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RUNWAY 22

Charity No: 1184409

Volume 1 No.28

www.mhas.org.uk

June 2022

Martlesham Heath Aviation Society

NEWSLETTER



RAF MARTLESHAM HEATH



THE MEMORIALS - BARRACK SQUARE



356TH FIGHTER GROUP

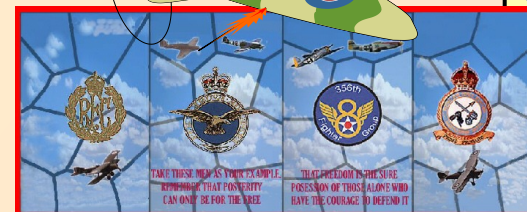
**Control Tower Museum
Martlesham Heath
Opened on the 23 September 2000**



Courtesy of Tarkey Barker

**Memorial Window
St. Michael & All Angels Church
Martlesham Heath**

**Dedicated on the...
23 September 2000**



EDITORIAL

As our chairman, Martyn Cook has explained, as a charitable organisation we no longer hold an AGM. But I will let Martyn explain this in his report.

Hopefully, we are returning to a normal life style once more and Martyn's report is quite upbeat. Perhaps we will never return to the days before Covid, when our monthly meetings were regularly attended by well over 100 aviation enthusiasts, but already we are welcoming quite a good turn out each month. It always did amaze me that we were able to attract such large audiences when other clubs and societies were struggling. As I always say - we must be getting something right!

We are delighted to include the life story of one of our long standing members who has recently celebrated his 100th year! Ken Oatley had a distinguished WW2 career and received the French Légion d'honneur. I included the report of his investiture in the February 2018 edition of Runway 22 and am pleased to repeat it here.

Other articles are also related directly to RAF Martlesham Heath and I hope that you will enjoy reading it.

Alan Powell, editor.

Annual Associate Members Meeting (AAMM) Year End Report

By: Chairman & Membership Secretary Martyn Cook

Hello everyone

I am starting my report in the same vein as my 2021 report, Covid-19.

Today it's more prevalent than ever albeit not so severe thank goodness, but still it plagues us. Most report that the first symptom is a sore throat and apart from feeling a little groggy that's it. We have many of our members who have contacted Covid in its various forms and who get better relatively quickly thank goodness. Obviously the number of vaccinations that we have had has helped the situation.

For those of you who are attending your first AAM meeting here is a quick reminder. Being a 'Charitable Incorporated Organisation' (CIO) we do not hold an AGM. This means no elections or re-elections of trustees etc. However, having said that the trustees have to hold a meeting in order to keep you all up to date on the societies activities and to allow you to have your say. The meeting never happened last year due to Covid-19 and

President: **Mr Richard Barker**

Newsletter Contributions

If you have an article or a story you would like to share with the other members of the Society then please send it to me...

Alan Powell - Newsletter Editor
16 Warren Lane
Martlesham Heath
Ipswich IP5 3SH

Tel: Ipswich 622458
E-Mail Address
alanpowell321@gmail.com

Other Committee Contacts...

Chairman	Martyn Cook	(01473) 614442
Vice Chairman	Howard King	(01473) 274300
Secretary	Alan Powell	(01473) 622458
Treasurer	Pat Lisseman	(01473) 611665
Program Sec.	Vicky Gunnell	(01473) 720004
Membership Sec.	Martyn Cook	(01473) 614442
Publicity Sec.	Howard King	(01473) 274300
Catering	Peter Morris	(01473) 415787
Clerk of Works	Colin Whitmore	(01473) 729512
Museum Manager	Ian Lisseman	(01473) 611665
Sound & Lighting	Allan Stimson	(07823) 492750
Engineering	Brian Gray	(01394) 383163
Groundsman	Robert Alexander	(07766) 336068

Membership Secretary's Report

Sadly this is the first newsletter that we have produced in which we have had no new members to introduce to you.

This maybe the opportune time to mention that with the rising costs of postage and printing the trustees are looking to raise the membership fee for next year (2023-2024). We will of course keep you informed.

However, should you know of anyone wishing to join the following fees still apply:

Single Membership cost: £8 on joining, £7 per year thereafter.

Joint Membership costs: £13 on joining, £11 per year thereafter.

Should you wish to contact me my details are as follows:

Martyn Cook : 4 Peel Yard: Martlesham Heath : Ipswich : IP5 3UL
Telephone: (01473) 614442 Email: martyn.mhas@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP & RUNWAY 22 - Please Read

I hope that you have enjoyed reading your latest newsletter...
'RUNWAY 22'.

It will continue to arrive on your door step every four months because you have renewed your membership for the coming year (2022/23).

You Haven't Renewed As Yet! Please see the Chairman's report in this issue for information on how, for the bargain sum of £7.00 you can continue to receive your copy of this great editorial.

Should you not wish to renew then we thank you for your support and, if you let me know and I will remove your details from our membership list. May I on behalf of the MHAS trustees wish you all the very best for the future and should you wish to rejoin please don't hesitate to contacting me.

Martyn Cook MHAS Chairman & Membership Secretary



WHAT'S ON



VICKY GUNNELL - PROGRAMME SECRETARY

3rd June '22 Audio Visual Presentation **KEN DELVE**

'100 years of Combat Operations at RAF Marham'

1st July '22 Audio Visual Presentation **JEREMY TAYLOR**

'Air Racing & Aerobatics'

5th August '22 Audio Visual Presentation **RON CLAYTON**

'The Story of the Shingle Street'

2nd September '22 Bletchley Park Heritage Centre **DAY VISIT**

'The Coach leaves the Community Hall car park MH at 8.30am

Leaving Bletchely Park for home at 4.30pm'

11th September '22 Classic Car & Military Vehicle Meet **CONTROL TOWER**

'A Day for Families with Plenty to See and Do'

7th October '22 Audio Visual Presentation **JOHN VASCO**

'The Messerschmitt Bf in the Battle of Britain'

Please check our website - www.mhas.org.uk - for any programme updates

the lockdown, hence my end of year written report you received by email or post.

As Chairman I have a duty to give you a report on the society's activities and actions over the past year along with any changes to the line up of trustee's. Thankfully there have been no trustee resignations. I will as I did last year, email you this report and post it to those without an email address.

The above also requires our Treasurer to give you a report and following my report our Treasurer Pat Lisseman (Mrs) will deliver her report on the finances of the society.

Alan Powell our Secretary and Newsletter Editor volunteered back in July 2020 to produce "The MHAS Times" a monthly style new sheet in between producing our "Runway 22". The total number of New sheet Alan produced was 12. This kept members up to date and no doubt helped to prompt members into renewing their membership for 2021/22.

Our last meeting before the second lockdown was if I remember correctly March 2021. Our next meeting took place after the end of the 2nd lock-down on the 3rd September 2021. Phil Wilkinson gave a wonderful talk to kick off our monthly meeting programme entitled "Red Star & Roundel". We lost 6 monthly meetings through the 2nd lock-down. n between however, we still attracted some new members. 11 to be precise. Unfortunately, we had 17 members who did not renew their membership in 2021/22.

Unfortunately we lost 4 members during the year that we know of who past away. One of those was Alan Smith our Consultant Archivist and a Vice President. Jack Peck one of the Wednesday gang. From the 356th Fighter Group we lost Arthur Wong a 359th Sqd. veteran pilot and Inez Troge, wife of the late Eldon Troge also from the 359th Sqd. One ex-member Ivan Potter left a gratuity of £1,000 in his will to the society. There may of course be others who we are unaware of as a result of the 2nd Covid-19 lockdown.

So, what did we do during 2021-22

On Friday 20th August Howard King arranged a visit to Flixton Aviation Museum it was our only group outside visit of the year. Flixton like MHAS had not been open and so we were the first to visit since the lockdown and they did us proud. Food and drink was in abundance and the personal tour they arranged was very well received.

On September 12th we held our now annual "Classic Car & Military

Vehicle Meet” at the Control Tower. What an event. The people came but never left the same goes for the classic cars. It has always been a successful event but last year was phenomenal.

As I said above we re-started our monthly meetings on the 1st of October with Nick Black telling the story of the “Battle of Barking Creek”. Thankfully we have continued to hold our meetings with varying number of attendees just about covering our costs. We sincerely hope that this will increase when the Covid-19 numbers decrease.

In November we held our ‘Service of Remembrance’. Sadly we were unable to enlist an RAF senior officer to deliver an address but the RAF was represented by the presence of the Felixstowe No.356 ATC. The number of attendees however was encouraging; perhaps starting 30 minutes earlier encouraged people to come along. Shortly before the arranged service date we lost our Scottish Piper Rod Caird who has played at all of our services since 2013. He had played with the Ipswich Piping Society at our Classic Car event just 2 months previously. We were please however to play the piece of music “Flower of Scotland” by a piper that Rod has always played as a tribute to him.

Strangely with the Covide restrictions such as they were the group visits to the Control Tower Museum increased, particularly schools. We have also had a number of private parties which Ian Lisseman our Museum Manager hosted.

Despite Covide and the 2nd lockdown work has gone on in the Control Tower Museum albeit with small projects. One on-going outside project is the safety fencing around the underground bunker. As our landlords are responsible for its safety they asked MHAS to provide a fence. This is being carried out by the contractor who installed the Control Tower compound.

We have now resumed our Sunday afternoon opening of the Control Tower Museum which hopefully will result in prospective members coming along and who knows, perhaps some of our members also.

Activities Planned for Coming Year 2021/22

We have as yet only agreed for one event the “Classic Car meet” to be held on Sunday 11th September at the Control Tower.

The annual “Service of Remembrance” will take place on Sunday 13th November.

That concludes my report for the year 2021/22

However, I cannot end without first thanking our President Mr Richard

INEZ TROGE

Who Sadly passed away on the 14th April 2022

If you were serving at RAF Martlesham Heath during 1943-45 you would certainly have met with Eldon Troge, Inez’s husband to be.

Eldon was a pilot with the 359th Sqd. 356th FG 8th USAAF. Eldon sadly passed away on the 13th November 2008.

Both Eldon and Inez became friends with the MHAS members who returned on a number of occasions to attend the 356th FG reunions in the US.

Sadly they never made it to Martlesham Heath as a couple but Inez along with their daughter Deb’s did. Pictured here with the late Alan Smith in our Control Tower Museum on the 11th May 2014.



Not to be left out, Eldon dressed with somewhere to go.

Now together once more and forever.

Martyn - On behalf of the MHAS President, Trustees & Members

He helped put together our PowerPoint presentation on the history of the airfield and started compiling records on the airfield history and it's human exuberant's which was difficult as the RAF did not keep accurate records of the comings and goings.

Alan will always be remembered, certainly by myself each time we show our PowerPoint presentation. The slide showing the crashed German Heinkel mine laying aeroplane that circled Clacton on the night of the 30th April 1940 which Alan heard whilst laying in his bed. The plane eventually crashed and one of the two mines blew up.

Alan lived in Clacton at that time and the following morning he and his chums raced to look at the crashed plane and the devastation left by the exploding mine.

Alan passed away at the age of 94 years on the 12th January 2022 in the Alice Grange Care Home in Kesgrave, within sight almost of his beloved Martlesham Heath airfield.

We will not forget you Alan or your desire to record every incident and aeroplane that came to Martlesham Heath airfield for testing. Now you have the opportunity to speak with all those test pilots that have gone before you.

Rest in peace Alan

Martyn - On behalf of the President, the Trustees and Members of the MHAS.

2nd Lt. ARTHUR WONG

Who Passed away February 2022 aged 99

Sadly we never met Arthur who was a prisoner of war. Arthur baled out of his plane on Christmas Eve 1944.



Darren Adkinson a brit living in the US brought Arthur to our attention and generally looked him.

Our editor did a feature on Arthur in the June 2020 Runway 22. Why not look it up and read all about him.

Martyn - On behalf of the President, the Trustees and Members of the MHAS.

Barker and of course the MHAS trustees. Their help and support throughout the year makes running our society a pleasure even in these difficult times.

MHAS CIO TREASURER TO MEMBERS 31st MARCH 2022

	INCOME 2021/22	INCOME 2020/21	See Note
Subscriptions	804.00	1126.00	1
Meeting Receipts	1414.00	0.00	2
Donations	2942.51	824.26	3
Shop Sales	483.15	72.50	
Second Hand Book Sales	743.90	164.00	
Ticket Sales and Outings	490.00	0.00	
Classci Car Open Day	761.00		
Tax Rebate Gift Aid	219.96	108.28	
SCDC Grants Revetments			
MHHL Bal cost of Revetments	0.00	1350.00	
Misc	571.00	590.00	4
Interest Reserve Account	1.45	6.05	
Total Income for Year	8430.97	4241.09	
	EXPENDITURE 2021/22	EXPENDITURE 2020/21	
Trips and Outings	545.00	0.00	
Exp Monthly Meetings	1188.51	34.04	
Classic Car Open Day	387.48	20.00	
Refreshments Tower	55.00	0.00	
Utility Bills	590.92	371.79	
Shop Stock	153.18	68.40	
Museum Displays	782.09	621.78	5
Museum Fabric & Maintenance	2111.51	463.28	6
Publicity	195.82	186.30	
Printing & Postage Newsletters	482.67	626.02	
Insurance	196.06	179.20	
Printing	119.00	80.96	
Stationary & Postage	28.45	112.17	
Broadband/ web site	71.79	50.26	
Remembrance Service	190.00	60.00	
CCTV Control Tower	0.00	930.43	
Revetments (ES Grant)	0.00	2940.00	
Misc	881.32	242.24	7
Total Expenditure for Year	7978.80	6986.87	
Net Income	452.17		
Net Expenditure		2745.78	
Opening Balance 1.4.21	20344.69		
Closing Balance 31.3.22	20796.86		
	Reconciliation 31.3.22		
Bank Balance - Current Account	5985.18		
Cash held by Treasurer	154.62		
Reserve Account	14657.06		
	20796.86		
I confirm that this is a true record and statement of accounts			
Pat Lisseman - Treasurer Dated 1st April 2022			

Treasurers Notes

1. We are extremely grateful to all our members who have continued to support us by paying their annual subscriptions especially to those who have signed gift aid forms
2. We were delighted that we could restart our monthly meetings in September and at the numbers of attendees.
3. Throughout the year we have offered private visits and especially school groups these raised £618.50. Donations from American members totalled just over £200 and we received a £1000 legacy from the estate of Ivan Potter,
4. Misc donations include : £500 from Redwoods the Industrial Site Management for Remembrance Day
5. Volunteers have completed works to improve lighting and displays including a "Memorial Wall". Special thanks to Colin and Allan from the Wednesday gang and Alan Powell for the Memorial Wall.
6. Following H&S report by MHHL we have allocated £1,195 for safety fencing for the Secret Bunker. Following attempted break in we replaced the side gate entry to the compound -£200 - Walls have been repaired and repainted (internal and external) . A new vacuum cleaner and accessories purchased for our volunteer cleaner.
7. Robert Alexander has done a lot of work in clearing areas around the bunker and shed - We paid £234 for a skip to clear waste. £120 was spent on a plaque to commemorate Rob and Rita Dunnett. £216 was used to clean one of the memorials in Barrack Square and we have purchased a Gazebo for use at external events.

Membership Renewal 2022/23

Some members have already rejoined. You can pay by BAC's through your own bank account the details are as follows...

MHAS Bank: **NatWest**
Account Name: **Martlesham Heath Aviation Society**
MHAS Bank Account No: **14670909**
Sort Code: **60-24-45**
Use as your Reference your: **Surname & Membership No**

You can of course send a cheque directly to me my address it is follows...

Martyn Cook - 4 Peel Yard - Martlesham Heath - Ipswich - Suffolk - IP5 3UL

If you could include a stamp that would be very helpful, at the same time saving a little more money. But please, make sure that the stamp is on the Post Office paper in order that it can be easily peeled off. We have special cardboard envelopes to post your new membership card to you, so no need of an envelope. Alternatively, should you be in the area then you can put the cash into an envelope and put it through my door. The dog may

I held my breath as I'm sure the others did since we had used most of our ammo in the ground attacks. Besides which we would have been slaughtered being outclassed, outnumbered and short of fuel.

I watched them disappear into the smoke and confusion over Dieppe.

It was nice to see the English coast again and even nicer to get down in one piece, because I was sure I'd been hit somewhere vital.

But all I had was a lot more holes in "G" and she was still flyable. We had only been on the ground a short time when a JU88 or Dornier came over Ford at a very low altitude and dropped a stick of bombs straight across the grass. HE ducked in and out of some low cloud which was coming in from the sea. He was a very brave man. I think he was later shot down by a Beaufighter.

Around teatime we were stood down as the operation was considered over so far as we were concerned. We had begun the operation with 17 pilots and we now had 8 left and some very patched Hurricanes.

Dieppe was over for me and the next day we flew back to Manston.

The Hurri-bomber was a development of the Hurricane of course. The Mk 2B Hurri-bomber was armed with twelve .303 wing mounted machine guns or six machine guns and four cannon. Also two 500 or 1000lb bombs. ED.

OBITUARIES

Back in January 2022 we lost our Consultative Archivist Alan Smith who was also one of our Vice President.



Alan was one of the first members back in 1981 along with Margaret his wife. Margaret could always be found cleaning the cabinets whilst Alan could be found in the office on the computer updating the society records. Sadly Margaret passed away in December 2007 after a long battle with cancer.

Up until his sight began failing Alan would always attend our monthly meetings where he was always surrounded by members wanting to know about some aspect of aviation history.

town and on the front.

The troops were now landing, I could see the landing barges and other sea transports quick clearly.

I flew out to sea giving the Royal Navy a wide berth since these chaps were understandably trigger happy and will let fly at anything in the air.

We flew back to Ford and I was somewhat short of fuel so lost no time in getting in. All our aircraft were found to have holes in them. My own "g" had a few through the fabric which the ground crew were hastily patching up with red dope.

After a debrief and lunch, we were briefed to go out again. This time our target was some concentrations of tanks and guns which were apparently moving in from the north of Dieppe. We were also informed that our troops were now pulling out and that we were supposed to cover them as best we could.

A different sight now met my eyes when we arrived over Dieppe. At 1500 feet I had a panoramic view in the brilliant sunshine. There was an extra ordinary amount of rubbish floating around in the water, quite some way off the shore. There were bright yellow dinghies which stood out against a surface of oil and sundry junk. I then realised the items floating in the water were bodies.

We went into attack the tanks in two lines abreast as pre-arranged and I could see the targets right ahead. They were slinging everything at us or so it appeared.

I saw one of our hurricanes get hit and catch fire. He dived straight at a bunch of armoured vehicles and blew up. It was a friend of mine called Doofy Du Fretay, a free Frenchman who loathed the Germans. Then another friend, an Australian who had been to my home in London, blew up. I think one of his bombs got hit as he went in. I flew straight at some transport and troops with guns going, and skipped my bombs at them. I passed over the top at a couple of feet since I brought back with me a souvenir, it was the whip aerial off a German tank wedged in my radiator. My number two, Murray Thomas, a Canadian lad, reminded me of this when he came from Canada a couple of years ago on holiday!

We formed up to go home at about 200 feet when I saw to my horror a big formation of Me109s and FW190s flying parallel to the coast. They passed directly over the top of us at not more than a couple of hundred feet. It was possible to make out the individual markings, and one I noticed had a big black oil streak underneath.

bark but it will not eat it. (Please remember do not send cash through the post).

Of course payment can be paid at one of our monthly meetings; cost of renewal is of course just £7.00 just come and see me, I have your membership card to hand.

In the meantime our web site... www.mhas.org.uk is of course be the place to look for society information.

In the meantime from our President and trustees, please keep safe, it's not over yet.

Martyn

MHAS Chairman & Membership Secretary

KEN OATLEY

CELEBRATING HIS 100th BIRTHDAY

24th March 1922-2022

MHAS are pleased to send their congratulations and very best wishes to their long-standing Member, Ken Oatley, on the occasion of his 100th Birthday on 24th March.

Ken's life began in Frome, Somerset. His parents, having bought the family bakery business from an uncle in 1925 wanted Ken to become a professional violinist .He began learning at the age of 3 years old and at the age of 6, he was entered into his first Eisteddfod coming a very creditable 2nd. By the age of 12, he was practising 3 hours a day whilst trying to juggle his schoolwork and occasionally entertaining others playing in 'The Oatley' trio, his mum on piano, dad on cello and Ken on violin. Ken even made 2 records on 78rpm.

His hobbies included making model airplanes, dabbling with early crystal radio sets and like a lot of youngsters in those days making pedal cars out of discarded pram wheels and bits of old wood.

By the age of 15 he had won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music but being so young and with no contacts or relatives in London, he was unable to accept the offer. By now at 16 years old, he was helping out with a bread round of 107 calls, up and down hill, pushing a bread barrow for up to 4 miles whilst still pursuing his violin training.

When war broke out in 1939, Ken joined the Home Guard and in true Dad's Army style was dressed in a fatigue type uniform and armed with a broom stick for drill!

In 1940, Ken joined the RAF to train to be a fighter pilot but soon found himself transferred to Bomber Command, initially training as a pilot and then as a navigator on Sterlings and Lancasters , braving the deadly Atlantic convoys to train in Canada and South Africa .

Back in England he found himself being transferred again .This time to 5 Group Bomber Command to fly the fantastic Mosquito as a navigator. In August 1944, he finally went operational on 627 Squadron, a low level precision dive bombing unit based at Woodhall Spa alongside 617 Dambuster Squadron .He survived 21 missions which included in February 1945, the infamous raid on Dresden. Ken met Irene, a WAAF parachute packer on the base and they married in 1945.



Ken with his Mosquito

De-mobbed in 1946, Ken re-joined the family business which had now relocated to Northampton with a restaurant, bakery and 6 cake shops. In 1947, Ken converted a derelict basement into an airliner themed restaurant called The Clipper. It was so authentic and popular for its time, that many stage and film stars playing at

the Theatre would frequent it. Ken and Irene had a very happy and busy social life with the local car club and their many friends in Northampton.

In 1952 Ken was sent to Ipswich to run a new business venture, the popular local restaurant in Westgate Street- The Oriental Restaurant. Well

I dropped down to 1500 feet and told the section to drop back in line astern ready for diving. All this had been planned beforehand, needless to say so that there was a minimum of R/T natter and less chance of confusion. The light flak was coming up thick and fast, and we were flying at a very vulnerable height. I could see the 40mm stuff curving up towards us, for all the world like a lot of bright glowing beads on a string. It would flash past us and explode just above our heads, or so it appeared. Flak always looks worse at night.

Then I saw it. Three or four big splodges of German concrete surrounded by trees. I called up my section and told them target ahead, although I found out later that they had seen it at the same time as myself, so they were ready for my tally ho.

I went down as low as I dared to release my bombs – I couldn't really miss. I could make out the heavy guns in their white concrete bases along with some smaller gun sites and huts. It was these smaller sites which had the guns which were firing at me, so I fired back as I dived down, this is a general tactic to make the people on the ground keep their heads down. Eight machine guns all going at once are quite noisy.

I pulled out at a couple of hundred feet and saw the trees loom out of the darkness in front of me.

My bombs had a 6 second delay whilst the boys behind me had 2 second fuses. This was to prevent those behind me being blown up by my bombs. Nevertheless, it still needed a quick and coordinated run over the target even with these precautions.

After what seemed a very long time, I saw the whole site go up in a series of quick flashes and then felt the crump which bounced my hurricane about. On my left, I saw one of my section having a hard time with the flak. He was weaving like a mad man just above the tree tops.

We were joined by another of our section and the three of us swung around to the Southside of Dieppe.

We all continued to machine gun anything that moved on the ground. It was by now light enough to see, and we all had a go at some German transport which disgorged its troops in a great big hurry.

I could see a lot of activity on the sea and the beaches. The German ship was still burning merrily away, although there were lots of fires in the

job was to cover the landings of the Canadian troops.

What did dismay our particular squadron was that we were the first lot in, before first light. We were also told that we were going to dive bomb our targets at low level, and that we were going to have two 500lbs bombs instead of the usual 250 lbs bombs. Just twice the weight.

I was a section leader at this time and I was detailed with my three other pilots to dive bomb some heavy naval type guns which had been placed to the rear of Dieppe on some high ground. These, we were told, could cover the beaches and the sea approaches, and it was essential to knock them out at first go. This accounted for our early departure.

On the morning of the 19th we were called at some ghastly hour, although few of us had slept much that night. After a scratch breakfast served by the ever ready WAAFs, we got into our aircraft, already warming up on the airfield. Since we were taking off in the dark we had to have our navigation lights on to see each other, this was a real novelty to us. It was also remarkable that we had no collisions, since we always took off in formation, four at a time.

We flew in low since there was still a need not to alert the Germans of our approach the first of the Canadians had not yet landed.

My own section formed up behind me in close formation so that they wouldn't lose me in the dark and I kept a close eye on our new Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader Fayolle, a free Frenchman whose father I believe was an Admiral in pre-war France. He had been with us only a few weeks.

It took us 40 minutes to cross to the other side, but long before we got there I could see a fire. This turned out to be a German ship which accidentally ran into the invasion fleet and had to be destroyed.

S/Ldr Fayolle naturally saw there was no need for us to continue on the deck, since the German obviously knew something was up, so we all climbed up to a couple of thousand feet in order to pinpoint ourselves and to get sufficient height to dive with our bombs.

It was quite easy to make out the coast and the town of Dieppe. The ship on fire lit up the whole scene clearly and the flak and fireworks were on a par to November the fifth.

known to older Ipswich residents in the 1950's and 60's this was one of the key places to visit in town and a focal point for businessmen and farmers when in town. Ken expanded the business to include a new bakery in Frobisher Road and another 6 cake shops which in due time became part of the new bakery group in town called Took's. Ken sold the business in 1967 to Associated British Foods (ABF) and accepted a directorship with the Company becoming Managing Director of 35 Fine Fare Restaurants.

2 years later and feeling the need to get back into his own business, he left ABF and bought a shop in the Walk and converted it into Marshalls Restaurant. He quickly added 2 Wimpy Bars in the Buttermarket and Carr Street and a 36 bedroom commercial hotel in Leicester. In the late 1970's, Ken and Irene bought the Chocolate Box in the Walk which Irene ran successfully for 5 years until they decided to retire in 1983.

During this time he moved the family home from Woodbridge Road East having built a new house off Constitution Hill. Later in the 1980's, Ken and Irene moved to a bungalow in Little Blakenham and then in the 1990's back into Ipswich at Rushmere St Andrew.

Ken never stopped working in his spare time either. Early in the 1970's he decided to get back into the air again. He qualified for his Private Pilots Licence and enjoyed many hours flying from Ipswich Airport. His spare time included laying tons of concrete and crazy paving, building an ornamental pond and a swimming pool.

His hobbies included woodworking, a passion he had had from childhood. He fitted out the hull of a 36' motor cruiser which he moored at Ramsholt, built seated kitchen furniture for Rodger and Jill and a wooden kayak for his grandson. He then restored 2 classic cars and built 3 kit cars. With Formula 1 and motor sport a keen interest, for his 80th and 85th birthdays, the family treated him to a drive in a single seater racing car at Rockingham Race Track. Always keen to try something new, in later life, he took up and enjoyed carpet bowls. These days, Ken still has fun playing his violin and at the Monday Club he can be found enjoying a good game of Dominoes!

Ken is now in demand to talk about his war-time recollections and until recently regularly took part in book and picture signings. He has appeared in a German made wartime drama documentary called The Drama of Dresden. He features in a YOUTUBE documentary made by the Imperial

War Museum, Duxford about the Mosquito, has been recorded on 4 audio tapes by the Imperial War Museum and has taken part in a podcast with the historian Dan Snow. He has recently been filmed and interviewed for snippets in a new DVD and documentary called – ‘Mosquito’.

In 2000, Ken lost Irene but has 2 children, Rodger and Jill, 5 grandchildren and 1 great grand daughter.

Happy 100th Birthday Ken – you deserve it!

In the February 2018 edition of Runway 22 I featured an article about Ken Oatley receiving the prestigious French award, the Legion d'honneur. I am pleased to include it once again in this tribute to Ken.

Kenneth Oatley - Receiving the Legion d'honneur
Account written by the...
"Ipswich War Memorial and Cenotaph Organisation"

For his part in the war Kenneth Oatley has been awarded the Légion d'honneur by the French Government being presented the medal today by the Lord Lt. of Suffolk Lady Euston in Ipswich. Kenneth Oatley Joined



627 Squadron in the summer of 1944 and took part in the large raid on 18th August 1944 at L'isle Adam France destroying V1 rocket site and storage depot. His Squadron supported ground troops after D-Day, carrying out low level visual marking of precision targets with the aim, avoiding civilian casualties whilst destroying strategic and tactical targets. Prime targets being Railway, goods, storage and ammunition depots at Caen, Rennes, Beauvoir, Potiers, Creil, Villeneuve and many other including targets at Brest and Boulogne. Kenneth took part in 20 operations over France, Germany and Norway. Kenneth first flew in 1941 in a Tiger Moth biplane and admits while training in Lancashire he got lost and was forced

and are now hopefully getting back to something like normal. Monthly meetings have been resumed and although attendances are inevitably down on what they were, we are nevertheless optimistic that audiences at our monthly meetings will continue to improve. Society membership has also held up quite well. Public interest in aviation subjects is always popular and we are able to attract many interesting talks at or regular monthly meetings.

After the report and followed by the annual society financial report given by our treasurer, Pat Lisseman, we rounded the evening off with a video of the amazing rescue from India and subsequent restoration of the rotting remains of a Hawker Hurricane that was flown during the Battle of Britain.

I have received this from the daughter of Flt/Sgt John William Brooks DFC DFM. Eugenie Brooks has sent me this interesting story about her father. He was at one time based here at Martlesham.

He survived the war and died peacefully in the late 90's. It is so important that we remember these stories. ED

DIEPPE 174 SQUADRON 1942

I was based at Manston Kent with 174 Squadron, and flew the new Hurri-bombers. The squadron by this time was fully operational and experienced in low level work, and although our chop rate was high, there was no lack of enthusiasm.

So, when we were sent to Ford on a temporary posting, along with a number of other Hurricane and Spitfire squadrons, we knew that there was something big on.

I see from my log book that I made the entry, “to Ford, for what”. That was on the 14th August. We had no idea of what we were supposed to do except it was fighter bomber work.

However, it wasn't very difficult to reason out our target. Since we knew we were to operate from Ford, and knowing our effective range, our most obvious destination was in the Dieppe area.

On the evening of the 18th we were all carefully briefed about what was going to happen the next day. We were told amongst other things that the Germans reaction was liable to be quick and massive. I personally can't remember very much of this briefing after all this time except that this was not going to be the invasion, but merely a try out. We were told our

transferred over to flying RAF Transports, mainly the Hercules. He reckoned that he had a far more interesting flying career as a result.

He has flown on all 7 continents from Ice Caps to Deserts and in War Zones, and landed sometimes under fire, often on inhospitable and really difficult runways.

He flew humanitarian missions and missions in war torn countries where he was in danger from ground fire and he told the stories of all types of flying, and the best way to survive them.

He also flew the Hercules in flying tanker missions supporting aircraft going to the Falklands and did spend some long postings in the Falklands with the Hercules.

The talk was pitched just right... we all learned a lot about the Hercules and enjoyed hearing his RAF experiences, both on and off duty with lots of humorous content. For instance when he was flying in and out of Afghanistan the crews slept in tents much to the amusement of the Americans who christened the RAF team "The Flint-Stones", where upon the RAF Changed their aircraft call signs to "Bedrock 1 or 2 etc etc"

His career moved on and he was at the forefront of the introduction of the updated/uprated Lockheed Hercules C130-J, with more efficient and powerful turbo-prop engines and the so called "Glass Cockpit" which reduced the need for a Navigator and Flight Engineer. Also fitted was Ground Mapping Radar and a computerised suite to enable aid to be dropped with far more accuracy.

After About 20 years he went to fly a desk in Whitehall. His transport flying experience was essential as he was in the team introducing new transport aircraft including the Airbus A400M.

His talk, which was put on at short notice to replace our original speaker, really hit the mark, and was really appreciated by the audience. Extra thanks are due to Rick for coming in so quickly. Our busy Chairman Martyn Cook, summed up Rick's talk with a well deserved vote of thanks.

Friday, May 6th and the occasion of our Annual Report given by our chairman, Martyn Cook. As we are now a Charitable Institution AGM's are no longer held.

Martyn was able to report that we have weathered the ravages of Covid

to land and ask for directions. From there he travelled to Canada training in Airspeed Oxford planes then to South Africa training as a navigator. By 1944 Kenneth had flown in Wellingtons, Sterling's and Lancaster bombers becoming a flight Sergeant. Then chosen to become a Navigator in a Pathfinder group flying the Mosquito. The main role of his group was to locate targets dropping 4 x 500lb magnesium bombs lighting up the target for the heavy bombers to aim on. The Mosquito plane was one of the fastest planes of its class being capable of speeds of 400mph flying under the radar over roof tops and trees at high speeds taking part in many dangerous and daring raids a complete thrill for Kenneth when he was appointed but he admitted having butterflies as orders came in for bombing raids. Kenneth was joined today with friends and family to celebrate his honour with special thanks to the Ipswich branch of the RBL. The French government has been awarding the Légion d'honneur to D-Day veterans from many different countries for several years, as a way of honouring and thanking those who fought and risked their lives to secure France's liberation during the Second World.

Rodger Oatley

The following letter refers to an article which appeared in the June 2020 Runway 22. All back copies of Runway 22 are available on the 'newsletter' page of our web site. www.mhas.org.uk.

ED

LETTER SPOT

Dear Alan,

I was interested to read the article about the tragic accident involving a Vampire crashing into a house in Ipswich in 1949.

I was at once intrigued as I was under the impression that Vampires were banned from landing at MH. Indeed, there was an Air Publication which listed all RAF airfields in the UK with their details of signals, etc. Martlesham's entry included a notice of the Vampire ban. I had a letter published in "The Aeroplane" some years ago in which I described an incident involving one of these aircraft whilst I was serving in the control tower (1952-54). The pilot called us for an emergency landing and after a couple of days, his problem resolved, he called for taxi instructions and was directed to runway 30. Fl/Lt Cooper called us all to the windows and told us we would now know why Vampires were not allowed. As the

aircraft started to roll, the downward blast from the engine blew the surface off the runway and made quite a mess, causing the airfield to be closed for the rest of the day.

So you can understand my puzzlement to read that Vampires were temporarily operating from Martlesham. Perhaps the runway surface had been installed after 1949 and before 1952, but that's hard to believe.

With kind regards,
John McCulloch.

John and Margaret McCulloch are two of our long-distance and long serving members. They live in Renfrewshire.

MONTHLY MEETINGS ROUNDUP

We are gradually getting back to normal, (fingers crossed), and for the first time in a couple of years I am able to report on a meeting for each month since the last newsletter.

ED

Friday February 4th and our monthly meeting was well attended considering the restraints that we have been under.

An illustrated talk was given by one of our own members. Andrew Locke joined the USAAF in late 1971 until he retired as a Master Sergeant Crew Chief. Most of his service was at RAF Bentwaters and this closed in 1993 and Andrew retired in 1994.

Andrew, who lives at Brandeston, married an English lady in 1993 and has applied for British citizenship.

Andrew worked on various aircraft, but mainly as a crew chief on the Phantom F4 fighter at RAF Bentwaters and later on the A10 Thunderbolt, also at RAF Bentwaters. A crew chief in the USAAF is a highly skilled airman responsible for keeping an aircraft well maintained. Diagnosing malfunctions, replacing components and keeping an aircraft in good flying condition.

Many of us remember the noisy Phantom F4 and the arrival of the much quieter A10 W Thunderbolt. A subsonic aircraft intended as a ground attack aircraft and usually called a Warthog because of its ugly configuration.

A vote of thanks was given by our chairman, Martyn Cook.

Friday, 4th March and we had our monthly public meeting in the Community Hall at Martlesham. Attendance is gradually picking up again and we had an interesting evening. Mike Lemon gave us his talk on the British Blue Steel stand-off bomb.

The Avro Blue Steel was a British air-launched, rocket-propelled nuclear armed stand-off missile, built to arm the V bomber force. It allowed the bomber to launch the missile against its target while still outside the range of surface-to-air missiles. Blue Steel was at the heart of the British nuclear deterrence from 1963 until 1970.

The Avro Vulcan V bomber was the usual aircraft deployed to carry the missile and could carry one under each wing. Mike was eventually an RAF Chief Technician and his talk was mostly about his experiences during that time. He had a 24 year career with the RAF and together with his wife, had many postings throughout the world.

A most interesting talk of that period of the "cold war." A vote of thanks was given by our president, Mr Richard Barker.

Friday 1st April, the Martlesham Heath Aviation was treated to a truly sparkling and entertaining talk when Rick Hobson outlined his 20 years of operational flying, most of it in the RAF military workhorse, the Lockheed Hercules four engine transport.

Unbelievably the Hercules first flew around 1954 and has and is still, serving in Air Forces around the world, with (at 2015) over 2,500 built in 40 variants. However it is due to leave RAF service in 2023 – being effectively worn out!



Rick went into the RAF initially to fly combat aircraft, training on aircraft such as The Hawk trainer however he realised that he did not have the "Killer instinct" for such a role so