



# NEWSLETTER

Book for our Buffet Lunch on 15th May - see Page 7

## March Meeting



Chris Skivyer gave us a fascinating presentation about the goings on at the bottom of his garden (which bordered onto Radlett Aerodrome).

The aerodrome was opened in 1929 but the official opening by HRH The Duke of Kent was on 7 Jul 30.

The first Test Pilot was Major Cordes who had earlier used the area for a precautionary landing en route to London. It was Cordes who suggested Handley Page should develop Radlett. He was attached to the Royal Flying Corps in 1916 and undertook his flying course in Egypt where he flew Maurice Farman Shorthorns. He returned to England in 1917 to train on the Bristol F2B and then joined 48 Sqn in France where he shot down 2 enemy aircraft and one other which was not confirmed.

After the war he continued flying. He joined the RAF in 1921 and took an instructor's course at the Central Flying School. He served until 1928 when he joined Handley Page as a Test Pilot. His first testing involved him with the Hyderabad. In 1930 Major Cordes took over the Handley Page 42 test programme, a famous airliner which set the standards right up to the outbreak of WW2. At the same time he became involved with the Heyford, the RAF's last large biplane. He made the maiden flight of the Heyford in

1930 and demonstrated the aircraft several times at the air pageants at Hendon.

Cordes became Chief Test Pilot at Handley Page in 1933, he developed the Harrow (First flight 1933) and the Hampden (First flight 1936). The pinnacle of his career must be the development of the Halifax, which he flew its First flight in 1939. The Halifax along with the Lancaster became the mainstay of Bomber Command from 1942 until the end of the war. He retired from active test flying in 1945.

Post war it was to be the Victor Bomber that took the name of Handley Page to the forefront of British aviation. Discussed at some length, much to the delight of Ian Stewart! Later as other companies joined together Sir Frederick Handley Page refused and despite a venture into the civil market with the HP Herald, initially as a 4 engine machine, changing latterly to 2 x Rolls Royce Darts it never fulfilled its full potential, missing out to the Fokker Friendship and the Avro 748.

They also built the HPI 15 a test aircraft for the wing design of Concord. Victor production had started in 1953 but less well known is that HP built 100 Canberras for English Electric. Their last aircraft was the Jetstream which when the company folded in March 1970, production went to Scottish Aviation and then BAe at Prestwick.

A fascinating presentation including many unknown activities within Handley Page. Our thanks to Chris.

## April Meeting

We are off to the Far East on 17 Apr at 11.00 am.



Remember 17th April 2019

'Burma'  
with  
Sherry Scott

**Round the world in luxury in a Catalina....until!**

Thomas Kendall, a retired California industrialist of 44, started a leisurely trip around the world in a PBV amphibian that he had converted into a lavish flying yacht. Kendall's party consisted of his wife Miriam, his children Bob, 24, Susan, 15, Paul, 11, Kathy, 9 and a LIFE photographer



*The party posing in style in Egypt*



*Viewing the Pyramids from the blister window*



*The children playing on the beach just before the attack*

On the 22nd March 1960 they landed at the Strait of Tirana and anchored the aircraft a short distance from the shore to spend the night there.

They heard someone shouting but did not pay any attention. In the afternoon of the following day they were attacked with machine guns and automatic firearms from a headland nearby. The children were able to swim back to the aircraft. Mr Kendall and his secretary were wounded while trying to start the Catalina but moved it about 800 metres, unfortunately it ran aground on a coral reef.

The firing lasted 30 to 40 minutes and no fewer than 300 shots hit the aircraft. The fuel tanks were perforated and 4000 litres of fuel poured from the holes but miraculously the aircraft did not catch fire. The sea was only about 1.5 metres deep and all aboard managed to leave the aircraft and reach the shore.

On the beach they were captured by a group of Bedouins attached to the Saudi Arabian army, who had taken them to be Israeli commandos. They were eventually taken to Jeddah, interrogated and finally set free with the help of the American Ambassador. The Ambassador protested to the Saudi Arabian government but they refused to accept any liability for the attack and consequent loss of the aircraft."



*The Catalina years later*

If like me you did not know that The Strait of Tirana were in the Red Sea, let alone on the Saudi Arabian coast. Check it out on Google Earth and the site is marked. Alas Google have not driven their vehicle down that road yet but the aircraft is still visible from the satellite photo.

There is a wonderful story about the above and another Catalina on this website by Dave O'Malley

<http://www.vintagewings.ca/VintageNews/Stories/tabid/116/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/424/Sweet-Dreams-and-Nightmares.aspx>

**Have you spotted some current BA aircraft in old colour schemes of BOAC and BEA?**

A BOAC Boeing 747-400 G-BYGC retrojet operating as part of the airline's centenary celebrations has been painted in the original BOAC colour scheme and will remain in this scheme until 2023 when it will be retired.



*G-BYGC landing at LHR (BA)*

They have also unveiled its second retrojet, an Airbus A319 (registration G-EUPJ) painted in the "Red Square" livery used by BEA on European services between 1959 and 1968. The aircraft arrived at London Heathrow from Shannon following repainting and entered service on a flight to Manchester. Initial scheduling also dictates that the BEA-liveried A319 will operate to Brussels and Zurich.

BEA's fleet during the "Red Square" era included BAC One-Eleven and Hawker Siddeley Trident jets, and Vickers Viscount and Vanguard turboprops. While the top and bottom of wings in the original scheme were red, that colour has only been applied to the A319's lower wings. The upper surfaces have remained grey to meet current wing-paint reflectivity requirements.



*Airbus G-EUPJ in BEA colours*

British Airways has announced that its next retrojet will be a Boeing 747-400 adorned with the Landor design. The third iteration of the centenary heritage livery released by British Airways is taking to the skies at the end of March. The Boeing 747-400, registration G-BNLY, is currently being painted in Landor colours, which decorated the British Airways fleet from 1984-1997.



The scheme, which is named after the creative agency Landor Associates that designed it, features the British Airways coat of arms with the motto 'To Fly. To Serve.' on the fin, with a stylised section of the Union Flag. The livery also includes the airline's centenary logo, which is shown on all centenary heritage designs. G-BNLY will be re-named "City of Swansea", its name from when it was originally delivered in the Landor livery in 1993.

It has not been officially announced but the rumour mill says the final one will be the "Negus" (no not Arthur but the company who did the design)

At least to celebrate their centenary, it looks as if we will not have to endure those dreadful tail designs we saw on too many BA aircraft!!



*Will this be next?*

So keep your eyes on the sky.

*Photos from BA and Boeing*

**Dakotas over Normandy....  
and over Duxford**

The biggest fleet of DC-3's and C-47's since WWII



*Duxford will be full of DC3/C47's*

Never since the end of the largest ever conflict in the World, World War II, have so many DC-3's and C-47's been assembled in a single location. Over 30 aircraft are signed up for the event. This once in a lifetime event will offer you the opportunity to see them up, close and personal. The aircraft will be prepared for the crossing of the English Channel on the 5th of June 2019 for the 75th commemoration of D-Day.

**Meet the Crews and the Paras**

All crews of all aircraft will be present to show you their Birds. They are there to answer your every question. And under their supervision you can board the aircraft at will. All aircraft that fly on a particular day can also be observed, but will be parked separated from the visitors. Around 300 parachutists that have come from over 20 different nations all over the Globe will be dressed in 40-ties style uniforms. They will train and prepare around the aircraft for the Big Cross-Channel jump that is planned for the afternoon of 5 June 2019, into the original 1944 drop zone 'N' close to Ranville in Normandy, France.

**Static and flying displays**

In the unique setting and the 'old style' atmosphere of Duxford Airfield, the magnificent 'Workhorse of the Sky' is in her natural element. They can be observed in static displays and can be admired in their natural habitat, the air. During the event the DC-3's and C-47's will grace the Duxford and Caen-Carpiquet skies with flying demos, scenic flights and practice parachute jumps.

**Scenic Flights**

Daks over Normandy is organized in two locations. From 2 to 5 June at Duxford Airfield - with flying days on 4 and 5 June - and from 5 to 9 June at Caen-Carpiquet Airport, with open visitor days on 7 and 8 June.

They organise scenic flights for visitors with the original DC-3 Dakota's. In the United Kingdom these wonderful flights will take you over the country side of Suffolk and Norfolk, where during the war the RAF and the US Air Forces had an large number of airfields which can still be seen today. In France the flights will take you over the historic battlefields, the original drop zones and the invasion beaches.

Daks over Normandy will give you the unique chance to see England and Normandy from a whole new perspective and to fly in the very aircraft that 75 years ago made history.

You can book your scenic flight :

Daks over Normandy Ltd.

73 Gladstone Road, Boscombe.

Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6HD,

At approximately 13.40pm on Wednesday 5 June, more than 35 Douglas DC-3/C-47s will take to the skies from Imperial War Museum Duxford. Escorted by a number of World War II fighters, they will set course for Caen-Carpiquet Airport in Normandy. The planned flight will pass Colchester, Southend-on-Sea, Maidstone and Eastbourne before heading out over The Channel. They will pass Le Havre and then the historic UK Drop Zone at Ranville, where the skies will be filled with paratroopers jumping round military parachutes, as they descend in honour of the troops who did the same 75 years ago.



The fleet will then descend on Caen-Carpiquet Airport around 16.45pm (FR time) where they will be on display on 7 and 8 June.

**Programme for Duxford**

**2nd June 1000 - 1800**

All day Arrival of aircraft

**3rd June 1000 - 1800**

Normal opening day at IWM Duxford

22.00 – 23.00

Photo shoot for aviation photographers

**4th June 10.00 - 1800**

Ticketed Event £25 children up to 15 free

10.00 Official Opening

10.30 Take-off Dakota Formation Flight

11.00 – 12.00 Morning Flight programme

\* Dakota Formation Demo

\* Parachute jump Free fall Team

\* Flight Demo C-53 LN-WND

11.30 Landing Dakota Formation Flight

14.00 Take-off Dakota Formation Flight

14.30 – 15.30 Dakota Display

15.30 Landing Dakota Formation Flight

15.30 – 16.30 Practice mass parachute jump with round parachutes

All day Air market, vendors, food trucks

All day Scenic DC-3 Flights

All day Photo flights DC-3's with T-6's as photo a/c

All day Photo flights DC-3's with Dragon Rapide as photo aircraft

**5th June 10.00 - 1800**

Ticketed Event £25 children up to 15 free

10.30 Take-off Dakota Formation Flight

11.00 – 12.00 Morning Flight programme

\* Dakota Formation Demo

\* Parachute jump Free fall Team

\* Flight Demo C-53 LN-WND

11.30 Landing Dakota Formation Flight

All day Air market, vendors, food trucks

Morning Scenic DC-3 Flights

Morning Photo flights DC-3's with T-6's as photo a/c

Morning Photo flights DC-3's with Dragon Rapide as photo aircraft

12.00 – 13.30 Flight preparations and preparations of the Parachutists

13.40 – 14.05 Departure all aircraft to Normandy

\* Subject to change

I hope that has whetted your appetite. For those unable to attend there is always the chance to see the aircraft fly to France but alas you will have to go East. Here is the planned route:



Of course you could plan a trip to France and see similar celebrations at Caen/Carpiquez on 7 June. Of course this may be post Brexit or we may still be waiting for those we voted for to get some guidance!!! Tickets in France are for adults 16+ £15.33, Children 8-15 £7.01 or a family ticket (2 adults and 2 children) £39.42.

Further details are available from Daks over Normandy (address on Page 4) or from their website:

<https://www.daksovernormandy.com/>

**Ed:** If anyone does attend please write a report for the Newsletter, thank you.

**RAF Day at RAF Museum**

**Rod Finn will act as our co-ordinator for this visit, so if you would like to attend, please send him your details. Travel will either be by minibus or by cars, hence Rod needs to know ASAP of those who wish to attend and also whether if we go for the car option, whether you can offer seats or need a lift.**

**RAF DAY - WEDNESDAY 8 MAY 2019**

Dear Mr Finn,

We would like to invite you to our second annual RAF Day at the Royal Air Force Museum London, which celebrates the best of the RAF. This year RAF Day will be taking place on **Wednesday 8 May 2019**. Its **location** will be in **HANGAR 6** which houses our 'RAF in an Age of Uncertainty 1980 – today' exhibition, providing a fitting space for all those invited to share their stories. A map showing this Hangar along with an outline programme are enclosed. RAF Veterans, current serving personnel and their guests are welcome to attend this event. To ensure that we can provide sufficient catering for the day we would ask that you **pre-register**.

Last year the event was a huge success with over 800 people attending. A large percentage was serving RAF Personnel from various bases. It was extremely delightful seeing the young mingling with their older peers. We will once again be inviting the RAF stations to join us, allowing the current RAF generation and former personnel the chance to meet and share stories.

As the event proved to be popular last year, to enable us to ensure we have sufficient car parking spaces for all the visitors **we are asking our guests to confirm how they intend to travel to the Museum and if they have any special access requirements by Friday 12 April 2019**. Parking charges will be suspended on the day.

**To register**, please call **Anji or Odette** on **020 8358 4849** between **10.00 am – 4.00pm** Monday - Friday. If you reach an answer-phone, please leave your name and telephone number and **we will call you back** as soon as possible.

Alternatively, please email us at **groups@rafmuseum.org** with your name, telephone number, and the squadron / service that you were in and the name of your guest (s). **Please also include means of travel, i.e. tube/car**. Full details of the event can be found on our online events calendar at <https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/london/whats-going-on/events/raf-day-private-event/>

If you would like us to delete or amend your details for future mailings, please call us on **0208 358 4849** or email us at **groups@rafmuseum.org**.

We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday 8 May 2019.

Yours sincerely,

*Anji & Odette*

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T: 020 8358 4849 / 020 8205 2266  
groups@rafmuseum.org  
[www.rafmuseum.org](http://www.rafmuseum.org)

# Buffet Lunch

Greenacres Tavern

Wednesday 15th May 2019 at 12 Noon for 12.30

We will be holding our usual Buffet Lunch at Greenacres instead of a usual May Meeting.

Please book below and then post to Ian Mason or if you prefer book by a BACS payment quoting Buffet Lunch as your reference.

Please reserve me ..... tickets for the Buffet Lunch @ £ 10 per person  
Widows @ £ 5 per person

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Postcode ..... Tel No .....

Name of Guests ..... .....

..... .....

Please send your order to:

**Ian Mason**  
**65 Sunnycroft, Downley, High Wycombe, Bucks**  
**HPI3 5UR**  
**Tel: 01494 439845**  
**Email: ian.mason197@ntlworld.com**

**Cheque payable to I M Mason or**  
**BACS, to I M Mason 09-01-28 41009326**

**Programme 2019**

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

- 17 Apr Burma - Sherry Scott
- 15 May Guest's Lunch\*
- 19 Jun More tales from Dennis Swains
- 17 Jul A new slant on Shakleton's Endurance Expedition - John Dudenay
- 21 Aug Luftwaffe in WW2 - Ian Thomson
- 18 Sep Visit TBA\*
- 16 Oct The Tragically Short War of a Topping Fellow - David Hearn
- 20 Nov Visit TBA\*
- 18 Dec Christmas Lunch\*

**Your 2019 Committee**

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**Chairman**

As the new Chairman, I have determined that four of us have flown the Andover. Now that must bring assurance to members and for them to know that the Committee has their best interests at heart. Very interesting presentation this month on Radlett and Handley Page. With members still totalling 35, we are still, rolling or, if elderly, sometimes limping along. Comradeship remains the basis of our existence.

**Des**

**Welfare**

Having spent early March in Ethiopia, luckily avoiding the terrible 737 accident, I am a little behind the times, but I hope to catch up in time to report at the next meeting. It was however great to see Ron Doble at our March meeting.

**David**

**Membership Secretary**

Please pay for your Buffet Lunch tickets to me and then I can pay the equivalent money direct into our ACA account, rather than having to send them to the treasurer. It will be quicker and easier for both myself and Rod, thanks.

**Ian**

**Secretary/Editor**

You will see you have our latest Membership List with this issue. Please remember this is 'Members only' in line with Government regulations. Please guard it and ensure you do not pass it on in any form. Finally please check your own entry for accuracy.

**Graham**

**Programme Secretary**

We now have a full programme with a couple of provisional visits planned for September and November. These will be instead of our normal meeting but full details later when confirmation has been received. We will probably start at Greenacres at noon for lunch and then depart for the venues. We may travel by cars or we may decide on a minibus but either way more details to follow

**Bill**