



Welcome to Winter 2006 edition of the MBA Newsletter.

Editorial.

(Brian Lloyd)

We appreciate items from members and readers for our Newsletter. Long hand is acceptable and a supporting picture is a bonus.

The highlight of the past six months has been the erection of the new fence. The Museum also attended the Woodley Carnival with the Mini-Link trainer creating a lot of interest and again proved very popular with the children. The fees taken helped to increase our funds and we thank the volunteers on the day.

Our treasurer, Alan Foskett, has done an excellent and thorough job to ensure "we look after our pennies"

Chairman's Report

(Ken Fostekew)

I begin with sad news I'm afraid. On the tenth of November Geoff, Jean and myself attended the funeral of Ian Stables at Bracknell Crematorium. Ian's daughter in law broke the news to us at the Museum the previous Wednesday. It came as a great shock to those of who had got to know Ian since he joined the "Wednesday Crew". Ian was an accomplished engineer who could turn his hand to any task, his patience with restoring and fitting the cabin doors for the M100 Student was boundless. We will miss his Scottish sense of humour and his jokes very much. Ian always seem to play down his illness, which made the suddenness of his death all the more acute. As a very generous gesture the family have made donations to the Museum, A letter of thanks and condolence on behalf of the Museum has been sent to Mrs Stables and Family.

Further bad news, recently, we learnt of the very serious illness that has put another of our volunteers out of action for the

foreseeable future, Pat "Jeff" Jeffries. Jeff, an accomplished model maker and retired Builder was very keen to become involved. In the comparative short time as a volunteer Jeff set to and was busy re-painting the edge of the cladding where the plastic coating was peeling of, also Jeff remade the wheelchair ramp at the rear exit, making a permanent ramp with concrete. Jeff's wife Rosemary also helped a great with research and the archive.

Also, Dick Gordon is seriously ill, but I will not go into details at this stage. However, suffice it to say, we send our best wishes to both Dick and Jeff.

The steps to both doors to the workshop have been rebuilt and also the path to the workshop entrance has been relaid. Many thanks for a super job to Dennis, Neil, John and others who assisted.

Publicity Report

(Brian Lloyd)

There have been no major publicity projects recently and we are consolidating our expenditure on this front.

I thought we should ask ourselves "Why a Newsletter" I would suggest that it gives a record of the past few months activities and developments so that Crew Members know what is going on and the planned way forward for the Museum. Also we send out some copies of the Newsletter to other "like" aviation organisations and individuals with a view to reminding them about us and to exchange information with them. The Newsletter also creates a link with those Crew Members who are not able to visit the Museum on a regular basis. Occasionally it promotes membership enquiries.

Sales of the book, *ML Aviation Ltd*, referred to on page three of the Summer 2006 Newsletter, continues to create sales and interest and copies are available for purchase via the Museum shop.

Web Site. This continues to be popular. The address is <http://www.Museumof-Berkshireaviation.co.uk/> The site is still efficiently managed by our immediate past chairman, Trevor, who is resident in the USA.

Members in Action:

Earlier in the year, Major Goddard was in Normandy to attend the dedication of a war memorial in memory of 2 TAF Typhoon pilots and supporting staff.

Their rocket firing Typhoons gave the Army valuable rapid close support in a ground attack role and in targetting ground such as reverse slopes which was dead to the trajectory of the Army's 25 pounder shells. The photograph shows the tribute to those who fell.



On Saturday 7th October, a group of 24 Cub Scouts visited the Museum together their leaders and helpers.

The Cub Scouts were from Surrey Heath Scout district, from groups in Frimley, Bagshot and West End, the visit to the Museum of Aviation is one of the highlights of working on their Cub Scout Air Activities badge.

The Cubs were given a tour of the museum and lots of information about the type of aircraft on display by the very knowledgeable and helpful museum staff. Then they were allowed to go inside the restored Airspeed Ambassador (sic) airliner which is parked outside the museum.

Finally the cubs visited the museum shop and seemed to have bought most of the stock of sweets and aircraft models.

The cubs and leaders would like to say a big Thank You! to everyone involved with the Museum of Berkshire Aviation for making the visit so interesting and enjoyable.

After renaming the Herald as an Ambassador I doubt if the Scout leader who wrote this will qualify for his Air Activities Badge.

Engineering Report

(Geoff Etridge)

Miles Martinet

The wing stub-ends and the leading-edges are now covered. The wing trailing edge flaps have been remanufactured and are in the process of being fitted; we are having to remake all the fixtures and fittings as they were all corroded away and are very complicated shapes - so it's taking

some time to get them right. The aileron control fittings and fixtures for the control-rods are in the latter stages of manufacture. The fuel-tank panels are fitted under the wings and the filler cap access doors are in work. The cockpit canopy permanent fitting is about to be started.

Miles Student

The English Wheel which we managed to manufacture, saving a substantial amount of money, is proving a great success. After a lot of effort to get the rollers correct it is doing a great job shaping the forward fuselage and nose cone for the guys working on it. They are now looking at starting to refurbish the rear cockpit bulkhead.

Mini-Link Trainer

After yet more problems at the Woodley Carnival the chaps on this project have had to remodify all the drive assemblies, hopefully this will cure the snags for good.

The lads have also remade both sets of steps to the workshop - we have also, courtesy of John Hunt's employers, inherited some new racking which we were sorely in need of in the workshop.

I would like to thank everybody on the team for their efforts during the year - A Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

The Shop (Geoff Etridge)

The shop has had another good year, we have sold the majority of the stock purchased this year and we will have to look at some re-stocking for next season.

Margaret has organised the annual get together at the Lands-End public-house on 13th January for a late Christmas dinner. Details are available at the Museum or by contacting either Margaret or myself on 0118 9265655.

F G Miles Ltd – A Personal Recollection (part 2) (Ken Wells)

Around this time F G Miles himself, although in his 60s decided to teach himself electronics, and tendered for a Ministry of Aviation project to provide flight refuelling procedure trainers for the RAF to cover the use of Victor, Valiant and Vulcan Aircraft. A new company "Miles Electronics" was formed to handle the project, and the staff started work initially

in the Airport Terminal building, taking over the area originally intended for incoming passengers.

The trainers required a mock up of each of the V bomber cockpits, with dummy control columns, throttle boxes etc., but with working simulated fuel controls and systems. This contract was successfully completed, and involved visits to the aircraft companies to obtain drawings of the aircraft components needed. At this time there were still three large independent companies, Vickers Armstrong, Handley Page and De Havilland. The work involved designing dummy throttle boxes and fuel controls. I ended up using mainly aircraft exterior components, with self designed interior ones for operating the necessary switches. Mine weighed less and cost about half the aircraft version.

This contract led to other simulator work, for Sea Vixen, Scimitar and Buccaneer aircraft for the Navy. This was the first generation of proper simulators to accurately represent the aircraft type rather than "Link Trainer" types which were used to give general training in instrument flying and controlled landing systems.

The simulators for the Navy were to be housed in trailers that could be towed to any airfield or housed on an aircraft carrier. They were computer controlled by analogue computers and electromechanical simulation of flight control systems.

This work required larger premises, and new wooden buildings were built adjacent to the existing drawing office and, because a lot of the information required to build the simulators was classified, a security fence was built around the buildings and a security officer and pass system set up. The security officer was a very officious ex RAF type; to check the security I made a copy of my pass made out to "Nikita Krushchev" which I showed for many weeks at the entry to the compound without comment. In spite of Gate security and vetting of staff, a member of staff was convicted of selling Buccaneer data to a member of the Czech embassy.

While I was with F G Miles Ltd they also started work on projects for Ministry of Aviation, Later to become Ministry of Technology, then Ministry of Defence (MoD) under successive governments.

Most liaison was with Weapons Department at RAE Farnborough, although also with AWRE at Aldermaston.

One project was to provide a safely lock system for bomb release units, redrawing drawings of a wartime bomb release unit originally designed by Vickers, updated to include a locking pin to prevent accidental release of nuclear weapons, and the development of an electric actuator to operate the locking pin. This system was installed in V bombers, Canberra and Buccaneer aircraft. This contract led to other work on Bomb release systems. The manufacturing part of this work was carried out at a subsidiary company "D & P Tools" sited in Hove.

F G Miles became part of Beagle Aircraft in 1960(?)

Most of the design staff became Beagle employees, but I and some of the purchasing and production control staff moved to a new factory built on the other side of the river, becoming a new company F G Miles Engineering, including the manufacturing facilities of D & P Tools, which was wound up.

One of the advantages of working on the Airport site was the fact that the Airport restaurant with bar served as the works canteen, and the bar served to host parties at Christmas and special occasions. After one such event and while considerably inebriated a draughtsman (Ian Bullock) set off round the perimeter track on his way home on his motorcycle after dark. He saw coming towards him two dim lights about 6 feet apart, and took this to be two cyclists, and decided to pass between them to give them a fright. Unfortunately the two lights were on the airport's antiquated fire engine, which he struck between the dim headlights, fortunately without serious injury.

F G Miles Engineering Ltd

F G Miles Engineering was formed with F G Miles as Managing director and chairman, and R S Wadlow as technical director after the Beagle take-over. I went to work for Roy Wadlow, starting a new drawing office and recruiting initially two draughtsmen and a tracer. The MoD work came to this company, and a number of military projects were undertaken, including some design work and tooling for TSR2.

The electric actuator work that I had started at Shoreham Airport was continued, an attempt being made to start an industrial product range. The only notable project was a large actuator to operate parking brakes on new Brighton Line railway stock. This had also to be capable of being operated from a hand driven generator in the event of power failure in the train. The hand generator consisted of a permanent magnet generator, geared to a large handwheel, which took considerable effort to wind at a high enough speed to operate the generator

Around this time the RAF was changing its bomb release systems from a single suspension point system, to the two point suspension as used by the USAF, and I worked on projects to add locking systems to bomb release units bought from the USA. The quality of these units was very poor, and sometimes arrived with cracked components. The size of these units, and their method of attachment to the aircraft, usually in wing pylons necessitated a smaller range of actuators, and FG Miles Engineering was awarded contracts for the developments, this became my major work for some years.

Eventually we were also awarded contracts to develop flight simulators, and Miles Electronics was reborn and work began on flight simulators for Harrier and Hercules aircraft. Work was started on an F111 simulator, but this was ended on cancellation of the RAF order for the F111 and development of the MRCA later Tornado. This work was housed in the old railway works at Lancing, and I transferred to there, working on the visual simulation systems for Hercules, Tornado and Harrier.

Miles Electronics was later bought by Link Corporation and became Link Miles, and again I had the option to stay with the Miles group, which I took, returning to the Riverbank site, continuing work on MoD projects, including further work on weapon carriage systems, mainly for RN helicopters. A UK design for dual suspension electro-mechanically operated release units was commissioned, and this provided work for a number of years. This continued until FG's death, and the sale of the the business to Hunting Engineering. Until then FG had been a regular sight around the works.

There was a further subsidiaries of F G Miles Engineering, based at Ford, where the Boxkite replicas had been built, which was converting standard armoured vehicle with upgrades to turn them into communication centres etc., and the start of "Miles Hivolt" designing and manufacturing High Voltage instruments and power supplies. While these had no connection to the aircraft industry, it does demonstrate FG's vision on seeing market opportunities.

Herald Video

(Alan Lott)

As a follow up to the item which appeared in the Winter 2005 issue of the Newsletter the long awaited video detailing the complete history of the Handley-Page Dart Herald has been completed and placed on public sale by Avion Video LLP. It is included in their "Airport Action" catalogue of July this year, under the classic wings column. It is available commercially, as well as in the Museum shop and retails at £17.50 on DVD. There will be a limited number of VHS versions. A discount will be available to Crew Members of the Museum.

We thank Alan and his friends for assisting with this project and are pleased to advise members that the Museum received a generous donation from Avion and have been promised royalty payments based on future sales.

In Defense of Freedom; A History of RAF Greenham Common; The True Story Finally Told

Thatcham, UK--June 6, 2006--After many years of in-depth research, interviews with personnel and from the submission of other very rare and unique material, the story of RAF Greenham Common's controversial history can finally be told.

In Defense of Freedom tells the story of the history of this historic place from its ancient use by militias to its construction as an airfield in 1941 to its final demise at the conclusion of the Cold War in 1992.

It is the story of how a small town in rural England became a modern fortress in the cause of freedom. This unique insight reveals how Greenham Common acted as a launch pad for the liberation of Western Europe in D-Day in 1944 with a stirring speech from General Eisenhower to its later Cold War development with the

longest runway in Europe, the site of the British Land Speed Record and its final mission as base for the 501st Tactical Missile Wing's cruise missiles and protests in the 1980s.

In Defense of Freedom reveals the real story of Greenham Common and RAF Welford and their critical missions for the first time.

Illustrated, 172 pages, \$21.76. Link to Publication:

<http://www.lulu.com/content/310488>

Royal Berkshire Aviation Society

RBAS is only too pleased to see any Crew Members who wish to attend their monthly meetings (held on the first Tuesday of each month). The August meeting is a "social" at White Waltham, other meetings are held in the Harry Pitt Building at Reading University (where the MBA AGM was held in 2006). Forthcoming meetings include Jan 2nd (Brian Madge on aircraft, airlines and airports he has known). Mar 6th (Ian Simmonds reprise of aircraft builders in High Wycombe). Apr 3rd (Don Currie with films).

No 8 Reserve Flying School at Woodley in 1947.

Mr. Percy Webb, resident in Canada, joined the RAF in January 1949 and trained as a wireless operator at Compton Bassett. After that in July 1950 he signed on with the RAFVR for five years until 1955. Here is a picture of himself in a Tiger Moth in 1947 with some ATC cadets. In the small group picture are John Oats, Tony Pym, himself, Jack Green and Brian Palmer.



From a leaflet, date unknown:

No. 8 Reserve Flying School, situated at Woodley near Reading, was opened in April for the training of RAFVR pilots,

and now has between 70 and 80 under training. Many vacancies still exist, and those interested should apply to The Commandant.



And another view, from the book "Brylcream Boys":

It was two weeks before Christmas when we were sent with all our gear to an RAF station at White Waltham near Maidenhead, where we were to try out all we had learnt on our survival course.

Our site was on the edge of a thicket where there was an ample supply of branches and timber to make our raft beds.

We were under canvas with marquees and tents. The marquees were for the stores, cookhouse, dining room and for my generators, while the smaller tents were for sleeping quarters for the personnel. There were three tents for the officers, and they were provided with proper beds, electric light and electric fires.

The war with Germany was now over and there was a partial lifting of the blackout enabling us to have an outside light over the cookhouse and dining marquees at night.

In erecting the tents and setting up camp, there was an invasion by the lads into the thicket to cut down what they could find to make their beds. I did not fancy sleeping on a rough wooden raft and wondered what I was going to make my bed with.

Being in charge of a Fordson truck and a jeep which was for use by the officers, my first job was to collect some bags of coke for the cookhouse in the jeep from the main camp coke compound.

It was at the compound that I saw just what I wanted to make my bed, three old wooden stretchers, which I put in the jeep to take back to camp.

I made then what was to become known as "Savory's four poster bed" using two of

the stretchers as the upright posts and the other as the main bed.

I was the envy of all the lads who were sleeping rough on their wooden rafts. Even the CO had to come and see "Savory's four poster bed".

My main charges were three 4 KVA generators powered by twin flat cylinder Coventry Victor diesel engines, two of the generators running alternately night and day while the other was for use in an emergency. These provided power for the signalling station and the lights.

With flexible pipes from these engine exhaust pipes that ran out under the tent flaps, I was able to have a constant supply of warm water to wash and shave in by keeping a bucket of water in these pipes, while all the other lads had to wash and shave in cold water.

Although weighted down with blankets I found it cold sleeping in a tent on those cold frosty December nights.

All the lads made their beds the way they had been taught at Boreham but I do not know what cooking facilities were used in the cookhouse. I saw no signs of using old oil drums, engine oil and water, for the food was remarkably good.

Life at White Waltham was quite relaxing for I had little to do but look after the generators, jeep and truck that needed little attention. It was like a camping holiday in the RAF but it was cold weather with frosts at night.

I was quite happy there and for once I did not let my hernia lump stand in my way. The war was over, my demob was in the offing and I was still not willing to have an operation. I was scared of hospitals.

I got on well with the two COs and Warrant Officer who treated me as one of their own. The Warrant Officer, who could not drive, relied on me to take him on several missions in the truck.

As a separate unit from the main camp we had no N.A.A.F.I to go to. Our only outside café for the forces was "The Barn", as it was called in White Waltham where local ladies provided teas and snacks for us airmen. One favourite snack was fried onions on toast as eggs were in short supply. I rather liked this dish though I have never tasted it since.

I remember one night when all the lads had gone to The Barn ahead of me, I de-

cidated to follow on after I had a warm wash and shave in my engine marquee. When I came out I found a dense fog had descended and I could only see the dim glow of the light on top of the pole near the cookhouse marquee.

Knowing that if I made a beeline for that light I would be near the entrance to the camp, I made towards it, only to find myself floundering around in the thicket.

Although I had been told that a large deep hole had been dug in the thicket to dispose of the toilet and cookhouse swill, I did not know where it was until I suddenly fell into it some four feet down.

It was lucky for me that a layer of earth had been put down to cover what lay beneath it and I was able to clamber out, leaving my cap behind, resulting in me having to jump back into the hole to retrieve it.

Relieved that the contents of the waste-disposal pit had been covered over with earth, I found my way out on to the road and made my way to The Barn in the fog. I presented a surprise when I opened the door into the brightly lit room, for my greatcoat and trousers were covered with clinging burrs that I had collected while floundering through the thicket. "Where on earth have you been"? they all called.

(to be continued)

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*Published by **The Museum of
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Way, Woodley, Reading,
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