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# Museum of Berkshire Aviation

July 2000

News for Museum Members

In This Issue: Check out the progress of the Engineering Section, the Museum film archive, the ML Aviation Open Day, Sonning Parish Church and much, much more .....

**Welcome to the third Newsletter from the Museum of Berkshire Aviation. Hope you enjoy the articles.**

## **ENGINEERING SECTION - THE WEDNESDAY BOYS**

**by John Hanby**

I feel it's time to bring all members, that are not part of the engineering group, upto date in greater detail with the varied activities taking place. Due to the excellent workshop that we now have, work continued at a rapid pace during the winter months in a well lit and warm environment. Recently we were blessed with gifts of a fly press, roller and folding machines along with a vast quantity of sheet metal, rivets, bolts, nuts, etc., from a firm in Wokingham that had no further use of them. This gift will make a great difference to our metalwork repairs, we also have the expertise of John K. and Brian L. who use their own lathes & machine shop facilities to make all the odd hardware that is no longer in production and is a vital link in our restoration work. To say that the engineering group is eternally grateful to these two fellows would be putting it mildly. Now to a breakdown.

### **THE MARTINET**

Now that Ian has joined us, along with his computer and vast knowledge of wooden aircraft, ably assisted by "Monty," much work has

progressed. The temporary longerons made by Dennis and Ted have now been replaced with ones made using the originals as patterns. New fuselage decking and two new frames have been manufactured, all of which have now been installed in the hangar and exhibited with the restored canopy. As time goes by it's hoped to make scale reproduction of the tailplane assembly. The lower cockpit flooring has now been finished, this involved very highly detailed and intricate jigsaw and metalwork, mostly carried out by Dennis and Ted. Members might like to remember that we have none of the original jigs or blueprints to work to, so all replacements have to be made using the original parts as a pattern, plus much stratching of heads by all "the Wednesday Boys" to come up with a reasonable authentic answer. This floor has now been installed along with the main floor consisting of the control column and rudder pedals. This floor had previously been refurbished but was awaiting completion of the lower floor before being installed. Work has now started on restoring the rear spars, the left spar basically complete up to the outer wing joint but the spar outer skin will have to be replaced due to their poor condition. Due to half of the right rear spar being missing, it will be necessary to use the left spar as a mirror image to rebuild the right spar up to the outer wing joint. When both spars are completed the next step will be to install both main landing gear

assembly's with a view to the aircraft being exhibited on its own gear with a tail steady.

### **THE GANNET**

Outside work all but ceased during the winter period, however work has continued in the workshop on the replacement canopy's obtained to replace the vandalised ones. These canopy's being badly scratched required thorough cleaning as a result of neglect and storage. This has involved many hours of work by members, but especially Graham, using "elbow grease" and polish, has indeed worked wonders. To see the transformation shows his dedication to this task, Graham has really worked a miracle.

### **THE STUDENT**

The cockpit centre section is now being stripped down to its separate parts, to use as patterns for the new panels. This involves many long hours of drilling out rivets, mostly carried out by the "Herald members," assisted by "Wednesday Boy" Frank. Good to see that Frank has not lost his "metal bashing" skills over the years and finds the metalwork machines we received a boon to his restoration work.

### **THE BOMB**

The bomb returned to the museum and was put on display by the members. Grateful thanks to Dick who used his contacts at White Waltham to obtain a trolley for final display of bomb. Well done Dick !!

### **THE DC-3**

During the first week of February the DC3 left the museum, as the owner had an offer from a film company for its use in a forthcoming film. The only bad point being that the exhibit might be burnt. Later, news filtered through that the exhibit may not be burnt, but returned to us but with "flak damage", that will be good news. The owner also told members that he wished the exhibit to be positioned outside as a possible childrens showpiece, this will involve improved weather proofing of the exhibit. It was necessary to remove our instruments & display lighting prior to its removal. Removal of the DC3 made room to reposition some of the other exhibits to show them off to better advantage. The Martinet was moved forward, this in turn allows us greater access to rear of aircraft, with the Student now being shown just inside of hangar, instead of being stored between the Magister and Gyrodyne. The Martinet and Student engines have been relocated for better public viewing.

### **NON AIRCRAFT WORK**

"The Wednesday Boys" had a request from the new management, running the tea shop/sales division, requesting refurbishment of the entire area. This was undertaken by all members. Work involved completely clearing the area, repainting, new counters and shelving installed, relocation of heaters and electrical appliances. This was accomplished on two Wednesdays as it was necessary to split the work to allow the public access to the area during the weekend. This was no mean feat considering the work involve. Feedback from "the management" and volunteers has been very good. Another problem that raised it's head during the winter months was rain entering the rear door. The problem was overcome by fabricating and installing a porch canopy. Members are also fully

occupied by the general upkeep of the museum, i.e. gardening, mowing, cleaning, attending to the needs of visitors and the shop. These visitors were very impressed with the ongoing work that we are doing and some are frankly amazed at how we do it.

So finally, a request to all members of the museum that read this news letter and are not involved with "the Wednesday Boys," please pass the word around we would welcome any new members to our group. They don't need aviation skills just basic knowledge of tools or DIY, age is no barrier, after all we are all pensioners. I promise you that the friendship is second to none, there's plenty of laughs and stale jokes but who cares?? And what's more, we make a lovely cup of tea. So come along on a Wednesday for a look see, you will be pleasantly surprised, so come on members pass the word along.

John Hanby (A Wednesday Boy)...

## **ML AVIATION OPEN DAY**

**by Dick Gordon**

After much presentation, which took far longer than anticipated, we managed to collect a considerable amount of 'memorabilia' from the past and with Ken Fostetew's help and guidance, laid out quite an interesting corner for the benefit of ex. ML employees.

The day dawned bright and sunny, luckily, and after a slow start they began to arrive in increasing numbers, eventually totalling about 130, just about capacity of the hangar. Considering it was Cup Final day this was quite a turn out ! How did I come to pick this day !

The press had been informed and camera crews from the Evening Post and Wokingham Times took pictures of the occasion, which were duly published.

We had on display quite a bit of archival data, press cutting, files, old company photo albums and personnel photos which were interesting for the 'older' generation to look back 'on how they were.'

The painting exhibition was well received and we managed to retain, on loan, a painting of a Sea Harrier lifting off the Illustrious, this now hangs above the cafeteria. It was a shame George Bishop (the artist) only died recently. Various other items were donated during the day and so the collection grows.

Two videos were shown of ML 's efforts, one prepared by Alan Lott and another by Wally Stabler, who joined ML's in Slough in 1941 and is still working on the ex ML airfield firing site (now owned by Cobhams Refuelling Flight) this must be quite a record and he is a very good source of information. This video is silent at the moment, but we hope to add a voice over using some of the ex. ML engineers and original experts.

It is worth repeating what an unusual company it was to work for, being basically a design and development company specialising in aviation products. It attracted a wide variety of outstanding engineers producing a huge range of products from wartime (1939 - 45) fighter bubble hoods and glider towing equipment up to the present day Eurofighter weapon carriage. The work variety inspired an unusual amount of loyalty and a lot of people spent most of their working lives with the company - hence the large 25 year name board which will be brought up to date.

We would like to express our thanks to Jean and Ken, Geoff and Margaret and all the other museum helpers for allowing us to host this very successful event. Also thanks especially to the ladies who provided and served refreshments. We also managed to make just over £200 for the museum's coffers which finished off a very satisfactory day.

Thanks everybody.  
Hazel and Dick

## The Museum Film and Video Archive

by Alan E Lott

On 29th November 1999 Don Currie and I visited the RAF Museum at Hendon where we held a meeting with the Museum Film Archivist, Ian Firsk. He kindly allowed us unrestricted use of his facilities to examine thirteen, one hour, U-Matic video tapes containing much early Miles material which had been transferred from 16mm film. By using "fast forward" we managed over three hours to list the significant sections including the factory fire of March 1944(?). The tapes also contained a lot of irrelevant shots. U-Matic is a professional format incompatible with VHS or Super VHS.

Ian stated that we were free to copy any of this material but to do so would involve at least three arduous very long day trips to Hendon, not to mention the expense, so at present we have not proceeded. Also, having seen these tapes we believe that they contain the same material as the three Super VHS tapes, which we have not yet managed to see, but are known to exist; see the previous Newsletter. We would have to take a VHS recorder to Hendon.

Meanwhile I have finally completed the catalogue of the 147 films or part films, as well as the 29 VHS video tapes we now have. Thirteen 100 ft rolls of unperformed 16 mm film were Kodak Recordak microfilm type 7452 which contained several thousand pages of records of the constructional details of the HP Dart Herald. Because we have no means of projecting/studying this material it was agreed with Jean that we should hand them to the Handley Page Association. Amongst our 16mm films we have several short black

and white sequences of the original Herald with the four Leonides engines. "This is obviously rare footage because of the short life of this early version of the Herald.

Early in the New Year, Jean obtained a 30 minute VHS home video from the Chiltern Aviation Society containing shots of over ten types of Miles aircraft, all taken at Woodley. We hope to locate the original source of this material in due course.

In the previous Newsletter I mentioned the problem of identifying the early Douglas seaplane carrying the marking F.82 which we have on 35 mm film. I now have the complete history of this machine from a Mr. Skarphol of Raelingen, Norway. He is a historic aircraft enthusiast. Briefly this plane was constructed at the Naval Flying Boat factory, Horten, Norway. It first flew in December, 1927, later than I had guessed. Its final version was comparable to the Fairey Swordfish. Horten was captured by the Germans in 1940 and it is believed that F.82 was subsequently scrapped. The Navy Museum in Horten has a short film of F.82 which is probably the same film as ours.

As you all know the Woodley Bomb was delivered to the Museum on 14th January. This was recorded by a Meridian News Team and short extracts were shown in local news programmes later the same day. Bernard Bareham and I also made our own video records and Bernard later presented the Museum with a nicely titled and edited copy.

Because we were unable to capture all of the shots and interviews conducted by the Meridian news team I approached Paul Erlam, Director of Meridian TV at Newbury, with whom I have had previous contact, and he kindly donated to the Museum a completely

uncut copy of all of the footage recorded by the news team, complete with all "flubs" on condition that it was for our Archive only, and was not to be used otherwise without his copyright/commercial permission. This was a very gracious gesture.

Our own video team "conscripted" from the Reading Film and Video Makers, (Denis Burke, Margaret Burke, Don Currie and Bernard Barham) are still hoping to complete the Museum video. A script prepared by Denis Burke has been inspected and approved by Jean. Don Currie will speak the commentary and we await a good fine day to take the opening sequences of him standing by the Gannet, one of the many types of aircraft the has flown.

For some time we have had a glass top showcase, near the refreshment area, containing models depicting the basis of map making by aerial photogrammetry. The folding, pocket type, stereo viewers are too small to demonstrate to visitors the greatly magnified vertical scales of such photogrammetric pairs of aerial photographs. Through my membership of the Stereoscopic Society I was eventually put in touch with an ex-Government Surplus dealers, Anchor Supplies of Nottingham. They had one mirror type stereoscopic viewer designed for 10" by 10" photogrammetric pairs as used by the Services during WW2 and ideal for demonstration purposes in our Museum. I was able to persuade them to donate this to our Museum, the only condition being that we displayed a small notice stating that they were the donors. After cleaning the "dust of ages" from it, it is now in good condition. Ken is arranging to find suitable 10" by 10" pairs for viewing and then it will be on display for the public to look through.

Doug Rough put me in touch with a neighbour of his whose late husband was a keen cine enthusiast and a member of the Darlington Cine Society until they moved to Woodley eight years ago. She had donated a Norisound Super 8 mm projector to the Museum and wished to dispose of the rest of his equipment. I helped her to sort out the number of films in his collection and transferred one to video for her. Also one was an early documentary of the Darlington Cine Club, probably taken some twenty or so years ago. Through my membership of the IAC I was able to contact the current Chairman of the Darlington Club and he was very pleased to receive the film from me when I met him at Buxton in April at the Movie 2000 event.

I have been assisting Mrs. Craig in disposing of items of equipment but there are still some unsold. In particular there is an AKAI 4000DS reel-to-reel stereo tape recorder and a heavy duty Slick pan and tilt head suitable for most tripods. If anyone is interested please contact me. Proceeds go to Mrs. Craig. Meanwhile the Noris projector she has donated to us was unsuitable for our 16mm and 35 mm films so after due consideration Ken and I decided to trade it in and apply the proceeds to the Archives. I have sold the machine to a dealer and realised £45 which will be 'ring-fenced' for the Archives.

On Saturday 22nd April, Mr. Harry Fraser Mitchell, Vice President of The Handley Page

Association met with me at the Museum and I handed over the 100 ft rolls of Recordak film mentioned earlier. He was very pleased to receive them. Also when I showed him my completed film listing he was very interested in No. 007, Airflow Over Aeroplane Wings and requested a video copy to illustrate his lectures. This I agreed to provide. He was also very interested to see that we had a number of films of the H.P. Jetstream and has requested videos of these also when I can find time. I think it is important to encourage liaison of this sort between like minded organisations because this helps to unearth previously unknown material to everyone's advantage. Hopefully in due course the Handley Page Association may come across some Miles footage which they will then tell us about.

Last November I contacted John Binge of the Farnborough Air Sciences Trust Association, who like myself, has been trawling through thousands of feet of 35 mm and 16mm films. At the time of contact he had not found any Miles footage but we agreed that in the New Year (now upon us!) we would arrange a meeting. This I must now do.

## Sonning and the War

Did you know that there is a Memorial Window in the Parish Church, Sonning.

Beneath the window attached to the sill is a plaque with the inscription:

"In ever loving memory of John Seymour Ingleby Lieut. RAF only and dearly loved son of the late John F. Ingleby and M.A. Ingleby who was killed in the service of his country June 11 1919."

John Seymour Ingleby lived at Appletree, Thames Street and was reported as joining the Royal Naval Air Service in August 1917 having left Harrow that Easter. The following is from the Parish Magazine July 1919:

"The village was stunned on the evening of June 11th with the news of the sudden death of Lieutenant Seymour Ingleby in a flying accident only 20 years old. After he left Harrow he joined the Flying Corps and served through the war at home and in France, and with the love of a gallant fellow for a life of adventure he was unwilling to give up the flying when he might honourably have done so. ..."

Extracts from Parish Magazine, October 1924, reporting the service of dedication of the window, the gift of John Seymour Ingleby's mother: "The window as you see it represents two figures each chosen with reference to a young soldier, whose memory it is meant to perpetuate alongside the resting place of his body in the churchyard and among the people who saw him move off in England's days of stress to adventure himself for his country's service. In the left hand light you see represented St. George first declared Patron Saint of England at a synod held in our diocese 700 years ago and in whose name we have also in our diocese the noble shrine of St George's Windsor. In the portrait before us St.

George is represented in traditional form as spearing the dragon - overcoming the evil that is in the world, an appropriate symbol of what we most admire in the young manhood of our land. In the r

ight hand light you see St Michael the patron saint of the Air Force treated as a knight in armour with his mantling cloak and wreath and below the badge and motto of the Royal Air Force -per ardua ad astra: the unit of the British Army to which our dear soldier lad attached himself with so much enthusiasm and served long enough in it to win the affection of those who served with him or under him..."

## Obituary

Sydney Goff, 1920 - 2000

Sydney Goff was taken on at Phillips & Powis as an apprentice spar maker in the wings department. Later he was involved with the M.52 project and was the foreman over Tom Jones, amongst others, and was known as 'Sideboard Syd' and 'furniture face' by more cheeky apprentices.

## Reminisces...

Extracts from a letter to Jean Fostekew.

by Mr R Norris

..... the following April I became 14 years of age and the blackout severely restricted my movements out of the house. Although my school Principal had told my mother that she wanted me to sit the entrance exams for Reading School and the Bluecoat School as she thought I might do well I persuaded my parents to let me leave school if I could get a job in war work. I had Phillips and Powis in mind, of course - having heard that they had recently advertised for apprentices - and you know the rest. Well - maybe not all of it! For three years plus I had to cope with WALKING from 13 Cambridge St. in Reading to Woodley in all weathers and back, usually in the dark with a torch, for the first few months until my father bought me a old bicycle at



*Badges belonging to the late Miles Pioneer, Sydney Goff.*

the Cattle Market one Saturday for two shillings. Trying to ride a bicycle down Shepherds House Hill on an icy road is an experience I would not wish on my worst enemy. I hardly ever started out for work in daylight and I certainly never came home in daylight. After my first six months at Woodley in the school I was let loose in various departments to gain experience and my daily hours went from eight to ten and even eleven or twelve on occasion - for six days a week. I was terribly tired - all I wanted to do was eat and sleep. I hardly went out on my day off.

Because I volunteered for aircrew at 17 1/4 yrs. of age - the earliest age at which you could volunteer in those days and was accepted and inducted soon after - and I stayed in the RAF until I was 21 - you could say I never had any teenage years to speak of compared with people before and after the war. It was a piece of my life I have often wondered about. I have never regretted joining the RAF when I did though. I have never regretted joining Miles Aircraft either. But I must admit that I am always thinking of all the 56,000 aircrew of Bomber Command that never came



*Sydney Goff, aged 14, at Phillips & Powis (Miles Aircraft), Woodley 1934 (the smallest boy in the picture).*

back. Every newsletter from 617 Sdn. Assn.) the Bomber Command Assn. and the RAF Assn. - of which I am a member - tells me how many more survivors have died. I received a newsletter from 617 Sdn. Assn. from England a few days ago followed by another from the Canadian Branch of 617 Sdn. yesterday and they both list all the members that have died in the last six months. I just hate reading this part of the "news".

Your item regarding the UXB I found very interesting. I had no idea one had been found. But I remember when I was on roof-spotting duty at Miles (part timing with the Royal Observer Corp.) I spotted a JU-88 approaching from the SE at about 5,000 ft. I wanted to sound the alarm but my senior partner refused as he said it was a Blenheim. It got within three or four miles of the airfield before it turned away and of course my partner said "there you are - what did I tell you - just a damn Blenheim!". Well, that "damn Blenheim" completed a 360 degree turn and headed straight for us again dropping, I believe, three bombs just outside the airfield. Maybe the UXB, you refer to was one of them. I seem to remember seeing the first one drop in the area of the gravel pit which I think was in the SW corner of the airfield. I did not see the others as I hit the floor remembering the stupid look on the face of the other spotter with his mouth wide open and taking no defensive action whatsoever. I never did get an apology from that man either. I was pretty confident of my identification because at the time I had passed a difficult spotter's test of 50 split-second, long-distance minute

cine slides - with credit - which meant that I had identified a minimum of 45 correctly.

### Forthcoming Events at the Science Museum, Wroughton

#### JULY 29 & 30

##### Wroughton Nostalgia Show

All public display hangars will be open for this classic vehicle show which includes arena events, antiques and collectables and a fairground. Viewing of the Air Transport collection may be restricted.

Open 10.00 - 17.00

Admission: Adults £6, children under 14 free.

Enquiries: Regal Fairs 01452 500880

#### AUGUST 19 & 20

##### Festival of Carriage Driving

A cross discipline equestrian event, this weekend will encompass competition driving, classic carriages and coaches, pony traps and hackneys. Highlighting the Museum's carriage collection, all public-display hangars will be open for viewing.

Open 10.00 -17.00

Admission: Adults £5, concessions & children £1, under-5s free.

Enquiries: Science Museum Wroughton 01793 814466

#### SEPTEMBER 03

Science Museum Vintage Fly-in and Open Day An opportunity to see classic and vintage aircraft flying in to Wroughton as well as the collections on display in the public hangars. There will be no access to the Land Transport and Agricultural collections. Open 10.00 - 17.00

Admission to public: Adults £5, children & OAPs free Landing fees: waived for vintage aircraft. Prior Permission Required

Enquiries: Science Museum Wroughton 01793 814466

### Forthcoming RBAS Events

**July 18 Visit** - Science Museum, London including tour of Small Stores Collection (Olympia). See Trevor for more details.

**Sunday 3rd September RBAS Annual Trip** - RAFA Shoreham Airshow. Coach departs 8.15am from Museum car park. No coach charge for RBAS or MBA members. Guests - Adult £3, Children (under 16) £2.

Admission charge for Airshow - on the day - Adult £10, Children £6. Pre-booked tickets - Adult £7, Children £4. Pre-booked tickets must be brought by Tuesday 1st August (RBAS meeting @ White Waltham). See Les, Bob or Trevor for more details.

### Final Thoughts from the Editor

I hope you enjoyed the third newsletter. Don't forget that this is your newsletter, let me know what you think of it and what you would like in the next issue. If you want to write an article, I would be pleased to hear from you.

**Also, please don't forget that the Museum still needs volunteers to man the museum on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the Summer.** If you want to help, please let me know, below you can find my e-mail address. Also, why not check out the website for the Museum, just type:

<http://fly.to/MuseumofBerkshireAviation>  
NEW e-mail address:  
MuseumofBerkshireAviation@fly.to