



NEWSLETTER

£10 Subscription now overdue, please send to Gerry

AGM

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

Well that is what it said in the Newsletter last month and I am glad to report that 20 members attended on a cold, clear January morning.

The Chairman **Geoff Hulett** opened the meeting (*apology here from your Editor who managed to put Gerry's name after the Chairman's remarks last month - there has been no change and Geoff was the only person that noticed!*). Geoff ran through the committee members and thanked them for their efforts during the year. He also stated that there had been no volunteers to take over any of the posts, so expected the meeting to finish quickly! He also thanked Stuart McKay for his work with the Newsletter and Stephanie, Fiona and the staff at Greenacres for making us so welcome throughout the year. It had been a busy year with various anniversaries, a plethora of 90th birthdays and sadly 5 members had departed on their final flight.

Gerry Sealy-Bell then listed the departed members and we all stood for a minute in their memory. Subscriptions were now due and Gerry happily took some renewals at the meeting. If you have yet to re join please do so as soon as possible. Details on Page 7.

Rod Finn then reported that our accounts were in good order and that we had managed to subsidise the

Christmas Lunch to the tune of nearly £4 per head. He also thanked those people who have generously donated to the raffle with prizes, which is a great help. Next month we should be able too publish a 'signed off' copy of the accounts.

Graham Laurie thanked those members who had sent in contributions for the Newsletter and also asked for any stories from the past that are lurking out there, as yet, unwritten. He also mentioned that after the successful visit to London we would try and book one to the De Havilland Museum once it re opens later in the year. Gerry Sealy-Bell suggested a visit to Cardington which will be investigated, once we can find out what is going on there.

Bill George has virtually completed this years programme but said it was becoming more difficult to find speakers. He did thank those who had given him leads and asked for that to continue.

David Bray was away (**Ed:** *In Cuba now there is something new!*) but he has been doing a super job of keeping in touch, particularly with those who we do not see so regularly and also not forgetting our widows.

Suddenly the whole room put their hands up, which must have meant the **committee have been voted back in** - another surprise! Ron Doble gave a vote of thanks to the committee, which was much appreciated. Ian Mason and Roger Miller were thanked for their hard work on the audio/visual system (and then took 10 mins to get a DVD working-hey ho! We than watched the DVD 'The Lancaster at War'.



Remember 17th February 2016

"Seven short lives"

by

Stephen Potter

Greenacres 1030 for 1100am

Another flight to Australia

Seeing the coverage of the recent trip to Australia by Tracey Curtis-Taylor reminded me of the trip by our own member Andy Hardy in his Piper PA 28 with his co pilot Sam Kidd.



The Route from UK to 'Oz

The trip by Tracey claims to be a solo one which makes it more remarkable. Although it was a much grander exercise than Andy's, as there was a camera aircraft and engineers following her all the way. An award winning documentary feature film entitled 'The Aviatrix' was made of Tracey's flight to Africa earlier and the Lady Heath story and this was screened by BBC4 in March 2015. Discussions are now underway for a television series of Tracey's expedition to Australia and the future one to America.

So who is Tracey? The press described her thus "An adventurer from London has said she feels "euphoric" after completing a historic 13,000 mile solo flight from the UK to Australia. Ms Curtis-Taylor has followed in the slipstream of Amy Johnson, the pioneering British aviatrix who became the first woman to fly solo from Britain to Australia in 1930 in a Tiger Moth.

Tracey Curtis-Taylor completed her trip having flown over 23 countries and made 50 refueling stops by flying the final leg from Richmond to land at Sydney Airport on 9th January. The self-styled 'Bird in a biplane' said it was a "huge relief" to reach Sydney, joking she needed "a drink" after months in the cockpit. But Ms Curtis-Taylor is no stranger to daring feats. In 2013, she flew a grueling 8,000-mile solo flight from Cape Town back to the UK in an open-cockpit biplane.

Raised in Canada and surrounded by magnificent scenery, Tracey naturally took to adventure, so it was no surprise to her parents when she developed a passion for flight, having her first flying lesson aged 16.

She returned to England with her family in the 70's and her early working career in London including training with de Beers as a diamond valuer and the Diplomatic Service at the Foreign Office in Whitehall.

But the 'call of the wild' and an ongoing fascination with Africa made Tracey cut the rope on her conventional life in England. She went to South Africa in 1982 where she worked for several months before returning to the UK overland in a Bedford truck - a journey that took five months camping through savannah, jungle and desert. Shortly after her return Tracey migrated to New Zealand and began flying in earnest. She gained her PPL, commercial licence and an instructor rating and, unusually for a woman, was trained by military pilots to fly World War II aeroplanes with the New Zealand Warbird Association.

In tandem with her love of flying, an interest in geology, landscape and imagery led to Tracey pursuing another career in aerial photography and mapping, which was to hold her in good stead for her future flying pursuits.

Always adventurous, she is also passionate about other forms of early pioneering transport and in particular, old cars. As a result, she took part in the 2007 centenary Peking to Paris classic car rally that re-traced the route first driven by Prince Borghese in 1907. This involved driving for six weeks through northern China, the Gobi Desert, across Russia to the Baltic and on to Paris – an epic experience that combined great adventure with rugged endurance.



Tracey with her Boeing Stearman

Tracey's aeroplane - a Boeing Stearman 'Spirit of Artemis' is now based at Goodwood in West Sussex. When not flying, her other interests include being Fellow of the British Gemmological Association and the Royal Geographical Society). She is also a keen oil painter.



Tracey and 'Spirit of Artemis' reach Sydney

For those of you who remember Andy's trip, it was not without incident, both in the air and on the ground. It would appear that Tracey had a similar experience. Yes she had to fly through a monsoon but also she had to fight, as Andy did, the bureaucracy in a number of countries.



Andy and Sam in Sydney 2013 with G-ATYS

Andy and Sam had far less flying experience than Tracey but they managed to make the trip safely. This was down to a great deal of planning and preparation both by them and to the aircraft. Modifications to increase the fuel load were essential, as nowadays piston engine fuel is not as readily available as in the past. Both pilots used modern navigation aids like GPS. On trips like these, it is the unexpected that will pop up and bite you if you are not prepared and having reliable navigation aids, particularly in the case of diversions is essential. How many times have we heard that 'First priority is to fly the aeroplane' and this is where the assistance of a GPS becomes so important. It will never replace good solid flight planning but it will help to reduce the workload when the chips are down.

Here are some of the stop offs on Tracey's journey, I wonder if members have memories of some of these airfields? If so please do put pen to paper (No boasting but your Editor has flown into 18 of them):

- Goodwood and Farnborough (UK)
- Charleville (France)
- Vienna (Austria)
- Bucharest (Romania)
- Istanbul (Turkey)
- Larnica (Cyprus)
- Amman (Jordan)
- Al-Jawf and Riyadh (Saudi Arabia)
- Abu Dhabi and Dubai (UAE)
- Jiwani and Karachi (Pakistan)
- Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Delhi, Agra, Varanasi and Calcutta (India)
- Chittagong (Bangladesh)
- Rangoon and Myyek (Myanmar/Burma)
- Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia)
- Singapore
- Palembang, Jakarta, Semarang, Bali, Timor (Indonesia)
- and finally
- Kununurra, Wave Hill, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Uluru, Oodnadatta, Woomera RAAF, Broken Hill, Richmond RAAF and Sydney

I am hoping we may be able to get Tracey to talk to us in the future, so watch this space.

50% of Members have failed to renew

If you are one of them please re-new now!

If you do not plan to renew tell Gerry

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Take Off Calculations

In modern day aircraft operations the take off (and landing) calculations are very important. You may not realise it but, very often, the take off is not done at full power. There are pages in the 'Flight Manual' to put a false higher temperature in, which will increase the take off roll, but if the runway is long enough it is perfectly safe. The reason behind this is to save wear and tear on the engines and thus increase their life and of course save the airline money without compromising safety.

This is all very well as long as the calculations are done correctly and match what the aircraft is to do. One or two instances have occurred lately when this has not been the case. The UK Air Accidents Investigation Branch are investigating a number of instances.

The airline concerned with three of these reports has underlined to crews the crucial importance of cross-checking performance calculations after three take-off incidents came under investigation in the space of four months.

The AAIB says that pilots of an Airbus A320 erroneously used a full-length runway calculation when conducting an intersection departure from London Luton on 16 July last year.

It adds that it is looking into miscalculation events involving the airline's A319s at Belfast on 25 June and Lisbon on 16 October.

Inquiries into the Luton incident found that the crew had originally programmed a full-length departure for runway 08, but revised the plan to an intersection take-off after a waiting aircraft became held up on the threshold.

While the captain told investigators that he had attempted to change the runway selection, the inquiry says a combination of his finger size and the calibration of the touchscreen on the electronic flight-bag probably resulted in the change not being completed.

The captain also suggested he was distracted from confirming the runway selection by a decision to change the aircraft's flap setting as part of the revised departure.

As a result the aircraft's thrust settings and speeds remained incorrect for the intersection take-off, for which only 1,688m (5,538ft) of runway was available compared with the full length of 2,162m. The aircraft reached its V1 decision speed with 580m of runway remaining, and the captain committed to the take-off after noticing the

shortening distance. Flight-data recorder information showed the A320 became airborne at 148kt about 180m from the runway end.

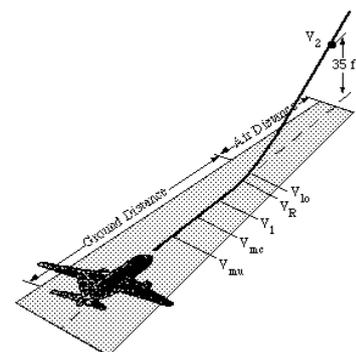
Both the Belfast and Lisbon incidents involved crews calculating take-off data for an opposite-direction runway, with the Belfast departure also using full-length runway data for an intersection departure.

The airline has added a briefing note to operational flight plans, says the AAIB, to highlight the importance of cross-checking calculations after last-minute changes. It also plans to publish an article warning of the serious hazards in the carrier's internal flight safety bulletin.



When you rotate over the numbers at the other end - did you get the take off calculation right?

When you see this sort of photo (admittedly from a long range view) the picture may be a little distorted but the vital point of all take off calculations is that if an engine should fail or any major component, then the aircraft must be able to stop in the available runway distance, this is the V1 calculation. If an engine failure occurs after V1 then the take off is continued but the aircraft must cross the end of the runway at a minimum height of 35 ft. The flight manual will have these calculations in either graph or table form. Any obstacles in the take off path are also taken into account.



Malaysian Grounds 777



Malaysia Airlines is grounding its remaining fleet of Boeing 777 aircraft. Not only that, the Malaysian carrier will also stop flying the Kuala Lumpur-Amsterdam, route. According to the report, Malaysia Airline's "last" Boeing 777 will arrive at Kuala Lumpur from Guangzhou, at the end of January. While the route will continue, the plane is being downsized to a Boeing 737-800 – a predominantly short-haul jet with about half the capacity (of the 777). The move comes following the airline's twin tragedies involving the 777 in 2014. Flight MH370 vanished enroute to Beijing from Kuala Lumpur in March that year while flight MH17 was shot down over a conflict zone in eastern Ukraine, while it was flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, in July.

All 239 people on board MH370 remain missing while 298 people were killed in the downing of MH17. Although the twin tragedies were unrelated, it shook public confidence in the airline, which was already in the red for years prior. The national carrier then opted to undergo a massive restructuring exercise, which saw jobs cut and routes lost.

The airlines is now "in the hands of a very well respected CEO, Christoph Mueller, known for successful turn-arounds."

Malcolm Ginsberg, Editor of Business Travel News, said: "People have short memories. If the management can be allowed to manage, then AirAsia and Singapore Airlines might quickly find they have real competition on their hands." It's in a very buoyant market with room for growth at its Kuala Lumpur hub."

Mr Mueller, former Chief Executive of Aer Lingus, recruited a former easyJet and Flybe executive, Paul Simmons, as Chief Commercial Officer.

Malaysia Airlines is still flying twice-daily between Heathrow and Kuala Lumpur, using Airbus A380 aircraft. But last week Willie Walsh, chief executive of British Airways' parent company, IAG, hinted that he may be interested in leasing the "superjumbo" planes from the Malaysian airline.

Mr Walsh told an aircraft finance conference that the airline's options on new A380s were "too expensive," adding: "We see the option of leasing them secondhand as an attractive opportunity."

BA currently has 10 A380s, with two more on order.

But More 777's are coming



Emirates, the world's biggest long-haul airline, plans to add 37 new planes to its fleet in the fiscal year beginning April as it expands operations in Asia with new destinations.

The airline will receive 21 Airbus Group SE A380 super-jumbos and 16 Boeing 777s in the year ending March 2017, Chief Commercial Officer Thierry Antinori announced at Singapore's Airshow. The aircraft are worth \$14.5 billion at list prices.

Emirates already serves about 150 destinations in about 80 countries using the industry's biggest wide-body fleet. The Dubai-based airline will begin operations to Panama in February in what will be the longest nonstop commercial flight by any carrier, overtaking Qantas Airways service to Dallas from Sydney.

"We will continue to grow," Antinori said. "We will continue to invest, innovate, have a younger fleet. It's about creating new markets."

Emirates also plans to retire 26 airplanes, including some A330s and A340s, from its fleet, Antinori said. The airline is studying an order for Airbus's A350-900 and -1000 variants along with Boeing's 787-9 and -10 models

Q - What happened on 22 January 1970?

Well it was when the Boeing 747 entered passenger service and in various forms it is still flying today but burning a lot less fuel and not polluting as much!

The B52 - When will the story end?

Well as you see it is amazing to think the B747 has been in airline service since January 1970 but when did the B52 first fly - well incredibly it was 15 April 1952. It's big, It's ugly and it's one of the most adaptable aircraft flown in the past 65 years.



The B52 can carry up to 70,000 lbs of ordnance

The B52 was designed to carry nuclear weapons during the Cold War but only carried conventional weapons in combat. There were, of course, huge leaps in aviation happening whilst the B52 was being designed and it went through six major redesigns during a five year period.

The B52A was also used to carry the North American X15 all it's flights including a world record trip. On October 3, 1967, Pete Knight (NASA Test Pilot) took it up again, and despite a slightly delayed launch, briefly hit a top speed of Mach 6.72 (4530 MPH). The aerodynamic heating at this speed far exceeded the engineering estimates and the plane's tail had partially melted and its skin had rolled back.



There were 744 B52's built, but currently there are only 85 in service today with 9 in reserve. Production ended in 1962, so the youngest B52 in service is already 54 years old. It is planned to be in service until the 2040's, so by then it will have been in service for over 90 years.

A recently declassified document reveals how close the United States came to accidentally detonating a nuclear bomb on North Carolina in 1961.

On January 23, 1961, a B-52 Stratofortress bomber patrolled the night skies over the Atlantic Ocean. It was three days after the presidential inauguration of John F. Kennedy, bombers such as this one carrying a pair of 3.8-megaton Mark 39 hydrogen bombs were kept airborne at all times to defend the country. Many hours had passed since the B-52 took off from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base near Goldsboro, North Carolina, when something suddenly went wrong on the routine Strategic Air Command training mission. Fuel started to gush out of a leak in the plane. Nineteen tons of fuel were lost in just two minutes. As the pilot attempted to limp back to Goldsboro, the right wing suddenly sheered from the plane. The bomber plunged into a tailspin and began to break up. Six of the eight crewmen ejected. As the plane spiraled to earth, the bombs, each of which were 260 times more powerful than the nuclear weapon dropped on Hiroshima, broke loose and plunged to the ground as well. Five of the men who were ejected parachuted to safety; the other three crew members were killed in the crash.



The strategically based tree!

When responders arrived on the crash scene 15 miles from Goldsboro, they discovered one of the nuclear weapons had landed in a field with its deployed parachute tangled in the branches of a tree. The second bomb had anything but a soft landing. It became entombed after striking the ground at nearly 700 miles per hour.

While the fact that the crippled B-52 was carrying two nuclear weapons was widely reported—"Jet Carrying A-Weapons Crashes" blared a banner headline in the Greensboro Record—the military kept secret just how close the accident came to causing a nuclear catastrophe. Although the Air Force at the time reported that there was no danger of a nuclear explosion, a newly declassified document obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, reveals otherwise.

Whilst the nuclear devices that fell near Goldsboro were equipped with safety devices to prevent accidental explosions, much as revolvers have safety catches, the report states that three of the four safety mechanisms in the bomb that had deployed its parachute had become unlocked during its plunge to the ground. Two were rendered ineffective by the breakup of the aircraft, and a third was set off by the fall. Fortunately, the last failsafe, a low-voltage switch, worked. So, "When the bomb hit the ground, a firing signal was sent to the nuclear core of the device, and it was only that final, highly vulnerable switch that averted calamity."

"One simple, dynamo-technology, low voltage switch stood between the United States and a major catastrophe," the report stated. The safety supervisor also asserted that had the mid-air breakup of the B-52 caused an electrical short to the switch, "a postulate that seems credible," it could have resulted in a nuclear explosion. The report concluded that "The Mk 39 Mod 2 bomb did not possess adequate safety for the airborne alert role in the B-52" and that the devices designed to prevent an accidental detonation were "not complex enough." The near-disaster resulted in more stringent safeguards being placed on America's nuclear arsenal.

One for the Air Gunners! in 1972 B52 tail gunner Albert Moore shot down a Mig-21 over Vietnam, it was the last recorded bomber-gunner shooting down an enemy aircraft



The end of a sortie, but nowhere near the end for the B52, as it due in service until 2040 - at least!

Membership Renewal @ £10

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Please enclose: Cheque payable to Chiltern ACA for £10, membership card (if available) and an SAE

Post to: Gerry Sealy-Bell, 31, Hempstead Rd, Kings Langley, Herts, WD4 8BR

Tel: 01923 262707

Please do it Now! Please do it Now! Please do it Now!

Programme 2016

Events at 1030 for 1100 at Greenacres unless (*)

2016

Feb 17	'Seven short lives'	Stephen Potter
Mar 16	Flying Concorde	Gwyn Williams
Apr 20	The Cinderella Op	Dusty Miller
May 18	Guests Lunch*	1200 Noon

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Chairman

Thank you to those members who came out on a very cold morning for our AGM. Thank you for voting us back and a thank you to Ron Doble for his kind remarks, they were very much appreciated by the committee

Geoff

Welfare

I am sorry but I am away 'cruisin' in Cuba so have not been ringing round. As soon as I return I will resume the calls, but just before I left I spoke with Ron Doble and he reported no news, which was good news. The weather I gather has not been good so please do stay warm.

David

Membership Secretary

Please, please renew now if you are one of the 50% who are yet to do so or at least give me a ring so we can discuss any problems there may be.

Gerry

Secretary/Editor

A little late with this one I am afraid, as the winter bug has got me again. I am waiting for the soothing phone call from Dave Bray!

Graham

Programme Secretary

You will note a couple of alterations in the programme, a couple of speakers have swapped but I have nearly got us complete for the year.

Bill

Accounts

I hope to have the signed off accounts for you at the next meeting and I will get Graham to print them in the next Newsletter (Ed: Thanks Rod, that is one less page to fill and our number of ex accountants love to pour over the figures for old times sake

Rod

Subscriptions 2016

£10

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with**

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See Page 7