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# RUNWAY 22

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[www.mhas.org.uk](http://www.mhas.org.uk)

October 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

Hello everyone

I hope that you are all keeping well and have enjoyed the summer sunshine although for many of us it was a little to much at times.

As you may know we have a new President Mr Roger Harrison. I have on page 2 written a little about Roger and entitled it 'Full Circle', when you read it you will see why.

On Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> of May we had a visit by John, Tom, Mick and Paul four son's of 356<sup>th</sup> Veteran Lt. Col. John (Wild Bill) Crump. Wild Bill as he is affectionately known was the owner/handler of Jeep the Coyote who he brought over with him in 1943 on the Queen Elizabeth. See and read my report.

In June we were fortunate enough thanks to Howard King, to make another visit to Orfordness. Our guide David Warren came and gave us a talk back in October 2022 on the work that his group IRGON (Independent Research Group of Orfordness) was undertaking relating to Orfordness and early radar. After all the sunshine the morning started with rain, not heavy but enough to make it miserable and it didn't stop until the party arrived back on the quay. Read Paul Calver's report.

Pat Lisseman has been chasing any company who could produce a tie for a reasonable cost. Well she has achieved what seemed the impossible. Gentlemen we have a new design of tie. Well done Pat.

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July was to be Martlesham Village Fete day. The weather forecast was for high winds and rain so was cancelled for health and safety reasons.

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August took MHAS members to Shuttleworth for what was a brilliant day out, read my report.

Jewson, a builders merchant, based in Stowmarket very kindly presented MHAS with a new tool box along with a selection of new tools. Stewart Buxton a member living and working in the Stowmarket depot approached his manager who very kindly agreed to the donation.

Have you looked at our web site lately, its been updated. Still a lot of work to do but we are getting there.

September 10<sup>th</sup> saw our 'Classic Car & Military Vehicle Meet'. The weather once again proved to be on our side. As in previous events it was very well attended. Read my account and see the pictures.

*Martyn Cook Chair & Ed.*

President: Mr Roger Harrison

## 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....*

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Groundsman	Robert Alexander	(07766) 336068
Minutes Secretary	John Howarth	(01473) 218867

## Membership Secretary Report

I would like to welcome 1 new members since our last newsletter...

<b>Hugh Harrison</b>	<b>Barbara Skinner</b>	<b>Roderick Richens</b>
<b>Dr. Anna Baldwin</b>	<b>Nigel Everett</b>	<b>Andrew Mercer</b>

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**



**A little space left to fill...** Two beautifully restored Vauxhall Cresta's. They can consider themselves lucky to have survived as they like all Vauxhall's of that time were prone to rust and very badly at that.



**WHAT'S ON**



**VICKY GUNNELL - PROGRAMME SECRETARY**



- 6<sup>th</sup> October '23 ..... **The Friendly Invasion!** ..... **CLIVE STEVENS**  
*The 'Friendly Invasion' A Personal View - the USAAF arrives in the UK*
- 3<sup>rd</sup> November '23 ..... **The Dambuster Crews** ..... **CORRINE SIMONS**  
*'An Untold Story of the Dambuster Crews'*
- 12<sup>th</sup> November '23 ..... **Service of Remembrance** ..... **BARRACK SQUARE**  
*' Starts at 2.30pm'*
- 1<sup>st</sup> December '23 ..... **A 16mm Film Show** ..... **JAMES CECIL**  
*'Rare 16mm Film including Archive Aviation'*
- 5<sup>th</sup> January '24 ..... **Awaiting Confirmation** .....
- 2<sup>nd</sup> February '24 ..... **Awaiting Confirmation** .....

**Please check website - [www.mhas.org.uk](http://www.mhas.org.uk) - for Programme updates**

**FULL CIRCLE**

Back in 1981 saw the beginning of the formation of the Martlesham Heath Aviation Historic Society, yes Historic society. The word Historic was later dropped as it made the committee feel that they were historic relics.

For those of you who attended the inaugural meeting held in the Pavilion on Martlesham Heath will remember a packed and excited meeting.

Living on the heath at that time was Roger Harrison. Roger worked for a company called Willis Faber & Dumas who were a large international insurance broker and Roger was a manager in the company's Aviation Insurance Division.

Their offices were in what was at the time an architecturally exciting building created using black glass panels. On the roof were lawns and gardens and in the building was a swimming pool. This "Willis" building has subsequently been listed.

At that time, work had started on building the village of Martlesham Heath (once RAF Martlesham Heath Airfield). The village was to be of a radically new design, and it was to be made up of individually named hamlets of differing house types and styles, linked by pathways, which was a new idea that won many awards for its design.

This was a large project and covered a large area of the former airfield as individual companies moved in to start building.

As you are all aware, building work involves digging and there was a lot of that going on. This of course revealed a lot of unknown aviation artefacts. Many of these related to the aviation history of the Martlesham Heath Airfield, but where did the workmen take their finds, yes, you guessed correctly, to Roger's door.

Roger built up quite a collection and thought it a good idea to advertise the fact that he had all of these artefacts. Maybe others might like to see them and perhaps answer some of Roger's questions like, what did this do?

So, in the Autumn of 1981 our local EADT newspaper filled the centre spread with these items along with an invitation from Roger for interested parties to come along and listen to a talk by Gordon Kinsey, a celebrated local author who was a prolific writer on all local aviation subjects but especially the book entitled Martlesham Heath'.

Needless to say, the hall was packed out. Roger then took the opportunity to ask who was interested in starting an aviation society dedicated to



Martlesham Heath Airfield. Many hands went up including mine and before the evening finished my name along with several others were put down as likely candidates as committee members. The meeting closed with a date set in 1982 for our first AGM.

April 1982 saw our first AGM. Roger was duly elected as Chairman. All the other candidates including myself were signed up as committee members and a date was set for our first committee meeting where tasks were assigned to the elected committee members.

This relationship continued for around three years, but Roger's job took him away to Hertfordshire. During those three years several committee members had dropped out and I became a candidate for the post of Chairman, which brings us up to today.

I guess you can now see why I have entitled this story as 'Full Circle'. Roger rejoining, although technically he never left as he became an Honorary Member of the MHAS. His return is in my opinion and that of the other trustees, a very happy reunion.

*Martyn  
MHAS Chair & Ed.*

## **Lt. Col. JOHN CRUMP (WILD BILL)**

### **A FAMILY REUNION WITH PLAYFORD HALL**

Many of you know the story of 'Jeep the Coyote'. Jeep was a wonderful little American Coyote born on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 1944 who sadly was killed when hit by a Jeep (the vehicle) on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1944 at the gates to Playford Hall his home which he hardly had time to get to know.

Jeep was brought to England by John (Wild Bill) Crump who was billeted in Playford Hall with the 360<sup>th</sup> squadron. For the purposes of this story I will call Wild Bill, Bill.

Jeep was given to Bill just before his departure to England by the farmer on whose land Bill used to shoot. Bill was rather taken aback as he was about to depart for England on the Queen Elizabeth. However, Bill kept him tucked away and Jeep arrived safely at Playford Hall where he lived his short life completely uncaged.

Jeep did fly with Bill. One of the five occasions was 'Operation Market Garden'. Bill said that Jeep would find his way to the heater and would be asleep by the time Bill began taking off. On this mission it was not a straight and level mission and Bill had to withdraw from the action in order to tie Jeep down as he was all over the cockpit.

all of our local schools where he lectured to school children about his life in the hands of the Nazi's during WW2. He was also a leading light in the Jewish Organisation and would attend and take part in their yearly meetings.



There is so much more that one could write about Frank. We here at Martlesham Heath and MHAS will always remember him as a gentle quite man.

Rest in peace Frank.

*Martyn  
MHAS Chair & Ed.*

Since writing this newsletter I have learnt of the passing of three more senior members. They are Norman Rose who some of you will remember helped build Bentwaters and later produced a book and a DVD on his life at Bentwaters. Ken Oatley ex-RAF Pathfinder who at 102 was still attending our monthly meetings. And lastly Peter Nichols from Shottisham who helped Robert Dunnnett and myself clear all the burnt gorse in front of the Control Tower many years ago.

Their obituaries will be in our February newsletter.

*Martyn  
MHAS Chair & Ed.*



meetings until he lost the use of his car. But thanks to Peter Barker Bill did still attend on a regular basis. Peter would pick Bill up and delivered him back home after the meeting until Bills legs no longer worked. Thank you Peter for supporting Bill in those last few months of his life.

### OBITUARY

#### Frank Bright MBE 1928 - 2023

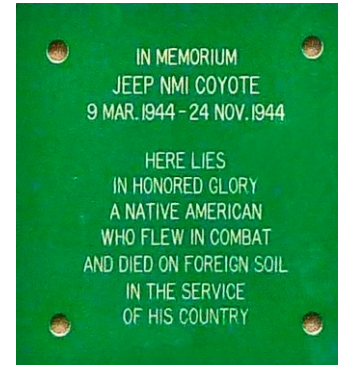
Frank was a very quiet man who kept himself to himself but when spoken to he came through in a very humorous way.

Frank was of Jewish nationality. He and his family suffered heavily at the hands of the Nazi's during WW2. I was surprised that he bore no animosity towards the German nation despite losing most of his family in the Nazi concentration camps.

We have over the years had German members who had flown in WW2 and most had been shot down and spent the war in a British prisoner of war camp. Peter Rix (not his birth name) was a Luftwaffe pilot who spent most of the war in a POW camp. He like so many were made to join but secretly did not accept the Nazi party.

I digress. Peter joined the MHAS society where he and Frank got on very well and would often be seen in discussion.

Frank later on in life was awarded a doctoret from the Suffolk University for his work in schools on the Holocaust. He was known in most if not



Sharon Chickering Moller wife of a 356<sup>th</sup> veteran wrote a very charming children's book about Jeep, sadly the book I think is no longer in print.

The returning family, Bob with his wife Trisha, Terry, Eric and his wife Karen and David Crump arrived in the UK on Saturday May 28<sup>th</sup>. Their mother June had hoped to travel with them but ill health unfortunately put a stop to that.



The Crump's had a list of things they wanted to see and do but time has a habit of catching you up.

Tarkey Barker has for many years always laid a wreath at the Madingley 'Service of Remembrance' on behalf of the 356<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group and



MHAS and this year was to be no exception.

The service took place on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May and the Crump's were not going to miss this service. In the following picture you will see the sons looking and reading the names of those who lost their lives and never returned.



They laid a wreath seen in the picture on the left as is customary. However, each year the laying of the wreaths alters. One year it can be USAF servicemen. They take the wreath from you and lay it while you watch. One year when I laid the wreath it was Scouts and Guides, US of course.



Notice in the picture on the left. On the backs of their sweat shirts there is a picture of their dad with Jeep in the cockpit of dads plane 'Jackie' a P-47 Thunderbolt (see picture on page 8).



The family had also made a decision to visit the IWM at Duxford which has a very large American Air Museum. So after the service they were driven to Duxford, a visit they enjoyed immensely.

## OBITUARY

### William (Bill) Grant 1929 - 2023

On Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2023 myself and eight other MHAS members attended the funeral of one of our oldest members William Grant know to all as Bill. I have known Bill since he joined MHAS way back in January 2000. He sadly passed away on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> of July at the grand age of 93 years.



Bill did not talk about his early life but attending his funeral and listening to his son and stepson Bills story unfolded which I found quite moving.

Bill was born on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1929 in Aberdeen and was immediately placed on the adoption register. He was adopted by a family living close to where he was born in Aberdeen.

Bill worked in the Aberdeen docks after leaving school. At the age of 17 he joined the RAF. Bill married but the marriage didn't last and they divorced. He eventually married Margaret; they were a devoted couple and set up home in Ipswich. Margaret sadly passed away with cancer and Bill was alone. But one thing we learnt, Bill was a great family man throughout his life and always found time to talk to his boys which at times like that make such a difference.

Bill was a wonderful gentleman small in size but huge in character. He loved a laugh as the picture above shows. This was taken at Brooklands back in July 2010.

The second picture (over the page) was taken at Bletchley Park in 2009. Sitting beside him was Bills very good friend and MHAS member, the late Tom Scrivener who died in September 2015.

Bills health deteriorated in the last three months of his life such that he felt unable to renew his membership.

For 23 years Bill was a loyal member taking part in many of our trips to other museums and aviation shows. He regularly attended our monthly



## OBITUARY

### Joe Cox

There are still some members who have been members long enough to remember Joe Cox.

Sadly Joe passed away just after the printing of our June 2023 newsletter so I was unable to print his Obituary at that time.

Joe joined the MHAS back in the 1980's and became our first Programme Secretary.



Joe and Sally ran a hotel on the Felixstowe promenade midway between the pier and Butlins on the sea front at Felixstowe.

The business was successful which meant that holding the position of Programme Secretary and running a hotel became a little stressful and they decided to sell the business and move to France.

Joe and Sally still had family living in Felixstowe and after several years living in France decided to return to Felixstowe to live.

Shortly after their return Joe re-joined the MHAS and became our Membership Secretary. I spent many hours with Joe and Sally at their Exeter Road home showing Joe the computer programme that I had been using to run our membership.

Joe was a very popular guy and that made working as Membership Secretary easier. But Joe had other interests i.e. the 356 ATC Squadron based in Felixstowe and joined them as a working officer.

Sadly Joe passed away on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023. His funeral was held in the packed church of St. John the Baptist in Felixstowe.

Joe will be remembered fondly as a very likeable guy.

*Martyn*

*MHAS Chair & Ed.*

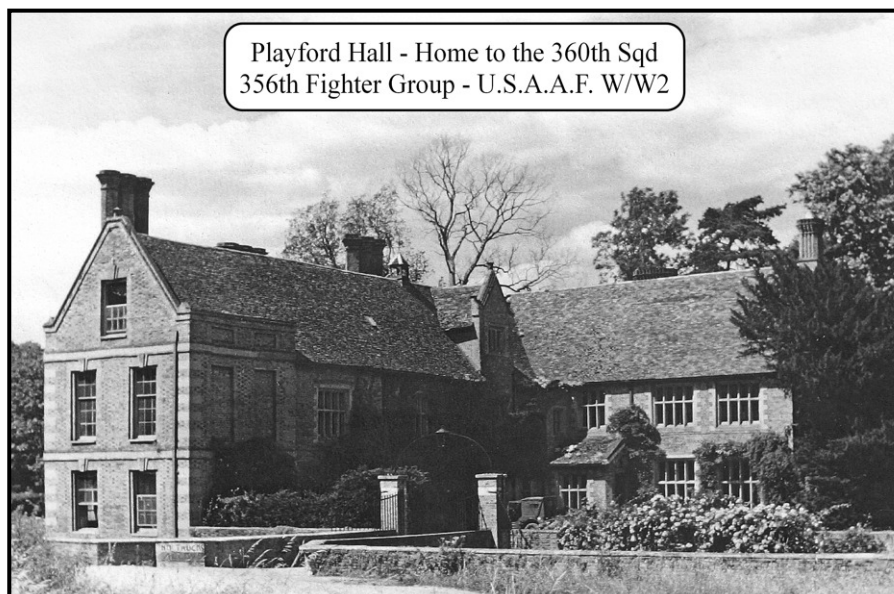
On Tuesday it was time to visit MHAS beginning with the Control Tower Museum.

During the visit the family presented the museum with dads horse hide jacket. A cabinet is being prepared and maybe will be in position when you read this newsletter.



Moving on from the Control Tower Museum we visited the Barrack Square where medals were presented to pilots. But it is also home to the two WWII memorials, one being the 356<sup>th</sup> memorial with the 72 names engraved on its brass fascia plate. However, it was recently discovered that there should have been 73 names. The second war memorial was raised by our late President Mr Richard Barker in 1991. It is dedicated to the Royal Flying Corps, the RAF, the British Commonwealth and Dominion airforces and the Civilians.

The Aviation Achievements pillar snuggled between the two war memorials is dedicated to all those units who, over the years whilst operating from Martlesham Heath strived to make aviation a safer environment.



On then to Playford Hall where the owner Mr Adrian Melrose would be waiting to show our visitors around part of the house.

Unfortunately it was a bank holiday weekend and for those who understand our public holidays means as on this occasion, a problem. Adrian had muddled up the Tuesday and Wednesday and was not available due to a business telephone call. Such a shame having travelled all this way to be thwarted by a telephone call.

Thankfully the weather was playing ball and the grounds were accessible although the grass was rather long and unkempt.

Clive decided to rebuild his Tiger Moth in American markings, and typically he rebuilt it from the ground up even finding an unused Gipsy Moth engine that was found in Argentina. This may seem extreme but Clive said, to have an engine of the period stripped and overhauled would probably cost in excess of £50K to £60K even after finding and purchasing one. This new engine once fitted fired up, and worked first time.

The aircraft rebuild took about 14 years, which Clive thought equates to around £152K. He said that to buy a second Hand Tiger Moth would probably cost about £82K, but you would probably have to pay a lot of money and time to get it in a safe flying condition.

Typically of Clive and Linda, they wanted to get everything right. Their intention is as they get older to use this Tiger as their fun aircraft project.

Clive and Linda's company '*Vintage Fabrics*' based near Audley End in Essex, are always busy rebuilding and re-covering vintage veteran aircraft for other aircraft owners. This meant that work on their aircraft was often pushed to the back, which explains why it took so long.

Clive showed us pictures of what '*Vintage Fabrics*' are currently doing. The pictures showed their hangar bursting with aircraft being re-built. This produced a flurry of requests for a Society visit.

**On Friday 1st September** we welcomed Chris Turland who presented an illustrated talk about the Flying Flea and other strange (and sometimes downright dangerous) aircraft that have taken to the air over the decades.

Some were probably designed and built in garages and small workshops, and some should have stayed there!

Others were prototypes some particularly odd that were made by the well-known aircraft manufacturers of the day, as they vied to get contracts from the Royal Air Force and commercial airlines of the day, a few made it to the Armament and Aircraft Experimental Establishment (A&AEE) at RAF Martlesham Heath, where aircraft Military and Civil were tested between World War 1 and World War 2 many being roundly rejected, especially those that crashed whilst here.

*Howard King*  
*Publicity Secretary*



running 'no passport' trips to France (the origins of the Booze Cruise perhaps!).

The business expanded into other airports and even opened its own airport with proper Terminal Buildings and concrete runways, which they called Ferryfield. This was at Lydd in Kent. Many of their earlier airfields had been grass, which became quagmires in heavy rain.

They opened up new routes. Squires Gate in Blackpool to the Isle of Man. Manston to France with links to the Railways, trying out a "Silver Arrow" Plane/Rail service to Gare De Nord in Paris.

Fares had to be competitive. In 1958, you could take a Morris Minor across the Channel for £5. Passenger and car transport business continuing to climb. But they started to lose more and more money, they were now competing with the more modern Roll-On/Roll-Off ferries. Eventually the airline folded. However, it is still an active listed Company which who knows may one day may take to the air again.

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July** – The evening began with the presentation of a Long Service award, the "Silver Owl" awarded by the Association for Suffolk Museums. The recipient was Alan Powell, recognising his long and diligent service to our Aviation Society.

Alan for more than 25 years has been our Society Secretary, and Newsletter Editor, as well as helping the Society in many other ways. Congratulations Alan and thanks. You can now spend more time taking amazing photographs, your favourite hobby.



Our guest speakers for the evening were Clive and Linda Denney from 'Vintage Fabrics'. They came to talk about the renovation of their shared DeHavilland Tiger Moth, one of about 9,000 of this 1930's design, with upwards of 700 still flying which says much for the esteem this Trainer aircraft is held in to this day.

It was often said that the Americans never used them in this country. When they came into World War 2 however they used about 16 in American colours.



Jeeps grave was a little overgrown and the plaque with his details on was a little worse for wear and difficult to see. The decision was made to ask Adrian if we could replace the plaque and perhaps tidy up the area.

However, time marches on and it was time for the family to drive back to

London, perhaps a little disappointed at not seeing inside Playford Hall.

Adrian did however come out after our guests had departed and apologised for his error of mixing up the two days. When asked about tidying up Jeeps grave he whole heartedly agreed to our idea.

I couldn't finish this report without showing this wonderful picture of Bill in his P-47 Thunderbolt with Jeep.



## Martlesham Heath Aviation Society – Visit to Orfordness

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – Twenty-three MHAS members had the pleasure of a guided tour of Orfordness led by David Warren. The ‘Ness’ is now owned by the National Trust (since 1993) and has a very varied history of military use.

The weather was not kind, but it didn’t stop the day being very informative. Certain areas were off limit due to nesting birds, but the group was shown the key buildings and artefacts from the Trust provided trailer, occasionally disembarking at sites such as the Armoury, the Black Beacon and the information centre.



David explained the geography of the Ness – with one third of the total area being owned and managed by the military for many years and used for a wide range of secret experimentation both before, during and after WW2.

The Ness had strong links for Martlesham Heath when it was discovered

## MEETINGS ROUNDUP

Howard King

**Friday 2nd June** – Paul Ross, in a fascinating talk, gave us “The Silver City Story” about an independent airline that set up just after World War 2 that initially started off flying short hops from Kent on the south coast to the other side of the Channel. Later, flying from Southampton to the Cherbourg Peninsular.

It initially took some of the cross-Channel Holiday traffic flying cars and passengers at a time when, to take your car across the channel, your vehicle had to be craned into the hold of a Cross Channel Ferry after the fuel Tank had been emptied, a slow and complicated business, with similar palaver on the other side of the Channel.

Silver City developed the business using the first drive on/drive off aircraft, like the Bristol Freighter which could take just two cars and 10 passengers for £27 flying from Lympne in Kent (equivalent to about £900 today) not cheap but popular with the wealthy like Film Stars, company directors and wealthy holiday makers.

It also used other passenger aircraft on the short hop to France.

The aircraft sometimes transported pedigree racehorses and livestock.

Paul told us that when sheep were transported in hot weather, the smell of lanolin in the sheep’s wool became overpowering and steamed up the cockpit windows. In the Cargo area they tried removing a window only to find that on arrival they had one sheep less, which had obviously gone for an early bath in the Channel. It was then decided to install metal grilles over the windows.

Business quickly improved to 20 flights a day, with planes often doing 90 minute round trips, flying at about 150 mph, the outbound aircraft flying at 1000ft, the inbound at 2000ft.

The airline also had other adventures. When the partition of India/Pakistan happened in 1947 the government asked Silver City to help relieve the chaotic situation in the Indian subcontinent. Dakotas were sent and in 9 days moved 1,100 refugees. In one DC3 they managed to take off with 111 on board, which would normally take about 40 people.

Silver City was also involved in the Berlin Airlift, helping to break the Russian blockade of the City. They managed to transport 900 tons of supplies into the besieged city.

The airline continued to expand with new larger aircraft. In 1955 it transported 42,500 cars, and 160,000 passengers. They even started





Yes we had a draw with some absolutely wonderful prizes. Pat Lisseman and her volunteers sold all the tickets thanks to your generosity.

*However, the show could not have gone ahead without the wonderful support of Steve and Dorinda Suttle. When I was taking time out to cool down I could hear Steve telling everyone what was happening and what was going to happen. His use of Spitfire recordings are a great attention seeker to view the skies, When you look around everyone is looking up to hopefully see a plane, alas the CAA stopped that several years ago, so we must content ourselves with just the sound and our imagination. Sadly Steve had to retire early with a health problem. He recovered and they went on their holiday to Norfolk as planned, we all wish them a great holiday and a quick return to health for Steve.*

The draw went brilliantly well. Pat had obtained some marvellous prizes and using the Three Chordettes sound system and assisted by them the draw went ahead.

With the draw being the last thing on our programme it was time to call it a day on what was a brilliant and very successful day.

that the airfield built early on was not fit-for-purpose and hence aircraft required for testing were sent from Martlesham Heath.

The shingle is moving and changing all the time, but the spit is still 'connected' to the mainland close to Aldeburgh but the changes over the years are clear to see. The latest causality being the lighthouse which had to be removed recently due to coastal erosion.

The key takeaways for the days were: -

### **Atomic Weapons Research Establishment Site**

One of the few sites in the UK with purpose-built facilities for the testing of components of nuclear weapons. Comprising of six 'labs', these buildings now form impressive backdrops on the shingle. Only Lab 1 is open to the public, the remainder have exterior access only on guided tours.

### **Vegetated shingle**

International rare and delicate landscape, consisting of shingle ridges and valleys, deposited over centuries by the sea. 20% of Europe's vegetated shingle is found on Orford Ness. Incredibly fragile, one single misplaced footstep can destroy structures that have taken centuries to form.

### **Airfield Marshes**

What was once a former World War One airfield, is now a rich grazing marsh, providing home to birds, deer and a flock of rare-breed sheep.

### **Radar Receiver Building**

First World War building, adapted in the 1930's, for early work on Radar is now home to the Ness's Secrets exhibition. The exhibition tells the story of 80 years of top-secret research on the Ness.

### **Bomb Ballistics Building**

Built in 1933 as the centre of an experimental bombing range. The roof now provides a panoramic viewing platform giving stunning views across the entire site.

### **Black Beacon**

An unusual building, erected in 1928 to house an experimental rotating-loop navigation beacon. Now home to exhibition and views across the vegetated shingle.

## National Nature Reserve

Three walking trails (two open only seasonally) take you through coastal grazing marshes and out to the vegetated shingle. Home to numerous wetland and wading birds, Chinese water deer, hares and a rare breed flock of sheep.

A more detailed history of Orfordness can be found here: -

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/suffolk/orford-ness-national-nature-reserve/history-of-orford-ness>

*Paul Calver - Building Manager*



## OUR VISIT TO SHUTTLEWORTH

**Sunday 6th August**

After the heavy rain the previous day hopes ran high for a calmer and dryer day. Our wish was granted and 18 members boarded a 19 seat coach from Felixstowe Travel bound for the Shuttleworth Trust.

The journey there and back with Adrian at the wheel was without any traffic jams or holdups, that must be a record.

I have left the classic vehicles till almost last for no other reason than there were so many. We were supported by four wonderful clubs, they were the Suffolk Vehicle Enthusiasts Club (SVEC), the Roman Roadsters, the 100 Friends Enthusiasts Club, and the Clacton Classic Car Club (a new club to visit us). What a wonderful display of classic cars. (pictures courtesy of Mike Crowley).



1.00pm saw the opening ceremony. Our President Roger Harrison opened the event with some reminiscences of MHAS past Vice Presidents who were intrinsically linked to Martlesham Heath and of course aviation.

James Mullen brought his 'white doves of peace' and opened the basket for them to fly freely into the sky in remembrance to all who lost their lives in war. James has been in attendance with his doves for many years and which he uses at weddings.

2.00pm saw the first appearance of the 'Three Chordettes'. As always a great attraction, three lovely girls singing their blend of wartime songs with an American flavour.





Cynthia is also very good with her hands and has a stand displaying all the items that she produces for children and grown ups.

The Air Ambulance were with us this year. They had a wealth of things to sell on their large stand. They said that they had a great day and I hope you all bought something from their stand as we never know when we may need their services.

The Control Tower lecture room was home to the Meccano men, Roger Upson-Smith and Martin Greaves. These gentlemen put on a wonderful display with many models actually moving. I bet it brought back some memories to those of you who played with Meccano.



We alighted the bus in brilliant sunshine with all the noise and razzmatazz of a wonderful venue with lots of planes (no jets) all lined up and ready to fly.

There were many other attractions to look at, but first a cup of coffee.

There were two vintage buses travelling up and down all day long, always full of happy adults and children. The second bus was taking people up to where the family home is situated but I never got that far.





The flying program started on time and there was just a chance that later in the afternoon the wind would die back and allow some of the real vintage planes to fly, but sadly it didn't.

I stood on the flight line until a family close by felt sorry for my plight and offered me a spare seat they had.

Joining me later was a gentleman in a wheel chair. He knew a little about some of the planes and myself, not too much more. He was surprised when I revealed my Martlesham Heath shirt displaying our badge. I couldn't help myself from telling him that the majority of planes flying today including the Spitfire and Hurricane, which stood in front of us having done their routine and waiting refuelling were all tested at RAF Martlesham Heath. What always annoys me are commentators who give out lots of information but forget to say where those planes began their service history. If they had not passed their testing at MH then they would not have been built and therefore not taking part in the airshow today. But enough of the recriminations

Here are two of the planes taking part that began life at MH or were involved with MH early in their life.



**Avro Ansen**

This type of plane took Taffy Bowen and Keith Wood from Robert Watson Watt Radar team into the history books. Their flight which took



Military guns of all types were on display, shown in the inset with some more military vehicles.

There were of course many other stands featuring things to interest children and to keep them entertained.

One stand that we invite each year is a stand that is prepared by Eddie Howlett accompanied by his lovely wife Cynthia.

Eddie is very good with his hands and with wood. This year Eddie had various type of transport (see the picture over the page). Each vehicle is beautifully put together. If you have built models like these you will appreciate the time and skill needed to make spoked wheels. I am in envy of Eddie's skills.



We had a new stand this year, Orwell Motor Cycles arranged by Robert Alexander.



Robert also arranged an articulated tractor unit from Trucks R' Us to show children and adults that these gigantic sky scrappers, yes skyscrapers, if you went and climbed the steps up to the cab, (no lifts), then you will know what I mean. (see picture)

But Roberts intension was to show everyone that these vehicles should be treated with great respect.

Andrew Moore filled his military vehicle section with some great vehicles, more than in previous years, thank you Andy.

Below are a couple of pictures to show the size and type of vehicles that were on display.

The RAF recovery vehicle over the page is a classic example of size and was in pristine condition. It certainly is an expensive hobby but the rewards justify the cost although I may be told differently.



them on a foggy day out into the North Sea with their primitive radar equipment and screens to view a naval exercise. The exercise was cancelled due to the fog but here they saw Swordfish taking off and flying towards them looking to see who was flying above. It was the first 'Air to Air Radar Interception'.

The Tomtit was designed by Sydney Camm and built by Hawker. The engine was built by Armstrong Siddeley and was named the 'Mongoose'. This was a sleek little plane began to see the end of the wooden aeroplane frame, it was time to build the frame with metal. However it was still covered in fabric..



**Hawker Tomtit**

One plane you cannot leave out when visiting Shuttleworth is the de Havilland DH-88 Comet. I was rather pleased with this picture as I only had a compact camera.





There was some wonderful flying and it was the first air show, although not advertised as an airshow that I had been to since the end of the pandemic.

Back on the bus it was back to Martlesham Heath. A big thank you must be extended to Howard King. It was the most difficult event to arrange, particularly with the costs which are now quite astronomical. However, a big thank you Howard for a truly wonderful day.

*Martyn  
MHAS Chair & Ed.*

## CLASSIC CAR & MILITARY VEHICLE EVENT

10<sup>th</sup> September 2023

We prayed for fine weather but I guess we prayed to hard, it was a scorcher of a day but better than a wet day.

Setting up stated at 8.00am. It was a nice morning and there was plenty to do but gradually it got hotter and hotter but enough of that.

Gazebo's were the order of the day. They are however getting larger and a little more difficult to erect, but up they went thanks to our volunteers.

Classic cars began to appear and thanks once again to our team of volunteers they began to be parked. I had to smile much later in the morning, Colin Whitmore who always looks after the classic cars and their parking came into the Control Tower absolutely whacked. "It's to hot, those that are late arrivals will have to park themselves". Yes that's how it was, but they all managed with a little bit of consideration by the other already positioned classic car owners.



The Riverside Fish n' Chip van was there as usual just before 8.00am and immediately began setting up.

Once set up they got started cooking or should it be frying. Bacon, sausages and serving coffee etc etc.

They were joined later by Robertos ice cream van. I just had to try one, goodness it was wonderful, just the thing on such a stifling hot day, well some one had to make sure they were cold and tasty didn't they.



The Felixstowe & District Amateur Radio Society arrived early and began setting up in their normal spot among the trees.

Coffee caddy arrived, special coffee for the connoisseurs.



They had other goodies for sale and did a roaring trade all day long.

I must admit that I took to the museum for a cooling off period and a cup of well deserved coffee, my own I hasten to add.