



NEWSLETTER

Book for Aircrew Lunch

July Meeting

Concorde Boom or Bust? Alan Merriman returned to give us an insight into the introduction of Concorde in service and in particular the trials (and tribulations) of getting the world used to 'sonic bangs'!

Working at Boscombe Down he was given the 'hush hush' job of flying certain routes to assess what the public reaction would be to 'sonic booms'. The first area selected was Dorchester, not too far for the fuel starved Lightning that was to be used to produce the bangs. Little public interest came after these flights.

Next was Bristol, chosen because Concorde was being built at Filton and they thought the town might have some empathy with what was being done. A little more negative reaction came from these trials. It was London however, helped by some typical 'over the top reporting' by the gutter press, saw complaints numbers rise sky high. So much so that the trial was stopped.

Wg Cdr Merriman was put up as the spokesperson to the world's press, whilst MOD and the Government hid away!

Some 90% of the orders were cancelled and Concorde was effectively given to Air France and British Airways. A brilliant project but supersonic flight over land masses was not to be. Thus in the end, the Boom led to the BUST.

As for the Air France crash that finally caused the grounding, that is another story altogether.

Bill Hyland

As many of you will know, sadly Bill lost his battle with the dreaded disease on 21 Jul 15. We will have a full obituary next month.

His funeral will be held at St George's Church, Royal Air Force Halton, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5PG, on Wednesday 5th August 2015 at 1400hrs.

Traveling by road you turn off the Wendover - Tring road at the Hawker Hunter and the church is 200 yards on the right.

Parking can be difficult but no doubt there will be personnel on hand to direct you, but would suggest aim to arrive about 1330 to avoid a rush.

International Bomber Command Centre

The Spire Memorial Unveiling Ceremony will be held on 2nd October 2015. Some of you have already had invitations but due to space limitations on site this event will be by invitation only.

Preference will be given to Bomber Command Veterans, their immediate family and relatives of those lost whilst serving in Bomber Command.

Details are on line at:

<http://internationalbombercommandcentre.com> or from International Bomber Command Centre, 13 Cherry Holt Road, Bourne, Lincs. PE10 9LA



LOTTERY FUNDED

Remember 19th August 2015

"Battle of Britain"

Chris Wren

Greenacres 10.30 for 11.00am

Malcolm Cloult's Story Part 6

Ed: *We left Malcolm discussing Arnhem*

My own comment, without detracting from Lord's commendation, is to compare the many crews lost in Burma (and elsewhere) when facing equally overwhelming attacks by Japanese fighters and monsoon weather with equal determination to get supplies to the ground forces, and with no hope of survival if they came down in the jungle. (In one period of three months before I arrived on 62 Squadron in Akyab eighteen aircraft were lost.)

There would have been a better chance of a successful operation had there not been a German Panzer Division resting not far North of Arnhem. It has been suggested that our Generals ignored the possibility of their presence detected by local intelligence. I blame Montgomery, who was incensed by American over-rule, and wished to make good his image

Parachutes were not carried by Dakota crews except on airborne operations. An additional protection for the pilots was a steel plate beneath their seats. A regular line from the popular TV show "Dad's Army" comes to mind: "They don't like it up 'em!" The parachutes that were used were of the type used by Navigators - ones that clipped on to the chest when needed.

That reminds me of Jimmy Edward's Wireless Operator's amusing account of aircraft down. He himself was standing on his seat, his head out of the escape hatch to avoid the flames, somehow managing to keep a degree of control. The other crew members had bailed out, but the W/Op. was struggling to get his parachute harness on, and as fast he was about the buckle up, it kept falling off, and he never did get it on. Both of them were thrown out from the crash, managing to get clear of the flaming wreck. Jimmy wore a burnt ear after that for all to see in his many comic performances after the war. Incidentally, I knew him before he grew his trade-mark moustache, when he doubled as Station Entertainments Officer

THE ACCIDENT. In extermis

The flight plan for that almost fatal day was to deliver a consignment (could have been all-important toilet rolls) from England to Carpiquet in Normandy and then pick up a load for Brussels recently liberated

As there would be a delay we spent time viewing the desolation of Caen, which came about due to the delay in Allied troops arriving from the Cherbourg D-Day

landings to start a sweep through France. For two weeks Caen was pounded until it could be liberated.

We were delayed getting back to the airfield. This would not have mattered except for our Navigator Jimmy's desire to be back in England for a "date" that night. I must explain that because there was still anti-aircraft danger from a pocket of Germans in Le Havre, which our troops had ignored in the hurry eastward, our instructions were to stay in Brussels if we could not get back across the Channel before dusk. Oh, what you set in motion, Jimmy!

I was a qualified First Pilot, but flying as co-Pilot to my Deputy Flight Commander, who had been in control so far on the leg from England. Now, as we walked back to the aircraft from Control, he asked if I would like to fly the next leg to Brussels.

The practice was for each of the crew to be involved in the removal of the gust locks from the control surfaces. These were external locks largely unique to the Dakota; they prevented the ailerons, rudder and elevators from damage in gusty wind when the aeroplane was parked. I was now responsible and should have made a visual check of the aircraft, and would have seen that an elevator lock had been left in. Even then this would have been apparent had I taken my time and carried out the usual methodical cockpit check while still in dispersal, but being in a hurry I did my check whilst taxiing out to the runway. – A case of familiarity breeding contempt.

Of course, we took off quite normally, but then we went into an uncontrolled steep climb, rapidly losing speed, getting close to wing-stalling speed. All Pilots know that the nose drops when engine thrust is reduced, but I was not even conscious of this when I throttled back – divinely inspired.

Only we two Pilots were injured, the crew escaping. We can attribute this to the oblique angle at which we hit the ground – another miracle because I had no control of the descent. The throttle setting must have been exactly right so that our speed starting levelling us out. One of the crew was a WAAF Nursing Orderly, whose skills were effective in binding my head wound, from which I lost a great deal of blood. In another chapter you will read that we always carried a WAAF Ambulance Nurse in case we were required to bring wounded back from the front. But for her I might well have bled to death – my battle-dress was saturated.

Elsewhere I tell of my spell in a field hospital, and of being fitted with a plaster jacket to deal with a compression fracture of the lumbar vertebrae. (My! How you itch in one!)

At the risk of repeating myself, I crashed once, but that did not involve a fault in the aircraft, only in the Pilot! It had one built-in potential hazard in the form of an external elevator lock, which I had left in place., causing many others to suffer accidents from the same cause, and with total fatalities .

Other Pilots with greater experience than mine committed similar mistakes,, and may explain why a Court of Enquiry into my accident was not proceeded with, nor was there any endorsement in my log book. Another crash involving a jammed elevator happened to a Liberator, causing the death of all on board, including Polish General Sikorski (“Forged in War” page 29).

I was hospitalised in England for a couple of months before being given a crew of my own and entrusted with another million-pound aeroplane! It all added to the delay in my getting to Burma.

After my appendix operation and convalescence I was ready to proceed alone to Akyab. I had a document that enabled me to take whatever transport was available.

My route took me through Lyneham, where I embarked on a Dakota , to Elmas, Castel Benito, Cairo West, Habbanya, (on the Persian Gulf – 100F and 100% humidity!) Sharjah, and Mauripur, then by Sunderland flying boat to Calcutta, on which journey I was taken ill and reported sick. I spent two weeks in hospital in Comilla, thus delaying further my entry into the Japanese war zone, I arrived in Akyab via Chittagong on August 10th. the day on which Atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshimo and Nagasaki.

The terrible death and destruction we caused must be seen in the context of the German and Allied bombings of Cities, and in bringing about the Japanese defeat earlier than would otherwise have been the case, saving many more thousands of fighting men’s lives on both sides. More than that, the cruel treatment of prisoners in the hands of brutal Japanese guards was brought to an end. Retribution never sounded so good.

It was with the expectation of being reunited with my crew that I finally arrived in Akyab (now Sittwe) to join my new Squadron. Alas, they had flown with another Skipper and been killed, together with two Despatchers, crashing in the Bay of Bengal after a brief “Mayday” signal. These two guys had survived in Bomber Command in England, one of them being

decorated with the DFM, and were now filling in time before demobilisation.

What a blow for their families to receive those dreaded war-time telegrams.. Imagine my own Mother’s reaction to receiving one. Hers, thank God, was to tell that I was only “seriously ill”. In the three months period during which I was delayed 18 aircraft were lost. A letter was received from the AOC 232 Group expressing his dismay at the number of casualties incurred by the Transport Squadrons operating from Akyab ... in comparison with those of the American Squadrons.. Instructions are therefore that crews, and especially new crews, are not to adopt a do- or- die attitude when flying in bad weather. (Hitherto they had felt obliged to carry on). However, he added, the Americans were based in Chittagong, a comparatively fair weather area.

I flew only three familiarisation missions with another Pilot, and then the Japanese capitulated! The Squadron then moved South to Mingaladon Airport, Rangoon (now renamed Yangon) where I had to “scratch around” for a new crew and erect my own tent. There were three “odd bods” whose skippers had been repatriated. One, a Navigator, filling in time in the flight office before his own return to England said he was not at all keen on facing the dangers of flying in that area, any more but he “caved in” eventually.

Yes, there were still inherent dangers from monsoon-type weather, and from continued supply work in difficult mountainous situations, even if Japanese Fighters were no longer a menace. But now it was permissible to abort Missions if unnecessarily potential danger was involved, and I did so on a couple of occasions with my crew’s approval. I certainly held the weather there in great respect.

A Wireless Operator seconded from the Royal Australia Air Force was a valuable addition, as was a co-Pilot who had experience as a Fitter at Southampton Airport before enlisting, so his technical expertise was put to good use, as I’ll explain:

Arriving at the dispersal area at Bangkok airport, the Thai ground marshaller drove my tail into a pile of rocks. It’s replacement took a few days, in which my crew enjoyed trips into the City. I stayed behind with my “baby”. I was asked by a “Guardian” newspaper reporter for a lift, discovering that I was proceeding to Saiigon (now Ho Che Min City). I saw his headline later, “50ft. over Siam Hell Track”!

(continued next month)

Guy Buckingham Part 7

During my stay at Lydd I was under the command of the Canadian Army, known as 'Blue Group', we only had to answer to them for discipline etc. There was a 12 mile exclusion zone around the south coast in preparation for the invasion; if we were stopped in the area by Military Police, the only thing we were allowed to tell them was that we were from blue group, this caused some heated exchanges with the MP's as on some occasions we looked a bit 'scruffy', however they had to let us go once they had checked us out. I did not stay with this unit very long.

I was then posted to Melksham as an instructor on Mk14 bombsights and auto-pilots, nicknamed 'George'. I was useless as an instructor; this was deliberate as I had no desire to work in training command, so I did my worst and a few weeks later was once again posted, this time to 77 Sqn at Pocklington in Yorkshire on Halifax bombers of 4 Group.

The early planes were powered by Merlin engines, they had many problems with the rudders and aircraft crashed as a result. It is not known how many were lost as a direct result of this fault, but after much testing at Boscombe Down, a new design of rudder was fitted. After many modifications to the airframe, gun turrets, engines etc. the Mk11 had Hercules engines, mid upper turrets, Vickers Ks at the nose instead of turrets, a new radar (H25) underneath and became a much better plane.

The planes had a blind spot underneath, so the squadron did a local mod to take care of this. The H25 units were removed, then perspex covers under the belly had the rear half cut off. A rough bracket was made up and a .5 machine gun was fitted to fire backwards and down. I never heard if it was effective! Many years later in Haddenham I met fellow ACA member Ted Matthews, we got talking and he mentioned 77 Sqn. I asked if he remembered the downward pointing gun, which was fitted into the blister? He informed me that not only did he remember it vividly but he was the 'mug' that had to operate the thing! He had already completed his tour of duty but he volunteered out of boredom.

On my day off I used to go shooting on Lord Halifax's estate which joined the airfield, there was always plenty of rabbits and pheasants about. One day whilst I was out shooting, some Spitfires flew low overhead, one suddenly dived down and crashed 100 yds from me, I never knew the cause. The crash crew cleared up the

site but a week later I found some body parts in a hedge, just yards away from the crash site.

It was a very busy time there as the Halifax aircraft were out two or three times a week.

We were moved up the road to Elvington, where we had to train a Free French squadron, who had taken over our old planes. They were hopeless, they crashed, they got lost, they got bogged down, one came back with a 1000 lb bomb hung up, and when he tried to land blew himself and the aircraft to bits! We were glad when we handed over to them and moved to Full Sutton. Whilst at Elvington we had an LAC called Bill Franks, he had a wicked sense of humour and enjoyed nothing more than winding up the French. Every so often he would rush into the workshop shouting, jumping up and down, throwing his hat on the floor and waving his arms about, the French would instantly fly into a panic - running everywhere, joining in the shouting - all about nothing. It was entertaining to us, once we had got used to Bill, but the French never learned, they fell for it every time!



Low pass over Full Sutton

Full Sutton had all new planes and it was quite a busy time. I took part in 'test flights', practice bombing, calibrating the Mk14 bombsights, adjusting 'George' to get everything right. 'George' the autopilot was a constant headache. 99% of the time the fault lay with the pilot, time after time it was placed unserviceable, which meant checking it and putting it right, once this was done, out it went over Bridlington Bay for an airtest, I quite enjoyed that part.

During straight and level flight, 'George' could be cut in and everything would be ok, but the pilots would tend to engage it, with the aircraft out of trim and of course

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'George' would be all over the place. After a bit of instruction to the pilot, everything would be fine, until the next time!

It was during my time at Full Sutton that I met and married my first wife Joan. She was the MO's Secretary, we called her the 'Pox Doctors Clerk'. We were married in the village church at Full Sutton on 10 Oct 44, we had a few friends and the WAAF CO as witnesses. We both wore our uniforms, as was the norm during wartime. We lived in rooms in a nearby farmhouse.

A few more raids and the War was finally over in Europe. After it ended celebrations at the squadron went on for quite a while. It was decided that those who wished to see the results of the bombings could go for a trip over all the targets. I went on several of these flying over Berlin, Kiel, Hamburg, Magdeburg, Cologne, Krefeld and many others.



Hamburg damaged beyond recognition

Seeing these places from the air was unbelievable, the damage was complete, especially Hamburg and Cologne; just miles and miles of rubble and bricks, with boats sunk in the harbour.

A few weeks after this I was posted to Brize Norton, this suited me fine as my parents had a jewelers shop in Witney, so I used to drive home every night. There was not much to do at Brize Norton when I first arrived but then after a few days, aircraft started to arrive from all over Europe to be scrapped. We had all sorts German and British, Wellingtons, Beauforts, Hurricanes, FW 190's, Junkers, Harvards, DC 3's and even some jets. The aircraft were examined by so called 'experts' and then flown to Little Rissington, where most were burnt or cut up. It really was a sad sight, but nobody wanted them, they had

served their purpose. Planes that had cost thousands of pounds, thousands of maintenance hours and thousands of lives, were now being sold to scrap metal merchants for a few pounds. If somebody had only had the foresight to store a few of them, they would now be priceless.

During my stay at Brize Norton I was put up for a Commission as an Engineering Officer, I passed all the interviews and was told that I would be notified in due course, however by the time it arrived to sign up, I had decided to leave the RAF and go back to the family business.

When my last day arrived, I reported to Cardington, collected my 'demob suit', hat and raincoat. I finally left the RAF on 9 Apr 46 with 3 stripes, five medals and £14. I had served six and a half years.

At first I was glad it was all over and to be in civvies once again, but I soon found out that settling down in 'civvy street' was very hard. I had a business to go to, but I was very restless, with hindsight perhaps I should have accepted that commission!

To be concluded next month

30th International Moth Rally
Woburn Abbey
Saturday 15 August
 and
Sunday 16 August
 (Gates open 10.00am on both days)
 For full details and online booking go to:
www.mothsatwoburn.co.uk

Flying Display on Sunday.
 Trade stands and exhibition.
 Gathering of vintage, historic and classic vehicles.
 Public admission to the aircraft park on both days.
 Reduced rate for advance purchase tickets.

Tickets available on the gate. Admission to Club Enclosure on production of ACA Membership Card courtesy of Stuart McKay

How do pilots find their way?

Ed: Found this on the internet and am grateful for permission to publish by the author Ken Hoke

Navigation is a really broad subject. Different aircraft have different types of equipment to help pilots find their way. Let us stick with a generic airliner setup.

Point-A to Point-B starts with a map ([or an iPad](#))



Enroute Charts – Maps of the sky

Enroute charts are the road maps of the sky. They display airways that connect any two places you need to go. Airways are designed to keep air traffic organized and separated.

An airline dispatcher uses a computer to help analyze the weather and winds between the origin and destination. He or she then determines the most economic route using the airway system. For U.S. flights, this requested route is electronically sent to an FAA Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) that analyzes the proposed route and compares it to thousands of other requests as well as traffic currently in the air. The local Air Traffic Control (ATC) facility at the departure airport will tell the pilots just prior to takeoff if the requested route is okay (it usually is) or if any changes need to be made due to traffic congestion or weather.



Here’s a really simple route. We’re flying from Memphis, Tennessee (KMEM) to Knoxville (KTYS). The symbols MEM, BNA, and VXV are navigation radio aids (NavAids) at Memphis, Nashville and Knoxville. The lines connecting the NavAids are the airways we will be using: J42 and J46. The “J” in J42 stands for

“Jet.” Jet airways are high altitude routes for, umm, jets. Our requested route in fancy ATC notation is MEM-J42-BNA-J46-VXV. Simple!

Now that we have our route, we need to convince the airplane to follow it!

The Flight Management System or “The Box”



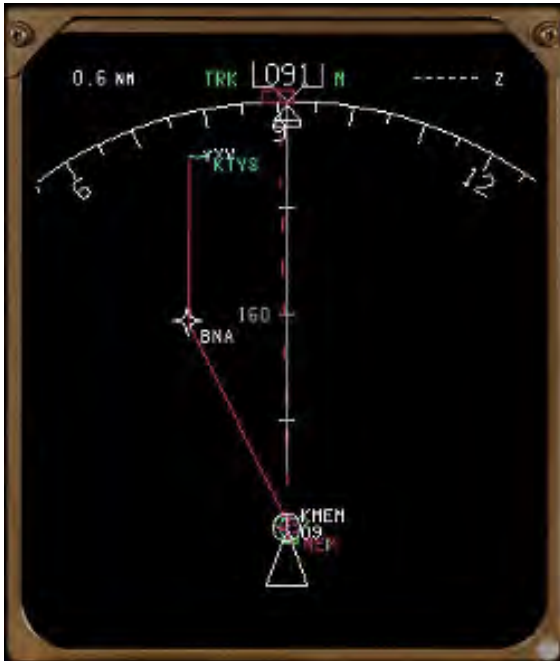
Honeywell Pegasus FMS

Onboard just about every airliner built since the early 1980’s is a box called the “Flight Management System” or FMS. Pilots call it simply “The Box.” The FMS is the ship’s navigation brain. When your captain comes over the PA in his captainly swagger and states “The computer shows us landing in Dallas in 43 minutes,” he’s not pulling that number out of his... head. He’s getting that time from “the box”.

The box uses several sensors to keep track of the aircraft’s position. Inertial reference system data, radio navigation signals, and on newer boxes, GPS position are all fed into the FMS to increase accuracy. The most important part of the box is it’s large database of the airports, navigation aids, and airways necessary for the route. Almost everything that’s displayed on the enroute chart above is in the box’s database.

The Boeing 767 uses an FMS like the one pictured above. Take a look at the flight plan that’s been loaded into the box, it’s the same flight that I high-

-lighted on the map; MEM-J42-BNA-J46-VXV. During our preflight prep, we type the route of flight into the box. In many cases, routes are preprogrammed (or “canned”) and we can type a short route code to retrieve them; this saves us a bunch of typing on long routes.



Electronic Horizontal Situation Indicator-EHSI

Enough preflight, it's time to fly!

Now that our route to Knoxville is in the box, it will be displayed on our Horizontal Situation Indicator screen. This screen shows the route as a solid magenta line (J42 and J46). The big triangle at the bottom is our airplane. Sure enough, you can see the navigation aids we loaded earlier; MEM, BNA, and VXV just offscreen at the top.

After takeoff from Memphis, air traffic control might direct us to “intercept J42.” This means “hop on the magenta line and head toward BNA.” Our autopilot will follow the magenta line with pinpoint accuracy.

Other ways we stumble around the skies

During most of a flight, it's up to the pilots and our FMS to guide the aircraft along the assigned route. But what if another airplane comes cruising along in our direction? What if his magenta line happens to cross our magenta line at the same time and same altitude?

Air Traffic Control

This is where Air Traffic Control (ATC) helps us out. The primary job of ATC is “aircraft separation”. Using radar displays and sophisticated computers, controllers have the big picture of all the

airplanes in their assigned sector. They can spot a potential conflict while aircraft are still hundreds of miles apart. When they see a problem, they will contact one or both aircraft and instruct the pilots to change course or altitude to avoid the conflict. This usually happens a few times every flight; it's very routine. As a passenger, there's no need to worry – relax and enjoy your peanuts and coffee; you paid good money for them!



Inside Heathrow ATC Tower

Another job of ATC is to help airplanes transition from the cruise phase of flight to landing. Pilots have everything they need on charts and the FMC to do this on their own; but around big cities, there are too many airplanes speeding toward the airport at the same time. To safely separate and space the airplanes to land on the runway, controllers will watch all the planes on their radar display and instruct pilots to change their speed and direction, guiding them with voice instructions onto final approach. This process is called “vectoring”. Once we land, a similar process happens on the ground while taxiing to the gate. A ground controller in the tower watches the busy taxiways and acts as a traffic cop to keep things moving in an orderly fashion.

Of course, there's more involved in flying a jet from New York to Los Angeles than discussed here. However, you now know more about airplane navigation than most of the folks at your next cocktail party. (Unless you invite a bunch of pilots; which is a bad idea because they'll yap on-and-on all night about airplanes!) *Ken Hoke*

Ed: *Well that makes a change from taking a Lancaster across the North Sea. Thought you would like an insight as to how modern aircraft navigate. There are more Blogs on Ken's website :*

<http://aerosavvy.com/pilots-navigate>

Programme 2015

Events at 1030 for 1100 at Greenacres unless (*)

15/16 Aug International Moth Rally at Woburn*

19 Aug Battle of Britain - Chris Wren

16 Sep The History of Royal Flying - Graham Laurie

25 Sep Aircrew Lunch, Abingdon*

21 Oct Flying Canberra's - Danny Bonwit

18 Nov TBN

16 Dec Christmas Lunch*

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Welfare

When I took over from Bill Hyland, I like all of you hoped that he would soon be fit enough to take over the reigns again. Alas it was not to be and despite a gritty fight Bill eventually was taken from us. He worked tirelessly on our behalf and will be sorely missed. Our thoughts go to Ann and the family

David

Membership Secretary

No real news this month other than to say what a sad loss Bill Hyland is to all of us but particularly to the committee, for whom he worked so hard.

Gerry

Secretary/Editor

Please note the funeral details for Bill on Page 1. I hope we can give him a good send off. He was a fine Navigator, a superb Air Traffic Controller and a very good friend.

At the back of this issue you will find details of the 'Aircrew Lunch' on Friday 25 September at the usual venue of The Black Horse at Abingdon. We hope to meet with old friends from Oxford and Woking as well as aircrew from many other sources.

Please book early as we hope have an increase in numbers this year.

Graham

Programme Secretary

You will see the programme has a couple of changes. After Chris Wren talks on the ""Battle of Britain', I have persuaded a speaker who we have not heard from for a while, Graham Laurie will tell us about 'The History of Royal Flying'. In October Danny Bonwit will give a presentation on 'Flying the Canberra'.

If you have any ideas for speakers please do let me know.

Bill