



# NEWSLETTER

**Join us for a Member's Meeting on 17th May**

## April's Guest Lunch

Forty four Members and guests assembled at Greenacres on Wednesday 19 April for our Guest's Lunch. After discussions with Stephanie we had changed the menu format, with slices of meat replacing some of the pastry items. This certainly proved popular and I suspect will be maintained next time. Another popular change was that the first drink was free!

Our senior Guest was The Hon Mrs Jackie Assheton (daughter of Bomber Harris) and it was a great honour to have her with us. Before, during and after lunch she chatted with nearly all the veterans. We also had Mike O'Farrell (Chairman of Middlesex County Cricket Club) who was greeted and welcomed by our Chairman - trying to avoid mentioning that Middlesex had won the championship after beating his beloved Yorkshire. Sadly our third guest Mike Neville from RAFBF could not attend but sends his apologies.

Three members of Woking ACA journeyed round the M25 thanks to John Austin bringing Bill Moore and Eric Smith. Roy Briggs hosted a whole table and among his party was Ellen Thompson whom Roy had dropped food to in Holland as part of 'Operation Manna'. Rod Finn's table included Geoffrey Griffiths who worked at Handley Page and was involved with the design of the Halifax III and Victor bombers and Emily Horton who was the last journalist to interview Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown prior to his death in February last year.

It was also good to see Ron Doble back looking well along with his minder Sandy Lowe. Ron had been hos-

pitalised a second time but seems to be overcoming problems and he certainly tucked into his meal!

After a short introduction from the Chairman we started the meal and we have to say that Stephanie and the team really did us well, so a big thank you to all the staff at Greenacres for all their hard work.

At the end of proceedings we managed to get a photo of our senior guest with the assembled WW2 veterans (see Page 2). This brought to a close a really excellent lunch. Our thanks must go to Ian Mason for sorting out all the admin (including the last minute adjustments!) and to Rod Finn for yet another super raffle which raised £187. Thank you gentlemen for your help.

At the end of the Raffle an additional prize of a bottle of whisky was presented to Sandy Lowe for all the help he has given to Ron Doble and his family during Ron's extended stay in hospital. Rumour has it Sandy drove more hours than Bill George <sup>364.40</sup> flew!



**Remember 17th May**

**Join us for  
"Members Meeting"**

**Greenacres 1030 Noon for 1100**



Our senior guest talks to Roy Briggs & Geoffrey Griffiths



Bill George's table



Roy Briggs & guests



Jackie Assheton successfully bids for the 'Stirling Beer' Auctioned for the International BomberCommand Centre



### What a Line Up

L to R:

- Geoffrey Griffiths (Guest)
- Harold Kirby
- Geoff Hulett
- The Hon Jackie Assheton
- Bill Moore (Woking ACA)
- Derek Gurney
- Bill Moore
- Roy Briggs
- Charlie Flint
- Ron Doble
- George Meredith

More Photos on P3 from Emily Horton with thanks



Give a man a microphone and ....

**Global Flight Tracking for Malaysia Airlines**

Malaysia Airlines has become the first customer to sign up for SITAONAIR, Aireon and FlightAware’s global flight tracking service, designed to prevent incidents similar to the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines MH370.



9M-MRO Boeing 777

Flight MH370, a Boeing 777-200ER registered 9M-MRO with 239 passengers and crew aboard veered from its planned course about 40 minutes after taking off from Kuala Lumpur bound for Beijing on March 8, 2014. Although some of the aircraft’s structures have since been located, the majority of the airframe has still not been recovered. The search for the missing 777 mainly off Australia’s South West coast, ended in January this year.

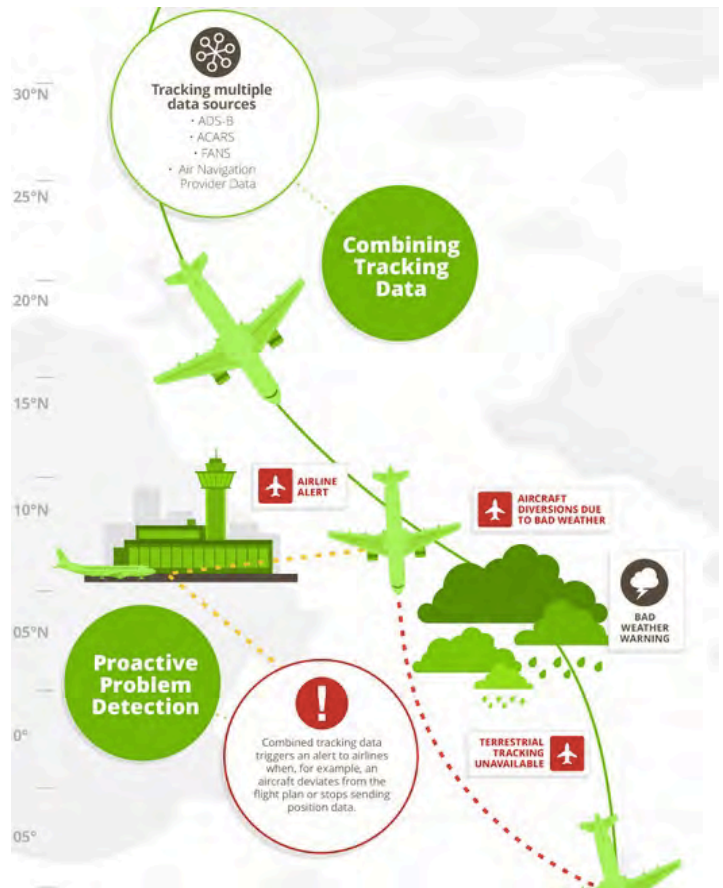
The MH370 disappearance has reinforced the need for continual flight tracking service triggering new ICAO rules for tracking aircraft. Under the SITAONAIR agreement, Malaysia Airlines will adopt the real-time alerting system, giving it minute-by-minute, space-based global tracking across its whole fleet.

The system adds Aireon’s space-based Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) data to FlightAware’s global air traffic control data, aircraft datalink information and terrestrial ADS-B data. This space-based ADS-B data helps cover data gaps particularly over oceanic and remote airspace, where there is currently no surveillance. The information is then delivered through to SITAONAIR’s AIRCOM Flight-Tracker.

“Malaysia Airlines will be at the cutting-edge of real-time flight tracking technology. With access to up-to-the-minute reporting, Malaysia Airlines will know the location, heading, speed and altitude of all aircraft in its

fleet, at all times, and be alerted to any exceptions” SITAONAIR AIRCOM ‘s Paul Gibson stated.

SITAONAIR added that no new avionics or modifications are needed to use the service; it will work for all ADS-B Out-equipped aircraft.



Global Tracking at work

So, in future, for whatever reason an aircraft deviates from it’s flight plan route, it’s operations staff will know almost immediately. There was much speculation, although unproven, that this was orchestrated by the aircraft commander Captain Zaharie Ahmad Shah. There have been other theories that foreign governments were involved. What is amazing that although we have satellite technology, nobody was able to pinpoint where the aircraft crashed. Thus the efforts to find the missing airframe were hindered from the start. Despite aircraft and ships covering huge areas the ‘black boxes’ were never found.

So now, having suffered two high profile hull losses, it is fitting perhaps that Malaysia Airlines are at the cutting edge of new technology.

## Circular Runways - The Future?



Last month a video arguing the case for circular runways at airports, took off and went viral. The video has had more than 36 million views on Facebook and generated heated debate on social media - including within the aviation community. I checked the date, as it had the hallmark of an April Fools joke, but no! Many people are sceptical about the concept. The man proposing the idea was Dutch engineer Henk Hesselink.

### This is what he had to say about wings nearly hitting the tarmac?

Henk Hesseklink: With the banked character of the runway, the wingtips and engines are closer to the ground than currently is the case. But the bank angle is designed such that even the most constrained aircraft (Boeing 747 and Airbus A380) will be able to land. Still, there is less margin for error than is currently the case. Pilots will need automated support for take-off and landing.

### What about Rejected take-offs

Henk responds: As there is no end to the runway, a starting aircraft can keep rolling and come to a stop in a safer way than is currently the case.

We will need a safety distance between individual aircraft, which we took into consideration in our trials. We used a runway length of three kilometres for planning purposes and a safety distance between separate aircraft of one kilometre.

### A new approach? The ILS (Instrument Landing System) helps pilots to land using precision guidance, sent from fixed points on the ground., so how would this work on a circular runway?

Henk Hesselink: Obviously, as we are making a turn during the landing, the ILS (Instrument Landing System) will not function. But we may be able to use an ILS-

system for part of the approach phase, the first part is still straight-in.

Either we put a simple form of ILS on each direction of the runway, or we can install a movable ILS-system that will move around the runway, for example on a rail-track . It is a bit far-fetched, I know.

### Could Instrument Landing Systems be adapted for circular runways?

Better would be to use some new approach, like satellite navigation. The current quality of GPS is not sufficient, but new methods are already being investigated.

I think developments in this area will move very fast as there is more demand for accurate location information, from trains, cars, drones, etc. Already curved approaches and fixed curves are used in aviation, requiring new navigation systems.

### Ice, rain and 'go arounds'

Ice and rain will reduce the centrifugal force which circular runways rely on, increasing the stopping distance, he argued. He added: "What if three airliners are landing, something goes wrong and they abort landings. Their prescribed go-around procedure would likely take them dangerously close to the other aircraft."

Henk responds: Indeed, like on a "normal" runway, ice and rain will have an effect on the operation. It is a fact that nowadays runway surfaces are getting better and are becoming more resistant to difficult conditions, and the current concrete absorbs most of the water.

We have been thinking about building offices and parking spaces under the runway and the remaining heat could be transferred to the runway, but this is an idea that will need further exploration. Heating of the runway surface is something that is already being applied.

### Would aborted landings known as 'go-around' present a threat to safety?

A new system for planning how aircraft move to and from the runway will be necessary.

We have designed a system where the air traffic controller is supported by a 'circular' planning tool. This seems strange at first, but is already applied in other fields. The planning will take all safety aspects into account, such as the possibility for a go-around by one or more aircraft simultaneously.

### Stalling speeds

What about stalling speeds while the aircraft is banking.

Henk replies: A higher speed will be necessary, indeed.

*Cont'd on P6 .*

Cont'd from P5

## Tales from the Tower

by Tony Brown

Take-off and landing run will increase because of this and the time that an aircraft spends on the runway will be about five to ten seconds longer. landin

### Emergency leaving the runway

Henk: The width of the runway has been extended by another 20 meters for safety. We consider safety a major issue and made calculations on the necessary runway dimensions.

Anyway, the "edge" of the runway should not be designed as a large wall that airplanes can fall down from. This additional safety distance is also necessary when the airplane lands at a point of the runway where it will be too low and the centrifugal forces will move it to the outside of the track and further outside than its optimal track.

We have calculated that the additional 20 meters will suffice for the safety case. We have also calculated that the aircraft will move to its optimal track in just one or two iterations, so no continuous bouncing upwards and downwards will occur. This is confirmed by the tests from the 1960s.

### Touchdown

In good wind conditions three planes can land and take off simultaneously in Mr. Hesselink's design

Henk Hesselink conducts his work from the Netherlands Aerospace Centre and has received funding from the European Commission to research circular runways, leading a consortium of five European research institutes. In response to all the feedback to the video, he wanted to clarify the scope of the project.

"To start with, the idea is a concept and many questions I receive are very directly related to current day operations. We must realize that it will take time before an endless runway can be brought into operation. It is like a concept car in a car exhibition - it will not be implemented exactly like this, but we learn a lot from the ideas, from simulations and, later on, practical tests.

**Ed:** *It reminds me of the early days of "Tomorrows World", we could never have believed how computers would rule our lives 50 years on. Will we see circular runways? I think Pigs may fly first, but then I have been proved wrong before - once!*

Astrid, the Swedish au pair who lives in the village, has been more than generous in her appreciation for my technical explanation of life in air traffic control. In the hope that this will continue I will explain the function of the A.T.I.S. (Automatic Terminal Information Service).

In the old days when there were only a couple of aircraft movements an hour there was plenty of time to give aircraft the latest weather, runway state and serviceability of equipment etc. As airports got busier it became more difficult to pass the information to each and every pilot and so a system was introduced whereby it was transmitted continuously and pilots could listen at a time to suit themselves. The information was recorded by whoever was available in the Control Tower every 30 minutes and to make sure pilots had the latest information the first ATIS of the day was given the letter Alpha the next one Bravo and so on. On his first contact with ATC the pilot would say he had Alpha or Mike or whatever was current, the controller would check and if it had changed would say "it's now November, the change is a new QNH (pressure setting)" and everyone was happy. Astrid says she understands so you all should!

So early one afternoon, I am sitting on approach and the inbound Speedbird calls up. Hello Manchester it's the Speedbird 123 with Juliet and thank you for the benediction. Slightly puzzled I say I don't know what you mean. Listen to the ATIS says Speedbird. I do. "This is Manchester Approach Arrival information Juliet. The surface wind is 280 degrees 7 knots. Visibility. JESUS CHRIST!!!!!! Further expletives deleted.

The trainee, wanting to make a name for himself by being helpful, had decided to make everyone a cup of tea. Unfortunately, whilst distributing the cups he reckoned he could reach one controller by reaching round the back of the man recording the weather. It was then that he learnt that a very hot cup of tea catching a protruding angle poise lamp and cascading down someone's neck does ensure a spirited reaction!!

**Ed:** *At least at Manchester the ATIS changes regularly. Visiting Lagos a couple of times in the late 80's it was Information A and when we went back 2 years later it was still Information A and I would swear it was the same recording! Thanks again Tony.*

## Thank You's and Congratulations

We have a number of thank you's to make, so I thought I would link them all together but I intend to start with a note of Congratulations to the ever hard working **Fiona** and her family on the birth of her daughter. No doubt when it fits with her programme, we will see her in person at one of our future meetings.

To **Greenacres**. To Stephanie and all the staff a really big thank you for the Lunch last month. As you may have heard we changed the menu somewhat and judging by the comments it was a resounding success. We will learn from this one a future menus will be similar to this one but with even less on the pastry side. It is very easy to forget the backroom staff in the kitchens but the manner in which they dealt with special menu choices was 'second to none', so thank you all.

A big thank you to **Andrea Hughes** and the family of the late Jim Copus for sending us a substantial donation in memory of Jim and asking that we join together to have a drink in memory of Jim. We thought it would be nice to use it for drinks beforehand at this year's Christmas Lunch and very much hope that some of the family will be able to join us and drink Jim's health.

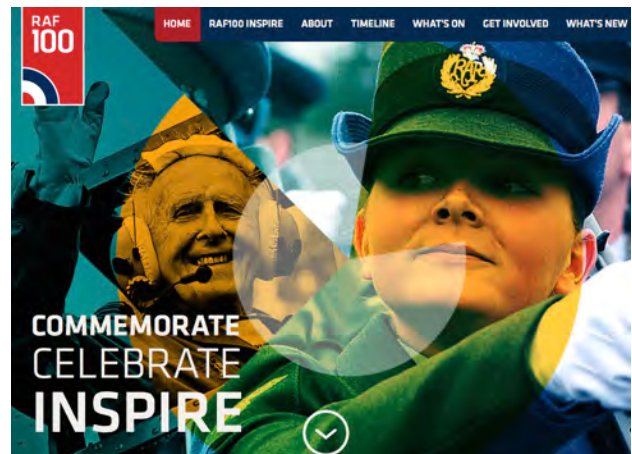
To **Sandy Lowe** for his dedicated help to Ron Doble and family. At the Lunch we presented Sandy with a Bottle of Whisky as a way of saying 'thank you'. An hour later (in typical Sandy style) he had left it on Tom Payne's hospital bedside table, to assist his recovery. You are a star Sandy, you really are.

To **Ian Mason and Rod Finn** for all their hard work with the Guest's Lunch, including all the changes in the last 48 hours (in fact in the last 4 hours)! A smile never left their face, as you can see on Page 3! Please, however, do try and assist with the administration by replying on time and in the event of any changes let them know as soon as possible.

To **Dave Bray**, who will be running the Member's Meeting with Geoff. But a real thank you to him for all the 'Keeping in Touch' he does with members and our widows. He also is always ready to go out of his way to collect members to attend meetings and rarely arrives with an empty car.

Finally to **The Members**. Because it is you who keeps the Chiltern Aircrew Association alive, so thank you and let's keep it going!

## Centenary of The Royal Air Force



The centenary of the Royal Air Force will be with us next year before we know it. I remember serving at RAF Abingdon where the 50th Anniversary was celebrated. I suspect there were more aircraft there that day than are in service today!

So what do we want to celebrate? Funnily enough something that keeps cropping up is why not give a Bomber Command Medal and finally recognise the appalling losses encountered by Bomber Command during WW2. Let us try, write to your MP and the National and Local Press, also the The Controller Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, we have nothing to lose.

As for events happening locally in April 18 there is an RAF 100 Concert at the Royal Albert Hall. In June 18 at the RAF Museum an exhibition entitled 'The Next 100 Years'. Later in July 18 there will be a celebration service at the RAF Chapel of St Clement Danes.

Add to this local services and events nearer to home will no doubt take place and we will endeavour to keep them covered here.



**Programme 2017****Welfare**

Events at 1030 for 1100 at Greenacres unless (\*)  
**2017**

- 7 May 17 Act of Remembrance @ Runnymede  
11.00 am
- 17 May 17 Members Meeting
- 10 Jun 17 DH Moth Club Charity Flying
- 11 Jun 17 Old Warden\*
- 21 Jun 17 Project Propeller (*Gideon Topes*)
- 25 Jun 17 Project Propeller 2017\*  
Gloucester Airport\*

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Tom Payne has moved rooms but is still in Hemel Hospital. He has had visitors and telephone calls and the injury seems to be stabilised and is being X Ray'd regularly to confirm it is knitting well. Cannot believe how well Ron Doble looked at the Lunch and boy was it good to see him tucking into his meal with gusto.

Please do all make an extra effort to come to the members meeting, the floor as usual will be yours and any subject is open for discussion.

**David**

**Membership Secretary**

We will publish a membership update next month, although neither myself or the Secretary will be at the next meeting, as we are off to Spain courtesy of Ryanair and returning from France courtesy of Titan Airways.

**Ian**

**Secretary/Editor**

Thank you all for attending the guest's Lunch. To have such honoured guests was wonderful. The Hon Jackie Assheton was lovely and has send a warm and friendly thank you note for the Lunch, as has her childhood friend of 75 years, Posy Clarke. Mike O'Farrell also thoroughly enjoyed the lunch and has already started talking of a future visit to Lords.

**Graham**

**Chairman**

From the first sip of a free drink from the bar to the final farewell, our Spring buffet lunch was a great success. Guests Jackie, Posy and Mike mixed freely and the 'buzz' was never stilled.

Stephanie of Greenacres served tasty food and the tables were splendidly dressed.

Veterans from Woking joined our own for a barrage of photographers and with his camera, Graham recorded this illustrious gathering.

Our thanks to Graham, Ian and Rod for arranging the event and coping so well with last minute changes.

It was really good to see Ron Doble and Sandy.

**Geoff**