



## WHAT'S ON



*Vicky Hall - Program Secretary*

- 6 June 97'.....'All Weather Operations' - Keith Wood
- 4 July 97'.....'Flying Jets' - George Paul
- 8 August 97'.....Evening visit to the Mistley Underground Bunker
- 5 September 97'.....'Art & Aviation' - Geoff Pleasance
- 3 October 97'.....'Never a Doodle' - Jim Double

### Newsletter Contributions

*If you have an article or a story you would like to share with the other members of the Society then please send it to me....*

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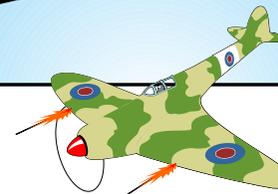
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*Produced by: Jack Russell Designs*

# RUNWAY 22

Volume 1 No.2

May 1997

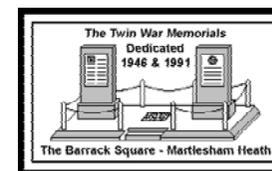


*Martlesham Heath Aviation Society*

## NEWSLETTER



RAF MARTLESHAM HEATH



MARTLESHAM HEATH AVIATION SOCIETY



356TH FIGHTER GROUP

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## EDITORIAL

### Alan Powell - Newsletter Editor

This is the first "Runway 22" that I have been responsible for editing and I should like to greet all our members and friends both at home and overseas. Martyn Cook produces the newsletter and designs the cover, and what a cover!! Congratulations Martyn, both to you and your computer!!

I have included in this newsletter details of the "Charles, 'Holly', Hall Photographic competition". This is intended to be an annual event to be judged at the AGM each year. It is the brainchild of Don Kitt and it is to be hoped that it will become very popular. So get snapping! That includes our American members! Just get your slides or prints to us before April, 1998.

We continue to enjoy good attendance's at our monthly meetings and this is clearly due to the excellence of the speakers that Vicky is able to obtain. For my sins I report on our meetings in the local parish magazine, the "Martlesham Monthly". Judging by the number of calls that I get our activities are followed by many folk who are not members but who, nevertheless, are fascinated by the experiences of our speakers. Only last month I received a call from a retired Flt Lt. This gentleman survived no less than 50 operations including 13 over Berlin, mostly in Lancasters. We look forward to a talk from him!!

Please keep your newsletter contributions coming in. Preferably typed so that Martyn can scan them in.

Bob Dunnett accompanied by his wife, Rita, represented MHAS at the annual Memorial Service at the Cambridge American Cemetery at Madingley on 26th May. Bob laid two wreathes, one on behalf of the 356th Fighter Group and one on behalf of our Society. Well over one hundred wreathes were laid. Mostly on behalf of Bomb Group and Fighter Group Associations.

A vintage aircraft fly by consisted of a P51 Mustang, B17 (Sally B of course), and an F86 Sabre. USAF "missing man", formation was a fly past by F15E's from Lakenheath.

The address was given by Major General Tad Oelstrom in the absence of the advertised personage who should have been Secretary of the Air Force, the Honourable Sheila Widnall. Major General Oelstrom is O.C. RAF

## **BOOKS & VIDEO'S FOR LOAN CONTACT ALAN POWELL**

### **Book Section**

**BOMBER COMMAND** - Air Ministry Account of Bomber Command's Offensive - September 1939 to July 1941

**MISSING IN ACTION** - H Phillip Causer - 356th F.G. 360 Sqd

**MALTA** - Story of the Defences of Malta

**TARGET BERLIN** - Mission 6th March 1944 - USAAF

**RAF STRADISHALL** - 1938 to 1970

**MOSQUITO** - Definitive history of the Mosquito

**MOST SECRET WAR** - Prof.R V Jones - British Scientific Intelligence 1939 - 1945

**ACES & WINGMEN //** - USAAF Personnel - by Danny Morris

**FIGHTER** - Battle of Britain - Intro. by A J P Taylor

**WING LEADER** - Group Captain Johnnie Johnson

**TEST PILOT** - Neville Duke

**FLY FOR YOUR LIFE** - Story of Wg.Cdr. Stanford Tuck

### **Video Section**

**PERFECT LADY** - 'Going Solo' - Carolyn Grace

**BEAUFIGHTERS IN THE DESERT** - by Jack Grimwood

**FLY 50 GLORIOUS YEARS** - RAF aircraft ww2 to 1990

radio-telephony and presumably, by this marvellous scientific invention, would have received the signal to “go round again”.

All went well, the rebels were routed, the lorries left the field emitting red smoke to the delighted applause of the crowds.

**NOTE:** The Handley-Page Heyfords were from No.99 Squadron based at Upper Heyford and were, for those that remember such things, the twin-engined biplane with the upper wing attached to the top of the fuselage, the bottom wing suspended some way below the fuselage. It had open cockpits and gun positions and a ‘dustbin’ turret which could be lowered manually below the fuselage when in flight. The aircraft entered service in November 1933 and were finally withdrawn in 1939.

Mildenhall and may be remembered by some as a former O.C. at Bentwaters.

### **THE CHARLES ‘HOLLY’ HALL PHOTO COMPETITION**

#### **Don Kitt**

As a small tribute to the wonderful contribution ‘Holly’ Hall made to our Society, we have decided to run an annual photographic competition in his memory and bearing his name.

The competition will be open to all our members and will feature two categories - slides and prints. The theme for the competition will be ‘AVIATION’. This can of course be aircraft, or anything connected with planes such as airfields, buildings, aviation museums etc. Entrants are encouraged to use their imagination.

Each competitor may enter two slides and/or two prints. The prints can be any size and either mounted or unmounted.

Entries will be judged by society members at the 1998 A.G.M. There will be one plaque to be won in each category.

For the first year, there will be no restrictions on when the entries were taken. the only stipulation is that they must have been taken by the contestant.

Good luck - lets see lots of entries!

### **FROM THE CHAIR**

#### **Martyn Cook**

This is the second newsletter, ‘Runway 22’ the Society has produced in its new format. I would like at this point to reinforce Alan’s earlier statement regarding your contributions. The success or otherwise of your newsletter hinges on your contributions, please keep them coming.

On the subject of membership the Society is growing. At the April and May meetings we had six new members and one who rejoined after a short absence. This is extremely encouraging for the Committee because it is a sure sign that the membership is liking what it see’s and hear’s at the meetings.

At one of our recent meetings one member asked that we write a short resume of how the Society was formed so, here goes.

### Birth of a Society

#### Martyn Cook - Chairman

During the mid to late 1970's contractors began moving onto Martlesham Heath. It was the end of any further speculation as to what was going to happen to the part of the heath that lies to the west of the A1214, it was about to be developed into small residential plots called hamlets. Later on it became a show piece development winning a number of awards for its design.

As a young child (just use your imagination) I travelled many times down 'B' Flight Road and through the airfield. The only plane I ever saw was always parked just beyond the Barrack Square as it was then and it belonged to I believe either the Blind Landing Unit or to the unit testing Atomic bomb casings. I was struck by that Martlesham magic but it wasn't until I came to work on Martlesham Heath that my interest was rekindled so much so that we moved house and became residents of Martlesham Heath, that was 1981 but I digress

It was a rather large press report in the Evening Star and the East Anglian Daily Times relating to items that were being unearthed on Martlesham Heath by the contractors that sparked a further and rapidly growing interest in the old airfield. A then resident of the heath Roger Harrison who's job involved aviation insurance had been consulted about these many and varied artefacts. Roger asked through the paper's that anyone interested in the airfield should come and attend a meeting (the date of which I have forgotten) in the Pavilion which was and still is situated on the edge of the village green near the Douglas Bader public house. There were of course quite a number who attended and some of the stories surrounding the airfield were retold by a gentleman of whom you may have heard of, Gordon Kinsey, I joke of course. Gordon was a person of whom I had heard a lot about, well he had written a book about the airfield so to me and many others he was a celebrity and I was quite excited at the prospect of meeting him. It was to be the start of a relationship that has lasted to this very day and one that I hope will continue for many years to come, but I digress yet again.

There is a great deal of evidence that something out of the ordinary occurred in Rendlesham Forest at Christmas in 1980 what we may never know. The first I heard about the incident was in the Butley Oyster pub early in 1981, the opinion of the locals was, that it was drunken Americans celebrating Christmas in the forest. However, I have a T.V. programme on video by Michael Aspel in the series 'Strange but True' covering the incident where all of the U.S. personnel came across as level headed types.

I personally have mixed views on the alleged incident like Brenda Butler I believe something happened, but what exactly occurred it is difficult to pin down, but perhaps one day the full details may be revealed.

### REBELS DEFEATED (EVENTUALLY) AT NORTHOLT

#### By Tony Errington

The first practice run commenced with the sighting of the three Heyfords circling above Hillingdon in the West and the three RAF lorries commencing their "escape" down the runway. It happened on the two days of rehearsal that there was a strong easterly wind blowing. The rebel transport was now half way along the runway and it could clearly be seen that the Heyfords were still battling against the wind several miles off. The rebel lorry drivers at this

The lorries eventually reached the east end of the runway where by this time the three young observers were in a state of near hilarity, and a second attempt was made with much the same result but, at the third go it all came right, well just about. The so called "bombs" were of course fireworks tossed out of the back of the rebel lorries.

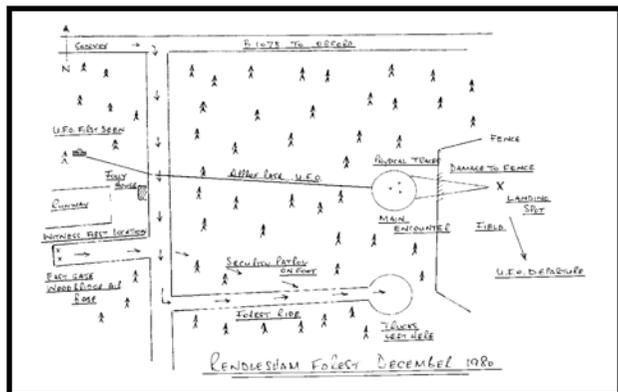
On the day of the show (3d to go in, for boys of our age, and 3d for the Programme) the wind had now veered around to the South West and of course the inevitable happened. The bombers could be seen approaching quite rapidly from the West, and to us 3 boys who knew where the rebels were coming from could see the members of the gang still climbing into the lorries at the far end. All of a sudden the three Heyfords did a very majestic turn to the South, headed back west and completed a 180 degree turn to bring them back on their original track. On enquiring as small boys will, we discovered that these three Heyfords had been equipped with

not start, so they had to stay in the car for about twenty minutes until the lights fade away. The car then started and they quickly left the scene, she added they were both very scared at the time.

During the afternoon I spoke with Brenda Butler and she said at that point in time she was convinced that some thing happened hut she was fairly certain it was not a U.F.O. Later I spoke to Ian Ridpath and I told him that I saw a Network First ITV programme concerning UFO's this reported on the Rendlesham Forest incident and a small group of U.S. servicemen one of who reported that in the field next to the forest he saw a large circular white light, followed by a large white light which came down from the sky and landed in the centre, and then turned into a metallic craft giving off a red and blue light. Mr. Ridpath's response was that was pure speculation !!

I am a keen cyclist and I have led several 'rough stuff runs' through Rendlesham Forest and I have pointed out to the group I was leading where this U.F.O. is alleged to have landed. The Russians are said to have had a space satellite landing in the North Sea over that Christmas period in 1980, or it could have been the light from the Orfordness Lighthouse. It was later alleged that the three feet marks in the forest are supposed to have been made by rabbits !! Brenda Butler told the group that Lt.Col. Halt give lectures on the U.F.O. incident in the U.S.A.

I discovered later on the computer Internet that the Rendlesham Forest U.F.O. is ranked number six in the list of ten such incidents logged since World War Two.



So there we all were pledging our support to keeping the memory of Martlesham Heath as an airfield alive. A further meeting was to be held at Roger's house with the sole intention of forming a committee and setting April 1982 as the date that the society was to be launched upon. We held the meeting and a committee was formed. My position on the committee because of my mechanical experience was to head a small team who's sole intention was that of restoration. The first of these restorations was the Pickett Hamilton Gun Fort but that's another story and one that I will relate in another issue.

Like all new societies are aims and idea's ran away with what we could practically achieve, but that is how it was. One of our largest projects was to restore the Control Tower which was situated in the Western Corridor. What I have failed to tell you was that Sandra my wife was also interested and later took a position on the committee as Fund Raiser a task that she excelled in. She arranged fun afternoons, draws, dances as well as going around the local contractors begging building materials with which to carry out the tower restoration. It was at this time having been in most of the committee positions that I became Chairman. The practical side of the Control Tower restoration was being spear headed by Jack Grimwood and Jack Sweetman. They were both retired and spent many hours during the day carrying out this task. It was at this point in time that the membership began declining, not heavily but never the less noticeable. I believe it was the fact that we were always asking or planning events that would require the membership to dip into the deepest recesses of their pockets and in the end they became fed up with this situation therefore something had to be done. Another contributory factor was that there wasn't the commitment by the members in helping with the project and with mounting costs and the fact that we could only have the top floor the project was scrapped.

Time past and the membership came back. We began concentrating on the things that the membership were interested in, the speakers and the trips. It wasn't to long before we began increasing the membership to the position where we are today and during that period we have outgrown both the Pavilion and the Richard's Room. The Society is now in its 15th year and may it continue for another 15 years and beyond.

## THOUGHTS OF A "SENIOR CITIZEN"

by Jim Ferguson

Since my retirement I have had plenty of time to contemplate. Lately I have been contemplating the Hereafter several times daily, having passed from one room to another I pause and say 'what the Hell am I hereafter'? However, growing old has it's compensations. I now have silver in my hair, gold in my teeth, lead in my limbs, stones in my kidneys and natural gas in my stomach - I'm rich!

Just think, we Senior Citizens were here before television, video, frozen foods, credit cards, ball point pens, plastics, polio shots, contact lenses and the 'pill'. When we 'Mugged' a person we did so by settling their bill (usually for drinks). For us, time sharing meant togetherness, we wound up our watches daily, we had no calculators other than the brain that God gave us. A 'chip' was either a piece of wood for fire lighting or a piece of fried potato. 'Hardware' meant something from the Chandlers that was durable and 'software' wasn't even in the dictionary. 'Porn' was where we deposited our assets (until the next weekend) under the sign of the three brass ball's. 'Jean's' were property belonging to a girl of that name. We had no dishwashers, tumble dryers, drip-dries, panty hose and electrified blankets. 'Fast food' was what we ate during Lent. We married first and then lived together (how quaint!) but how nice!, divorce was a pastime exclusive to film stars. Girls thought that 'Cleavage' was what the butcher did, bunnies were little rabbits and dishes were for eating off, not for receiving signals from outer space. We smoked cigarettes, 'pot' was for cooking in and 'grass' was for mowing. Rock music was a lullaby and 'aids' were for people of hard of hearing. A 'gay person' was the life and soul of the party and not today's hideous definition. We used manual typewriters and carbons for copying, fax was what we looked up in a dictionary or encyclopaedia. We were before vitamin pills, disposable nappies (sorry, 'Diapers') McDonalds and Pizzas. Instant coffee and Chinese take-always were unknown and 'made in Japan' meant poor quality.

How in God's name did we exist? We must have been a tough bunch!

## THE RENDLESHAM FOREST U.F.O.

By Mike Richard's

On Sunday October 13th 1996 the Forest Enterprise organised an afternoon seminar in Rendlesham Forest near Woodbridge. This was to discuss the happenings in the Forest when an Unidentified Flying Object was alleged to have landed at Christmas 1980. Also present were Brenda Butler a local lady who is the co-author of the book 'Skycrash' which covers the U.F.O. incident. Together with Ian Ridpath an astronomer who was living in the area in December 1980 and Vince Thirkettle who was living in a forest cottage at the time of the incident, I was very surprised to discover that all three seemed very sceptical about the alleged landing of the U.F.O. They spoke in turn to the group and were very off hand about anything out of the ordinary occurring.

We then went into the forest which is as it was in December 1980 and they stated that it would be difficult to see any lights from the east gate of the Woodbridge air base. We then proceeded to near the fence on the edge of the field where further discussion took place. It was pointed out that the Orfordness Lighthouse is in direct line with site of the alleged landing, and that the light can bounce off the trees giving strange effects at night.

There was then some discussion concerning the report sent to the M.O.D. shortly following the happening on December 17th 1980 by Lt.Col. Charles Holt U.S.A.F. the Deputy Base Commander in which he stated that the object appeared to be standing on three legs and had a large revolving part which gave off red and white lights. As it took off in the direction of Bawdsey at high speed nearby animals went into a frenzy. The next day three depressions were found in the forest, these were examined by the British Police. Two nights later lights were again seen in the forest and Lt.Col. Halt led a team of U.S. Airmen out to investigate. The lights were again red and white and these illuminated the airmen before breaking up and then changing into white balls which hovered in the sky before gradually breaking up and fading away. Apparently the M.O.D. never acknowledged this report.

A lady told the group that when she was sixteen she was courting a local lad and in January 1980 they were in a car on the edge of Tunstall Forest near the Bentwaters Air Base when some multi coloured lights appeared on the tree tops about 200 yards away. The lad tried to start the car and it would