



# NEWSLETTER

## Book for Christmas Lunch. Wednesday 12th December Details P8

### October Meeting

After the usual Parish Notices we stood in memory of those members recently departed. We also wish our Treasurer Ian Nelson a speedy recovery

Air Vice-Marshal Alan Merriman CB CBE AFC former A&AEE Commandant gave a superb presentation on 'Flight Testing' in the Royal Air Force. He commenced with the Hawker Hunter, explaining that it looked the 'perfect' aircraft, with sleek lines and an excellent set of performance figures

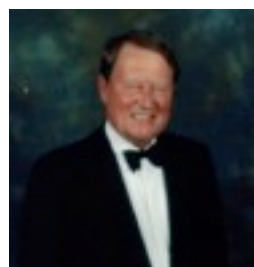


*Hawker Hunter F1*

The Air Vice Marshal then went into all the problems that the aircraft actually faced in the early days, such as when the guns were fired, their exhaust gasses went into the engine nacelle and effectively stalled the engine. There were also considerable problems with 'pitch up' and he went on to explain the changes that were made for all the problems in subsequent marks of Hunter. There was one problem that re-

mained and continued over the years was that of spinning, eventually resulting in a ban of spinning. The Air Vice-Marshal went through other aircraft including some overseas aircraft he flew and some of the incidents that occurred including landing on a parachute into an elderly lady's bedroom!

### Remember Remember the 21st November



Captain  
John Hutchinson

gives and excellent illustrated presentation  
on



Why not make a date and bring a friend for this very special event. Of course if any of our widow's would like to hear this fascinating talk please feel free to join us

See you at 11 am

## My Worst Moment

By Mort Lightstone.

During the summer of 1956 and early in my air force career I was at RCAF Station Winnipeg as a young Flying Officer. I received orders to put together a Guard of Honour and prepare to greet Air Commodore Chester Hull, then on the staff at Air Force Headquarters in Ottawa. I was assigned a drill sergeant, 100 men to participate in the Guard and a 35 member Air Force Band.

The Operation Order provided that this Ceremonial Event would be open to the public. We had three weeks time allotted for intensive drilling, Uniform designated as (winter) dress blues, wedge caps with white chin-strap, The 100 Airmen would carry Lee-Enfield rifles, adorned with a white web 'sling' and chrome plated bayonets. The Guard Commander, me, would be issued a 9 mm pistol, a white lanyard and a white web gun-holster, (traditionally, on parade officers carry a different weapon than that issued to the other ranks.) All members would wear white web belts.

The Guard of Honour would complete the ceremonial parade duties on the expansive tarmac in front of 16 Hangar and the Air Force Band will perform the required ceremonial music. 16 Hangar is a massive building with a center core three stores high. The core contains the usual offices, briefing room large enough to accommodate 20 crews, a weather office and, at ground level, tool cribs, supply storage rooms and at its centre, a cavernous hall. In fact, the centre core hall was large enough to perform most of the required drilling and kept us out of the blazing sun.

We needed the 100 member Guard of Honour to move as one person on all commands given them whilst Air Commodore Hull was on the Parade Square. The more important of these commands were "Present Arms", "Shoulder Arms" and "Order Arms". They were keen lads and quickly went through the transition from a rag-time army to a well trained Flight of Airmen, this much to the diligent work of our professional drill sergeant. He shouted commands that had no end to how high his volume would

go. With time, his vocabulary altered from nasty and offensive to flattering and admiring. After two weeks, we then drilled every second day on the tarmac enduring that ruthless prairie sun. In between, days were full dress rehearsals. Everyone was pleased with our accomplishments. Our Guard of Honour could stand with the best.

At one of the dress rehearsals, I observed that the white web belts worn by the Guard formed a perfect straight line. To my repulsion, I noticed that the weight of my pistol pulled my web belt down on the left side and made me look like a cowboy; certainly out of harmony with the Guard. I decided to ditch the pistol and fill the holster with a twisted wire coat hanger. Much better.

The big moment was almost upon us. The Guard of honour fell-in with the Air Force Band on our right flank. I gave the command, "Guard of Honour, turn to the right in column of route ... Right turn". In unison, the Guard and the Band turned smartly to the right. "Guard of honour, by the right, quick ... march". With the first step forward, the band struck up the tune of the Air Force March. In seconds, we were parading smartly onto the tarmac. I was caught by surprise by the size of the crowd that had gathered. We moved to our designated position facing west toward the exterior of 16 Hanger. I looked at the low dais suitable for only one person. It was a short step up, about eight inches above the ground. I turned and faced the Guard and gave the order to move into Open Order and then the ceremonial Right Dress. My next two commands ... "Eyes front" and "Shoulder Arms". I turned and faced the dais. There we stood. Uniforms clean, pressed, buttons and boots polished. Rifles at the slope and all of us at attention. The next thirty seconds stretched into an eternity. We were facing the early afternoon sun. There we stood.

Three cars arrived, all with fluttering bumper flags. A gaggle of senior officers gathered and chatted for another eternity. The tallest among them soon walked to the dais and stepped up. He was wearing 'Summer Dress Uniform'! His chest was adorned with an extensive row of medals.

Rather quickly he brought himself to attention. Signaling me that he was ready to proceed, he gazed at me with his face showing calm and a slight cheerful countenance.



*From left to right Flying Officer Mort Lightstone escorting Air Commodore Chester Hull, inspecting the Guard of Honour on the expansive tarmac in front of 16 Hangar at RCAF Station Winnipeg.*  
(Notice the crowd in the background.)

I was overwhelmed with this entire scene. Quickly, I proceeded with “Guard of Honour will advance in Review Order ... by the centre, quick ... MARCH”. With the first step forward, I listened for the 100 boots hitting the tarmac in unison and the swish of the trousers. I knew we were making a hit, I knew we were in sync and I knew we looked professional. We were a team of 101 performing in perfect harmony as though we were one. Each of the 100 Airmen are flawlessly supporting me. My chest swelled with pride. I experienced a sense of euphoria; I was so proud. As soon as I commanded “Guard of Honour ... General Salute ... Present ... Arms” the Air Force Band played the ceremonial music with a presto tempo.

“Guard of Honour ... Order Arms”. Every Airman moved simultaneously and with precession. Perfect! I was so proud of this Guard. I was certain the buttons would pop off my tunic. Little did I suspect that in a few seconds my world would crash!

I marched the fifteen feet to Air Commodore Hull with my eyes riveted on the first of his medals, the Distinguished Flying Cross. As his smile slightly increased I halted, our eyes locked, I introduced myself and asked “Sir, would you like to inspect the Guard?” “Yes” he replied, “but first I would like to inspect your weapon.”

Those words were deafening and full of terror! I was caught. I was dumbfounded! It was my worst moment. I was the one that let the team down. I visualized my career shattering into a million pieces. I didn’t know what to say or do.

His smile broadened. Putting me at ease he said “Let’s get on with it - I’ve done the same thing myself!”

Sadly, I recently learned that Air Commodore Chester Hull passed on April 9th, 2012. He retired from the Canadian Armed Forces with the rank of Lieutenant-General.



*Air Commodore Chester Hull being saluted by Flying Officer Mort Lightstone and the Guard of Honour as they march on the tarmac in front of 16 Hangar at RCAF Station Winnipeg.*  
**”I was the one that let the team down.”**

**Ed:** *My thanks to Mort, one of our Canadian readers, for this start of an occasional series of “What to do with a wire coat hanger!”*

## Reverse Thrust

Many modern aircraft use 'Reverse Thrust' or 'Thrust Reversers' for the more backward amongst the aviation fraternity.



*An example of Reverse Thrust*

The first squadron aircraft I flew was the HS 780 An-2, a rather unusually used reverse thrust in the air, as well as on the ground. This short ranged Transport aircraft was capable of Short Take Off and Landings (STOL). On short final with full flap (as against normal landing flap) approach speeds were 90kts or just below. Thus the ground roll was never going to be huge but if the twin Dart engines were put into 'Reverse' or rather the Dowty props were put into 'Reverse', at the roundout phase, then a very short landing ensued. This of course relied on a modicum of skill on behalf of the pilot or should I say pilots, as the original teaching was for the captain to give the control column to the co-pilot as he selected reverse thrust. A little late and a huge bounce ensued followed by a heavy landing. A little too early and you didn't bounce but beware of back injuries, it was bound to be a hard landing (sometimes even changing the design of the propeller tips!).

After a short while it was decided that the captain would cover both actions of selecting reverse along with a good hard yank back on the control column, to counteract the distinct lack of lift once reverse took effect. The result was effective operations from strips of just 2000 feet (including natural surface). This en-

abled the RAF in the late 60's and early 70's to provide forward landings for the ACE Mobile force of NATO. It was also useful when British Forces were sent to help with civil unrest in Anguilla.

Nowadays whenever we fly on airliners, reverse thrust is commonplace, along with the lurch in the cabin as it is applied. It is for this reason that shorter International airports, and one can include London Heathrow in this, can still operate the vastly heavier and larger passenger airliners of today.

**Ed:** *The photo on this page sadly happened to one of our members. He admitted his error and sent me a copy. I think we should attempt to cheer him up with a suitable aviation orientated caption. So there is your challenge. Please let me have them on or before our next meeting.*

## It's a Small World

It is a small world as I found out at our last meeting. I was chatting to Alan Merriman after his excellent presentation and he enquired about my aircrew category. I told him it was pilot but only National Service from 1952 to 1954. He then wanted to know the aircraft types I had flown. His ears pricked up when I mentioned Meteors at Full Sutton because he had flown in there on occasions to meet a close friend from his Cranwell days who was an instructor. He asked me if I remembered a Mike Hughes. As it happened my instructor's name was Hughes but I didn't know if it was Mike, because you only knew your instructors as "Sir". Alan is still in contact with his friend so I asked if he could find out more.

He e-mailed Mike Hughes, who dug out his old log-books and found that he flew with P/O George 21 times. That is exactly what it says in my logbook. I remember him as a very laid back instructor and very competent pilot. He could conduct everyday chit-chat while landing a Meteor from the rear seat. No mean feat.

Thanks to Alan I now have e-mail contact with my instructor from 50 years ago. I haven't spoken to him yet but I am sure that will come and who knows we may even meet up. As I said it is a small world.

**Bill George 2553276 – (369 hrs 20 mins)**

## DH Moth Club Last Charity Flying Weekend



*Stuart McKay's Tiger Moth*

Over the years the Chiltern Aircrew Association and the ACA before that, have always been made most welcome at 'Moth Club' events at Woburn and Halton. That hospitality largely through the good auspices of their Secretary and our fellow member Stuart McKay.

This year is the last Charity Flying event because of legislation changes in the CAA which mean that the aircraft will not be able to operate this type of flight in future. The venue this year was Old Warden home of the Shuttleworth Collection. The event was attended by our own **Ron Doble and Sandy Lowe** and I quote from Ron's letter on the subject:

"I went with Sandy Lowe to the Moth Club Charity Flying Weekend at Old Warden. People were queuing up for flights in a de Havilland Airliner (Dragon Rapide) at £90 a time - that let Sandy and me out!

Then a Moth Club member got in touch with Stuart McKay who came over and made us most welcome. Being that we were from Chiltern ACA he organized a flight for us in a DH80a Puss Moth, a 1933 4 seater aircraft. What an experience it was. We thanked those involved who were most helpful and jovial (lovely people) and above all there was Stuart McKay, what a perfect gentleman.



*de Havilland DH80a Puss Moth*



*de Havilland Puss Moth airborne*

It really was a wonderful time and before we left we made a contribution to their Charity collection.

Please pass on our thanks to Stuart and all those involved.

**Ron Doble and Sandy Lowe"**

**Ed:** *I hope as he prints these pages Stuart's tears do not smudge the print but it gives me immense pleasure to print Ron's remarks as they are so richly deserved. Not only has Stuart looked after our members at his events so well, as you see here but of course, every month he gives of his time to print our Newsletter and place it in the envelopes and posts it! This service he does free of charge and we as an Association cannot thank him enough! If anyone would like details of membership for the Moth Club, please contact Stuart or the Editor.*

## **Flying Breakfast Rose & Thistle, Haddenham**



On the last Friday of October 24 members of Chiltern and Oxford ACA's joined together for the annual 'Flying Breakfast' at the Rose and Thistle pub in Haddenham. The idea originally came from Ron Doble, who ran the event for many years and it has become a regular feature in our programme.

It was particularly nice to see both Chairman at the event, namely our own Geoff Hulett and Roger Hannaford from Oxford.

The new Landlord produced a menu comprising of a Breakfast, Fish and Chips or Chicken with an Apple Roulade or Ice Cream to follow. As Geoff mentioned, all we seem to do in the Chiltern ACA is eat and drink!

It was nice to see old friends and also one or two who we do not see at meetings such as David Lindsay from the Hastings era (that is Handley Page Hastings not The Battle of.....) and we hope that now he is fully retired we might see him at Greenacres (lifts may be available from Sandy Lowe), I will leave our Haddenham Chapter to sort it out.

It was particularly good to see Jack Easter, just returned from a week on the south coast, looking very well and thanks to Tom Payne (as ever) for acting as chauffeur.



*The well stocked bar*

Our thanks to the landlord and his staff for their super service and we hope to do it again next year

## **Christmas Lunch**

You will see from Page 8 the details of our Christmas Lunch, which you will also note that the date is NOT the third Wednesday as usual but the **second Wednesday in December, namely the 12th.**

Gerry will have tickets available at our November meeting but if you order then or by mail, please fill in the form as this will help with the seating plan. One final plea as always please remember the **Stamped Addressed Envelope.**

## **Emailed Newsletter**

With the postal charges recently increased by a significant amount we must to all we can to keep costs down, if we are not to have a large increase in our subscription charges. One way this can be done of course is by getting your Newsletter by email. This service is of course free for you and also for us. So if you would like to receive it by email please advise me on [graham@kitty4.co.uk](mailto:graham@kitty4.co.uk) and I will do the rest.

## Programme

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

21 Nov	John Hutchinson	Concorde
12 Dec	Xmas Lunch	1200 Noon
16 Jan	AGM & Member's Meeting	
20 Feb	RAF Benevolent Fund	

## Your Committee

### Chairman

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## Welfare

### Bill Hyland reports:

It is nice to report some good things for a change, Jack Easter has been away for a week on the south coast at the home run by St Dunstan's on the South Coast.

Mavis Dyson is on good form and will concentrate on advertising the Christmas do. Not a great deal going on apparently. Hopefully everyone will remain in reasonable fettle as we approach the winter season.

**Bill**

## Membership

Not a lot to report this month, other than advanced notice that our AGM and thus Subscriptions will be due in January 2013, after your once in a lifetime offer last year of 15 months for the price of 12! I look forward to receiving your Christmas Lunch Bookings.

**Gerry**

## From the Cheshunt and Waltham Mercury

### “Time to honour forgotten heroes”

When the Queen unveiled the memorial to the men of RAF Bomber Command, it was a moment of vindication, not only for those who lost their lives, but of those who made it home.

Among them was 88 year old Cheshunt veteran **Reg White**, who relates his poignant story in today's Mercury.

The debate over the loss of civilian lives as a result of the bombs dropped over Germany during the Second World War will rumble on.

But the courage shown by the crews of the bombers cannot be denied, and it is only right that their contribution is finally recognized alongside the other branches of the armed services.

We salute you Reg.

**Ed:** A full article will be published in the December Newsletter but I thought I would whet your appetites. The headline reads: **“I was sitting there looking at him - he opened up and I had shells going either side of me. It all happened so quickly - I don't remember being frightened but I must have been”**. Reg White, shot down over Poland

**Christmas Lunch**

**Wednesday 12th December 2012**

**1200 Noon**

**Greenacres Tavern**

Please send me ..... tickets (**£20.00 per person/£10.00 for our widows**)

NAME: ..... ADDRESS.....

PLEASE SEAT ME NEAR..... TEL NO:.....

- I enclose:**
- a. Cheque payable to 'Chiltern Aircrew Association'**
  - b. Stamped addressed envelope.**
  - c. Send to Gerry Sealy-Bell, 31 Hempstead Road, Kings Langley, Herts WD4 8BR**

***Menu***

**Asparagus Soup**

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**Roast Breast of Turkey**

**Honey Roast Ham**

**Sage and Onion Stuffing**

**Selection of Fresh Vegetables**

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**Christmas Pudding**

**Brandy Sauce**

**Mince Pies**

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**Coffee and Mints**

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**Red and White Wine (inclusive)**