



DAVE CHAPMAN

**MOT
and...**

Service Centre

- MOT's
- Servicing
- Tyres
- Air Conditioning
- Diagnostics
- Exhausts
- Brakes
- Cambelts
- Batteries

**8 Betts Avenue : Martlesham Heath : Ipswich : IP5 3RH
Tel: (01473) 927927 Email: service@rpengineering.org.uk**

Do you know a business that would like to advertise in this space? If so, please contact our Treasurer... Pat Lisseman or Martyn Cook

RUNWAY 22

Charity No: 1184409

Volume 1 No.31

www.mhas.org.uk

June 2023

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

Friday May 5th and the occasion of our Annual Associate Members meeting. No, it's not an AGM. Martyn has explained all in his Chairman's Year End Report in this newsletter.

Another upbeat account of our society's health. I know, I say it every year "We must be doing something right!"

Attendances are continuing to recover after the trauma of Covid and our finances are in a healthy state.

As for me, Martyn has explained in his report that I have decided to retire from the Executive committee and Secretary. Also as newsletter editor and webmaster.

I have enjoyed my time with the society and will of course remain a member. After 26 years editing the newsletter and many years running the website I have decided to call it a day. Time for you youngsters to have a go! Incidentally all my newsletters are on the website under the 'newsletter' page. Right back to January 1997.

Our Berlin correspondent, Stuart Yule, (he prefers to be 'chairman of the MHAS Berlin Branch!') has submitted an interesting WW2 story. It is so important that these stories of courage are never forgotten and I am always pleased to include them. Thanks for that Stuart.

I was at RAF Khartoum in 1951 for much of my National Service and because Khartoum and what is now Khartoum International airport is so tragically in the news, I decided to write a short piece about my time out there and just how much the Sudan has changed since I was there. Trouble is once I get started I don't know when to stop, so it is longer than I intended. Nevertheless I hope you all find it interesting. I fairly recently wrote another article about my time in the Sudan, but that was mainly concerning my researches in to the pre-war 'Empire Air Route'.

Alan Powell

Please note that the Chairman's report has been updated since I sent out the 1st version to those of you with an email address. Losing our Newsletter Editor is going to make things difficult as at present I will have to pick up the reins until someone steps forward to fill Alan's place. See page 18 for information.

Martyn

MHAS Chair

President:

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...

Martyn Cook - (Temporary Editor)
4 Peel Yard
Martlesham Heath
Ipswich IP5 3UL

Tel: Ipswich 614442
E-mail Address
martyn.mhas@gmail.com

Other Committee Contacts...

Chairman	Martyn Cook	(01473) 614442
Vice Chairman	Howard King	(01473) 274300
Secretary	John Howarth	(01473) 218867
Treasurer	Pat Lisseman	(01473) 611665
Program Sec.	Vicky Gunnell	(01473) 720004
Membership Sec.	Martyn Cook	(01473) 614442
Publicity Sec.	Howard King	(01473) 274300
Building Manager	Paul Calver	(07710) 309966
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
Minutes Secretary	John Howarth	(01473) 218867

Membership Secretary Report

I would like to welcome 3 new members since our last newsletter...

Stuart Buxton

Corrine Simons

Bill Smith

Should you know of anyone wishing to join the following fees apply:

Single Membership cost: £12 on joining, £10 per year thereafter.

Joint Membership costs: £16 on joining, £14 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
(As a Reminder see Page 15 & 16)**

I hope you have enjoyed reading your newsletter.

But now for the crunch... Your newsletter will only arrive on your doorstep or in your hand if you renew your membership. So why not take the opportunity to rejoin now. You can pay by BACS through your own bank account.

You can of course send a cheque directly to me at my address below...
Martyn Cook - 4 Peel Yard - Martlesham Heath - Ipswich - IP5 3UL

If you could include a stamp that would be very helpful and save 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.

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 bark but will not eat it.

Martyn Cook - MHAS Chairman & Membership Secretary



WHAT'S ON



VICKY GUNNELL - PROGRAMME SECRETARY

2 nd June '23	Audio Visual Presentation	PAUL ROSS
	<i>'Silver City Airways Story'</i>	
29 th June '23	Orfordness Visit	VISIT
	<i>'Self Drive or Car Share'</i>	
7 th July '23	Audio Visual Presentation	CLIVE DENNEY
	<i>'A Tiger's Tale & Other Restoration Projects'</i>	
6 th August '23	Shuttleworth Visit.....	BUS TRIP
	<i>'Carnival Airshow - House & Gardens Open'</i>	
1 st September '23	Audio Visual Presentation	CHRIS TURLAND
	<i>'The Flying Flea & Other Aerial Oddities'</i>	
6 th October '23	To Be Advised	TO BE ADVISED
	<i>'Watch This Space'</i>	

Please check website - www.mhas.org.uk - for Programme updates

The Halifax in the Woods

Dear MHAS Members and readers of Runway 22, Stuart Yule here again, Chairman of the MHAS Berlin Branch. I would like to share a story with you today that I recently became aware of after meeting a German WWII Military Historian in the bar of the Berlin Branch of the Royal British Legion. His involvement in the story will become clearer later, but first I need to take you back to a cold Yorkshire night in late January 1944....

Part 1: Destination Berlin

The date is Thursday the 20th of January 1944, the location is RAF Pocklington, a Bomber Command Station opened in 1941 near the small town of Pocklington approximately 13 miles from the city of York. The station at the time was home to 102 Squadron, a night bomber unit flying the large 4 Rolls-Royce Merlin engine powered Handley Page Halifax aircraft. At 16:30 hours 16 Halifax bombers from 102 Squadron took off to join 768 other aircraft on a mission to bomb Berlin. It was the third heavy night bomber raid on the Reichs capital that month, the previous raids being on the 1st/2nd and again on the 2nd/3rd, however this raid contained almost as many allied aircraft as the previous two raids combined. In total there were 495 Lancaster, 264 Halifax and 10 Mosquito aircraft.

Halifax Mark II serial number LW337, code DY-F, "Old Flo" was one the 16 aircraft that had departed RAF Pocklington that evening, and subsequently rendezvoused with the bomber stream over the North Sea. On board Old Flo were a crew of 8, they were:



Pilot:
Flying Officer
George A. Griffiths

2nd Pilot:
Sgt. Kenneth
Fredrick Stanbridge

Air Bombardier:
Flying Officer
Laurie
A. Underwood

Flight Engineer:
Sgt. John Bremner



Wireless Operator	Air Gunner (mid upper):	Navigator:	Air Gunner (Rear):
Air Gunner:	Warrant II Officer	Flight Sgt.	Sgt. John
Pilot Officer Eric Arthur	Charles	Reg C. Wilson	H.L. Bushell
Church	Gordon Dupueis		
(pictured incorrectly as Sgt.)	(Canadian)		

At 17:09 hours, when the bomber stream was over the Dutch West Frisian Island of Terschelling, it was detected by the Würzburg Radar equipped Germany Navy ship the MS Togo, which was based in the Baltic Sea to provide Luftwaffe night fighter direction control to intercept the allied bombers. The weather conditions at that location were poor that evening, and only the most experienced Luftwaffe night fighter crews took off to intercept. Nevertheless, 10 bomber aircraft were shot down by the fighters. Old Flo was not one of them, and she and her crew remained on course towards Berlin, and prepared for the attack.

At 19:07 the first bombers had reached Berlin, and began what would be the heaviest raid of the war on the German capital so far. The weather over the target had improved, and although there was no moon, it was clear and visibility was good. This favoured the Luftwaffe night fighters, who were waiting for the bombers when they arrived. In addition to the night fighters the bombers had to endure a barrage of flak from the Number 1 Flak Division, which, with its over 130 Flak Cannon batteries located across the city, defended the skies above Berlin. During the course of the 1 ½ hour raid the allies lost a further 21 aircraft to flak and the night fighters. They were to subsequently lose another 4 on the “home run”. In total 174 men lost their lives that night, with a further 71 being taken prisoner, with 10 managing to evade capture. For 102 Squadron it was a particularly bad. Of the 16 Halifax aircraft that had left RAF Pocklington that cold January evening, only 9 were to return home. Old Flo was

This, so I am told will be added to by a Hurricane and a North American P-51 Mustang in the coming months. It required a lot of time and effort and support which is where Richard was able to help in allowing the use of the Martlesham Scouts hut to draw out the outline of the plane on paper.

I can see aeroplane's flying over in the summer months taking pictures.

Thank you all.



Just to finish off Colin & Elaine in their Armstrong Siddley at Felixstowe



Friday 3rd March

Richard Gibson from Thorpe Abbots Museum come and presented a talk on “Thorpe Abbots Airfield”, wartime home of the USAAF the “Bloody Hundreth” Bomb Group.

They flew their first combat mission on 25th June 1943, its last on 20th April 1945. During this time 306 missions were flown, but with terrible losses, 757 missing or killed in action, 923 becoming prisoners of war, with 177 aircraft lost, one of the worst Bomb Group records in the whole of the US Army Air Force in Britain in World War 2.

Following the talk a special DVD was shown which salutes the heroics, the heartache and the humour displayed by these mostly young American airmen.

Martyn Cook our Chairman gave the vote of thanks to Richard for a most interesting and informative talk.

Friday 31st March

A week early due to the Easter Weekend. We welcomed Mike Pugh-Davies who gave a talk entitled “Aircraft versus the U-Boat in WW2”.

The actions of the German U-Boat in WWII was a subject quite new to most of our members. Winston Churchill said in his wartime memoirs that the threat of the German’s starving us into submission with their U-Boats was his worst nightmare in the whole war.

Mike talked about new improved tactics, weapons and search equipment along with the introduction of the shipping convoy system which when put together eventually got the better of the U-Boats. In this turnaround long range aircraft, including Flying Boats, played a significant role.

Our Chairman gave Mike a vote of thanks for a wonderful and informative talk.

INTERESTING AND UNREPORTED THINGS

Quite often things happen in or around our Control Tower Museum that do not get reported and the following is just one of those things.

Members Paul Calver, Ian Fosker and Richard Walling produced the following Spitfire outline on the floor of the Revetment area next to the Control Tower.

unfortunately not to be one of them.

Waiting in his Lichtenstein SN-2 radar equipped 2-man Messerschmitt Bf 110 G-4 above Berlin that night was Austrian born Group Captain Leopold “Poldi” Fellerer. By January 1944 Fellerer was leading Group II of the NJG 5 - 5th Night Fighter Wing. Already that month he had shot down two USAAF B-24 Liberators and one B-17 Flying Fortress, bringing his total confirmed allied aircraft victories to 18. That night in only 30 minutes of intense aerial combat Fellerer shot down 5 of the RAF bombers, including Old Flo.



For his actions that night Fellerer received the German Cross in Gold. He went on to become one of the most successful Luftwaffe aces, ending the war after an incredible 450 missions. He had 41 confirmed aerial victories, 39 of which were at night, including 32 heavy 4 engine allied bombers, he was also recipient of the Knights Cross of the Iron Cross. He survived the war, returning to his native Austria, where he served in the Austrian Airforce until 1950. He unfortunately died in July 1968 when his Cessna L-19 light aircraft crashed near the Austrian town of Krems.

At 19:45 hours Old Flo, heading for home but already badly damaged by the flak from Number 1 Flak Division, found herself at 20,000 feet above the heavily wooded Berlin district of Koepenick, located south east of the city centre. Fellerer had her in his gun sights, she was hit in the starboard wing and the bomb bay, and burst into flame from wing tip to wing tip almost immediately. Soon afterwards she was torn apart by a huge internal explosion, most likely from an unreleased bomb. Wilson and Underwood managed to escape the stricken bomber before the blast and parachuted safely to earth, landing in the woods where they were quickly captured. Griffiths and Bushell were thrown out of the aircraft by the force of the explosion.

The explosion caused Bushell, Old Flo’s rear gunner, to hit his head on

the four .303 in Browning machine guns mounted in his Boulton Paul Type E tail turret, and he was knocked unconscious. Remarkably he came to in the free-fall and was able to pull the rip cord of his parachute. The pair landed safely but injured near a train station, where they were also quickly captured. Old Flo dived steeply earthwards, broke up, and crashed into the Koepenick woods below, taking Stanbridge, Bremner, Church and Dupueis with her.

Three of the captured men soon found themselves prisoners of war in the Stalag Luft III camp at Sagan, located in what is now Poland, and location of the "Great Escape". The now famous Tom, Dick and Harry tunnel escape occurred on the night of the 24th to the 25th of March 1944. The author is not sure if the 3 survivors from Old Flo were already there at the time of the escape, it is however certainly possible. Bushell, who coincidentally shared the same surname as Squadron Leader Roger Bushell, the mastermind of the mass tunnel escape, and the basis for the character "Roger Bartlett" played by Richard Attenborough in the 1963 film The Great Escape, was not sent to the Stalag Luft III Camp. The author is unable to ascertain if the men were related. Old Flo's rear gunner was sent instead to Stalag IV B prisoner of war camp in Muhlberg, near the city of Leipzig. All 4 men survived the war, and returned home to the UK in the summer of 1945.

Shortly after the end of hostilities the bodies of Stanbridge and Church were recovered from the crash site, and buried in a nearby cemetery. In 1948 their bodies were relocated to the newly established Allied cemetery located on Heerstrasse in Berlin, west of the city center in what was later to become the British sector. Today the cemetery is managed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which the author has visited on several occasions, most recently for the Remembrance Sunday parade and service in November 2022. The bodies of Bremner and Dupueis were not found. As the Cold War developed, and the district of Koepenick found itself within the Soviet controlled East Berlin sector, the wooded crash site of Old Flo slipped into memory and was largely forgotten by everyone, with the exception of Reg Wilson. So here begins the second part of our story.

Part 2: The Navigator and the Diary

Fast forward to the summer of 2005, and the now 85 years old Reg Wilson was back in Berlin together with his daughter, who spoke fluent German,

was then a museum detailing the 'Battle of Omdurman', when the British, under the command of Lord Kitchener, defeated the Dervishes in 1898. I bet it's not there today.

I remember my time at Khartoum with affection, despite the heat. In those days it was safe for any of us to walk unaccompanied into Khartoum in safety.

When I began this I only meant to write about the time when the Mk1 Comet was at Khartoum for evaluation under tropical conditions because John Howarth, in his illustrated talk at our May meeting had reminded me that the Nimrod had its origins in the De Havilland Comet!. Got carried away as usual!

It is a sobering thought to remember that I arrived at Khartoum 66 years after the siege of Khartoum and now more than 70 years have passed since I was there.' Blimey.

Alan Powell

MONTHLY MEETING REPORTS

Friday 3rd February

We had one of our members 'Historian' Mick Meras come and presented his talk on "RAF Air Sea Rescue during WWII" with particular emphasis on RAF Martlesham Heath.

277 Squadron was formed at RAF Martlesham Heath and saved many fliers both British, Commonwealth and American flight crews from the cold and extremely dangerous North Sea and English Channel.

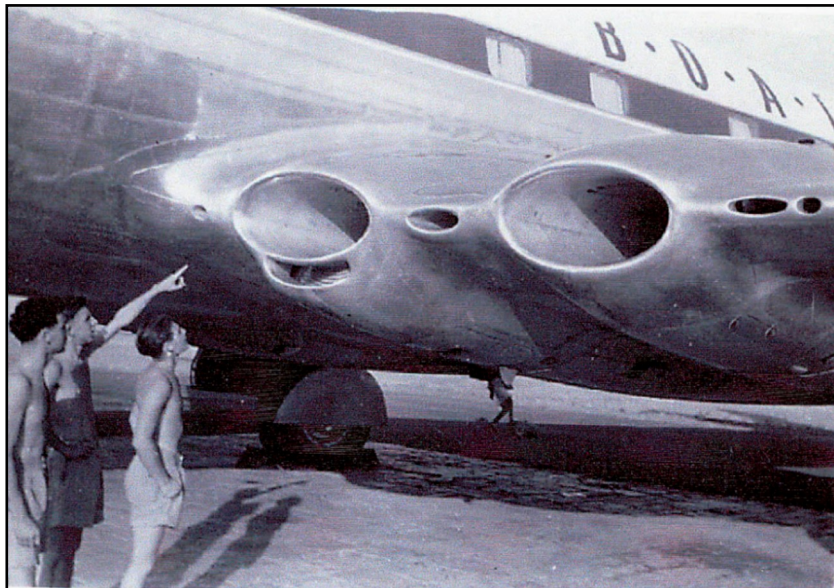
The evening started with a fascinating and detailed talk illustrating particular rescues with many facts about the service.

After the interval, we were treated to a video slide show with commentary, created by our Society Secretary Alan Powell, about other aspects of the same story.

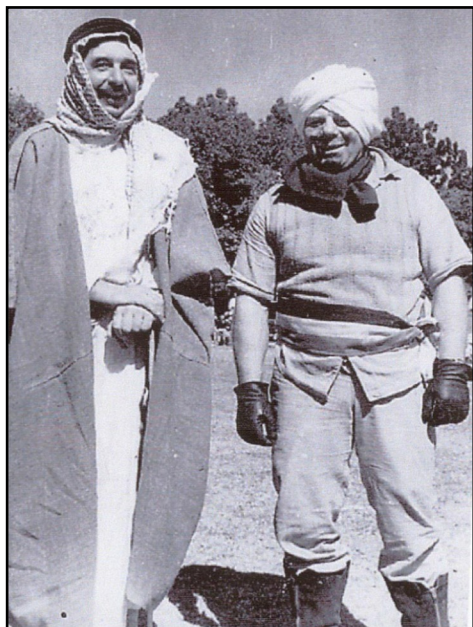
So much detailed research was done by both speakers and made for a very interesting and informative evening.

Our Chairman gave Mick a vote of thanks for a wonderful evening.

my arm when the aircraft kept banking steeply.



Mk 1 Comet at Khartoum. One of my mates pointing out the weakness of the square windows!



Christmas day 1951. C/O on the left Station Warrant Officer on the right.

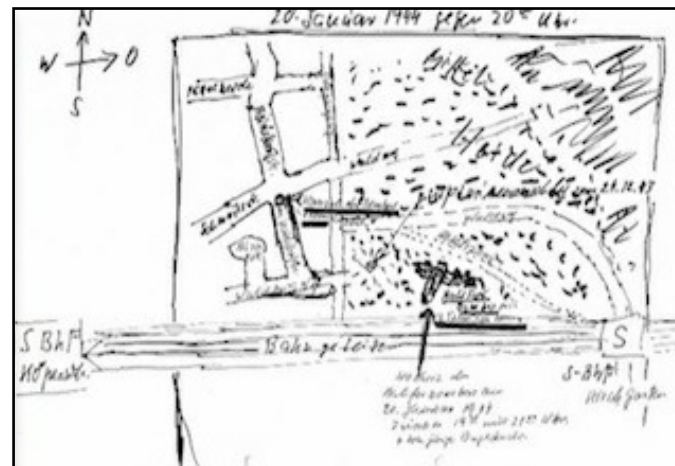
Note the irrigated grass and trees

Sadly they wouldn't let us erk anywhere near the Comet. To think, I might have flown in the first of the first jet airliners!

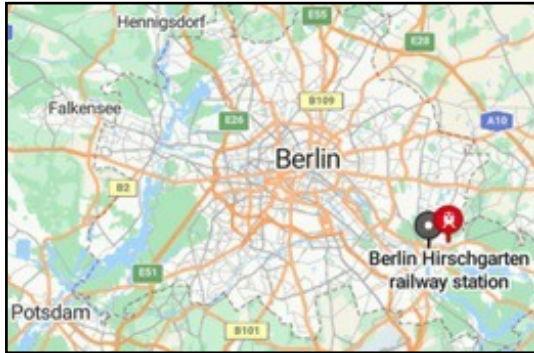
Finally in this trip down memory lane, I have memories of a few of us hiring rickety bicycles from an enterprising Arab wallah on the Station and making our way across one of two bridges spanning the river to the city of Omdurman opposite Khartoum. This was in the days before the banning of ivory for commercial purposes and it was possible to buy a piece of carved ivory. We could also view the Mahdi's tomb, (from the outside only. Infidels not allowed in!). Also the Khalif's house, which

determined to find the crash site, and his missing crew mates Bremner and Dupueis. "I was the navigator", Reg said at the time, "...and the navigator brings the crew home." The local Koepenick Museum had already collected in advance of Reg's visit statements from over 60 witnesses who had claimed to remember Old Flo crashing in the woods. However, many statements were contradictory, over 61 years had passed, and the area had changed. Despite intensive searching, the crash site could not be located. Reg and his daughter returned home disappointed, but still determined.

They returned in the Autumn of the same year, this time however a significant piece of new evidence had been discovered. Dr. Michael Pincus had been a small boy living in Koepenick in January 1944. Like many children in times of war he had kept a diary. Amazingly he still had the diary, and the entry for Thursday 20th January was telling. It contained detailed information and sketches about the crash of an RAF Bomber, which he had specified as being a Halifax, in the woods near his home. Additionally, the diary contained details that some of the crew survived, and some had perished. Although over 100 allied bombers crashed in and around Berlin during the war, all the evidence pointed to this being Old Flo.



Sketch from the diary of Dr Pincus detailing the crash site. At the top it states "20 January 1944 just before 20:00 hours", bottom right is the "S" denoting the S-Bahn Station Hirschgarten, the same one near where Griffiths and Bushell had been captured. The arrow in the middle at the bottom denotes the location of the aircraft wreckage



Map of Berlin showing the approximate crash site of Old Flo



Reg returned again in the summer of 2006, this time with his wife, as well as his German speaking daughter. Together with Dr Pincus, representatives of a Berlin Historical Military Aviation Charity and a journalist, the team returned to the Koepenick woods, however this time following the detailed notes and sketches contained in the diary. After a short time searching, and now finding themselves in a less densely wooded area, the team found underneath a bed of grass and moss a burnt area and some small pieces of metal. They hoped that the woods were about to give up their secret, and that Old Flo was close by.

Then the find that Reg had been hoping 62 years for, a small piece of metal was found. It was quickly identified to likely be aluminium,

but wait, there were some stamped numbers on the part, which after some cleaning could clearly be read. The location was close to the train station where his crew mates had been captured, and matched the location on the sketch in the diary. Had Reg found Old Flo at last?



station in the world. The entrance to the aerodrome was through a rather picturesque archway. Within the boundaries it was irrigated and trees and grass thrived. Like entering another country!

The Blue Nile flows down from the mountains of Ethiopia and the White Nile has its origins way down south towards Lake Victoria. They

meet at Khartoum and become simply the Nile as it makes its way up to Egypt. It is up to a mile wide in places.

The East Lancashire regiment also had a presence in Khartoum and we shared sailing facilities on the Nile. An organisation known as the British Services Sailing Club provided a small fleet of half-decker sailing dinghies. As a wireless operator I was on a watch system and often had days off, where I spent many happy hours sailing those dinghies.

Our clubhouse, would you believe, was a survivor from the relief of Khartoum in 1885. It even had the gun mounting base on the foredeck. General Kitchener led a contingent of boats down the Nile from Egypt in an attempt to save General Gordon who was being attacked by the Dervishes, led by the Mahdi. General Gordon had been slain on the steps of the Governors Palace the day before they arrived.

RAF Khartoum was also home to the tropical wing of the Aeroplane and Armaments Experimental Establishment from Boscombe Down. Formerly at Martlesham of course.

When I was there in 1951 the Comet mk1 was flown in by Group Captain Cunningham, then chief test pilot of De Havilland's. It was here for evaluation under tropical conditions. Also here whilst I was at Khartoum was the Airspeed Ambassador, (later renamed the Elizabethan), and an early version of the Vickers Viscount.

On days off we could climb aboard the Ambassador and the Viscount for a trip if they weren't planning to do any dangerous manoeuvres. However, it is the only time I experienced G forces, when I found it difficult to lift

MY MEMORIES OF KHARTOUM

As most of our members know in the post war era it was obligatory for young men to serve two years in one of the three services, unless they were in a strategic occupation. I was enlisted in 1950 and trained as a wireless operator in the RAF, eventually being posted to RAF Khartoum.

We were there for military reasons of course, but were also responsible for air traffic control of civil airliners as they made their way down that side of Africa to Johannesburg. A journey that from England could take several days in that pre-jet era. From Heathrow with five stops before arriving at Johannesburg. Rome, Rome to Cairo, Cairo to Khartoum, Khartoum to Nairobi and from Kenya on to Johannesburg.

A Khartoum which was a very different place to the pictures we see today on our television screens.

As the capital of that vast desert known as the Sudan, it was administrated by the British, who had an historic interests in the production of cotton in that country. It was what was known as a con-dominion. That is to say that it was administrated jointly between Egypt and the UK. The Sudan finally obtained independence in 1956.

Before independence we effectively ran the country with a British styled civil service. No discernable colour bar. However, the Sudanese general public looked to Egypt, because it is, like the Sudan, a Moslem country.

British influence was everywhere. The streets radiated out in the form of a Union Jack. This was not for jingoistic reasons, but because so many intersections enabled guns to simply swing round to defend wherever the direction opposition was coming from.

In those days of innocence the average Sudanese man in the street was courteous and friendly. Now of course they have their smartphones and can see the relative opulence of the developed world. Many of those young men doubtless say to themselves, 'I'll have some of that!'

RAF Khartoum was on the site of what is now Khartoum international airport. When I look at it on the TV screen it is of course completely unrecognisable.

The following photos, (Me-always the photographer!), give an idea of an enjoyable life style despite being posted to just about the hottest RAF

The team agreed to keep their find secret for now, and a few days later Reg returned to the UK. With the help of aviation historians, the part number and serial number on the piece of metal found by the team could categorically be matched, using original manufacturing records, to be from Halifax Mark II serial number LW337. The Navigator had found his Old Flo at last. But what about his missing in action crew mates, Bremner and Dupueis?

Returning again in November 2006, this time with the Berlin Police, bomb disposal experts, and experienced aircraft wreckage searchers, armed with metal detectors, the team set about finding the rest of Old Flo. Quickly more wreckage was unearthed, although no bombs or ammunition were found. Presumably having already been removed shortly after the crash in January 1944. What the team found then nobody had really expected, even, he would say later, Reg himself. Human remains.

After the Police had secured the remains, the British and Canadian embassies were contacted with the hope that they could find living relatives of the two missing crew members. Reg and the team waited a long 6 months, but finally in the summer of 2007, almost exactly two years after his first unsuccessful search for Old Flo and his crew mates, DNA testing proved a 100% match. The remains were of Sgt. John Bremner, Old Flo's Flight Engineer. Unfortunately, no trace of Old Flo's 20 years old mid upper gunner Charles Dupueis could be found. And so we enter the third part of our story.

Part 3: Coming Home

October 16th 2007, Heerstrasse Commonwealth Graves Cemetery, Berlin, 63 years and almost 9 months after Old Flo made her last flight, Sgt. John Bremner was finally laid to rest.

With full military honours, members of the RAF Regiment carried the coffin of Sgt. Bremner to his final resting place in a quiet corner of Berlin in a grave next to his crew mates Stanbridge and Church. Following them were members of the Berlin Branch of the Royal British Legion, including the person I had met in the bar last year, who had made me first aware of this amazing story.

Reg Wilson was of course present that day, as was Old Flo's rear gunner



Members of the RAF Regiment carrying Sgt. Bremner's Coffin to his final resting place next to his two crew mates

Sgt. John Bushell, also there was Marjorie Acon, aged 89 years old sister of Sgt. Bremner from whom the DNA sample had been taken the year before. Laurie Underwood, old Flo's Bombardier was to ill to travel to the service. George Griffiths, Old Flo's pilot, and the 4th person to survive that night 63 years earlier in the sky over Berlin, had passed away in 1998. Several other relatives of Old Flo's crew were also present. In a particularly touching moment after her brother had been lowered to his final resting place, Marjorie was handed the Union Jack flag that had previously been draped over her brother's coffin. She kissed the flag and was heard to say, "At last my dear Jackie has found his peace."



(Left to Right) Reg Wilson sitting behind Marjorie Acon, Marjorie Receiving the Union Flag, and John Bushall all at the October 2007 ceremony in Berlin

Laurie Underwood passed away a few years after his crew mate was laid to rest. John Bushell, Old Flo's tail gunner, who had survived after his remarkable unconscious free-fall, also died shortly afterwards. Before his death he remembered how the crew would often go to a piano bar in York, and John Bremner "would sing his heart out all night".

TREASURER 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. Following Covid 2022/3 is our first full year of activities.
2. Donations include: Receipts from Trustee's talk to external groups - £211.50; Opening of museum for private visits (including schools and youth groups) - £670; Donation from Redwoods the owners of the Martlesham Business Park £470
3. For years we have been storing uniforms; flying suits etc with no space to exhibit them. Three suits were sold for £875 (postage and insurance cost £53.15)
4. The museum is open every Wednesday morning when a working group maintain the Control Tower and grounds and refreshments are provided.
5. Tasks undertaken to improve the displays: Anderson shelter cleared and being furnished as an exhibit ; Copy made of the 356th handwritten book of remembrance to be kept in the Control Tower £120; Information board and tidying up of the Signal Square £1085 (£1000 grant from East Suffolk DC)
6. Fencing for the underground bunker £534; Skip hire to clear rubbish from Anderson Shelter and shed £258; Purchase of dehumidifier £260
7. The museum leaflet has been re-designed and 2000 copies produced to be distributed cost £159.
8. "Sum Up" machine for card payment - £119; Yamaha Sound System - £450

NEWSLETTER EDITOR POSITION

As you will have read on page 1 our Newsletter Editor Alan Powell is stepping back from the positions of Web Master and Newsletter Editor.

We therefore have a vacancy for a Newsletter Editor. The position sounds onerous, but the fact that I put the newsletter together makes it easier.

So what will the editor do. He or she will be the recipient for the collection of stories/articles that are sent in from our members by email usually, so it is necessary that you will have a computer and be able to use it.

Once the editor has read and where necessary corrected the wording of the story/article then they can email it to me.

Closer to the time of printing the newsletter I will put all of the stories/articles into our newsletter in the format that you are currently familiar with unless of course the new 'Newsletter Editor' can produce a newsletter using his or her own computer programme.

If you are interested and would like more information then please contact me, my contact details are in this newsletter.

Martyn
MHAS Chair

MHAS CIO TREASURER REPORT TO MEMBERS 31ST MARCH 2023

	INCOME 2022/3	INCOME 2021/22	See Note
			1
Subscriptions	1064.00	804.00	
Meeting Receipts	2901.00	1414.00	
Donations	2115.53	2942.51	2
Shop Sales	952.88	483.15	
Second Hand Book Sales	294.03	743.90	
Ticket Sales and Outings	1093.50	490.00	
Classic Car Open Day	1659.96	761.00	
Tax Rebate Gift Aid	198.53	219.96	
East Suffolk Grant Signal Square	1000.00		
Sale of surplus flying suits	875.00		3
Refund for Remembrance Wreaths	157.50		
Misc	0.00	571.00	
Interest Reserve Account	64.50	1.45	
Total Income for Year	12376.43	8430.97	
	EXPENDITURE 2022/3	EXPENDITURE 2021/22	
Trips and Outings	1105.00	545.00	
Exp Monthly Meetings	1838.67	1188.51	
Classic Car Open Day	1132.43	387.48	
Refreshments Tower	184.09	55.00	4
Utility Bills	971.56	590.92	
Shop Stock	798.72	153.18	
Museum Displays	1673.95	782.09	5
Museum Fabric & Maintenance	1707.22	2111.51	6
Publicity	493.74	195.82	7
Printing & Postage Newsletters	363.56	482.67	
Insurance	184.02	196.06	
Printing	88.26	119.00	
Stationary & Postage	74.71	28.45	
Broadband/ web site	71.86	71.79	
Remembrance Service	277.50	190.00	
Misc	822.87	881.32	8
Total Expenditure for Year	11788.16	7978.80	
Net Income	588.27	452.17	
Opening Balance 1.4.22	20796.86		
Closing Balance 31.3.23	21385.13		
	Reconciliation 31.3.23		
Bank Balance - Current Account	6108.65		
Cash held by Treasurer	554.96		
Reserve Account	14721.52		
	21385.13		
I confirm that this is a true record and statement of accounts			
Pat Lisseman - Treasurer Dated 1st April 2023			



The graves of Old Flo's Stanbridge, Church and Bremner lying together in the Berlin Commonwealth Graves Cemetery

Somehow poignantly, Reg Wilson the Navigator, who had brought his friend Sgt John Bremner home, was the last of Old Flo's crew to pass away. He died on the 11th November 2016, nearly 73 years after that fateful crash in January 1944. In 2015, shortly before his death, Reg and his daughter published a book entitled "Into the Dark", detailing the accident, his time as a prisoner of war at the famous Stalag Luft III Camp, and of course his lifelong quest to find Old Flo and his missing crew mates. The author has not yet read the book, instead the information for this story has been obtained from various internet sources. This year in the summer I do plan to visit the crash site, which hopefully I shall be able to report to you in a future issue of Runway 22.

Part 4: Old Flo's Final Secret

Unfortunately, Reg passed away without being able to establish the fate of Old Flo's last still missing crew member, Warrant Officer 2nd Class Charles Gordon Dupueis, her mid upper gunner. Born in Regina, Saskatchewan in Canada on the 30th December 1923, Dupueis was Old Flo's youngest crew member on that fateful January night in 1944, happening only 21 days after his 20th birthday the month before. No trace of his remains were found at the crash site in 2006. He will likely remain missing forever, one of the 57,205 RAF Bomber Command members killed or missing in action in the war.

Dupueis is remembered on Panel 24 of the Runnymede Memorial near Windsor. The memorial commemorates by name over 20,000 men and women of all branches of the air forces, who were lost in the Second World War during operations from bases in the United Kingdom and North and Western Europe, and who have no known graves. Additionally, Dupueis Lakes in Saskatchewan, Canada are named after Old Flo's missing crew member.

I hope that you enjoyed reading this amazing story as much as I enjoyed researching and writing it. It is a story of hope, and one which demonstrates how strong the bond must have been between those young men who flew together, and how one man's determination to find his crew mates remained undiminished for over 60 years.

Please use as your Reference your: **SURNAME and/or MEMBERSHIP NUMBER.**

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

Note to Members who have renewed their membership for 2023-24...

For those of you who have paid for your 2023-24 membership but not yet received your new 2023-24 Membership Card fear not, it will come with your June 2023 newsletter unless I see you in the meantime. For those of you who receive your newsletter by email, you will receive it singularly by post.

In the meantime from our trustees, please keep safe and if you can make the meetings, we will enjoy your company and, thank you for being a member.

Martyn

MHAS Chairman & Membership Secretary

The Treasurers report is on page 17 and 18

Our Sunday afternoon opening has taken off with blast. So far the afternoons have been very busy which is very encouraging.

Activities Planned for the Coming Year 2023/24

Vicky has been busy working on a programme of talks for the coming months and they all look like giving us a some great evenings entertainment.

Howard has been very busy looking at venues that we can visit as a group, the main problem is cost. The coach fees have gone up dramatically, so he has been looking closer to home.

- **Orfordness Thursday June 29th 2023 10.00am start from Orford Quay**

The opportunity to visit is not often available so please take advantage. It will be a guided tour. **Please see Howard's attachment with detail**

- **Shuttleworth Sunday 6th August 2023 starting at ? to be decided later**

Another expensive day but these are the figures unfortunately. It will be a great day out and there is so much to see as well as a great restaurant. **Please contact Howard for details.**

- **Control Tower Museum Open Day "Classic Car & Military Vehicle Meet"**

Sunday 10th September 2023

- **Service of Remembrance - The Barrack Square 2.30pm**

Sunday 12th November 2023

That concludes my report for the 2022/23 year except to reiterate the new membership fees, please take note.

Renewing Single member £10.00 Renewing couple £14.00

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: **602445**

ANNUAL ASSOCIATE MEMBERS MEETING (AAMM)

Chairman's Year End Report – 2022/23

(What would have been our 42nd AGM)

Apologies: Roger Harrison, Ian Fosker, Andrew Moore, Tarkey Barker, John Barbrooke.

Hello Everyone

Where has the year gone. Hopefully Covid is now past, well certainly the epidemic, I guess like other diseases, Flu etc. it will always be in the back ground.

For those of you who are attending your first Annual Associate Members Meeting' here is a quick reminder of how it works. 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.

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.

Trustees

Sadly we have two trustees who are standing down as trustees....

Peter Morris our catering manager. Peter had been finding it difficult with his deteriorating eyesight and as other trustees covered the position Peter decided to stand down but wants to continue helping wherever he can. As Chairman I wrote on your behalf to Peter to thank him for his dedicated service over the years, the trustees look forward to continue working with Peter in the future in a different role.

Alan Powell our 'MHAS Secretary' and 'Web Manager' has sadly decided to stand down after many years as a committee member then as a trustee. Alan, who is in his 90's and a keen photographer, wants to devote more time to his photographic hobby.

Many of you are aware Alan established our currant web site and has continued to manage it ever since. He has also been our Newsletter Editor. Looking at our past newsletter that I have, he has been the Editor

since January 1997 but possibly longer as I don't have any newsletters from 1987 to 1997.

Earlier in the year Alan asked to be relieved from his position as trustees 'Minutes Secretary' which he has covered since the 14th April 1997 according to my records. John Howarth has taken on the role and has becoming a new trustee of the MHAS.

We owe a big debt of gratitude to Alan for all his hard work in helping to make the society what it is today and we all sincerely hope that he takes many more photographs.

But why not email or telephone him and tell him yourself.

Please join me in a show of our gratitude to Alan.

So far the post of Newsletter Editor has not been filled, **are you that person?**

Control Tower

Ian Lisseman our Control Tower Manager and trustee has been finding it a little difficult to manage the museum and other aspects of maintaining the Control Tower building (I know how he feels). So the trustees have appointed Paul Calver as a new trustee. Paul has been doing a marvellous job on the Anderson Shelter and numerous tasks around the Museum as 'Building Manager', this has given the museum a fresh look.

Another member to mention here is Ian Fosker. You will have noticed the new style of monthly meeting posters and various other notices and posters. He has also reproduced our 'give away' information leaflet to match. Howard has for many years produced these posters but has handed the position to Ian Fosker who has brought in a new level of design. Well done Ian. Along with Ian we will be looking at our newsletter design in the coming months.

Sadly we lost out President Richard Barker during the year. Although not a demanding job the President needs to be a person of some stature, so a replacement is going to be difficult to find but we will keep looking.

Thankfully our monthly meetings despite the 'lull' after Covid have continued to grow in attendance with some wonderful memorable meetings thanks to the work by Vicky Gunnell your 'Programme Secretary'.

Our membership numbers could be better but with all that's happened in the last few years manages to hold its own. We have new members joining but we always lose a few on the way, that's to be expected.

What did we do during 2022-23

Well we had a great visit to Bletchley Park arranged by Howard King our Publicity Secretary and trustee. Sadly Howard could not quite get enough takers which would have meant cancelling the visit. However, the visit did go ahead due to the generosity of our late President Mr Richard Barker. This was not the first occasion that Richard has come to the rescue. The weather was very kind to us allowing us to walk where ever without fear of getting wet. Thank you Howard for all your efforts in getting this visit arranged.

On Sunday 11th September 2022

We held our Classic Car & Military Vehicle Meet at our Control Tower Museum. We have been very lucky with the weather for this event over the years and once again the sun shone all day. I think everyone who attended and who took part thoroughly enjoyed the day. A lot of hard work but very rewarding on all levels.

On Sunday 12th November

We held our Service of Remembrance which despite there being no ATC unit went off extremely well. Their place was more than filled by the Kesgrave Parachute Army Cadet Force, an extremely well organised military group. Reverend Toby Tate took the service and Martlesham Brass under the leadership of Adam Cable was on hand to play the service music. We were extremely lucky that prior to the service Captain Mike Ward turned up out of the blue and with a modicum of persuasion agreed to address the parade. Sadly our President Richard Barker passed away in October missed the service by a month it was always the highlight of his year. We will really miss him.

The Control Tower Museum has stood the society in good stead and was used to great effect during the lockdown's. A meeting place and work place for those with a need to do something. The Museum has been reorganised in places as I have mentioned above, to good effect I have to say. You really need to visit to appreciate the work that has taken place.