



NEWSLETTER

Last chance to book Xmas Lunch - Details P8



Christmas Greetings from your Chairman and Committee

(Cartoon courtesy of Jo Laurie and available as a card from the RAF Benevolent Fund)

**Christmas Lunch 12 December 2012
at 1200 Noon for 1230**

A week earlier than usual, we will gather at Gre-nacres Tavern for our Christmas Lunch, please order your tickets from Gerry Sealy-Bell as soon as possible as we have to give the numbers to the caterers on Weds 5 December. Why not think about bringing a friend. Full details on Page 8, so let Gerry know NOW!

Concorde

What a great presentation by John Hutchinson at the November meeting. It started with his slant on the Concorde crash in Paris, followed by some facts and figures. He followed with some reminiscences including chatting to a female passenger who first flew in 1911 and had also flown with Bleriot himself - All in her 90 years!

See next year's programme on Page 7

Phil Potts

It is sad to report that Phil Potts passed away in Watford General Hospital on Sunday 18th November 2012. Phil was a founder member of our Association Branch and held many Committee appointments over the years.

Phil was trained in Alberta, Canada in April to October 1943, firstly as a pilot (which didn't come off) and then as a navigator on Anson's. On his return to UK he went to OTU at Wymeswold and Castle Donnington and then to Elsham Wolds on Lancaster's.

His 5th Op was to a flying-bomb site in the Pas de Calais.....in daylight! Trips such as this, close to the bomb line were difficult and they had already been accused of bombing our own troops, the Canadians, on a previous Op. So this trip, a precision raid, was by way of penance.

The cloud was 5,000ft not 10,000ft as forecast, the fighter escort did not show and as Phil said 'we were green enough to think we could ignore the flak'. They were shot down, sadly 3 of the crew failed to get out in time but and Phil joined the Caterpillar Club and spent the rest of the war in Europe as a POW.

Phil's time as a Kreigy is worth a story on it's own. Suffice to say he was imprisoned in Bankau, Upper Silesia and later, after a 240km forced march, to Luckenwald, 12 miles south of Berlin. Later after 6 weeks in Russian hands, he was released and flown back to UK. He claims his most exciting flying experience was this trip home in a Lancaster. The 'white cliffs' never ever looked so beautiful!

He claims his most frightening experience, apart from being shot down, was in a Wellington: 'Having reached the bombing range at Wainfleet, I was minding my own business in my 'office', when I realised we were diving at 300mph. Apparently

another aircraft had turned into the range on wrong and opposite circuit and to avoid a collision my skipper pushed the stick forward. The first I knew of this was when the altimeter started unwinding!

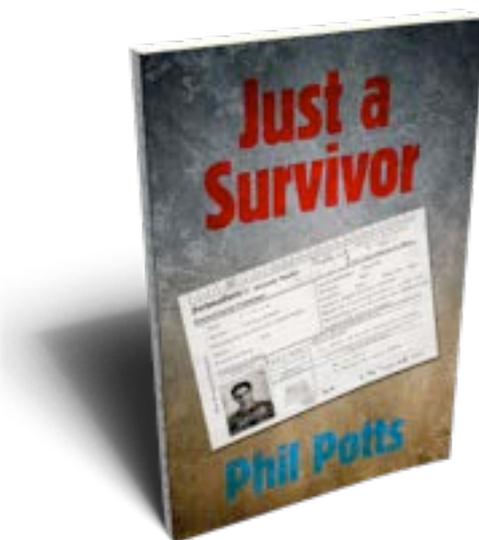
Of humorous incidents he recalled that whilst learning to fly as a trainee pilot in Canada on Tiger Moths, his instructor, having had enough of Phil's efforts, took over and went through his full repertoire of aerobatics.

In civilian life he was a Purchasing Manager and for 21 years a Council Member of his professional Institute. In younger days he played cricket for Dunstable and West Herts and soccer for Dunstable Town, not to mention his prowess on the Table Tennis Table.

As well as the ACA, Phil was a big supporter of RAFA and the Bomber Command Association and ex-POW Association.

He wrote his life story and here are the details:

Just a Survivor £9.95 (Woodfield Publishing)
by Phil Potts The WW2 experiences of a 103 Squadron Lancaster navigator



Phil's funeral was on 30 November. We send our condolences to Barbara and family.

Pussies and Fox's

Now do not get too excited but just after we went to print last month I heard from the Secretary of The Moth Club concerning two of our members from Haddenham who attended the Charity Flying weekend at Old Warden in October. You may remember the report from Ron Doble concerning his flight in a Puss Moth



DH80a Puss Moth

Well Stuart reports there was a small aircraft recognition problem, they in fact flew in the larger DH Fox Moth



DH83 Fox Moth

De Havilland designer A. E. Hagg evolved the de Havilland D.H.83 Fox Moth in 1932 to meet a per-

ceived need for a light transport aircraft with good performance, economical operations and low initial cost. To standard Tiger Moth components (including wings, tail unit, landing gear and engine mounting) he added a new plywood-covered wooden fuselage, locating the pilot in an open cockpit behind an enclosed cabin which accommodated up to four passengers. The prototype, powered by an 89kW de Havilland Gipsy III engine, was flown at Stag Lane in March 1932. It was later shipped to Canada for trials on floats and skis, undertaken in service with Canadian Airways Ltd. Eight of the 98 British-built Fox Moths were exported to Canada between 1932 and 1935, and two more examples were built by de Havilland Aircraft of Australia. Many of these were powered by the Gipsy Major engine and some had sliding hoods over the cockpit. A single Japanese-built copy, powered by a 112kW radial engine and known as the Chidorigo, was flown by the Japanese Aerial Transport Company.

After the war, in 1946, de Havilland Canada built 52 examples of the D.H.83C, which had a number of small improvements including trim tab on the elevators, an enlarged clear-view hood over the cockpit and the installation of a 108kW Gipsy Major 1C engine. Another example of the D.H.83C (there were no D.H.83A or D.H.83B variants) was completed by Leavens Bros Ltd in 1948.

HRH The Prince of Wales owned a Puss Moth and later a Fox Moth, prior to becoming King Edward VIII, in fact if you saw the film 'The King's Speech' you will have seen him land a Tiger Moth at Sandringham. Well it should have been a Fox Moth but the aircraft went u/s on the day of filming and alas the film makers could not wait!

Out in Australia the Fox Moth was operated by Queensland and Northern Territories Air Services, later QANTAS and was used by the Royal Flying Doctor Service, before they moved on to the twin engine DH84 Dragon.

Do the Puss Moth and Fox Moth look alike, well to an old Air Gunner, they obviously do!

Cars, Boats and Planes (but this time no boats)

ROANOKE — The Federal Aviation Administration is investigating after a sport utility vehicle had a hole punched in its roof by a small plane but luckily no one was seriously hurt.

The accident happened at Northwest Regional Airport in Roanoke. Department of Public Safety spokesman Trooper Lonny Haschel said the 2005 Cessna Skyhawk was coming in for a landing when its landing gear struck a 2008 Volvo SUV that was traveling on an perimeter road at the airport around 10:50 a.m.

The plane skidded off the runway and into a grassy area about 75 yards from the point of impact. Pilot William Davis of Flower Mound was not hurt, but the aircraft was damaged. The occupants of the SUV, Frank and Heather Laudo of Flower Mound, were taken to a hospital for treatment of non-life threatening injuries, Haschel said.

Well that report sounds simple enough but the photos are more dramatic. Why did it happen? The airfield is private, so is the road but they are not owned by the same person. The two parties are now getting together to see if they can resolve the obvious accident potential!

Now look at this series of photos to see how it happened.



Concentrating on the centreline/



Did you hear something?



The damage and below the airfield



A little low on the glidepath!



and Passengers!!!

Following on from that last incident, what about this from Brazil!

Incident: Avianca Brazil A320 and Gol B738 at Salvador on Nov 9th 2012, go arounds due to passenger runway incursion

An Avianca Brazil Airbus A320-200, performing a flight from Petrolina, to Salvador (Brazil), was on final approach to Salvador's runway 10 descending through about 700 feet AGL when two pedestrians walked onto the runway prompting the crew to initiate a go around.

A Gol Transportes Aereas Boeing 737-800 performing a flight from Recife, to Salvador, was on final approach behind the Avianca A320 and needed to go around from about 800 feet about 2 minutes later, too, when the pedestrians were still not clear of the runway.

Both aircraft positioned for another approach and landed safely about 15 minutes after aborting their first approaches.

Brazil's ANAC (Civil Aviation Authority) confirmed that the pedestrians, one of them being the governor of Brazil's state Ceara, had landed on a private jet minutes earlier arriving from Fortaleza (CE/Ceara). After the aircraft had stopped on the apron the two passengers disembarked on their own and being under time pressure to join a ceremony at the military apron on the other side of the runway walked across the runway. ANAC is investigating the incident, the pedestrians as well as the pilot of their aircraft are facing charges.

Ed: I remember a similar incident in Sudan. I was flying a member of the Royal Family into a strip called Gedaref. It was a natural surface strip and I thought it would be nice for the President of Save The Children Fund to see the landing from the flight deck. All was going well, the timing was spot on as the parking area was just off the threshold at the far end of the runway.

At about 400ft I spotted an Army Land Rover approaching the landing threshold from the right. Of course it has seen us and is going to stop, 300ft, oh no it's not.

It drove up the runway ahead of us as we overshot, did a visual circuit and landed. By this time 5 minutes late! After the arrival ceremony I sought out the Army Commanding Officer, who explained the Corporal driver had done the right thing, as he had personally (from the back seat) ordered him to enter the runway. I could see you and so you could see me, so what was the problem. To save International relations, that is where the matter finished!

Why had the Colonel ordered the Land Rover to enter the runway with the aircraft under half a mile from touchdown, simples, the young lady who was to present a posy of flowers was on board, so had to be there before The Princess Royal!

AGM Wednesday 16th January 2013

We are holding our AGM during the first meeting of the year on 16 Jan 13 . The Agenda is as follows:

1. Chairman's opening remarks
2. Committee reports
3. Election of Officers
- 4 Any other business

As well as our AGM of course Subscriptions are due as of 1 Jan 13. There will be a form with the Jan newsletter for those who cannot get to the AGM.

We are looking for a new Treasurer as Ian Nelson is shortly to move out of the area. Now we are a stand alone Association the job is not onerous, just money in and money out and as long as the former is more than the latter the FSA will be happy.

Please call Ian if you would like to help, or speak to any Committee member. We have been so lucky having Ian over the past years but we MUST have a replacement, so as they say 'It's your Association'

Volunteer or loose it!!!

Caption Competition from Nov 12 issue



“Straddled the target!”

My thanks to the person who entered. The winning caption was supplied by none other than Geoff Hulett!

Moving around!

Ed: *George Biggs has recently been in hospital but I am glad to report he is now back at his computer. Keep ‘em coming George!*

In my 10 years in the RAF, I had 56 postings recorded in my Log Book. I remember a WAAF once remarking that it did not leave me much time to unpack my Kitbag.

I joined the Air Defence Cadet Corps in April 1938 in Marylebone, London. It was a large Squadron; over 200 Cadets. We used to meet in a huge underground Car Park under a Hotel in Marylebone Road (still there) (someone had foresight as there were hardly any cars about then). We even had a Band and used to march around the area Sunday mornings ending up in St John's Church, Norfolk Square (still there).

I joined the Squadron, in uniform on my 14th Birthday and being slim with square shoulders on my very first Parade, I was pulled out in front as being the smartest Cadet. (honest). I can only re-

member going to one Airfield and that it was a grass one and we saw an Autogiro.

In 1940 the Air Defence Cadet Corps changed its name to Air Training Corps. We kept the same uniforms. We only had to change our shoulder badges. Several times, on my own I cycled to Croydon. It was a large International Airport then, now it's a Factory Estate. A smart little Air Cadet was always offered flights in Private Aeroplanes. I could not wait till I was old enough to volunteer to join the RAF but I had to wait three years, working 12 hours day in an Aircraft Factory in Chelsea; initially cycling through the London Blitz, living on my own in a Royal Mews Flat near Marble Arch which had no heating or hot water.

It was really hard going in that Factory and how wonderful it was to join the RAF with clean clothes, showers and companionship of boys similar to myself.



George and his Spitfire in 1947

George Biggs

Reg White

Ed: I had promised you a further article on Reg in this issue but have decided to delay until the Jan 13 issue, it will ensure that the article does not have to be cut. I am sure you will appreciate that priority had to be given to the obituary on Page 2.

Programme
Welfare

All events at 1030 for 1100 at Greenacres unless advised (*)

12 Dec	Xmas Lunch	1200 Noon
16 Jan	AGM & Member's Meeting	
20 Feb	RAF Benevolent Fund	Paul Hewson
20 Mar	The Rudolph Hess cover up - Tony Eaton	
17 Apr	Fly Girl - Anita Mays	
15 May	Guest's Lunch*	1200 Noon
19 Jun	Aeronautical Artist - Chris Sprent	

Your Committee**Chairman****Geoff Hulett**

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Bill Hyland reports:

Obviously it was very sad to hear that founder member (No 23) Phil Potts had passed away (see Page 2). We were well represented at his funeral on 30 Nov 12.

Glad to report that George Biggs is now out of Watford General, having gone in out of breath, they soon found some other problems to practice on but he is now pleased to be back home with dear Florrie. He cannot get out as he used to, so would appreciate a call occasionally. He may be a little short of breath occasionally but can still 'tell his stories'.

As George left Watford his place was taken by Derek Gurney but hopefully he will not be in too long.

As the winter approaches, stay warm, extra clothing is required just as it was at 10,000ft, so don't delay put something extra on and it will help keep the fuel bills down. Stay safe.

Bill**Membership**

Just a quick mention about the Christmas Lunch, I have to let Stephanie know numbers on Wednesday 5th for the lunch on the 12th, so please get your ticket request to me soonest, along with a cheque and Stamped addressed envelope (SAE).

I will start taking subscriptions in January so please help the admin by paying up promptly, it is £10 for the year. Do not worry if you cannot find your membership card but if you do, another SAE please.

Gerry**Programme**

You will see we have another interesting programme for 2013 and my thanks to those who have made suggestions. I am always open for more as I am happy to get bookings for 2014.

Bill

Christmas Lunch

Wednesday 12th December 2012

1200 Noon

Greenacres Tavern

Please send me tickets (**£20.00 per person/£10.00 for our widows includes your Raffle Ticket**)

NAME: ADDRESS.....

PLEASE SEAT ME NEAR..... TEL NO:.....

- I enclose:**
- a. Cheque payable to 'Chiltern Aircrew Association'**
 - b. Stamped addressed envelope.**
 - c. Send to Gerry Sealy-Bell, 31 Hempstead Road, Kings Langley,**

Menu

Asparagus Soup

Roast Breast of Turkey

Honey Roast Ham

Sage and Onion Stuffing

Selection of Fresh Vegetables

Christmas Pudding

Brandy Sauce

Mince Pies

Coffee and Mints

Red and White Wine (inclusive)

Closing date for ticket application is Wednesday 5th December 2012