



Welcome to Summer 2007 edition of the MBA Newsletter.

**Editorial.**  
(Brian Lloyd)

We always appreciate articles or pictures for publication in our Newsletter. Long hand is acceptable and a supporting picture is a bonus. Our thanks to Keith Freeman for producing the final format of this Newsletter.

We regret to start with some bereavements:

**Raymond Baxter, OBE, FRSA.**  
We regret to report the death of Raymond Baxter who passed away in September 2006. He was a long serving Patron of the Museum.

In April 2007 a Service of Thanksgiving took place at St. Clement Danes Church in the Strand and was attended by our President Major Douglas G. Goddard, MBE, RA and by Museum Chairman, Ken Fostekew.

We understand that this was a most impressive occasion to celebrate Raymond's life, with many people in the audience from the media, the RAF and from The Association of Dunkirk Little Ships. Music before the service was provided by the Saxophone Quartet from the Central Band of The Royal British Legion. The service was conducted by The Archdeacon for the Royal Air Force. The Address was given by Mr. John Farley, OBE, AFC, a former Test Pilot and the family

Tribute was given by Mrs. Jennifer Douglas and Dr. Graham Baxter. The reception was held at the RAF Club in Piccadilly.

*The undermentioned two obituaries prepared, with our thanks, by our Chairman, Ken Fostekew.*

**Dick (Richard) Gordon.** Dick passed away on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2006 and his funeral took place at St. Andrew's church Sonning on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2007. There was a large turn out, including his colleagues from ML Aviation, and the Museum. The Canon who conducted the service was very impressed with the size of the congregation in the region of 250 people. A great acknowledgement of the high regard in which Dick was held.

Dick will be missed by all of us, not just for the valuable contribution over the years he made to the Museum, but for his boundless enthusiasm and sense of humour. Who else but Dick, would drive vintage coaches for "relaxation" and still retain his enthusiasm for motor cycles. Just before he was unwell, he had purchased a Honda motor-cycle and set up his model railway. This epitomised the latent school boy in all of us, whether it be cars, boats, trains or aircraft. I'm sure I speak for everyone who knew him, it was a pleasure and privilege to have known him.

**Pat Jeffrey,** known as "Jeff" He was a volunteer, along with his wife Rosemary who carried out sterling work for us. Both were willing volunteers prepared to tackle anything. Rosemary helped Jean with research and archiving. Jeff was responsible for making the wheelchair access ramp at the rear exit, also for treating the steel cladding along the edge of the roof and bottom edge on the West side of the Hangar. His intentions were

to continue all round the building and when the job was complete he was going to renovate the emergency exits. He was a highly accomplished model maker and at Easter 2006 he displayed at the Museum, his superb Miles aircraft models.

All his friends at the Museum will miss Jeff. Jean and myself attended the funeral on behalf of the Museum in Aldershot.

We are also sad to report the death in March of Crew Member Colin Fair.

**Announcement.** We are delighted to report that Mr. Julian Temple, a Patron of the Museum and one of the early stalwarts to get the Museum established has been appointed General Manager – Museum Operations at the Brooklands Museum at Weybridge, Surrey.

**Museum manning roster.** We urgently require assistance especially at the weekends. Therefore we welcome new volunteers. We open less hours during winter months. It is not necessary for you to go to the Museum to see the roster as Mr K. Fostekew/Jean Fostekew always have a current copy at home. The duties are not onerous and it is not essential to be an aviation expert as there will always be somebody on duty with you. We give "on the job" training.

**Chairman's Report**  
(Ken Fostekew)

I am pleased to advise members the Museum is in good heart thanks to our helpers who carry out small but important duties.

The Committee remain enthusiastic and the finances are not unsatisfactory.

Ground clearance for the extension has been carried out and construction works will commence soon. There are a few more new displays at the Museum for you to enjoy.

### Publicity Report

(Brian Lloyd)

The publicity scene is quiet at the present time but we continue to search for economical ideas. Contacts are made by the Committee on a one to one basis with other persons with an aviation interest and our web site creates questions and enquires.

### Engineering Report

(Geoff Etridge)

**Martinet:** All areas are progressing well, the wing flaps are being covered with fabric and dope application is ongoing. The lower wing surface panels are well on the way to completion. The engine throttle controls still in work, these are very complicated to work out as we are working in the dark and have to feel our way along. There was nothing left of the original set up so we are having to work out how the originals were set up.

**Fairey Gannet:** We have a new member who has taken on board the upkeep of the exterior cleaning. The aircraft will soon be moved from its present position in order for the new extension to be started.

**Handley Page Herald:** This is due for its annual clean up.

**Mini-Link Trainer:** We have managed to put this into storage, off site, for the summer. Before we did this we took the wings off and shortened them by about a foot each side to the ends of the ailerons. This will make it easier for transportation. We have removed the small hangar that it was stored in to allow the laying of

the concrete footings of the extension.

### The Shop

(Margaret Etridge)

The Museum won the cup for the best charity stall at the Woodley Carnival.

I am sure members don't really need reminding that there is a plentiful, wide ranging, stock in the shop... your custom is always appreciated.

### Gift Aid Declaration Form

This is primarily aimed at those of you who pay your yearly membership subscription by Bankers Order. Being a charity the Museum can claim back tax on donations **and** subscriptions. That is if (a) you fill out a form and (b) that you pay Income and/or Capital Gains tax at least equal to the amount the Museum Trust will reclaim. Currently we can claim 28p per pound received. *A little work on your part, a little work by our Treasurer and your £15 subscription is worth £19.20 to the Museum ! A form should accompany this Newsletter... if it doesn't and you require one ask at the Museum or contact Keith Freeman.*

Forms can be returned to Keith Freeman, (269 Wykeham Road, Reading, RG6 1PL) or handed in at the Museum if you're visiting. Obviously anyone who usually pays each year by cheque or cash **can** fill one in – but I normally include one with the subscription reminder unless I know one has been filled in.

One word of warning – if you fill in a Gift Aid Certificate it continues to apply each year thereafter. If you should cease to pay the appropriate income tax and/or Capital Gains Tax you should let us know **immediately** – otherwise you might find the Inland Revenue chasing

you for the 28p per pound the Museum have reclaimed.

### Members in Action:

As members will know we have a complete cross section of visitors and some arrive by interesting transport. Recently we had a number of Motor Cyclists on a fully restored machines who were taking part in a countrywide rally visiting designated places of interest.

A beautifully restored U.S. Army staff car was another visitor, also a fully restored ex Army. 1997 Land Rover "Wolf" 110. It served with 30 Signals Squadron in the 250 Gurkha Signals Regiment as a communications vehicle. This is owned by Mr. Carleton Brown of Henley whose father was an apprentice with Miles and we hope to welcome him at the Museum with his son, Carleton.



### Royal Berkshire Aviation Society

RBAS has a talk/film show etc on the first Tuesday of every month (except August); these take place at the Harry Pitt Building (Applied Statistics) at the University of Reading from 7.30pm. MBA crew members are very welcome. They do have to sign in at the front desk – but RBAS does not expect them to pay a donation.

## **No 8 Reserve Flying School at Woodley.**

*Continued from the last Newsletter, this is an extract from the book "Brylcream Boys":*

A cup of tea and toast and onion was welcomed after that ordeal!

Our survival course at White Waltham did not last long when, after a week of bitter frost and snow, we were allowed to occupy some nearby empty billets where we had proper beds, but I still enjoyed the warmth and warm water of my diesel marquee.

It was at White Waltham that I was able to get another part for the invalid chair I was hoping to make for Mr King at Westbury, in the shape of the front wheel and forks. When I was sent to Maidenhead to collect some injectors for the generators at Twyford I came upon the most unusual scrap-yard I had ever seen. It was full of old fire engines, stagecoaches, showmen's caravans, steam traction engines and wagons and one Foden with a young tree growing up through the roof. There were old lorries and cars. I saw at least two Rolls Royce Silver Ghosts and an old Bean car. A doctor in Westbury had one of them.

I was told later by someone who lived in White Waltham that the old chap who owned the scrap yard refused to part with anything he had there and that he also had a menagerie there.

Perhaps I was lucky to get the front wheels and forks from the tradesman's bike which I was able to send home by train before I got back to camp. I was my own boss. I could do what I liked there, in my own domain.

One occasion I will not forget was when our unit was invited to a dance in Maidenhead. About ten of the lads went including me, who

was to be the driver of the truck. As a non-dancer with two left feet, I felt I was going to be a bit embarrassed at the thought of having to sit it out at the dances, but believed there would be plenty of fellows around to take my place.

On arriving at Maidenhead I parked the truck near the dance hall, but instead of going in, all the lads made a dash for the nearest pub, leaving me and a Scotsman, Jock, who were non drinkers, to go to the dance.

On entering the dance hall we were greeted with a cry from a hall full of girls.

"Hooray, the lads are here. Put on the music!" which was only an old wind-up gramophone. "The lads are here" I thought. Just Jock and me with two left feet. What am I going to do among all those girls?

On asking where I could put my greatcoat, I was told I could put it behind the stage where, to my surprise and joy, I found there was a door that opened onto the street.

This is where I made my escape, dashing down to the pub to tell the lads to come on, as Jock was all alone with a room full of girls. I returned to the dance with a few of the lads to find Jock dancing with a girl while the other girls were dancing with each other, the old gramophone pumping out the music.

Jock was not very pleased with my sudden disappearance "You were here one minute, then you were gone" he moaned, "leaving me here with all these girls." Anyway I survived the evening and got the lads safely back to camp.

Although there were rumours that we were going to Prague, the CO called me to his tent one day to tell me he was going to recommend me to become a corporal fitter. I

thanked him very much, gave him a smart salute and left feeling very pleased with myself.

A week later he called me into his tent again to tell me that his recommendation for me as a corporal had been turned down and that another corporal fitter was being sent to take my place. He added sadly that he would have to lose me, making me wonder where I would be sent to next.

About a week later we all had to hand in our pay books to be sent back to base camp for checking, and, on their return, I found my pay book had been altered to corporal fitter.

I remember the day they came back, we were paraded to receive them and on looking at mine I found L.A.C. (leading aircraft hand) had been crossed out and corporal had been written above it.

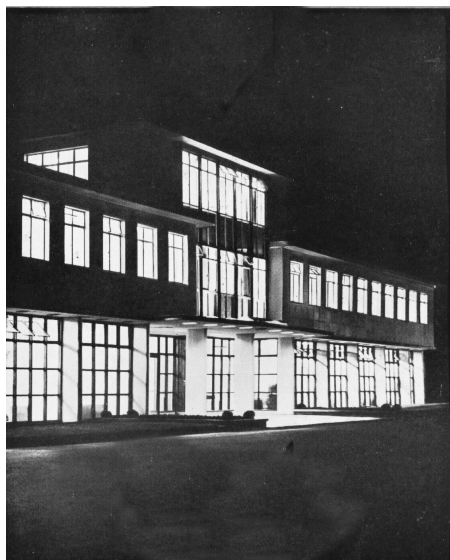
The CO then asked if any of us had any complaints to make regarding our pay books and, confused at the change to corporal on mine after what I had been told about my promotion, I said "Yes Sir". When asked what my complaint was, I told him my rank had been changed to corporal. The CO sternly though I knew he was only joking, told me to get down to the tailors right away to get my "tapes" put on or else he would put me on a charge for being improperly dressed.

I dashed off, happy to return proudly showing off the tapes on my sleeves.

My promotion on the site did not appear to last long when, one day, another corporal fitter arrived to take my place and the question was now who was going to go or stay. I felt again that it would be me who would have to leave as it did not need two corporal fitters to look after three generators, a truck and a jeep, but surprisingly, the CO de-

terminated to keep me by making up the complement of the unit to two fitters.

I hardly got to know the new fitter before my demob came through. It was now all over. I was not wanted. I was to go to Uxbridge to get my demob.



*The original Miles Aircraft Factory Office Building at night.*

### **When the Duke of Edinburgh Learned to Fly.**

The following letter is being reproduced by kind permission of the magazine *Best of British* – past and present. An excellent monthly read which is available by direct mail order or purchase at Newsagents. The web site will give you more information, [www.bestofbritishmag.co.uk](http://www.bestofbritishmag.co.uk), or 01778 342814

*Letter to the Best of British Magazine from Robert Edom, of Addlestone, Surrey.*

I was doing my National Service at White Waltham in 1952, when it was announced the Duke of Edinburgh was to learn to fly. It quickly became known that White Waltham was to be the airfield of choice, probably because it was so close to Windsor and the HQ of RAF Home Command.

The news created a flurry of activity at the camp in typical service style. First of all, the lino in the guardroom was replaced and was quickly brought up to a high sheen so beloved by the RAF police Sergeants in charge of guard rooms. The guardroom was, of course, the point of entry at every RAF station, even for royals.

Next a team of admin orderlies were assigned to go around the camp sprucing everything up and applying white paint to almost anything that didn't move.

Then a special hangar was allocated to house a brand new Chipmunk trainer aircraft and a large prefabricated building was erected next to the hangar for the royal pupil to be briefed and to change into his flying gear. Then a special RAF police dog handler, complete with a large Alsatian, was posted in to guard the royal hangar. In the Command Drafting Office I duly recorded the arrival of both dog and handler, each with a service number.

After all of these preparations were complete the first royal visit was imminent and at this stage a special issue of Station Routine Orders was published announcing that the Commanding Officer, a Squadron Leader, had relinquished command and had been replaced by an air commodore. It was assumed that this was because a squadron leader was not sufficiently senior to greet a royal Duke. After the Duke's visit, Station Orders announced that the squadron leader had resumed command and this arrangement was repeated each time the Duke visited the camp.

As a humble erk I was never involved in these events and just went about my usual duties as a clerk in the Command Drafting Office. I never even saw the Duke of Edinburgh, although I did once

catch a glimpse of a large limousine with pennant flying as it sped through the camp. I often wondered if the Duke realised what a stir his visits caused.

Robert Edom, Addlestone, Surrey.

### **Another First for Woodley in 1930.**

This was the headline of an article which appeared in the May edition of the magazine *Best of British*, about female aviators and their expansion up to the establishment of the ATA. Pauline Mary de Peaully Gower developed an ambition to fly at the age of twenty; she took lessons at Woodley and on completion became the first woman to qualify for a private pilots licence at Woodley and the first woman to solo after just seven and a half hours dual instruction.

### **Committee Members Information**

*Chairman & Curator* Ken Fostekew:  
[jean.fostekew@care4free.n](mailto:jean.fostekew@care4free.n)

*Treasurer* Alan Foskett

*Engineering* Geoff Etridge

*Publicity & Press* Brian Lloyd:  
[brianlloyd@redwood32.freemove.co.uk](mailto:brianlloyd@redwood32.freemove.co.uk) 01628 661 005

*Museum Manning:*

*Membership* Keith Freeman:  
[museumberssav@gmail.com](mailto:museumberssav@gmail.com)

---

*Published by The Museum of Berkshire Aviation, Mohawk Way, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire RG5 4UE*

### **Web Site**

<http://www.museumofberkshireaviation.co.uk/>

---