



# NEWSLETTER

**Last chance to book for the Aircrew Lunch (28 Sep 18) on Page 7**

## August Meeting

This month our speaker was Captain Winston Churchill who served for 34 years in The US Coastguard Service.

He explained that the talk was going to be about boats not aircraft, although the US Coastguard Service does operate a large number of aircraft including the Jayhawk Helicopter, their version of the Blackhawk. In fact their fleet is comprehensive:

- 27 Lockheed HC-130 Hercules.
- 42 Sikorsky MH-60T Jayhawk.
- 102 Airbus MH-65 Dolphin.
- 11 HC-27J Spartan Out of 14 on order.
- 18 CASA HC-144A Ocean Sentry.
- 2 Gulfstream C-37A (VIP transport).

The US Coastguard is the 8th largest Navy in the World. Winston started his service as a junior rank but after commissioning eventually attained the rank of Captain (as in RN). He explained the role of the service, much more than our RNLI, although they do cover that role. In fact it is a large multi role organisation covering the following:

- Port, Waterways, and Coastal Security (PWCS)
- Drug Interdiction
- Aids to Navigation
- Search and Rescue (SAR)
- Living Marine Resources
- Marine Safety

- Defense Readiness
- Migrant Interdiction
- Marine Environmental Protection
- Ice Operations
- Other Law Enforcement

In Britain many of these roles are split between the likes of RNLI, Trinity House and The Royal Navy. They have within US Law the ability to arrest unlike the US Navy (apart from piracy). Winston took us through his career which was varied to say the least. His final command of a ship was the 'Taney', now a museum piece in Baltimore. He also served in command of US Coastguards in 'Operation Desert Storm' in the Middle East'

A fascinating presentation which preceded the longest "Q & A" session we have had in a long time.



US Coastguard ship "Taney"

**Remember 19th September 2018**

**"My time in the RAF"**

**with**

**Dennis Swains**

**Greenacres 1030 for 1100**



**The First World War Pilot J M (Jack) Mason**  
**Part 13**

**Ed:** *Extracts from Jack's First World War Logbook, on Active Service. The busy Summer of 1918 continues with good and bad raid results*

3	DH4	129 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Orniecoint Dump. Leading. Many very good results sustained. Seven or eight direct hits observed. Both my bombs went home. AA light & inaccurate. E.A. Nil.
3	DH4	139 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Rosieres Station & Dump. Leading. A very "cushy" raid. No AA & no E.A. Results fair. One of my bombs fell short & the other obtained a direct hit on the railway station which, however, did not cause a fire.
4	DH4	15 mins (P1)	To Bertangles. To see 48 Squadron's Flight Commanders.
4	DH4	15 mins (P1)	From Bertangles.
5	DH4	138 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Orniecoint Dump. Leading. Again very good results. Several direct hits observed. AA poor. Lt Theran shot down (unhurt) & landed this side of the lines by a Hun Triplane. Numerous E.A. Who attacked the rear of the formation & 48 Squadron who were escorting us refused to go to them & left us without help.
5	DH4	121 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on the Rolling Stock & Bray Station. Leading. Absolutely the worst shelling I've ever had the misfortune to experience. No results observed owing to the intense AA fire & we had to make for home at 100 miles an hour to avoid being hit.
6	DH4	122 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Rolling Stock in Bray Station. The target was hidden by large drifting clouds so no results could be observed. No E.A. & very little AA. Leading & had great difficulty in finding the target.
6	DH4	127 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Rosieres Station & Dump. Leading. Results were not very good but at the same time not bad. Only four hits obtained on the dump. Two observed were mine & these two bombs caused two explosions. No E.A. & no AA.
7	DH4	126 mins (P1)	Bombing Raid on Rosieres Station & Dump. Leading. The best raid this Squadron has ever done. Seven large fires started & numerous other direct hits observed. Several E.A. attacked us but were driven off by 24 Squadron (SE 5s) who were escorting us. A fairly heavy shelling.

---

8	DH4	116 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Rosieres Station & Dump. Leading. A very poor show. No direct hits obtained on the dump & only one on the railway line. Very little AA & 3 E.A. Who did not attack.
9	DH4	87 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Meyieres Village. Leading. Both my bombs fell & exploded in the village. Nobody else hit the target at all. A very poor show. No E.A. & no AA.
9	DH4	87 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Baucourt Village. A better show. About eight hits, two of which were mine. A very heavy & accurate shelling. No E.A. Leading.
11	DH4	136 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. Leading. Very good results. Both bombs went home & also several other direct hits obtained. No E.A. Very little AA.
12	DH4	152 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. Gaman leading. Not a very good raid but at the same time not a bad one. Only five hits obtained one of which was mine. The CO went as passenger with Lt Wilson. AA very light & inaccurate. Five E.A. Who did not attack.
15	DH4	139 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Rosieres Station & Dump. Dickson leading. One of the worst raids ever done. No direct hits obtained by anybody. AA very heavy & accurate. No E.A.
16	DH4	100 mins (PI)	Bombing Raid on Foneancont Aerodrome. Leading. The orders were to bomb this aerodrome from not more than 10000ft & the scouts were to shoot it up from 50ft immediately afterwards. The bombing on the whole was very bad chiefly owing to very intense & accurate AA fire we were subjected to from the moment we crossed the lines. One bomb burst among a group of machines standing on the SE corner of the aerodrome & one direct hit on one of the hangars. About five E.A. One of which was downed in flames by the SE 5s.
17	DH4	143 mins (PI)	Bombing raid on Chaulnes Railway Station. Dickson leading. A very bad show. No bombs hit target at all. One of the heaviest shelling I have ever had. The CO went as a passenger with Capt Gaman. Gaman shot down by archie. Wounded in the hand but succeeded in landing at Bertangles & was then sent to hospital.

---

**Who said flying was dangerous?**

*I expect most of you saw the coverage of the stolen Alaskan Horizon (Horizon Air) Q400 turboprop plane (registered N449QX) that was undergoing maintenance.*

The Q400 Bombardier Dash 8 is a popular Canadian made plane that can seat 76 passengers in a single aisle, one class configuration and fly a range of 1,100 nmi (2,040 km). It is perfect for landing at smaller airports that can't take jetliners, commonly found throughout the upper north-west continental USA, Canada and Alaska.



Horizon Air is a sister airline of Alaskan Airlines (They are both owned by the same parent company) and has forty-four Q400's in service. They cost roughly \$32.2 million each.

The plane took off from the airport without authorisation, but the pilot, known to Airport staff as Rich, proceeded to speak with air traffic controllers.

The mechanic reported: "I've got a lot of people that care about me. I'm going to disappoint them to hear that I did this. I would like to apologize to each and every one of them. Just a broken guy, got a few screws loose I guess. Never really knew it, until now,"

As the plane took off it became clear that he was inexperienced and was not able to land. As a result, all traffic was halted at the airport, causing a long delay for arriving and departing flights.

"We are aware of an incident involving an unauthorized take-off of a Horizon Air Q400. We believe there are no passengers on board. More information as we learn more." – Alaska Airlines tweeted. The stolen Q400 was then followed by two scrambled F16's from the USAF base near Portland, as he proceeded to do a loop and a barrel roll.

Residents all around the area spoke up on twitter as the plane buzzed by. "Seatac airspace closed. Horizon Q400 prop hijacked by an unauthorized person not a pilot. Tower tracking flight and in contact. Hijacker does not know how to land the plane. Latest update from tower indicates no interest on his part to land the plane. Stay tuned."

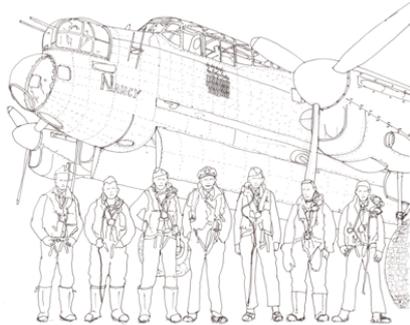
"Halfway down the runway on Alaska airlines out of Seattle and the pilot slams on the brakes and shares we must go back to the gate. Quite a scary experience. Not entirely sure what's happening. Someone sneak on board?" – Ben Schaechter wrote on Twitter,

The mechanic then attempted another trick and crashed Ketron Island outside Seattle. The mechanic died in the crash.

"An airline employee conducted an unauthorized takeoff without passengers at Sea-Tac; aircraft has crashed in south Puget Sound. Normal operations at Sea-Tac Airport have resumed" – Sea-Tac airport confirmed.

The Airport was then reopened and traffic resumed. The local sheriff is investigating and has not yet released a statement.

*How could this happen, quite easily by all accounts, the mechanic was cleared to be on the ramp and tow the aircraft...but not to fly it!*



**Nancy's Boys**

A short(ish) 'story'  
by  
Smiley Mildwater

*Written by a friend of Tom Payne and will be serialised over the next few months*

Starts on Page 5

### Seven Boys and Nancy

That evening, two years ago, was a typical fenland November evening. Wood smoke hung in the dampness of the thickening fog, there being no discernible movement in the air. It was the sort of evening that all you wanted to do was to bolt the door, shut the curtains and sit in front of the fire eating a generous plate of sausage, mash, marrow fat peas and onion gravy. Comfort food washed down with a warming 'wee dram' or three.

Unfortunately, that would have to wait as, on this particular evening, I was securing the Abbey and farmland museum after the last of the afternoon seminar attendees had departed. I had locked the Abbey and was walking across the grass to the cottage when, from my right, I heard the increasingly loud sound of what I knew to be four Rolls Royce Merlin engines under some strain. That must be the BBMF Lancaster coming out of Cambridge airport, I thought, must've had a fuel stop but I didn't think they flew at this time of year and in the dark too. The aircraft roared overhead and the noise began to fade in the distance. I wonder if old Bob heard it, I thought, no doubt I'll hear all about it from him in the morning.

The noise had faded to the barely audible when, through the fog, came the sound of a muffled explosion. "Oh Christ" I thought "they've gone in". My first instinct was to grab the mobile and call the fire and rescue services but, as I fumbled for the phone, I became aware of a lightening of the gloom around me. Looking up I saw that I was being watched by seven young men and I knew at once what I was looking at though, curiously enough, I felt no fear or alarm, only a profound sense of sadness.

I knew this was a WW2 Bomber Command crew. Over their battle-dresses and flying suits were Mae West life preservers and parachute harnesses. Some wore their service caps, others were hatless but all carried their leather flying helmets, goggles and oxygen masks. At their feet were the paraphernalia of a bomber crew setting out on, or returning from, another mission, bags, parachutes, flasks and ration boxes.

Oddly, there was no colour; it was as though they were covered in a very fine layer of cement dust. "Where on earth did you come from?" I finally exclaimed and, as I said it, I realised how bloody stupid and pointless was the question.

From the centre of the group, a tall figure took a single step forward and at once I knew him to be the pilot, the Captain. He wore a battered officers peaked hat, on his epaulettes the single ring of a Flying Officer, on his shoulder, the legend Australia and, just visible behind his Mae West, his pilots wings. He regarded me with an unflinching gaze, the red rimmed eyes being the only colour in this bizarre tableau.

He didn't speak but, deep within me, somewhere, a faint, ethereal voice with a slight Aussie accent, uttered the words I will remember to my dying day "It was not our fault. It was not my fault. Make it right. You make it right"

At this point my phone, forgotten 'till now, fell from my fingers. As I looked down I was conscious that the gloom darkened and, on looking up, saw I was once again alone. There was not even an eddy in the fog to mark their departure.

I felt unbelievably calm at this point, finished my locking up, got in the car and drove home. I poured myself a large whiskey and sat down. At that point it hit me, the realisation of what had just happened and I began to shiver uncontrollably. However, after a couple or so minutes I calmed down and began to think about the evening's events. What had I seen, who had I seen and, more importantly, why had I seen it? What was the reason and what was the meaning of "It was not our fault. It was not my fault. Make it right. You make it right"?

That night I tossed, turned and tried to sleep, eventually resolving on a course of action. I knew that Lancaster's had flown from RAF Waterbeach during the war so, if I researched that day in November, from 1942 to 1945, using the Form 540s, the daily diary of the squadron and the station, I might come up with some answers. Keeping the reason for my inquiries to myself, over the next few months I searched the records at Kew, the RAF Museum and anywhere else that I thought might help and, over those months, I managed to put together the events of a November evening in 1944.

For one particular crew and aircraft, N for 'Nancy', this was to be their last mission together as the crew were on the 30th and final sortie. The crew had come together at a Lancaster conversion unit and had been together ever since. An Australian pilot, a flight engineer who had been a Cumbrian shepherd and an ex- policeman as the bomb aimer.

*To be continued*

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

It was a quiet Sunday afternoon and a pilot with a strong Bolton accent came on the approach frequency. All the pilots in the Manchester area speak with a Bolton accent -except British Airways -so we were not concerned!

A/C “ Hello Manchester this is G-ABCD.”  
 ATC “G-ABCD pass your message”  
 A/C. “ Hello Manchester, I have just got my PPL and I am on a cross country navigation exercise from Barton to the airfield at Netherthorpe”

In view of the aircrafts track and and the fact that he was well clear of controlled airspace and heading in the right direction approach gave him the regional pressure setting, patted him on the head and sent him on his way. As it was still quiet the controller, although not required to do so, rang Netherthorpe with the details and an arrival ETA.



Netherthorpe

Thirty minutes later the phone rings on the Manchester Supervisors desk. “Hello Manchester. That aircraft you told us about has not turned up. As you are the authority for the area will you commence overdue action please”. The Supervisor agrees and gets out the appropriate file.

Ten minutes later Netherthorpe rings. “We’ve found him he’s landed at Doncaster. Apparently caused a bit of chaos as he landed on the wrong end. No one hurt. His instructor is coming over

from Barton to escort him back. Will you speak to the pilot please he’s in the Doncaster control tower now?”



*It says ‘Welcome to Doncaster’, but only if you plan to go there and of course land on the runway in use!*

Now the Supervisor is the most amiable chap and hates paperwork, preferring the gentle approach, so decides on a quiet word with the pilot on the phone.

Supervisor “I understand that you got a bit confused and that the runways are similar, 05/23 and 06/24, but when the controller said “ this is Doncaster you should be on 121.3” didn’t that give you a clue?”

Pilot. “No sir I thought **Don Caster** was the controllers name!”

I’ve never seen so much paperwork!

Netherthorpe is still active, still difficult to spot from the air and Doncaster closed in 1992. If you look Doncaster Airport up on Google you get Doncaster/Sheffield Airport (formerly Robin Hood Airport) but of course to many it is still RAF Finningley!



**Aircrew Lunch****Friday 28th September 2018 (12 Noon for 1230)****The Black Horse,  
Faringdon Rd, Gozzards Ford, Abingdon, OX13 6JH**

We will be holding our annual 'Aircrew Lunch' on Friday 28th September at the usual venue just outside Abingdon. The event is open to all members and non members of the Aircrew Association (those branches still functioning) and anyone with an interest in Aviation male or female, oh and if you have never been stationed at RAF Upavon, WRAF Officers as well! The idea is to meet, enjoy the company and the food.

Please select your menu choice and return to the address below with your **cheque payable to "The Black Horse" by the closing date of 21 September**. If any have particular dietary requirements please get in touch and I will arrange it with the Landlord.

## MAIN COURSE

Slices of Ham, two free range fried eggs all served with crispy chunky chips and a slice of bread & butter for the ultimate 'Northern Chip Butty'.

Chicken Tikka Masala served with Basmati Rice, Naan Bread, Popadoms and Mango chutney

Steak & Ale Pie served with crispy chunky chips, fresh vegetables and an extra side of gravy (V pie option available)

Traditional hand beer-battered Cod served with crispy chunky chips, mushy peas and home-made tartare sauce

Home-made Fish Pie - Mix of cod, smoked haddock, salmon and prawns, in a creamy dill sauce and topped with cheesy mash and fresh vegetables on the side

Roasted Stuffed Peppers - Peppers stuffed with couscous and garlic roasted vegetables, topped with melted Taw Valley Cheddar cheese, served with new potatoes and green beans (V)

## DESSERT

Ice Cream Sundae - choose from vanilla, chocolate or strawberry ice cream

Apple Pie served with double cream or vanilla ice cream

Homemade Sticky Toffee Pudding served with homemade toffee sauce, cream, custard or ice cream

Chef's homemade cheesecake of the week

Homemade crumble served with a jug of custard

Cheeseboard with Taw Valley Mature Cheddar, French Brie and Tuxford & Tebbutt Stilton served with Grapes, chutney and butter

Tea and Coffee

**Please send cheque for £ 22.00 per person payable to "The Black Horse" and your menu choice to Graham Laurie, 19 High St, Prestwood, Gt Missenden, Bucks HP16 9EE.**

Any queries Tel: 01494 863492 (H) 07798 703022 (M) or [graham@kitty4.co.uk](mailto:graham@kitty4.co.uk)

**Programme 2018**

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

**2018**

**19 Sep My time in the RAF- Dennis Swains**

**28 Sep Aircrew Lunch @ Black Horse\***

17 Oct George Holt-Thomas Dave Scott

21 Nov 'Stag Lane Aerodrome 1917-1934' -  
Stuart McKay

12 Dec Christmas Lunch\* 12 Noon

**Your 2018 Committee****President**

Geoff Hulett

11 Pearsewood Gardens, Stanmore, Middx  
HA7 1NU.

Tel: 0208 952 4092

Email: [banghulett@btinternet.com](mailto:banghulett@btinternet.com)

**Chairman:** Position Vacant

**Newsletter Editor/Secretary:**

Graham Laurie

19 High St, Prestwood, Gt Missenden, Bucks  
HP16 9EE

Tel: 01494 863492

Email: [graham@kitty4.co.uk](mailto:graham@kitty4.co.uk)

**Membership Sec:**

Ian Mason

65 Sunnycroft, Downley, High Wycombe, Bucks  
HP13 5UR

Tel: 01494 439845

Email: [ian.mason197@ntlworld.com](mailto:ian.mason197@ntlworld.com)

**Treasurer:**

Rod Finn

67 Hayfield, Chells Manor Village, Stevenage  
SG2 7JR Tel: 01438 350115

Email: [rodfinn@btinternet.com](mailto:rodfinn@btinternet.com)

**Welfare:** David Bray

23a Aylesbury Road, Wing, Leighton Buzzard,  
Beds LU7 0PD Tel: 01296 688425

Email: [adbbray@aol.com](mailto:adbbray@aol.com)

**Programme Secretary:**

Bill George

Blossom Cottage, 54, Green End Street, Aston  
Clinton, Bucks, HP22 5EX Tel: 01296 630998

Email: [bill.bbgi@btinternet.com](mailto:bill.bbgi@btinternet.com)

**Welfare**

Have been out of circulation due OZ nephews plus families for the last fortnight so have not progressed as I wish re Ladies at meetings. However, Norma Hagen has particularly shown a wish to attend, when Charles(Geoff) Day had his looksee meeting his wife, Margaret, came along - so believe Margaret could be an addition. There are also the 'lunch' ladies inc Ann Hyland etc who we could approach

Ron Doble has phoned me, unfortunately I was out, but he sounded quite sprightly!

**David**

**Secretary/Editor**

**Our falling numbers have been a problem over the past few months. If we are to continue to attract speakers, we must have reasonable numbers in attendance. Bill now has a few lined up for next year. With this in mind we would like to open our meetings to "the Ladies". Wives, friends and of course our widows. Please contact one of the committee if you are uncertain about anything, Please just drop in by 11.00 am on the third Wednesday and book lunch as well. We would love to see you.**

Thanks to Ron Doble for getting in touch and so has Tom Payne, forwarding a short story from one of his friends from the Mildenhall Circle, which you will see on Page 5 and in future issues.

**Graham**

**Speaker Secretary**

We have completed our programme for this year and thanks to the work of fellow members I now have a few names for 2019, which is great. Thank you all.

**Bill**

**President**

Westminster Abbey....following advice via Graham, I applied for tickets on the internet and received them within days. So much easier than postal applications. Hope to see Chiltern represented in force.

Ron Doble was very chirpy when he phoned the other day. He hopes to attend the September meeting.