 7 Oct 13 Minister of State for Disabled People!

We await the outcome of this case with interest. The cheap and easy answer would be a small shed/garage so the occupants could park their vehicles overnight but really are they a fire hazard?

Minister of State Mr Penning, over to you!

Jim Tomlinson

Jim Tomlinson passed away on 20 May. We send our condolences to his family and friends.

Jim was a Flight Engineer, although he had wanted to join as a Wireless Operator! After early training at Filey he did his Mechanics Course at 'Trebzue', right on the edge of RAF St Mawgan, being constructed at the time. He then completed the Flight Engineers Course at RAF St Athan before doing his first flight in a Lancaster as a 'fully trained' aircrew member at 1656 CU Lindholme. He was posted to No 103 Sqn at Elsham Wolds and started with 3 trips to Hamburg including the 'firestorm' one. He then did another 14 Ops and on the 11th of these they swung on take off but managed to miss those at the holding point! After his 17th he was hospitalised with a cold. His crew went off with another F/E and were shot down!

He was re-crewed at 1662 CU and posted to No 166 Sqn at Kirmington. Whilst on stand down he and his bomb aimer would hitch to his home town of Sheffield. He would meet up with his golf friend (later his wife). He would then catch the 4.30am train and arrive back to Elsham at 9.00am. As he said, lucky ops were at night and they could sleep by day! On completion of his tour he was moved to 1656 HCU at Lindholme before joining No 7 Sqn at Oakington. This involved 'Cooks Tours' taking groundcrew over Germany to see the damage.

He had hoped to join Transport Command but ended up at Abu Seir before eventually bringing home a Lancaster from Fayid, with an engine failure and diversion to Castel Benito. A complete set of new plugs sorted the problem and the journey to UK was completed in fine style.

Post war he rejoined the heavy steel industry (after all he came from Sheffield) and became a qualified metallurgist. Eventually, however, he moved south to Hemel Hempstead where he ended up as a shop keeper! RIP Jim.

After MH 370



Inmarsat's Tracking Centre

UK satellite operator Inmarsat is to offer a free, basic tracking service to all the world's passenger airliners. The offer follows the case of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370, which disappeared without trace on 8 March.

It was very brief electronic "pings" from Inmarsat equipment on the lost plane that prompted investigators to look for wreckage in the Indian Ocean. Inmarsat says the free service it is offering would carry definitive positional information. It would see a plane determine its location using GPS and then transmit that data - together with a heading, speed and altitude - over Inmarsat's global network of satellites every 15 minutes.

"Our equipment is on 90% of the world's wide-body jets already. This is an immediate fix for the industry at no cost to the industry," Inmarsat's Chris McLaughlin stated. Cost is one of the reasons often cited for the reluctance of airlines to routinely use satellite tracking. The company announced its offer ahead of a conference on aircraft tracking being hosted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal. Both ICAO and the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the trade association for the world's airlines, are currently considering how best to respond to the loss of MH370.

Many observers were incredulous that a Boeing 777 could simply vanish, that its identification

systems could be deliberately disabled in the cockpit, and that once the aircraft flew beyond the range of radar it was essentially invisible.

Investigators' only clue to MH370's possible whereabouts was a series of hourly electronic "handshakes" made between Inmarsat equipment onboard the plane and ground stations that were automatically checking to see if a satellite connection was still open.

Experts had to use frequency analysis techniques on these pings to derive some approximate positional information. This is far from ideal, so Inmarsat proposes that, at bare minimum, all passenger jets regularly transmit definitive data over its network. The satellite operator would carry the cost, anticipated to be about \$3m a year.

It already does something similar in the maritime sector. All distress calls from ships are relayed over its network free of charge. The company would hope to recoup costs as airlines moved to take up some of its premium services. "But we would keep that basic tracking service free of charge," said Mr McLaughlin.

A number of organisations have put forward proposals in recent weeks to try to prevent a repeat of a MH370-type mystery. The European Aviation Safety Agency has called for the power systems on "black box" flight recorders to be made to work underwater for at least 90 days, not the current 30 days. This would have given search teams more time to pinpoint transmissions on the Indian Ocean floor.

The agency also said the minimum recording duration of the cockpit voice recorder should be increased to 20 hours from the two hours currently demanded.

Search teams continue to scour the Indian Ocean for any sign of the missing Malaysia Airlines jet. The official leading the hunt for the missing airliner says a full search of the suspected crash area could take up to a year.

Programme 2014

- All events at 1030 for 1100 at Greenacres unless (*)]
- 3 Jun Visit to White Waltham
- 18 Jun 'Malcolm's War', Malcolm Cloult**
- 21 Jun Project Propeller, Gloucester/Staverton
- 16 Jul LHR Present & Future **Richard Smith**
- 16/17 Aug International Moth Rally, Woburn Abbey*
- 20 Aug Commonwealth War Graves, **Roy Rigg**
- 17 Sep Guest's Lunch 12.00 Noon
- 26 Sep Aircrew Lunch, Black Horse, Abingdon*
- 15 Oct RAF Chenies & Bovington, **Colin Oakes**
- 19 Nov Luftwaffe a/c of WW2, G/C **Chris Sprent**
- 17 Dec Xmas Lunch 12.00 Noon

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Welfare

A good turn out at the May Buffet with Alan Chappell and his son Peter making a rare and welcome visit. Alan is now in the Lewin House Care Home Aylesbury and would be pleased with any visit if you are in the area.

Sadly we have to report the passing of Jim Tomlinson, who we saw a few times at recent Meetings. No further details at the moment.

Tom Payne and Derek Gurney unfortunately couldn't join us but are in good form despite Tom having an argument with a curtain pole a couple of days ago. However he is presently having a rather bigger argument with the powers that be who have now decided that his electric mobility scooter is a fire hazard in its present parking area. I just wonder what they would have made of some of his former modes of transport, notably the Lancaster, fully fueled and bombed up. Take care if you see Tom anywhere, he is quite likely to explode!! The Editor has written to the RAF Benevolent Fund to ask for help with Tom's case.

Good to hear that Alan and Vi Dicker have settled into their Abbeyfield Home and are happy with their surroundings and the TLC they are getting from the staff. Their new details are below. **Bill**

Membership Secretary

Alan and Vi Dicker have moved into the Abbots Langley Abbeyfield and we wish them well in their new home and here are their details for your Membership List.

202 DICKER A.H.G. (Alan), Tanners Wood, 11 Greenways, Abbots Langley, Herts - WD5 0EU Tel: 01 923 517614 RF

I understand Ian Mason brought a guest to the Buffet Lunch and he left with a membership application, so thank you Ian for your efforts and hope it proves a success. Our current membership stands at 55.

Gerry**Editor**

I had a letter from the son of Jim Copus's Navigator having seen the article he wrote in the Newsletter, on the ACA website. Sadly the Nav has passed away but his son is now in contact with Jim. These tales of yesteryear do get read!

Graham