



NEWSLETTER



November 2011

www.olddux.org

Compiled by Larry Cross

Dear members,

Once again the weather was kind for the meeting on the 23rd October and for the tour across to the north side (residential) initiated by Peter Gibbard.

The party was escorted by Steve Woolford, Head of Interpretation and Collections, Carl Warner, I.W.M. Exhibitions Manager, Sarah Russell his assistant and Esther Blaine, Public Relations Manager. (See page 2)

The Nov/Dec issue has been slightly delayed awaiting confirmation of the date and venue for the annual dinner

Hope you all enjoy the Bumper Xmas edition !

The Meeting

The tour party were back in good time, with the aforementioned I.W.M staff attending and the room was soon buzzing with introductory conversation.

Bob called the meeting to order and commenced the minutes silence remembering those no longer with us. As is customary new members present and those attending for the first time were asked to stand and relate details of their time and dates at Duxford.

The idea of a car sticker was mentioned, a sample of which was passed round and briefly discussed.

Carl Warner then took the floor to explain how well the ongoing Historic Duxford Exhibition was progressing and how it will develop in future weeks with the aid of Site Designers.

Steve Woolford followed, hoping to show extracts from the recent video interview with Douglas Sturgeon. Unfortunately the gremlins decided that we could have sound but no picture and vice versa and so he proceeded to relate the story in a most interesting and entertaining way, all in all the meeting went very well.

Xmas Pressies for all

In an effort to publicize our association and hopefully increase the membership by advertising, the committee decided to re-introduce a car sticker.

The first car sticker was introduced in 1995 in the form of a DIY kit with instructions as to the colour scheme, are there any still about I wonder?

However, in this way our name will reach places some of us have never even heard of – overseas too.

Every member will receive one, look on it as an early Christmas present, however we do expect your full co-operation and support by installing it on your car's rear screen - the most likely option.

The stickers are colour fast and easily installed or removed like self cling tax discs. If you are one of a fortunate few who do not own a car, then get one! Alternatively, pass it on to a close friend or relative..... one who is out and about 24/7 ! Members who receive their Newsletter by snail mail will find one enclosed, those on email will also receive theirs in the post. TIP.... To peel sticker bend back a corner.

New Members

Walter Forster 64 Sqn Pilot

Ron Pountain Sgt.Armourer 65 Sqn 1953-54

Roy Dorey 64Sqn 1952 – 54.

Richard Fry 64 Sqn 1952 – 53 Inst.Tech

Edward (Ted) Fifield 56 Sqn 1941.

Michael Warren Str/ Flt. Elect/Mech.

Peter Woods Ass.Member (Bob Hindley's son-in-law)

Alex(Sandy)Mullen J/T Eng/FJan1961/June 61 Rejoined)

Reginald Loyd J/T Att:64/65 Sqns VHFTX/RX 1955-56

Became a member on 7th November sadly he died suddenly on 9th November. Condolences have been sent to Mrs Floyd

Condolences to the family of Flt./Lt Sean Cunningham have also been posted in the Red Arrows Condolences Book



The Red Lion Hotel

Annual Dinner 2012

The date for the annual dinner 2012 has been confirmed as Saturday May 12th to be held at the Red Lion Hotel Whittlesford. Accommodation will be available at both the Red Lion and Holiday Inns.

Negotiations are on going re – prices.

The AGM on Sunday 13th.will commence at 13.00hrs in the Airspace hangar Learning Room One

As can be seen, a new entrance and annex to the right has been added, this will be the functions room which will seat 100 diners comfortably. The interior has been sympathetically refurbished, the new bar and reception area blending in nicely with the original old timbers. The available accommodation has also been greatly improved and modernised. This facility could also feature in future plans to try to make the October meetings more of a social event.

An area to the right of the picture looking towards the Duxford Chapel is at present being landscaped, and was thought by committee members that this could be an ideal site to install the memorial garden previously discussed. Approaches to the hotel management will be made in due course.



On the occasion of our October meeting Carl Warner of the I.W.M. kindly agreed to escort a party of members on a visit to "The North Side" (domestic site) at Duxford.

At 10.50am about 20 of us were assembled by the Bailey Bridge on a fine but windy day.

Carl arrived with Stephen Woolford and two charming females, Sarah Russell, Carl's assistant and Esther Blaine a Public Relations Manager, who promised to make us famous (if we weren't already).

We were told by Carl that the fee for taking us was to contribute to his knowledge with a few "sound bites" on his Video Camera. He wanted our comments and memories as we walked around.

We duly set off over the bridge passing behind the Officers Mess.

Our first stop was by the Sports Field followed by the Parade Ground. From there we could see the NAAFI building, several Billets and the Camp Cinema.

Next to that the WRAF Block (where I met my wife). Several filmed conversations took place and then the group tended to split up exploring areas of individual interest.

The "Sick Bay" buildings are still there, I only have one recollection of seeing the Medical Officer (after going on "Sick Parade"). He asked me what was wrong and when I said, "I had the Flu," he said "I'll decide what you've got; you just tell me what's wrong with you". Happy days!

One of the places we all remembered was the Airman's Mess. No one could remember what was upstairs there, I'm sure we all ate on the ground floor. I know that on exiting the building there was a large tank of hot water to wash our "irons" in, a terrible problem if you dropped them!

Some of us recalled the time (1954) of the scandal with Lord Montagu of Beaulieu. The two Airmen involved were marched into the Mess by the S.P.'s. There were lots of whistles and catcalls from the other diners!

Does anyone remember anymore details, particularly with regard to the two Airmen?

The Western side of the site, where some of our Billets were, is now a housing estate. One thing I was pleased to learn however was that the Sgt's Mess still exists. The building is now boarded up and is used by a company that sells bottled water.

Many thanks to the I.W.M. for an enjoyable trip down memory lane, with time for a coffee before the meeting.

Display Teams at Duxford

I was recently contacted by David Watkins requesting information to help update his recently published book *"The History of RAF Aerobatic Teams from 1920"*

David wrote, "I am putting together a PDF containing amendments, corrections etc. which will be eventually forwarded to anyone who wants a copy to update the book. Duxford had a number of superb display teams over the years and I would welcome any of your newsletter readers to get in touch with me if they feel that they can help."

Please send me a copy of your newsletter - it sounds to be of interest? vampireddave@btinternet.com

I put him in touch with Baz Gowling, whose response which was news to me was both interesting and enlightening after all- I had only been on the Sqn. 2½yrs (See below).

Baz's detailed response as follows:

, The team, as you have listed, comprised of the B Flt Cdr, Flt Lt HMS "Pat" Pattullo as leader, myself, Baz Gowling, as No 2, Brian St Clair as No3 - you will no doubt have seen Brian as a member of later distinguished Hunter teams!, and Buck Ryan as No 4 - he was a Flt Lt by this time.

I have looked at the relevant entries in my logbook and find that we flew 22 work-up sorties before completing 3 displays on Battle of Britain Day. Since the first 3 work-up sorties were flown from RAF Acklington, where we were detached as a squadron to the Armament Practice School, I can imagine the scenario: the squadron no doubt was tasked by No 11 Group with undertaking 3 displays on 17th Sep 1955 - B of B Day.

Realizing that time was of the essence, we flew the first three sorties in between gun-firing exercises at the APS before returning to base in mid-August. Further work-up sorties were flown at our base, Duxford, as commitments allowed. I see that inter alia, we were heavily involved in a major Command exercise and also had yet more air-to-air firing exercises on Knockdeep range, off Clacton.

We must have passed muster as, on B of B Day, we displayed first at our own base. Next, after refuelling, we flew to RAF West Malling, where we displayed, before landing to again refuel. Finally, we displayed at RAF Debden, before landing back at base. We had had our "moments" in the work-up training, and even on "the" day, happily with no harm - other than a few frayed nerves!

Thus ended the displays of our "modest team!"

I can help with information about the previous No 65 Squadron team in 1953. The pilots involved were as you have listed: "Jack" Fryer, "Mike" Gill, "Angus" Lethem and "Wally" Bainbridge.

Best Wishes Baz Gowling.

British Kidney Patient Association

Bob's appeal for used postage stamps is ongoing in support of the above. At this time of year there should be oodles of stamps flying about so do your best to support this cause.

O.D.A. members can send the stamps direct to: - **BKAP, Bordon, Hampshire GU35 9JZ**

Mark the Packets – Freepost GI / - 277



FOREWORD

This chapter about Duxford - and my experiences there in 1960-1961 - is extracted from an amateur autobiography written solely with my family, and extended family, in mind. I have had to provide therefore some explanations not normally required by a readers with service backgrounds. This can make for somewhat laborious reading in parts.

Secondly, it is not an account of any historical importance or accuracy - it contains personal reminiscences with some service humour thrown in. I treat my subject selfishly from a very junior pilot's perspective at the expense of talking about our groundcrews, for example, and I don't want to diminish or undervalue the enormous and essential contribution they made to 65 Squadron's operational role and status.

Please, therefore, make allowances for what I have written only with my son Steve and my daughter Ruth in mind, who both showed absolutely no interest whatsoever in what their father was doing to earn a living for twenty years ! Only in later life have they begun to ask a few questions.

John Lobleby

July 2011

Duxford and No 65 (F) Squadron

Chapter IX

I travelled in the *Hillman* to Cambridge on a beautiful Sunday afternoon in July 1960 to join my first RAF squadron, which my Log Book records as commencing on 18 July of that year. I remember being very pensive during the journey down - an emotional mixture yet again of " leaving home " and " leaving Judith and our blossoming social life " - to commence yet another new adventure. I should have been very excited by all accounts, but there was a touch of apprehension in my thoughts, partly due to my natural reserve and partly because I knew that I would be under the most intense scrutiny by all my fellows on the squadron for several months - none of whom I knew even by name - and by others on the Station and in the Mess. It was an era in which many service people were single and lived as bachelors, or single girls, in the Officers' and other Messes: this was a community in which friends were made and hopefully not too many enemies; it was a community of like-minded people - very professional in their approach to their respective jobs, but of people who always wanted to enjoy life to the full. It was essential to " fit in " with these colleagues and comrades, and to be an accepted and hopefully even a popular member of the group. Perhaps, therefore, during the drive I was entitled to feel just a little daunted by what lay ahead; I certainly wanted to succeed as a fighter pilot, but there is so much more to service life than just doing a job. It is all about people and relationships.

Cambridge was a beautiful sight and an inspiring city to see for the first time, but it reminded me that I was now only about twenty minutes away from my destination - the famous 'Battle of Britain' aerodrome called RAF Duxford, and the car park of the Officers' Mess. I need not have worried; it was mid-afternoon and although quiet in Reception, there was a note on the desk welcoming me to Duxford, giving me my room number, and relevant Mess Information (a bit like you get in a hotel), and inviting me to be in the Bar at 18.30 where I would meet my new colleagues for a drink or ten. This nice touch put me more at ease, and I therefore set about finding my room and unloading everything from the car into my new home. I saw one or two other guys in the public rooms, some in the vast Anteroom (lounge) and some in the main Dining Room having what I later learned was called " High Tea " - a customary meal at weekends in lieu of Dinner and served earlier so that people could get out into Cambridge or wherever for their social engagements. One guy did introduce himself to me and gave me a hand with some bags into my room; Alan Love was a pilot and member of 65 Squadron and he said he would take me along to the Bar for the welcome drinks party, a small touch for which I was immensely grateful. I shall say more about this remarkable person later. I was sad to learn a few years afterwards that Alan had been killed in a *Buccaneer* strike-bomber which he had rather carelessly flown into the ground whilst carrying out some dive-bombing attacks on a Lincolnshire range.

True to his word, Alan collected me just before 6.30pm and took me down to the Bar. I was amazed to find that the *whole* Squadron was assembled there: the squadron commander, Squadron Leader Chris " Bubbles " Neville, the two flight commanders, Flight Lieutenants " Tammy " Syme and Tim Barrett, the squadron QFI (the qualified flying instructor with whom I would spend a lot of time) a Flight Lieutenant " Dinger " Bell, and of course all the other pilots making up a total of 15 altogether. Front-line *Hunter* squadrons, and many others, customarily had twelve aircraft and 16 pilots on establishment in those days - I was to make up the complement to 16 aircrew, and would be, of course, " the junior pilot " - an unenviable position which was only relinquished when some other poor sole straight from training joined the squadron ! Our squadrons also had an autonomous groundcrew complement of some 70 personnel under the command of the Squadron Engineering Officer, who was also present for my welcoming party. Of course I was introduced to everybody, all dressed in civilian clothes, and it was truly difficult to remember who was who: at least when wearing uniform there is an aid to recognition if only by observing badges of rank. Obviously the squadron commander stood out, not only by his deportment and huge, unforgettable frame, but also by his jovial and extremely pleasant disposition - a " bubbly " sort of man, hence his nickname, though I did subsequently learn that this particular word had another, less complimentary connotation more akin to his occasional hot air emissions ! He made me feel very welcome, however, and passed me on to Tammy Syme whose 'A' Flight I was about to join. Tammy was old school, and calmly told me that I should report to the Squadron at 08.00 the following morning in time for Met Briefing, where he would then interview me and set me off on the round of formalities of arrival on both the Station and the Squadron. I recognised Tammy was a no-nonsense sort of person, who was clearly a very experienced and professional fighter pilot and flight commander, whose exacting standards would be hard to match up to. Welcoming a new pilot was clearly a long-established custom of 65 Squadron and a " parade " - it was incumbent upon everybody, irrespective of personal commitments and preferences for Sunday evenings, to be there en masse to meet and greet the new arrival. I felt honoured and flattered, and it certainly helped me to adjust to my very new circumstances and to face the Monday morning in a more confident mood

(Continued over)

The next day, and indeed the rest of the week, was taken up with administrative matters and getting myself things like a Security Pass, some Navigation Equipment, and a 65 Squadron badge sewn onto my flying suit. There were briefings and trips around the Station, to Air traffic Control for instance, and a short visit to our sister all-weather Javelin fighter squadron - No 64 Squadron - and meeting some of this squadron's aircrew. It was purely coincidence that the numerically close Nos 65 and 64 squadrons resided at the same base; the day-fighters of 65 Squadron were tasked with operational duties from dawn to dusk, and the all-weather (or night fighters) of 64 Squadron took over from dusk to dawn. The Javelins were delta-shaped in mainframe profile with a delta tailplane mounted atop a huge fin; they were twin-engined and carried a two-man crew of pilot and navigator; and in shape they resembled old fashioned flat-irons. Somebody once told me that far from being state-of-the-art fighters, they were really just "two engines fighting drag" - though they could turn pretty well at high altitude. I had a trip in a two-pilot trainer version of the Javelin some months later, but returned to earth glad that I was a Hunter pilot.

Dinger Bell took me on a dual-check ride that week and Don Oakden - the squadron Instrument Rating Examiner - took me up for an instrument flying check on the same day. Thereafter that week I flew solo from Duxford and really began to feel I was part of my new outfit, albeit with a lot of training ahead of me before I would be declared "Operational". My most vivid recollection of this period was my solo, close formation check-out with Tammy Syme as my leader which took place on 25 July: when we were safely airborne as a pair at about 15,000 feet, without much ado, Tammy started doing tight turns, with ever increasing amounts of 'g' being pulled with me trying to retain my formation station on his starboard wing tip. These turns soon gave way to barrel rolls both to the left and to the right, again with high 'g' forces, and then into a succession of vertical loops - which aren't easy until one has practised them over and over again. The sortie culminated in a formation recovery from high level under Air Traffic Control feeding into a Ground Controlled Approach (GCA) and a formation landing. I think I must have sweated pounds during this hour-long sortie, and felt absolutely shattered. Tammy was reasonably happy with my performance, it appeared, and told me that - since I had managed to stay roughly in the right position without doing anything dangerous, or having to break away - I could be considered cleared for close formation sorties on the Squadron. This from Tammy was praise indeed: he wasn't a man who dithered about - either you *could* stay on his wingtip or you *couldn't* - and he always threw you in at the deep end with barrel rolls and loops on your very first formation trip with him leading. He was, and is, a remarkable man and a great leader.

(To be continued)

"The saving of a ventral tank"

by Gerry (Blondie) Knight



The 64 Sqn Mk7 Meteor was in the hangar for some undercarriage work. Job completed, it was going up on a test flight. Yours truly scrounged a back seat flight. All was well until we were airborne and undercarriage up was selected. - 2 Green lights and a nose wheel Red. Pilot tried it again same result. Control Tower advised of problem. Another aircraft sent up to fly underneath us to see if the problem could be seen. Nothing noticeable - Instructed to fly around to use fuel.



After about 15 minutes Tower came on air. "Give passenger a choice of baling out or staying in for a belly landing"

Me to pilot, "I'll stay with you." and "How do we do a belly landing with the nose wheel down"?

Pilot "Good point, I'll talk to tower"

Tower, "Drop ventral tank and select undercarriage down, then do a normal landing and hope the undercarriage holds"

- "Roger"

So big circuit and slow approach to drop tank. As we came over the fence near the end of the runway, I yelled "Don't drop the tank, I know what the problem is"!!!

We pulled up increasing speed and away.

Pilot "What do you think it is"?

Me "The ground lock is still in"

Pilot "But the other Pilot couldn't see the flag on the lock when they flew underneath !! "

Me "There was no flag on the lock and have the tower call the squadron and ask Corporal ??? if he took the lock out."

The answer came back and it was "NO"

So we went round again and did a normal landing. Taxied to the flight pan. Thanked by the pilot whose name escapes me and put under close arrest for endangering an aircraft and pilot. (Didn't matter about me.)

Sgt Jarvis was delighted to have me in the guardroom again.

Anyway I was charged and given 7 days. The C/O, S / Leader Gardner asked me if I had anything to say. "Well sir, it seems strange I should save a ventral tank and possibly an aircraft and you give me 7 day " He smiled and had to hold back a laugh. I was held to blame as I was the one who signed the F700 stating the aircraft was ready for duty. I can't remember the name of the corporal but he got away Scott free.

Malcolm Niblett Writes

Hi Larry, enjoyed reading the latest Newsletter - as usual. A small piece of trivia as a result.

The first car I had at Duxford was a 1929 Austin 7 ! Yes, that IS Twenty-nine.

I bought it from Dickie Lord (still a member)?

And I sold it to Pud Holloway now a new member.

Cheers,

Malcolm. (Canada)

Our website

www.olddux.org has recently been renewed and is now into its sixth year, the cost of which is as it was in year one – £50.00. During that time we have had 6,939 hits, only a few resulting in new members, however I consider it to be good value and would like to see more use made of it. As has been mentioned previously the original hit counter was zeroed due to a technical hitch - to get an up to date reading just add 5,400.

The interactive Messages page gets some use by 'The Few' but sadly doesn't seem to be of interest to most? and I am at a loss to know what could be done to make the site more interesting. If anyone has any suggestions / ideas - please let me know. john_cross2@sky.com Tel 01903 207056

Editor



School Article

by Joe Cross

“RAF Duxford”

Earlier in the year, I was invited by my grandparents; who both served in the RAF, to attend the annual dinner and meeting of the Old Dux Association – an independent group of ex-RAF personnel of all ranks who served at RAF Duxford during its time as an operational airfield. The inaugural meeting took place in 1995 with only nineteen guests and membership has since grown into hundreds; all across the world.

Duxford is a small village in Cambridgeshire that is home to the historic RAF station of which it takes its name. RAF Duxford was used during World War I and the Battle of Britain, and from 1943 - 45 becoming a fighter airfield for the USAF (United States Air Force), in support of daylight bombing raids against Germany, before returning to RAF control. It became the Imperial War Museum Duxford in 1977 after its retirement; the first outstation of the Imperial War Museum London. It is Britain's largest aviation museum, including nearly 200 aircraft, military vehicles and artillery in seven exhibition buildings. It was used in the film: The Battle of Britain and had one of its hangers blown up to simulate a bombing raid!

After arriving at my hotel, I had a chance to meet some of the members at their old local pub the Red Lion, (which interestingly was officers only during the Second World War); where we enjoyed lunch and where I heard some fabulous stories about their time in the Air Force. I was surprised to see a member had even flown in from the U.S. to attend. Later on, my granddad introduced me to the President of the association; Air Chief Marshall Sir Richard Johns for a drink and a chat. Sir Richard is the former Commander in Chief of the RAF Strike Command and served as Chief of the Air Force from 1997 to 2000. He recently retired from his post as the Queen's Equerry and Governor of Windsor Castle.

I was then taken to the annual dinner, opened by Chairman Bob Hope with two minutes silence for absent friends and later, Sir Richard gave the Royal Toast followed by a hilarious speech about a journey back to Britain, where before takeoff he called to his navigator, who did not respond. He then turned around to see his navigator had jumped from the plane as the rear end had caught fire. Sir Richard began to climb out of the plane before realising he had left his bag in the cockpit with presents for his wife and so had to get back into the flaming plane, before hearing a muffled “Get mine too!” through the smoke from his navigator!

At my table, I was regaled with many a tale about shenanigans between squadrons at the base the primary two being 64 and 65 Squadron; it wasn't all serious; they still found time to entertain themselves.

The meeting took place the following morning, and I had a chance to tour the airfield and exhibitions. Duxford is a fascinating place, home to many of the world's finest aircraft from WWI through to modern day. Some of those which stood out to me included: the RAF Eurofighter Typhoon; which cost £90m each and are one of the most advanced fighter aircraft in the world today, Concorde, the Hawker Hunter (which broke the air speed record in 1953), the famous Spitfire and Hurricane and the German WWII fighter Messerschmitt Bf-109E. I also had a look at the aircraft in the American Air Museum, which was opened by the Queen in 1997 and was dedicated in a ceremony attended by President George H.W. Bush and Prince Charles. The American museum contains two extraordinary planes. The SR-71 'Blackbird', which is the fastest manned aircraft in the world, at Mach 3.3, with a top speed of 3500km/h and a range of 6000km. It can travel from London to Paris in 6 minutes and from London to New York in an hour and a half (if only all flights were like this), it was used primarily by the USAF for stealth reconnaissance. Secondly, was the B-52 Bomber which can travel 17000km without the need for refuelling (that is the distance from the UK to Australia) and with it, can carry over 70,000lb of explosives, including bombs, mines and missiles. Duxford welcomed its 10 millionth visitor in 2005 and sees an average of 400,000 visitors a year.

My whistle-stop tour of RAF Duxford, with stories from the eyes of real service personnel has been thoroughly interesting and an eye opener about life in the war and the early 50s. I was amazed to hear about the rapid developments in aircraft from the Wright brothers' first successful airplane in 1903 through to today's modern air fleet. In addition, I was surprised at the lives and different paths taken by some of the members, while some stayed with the RAF after their tour of duty had finished and continued to climb the ranks, others went on to join the SAS, compete in the Olympics and become authors.

It has made me realise that we need to stop and consider the respect due to our older generations and some of the marvellous things they have achieved in their lives and what a debt we owe them for shaping the world we live in today. Last year, we saw the commemoration of seventy years since the Battle of Britain, and in another seventy years those who lived through times like WWII may be gone and we will be their age – so I urge you to go and try and learn something about this generation while you still can. In the words of Winston Churchill: “Never in the field of human conflict, has so much been owed by so many to so few”.

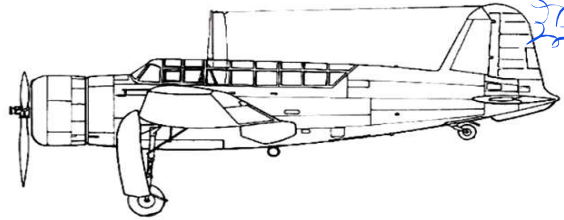
For information on Old Dux Association visit www.olddux.org and Imperial War Museum Duxford www.duxford.iwm.org.uk

During the 1950's, RAF Idris in Libya (known as Castel Benito during WW2) located 34km south of Tripoli operated primarily as a staging post for the scheduled Handley Page Hastings flights of Transport Command and any other RAF and foreign military aircraft that for a variety of reasons had to land there. We operated on a four-shift system (I was i/c C shift) all the year round, night and day (including Christmas Day), ready to receive and 'service' whatever we were confronted with. Civil airline operators also shared the airfield that meant there was a high level of activity for such a relatively small airfield, but the only interaction with the civil operators was that the RAF were responsible for clearing the runways in the event of a crash. Early in 1954 we were advised by Telex (Remember them?) that a flight of 6 Swedish SAAB 17 dive bombers on route to Ethiopia for delivery to the Imperial Ethiopian Airforce would be arriving and would require re-fuelling.

The Swedish SAAB 17 was a large purpose built dive-bomber powered by a single radial engine with a crew of two. Its most notable feature was the undercarriage covered by a large streamlined fairing that retracted backwards into the wing. When diving to deliver its bomb load the undercarriage could be partially lowered to act as a dive brake. I found out later that these were part of a batch of 46 such planes sold to Ethiopia by the Swedes as England and America had refused to re-equip the IEA for 'political' reasons. (However, that did not seem to stop Emperor Haile Sellassie visiting Duxford in 1955!).

The six planes landed as scheduled and refuelling was carried out whilst the Swedish ferry pilots went for a meal etc. One of the pilots had reported that one of his wheel brakes seemed to be leaking fluid and asked if I could fix it. He explained that he got paid on delivery so only needed a couple more landings, and then the IEA inherited the problem!

I adapted one of our small jacks to lift the wheel clear of the ground, removed the wheel, and dismantled the brake, to reveal a flat rubber brake sac that had a small pinhole leaking fluid whenever the brakes were applied. I blocked the feed line to prevent further loss of brake fluid, removed the sac and cleaned the area around the hole with 100-octane petrol (AKA laundry liquid!). Using a puncture repair kit, I applied a patch and as I was unsure about the compatibility between the different rubbers, covered the patch with electricians tape! After re-assembling everything, the pilot applied the brakes and it looked as if the repair had succeeded! The pilot expressed satisfaction with the result and took off to resume his journey. I often wondered how long that patch lasted and was he paid?



About a month later a Junkers 52 landed unannounced sporting French Air force colours, the pilot reported that one of his engines, the front one, was misbehaving (I think that's what he said!) and could *Les Amis*, cure the problem? This particular plane was used by the French Foreign Legion and was en route, I believe from / to Corsica to somewhere "in the desert". Language problems and a reluctance to talk prevented any further information gathering! The Junkers 52 was at one time the transport backbone of the German Luftwaffe used for cargo, parachute drops and passenger carrying and one was used by Adolf Hitler as his own personal aircraft.

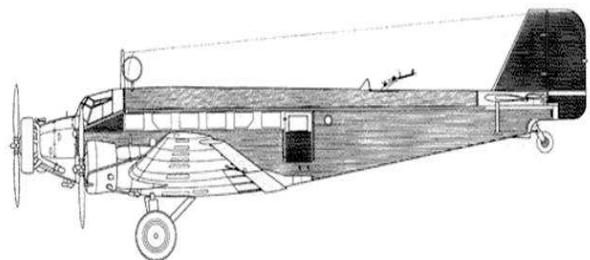
It had three radial engines, fixed undercarriage and the wings and fuselage were clad in what looked like corrugated iron, it was extremely slow and cumbersome and was an easy target for allied fighters during WW2.

An engine fitter visually checked the engine whilst I went forward into the cockpit area and after a good look around homed in on a large switch panel on the starboard side of the cockpit covered with a sheet of Perspex with small holes drilled in it over each of the switches. Under the Perspex the switch descriptions were all in German, and taped to the cover were the French translations, neither of which I understood!

Hanging from a piece of string fixed to the cover was what looked like a small knitting needle, presumably to poke through the holes. I noticed that the switches were in fact a type of circuit breaker and that one of them was standing proud from its neighbours. Using the afore -mentioned needle I gave it a push and it clicked in, and stayed in!

When the pilot and passengers returned from their 'break' I tried, without success, to explain what I had done, and after a lot of Gaelic hand waving he indicated that he would give the misbehaving engine a twirl. (I think that's French for starting) and after a few moments running he gave me the universal 'thumbs up', passengers got in, two more engines started and he was gone!

Sacré Bleu, What did I reset? Gott in Himmel, I have no idea but it seemed to have worked!



Email Updates

Edward Cawley ted3raven@gmail.com

Sylvia Hann sholder@ntlworld.com

Peter Clay peterclay611@btinternet.com

Glen Bartle glenbartle@virginmedia.com

Walter Forster w-forster@sky.com (New Member)

John Lobley johnlobbers@gmail.com

Ron Pountain a.hallsworth699@btinternet.com (Son - in - Law)

Blue Bulldog

Jim Garlinge was recently contacted by a Mr Ron Abrahams of Royston, explaining that he had in his possession a china bulldog that had connections with RAF Duxford. Jim was obviously interested and imagined that it could be a bulldog of the flying type and prevailed upon Keith Bayliss, who lives locally to collect it. Keith kindly agreed, later delivering it to Jim at one of the airshow and was mildly surprised to find it to be a china bulldog of the canine variety. It was of some age, probably 1930'ish, when 19Sqn flew Bristol Bulldogs from Duxford and incidentally it was the type of aircraft that Douglas Bader flew when he lost both legs doing unauthorized low level aerobatics in December 1931.

As can be seen it has had a lick of blue paint here and there for some reason and Jim was hoping that perhaps the 'more senior' members especially those who served with 19 Sqn. might recognise it or perhaps be able to offer an explanation. Contact Jim on 01322 274245



Winning in the Old Dux Association Draw

I was very fortunate to win the Old Dux Association Draw on 15th May 2011. The prize was presented to the association by Gerry Honey as a parting gift and wish to thank him on their behalf for this generosity.

The prize was a flight in a Boeing Stearman PT 17, an open cockpit training aircraft.

When I arrived at Buckenham airfield I met Gerry Honey, the pilot, who is also Chief Flying Instructor for the Old Buckenham Aero Club. He took me through the paper procedures and safety instructions prior to the flight.

I then got my first sight of the aircraft I was to fly in.

It was very solid looking with a big radial engine in front. I was strapped in, some last minute instructions were given and, with some trepidation, we were off.

I had decided, as I am in my 82nd year, not to do the aerobatics. The flight was noisy but exhilarating with the wind rushing past so not all the conversation with Gerry was heard by me. We didn't fly higher than 1000 feet so I could view all the countryside and airfield quite clearly. The robust aircraft was very stable in the air and did not give me a moment's anxiety, for which I am thankful. We had longer in the air than expected due to other aircraft landing but all too soon, like all good things, the flight came to an end. We landed, I was presented with my certificate, photographs were taken and then I was able to have a chat with members of the Aero Club, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

The whole experience was wonderful and I will always remember it. Again my sincere thanks to Gerry.

Michael Scrivener

No offence !.... but

A fat girl served me in McDonald's at lunch time. She said 'sorry about the wait.' I said 'don't worry dear, you're bound to lose it eventually.'

Snow is forecast! The TV weather girl said she was expecting 8 inches tonight. I thought to myself, fat chance with a face like that!

I hate all this terrorist business. I used to love the days when you could look at an unattended bag on a train or bus and think to yourself I'm going to have that.

I had a Trivia competition sewn up until the last question which I got wrong. The question was, Where do women have the curliest hair??

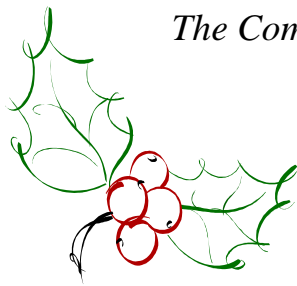
The answer I should have given was Fiji...

The Committee Send Their Sincere Good Wishes To All Members

For Christmas and The New Year

and Thank Them

For Their Continued Support



Happy Christmas

A Post Office worker's job was to process all the mail that had illegible addresses. A letter came addressed in a shaky handwriting to God with no actual address. He thought he should open it to see what it was about. The letter read:
Dear God,
I am an 83 year old widow, living on a very small pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had £100 in it, which was all the money I had until my next pension payment. Next Sunday is Christmas, and I had invited two of my friends over for dinner. Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with, have no family to turn to, and you are my only hope.. Can you please help ?

Sincerely, Edna

The postal worker was touched.. He showed the letter to all the other workers, each one dug into his or her wallet and came up with a few pounds.

By the time he made the rounds, he had collected £96, which they put into an envelope and sent to the woman. The rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of Edna and the dinner she would be able to share with her friends.

Christmas came and went..... A few days later, another letter came from the same old lady to God.

All the workers gathered while the letter was opened..... It read: Dear God,

How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your gift of love, I was able to fix a glorious dinner for my friends. We had a very nice day and I told my friends of your wonderful gift.

By the way, there was £4 missing..... I think it might have been those bastards at the post office.

Sincerely, Edna.

Daddy, How Was I Born?

A little boy asks his father, "Daddy, how was I born?" The father answers, "Well, son, I suppose one day you will need to find out anyway! Your Mum and I first got together in a chat room on Yahoo. Then I set up a date via e-mail with your Mum and we met at a cybercafe. We sneaked into a secluded room, and Googled each other. Your mother agreed to a download from my hard drive. But when I was ready to upload, we discovered that neither one of us had used a firewall and it was too late to hit the delete button." "Nine months later a little Pop-Up appeared that said: 'You've Got Male!'"

(That's not how I remember it!)

Views on Aging

The only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we're kids? If you're less than 10 years old, you're so excited about aging that you think in fractions ."How old are you?" "I'm four and a half " You get into your teens, now they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number, or even a few ahead. "How old are you?" "I'm gonna be 16!" You could be 13, but hey, you're gonna be 16! And then the greatest day of your life.... you become 21. Even the words sound like a ceremony . . YOU BECOME 21. YESSS!
But then you turn 30. Oooohh, what happened there? You BECOME 21, you TURN 30, then you're PUSHING 40. Whoa! Put on the brakes, it's all slipping away. Before you know it, you REACH 50 and your dreams are gone. But wait!!! You MAKE it to 60. You didn't think you would!

So you BECOME 21, TURN 30, PUSH 40, REACH 50 and MAKE it to 60.

You've built up so much speed that you HIT 70! After that it's a day-by-day thing; you HIT Wednesday! You get in to your 80s and every day is a complete cycle; you HIT lunch; you TURN 4:30; you REACH bedtime. And it doesn't end there. Into the 90s, you start going backwards; "I Was JUST 92."

Then a strange thing happens. If you make it to over 100, you become a little kid again. "I'm 100 and a half !
May you all make it to a healthy 100 and a half !

