



NEWSLETTER

Visit to deHavilland Museum in September (P6)

July Meeting

We had a last minute change to our programme this month as sadly John Dudenay had to cry off at the last minute. We were able, however to continue the Antarctic theme, not with Shackleton but with Lt Henry 'Birdie' Bowers, who passed away with Captain Scott in the tent, on or about 29 March 1912. Our speaker was none other than Jo Laurie who told us about 'My cousin Henry, from Ardbeg to Antarctica'.

Birdie Bowers father was a renowned sailing ship Captain and although Birdie's mother did not want him to follow in his late father's footsteps, she found a big picture of a sailing vessel in his bedroom one day and realised she had lost the battle. After discussing the family history and Henry's early training on HMS Worcester, followed by him being commissioned into the Royal Indian Marine Service, Jo explained how he came to be selected for the Antarctic trip by Captain Scott, mainly due to his former Captain on HMS Worcester and Scott's friend Sir Clements Markham.

Jo features some very poignant descriptions from Birdie's sister May from her diary for 1910, together with some excellent photos of the journey to the Pole. The party was only 150 miles from the Pole when Scott made the decision to add Bowers to the Pole Party, due to his performance up to that time. Of course the story of them arriving at the Pole is well known, only to find Roald Amundsen had reached there first. Jo stressed that it was never planned as a race but Scott's aim was to reach the Pole but also carry out a great deal of scientific research on the way.



Was this the first 'selfie'? Taken by Bowers with string round his right boot

The tragic events of their return from the pole, started by losing Taff Evans on the Beardmore Glacier and this was then followed by Captain Oates walking out of the tent with the immortal words "I may be some time".

Jo discussed the strength and fitness of the tent occupants and delivered her opinions on what really happened. Jo then sat down to a big ovation and a number of interesting questions. Certainly a presentation to remember.

Continuing the Antarctic theme now go to Page 2 for details of the aviation department of The British Antarctic Survey.

August Meeting

Join us for a talk on the Luftwaffe by Ian Thomson at 1030 for 1100 on Wednesday 21st August.



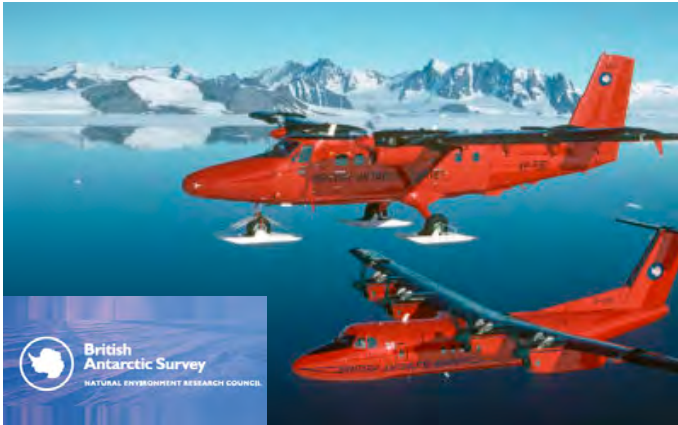
Remember 21st August 2019

The Luftwaffe

with Ian Thomson

Greenacres 1030 for 1100

The British Antarctic Survey Aircraft



BAS Twin Otter and Dash 7



Dash 7 lands at Sky-Blu base

BAS and its predecessors have been using aircraft in the Antarctic for more than 50 years. In the 1940s, sea-planes were used to carry out aerial surveys from ships. Other planes used in the past have been the single-engined de Havilland Otter and Beaver aircraft. BAS originally used the same air base as Antarctic aviation pioneer, George Wilkins, on Deception Island, until a volcanic eruption forced its closure in 1969. The main facility was then transferred to Adelaide Island – the current site of Rothera Research Station.

During the Antarctic summer, the Dash-7 makes regular flights to and from the Falklands and Punta Arenas, Chile. The 1,900km journey can be completed in five hours with up to 16 passengers or 2,000kg of cargo on board. The introduction of the aircraft as an intercontinental link allows some BAS scientists to make relatively short trips for summer fieldwork, rather than spending the entire season south if they were to travel by ship. It has also provided a regular link for spares, urgent supplies and fresh food as well as freeing up the two BAS ships, enabling them to spend more time at sea on scientific cruises.

Because the Dash-7 can land on ice runways, it is a regular visitor to the field station at Sky-Blu. Thanks to its greater capacity over the Twin Otters, the Dash-7 has significantly reduced the number of flights required to ferry fuel and supplies.

The aircraft has modifications to allow surveying equipment to be fitted. This includes magnetometer pods on the wing-tips enabling the aircraft to be used for aerial studies, remote sensing work or aerial surveying.

Pilot positions within BAS are normally, but not exclusively, open ended contracts. Benefits include a pension scheme, loss of licence insurance, free food and accommodation while in Antarctica. Attendance will be required in June for Pilot Training.

Polar pilots spend a considerable amount of time away from the comfort of our research stations, camping in sub-zero temperatures in remote areas often with only one other person for company. During the Antarctic season (start of October to the end of March) pilots are either ferrying the aircraft to/from Antarctica or supporting field research teams in Antarctica. Pilots' duties include all aspects of the aircraft operation except maintenance. This means loading, cleaning and refuelling aircraft as well as other housekeeping tasks around the research station.

Twin Otter aircraft are operated by single crew with at least one other person with the pilot at all times. This can be a member of the science or support teams. A two-pilot crew flies the Dash-7 aircraft.

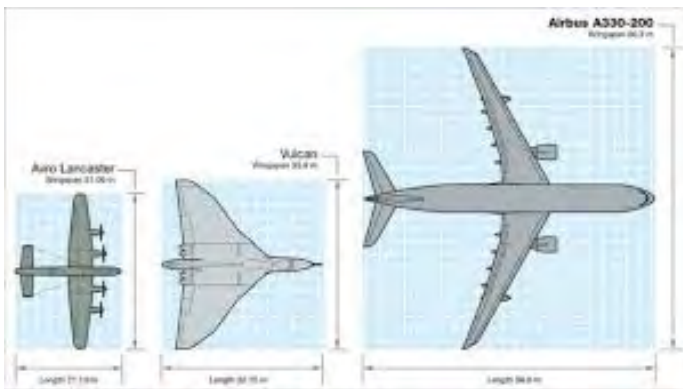
The requirement is a minimum of 2500 hrs total time and this can include some rotary time if relevant. Twin Otter ratings, ski time or any other specific flying experience is not required. Pilots must hold a UK, JAA/EASA, FAA or Canadian licence. These are accepted by the regulatory authorities who will issue a licence validation on completion of training.

Pilots are expected to have good leadership skills, be comfortable and self-reliant in a remote environment, and play an active role in ensuring that field camps are run efficiently and safely.

The A330 Voyager

During July I was invited to the RAF/Air Tanker facility at RAF Brize Norton, the home of No 10 Squadron and No 101 Squadrons.

Air Tanker won the contract to supply the Multi Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) for the Royal Air Force. It is a company formed by Airbus, Cobham, Rolls Royce and Thales. The largest aircraft in the RAF's fleet, Voyager is a derivative of the proven Airbus A330-200 passenger aircraft.



The largest a/c in the RAF

This established in-production civilian model is converted by Airbus Military into its military Multi Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) aircraft configuration, to a specification set by the RAF and the Ministry of Defence.

It is the only aircraft currently certified to simultaneously perform three different types of missions: air-to-air refuelling (tanker role), passenger and/or freight transport, and/or medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), the MRTT as Voyager, delivers new strategic capability to the RAF.

RAF Voyager is able to carry 111 tonnes of fuel without the requirement for additional fuel tanks which leave its' cargo hold and passenger capacity unchecked. In its configuration for the RAF this means that it can carry 291 passengers in a single class, with a roomy 34inch pitch. Voyager's cargo hold can accommodate eight NATO pallets or a payload of 43 tonnes.

On 30 September 2016, AirTanker reached the final establishment phase milestone in the Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft (FSTA) programme with the achievement of Full Service Date on time and on budget delivering all 14 Aircraft.

As of February 2019 the AirTanker fleet comprises the following:

ZZ330	G-VYGA	RAF	291
ZZ331	G-VYGB	RAF	291
ZZ332	G-VYGC	RAF	291
ZZ333	G-VYGD	RAF	291
ZZ334	G-VYGE	RAF	291
ZZ335	G-VYGF	RAF	291
ZZ336	G-VYGG	RAF	291
ZZ337	G-VYGH	RAF	58 VIP seats + 158
ZZ338	G-VYGI	RAF	291
ZZ339	G-VYGJ	AirTanker for RAF	
ZZ340*	G-VY GK	Condor	320 Economy
ZZ341*	G-VYGL	jet2.com	327 economy
ZZ342*	G-VYGM	jet2.com	327 economy
ZZ343	G-VYGN	RAF	291

* Flies under civil reg'n whilst out on lease



Economy seating for 291 in 2-4-2 format

Thus Air Tanker is an airline and 3 of the aircraft could be commandeered for the RAF at very short notice but are currently being used by Jet 2 and Condor. AirTanker also provides twice-weekly flights from RAF Brize Norton to RAF Mount Pleasant on the Falkland Islands mainly for military personnel, though fare-paying passengers are also allowed to travel.



The uncluttered Voyager Cockpit



The Mission Systems Operator (MSO) controls the Air to Air Refuelling from his station behind the co-pilot

One aircraft has been fitted with a VIP fit with reduced economy seating. It has already been used for Royal Flights and regularly flies the Prime Minister on long range trips. When not in use for VIP duties it is often fully fuelled and participates in the 24 hour standby on Quick Reaction Alert (QRA)



The VIP fit of 58, allows for 158 Economy seats



Voyager in its RAF and MOD specification, has capacity to take up to 40 stretchers, while it can also be reconfigured to accommodate a three-patient critical care capability.

In this 40 stretcher front cabin configuration, there are 20 seats alongside the stretchers for those caring for the patients and a further 100 seat passenger capacity in the rear cabin to support general passenger movements.

This delivers new flexibility to the RAF and UK Armed Forces in operations in either a military or humanitarian capacity.

RAF Voyager's critical care set-up gives medical care teams unparalleled access to the patient. Connection points in its bulkheads mean that life-saving medical equipment can be connected and plugged in above stretchers, allowing free movement either side unrestricted by wires and cabling.

When not in the full medical fit 291 seat general transport set-up, Voyager can be rapidly switched to accommodate a two stretcher passenger configuration facilitating short-notice movement of injured personnel.



G-VYGL one of the aircraft out on lease

A flexible fleet doing an excellent job and a joint venture that has proved a great success. All the operations are controlled from Voyager Ops at Brize Norton, both military and civil.

Graham

Dangerous or Exciting Airfields?

Chitral Airport (IATA: CJL, ICAO: OPCH) is a small domestic airport situated 2 NM (3.7 km) north of the city centre of Chitral, in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan.



Chitral Airport

Elevation 4921 ft

Runway 02/20 Length 5741 ft Asphalt

So there are the details and you might ask what is dangerous or exciting getting into the airport. Photographs can be a little confusing, so if I tell you this picture was taken from the ground, then perhaps you can see where I am coming from. Now let me show you a view from the north:



The departure end with the valley 45 dogs to the left

So here we have a tricky departure but what about the landing from the other end. It starts by flying over the Lowari Pass (10,230 ft) at a minimum before turning right and dropping into a valley. After a few miles the

valley splits into two and the left fork leads to Chitral. The backdrop to Chitral is the western Himalaya with Mount Tirich Mir (25,230 ft). On approaching the airfield it is difficult to spot, although the mountains behind are not



The airfield is just the other side of the river

So now you see the 45 degree turn required on finals, avoiding the hills to the left where the first photo was taken from.

Airline services started in 1962 with a DC3. This was replaced by Fokker F27's and nowadays Pakistan International Airways (PIA) operate ATR 42 and 72's. They fly from Peshawar and Islamabad once a week on Fridays.

I have flown into Chitral on a number of occasions, the first in early 1970 with an Andover CMk1 of No 84 Stn to rescue an injured climber. My other trips have been with the Andover CMk2 and BAe 146, including a demonstration flight for PIA with BAe sales staff on board. In those days the Fokker F27 was operating the service and in the event of poor visibility it had to overshoot at 2 miles from touchdown and execute a sharp turn to the right. The 146 could reach the threshold before out climbing the immediate hills to the left and then carry out a normal turn to the right. Not something I would like to do in poor weather I must admit. In fact the last time I visited Chitral was to take in HRH The Princess of Wales from Peshawar. We were scheduled to arrive at 1300 but the actual was low cloud but forecast to clear by 1400. We delayed our departure and the weather cleared as we approached. This meant a shortened programme of events but HRH promised to be back in time for us to take off and climb out in daylight, because it is always Visual Flight Rules in and out, the airfield has no landing aids whatsoever.

CHILTERN AIRCREW ASSOCIATION

This is the view that greeted HRH The Princess of Wales on landing at Chitral



BAe 146 of The Queen's Flight at Chitral

In those days PIA operated a daily flight from Islamabad but today this has all changed. Travel to Chitral from Peshawar and Islamabad between November and late May was restricted to Air Travel as the Lowari Pass was closed to vehicles by snow. In June 2017 a road tunnel under the pass was opened to give all year access to the Chitral valley, albeit with great care, so nowadays PIA fly only on Fridays with holiday traffic.

An exciting airfield to visit and one which I have very fond memories. On my first royal tour we did a recce flight into Chitral with a PIA Captain on our jump seat. I had asked our High Commission to organise an F27 Captain for us, but was a little surprised to hear he was a current Boeing 707 Captain! When I met him, all became clear, he was born and bred in Chitral, and what he did not know about operating in and out was not worth knowing!



AUGUST 2019

I will always remember Chitral for is for the wonderful crew photo, HRH did arrive back in time for a daylight departure, even 5 minutes early so this photo could be taken. The 707 Captain who advised me in those early days, now runs the Hindu Heights Hotel in Chitral, overlooking the airfield. I would love to take my wife to visit him, but alas Chitral is very close to the Afghan border and the Foreign Office does not recommend travel to the area.

Visit to de Havilland Aircraft Museum



We are visiting The de Havilland Museum instead of our regular meeting on Wednesday 18 September. We will meet at Greenacres for lunch at 12 Noon and plan to leave for the Museum at 1315. We hope to run the visit by giving lifts there and back, so we are keen to know whether or not you plan to attend? Please let Graham Laurie know if you are coming (details on Page 8).

There is a charge for entry but we are hoping to waive this by using our funds to subsidise or even pay the full amount. The party can consist of up to 20 people, so please get your names into Graham as it will be first come, first served. **Closing Date 21 Aug 19**

Could you please also give me the registration/vehicle type/ colour so that we can advise the Museum of the number.

A final reminder that this visit is instead of our normal meeting, so please meet at 12 Noon and not 1030 as usual. Later in November we hope to visit the Shuttleworth Collection at Old Warden and more details will follow in a later edition of the Newsletter.

Aircrew Lunch
Friday 27 September 2019
12Noon for 1230

We are holding another “Aircrew Lunch” at The Black Horse, Faringdon Road, Gozzards Ford, Abingdon OX13 6JH. This was for many years, for those of you with long memories the “ACA Quad Lunch” when Chiltern, Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester Branches joined together. It has now developed, with the demise of other branches, into a very friendly get together, with ex aircrew and their partners from around the local area. Having said that, it is also a great way of thanking friends or introducing them to our motley band!

MENU

Home Cooked Beef Lasagne served with garlic bread and side salad. (V option available)

Traditional hand beer-battered Cod served with crispy chunky chips, mushy peas and our home-made tartare sauce. (GF option available)

Trio of Cumberland Sausages served on a bed of creamy mashed potato, gravy and fresh vegetables. (GFV option available)

Wholesale Scampi and crispy chunky chips served with either peas or salad and our home-made tartare sauce.

Home-made Fish Pie - Mix of cod, smoked haddock, salmon, and prawns, in a creamy dill sauce and topped with cheesy mash and fresh vegetables on the side.

Gammon and crispy chunky chips served with garden peas topped with either a fried egg or pineapple.

Broadway Steak Burger

6oz Burger with Burger Relish, tomato, red onion, slices of gherkin, Taw Valley Cheddar cheese, smoked back bacon, topped with our Burger Sauce and served on a toasted rustic Brioche Bun. All paired with crispy chunky chips, homemade slaw and homemade battered onion rings. (Supplied by Broadway Butchers, Didcot)

Broadway Lamb and Mint Burger

6oz Burger with mint mayo, tomato, red onion and salad served on a toasted rustic Brioche Bun. All paired with crispy chunky chips, homemade slaw and homemade battered onion rings (Supplied by Broadway Butchers, Didcot)

Chicken Breast Burger

Our butterflied chicken breast served with BBQ sauce, tomato, red onion, salad and Hellman's mayo served on a toasted rustic Brioche Bun. All paired

with crispy chunky chips, homemade slaw, corn on the cob and homemade battered onion rings.

Vegetarian Burger

Vegetarian Quarter Pounder Burger with Burger Relish, tomato, onion, salad and a Portabello mushroom served on a toasted rustic Brioche Bun. All paired with sweet potato fries, our homemade slaw and homemade battered onion rings.

Desserts

Ice Cream Sundae – choose from vanilla, chocolate or strawberry ice cream.

Homemade Sticky Toffee Pudding served with home-made toffee sauce. Served with cream, custard or ice cream.

Blackcurrant and Prosecco Cheesecake.

Alabama Chocolate Fudge served with double cream or ice-cream. GF

Chocolate brownie served with chocolate sauce and mint choc chip ice cream. GF

Apple crumble served with a jug of custard.

“Memories of School Days” - Jam sponge or Spotted Dick, served with custard

Cheeseboard with Taw Valley Mature Cheddar, French Brie and Tuxford and Tebbutt Stilton served with grapes, chutney, crackers and butter. GF available

Tea or Coffee

Cost £25

Please send Menu Choice and cheque payable to “The Black Horse” to Graham Laurie **by 18 September**, to:

19 High Street, Prestwood, Great Missenden, Bucks HP16 9EE

Programme 2019

Events at 1030 for 1100 at Greenacres unless (*)

- 21 Aug Luftwaffe in WW2 - Ian Thomson
- 18 Sep Visit to deHavilland Museum * 12 Noon @ Greenacres
- 16 Oct The Tragically Short War of a Topping Fellow - David Hearn
- 20 Nov Visit TBA*
- 18 Dec Christmas Lunch*

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Chairman

The talk volunteered at very short notice by our own Jo Laurie on her relative Henry Bowers, the well known explorer who accompanied Captain Scott on the Antarctic Expedition was outstanding being both very interesting and clear. You could have heard a pin drop during the talk with the rapt attention of the audience. Thank you Jo!

I now have a new left knee getting better all the time.

Our good wishes are with Geoff Hulett, our long standing Chairman and President, and Burma Star veteran who has recently been in hospital.

Welfare

I have been ringing around and glad to see our Chairman is quickly getting back to 'full power' and also that Geoff is out of hospital. He cannot drive but we are going to do our best to get him lifts to meetings. Also spoke to Ron Doble who sounded stronger than the last time we spoke and we hope to see him at our next meeting.

David

Secretary/Editor

Please support our Aircrew Lunch, although some distance the meal and company should be worth it. Also please remember I need to know if you plan to join us for the September visit to the DeHavilland Museum by the date of the August meeting meeting

Graham

President

'Tis said the roads will be safer now that I no longer drive, comments which prompted me to reflect on my record over the past 70 years as a motorist.

Over 40 years of 'business 'motoring I averaged 25,000 miles per year plus private mileage during which time I had two insurance claims, one was a minor brush with another car in High Holborn, the other when hit by a truck when stationary.

All this plus a clean licence shows how lucky I have been! Safe driving.

Geoff