



# NEWSLETTER

**Subscriptions now long Overdue please pay Gerry S-B asap!**

## Dreamliner Colin

At our February meeting we had a fascinating and very detailed look at 'The Dreamliner' or to be more accurate The Boeing 787-8 of Thompson Airways from **Captain Colin Read.**

After an initial look at some of the technical aspects of the aircraft, he took us on an imaginary flight from London/Gatwick to Barbados. It did not take long to realise the increase in automation, in a modern day airliner. This started as the Captain reached the aircraft, he no longer uses the radio to call Air Traffic for his ATC clearance but sends them a message from one of the onboard computers, When this message is acknowledged it is done in the same manner. His route is put into the navigation computer, not by the pilots but by staff from the airline, miles away from Gatwick!

Then came start up (automatic) and taxiing which believe it or not is done by the Captain! After a rolling take off, it is not long before the automatics take over. There is even a 'head up display', which should mean Thompson will have a steady supply of fighter pilots knocking on their door for jobs!

En route is where the automatics really come into their own, as much of the communications, formerly conducted with much frustration on HF radio, is now done by satellite communications.

The flight distance to Barbados is just over 4200 nm's, whereas they can fly to Phuket, Thailand which is over 6000 nm's. With a 3 pilot crew, this can mean a 'crew duty' day of 14 to 15 hours. Tiring, yes, but not as tiring in many other aircraft, as the cabin altitude at a cruise of 40,000 ft is only 6,000 ft in comparison to the normal 8,000 ft (more oxygen to the brain) and the Relative Humidity is higher 16% as against 4% in the 747. Both these factors combined, together with the larger, oval shaped, cabin give crew and passengers a far more comfortable ride.

Finally the landing can be fully automatic but there is a move to make crews do manual landings, more often. All in all, a wonderful modern aircraft and a great introduction to modern airline operations. Colin retires in August so we have a job for his 'next door neighbour of 40 years', Bill George to ensure he joins The Chiltern Aircrew Association! Thank you so much Colin, and enjoy that retirement when it comes in August.

### A R 'Tony' Stephens

Tony passed away on 6 February and his funeral is to be held on Monday 2 March at Garston Crematorium at 11.40 am and afterwards at Harpenden RBL See Page 4.

Remember 18th March 2015

**"The Bomber Command Memorial"**  
by  
*Harry Irons*

Greenacres 10.30 for 11.00 am.



**Malcolm Cloutt in Burma**

**Ed:** *Malcolm Cloutt (94) you may remember gave us a presentation last year. He was also busy visiting Burma, a 5332 mile journey to visit the crash site that he mentioned in his talk. His story starts here:-*

*Children – well usually children –ask me about my part in WW2 as an RAF Pilot. The usual questions and answers include:*

*(In awe.) “Did you fly Spitfires?” “No, I was not a Fighter Pilot.”*

*(Hopefully.) “Did you drop bombs?” “Only two, but I was not a bomber pilot.”*

*(Disappointed.) Didn't you kill any enemy?” “Not that I'm aware of.”*

*(Puzzled.) “So what DID you do?” “My story will tell you,!”*

So read on, and all will be explained.

Full name Leonard Malcolm Cloutt, always called Malcolm, so why the Leonard bit? At school I was not aware of it. My Father must have been to blame, probably having a friend named Malcolm in the 42nd Seaforth Highlanders, in which he served during the Great War. His own names were Charles Leonard, and it was normal for a child to be given one of the parents' names.

I arrived two-and-a-half years after my sister, Iris Eva (people who pronounced our surname “Clowt” instead of “Clout” made fun with those Christian names). She

was born when Germany was bombing England from airships during the Great War, optimistically called “the war to end wars”.

My secondary school, the Wimbledon Selective Central School, was a constant joy, where I achieved well, especially in all areas of mathematics (a necessary prerequisite later for an RAF Pilot). My fourth form and Maths Master, “Charlie” “Lee” to us boys, was an ex Royal Flying Corp (later RAF) pilot in the 1914-18 war, who bore facial scars from his dangerous flying. I wonder if it was my respect for him that led me to choose aircrew. Later, he met me in uniform with my coveted “Wings”, and he was back in uniform too. He was clearly “chuffed” to meet one of his boys again (maybe proud, too?)

I want to put Transport Command and, in particular, the wonderful DC3 aircraft (Dakota) on the map, since it seem to have been the “poor cousins” of war-time reporting. True, its exploits don't match those of Bomber and Fighter Commands, but they were essential ingredients in the successful conclusion of the European fighting due to their airborne operations on D-Day, at Arnhem and the Rhine crossing, and were vital to the defeat of the Japanese in Burma and Pacific areas through supply missions.

I am writing what I know about, using relevant reports from various sources such as “Forged in War” by Humphrey Wynn of the Air Historical Branch, “Sixty Glorious Years” by Arthur Pearcy, “The Forgotten Air Force” by Air Commodore Henry Probert, and the world-wide web.

Some attempts have been made to keep the Dakotas - these “old war horses” - in the public eye, as at, for example, the 2007 Jersey Air Show that I attended, where a Dakota was given pride of place in leading the air display, but I guess that was as much to do with its age as its exploits. And in the 70th year celebrations of the D-Day landings in Normandy these aeroplanes have seen TV coverage because of their part in carrying many paratroops and gliders, which are only two examples of their important role in bringing about an earlier end to WW2. Note, however, it was not all RAF doing for, as Henry Probert wrote, ‘we have to honour a large share of that with the USA and their C47's’, as they named their version of our Dakota.

How did I come to be an RAF Pilot? My interest began in the Spring of 1939 when young men were persuaded to join one or other of the Service Reserves, for it was becoming obvious that we would soon be at war with Nazi Germany, despite Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's optimistic return paper

*(Continued on Page 3)*

*(continued from Page 2)*

from Germany waving a piece of paper (it can hardly be called an Agreement) signed by Hitler, and declaring that there would be "peace in our time". I chose aircrew as the lesser of the three evils! I had been brought up on a diet of Great War films (many of them silent, with a pianist playing suitable music – sad or exciting according to the picture, and I remember in my local cinema seeing 'stars' of the day, Mary Pickford and Charlie Chaplin. Those war films showed mud and blood and death in Flanders, and then seeing for myself the many de-limbed men in the community, that ruled out the Army for me! Also I was not a proficient swimmer, so the thought of being ship-wrecked dissuaded me from the Navy. But somehow the glamour of aircrew "Wings" conquered any fear I had in that direction. So I applied to the RAF for any position in Aircrew, never imagining that, in due course, I would be selected for pilot training.

At my first interview I was rejected ignominiously! Although I had reached matriculation (then the University entrance examination) standard, remember, I had left school three years previously and forgotten much of my maths. Anyway, it was then only a few months before war was declared following Germany's invasion of neighbouring countries, so I tried to enlist, again, unsuccessfully, for I was told that I could not be considered for aircrew, having once been rejected. I was so upset that I decided to sit back and wait until I was "called up". By then the Battle of Britain losses, and Bomber Command needs for aircrew overlooked the previous objection, and I was in fact accepted.

In the meantime I advanced my Maths' studies with the aid of text books from the local library. But vital additional help came from my cousin Walter Snell (later a Squadron Leader on Lancaster bombers surviving several tours) who, complete with 'Pilot's Wings', called to see me. He was a year older. He told me how important would be aircraft recognition when I was next interviewed, and he gave me his pack of cards bearing, on one side various silhouettes of our own and enemy aircraft, and, on the other side, details of the aircraft. As a result, when I was interviewed in the Summer of 1940, I sailed though, and was recommended for Pilot training, enlisting in September, together with my oldest friend, Gerald, who had similarly been recommended. We had played together as kids from the age of four, living only six doors apart and attending the same schools. Gerald was curly-haired, headstrong and quick-tempered as his Irish heritage might suggest. Sometimes we fought, as even friends do, and he always won. I think

he would have made a good fighter pilot but for failing in ground subjects. (I only scraped through.)

Training began with "square bashing" to instill discipline. Actually one got to enjoy and be proud of performing well. We were housed in what had been luxury flats in St. John's Wood in London, not far from Regents' Park Zoo, being marched there for our meals! In the other direction was Lords' Cricket ground, where our pay parades were held. We were called in alphabetical order, which always kept one guy waiting, because he was Greek, having a name beginning with "Z".

Hanging in the dormitory was a sign, "Newspaper is to be cut up into pieces 6" x 4". That obviously caused much amusement. There was a white paper shortage (amongst many other things in very short supply and rationed) and what there was had a greyish colour). The whole of our first evening was trying to put a shine on our new boots, with the advice of the ex-policemen in our ranks. Those same two men come briefly a couple more times in my story.

After being kitted with uniforms, and pricked with some painful inoculations, the realities of Service life became a new way of life, making new friendships. Being only a bus ride from home we made the journey to parade our uniforms! En route we practised saluting anything that looked like an Officer!

I was posted to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) for training. Many others were sent to Canada and Australia, as flying training in England was becoming a problem due to increasing German air raids on our airfields.

In Faraday Road, Wimbledon, our home, three bombs fell at different times, one a hundred yards away, causing us only broken windows, but others killing some of our greengrocer's family. Hearing the bombs screaming down, one after the other: each getting near, was scary. My own fiancée, Lily, and her family were bombed, but survived. They were buried under rubble, and a neighbour was killed. For them and others accommodation for the rest of the war was provided in Government-commandeered properties that were left unoccupied., usually by people who moved to safe areas. The material needs of the war required the commandeering of various things, like the wrought-iron gates and railings around houses. We lost ours. And if you produced eggs, or any things rationed, it had to be surrendered for the common good.

*(To be continued)*

**Tony Stephens****Passed away 6 Feb 15**

Tony trained in East London, South Africa from Nov 41 to Mar 42, then back to Dumfries and Moreton in Marsh flying Ansons, Battles, Bothas and Wellingtons. During his career Tony flew seven marks of Wellingtons variously equipped with mines, bombs, ASR/Flares (known as Goofington), 2x 18 inch Torpedoes (known as Fishington), Leigh Lights and depth charges with No 38 Sqn (Bomber Command) and 221 Sqn (Coastal Command).

Despite 38 Ops and quite a lot of excitement, he remembered one particular take off from Gibraltar as one of his most frightening experiences! It was in a Wellington 1c with full crew and kit and overload tanks. As you will be aware the runway at Gib extends into the sea. They took off at 90 knots with about 20 yards of runway spare! Their flight time to Gambia was 12 hrs 40 mins.

In January 1943 Tony was operational from Luqa, Malta, in a search for a tanker and two destroyers. The target was located at night and then Tony's Wellington attacked at a height of 60 ft over the sea and scored hits with both torpedoes. The tanker split in two and was on fire from end to end. The Skipper was awarded an immediate DFM, which of course reflected on the whole crew.

In civilian life he had a job, nearly as exciting as his war-time occupation. He was a lighting engineer, selling and supervising the installation of high mast lighting (up to 50 metres) at ports, airports, roads, car parks, railways and sports fields and all of this worldwide. So he has travelled with this job almost all over the world, so plenty of passenger hours to add to his log book hours.

One of Tony's interests was stamp collecting and he was a past President of the Harpenden Philatelic Society. Through this society he met the local CO of a Territorial Army unit, which he joined in 1947. As he was commissioned in the RAF, the TA gave him the rank of Colour Sergeant! After some happy years as a 'brown job' he joined the RAFVR in 1951, navigating Ansons out of Panshanger to various parts of the country, as well as the odd 'duty free' run to Jersey. During his career he flew with 66 pilots and visited 16 countries. In retirement he attended reunions of 221 Sqn and was also a Committee member of Harpenden RAFA and he also had interests in the Royal British Legion, The DH Mosquito Museum, George Cross Island Association (Life Member). Tony also had interests in Model Railways, gardening and tennis!

Our condolences to his family.

**Woking ACA**

**Rod Finn Reports:** Whilst talking with Tony Boxall at Woking ACA on 12 Feb, the subject of us joining the branch for a pub lunch the following week (17 Feb) was mentioned. It was all a bit quick but I rang Tom Payne, Roy Briggs and Derek Gurney who were all in agreement.

Having collected my passengers it was off down the M25/M3 and other town and village roads until we arrived at The Royal Oak, Aldershot Road, Pirbright. Tony mentioned that he and the members normally arrive for 12 noon. I checked my watch and we arrived exactly 12 noon as well, bearing in mind the motorway route we had enjoyed a good journey.

Once inside we met up and were greeted by most of the Woking committee i.e. Bill Bawden, Ron Hepburn, Tony Rest, Eric Smith, Tony Boxall and of course their members and ladies. We found a table ordered our food and whilst waiting for it to arrive Derek got into deep conversation with Fred Hooker of Woking, and it transpired that (a) they had both flown Halifax's and (b) they had both trained at Pocklington. Lunch duly arrived and was most enjoyable and over coffee we all mixed with other Woking members including Bill Moore, Sir Paul Holden (Flight Lieutenant, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in 1942), much hand shaking took place, some photo albums were produced and plenty of talking and reminiscing took place. Come 3pm as the Woking members started to depart we set off on our return journey.

Tony Boxall informed me that for the months of November, January and February Woking ACA adjourn to the Royal Oak (their Xmas function is elsewhere) and then from March through October they have evening meetings in The Clubhouse, Fair Oaks Airport. Tony and his committee colleagues have invited Chiltern ACA to their 'Flying Evening' which will be held in June, possibly on a Friday evening but on a date to be confirmed. Once the date is confirmed Tony will let us know.

Thanks, as always to Tom, Roy and Derek for their company, and Tom (not Tom Tom) for navigating....!

**Ed:** *I have spoken to the Woking Branch on 3 occasions and Bill George has also spoken of his 3.....hours (you know what I mean) as a National Service Pilot. Some of their members have attended our guest lunches, they really are an excellent bunch, Sadly, their member, Jimmy James who attended the 2014 Aircrew Lunch, passed away earlier this year and will be sadly missed by his many friends - a real gentleman RIP*

## Guy Buckingham

### Part 2

The trip to Malta took a few weeks, it was at times, exciting, scary (avoiding submarines) but mostly downright boring! On arrival in Malta nobody seemed to know about us, so we boarded another troopship, the 'Somerset' bound for Port Said, then to RAF Abu Sueir by truck. We stayed in a transit camp there for a few days, just waiting for news.

It was then decided to send 25 of us to No 47 Sqn based at Khartoum. We were kitted out with Topees (pith helmets to you), shorts and lots of other necessary gear and sent on our way. We travelled on a troop train from Cairo on the Egyptian State Railway. The train had wooden seats and no glass in the windows, it did, however, have a large earthenware container at each end of the carriage, - warm drinking water was our only comfort!



*On the Khartoum bound train*

The train was primitive with two engines, one at each end. The drivers had a scheme of signals to organise stopping and starting - or so we thought! After a few miles things started to go drastically wrong. A single blast from either engine, meant that the other one should stop, simple enough, but sometimes this did not happen and the front engine would continue after the rear engine had applied the brakes, this nearly pulled the carriages in half! The system was not helped when drivers saw mates on the route and 'hooted' at them, playing havoc with the stop/start programme.

The line ran along the Suez Canal, we also travelled through the Valley of the Kings, where Tutankhamun was discovered. Further on at Abu Simbel we saw the enormous temple, cut out from the side of a mountain. When the train reached Wadi Halfa we changed to a Sudan Government train, necessary as the gauge of the track changed within Sudan. After the 10 day trip we finally arrived in Khartoum.

When we arrived at RAF Khartoum, the whole of the station turned out to greet us, they had been there about 3 years and some of them looked quite mad 'sand happy' as we called them.

The living quarters were very old and were so hot and uncomfortable, that at night we took our beds onto the roof where it was cooler and free from mosquitos. The 'mess' was very good in comparison, table cloths, water jugs all very nicely laid out, the food was also quite good. There were two squadrons based at Khartoum, 47 and 223, their planes a mixed collection of all pre-war and not much use for wartime, namely: Wellesley's, Vincent's, Gordon's, a Valencia, a Bombay and a very old Walrus.

The Walrus had folding wings joined by a 3 inch diameter sleeve with left and right threads. Some were so worn, that only a few threads held the wings together.

The Valencia was used for carting engines and other spare parts about, but it was prehistoric and very slow. At times, with a strong headwind it would even fly backwards with an IAS of 80 mph. The only way to get it anywhere was to 'tack' like a sailing boat!



*Vickers Valencia (without the spinnaker)*

The Bombay was also used for transport, but on a few occasions bombs were dropped from it by pushing them out the door!

**Ed:** *More from our Khartoum correspondent next month*

## TransAsia Airlines



### ATR 72

The Taiwanese Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) reported that it is increasing the inspections of the operations of TransAsia Airways in the aftermath of the fatal accident involving flight GE235 at Taipei.

The investigation of the February 4 accident involving a TransAsia ATR-72 focusses on the way the pilots handled an apparent engine failure. Preliminary information suggests the pilots proceeded to shut down and restart the remaining working engine during the emergency.

This led the Taiwanese CAA to order oral proficiency tests of all of TransAsia's ATR-72 pilots on handling an aircraft during engine failure. By February 11 a total of 49 pilots had been tested, with ten of them failing the test. TransAsia suspended these pilots from flying duties and sent them for refresher training. Meanwhile, the CAA increased the cockpit en route inspection frequency of TransAsia.

So here we go again, queries of the training and competency of pilots. Shutting down the wrong engine has always been a problem and the RAF have over the years seen a number of incidents and accidents as a result of these actions. You will no doubt remember the tragic case of the British Midland 737 that crashed on short finals to East Midlands, when the engine that was giving problems finally failed, whilst a perfectly serviceable engine had been shut down in error.

What do we do? Well certainly the introduction of simulators has helped and all airlines that carry out simulator training put much time into engine failure drills. In the Transavia case did the fact that an instructor pilot was on the jump seat, put the operating crew

under extra strain. What is not clear at the moment is why he was there? Was he 'dead heading' or were there problems with one of the operating crew, or was it a routine check ride. When the final report is issued, all will be explained. In the meantime what has already been made public makes for uncomfortable reading.

## Engine Runs

We, of course, have our own 'Engineer' in the form of Roger Miller. I am sure he will not need to be reminded of what an Engineering Officer did whilst engine running a Lightning at RAF Lyneham, many years ago. There was also a nasty incident at Airbus Toulouse to an Airbus A340 of Qatar Airways. Well it has alas happened again, this time at the International Airport in the Ukraine capital Kiev. As if they did not have enough troubles at the moment!

An Antonov 26B, registration EW-246TG sustained substantial damage in a ground accident at Kiev-Borispol Airport, Ukraine.

During an engine test, the throttles were inadvertently opened to full throttle. The aircraft ran forward and collided with a parked Yakovlev 40, registration UR-MIG. The nr.1 propeller slashed away the nose section of the Yak-40 until the prop separated from the engine. The aircraft came to rest with the nose section of the Yah-40 wedged between the Antonov's no 1 engine and fuselage.



*Note the weather conditions!*

Luckily the YAK 40 cockpit was unoccupied at the time! No sign of chocks either, despite the weather! It looks like 'PPP' which is Pi.. Poor Preparation!

**Who is this CACA member ?**



*The Navigator*



*The Office*

He flew with No 15 Squadron at RAF Cottesmore from 1 Sep 58, when the previous Canberra squadron was reformed with the Handley Page Victor.



HPVictor

So there are the clues, who is our member? You may well be surprised, but you will have to wait until the April edition to find out.

**John Franklin's Books**



A good friend of John's David Edwards visited us at our Feb meeting and delivered a box of books and a picture of John's, that the family had passed on to him. David wanted them to go to a good 'Aviation home', so in turn has passed them to us. The committee have decided to offer the books to members for a suitable donation. Once the picture has been restored we will decide on how it should be disposed of.

- Bombers (Bill Gunston)
- Bomber Command (RAF Museum Guide)
- Britain's Aviation Heritage (A celebration of 90 years of the RAF)
- Bomber Command (Max Hastings)
- The Army in the Air (Gen Sir Anthony Farrah-Hockley)
- Spitfire at War 2 (Alfred Price)
- Watch Opened - a brief history of aircrew in the Air Communications and Electronics Role (MAEOp R V Radford MBE)

## Programme 2015

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

- 18 Mar The Bomber Command Memorial Harry Irons**
- 15 Apr Member's meeting
- 20 May Guest's Lunch\* 1200 Noon
- 30 May Project Propeller\* - Cosford
- 17 Jun Airliners - Chris Sprent
- 15 Jul Concord, Boom or Bust? - Alan Merriman
- 19 Aug Battle of Britain - Chris Wren

## Your Committee

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## Welfare

Sorry to have missed the last couple of meetings as I globetrotted around the world (if you can call Tenerife, globetrotting?). I have managed a few telephone calls but with no major information. Sorry to hear George Meredith had a small 'prang' in his car outside Greenacres, but he reports he is ok, this despite ambulance and police arriving on the scene, after the occupants of the other car had claimed injury! Alas on assessing the vehicles the police concluded there was either no contact or at worst minimal contact. Tom Payne and Gerry Sealy Bell have visited Vi Dicker at her Abbeyfield flat, With Alan in a nearby home she was pleased to see them, particularly as some of her family are currently overseas.

I gather former National President Des Richard was at the last meeting, looking chipper. He still has to spend most of his time caring for Janet. Bill Hyland deputised for me in the committee reports, which was great news in itself, as he has now made it to the last 3 meetings.

**David**

## Membership Secretary

**Payment of your Annual Subscription is now long overdue.** Please treat this as a matter of urgency and send me your cheque for £10, with a stamped addressed envelope for the return of your membership card. You should by now have had a specific email or telephone reminder.

We are sad to announce the passing of Tony Stephens (details of funeral on Page 1) and send his family our deepest condolences. Tony was a Navigator on 38 and 221 Squadrons flying Wellingtons.

**Gerry**

### AGM of Aylesbury and Halton RAFA

Wednesday 4 March 2015

1939 for 2000

at Building 259, The Airfield, RAF Halton

All Chiltern ACA Members welcome

*During the evening a framed picture of 'Two Lancasters' a limited edition signed by 14 aircrew including our own Gerry Norwood will be presented by Tom Payne to the branch*