



## WHAT'S ON



VICKY HALL - PROGRAMME SECRETARY

- 8 January 99'.....Vic Wilkinson - Recollections of Farnborough
- 6 February 99'.....Gordon Kinsey - Martlesham Heath
- 5 March 99'.....Paul Jackson from Janes all the Worlds Aircraft
- 9 April 99'.....AGM & Photo Competition
- 7th May 99'.....Monica Maxwell - Codes & Ciphers!

### 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....*

Alan Powell - Newsletter Editor  
 16 Warren Lane  
 Martlesham Heath  
 Ipswich IP5 3SH

Tel: Ipswich 622458  
 E-Mail Address  
 Alan.J.Powell@btinternet.C  
 om

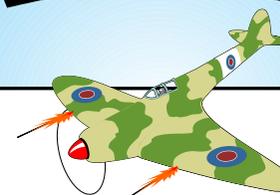
### Other Committee Contacts

Chairman	Martyn Cook	(01394) 671210
E-Mail Address	Martyn@MHAS.Freeserve.Co.UK	
Vice Chairman	Bob Dunnett	(01473) 624510
Treasurer	Russell Bailey	(01473) 715938
Program Sec.	Vicky Hall	(01473) 720004
Membership Sec.	Julie Smith	(01473) 728343
Rag Trade	David Bloomfield	(01473) 686204
Catering	Ethel & Roy Gammage	(01473) 623420
Museum Adviser	Tony Errington	(01473) 741574
Society Advisor	Don Kitt	(01473) 742332
Society Advisor	Daphne Taylor	(01473) 713087

**PRODUCED BY: JACK RUSSELL DESIGNS**

# RUNWAY 22

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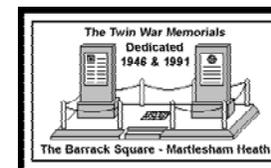
January 1999

*Martlesham Heath Aviation Society*

## NEWSLETTER



RAF MARTLESHAM HEATH



MARTLESHAM HEATH AVIATION SOCIETY



356TH FIGHTER GROUP

### CONTENTS

Page 2.....	Editorial
Page 2.....	'Flight To Freedom'
Page 4.....	England At Leisure 98'
Page 5.....	RAF Martlesham Heath Reunion 1999
Page 6.....	RAF Martlesham Heath 1950
Page 6.....	Remembrance Day 1998
Page 7.....	Remembrance Day 1940
Page 8.....	Monthly Meeting Roundup
Page 9.....	Gas Turbines & Jet Propulsion For Aircraft
Page 11.....	356th FG Membership Renewal

## **EDITORIAL**

The first newsletter of the last year of the present century and may I take this opportunity of wishing everybody a very happy New Year.

Our Society continues to thrive. I have not accurately counted the number of folk that we get to the monthly meetings but I am sure that there are often over a hundred bums on seats. Vicky provides us with most interesting speakers and we are grateful to her for that.

It seems a long time ago since our American friends from the 356<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Association visited us. This is the first time we have been able to report on it. Ed Malo, who organised the trip in the States, has sent me a nice article, which is very appreciative of our efforts to entertain them.

Thank you to James Crisp, a new member, for a piece about Martlesham in the early 50's. Also to Roy Browne for his interesting contribution which was inspired by the talk given recently by our own Honorary Vice President, Dick Storer. All those who heard Dick describe his time, as Air Attaché in Brussels will remember his observation that many of the Belgian Air Force officers wore RAF Wings on their uniforms, this is the story of two of them.

Having reported on the occasion of our current Remembrance Day Service, I thought it would be interesting to include an article by Gordon Kinsey which relates to an historical event on Remembrance Day, 1940. Thank you Gordon for that.

We have a newsletter exchange arrangement with the Handley Page Association and their newsletters are available from me if anyone wishes to see them.

Normal procedure is to distribute newsletters at the monthly meetings. However, all those unclaimed after the second meeting are then despatched by post. This is obviously for reasons of economy. If you cannot attend meetings we can post your newsletter at the time of publication. So if our list is incomplete please let me know.

I am always happy to receive criticism, both negative and positive, (positive preferred), about the content and style of the newsletter. To a large extent the success of the publication is dependent upon input from you, the members and readers.

**Ed**

### **FLIGHT TO FREEDOM**

It was early one sunny morning on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 1941 at Thorpe Le Soken,

and the real break through will not come for about 10 years when jet-propelled aircraft operating at a high altitude, with pressurised cabins, are fully developed". The enormous advantage of jets versus internal combustion engines at high altitudes was well recognised and the forecast by Roy Chadwick was quite correct.

Much of what appears in the book did certainly occur in reality, after all, that concept of the turboprop with contra-rotating propellers is still very much with us today in much the same form.

The only allied jet to see active service during WW2 was the Gloster Meteor,

### **So what's new?**

Illustration of a jet-propelled carriage which appears in early text books on the evolution of the horseless carriage. You cannot be serious!!

### **356TH FIGHTER GROUP MEMBERS - MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

The committee hope that you have enjoyed reading the Runway 22 Newsletters and being a member of the Martlesham Heath Aviation Society and we sincerely hope that you will want to renew your membership for another

As this will be the last newsletter before the 1st April 1999 which is the date on which all members subscriptions become due I thought it would be helpful to advise you on the procedure for renewing your membership for the coming

The cost of membership is \$25.00. Should you wish to renew your membership please send your money to Ken & Brita Male along with a note of your name and address, this ensures that we are posting the Newsletters etc. To the right address. Ken & Brita will collect all your notes and send them onto me.

To ensure you receive your May 1999 Newsletter and your membership card and to save Ken & Brita posting individual details please could you post your subscription to them to arrive no later than the 20 February 1999, thank you.

**Julie Smith - Membership Secretary**

so much to say about the future of jet propulsion in the middle of WW2.

The book, which carries the same title as this article, was written by the much respected Managing Editor of "Flight" magazine, G. Geoffrey Smith, MBE and carries a Forward by his friend, Sir Geoffrey De Havilland. Permission to publish the book had been sought and approved by the Minister of Aircraft Production, Lord Brabazon. First published in 1942, the earlier edition simply expounded the theory of jet propulsion and in particular gave much space to the Italian Caproni-Campini experimental aircraft. Unlike the ultimate gas-turbine design, as patented by Group Captain Frank Whittle, the Caproni-Campini utilised a conventional radial petrol engine to drive the rotary turbine compressor. The aircraft first flew in August 1940.

However, the April 1944 edition, which is in my possession, goes into some detail about the Whittle jet programme. As is well known, after initially taking out the patent in 1930, the first Whittle designed BTH turbine compressor ran successfully on a test bed 1937 and the Air Ministry did not place an order for a jet propelled aircraft until 1939. What if Frank Whittle had ignored his patriotic instincts and offered the concept to a large American company such as GEC, who were eventually given it anyway? There are always if's and but's however, one cannot help but speculate that with commercial foresight and adequate funding from the start that the world may have seen jet planes sooner.

The first flight of the Gloster jet in May 1941 is recorded and it was flown by an ex Martlesham Heath test pilot, Jerry Sayer. Then, in July 1941 full information was disclosed to General Arthur, US Army Air Force. He asked for an engine to be sent to America and this was delivered to the General Electric Company in September 1941. October 1942 is given as the date when the first flight of an American aircraft took place using Whittle/GEC jet units in a Bell experimental 'plane. The first official announcement of the existence of the jet programme was given in a joint release by the Air Ministry and the US Army Air Forces on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1944.

German jet development is discussed and although it was well known by the allies, by the time this book was written the Luftwaffe was deploying a formidable jet powered fighter. The only reference was to the existence of a Junkers engine employing a multi-bank, radial, two-stroke engine unit as the driving unit for the rotary compressor.

The concept of the "flying wing" was much discussed in the 40's and the arrival of the jet engine is mentioned in the book in such a way to suggest that this might be an important way forward in aeronautical design. Roy Chadwick, the designer of the Lancaster bomber, puts forward his views. He envisaged, "that post war civil air liners will cruise at around 200 mph

where I lived at the police station with my parents, my father being the police sergeant for the locality. A biplane was spotted by the local War Reserve Constable disappearing over the horizon in an easterly direction. A relief constable was on duty at 6am when he was surprised to see two young men in strange uniforms making their way towards him. "Good morning, we are from Belgium", said one! Mike Donnet and Leon Duvoy were soon tucking into breakfast supplied by my mother. They had stolen a SV4B Stampe biplane from under the noses of the Germans and escaped to England to help fight the war!

The Belgians had learned that the aircraft was in a small hangar about 300 yards from a chateau, which was occupied by officers of a JU88 squadron. Petrol was stolen from German army lorries and was distilled at nearby Brussels University to increase the octane value. It was then hidden in a wood until required. When they came to collect the petrol on the very night that the escape was planned, it was discovered that it had been stolen! The whole dangerous business of stealing and distilling more petrol had to be repeated. The biplane had no instruments except a home-made bent glass tube containing a ball bearing. This was an indicator for turning and banking! A chair spring with a tin lid fastened to it was attached to an outboard strut. This was the airspeed indicator! There was a compass! Take off was short but when the 'plane became airborne it was difficult to gain altitude because of the poor quality of the petrol. Nevertheless, despite the low height it was discovered afterwards that a radar echo had been established and a Spitfire was despatched. Fortunately they were not intercepted. Tobleron chocolate always brings back memories of Mike Donnet. He had handed me a tiny bar. His "flight rations" or to keep his spirits up if they had come down in the sea! I asked them to sign my autograph book. Mike signed, "from Belgium to England on the night of 5<sup>th</sup> July 1941". Leon Duvoy signed in French, "I was afraid, but we will get them".

Twenty seven years later and my wife and I were in Brussels. I 'phoned Mr. Donnet and he immediately said, "we must meet"! He took us to the chateau where the aircraft was stolen, then on to the military museum where the Stampe now resides and then to a restaurant where we were joined by Micheh Jansen, another member of the escape team. He had swung the propeller before disappearing into the forest. Later he escaped through Spain and on to England to become a gunner on Mitchell's based in Norfolk.

Michael Donnet became Squadron Commander of 64 Squadron, flying Spitfires. In 1944 he took over 350 Belgian Squadron, stationed first at Hawkinge then, in 1945, at Bentwaters. Leon Duvoy was shot down over Calais and spent the rest of the war in a prison camp. The day after the Stampe landed in Essex it was flown to RAF Martlesham where I assume,

it was stored. A book was written by Mike Donnet and published in French, "J'ai vole la Liberte". Later it was translated into English, "Flight to Freedom".

### **Roy Browne**

#### ***ENGLAND AT LEISURE, 98***

In late September 1998, sixteen people from the United States arrived in Ipswich, England. Some of us reliving our experiences at Martlesham Heath during WW-II and others who wished to experience what they had missed during the War.

The wonderful people from the Martlesham Heath Aviation Society had arranged a great week in the Suffolk area. We first went to Martlesham Heath to see what remained of the famous Martlesham Heath Airdrome. While there we visited the old control tower, the museum and the church where the Book of Remembrance is kept. The Book of Remembrance lists those men who were killed while serving with the 356th Fighter Group in England during the War. We had a light lunch at the Douglas Bader pub on our old airfield. The pub is named after one of the RAF's outstanding fighter pilots during the Battle of Britain. Douglas Bader was one of the many RAF famous pilots stationed at Martlesham Heath.

On Saturday September 26, we visited the museum and former airfield of the 390th Bomb Group at Parham airfield. The museum has a large amount of memorabilia from the Bomb Group. The Parham Museum also housed another museum dedicated to a relatively unknown group that was established to counter any invasion threat by the German forces. These units were composed of civilian men and woman who would fight the German forces if the invasion occurred. Some details of these units are still governed by the British Official Secrets Act. In the evening we had a party and feasted on fish and chips at the Victoria pub at Felixstowe.

Sunday was a day of rest which most of us needed. However, we did visit many of our host's homes.

Monday was occupied with a visit to the American Cemetery in Cambridge. It always invokes sad memories when visiting the gravesites of the men you flew with some 54 years ago. The management of the American cemetery goes out of their way to be helpful. Knowing in advance that members of the 356th Fighter Group would be visiting the cemetery, American and British flags were placed at each grave site marking the location of a former 356th man who died in the service of his country. After our visit to the cemetery, we proceeded to the Duxford Imperial War Museum and the American hanger at Duxford. Many WW-II aircraft are in the hanger,

showed several large radio controlled models including his own HP Halifax. It is now practical to fly multi-engined models because they can be powered by electric motors, which are wired together thus ensuring synchronised output. With retractable undercarriage, flaps, arielons and rudder control and a wing span of around 5ft these models are most impressive and apparently tend to emulate the flying characteristics of their full sized counterparts. Trevor Stannard was also present and showed his Mitsubishi Betty, WW2 twin-engine bomber. The second part of the evening saw a practical demonstration by Mr. Stan Sawyer of feather light flying. With an endurance of several minutes and the use of ultra-light materials these rubber-powered models are highly developed and most skilfully built, a fascinating evening.

Our November meeting was an illustrated talk by Sgt. Mick Lambert, a Winchman with No.22 Search and Rescue Squadron, based at Wattisham. With more than 3800 hours flying time behind him and involvement in about 300 rescues Mick Lambert gave a talk which certainly held his audience. He outlined the command structure in the UK for air and sea rescue. The emergency services are alerted through a sophisticated system of communication which includes satellites and very little time elapses before help is on its way. Mick Lambert gave a matter of fact description of his role but no one present was in any doubt that his is a skilful, dangerous and exciting occupation. The vote of thanks was given by Gordon Kinsey, who informed the audience that No.22 Squadron was actually formed at Martlesham in 1924.

December and the occasion of our annual Dance and Social. It was a sell out and all the guests had a thoroughly good time dancing to the 'big band' type music of "Rhythm & Reeds", good 'ole Glenn Miller!

There were many prizes for the raffle and Daphne Taylor had organised a "silent auction". Items were arranged on a table and guests were invited to write their bid on a separate piece of paper for each item. The person who bid the most then bought the merchandise. All proceeds went to the Stained Glass Window project

### **Ed.**

#### ***GAS TURBINES AND JET PROPULSION FOR AIRCRAFT***

You may remember that in the September issue of "Runway 22" I included a picture of "*A proposed design of a power egg in which the turbine-compressor unit drives a contra-rotating airscrew . The efflux of the turbine is utilised as a jet for auxiliary propulsion*". This was from a book, which was published in April 1944. I said that I was surprised that we had

cover but the Hurricanes were in pursuit. One BR20 bomber, whose pilot was probably shot, performed its first and last loop before diving into the sea. Flt.Lt. Blatchford had caught the upper main plane of a CR42 with his propeller. Nevertheless, with a badly vibrating engine he made repeated dummy runs against the other Fiats, which turned and flew back to the Continent. He said afterward that it was the best party he had been to!

One CR42 spiralled and landed on the shingle beach at Orfordness and was only slightly damaged. This machine can now be seen in the RAF Museum at Hendon. Another CR42 was badly damaged when it landed in a ploughed field at Corton, near Lowestoft. A BR20 bomber was chased inland towards Woodbridge and with a propeller missing, made a forced landing in Tangmere forest near the present RAF Woodbridge base.

These were the first Tuscan enemies to land on English soil since the Romans, nearly 2000 years ago. A bottle of Champagne, a bottle of Chianti and a 5lb cheese and cheese grater were rescued from the bomber and were much appreciated when they appeared on the menu at the officers mess at Martlesham that evening!

On November 23rd a further force of Italian aircraft attacked a convoy in the North Sea and lost 7 more aircraft. This was the last recorded action by the Italians.

Was this all a costly propaganda stunt? Did Mussolini really believe that the Italian Air Force could do better than the hard-hitting Luftwaffe, with its much more superior aircraft and crews, had failed to do?

**Gordon Kinsey**

### ***MONTHLY MEETINGS ROUNDUP***

In our September meeting we welcomed back one of our Hon. Vice Presidents', Wing Commander Dick Storer. Those who attended his first talk will recall that Dick Storer had 32 eventful years during his career in the RAF. Dick, who now runs the Rare Breeds Farm at Baylham, recounted his time at Farnborough when he commanded one of the two squadrons that were there to facilitate the experimental programme at the Royal Aircraft Establishment. Finally something completely different! Dick Storer was appointed Air Attaché to the British Embassy in Brussels. Certainly an action packed career from flying Vampires, Hunters and Vulcans and being a leader and then CO of the Red Arrows and culminating in a diplomatic post.

Our October meeting was a talk and practical demonstration of radio controlled model aircraft and indoor feather light flying. Mr. John Ranson

including the beloved, (from my point of view), P-47 Thunderbolt. One interesting display outside of the American hanger was a V-1 Buzz bomb.

Other experiences included a side trip to a medieval castle, a very entertaining carriage ride and lunch at a pub, and a visit to the market town of Bury St. Edmunds. While in Bury St. Edmunds we encountered some heavy rain showers, which was probably fortunate. If it had not been raining, we probably would have had to buy another suitcase to carry our purchases home!

On the final day in Ipswich we had a farewell dinner at the Black Tiles in Martlesham. We enjoyed the dinner very much and the gifts we received from our British friends and will always remember the talk and humour of Gordon Kinsey who my wife would like to adopt.

On a personal note, Geoff Pleasance, the well-known British artist, presented me with two drawings of the P-47 OC P, the P-47 that my roommate, and I Airus Bergstrom flew during part of our combat tour. Upon gazing at the painting, Airus Bergstrom said, "I could see the runway straight ahead, count 5 when it became my turn to peel & then pull it hard left and get my head up to find the guy in front of me. Got some flaps now and the gear is coming down. Lots of noise and then the big thump as the wheels came down and lock. Still got a quarter turn and I'm hot, so, more flaps, more power off and back on the stick. More noise when the wheels touch & skid, more power off and let the tail down when I'm in position on the guy ahead. Now it's off the runway, a little essing and I turn off to the parking area, shut her down and take a big sigh and let my chin fall down on my chest. It's over for another day". Bergy expressed our thoughts after each mission.

We want to thank all the members of the Martlesham Heath Aviation Society who made our trip such a wonderful experience. To paraphrase Bob Dunnett, it's not just the history that we revisited, it's the close friendships that we've established that really count. We are planning another trip to Martlesham Heath in the spring of the year 2000. In the meantime, hope to see all of you at the next 356th reunion in Portland Maine in September 1999.

**Ed Malo.**

### ***RAF MARTLESHAM HEATH REUNION 1999***

Largely through the initiative and efforts of Daphne Taylor, the Society is arranging a reunion of ex RAF personnel who served at RAF Martlesham at any time during its history. Daphne, whose husband served here in the post war period, is in touch with several interested people. It has been advertised in the RAF News and on Teletext, page 682. The reunion will take place on the weekend of the 18th to 20th June 1999. Special party

rates are being negotiated with a hotel. It is proposed that guests will arrive sometime on Friday 18th. Gordon Kinsey has been invited to give an illustrated talk about the history of the aerodrome in the evening. On Saturday a tour of places of interest, including the control tower and the museum. Followed by a light lunch at the "Douglas Bader". In the evening a celebration dinner. On Sunday a Service at St. Michael's and All Angels followed by a wreath laying at the Twin Memorials.

**Ed.**

### ***RAF MARTLESHAM HEATH 1950***

As a National Service 'erk' I served in the medical branch of the RAF and was posted to Martlesham during the early summer of 1950. Several names come to mind, Flight Sergeant Maurice Taylor in Sick Quarters. The Medical Officer was Flying Officer, (later Flight Lt), Peter Chalk. He was a keen flier and often flew as Navigator in a DH Mosquito.

I remember taking a short trip in that Mosquito. We flew to Orford to fire some rockets, it seemed to take an age to dive on to the target and I was glad that no ack ack guns were trained on us!

The CO when I was there was Wing Commander W G Oldbury DFC. Also Squadron Leader A L Law. Flight Lt. Fishwick was an engineering officer. I seem to remember that one of the pilots wore riding boots when in uniform!

Flying Officer Cork and a sergeant were both tragically killed when their light aircraft crashed about 10 minutes out of Martlesham. I believe it was a Percival Provost.

The time passed at a very fast pace possibly because I was doing something completely different. I remember it as a happy time and trips in the following aircraft were an added bonus, the Avro Anson, DH Dove, Avro Lincoln and of course the DH Mosquito.

**James T Crisp.**

### ***REMEMBRANCE DAY 1998***

The annual Service of Remembrance which is organised by Martlesham Heath Aviation Society and Martyn Cook in particular, took place on Sunday 8th November in front of the twin memorials on the barrack square. We were spared the rain and grateful for the relatively mild conditions. Ken Wilding took the parade as usual and the Rev. Brian Lillistone conducted the Service. Thanks to all those who took part and attended.

**Ed.**

### ***REMEMBRANCE DAY 1940***

This was a memorable day in the life of the Heath, as there was a lull after the hectic days of the "Battle of Britain", in which Martlesham Heath had played its part and had been host to many of the outstanding personalities of the conflict. It was a memorable day because on November 11th 1940 the Italian Air Force mounted an attack against England and Hurricanes from Martlesham were involved in intercepting them.

British Intelligence was aware of the presence of Italian Air Force units operating from airfields formerly occupied by the Luftwaffe. However, little was known until an Italian aviation magazine published the news that an "Italian Expeditionary Force" was established along the Channel coast, with other units operating from Belgium. The force was named as the "Corps Aerio Italiano, (Italian Air Corps) and the estimated strength was between 300 and 400 aircraft including fighters, fighter-reconnaissance, fighter-bombers and bombers. Later, when some of these machines had been shot down, RAF Intelligence were of the opinion that they belonged to the First Air Fleet, from Milan.

The Italian press reported victories over the RAF Hurricanes and Spitfires and also claimed that they had bombed London. At this time no Italian aircraft had been brought down over the mainland and it appears that the extent of their operations consisted of some spying flights in the Dover area, whilst a few were engaged on nuisance flights over Southern England at night.

On Armistice Day, November 11th 1940, after being inspected by many high-ranking officers, the cream of the Corps Aerio Italiano were briefed to set out on a major strike against the UK. The formation comprised 10 Fiat BR20 twin-engine bombers, which were equivalent to the RAF Whitley, and 40 Fiat CR42 fighters, which were biplanes in the Gloster Gladiator class. Their target was harbour installations at Harwich.

Bawdsey and Gt. Bromley radar had detected the force and RAF Fighters from Hornchurch, North Weald and Martlesham were scrambled. No. 257 Squadron from Martlesham claimed 5 BR20's and 2 CR42's destroyed. They also claimed, 1 BR20 and 3 CR42's damaged. No. 46(F) and 245 (F) Squadrons from North Weald claimed a further 2 BR20's and 3 CR42's as probables.

Flight Lt. Blatchford led 257 Squadron from Martlesham that day as the CO, Sqd.ldr. Stanford-Tuck was off duty. They made rendezvous with 46 Squadron over the North Sea at 12000ft. The aircraft were sighted in a tight "vic" formation surrounded by the fighters. The bombers made for cloud