



# NEWSLETTER

## The RAF celebrate their centenary in London on 10 July 2018

### June Visit to RAF Halton Museum

‘Only 10 lunched at Greenacres for the June CACA meeting before moving to RAF Halton’s Trenchard Museum. Non ‘lunchers’ joined and 12 members had a very interesting visit to a compact but excellent venue. The curator, Francis Hanford introduced himself and gave the background to the history of the base and the aims of the museum. The rest of the afternoon was spent viewing the exhibits depicting the history and current operation of RAF Halton.

Additionally, a few walked cross the parade ground to a small aviation museum, the James McCudden Flight Heritage Centre, where there were Link trainers and a Chipmunk simulator.

The latter could not be missed by Ian Mason and our President, who both enjoyed smooth landings of the Chipmunk. Others who tried were not as successful!

Overall a very good visit that left a few, a promise to return and spend more time at the very well formed museum’. Thanks David for the organisation of the visit.



RAF  
100

**Tuesday 10th July**

Over a thousand servicemen and women will take part in a parade on The Mall at 11:25am.

Then at 1:00pm witness the historic flypast where up to 100 aircraft, representing the RAF’s history, will fly over Buckingham Palace.



**Remember 18th July 2018**

“Deception in WW2”

with

**Hugh Grainger**

**Greenacres 1030 for 1100**

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

**Ed:** Extracts from Jack's First World War Logbook, on Active Service. April/May 1918 again is very busy

12	DH4	110 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Deupiene Aerodrome. When we got to the target the aerodrome was full of Hun machines on the ground. All bombs were dropped on these & two were observed to burst among them. AA fire very intense & accurate. No E.A. seen.
12	DH4	71 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Deupiene Aerodrome. I was forced to pull out with engine trouble & signaled to my observer to fire lights. He fired a red one in mistake for a green & immediately Lt Flt's observer (2nd Lt James) saw this & dropped his bombs (twenty miles this side of our lines) & the whole of the rest of the formation followed Dickson (who was also forced to fall out) & myself home. Altogether the whole thing was frightful chaos. Third raid today.
12	DH4	122 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Villages of Meyiers & Fresnoy. Several bursts observed on both targets & two fires caused in the latter. On of the worst shellings I have ever had & I thought they had got a direct hit several times. No Huns. Large formation of German troops observed.
20	DH4	102 mins (PI)	Attempted Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. This raid had to be abandoned owing to the adverse weather conditions which made it impossible to continue. Landed with all bombs. Lt Day landed with bombs & crashed. All of the bombs exploded & left the machine laying in the middle of the aerodrome. The fire caused several more bombs to explode. He sustained a compound fracture of the left leg but was otherwise unhurt. His machine was burnt to cinders. His gunlayer (Mackay) unhurt.
21	DH4	145 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. All bombs dropped on the target with very good results. Three direct hits obtained on the station. No Huns sighted & very little AA & what there was, was very inaccurate.
21	DH4	121 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Village of Marceleaux & Railway. Ten of us started out but only four of us got across the lines. The others all lost themselves & returned with their bombs. Two fires caused in the village. The worst shelling I've had. Thirty-two holes in my machine from archie. No E.A. Sighted.

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23	DH4	190 mins (P1)	<p>Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. On crossing the lines, we ran into a formation of Huns amounting to about 40 machines. We were a formation of only five (all naval pilots &amp; observers). The Huns followed us &amp; did not attack until we were just about to drop our bombs. Then they went for us. Lt Cocks was set on fire &amp; wounded almost immediately &amp; started to dive. He, however, succeeded in getting the fire out &amp; landed his machine this side of the lines (a very praiseworthy piece of work). Then E.AQ, attacked from both sides &amp; the rear. We got absolutely lost in the fighting &amp; three of us (Gaman, Sidle &amp; myself) landed at a French aerodrome at Poix. Then I lost my engine twice &amp; the other two went off without me. It was twilight (7:50) before I got going again. However, I thought I might be able to make home before dark, but had not the time to do it in &amp; was forced to land in darkness at Saigneville where I put up for the night with the AA people. Made a very good landing in a cornfield. This was the worst fight I've ever been in.</p>
24	DH4	30 mins (P1)	<p>Flying Machine Back from Saigneville. Clouds were very low indeed but I decided to start. Got home &amp; made a very good landing but failed to notice the tent &amp; caught one of the wires with my left hand upper aileron &amp; broke it &amp; one of the interplane struts.</p>
MAY 1918			
2	DH4	102 mins (P1)	<p>Attempted Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. Clouds at 1000ft completely hid the ground &amp; the raid was washed out by the leader (Capt Gaman).</p>
2	DH4	92 mins (P1)	<p>Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. I could not get the machine above 12000ft so after vainly trying for an hour, I returned without crossing the lines.</p>
ON ACTIVE SERVICE – No 205 SQUADRON			
19	DH4	121 mins (P1)	<p>Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. My first raid as a Flight Commander. I did not lead. No AA fire &amp; no E.A. A very cushy raid indeed.</p>
20	DH4	135 mins (P1)	<p>Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. We were attacked in a half-hearted way by a formation of Hun Scouts, one of which was shot down in flames &amp; seen to crash. AA plentiful but very inaccurate. I obtained a direct hit on the target with 112lb bomb.</p>

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**ILAFFT**

**Ed:** *A second 'I learnt about flying from that' from Alistair MacPherson and his Jodel (but this time flown by his father!)*

Flicking through the pages of my late father's Flying Log Book recently, I came across an entry dated 11th of August 1969 with the comment "Pwllheli, coast etc !!!" under "Remarks", which will always remain imprinted in my mind too.

Our aircraft, a Jodel Ambassadeur, DR1050, G-AVOA (still flying today), was based at RAF Valley for two weeks while we holidayed in Anglesey.

After a weather briefing, which suggested all was fine for our intended route for VFR flying, we departed at 15.00 local time for our destination, Pwllheli. However, as we approached the southern part of the Llyn Peninsula along the coast, towards our destination, the cloud increased and our navigational points of reference became harder to define.

As my captain pressed onwards towards the old indistinctive grass airfield, the lowering cloud base continually dropped and suddenly, visibility became none existent as we inadvertently entered the dark grey murk. Instinctively and highly aware of the high ground around us, yet uncertain of our exact position, he immediately increased power and initiated a steep climb.

Within minutes, I became aware of dust filling the cockpit, the instruments not making any sense to me at all (which had in fact "toppled" as I was later informed) and the airspeed indicator off the clock! (I recall a VNE of 163 MPH in this aircraft)

I looked towards father seeking some reassurance, but who was totally engrossed flying the aircraft, as the engine noise levels had increased also, to see that his hair, what little he had, was almost standing on end!

We were then subjected to incredible positive gravity forces, such as I never experienced in my life before and at that moment, we burst out of the cloud at a tremendously high rate of knots towards a road, the white lines of which and surface texture I could clearly make out! Instinctively, I braced myself for

impact by placing my hands against the instrument panel. A thought flashed through my mind of another brief article bearing our names appearing in the Daily Express "Light Aircraft fatalities in Snowdonia" as was virtually commonplace then and sadly continue to occur today.

With a tremendous downwards force, pressing me firmly into me seat and a sensation as if my body weighed ten times more, the aircraft then entered straight and level flight beneath the cloud, all be it at a very low height above the ground and the engine was coughing severely.

How the wings didn't separate given the amazing G Force experienced during the recovery served as testament to the strength of primarily wooden and fabric constructed aircraft such Jodels

Fortunately, we could see the coast line and headed towards it looking for somewhere to force land if the engine became worse. Within seconds, the trusty Rolls Royce Continental engine picked up and resumed running smoothly, we however personally were far from running smoothly and in a state of shock from the ordeal. As we arrived at the coast, the visibility improved and the cloud base suddenly lifted. CAVOK.



*Llanbedr Airfield from the south*

We could see the welcoming long runway of Llanbedr in the distance, a restricted airfield at that time but nevertheless, headed towards it to execute an emergency landing. As we neared though, our confidence in the reliability of the RR Power unit had increased to the point that we both agreed that the worst was behind us and elected to return to Valley, gradually increasing height and hugging the coastline all the way.



*The Jodel G-AVOA is still flying today*

The return flight was uneventful but I will never forget the sensation of putting my shaking wobbly legs back onto terra firma!

We were greeted by a very kind RAF airman on the apron who asked if we were OK as they had lost radar contact with us for a while. Such was their concern that they offered to look over the aircraft for us, an invitation accepted until we could return the aircraft to its engineering base back at Manchester Ringway for a fuller examination (a comprehensive check later revealed that there had been no stress to the airframe nor engine)

On leaving RAF Valley, we headed for the nearest licenced hostelry to settle our nerves and a debrief from father.

He told me that he had soon realised that the aircraft had entered a spin during the climb into the cloud, as he had overlooked trimming it. He added that he was halfway through an IMC Rating Course and was unsure whether to apply right or left rudder during our spin earthwards. Fortunately, instinctively, he chose the correct direction, incorrect application would have aggravated the spin making recovery impossible, given the very low height that we were operating at. At this

juncture, it is notable that Jodel DR1050 is not cleared for spinning due to the small rudder size!

Undeterred by this death defying experience, I later gained my own PPL in the Jodel.

Due to it not being certified for spinning, I enjoyed the spinning exercise in a Tiger Moth, high over the Dee Estuary. (The slipstream from which any incorrect rudder application would slap me in the face being open cockpit and a tremendous discipline for appropriate use in general flight)

As a young passenger at the time, I ultimately benefitted tremendously from this terrifying "character building" experience.

Not only did it enhance my zest for life, but also gave me a very healthy respect for unexpected worsening weather conditions and visibility if flying into solid cumula granite is to be avoided, as are plentiful in Snowdonia, especially without an IMC rating, never to press on and always to turn back!

**By Alistair Macpherson**

**Ed:** Thank you Al and I understand No 3 is in production and will involve Tony Brown (our Air Traffic Correspondent) and possibly his daughter!

**Devon D-Day celebrations 2018  
Saunton Sands**



Hosted by Friends of the Assault Training Center and attended by the 304th Panzergrenadiers and the 2nd Devons'. Devon D-Day 2018' was held at Saunton for the 75th Anniversary of the creation of the Assault Training Center when American soldiers started arriving for their training for D-Day 1944.



Saturday 2nd June 2018 was a WW2 Vehicle Convoy starting at Cobbaton Combat Collection and arriving at Saunton Sands around lunchtime. On Sunday 3rd June 2018 Saunton D-Day was held on Saunton Beach, and featured a number of aircraft

The celebration is an annual one but Saunton Sands has also seen larger military aircraft. The J Model Hercules practiced 'beach landings' there in 2014 and prior to that the I30K had been a visitor a number of



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

Ingrid has suggested that I explain to the younger aircrew amongst you, how the area radar system worked in the eighties and nineties . She has offered me a reward if I do so. I therefore have no alternative!. There were three area radar units . London, Manchester and Scottish. Aircraft coming North would be handed from London to Manchester who would subsequently hand them over to Scottish. The same principle applied in the opposite direction. Likewise aircraft coming east from Ireland would be handed to Manchester. They would then be handed over to Northern Radar at RAF Lindholme. This was an operational flying station with a specific radar unit attached. This was manned by RAF personnel on UHF and a lodger unit of civilian controllers on VHF. Aircraft flying on airways would remain with the civilians who would subsequently hand them over to Amsterdam or Copenhagen and military aircraft would remain with the RAF. Military crossing of airways could be tricky if it was busy, resulting in a lot of coordination but it worked very well. You now remember it all!!

gets airborne and is later transferred to the civil controller as he leaves the airway for bandit country. The 747 already holding at FL 180 is put on a northerly heading as the Learjet heads east at FL 170. It's a bit hazy and nothing is seen so each aircraft does a 180 and comes back on the reciprocal heading. Still nothing seen as the UHF and VHF controllers with increasingly high pitched voices, try to coordinate things on two different frequencies. Suddenly the 747 yells "I can see him. I can see him" "Tell him to continue on his present heading and I will position on his right hand side". Further co ordination takes place and the 747 is cleared to descend and to continue visually.



Lufthansa 747-200



Learjet

Five minutes later on the emergency frequency: "Help me, help me I am a German Air Force Starfighter on a military exercise. A 747 has formatted on my right hand side and no matter what I do I can't shake him off!!"

A certain airline in Germany, which for the sake of anonymity we will call Lufthansa, had taken delivery of a brand new 747 and wanted to to get some air to air shots for a TV commercial. The European ATC units were not very receptive to this idea and suggested an approach to UK controllers. They were far more cooperative but insisted that both aircraft had UHF as they would be operating in military airspace. The photo aircraft ,a Lear jet ,would depart from Manchester flying airways as would the 747 from Munich until they left controlled airspace east of Hull. An operational window from 1230 to 1245 was allocated. The 747 had no problem with UHF but the promised set for the Lear jet failed to turn up. Getting desperate the pilot threw himself on the mercy of Manchester ATC who convince Lindholme to accept it on VHF. The Learjet



F104 Starfighter

So when a pilot says he has the traffic in sight and is happy to go VFR, ATC will just let him get on with it. I suppose Lufthansa's 747 ground-school does not include much aircraft recognition-just enough to recognise a Boeing 747-200, so the crew walk to the correct aircraft on the ramp!

**Ed:** *As Tony says, these are all true!*

**Programme 2018**

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

**2018**

18 Jul Deception in WW2 - Hugh Grainger

15 Aug

19 Sep

17 Oct 'Stag Lane Aerodrome 1917-1934' -  
Stuart McKay

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**Welfare**

We have heard from Roger Miller who has been AWOL for a while, but for a very good reason he had a knee replacement on 4 Jun and when he has recovered from that he has to have both ankles done (not at same time I hope). He apologises for his absence but hopes to see us before too long.

**David**

**Secretary/Editor**

It was good to hear from Alistair MacPherson again, not only that he sent another ILAFFT but that it meant he had recovered from a long period of ill health. Our very best wishes Alistair and we hope to hear from you again soon.

**Graham**

**President's Report on  
Project Propeller 2019**

My flight this year from Elstree to Halfpenney Green Airfield, Wolverhampton with Mark and Nick in their single engine Cirrus. Weather at Elstree was not good...overcast with cloud base at 1800 feet as we head to Bovingdon then climbing through cloud to 5000 feet and brilliant sunshine.

Heading to Brize Norton, Nick requests clearance for a low pass over the the airfield and with permission granted descends to 500 feet flying down the runway giving superb views of the Airbus 400m transport aircraft (Atlas) based there. Airspace is very busy as we arrive at Halfpenny Green and we circle a couple of times before joining the circuit.

Today marks the 20th anniversary of PP and a programme of events is highlighted by a visit from the B of B flight Lancaster making three passes at low level. Chiltern was well represented by Derek, Charlie, Bill, Ron, Sandy, Dennis and Harold, sadly Roy and Rod's pilot opted out due to weather conditions.

Static aircraft on show include an Army Auster, an American Beechcraft, Stearman and a Magister together with model aircraft.

Our return journey was under cloud at 1800feet, arriving at Elstree at 16.30hours. A great day in the air.

I join with others in thanking the pilots for putting their aircraft at our disposal and to Graham Cowie and his team for making the whole operation such a success. Look forward to 2019!

**Geoff**