



Welcome to the 2005 Summer edition of the Museum's Newsletter

Editorial (Brian Lloyd)

Any items of interest you care to submit will be welcomed and almost certainly we will be pleased to publish them. Although we obviously would prefer any articles typewritten (or even better on a disc or via the Museum's e-mail address) we will be happy to receive handwritten submissions.

As you will see from the items immediately below we have some *changes at the top* to announce. For the time being Brian Lloyd will be editing the Newsletter and Keith Freeman will be in charge of the production - but we wish to appoint a full time editor. Any volunteers?? You do not have to be a journalistic whiz kid, but being computer literate is essential. Articles will be received from various sources. Please contact Brian Lloyd if you are interested.

The changes at the top involve the Chairmanship of the Museum Committee. Our most recent Chairman, Trevor Hensley, has moved to the USA for business reasons so is unable to continue as Chairman but he will still manage our web site. For the time being the Committee have appointed our

Treasurer, Rob Wood to carry out the duties of Acting Chairman until a permanent Chairman can be recruited. We would prefer to appoint someone with a good commercial business background to take us forward to develop the Museum with our future plans and help to increase our income. It is not essential for the appointee to be an "Aviation Buff" although this would be a bonus.

We have received the following message from **Trevor Hensley**:

"As you most likely have heard, I have had to step down as chairman due to a new overseas assignment, and more importantly, getting married to Dianne. As outgoing chairman I wanted to put down a few words as the museum enters an important stage in its ongoing development.

"The Museum is entering a very important phase as it tries to move forward the plans for the extension. I am just sorry that I cannot take an active part in this work and see the groundwork start. I hope everyone at the Museum will give their full support to the committee and new chairman, as I know they will all be working hard to make it happen.

"Finally, I would like to thank all of you for your help and friendship over the past few years. I will miss manning the museum on a cold Sunday afternoon in January!"

From **Acting Chairman, Rob Wood**: I am pleased to occupy the position of Acting Chairman for the time being. I will do all I can to help to press ahead with our plans of extending the size of the covered Museum display area. We do have the necessary permissions

but finance is now our major objective. We are researching various finance initiatives - if any member has any strong leads which we could follow up I would welcome a call.

These days there is a trend for Museums to be places of learning as well as places of historical interest and we have to bear this in mind when making any applications for finance.

Regards to everyone and thank you for your individual efforts - and a special thank you to Trevor for everything he has done on behalf of the Museum during his tenure as Chairman.

Curator's Report (Ken Fostekew)

Visitors will notice that we have recently acquired a number of large scale models. One of the most interesting and elegant of these is the superb model of the Miles Hawk Speed Six which was built by Dave Charlish, a member of the original Berkshire Aviation Group. Dave sadly died recently and his widow has very kindly donated this and other of his large scale models to the Museum.

Several of the display boards have been updated and enlarged with some interesting photographic material. Visitors from all over the world have written very complimentary comments in our visitors book.

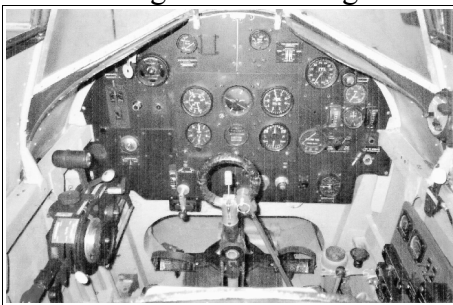
We participated in the Vintage Fly-In at Hullavington on May 21st only to be assaulted by extreme wind and rain (a severe weather warning was issued while we were there); we still managed to make over £100 for the Museum funds in

a very short time, and, of course , as always at these events, generated interest in the Museum.

This is to advise members we are in discussion with Vodaphone about the erection of a mast on our site. This will attract “not unsatisfactory” income for us if it goes through. All of the necessary approvals and permissions are being sought through the official channels with legal advice and neighbours have been advised by Vodaphone, so we are dealing with this carefully.

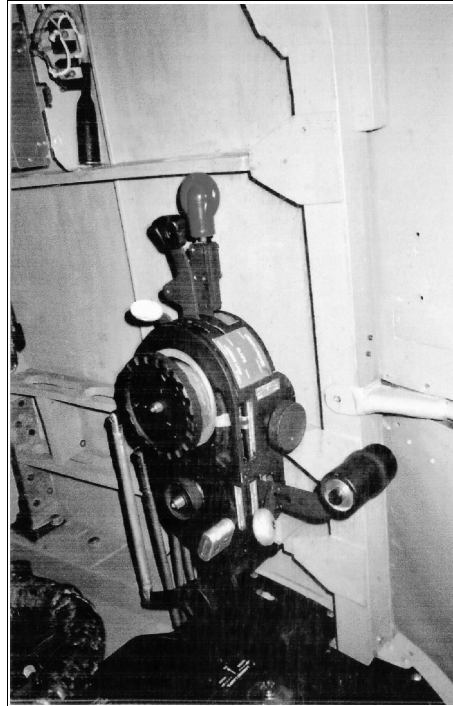
Engineering Report (Geoff Etridge)

The Miles Martinet rebuild is coming along nicely. Everybody involved in this project is working very hard to achieve authenticity of the rebuild. At the moment we are refurbishing the cockpit, this is proving to be a mammoth task as only a few pieces of equipment were left intact; those that were had to be stripped apart and made to operate correctly - as you will see in the accompanying photographs the standard of work is superb. This was all either fabricated according to the drawings in the

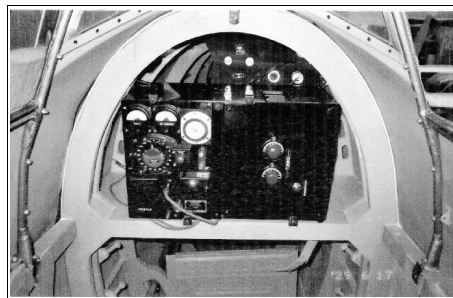


Martinet manual or remanufactured by the people involved. When you visit the museum the next time take a look into the cockpit and you will be amazed at what can be achieved by hard work and

attention to detail by the engineering chaps.



The Miles Student rebuild is also going along pretty well the cockpit outer shell and doors are proving to be a big problem because of the distortion in the forward fuselage caused by the crash in which it was involved but thanks to the efforts of Alan Jerome and Tom Jones, ably assisted by Ian Stables things are coming along nicely. We would all like to wish Tom a speedy recovery from his present illness



The Wednesday group have spent two whole Wednesdays cleaning the Handley Page Herald and it is looking very smart again. We are going to try to refurbish the exter-

nal markings to try to make it look even better.

I hope we can find some time to start on the Fairey Gannet soon as we have not had much chance to do much to it of late; maybe we can start doing the interior work during the winter months.

You will be pleased to know that the mini-link trainer is up and running full time and hopefully will start paying us back for all the time and effort that has gone into it

Last but not least can I say a big thank you to the chaps that are keeping the outside of the hangar and area around the Herald neat and tidy, I don't know what we would do without their efforts at the lawn mowing and weed control.

Work Carried Out by the "Wednesday Lads" for the Thames Valley and Chiltern Air Ambulance.

Towards the end of 2004 the Museum was approached by the TV and Chiltern Air Ambulance, which is based at White Waltham Airfield, to repair and modify the life size trailer mounted model which is used for fund raising at various locations throughout the area. This work was necessary following accidental damage.

To this end Museum volunteers, Ian Simmons, Ted Prestige, Colin Galbraith, Dennis Harvey and Eric Snapes carried out repairs. In doing so, the attachment to the trailer was also modified to make the whole assembly safer and more road worthy.

As can be seen on the photograph, cradles were fabricated and welded steel brackets were made to firmly attach the fuselage to the trailer. The first Fund Raising outing for



the modified unit was at the John Lewis store at High Wycombe.

The Thames Valley management recognised the work carried out by the Museum, by a very nice letter of thanks and a Certificate of Achievement.

The Museum was very honoured to be asked and happy to help such a worth while Charity

Publicity and Press Report (Brian Lloyd)

Members will be pleased to hear that we have continued the embargo on paid advertising but this does not appear to have created a reduction in our admissions. However, we still need more visitors, so please tell your friends and relatives about us. A warm and friendly welcome awaits them at the Museum. All of us are potential salesman so please spread the word. If you have any publicity ideas, please direct them to Brian Lloyd. We do not have any major publicity plans in the pipeline but we keep our eyes and minds open for opportunities.

Ken and Jean Fostekew continue to do sterling work for us by conducting group visits and giving talks. If you have anyone interested in a talk or a group visit, please contact Brian Lloyd in the first place so that the enquiry can be filtered. Also, our Museum is available for hire for small groups

who may wish to hold a small attendance meeting.

Do not forget our Membership offer which we announced in an earlier Newsletter. An introductory discount is given to existing members, subject to conditions.

Volunteers required. There is a small percentage of our members who kindly volunteer their services to help us to man the Museum, especially at weekends. We would like to increase this percentage so the load is more widely spread. The duties are not onerous or physical, aviation knowledge is not critical and "on the job" training will be provided. A day here and there throughout the year would be of great help to us and much appreciated by the current hardcore. If you can help us please contact Jean or Ken Fostekew.

Membership Report (Keith Freeman)

Having taken over the job of Membership Officer in July 2003 I quickly established a habit of sending out reminder notices to crew members who's subscriptions were about to become due. For various reasons I sent these out at the beginning of the month – thinking to give plenty of warning. This was, perhaps, a bad move – I suspect several people put my letter to one side thinking there was plenty of time... and then forgot about it ! Henceforward I hope to send out the letters in the last week or two of the month when subscriptions become due – I certainly hope this will enable me to cut down on the (final) "overdue" letters I've been sending!

It does make my job easier that most people seem only too happy to renew and there seem to be very few crew members who've "fallen by the wayside". I always endeavour to get Membership Cards out to people as quickly as possible - so if you send in a payment and don't get a card within a week to ten days *please* get in touch with me in case your letter has gone astray.

At the time of writing we have 72 members.

A Tribute to Barbara Wheeler of Whistley Green, Hurst 1919-2005 (Jean Fostekew)

Barbara Wheeler was perhaps best known as the wife and widow of Air Commodore Alien Wheeler who was famous on many counts, not least as C.O. of the Experimental F.D at Farnborough where he flew captured German aircraft and of the Testing Squadron at Boscombe Down; nearer to home he flew the last aircraft out of Woodley when it closed.

However Barbara Wheeler, or Bar, as she was always known, deserves to be remembered in her own right. Having joined the WAAF she soon rose from a humble mess attendant at Harwell to go on to navigational duties and then to Photo Interpretation at Medmenham where she developed an uncanny aptitude for photo identification of reconnaissance sorties where as many as 11,000 prints could be scrutinized on one shift.

In 1944, a week after D-Day at three o'clock in the morning, Bar spotted a VI launching site. As a result of Bar's discovery Eisenhow-

er gave priority to bombing VI sites over all other targets.

She learnt to fly and had her first solo flight on her 33rd birthday in 1949. As the wife of the CO on their Cyprus posting she hosted many functions even surviving a very primitive appendectomy developed whilst picnicking on Mount Trudos.

In 1959 she took part in the Bleriot Anniversary Race from Marble Arch to the Arc de Triumphe. Dressed in a tight-skirted dress, high heels, gloves and a handbag, she and her team completed the course in one hour and two minutes!

THE WAY WE WERE – A reproduction of an article which appeared in the *Aeroplane Magazine*, June 1994 about us at that time:

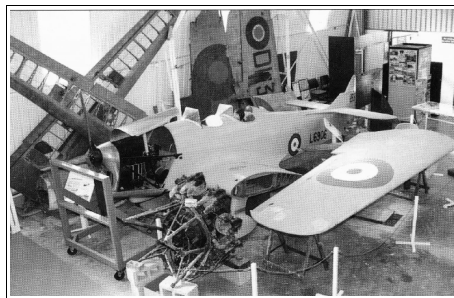
Berkshire Invasion

FINAL PREPARATIONS are under way at the Woodley-based Museum of Berkshire Aviation (MBA) for its own D-Day assault — it is hoping for an invasion of visitors to see its new D-Day 50th anniversary exhibition.

Opened for the 1994 season on March 26, the MBA has been appointed by the Southern Tourist Board to stage the exhibition as part of a commemorative programme extending across much of Southern England. The centrepiece is a loaned Dakota nose (ex-USAAF 42-100611, later 6W-SAF of the Senegalese Air Force), which is being painted in wartime olive drab to represent C-47A 42-100766, coded 4U, of the USAAF's 438th Tactical Carrier Group based at Greenham Common during the Invasion.

The Dakota nose is surrounded by the models, maps, weapons and photographs which make up the rest of the exhibition. Meanwhile the MBA is also taking the opportunity to increase awareness of other aspects of local aviation heritage. Most of the exhibits are Miles- or Handley Page-orientated (types from Hawk Major to Herald were built at Woodley), with composite Magister "L6906" and Dart Herald G-APWA on display along with an assortment of parts from Master, Martinet, Gemini and others.

The one-off Broburn Wanderlust glider, built at Woodley by K.W Radburn and T. E. Brown in 1946, has also returned to its birthplace, having been "rediscovered" at Farnborough after years of obscurity.



*Many thanks to **Aeroplane Magazine** for permission to reprint this article.*

Royal Berkshire Aviation Society

RBAS is only too pleased to see any Crew Members who wish to attend their monthly meetings. Here are the subjects and speakers for the next few months:

July 5th: Arthur Orde-Hume - Setting up Airlines and Airliners from 1946.

August 2nd: Social gathering at White Waltham.

September 6th: David Hassard - All Shapes & Sizes – The extraordinary variety of private aircraft.

October 4th: Harry Fraser-Mitchell - subject to be announced.

November 1st: Don Currie – Film of a complete voyage of an aircraft carrier.

December 6th: Richard Poad – *Aviation in East Berkshire.*

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Web Site

<http://fly.to/MuseumofBerkshireAviation/>