

EDITORIAL

Once again a very happy New Year to everybody!

The 356th Fighter Group Reunion was held in Washington DC from the 16th to the 18th September 2005 and MHAS was represented by our members, David Bloomfield and Vic Wilkinson attended. David was accompanied by his wife, Ann. I have included their reports of what was clearly a very enjoyable visit.

We sometimes forget that RAF Martlesham Heath reverted to experimental work in the early post war years and I have included an interesting article submitted by Alan Smith, about the Blind Landing Experimental Unit.

Another story with a Martlesham connection is submitted by the speaker for our January meeting. It relates to the development of the Avro 748 and the rough landing conditions especially prepared at Martlesham.

A few light hearted bits and bobs as usual. Please enjoy and don't forget folks, our newsletter relies on its readers supplying some of the input! So if you have an interesting story, especially if it relates to Martlesham, please send it along.

ED

DAVID AND ANN BLOOMFIELD – 356TH FIGHTER GROUP REUNION SEPTEMBER 2005 – WASHINGTON DC.

We arrived in Washington in the late afternoon. The hotel was situated in a lovely park setting with a small lake nearby and the weather was very hot. After settling into our room and a quick freshen up, we made our way up to the 256th FG Hospitality room. We were greeted warmly by old friends i.e. Nancy Hough and her cousin Carol, The Malo's, Ann Tukey, Ken & Brita Male and Bob Schmidt. Then we met Jim Stowell and Joannnn Ziegler - (it was good to put faces to names we had only seen on emails over the past few months!) They had been responsible for most of the organising of the reunion, and what a brilliant job they did. By this time most of the 24 veterans, their relatives and friends had arrived at the hotel and they were happy to exchange stories and look at each other's photos while enjoying a drink.

On Friday 16th September we met up with the remaining members of the reunion after breakfast and then on to the Smithsonian Museum as reported by Vic. We returned to the hotel by about 3pm and then the two of us went to a local shopping mall for a bit of retail therapy!!

At dinner on Friday we sat with Doreen Burwell, the widow of a veteran who died 4 years ago. Doreen was born in Foxhall Road, met Ray while he was at Martlesham and married in Rushmere Church. She was pleased to meet us and to talk about Ipswich! Doreen had brought her 2 daughters, a grand-daughter and her husband with her and they were so pleased to hear about their dad and granddad from some of the veterans who flew with Ray. We will definitely keep in touch and hope they will visit here sometime.

We were really pleased to meet a few other 'English brides' - Hilda Davis, Doe Thorough and Stella Ricker. It was good to meet again several other veterans - Alex Kovacs, Rolf Chickering and Aims Bergstrom to name a few. As Vic said the after dinner speaker, John McConnell, was excellent. We had watched George Bush on TV the previous evening giving his speech about New Orleans and how the government were going to go about getting it back to its former glory. We were both very impressed by this speech and then to be told by John McConnell that he had written most of it - we felt very privileged to have met him.

After this speech Ed Malo read a letter from Robert outlining all that had been done at the museum and wishing the reunion a success. David was then asked if he wanted to say a few words! He is certainly not a speechmaker and being asked to speak after George Bush's senior speechmaker was quite a daunting prospect. Needless to say it was only a few words!!!

Saturday 17th September and As Vic said, we had a good, although very hot, humid and tiring trip to Washington on Saturday.

We met for drinks in the hospitality room in the evening and then down for the banquet. We joined Joyce & Steve Richason (sadly not in his white dress uniform), the Tukeys and Mark Copeland this. Before the meal a colour party marched into the dining room, then everyone swore allegiance to the flag and sang the National Anthem (how patriotic they all are!). A military band played while we ate and then a dance band played afterwards. I must say we were too exhausted, with all our walking round Washington, to dance and were really shown up by Hilda & Cliff Davis who really enjoyed their dance (Hilda usually needs a stick to get around)

Sunday started with a memorial service taken by Ken Male when we remembered 17 veterans who had died since the last reunion. A small flag for each was erected by Ray Withers.

We then had to say farewell to most people with promises to meet again sometime if possible.

As Vic reported we had a very good day out with Nancy and her cousins for the rest of the day. Doreen and family did not leave until Monday so we met up with them for a meal on the Sunday evening before saying farewell.

We brought several messages back to Martlesham from friends of the 356th. What a great bunch of people they are and we were so pleased and honoured to be part of their reunion this year.

On Monday Nancy drove the two of us to New York on Monday on her way back to Boston. This was about a 6hour drive and although she hadn't driven in the city before, she was fantastic - delivering us safely to the door of our hotel, which was only 2 minutes from the Empire State Building. We had a wonderful few days in 'The Big Apple' seeing all the famous sights including going to a baseball match at the Yankee stadium.

A truly memorable holiday.

DAVID BLOOMFIELD

VIC WILKINSON – 356TH FIGHTER GROUP REUNION – WASHINGTON DC

24 Veterans attended and they were accompanied by some 80 relatives and our MHAS contingent – Myself and David and Ann Bloomfield. I had arrived the day before David and Ann. After an administrative problem had been resolved which had meant spending the Wednesday night in Maryland instead of Virginia, I spent the rest of Thursday sight seeing in Washington visiting the Ford theatre where President Lincoln was shot (by John Wilkes Booth) and to his friend Peterson's house just across the street where the President died next day (15th April 1865). Next to the old post office tower with panoramic views of the city, on to the Capitol, Library of Congress, Supreme Court and finally the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum .All this when the temperature was 95F!

Friday 16th. The whole group visited the new facility at Dulles airport which now houses much of the Smithsonian collection named after it's principal benefactor Steven F. Udvar-Hazy who gave \$60M towards it initial cost of \$125M. The complex covering over 750,000 square feet was opened on 15th December 2003 and will eventually house some 300 aircraft and many thousands of air and space related artefacts. Among the many aircraft on display were the B29 Enola Gay of Hiroshima fame (those of us who were at the 2001 reunion also saw Bockcar ,the Nagasaki B29, at the Wright Patterson museum in Dayton Ohio), the X35 Joint Strike Fighter, the NASA Space Shuttle Enterprise, the only surviving examples of the Arado 234, Okha-22 (Kamakasi) and the Japanese M6A1 'Seran'. The Seran was only discovered during the occupation of Japan. The Japanese were building a fleet of very large long-range submarines each capable of carrying four of these aircraft. The intention was to have attacked targets on the eastern seaboard of the United States such as the Empire State build. Statue of Liberty and the Panama canal! Other exhibits included a Hurricane, Lysander, FW190, Air France Concorde, Bell XVI 5 (Osprey prototype) and SR71 Blackbird.

The 'Langley Aerodrome' which the Smithsonian had championed as beating Orville Wright's flight is also on display. This support for Langley, who just happened to be a Smithsonian official, had led to the bitter dispute between the Smithsonian and the Wrights resulting in the Wright flyer being in England from 1928 until 1948, most of that time in the Science museum in London. When the Smithsonian finally acknowledged Orville Wright's achievement, the Flyer was returned to the States. After the Friday evening banquet, we enjoyed an after dinner speech from the President's chief speech writer who treated us

to a fascinating insight into life in the Oval office close to the President. Saturday 17th.

The group visited the very impressive WW2 memorial in Washington. David, Ann and myself then stayed downtown to view sites of interest, firstly the Korean and Vietnam war memorials, the Lincoln memorial, where Martin Luther King gave his "I have a Dream" speech, thence across the Potomac to the Arlington cemetery to visit the JFK memorial, then back to the WW2 memorial and Washington monument and the White House. Another ride on the "Tourmobile", an essentials way of getting round this part of the city, to the Capitol, and finally the Smithsonian so that David and Ann could also see the Wright Flyer, Spirit of St Louis, Bell XI, Amelia Earhart's Lockheed Vega and Voyager that Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager succeeded in December 1986 of flying round the world without stopping or refuelling. Among the many other exhibits are an ME262, Bf109, Spitfire, Apollo 1 command capsule, the back up Lunar rover vehicle, and Hubble space telescope. The list could go on and on! Saturday evening concluded with ceremonies and another banquet.

Sunday 18th After the remembrance of the 17 veterans who had died since the last reunion, the three of us enjoyed the hospitality of Nancy Hough's cousin Bob and Pat Schrader at their beautiful home in Maryland. Bob even showed us his coffee cup and saucer from the Graf Zeppelin! Just to put the icing on what had been a very rich cake, they took us out for a lovely meal at a restaurant overlooking Annapolis harbour and a tour of the Naval Academy, their equivalent of Dartmouth.

On Monday David and Ann went on to New York and I returned to the U.K.

VIC WILKINSON

BLIND LANDING EXPERIMENTAL UNIT.

The Blind Landing Experimental Unit (BLEU) was formed on the 1 October 1945 at Woodbridge as an outstation of the RAE, moving to Martlesham Heath in July 1946 and continued to use Woodbridge as a satellite intermittently.

It was disbanded into the Bomb Ballistic and Blind Landing Experimental Establishment on 1 November 1949 and eventually became the Armament and Instrument Experimental Unit (AIEU) on 1 May 1950.

The BLEU was formed to develop a method of landing aircraft in foggy and bad weather conditions. Conditions which caused the loss of many aircraft during wartime when returning to base from operations in deteriorating conditions, especially at night.

Its work was also seen as essential for the operation of V-Bombers at any time irrespective of the weather conditions.

To this end the unit was charged with the development of automatic approach and landing in these conditions.

Many experimental landing approaches and landings were made at Woodbridge because of its lengthy and wide runway and unrestricted approach with only Orfordness Lighthouse to cause distortion to the radio beam used for the approach.

Squadron Leader Ross, then a Flight Lieutenant, navigator has told of the puzzlement by the locals when he left his lodgings in Ipswich in on foggy nights to go to Woodbridge for flying, and in fact on one occasion he tells that he was stopped on the road by a policeman who warned him of an accident ahead, and remarked that there were even some B--- fools flying aircraft from Woodbridge. The Squadron Leader did not enlighten him.

We have made contact with Wing Commander Ron Everson, who as a Flight Lieutenant, was in charge of the flying side of the unit during the early 1950.

He has told us of the following episode when the system had been developed and trials to test the automatic approach and landing in foggy conditions at London Airport (Heathrow).

He said that it was difficult to fit the tests in with civil aircraft movements but on 13 December 1951 it was reported that London Airport was closed because of fog and that no further flights were being accepted. Permission was obtained for carrying out automatic approaches and landings in the BLEU's Devon aircraft Serial WF984, which was fitted for automatic approach. He goes on to say "We became airborne from Martlesham Heath for London Airport early in the evening of 13 December. On board was F/Lt Everson, pilot, Dennis Evans, navigator, Mike Burgan, John Mercer and Mr. Burgess of the boffin's fog flying team. On arrival at LA we were taken over by approach control and I made an approach and landing using GCA (Ground Control Approach). The visibility at the time was given as 40 yards. The most difficult part had yet to come, finding the parking apron. After some very cautious taxiing from blue light to blue light we eventually made it. I believe I am right when I say that an Air France aircraft which had landed in fog the previous night was unable to find the way to the apron and unloaded its passengers on the airfield!! Or so I heard,!! .

Having reached the apron we switched off the engines and John Mercer went to the control tower to organise the evening's flying of circuits and landings using the automatic approach gear. He returned a little later looking very dejected. We would not be permitted to fly. Why? Following our landing the Airport Fire and Rescue Service had stood down at the end of their shift and the new shift had not been able to get to the airport because of the fog!!! We spent the night in the Aliens accommodation. At first light it was still very foggy, visibility 30 to 50 yards (from my log book), but we were given permission to take-off to return to Woodbridge. I guess the Emergency Services had managed to reach the airport at some time during the night. We

landed at Woodbridge using automatic approach in a visibility of 50 yards (log book). So ended out first attempt to test the automatic gear at London Airport. I believe it was on this occasion, when returning through Woodbridge town that John Mercer, wanting some cigarettes, called at the tobacconist in the Thoroughfare. On his return he said the tobacconist had commiserated with him on the poor visibility and had added that some B... fool was flying over at RAF Woodbridge.

Further flights were made to London Airport to carry out the test at later dates I believe in the Viking the unit had as well as the Devon.

The AIEU was disbanded at Martlesham on 30 June 1957 and the blind landing work was taken over by RAE Bedford.

Submitted by **ALAN SMITH**

IMPRESSIONS OF A PILOT

Flight is freedom in its purest form,
To dance with the clouds which follow a storm;

To roll and glide, to wheel and spin,
To feel the joy that swells within;

To leave the earth with its troubles and fly,
And know the warmth of a clear spring sky;

Then back to earth at the end of a day,
Released from the tensions which melted away.

Should my end come while I am in flight,
Whether brightest day or darkest night;

Spare me your pity and shrug off the pain,
Secure in the knowledge that I'd do it again;

For each of us is created to die,
And within me I know,
I was born to fly.

— *Gary Claud Stokor*

MAJOR FREDDIE WINTLE

There resides in our modest little library in the Control Tower Museum a most important book. I know because I donated it! The book is by the Chief Scientific Officer to the Government during WW2, Professor RV Jones. He first obtained permission to publish the book in 1978 and the title? "Most Secret War".

It is a totalling fascinating and authoritative account of many of the complex technological battles fought during the war. One more light-hearted passage in the book is related by Professor Jones and I have condensed the gist of it simply because it tickled my sense of humour!

RV Jones relates that he was walking across Horseguards Parade to his office one day in the summer of 1940 when he received a slap on the back from someone he knew vaguely from his home town of Norwood. His name was Freddie Winter and he was a Major in a cavalry regiment. "How's the war going for you?" asked the eccentric Major. The most urgent problem of the time was the necessity to combat the clever German Knickebein radio direction-finding system and some progress in blocking it was being made, so Professor Jones was able to reply that it was, "taking an interesting turn."

Then, a few days later Jones read on a news placard, "Army Officer in the Tower. This, of course turned out to be none other than Major Winter. Apparently he had been ordered back to his regiment and he had argued that instead he should return to France where he could, "stiffen the morale of the French so that they would not give in." His reason for this was that he claimed to know the psyche of the French better than most because he had been an instructor at the French Staff College at St. Cyr. For reasons not explained by Professor Jones he had gone to the Director of Air Intelligence to protest about his posting and the Director had accused him of cowardice for not wishing to rejoin his regiment. It was not a good idea to suggest to Major Wintle that he was a coward and he immediately drew his revolver and said the "your kind ought to be shot", or words to that effect! He was thereupon arrested and sent to the Tower of London, no less.

Looking forward to the Court Martial was, Professor Jones words, "one light relief during the dark days of the "Battle of Britain."

Major Wintle duly appeared in the dock, suitably immaculately dressed, on the morning of the Court Martial. Leather and brass gleamed and breeches were beautifully pipeclayed. Monocle firmly screwed into his eye, he glared at the Court. One of the charges brought was that he had faked defective vision in his right eye. In fact he had lost the sight of one eye in the Great War and he had bluffed the doctor at his re-entry into the Service into believing that he had good vision in both eyes. That charge was dropped!

The more serious charge was that he had threatened to shoot the Air Commodore concerned, along with other Ministers of the Crown and certain RAF and army officers. He began to name his list of candidates but was cut short by the Prosecuting Council. When questioned as to why he should intimidate the Air Commodore he claimed that he could never intimidate "that man". He said that if he had gone into his office and shouted, "the Air Ministry's on fire," he would take up his pen and write a minute to someone about it!

The indomitable Major was severely reprimanded. If the sentence seemed lenient let us not forget that it was, after all, an Army Court Martial and the main charge was the one of assaulting a RAF officer!

Professor Jones then heard no more of Major Freddie Wintle until he learned that he had volunteered for the Special Operations Executive and been parachuted into France. So much for cowardice! He was picked up by the Vichy French and incarcerated in Toulon jail He escaped on his second attempt and made his way to Spain and there the trail went cold again.

At the end of the war who should appear again, but the irrepressible Major. He was once again back in Norwood when his car failed to take a bend and crashed into a house. "My dear lady", said the gallant Major to the occupant, "you must be upset. What you need is a sherry", and with that he went to the pub to buy a bottle to placate the woman. Apparently Major Freddie Wintle was standing as a Liberal candidate for Norwood against the Conservative candidate, Duncan Sandys. Professor Jones subsequently said how much he would have preferred Freddie Wintle to have been his MP!

The last episode involving the wonderfully eccentric Major Wintle occurred when he was once again prosecuted. Apparently he had lured a solicitor to a flat because he thought that the solicitor was tricking one of his female relatives into making over her money to him. He forcibly relieved said solicitor of his trousers and was sentenced to six months in gaol for assault. When he was released from prison he managed to prove his case against the solicitor. The legal battle was fought right up to the House of Lords without any professional aid. The Times headline being, "Cavalry Officer Jumps Last Fence To Win!"

When he died, in 1966, a friend drank a bottle of Glenfiddich at the funeral at Canterbury Cathedral and then, "through a mist of whisky and tears", sang the "Cavalry Last Post" and "Cavalry Reveille" to the astonished worshippers.

Perhaps this was rather an odd chapter to quote from RV Jones book, "Most Secret War", but I contend that it was worth the telling! The book itself is a tour de force of our successes and failures in the electronic war and I recommend it to all.

ALAN POWELL

The following piece, submitted by our member, Phil Sheaf is so unlikely its just got to be true! ED

"Circa 1943. A naval lieutenant, one David Hunter, an inmate of Colditz Castle, had hurled abuse at Reinholt Eggers an officer of the camp guard, calling the Germans 'murderers' He found himself arrested and sent to Graudenz, a Wehrmacht military prison. The Germans sent some of their own men there for punishment.

He was taken aback to find that he was allowed a German batman, a chap in the next cell, to attend his needs. It appears that his fellow prisoner cum batman had been a former colonel in the Luftwaffe. This former colonel had been found guilty of "aviational unchastity". He had been in the habit of flying his ME-109 under bridges on an autobahn. Then he was issued with a new aeroplane, a ME-110. This had a twenty foot wider wingspan so when he flew under the bridge he left ten feet off each end. At that time they were short of aircraft and didn't need him, so he was stripped of his rank and given four years in the slammer and told he could make up Lt. Hunter's bed and clean his boots which probably taught him a thing or two"

From a book, "Colditz, the Definitive History", by Henry Chancellor PHIL SHEAF.

DID I READ THAT SIGN RIGHT?

Toilet out of order – Please use floor below.

In a Laundromat:- Automatic washing machines – Please remove all your clothes when the light goes out.

In a London Department store:- Bargain Basement upstairs.

In an office:- Would the person who took the step ladder yesterday please bring it back or further steps will be taken.

In an office:- After the break, staff should empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board.

Outside a second-hand shop:- We exchange anything – bicycles, washing machines, etc. Why not bring your wife along and get a wonderful bargain?

Notice in health food shop:- Closed due to illness.

Spotted in a Safari Park:- Elephants please stay in your car.

Seen during a conference:- For anyone who has children and doesn't know it, there is a day-care centre on the first floor.

Notice in a farmer's field:- The farmer allows walkers to cross the field for free – the bull charges.

Notice on a repair shop door:- We can repair anything. (Please knock hard – the bell doesn't work).

THE GENESIS OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE ANDOVER

In 1958 A.V.Roe & Co. Ltd at Woodford, decided to re-enter the civil airliner market and produce an aircraft that could fly with modern safety into all the small rough airfields that the DC3 Douglas Dakota were using worldwide. I had joined the company two years earlier as a test pilot and so I got to know the aircraft from its inception. The Avro marketing team realised that there were thousands of these aircraft being used in the Third World and that there was a real need for a new aircraft that could lose an engine at any stage of flight and still continue safely. The Fokker F27 was having some success trying to penetrate this DC3 market but its performance on the shorter and rougher airfields was not good enough to be able to carry a useful payload. Furthermore the F27 wheel loading was higher than was desirable for the poor surfaces on these airfields.

Avro decided to use the same engine as the F27, the Rolls Royce Dart, but opted for the engines to be mounted on top of the wing rather than underneath so that the landing gear could be short and very strong. Furthermore, the tyre size was chosen to be larger than the F27 to try to ensure that the aircraft would not 'sink' into the rough airfields.

The Avro 748 first flew on June 24th, 1960 and by then Avro had Aerolinas Argentinas as the launch customer, with the UK airline Skyways not far behind. Like most aircraft manufacturers, the moment the design of the Avro748 was completed it was decided to improve the aircraft by fitting larger Dart engines, which by then had become available, and so the Avro 748 Series 2 was born, with better all round performance, particularly on short airfields.

The Avro marketing team was working feverishly getting new customers. Fortuitously, there was a need for a Royal Air Force support aircraft able to operate from unprepared strips and Avro offered an aircraft which was to become the Andover CC Mk1 with an enlarged rear freight door which could be opened in flight and a kneeling undercarriage to facilitate loading. In addition, the aircraft had a Dart engine which produced nearly twice as much power as the original Dart engine.

However, before the Royal Air Force was prepared to buy the aircraft it was decided that there must be a demonstration of its rough field capability. The date chosen was 29th January, 1962 and the venue selected was a rough landing strip at Martlesham Heath and Avro decided to use their Series 2 sales aircraft G-ARAY for the demonstration. Martlesham ploughed up the landing strip and on 22nd January Jimmy Harrison, Chief Test Pilot at the time, and I flew down to Martlesham for a practice run. We took with us aircraft jacks, lots of spare wheels and support engineers to change them. We also had the foresight to take a lot of shovels!

We made our first landing which seemed surprisingly short until we discovered that there were mounds of earth in front of our wheels. With a sinking feeling we realised that we were unable to move. However the team used the shovels to great effect and managed to clear the earth. After that we cheered up a bit because we realised that the aircraft had not sunk into the ground but had been merely impeded from moving by the build up of earth. We restarted the engines and heaved sighs of relief when we managed to get the aircraft moving. We were nervous and did not dare to stop in case would not be able to move again. We gingerly turned the aircraft down the runway to the take-off point, managed to turn the aircraft without getting bogged down and opened the throttles for take-off..

Luckily through the years we had developed a standard take-off technique for operating from rough airfields. We would pull the stick back almost immediately the aircraft started to roll to get the weight off the nose wheels. We would then rotate the aircraft when the speed reached V_r . However we had never operated from a ploughed field before and we decided we needed to modify our take-off technique to ensure that we got airborne as quickly as possible. We would lower the take-off flap as usual before the start of the roll but then, as the speed built up, we would further lower the flap to the approach flap setting so that we would be able to pull the aircraft into the air well before the normal rotation speed. Once airborne we would keep the aircraft near the ground to build up speed as quickly as possible before climbing away..

We found that this revised take-off technique worked well and, flushed with success, we returned for landing but we again got bogged down by the mounds of earth in front of the wheels. By now we were getting worried and wondered whether the ploughed field surface provided by Martlesham was going to defeat us. After one or two more landings we decided that it was the braking that was causing the earth build up. Unfortunately, it was taking quite a lot of time after each landing to clear the wheels. We were running out of time. It was getting dark and we had to return back to Woodford definitely unsure and under-confident.

Two days later we tried again with more people and more shovels but with a modified landing technique. After touch down we kept the nose wheels in the air, selected ground fine pitch on the propellers and avoided deliberate braking so we had sufficient elevator control to prevent the nose wheels slamming into the ground. In fact the ground was so rough the aircraft did not need any significant amount of braking and any braking that we did was always done at high speed so that the aircraft momentum carried us over any mounds of earth that might be formed. Feeling more confident we returned back to Woodford ready for the great day.

A.V.Roe's Chief Executive at the time was Air Chief Marshal Sir Harry Broadhurst and one of his maxims was always to pre-position the aircraft if the

operation was important. Unwisely we decided not to pre-position since the weather forecast was good. The pictures show that the UK was in an unseasonal high pressure area with clear blue sky but at the planned time of our arrival the mist had not cleared. Somehow we managed to find the field and to get into position before the Air Marshals and their acolytes arrived in our Series 1 demonstrator G-AYZV, which we had provided to bring in the evaluation team. From that point onwards everything worked like clockwork and we made several demonstration take-offs and landings without any problems, though it must be said that we were not at maximum weight.

As you all know we won the contract and sold not only the Mk1 to Transport Command but the Andover Mk2 to the Queen's Flight. During the life of the Avro748 we did many rough field landings all over the World but I don't think we ever met anything as difficult as at Martlesham. The only comparable airfield I experienced was at Lympne in Kent with Skyways which tended to be like a bog when wet and it was necessary on occasions to close the airfield and operate from Lydd nearby. Generally the rough airfields we encountered were much firmer, shorter, very often surrounded by mountains and more like skating rinks when wet. However the locals were always trying to keep their airfields serviceable; I have never been sure about the ground staff at Martlesham.

TONY BLACKMAN

MONTHLY MEETINGS ROUNDUP

Our October meeting featured a most interesting talk by a lady who came all the way from Hertfordshire. Anne Grimshaw had researched the history of a particular Avro Lancaster that went missing on the night of 26/27th April 1944. It was one of a very large contingent of RAF bombers to raid Germany on that particular night and its fate had never been known until Anne discovered the details. Six crew members are buried in the tiny churchyard in the village of Landeville in a remote part of rural France. The seventh member of the crew survived the crash but was unaware of the location and has since died. Anne Grimshaw has visited the village of Landeville and was able to report that the graves are very well attended and each year a Service of Remembrance for "our RAF boys", as the villagers call them, is held in the church. A vote of thanks for a most interesting and moving evening was given by Gordon Kinsey.

November saw the return of one of our friends who has previously given us a talk. Jock Whitehouse is the chairman of Haverhill Aviation Society and is in possession of a number of slides donated by a former member of his Society, who has since died. The slide show was entitled "East Anglian Air Shows of the 50's and 60's. Many aircraft of that era were shown, including Lightnings,

Avro Vulcans, Hunters, Javelins and Canberras. Much nostalgia was in evidence and a vote of thanks was given by Gordon Kinsey.

Another event held each November is our annual Service of Remembrance, organised by our Chairman, Martyn Cook. We were blessed with reasonably mild weather and representatives from the USAF, the RAF, Army Air Corps, Martlesham Scouts, The Royal British Legion, Felixtowe ATC, The Suffolk Air Crew Association and a representative from B_SERV, the owners of the Martlesham site. Felixtowe Salvation Army Band performed for us once again. Our December meeting is a light hearted affair and we welcomed back a speaker who visited us at least 10 years ago. Rex Garrod is an engineer extraordinaire and his talk was entitled, "The Secret Life of Rex Garrod – Creative Engineer. An extremely clever engineer Rex may be, but he is also an very entertaining and funny speaker. His talk was peppered with videos, slides and demonstrations of his talent. His work has been featured in films and on television. The TV programme for children, "Rosie and Jim" an example of his work. When the principal characters are not being manipulated as puppets their movements are radio controlled courtesy of Rex. A vote of thanks was given by Gordon Kinsey.

ALAN POWELL

We welcome the following new members:- Douglas Baxter, Paul Cochran, Nick Cox, Steve Davies, John Fiske, Eric Flory, Brian Freeman, Geoffrey Kirkham, Kenneth Oatley, John Ruffles, and David Vickers. With apologies to anyone who has been left off the list inadvertently.