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Mr Steve Mullis

Newsletter Editor:

Mr Bryn Holland**From the Editor:**

Welcome to the June edition of our award winning newsletter for you to enjoy. Well what a great two months I have had in the UK, firstly catching up with and getting to know my fellow Committee Members, something I was looking forward to, then a visit to

RAF Brize Norton, what a great time we had there, all thanks to the RAF and the personnel who assisted us, then attending the Branch AGM at the Blue Boar in Witney, where we were looked after very well by the Manager and his staff. The AGM went very well with a few tricks and ideas I have learned to take back with me for my Christchurch branch of the RNZAF Assoc. to look at. After all of that, visits to Family and friends took over with most of my remaining time has been spent with that. I would however like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Committee members and those who also attended the AGM, for making me so welcome, it was such a pleasure to meet you all in person rather than on-line and what a blast, to also Win the regional Newsletter award on top of it all while here. We now have to wait and see if we get anywhere with the National awards at the National AGM in May, where I will be back in New Zealand, so we will wait and see with fingers and things crossed. This will probably be my last trip to the Land of UK and I am now looking forward to a good rest when I get home! Bryn

Cover Photo:

RAF Panavia Tornado

Special points of Interest:

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Derek Barratt
Kev O'Neill
Allan Lomax
Derf Mockford
David Forsyth

Chris Brown
Bryan Stoyale
Clive Simpson

Book of the Month**Buster: The dog who saved a thousand lives****By Will Barrow,**

Thousands of lives have been saved by this spaniel. He is a best friend in dog's clothing. An RAF dog with his mossy feet firmly on the ground. A brave dog who has served his colleagues and his country with unstinting devotion. A dog in a million.

This is the story of the partnership of Buster and Will, told by Will himself, describing how each came to save the other's life. This is a relationship that produced some heroic feats in the dust and desert heat of Afghanistan - and beyond. Buster, uniquely, has served five tours of duty - more than any other military dog.

"With some dogs you share a boil in the bag breakfast and maybe a blanket on a cold desert floor.

Some you wouldn't leave in charge of your Grandma unless you wanted to find out just how fast the old girl could run. But, if you're very, very lucky there will be the one dog you would lay down your life for – and for me that dog is Buster."

As told to Isabel George.

Paperback

£8.62

See WEB page at

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Buster-dog-saved-thousand-lives/dp/0753555794>

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Meet Your Committee - Ian T Kirk, Social Events Coordinator



Ian T Kirk was born in Mid Glamorgan, Wales in December 1965, to Keith and Christine. My earliest memories are of living in RAF Wittering and RAF Gutersloh where I went to Haig school. My best friend at the time was a guy called Stephen Govier who I lost contact with and later found through Friends Reunited some 30 years later. My father was posted back to the UK in 1974 to RAF Odiham where my father was an Airframes technician,

his rank at the time was CT (Chief Technician). I went to Robert Mays school in Odiham, a walk of about a mile, no 4x4's closing up the roads on school runs. I left school in 1982 and worked in International stores Hartley Wintney until I started at Clairmont Automatics in 1983 which was a fruit machine and dukebox company based in Fleet Hampshire.

What a great place to work that was - I was a workshop apprentice and fixed fruit machines and also gaming consoles. I also went out with the service engineers to site. This consisted of days going around pubs, fixing fruit machines or replacing faulty machines, guess that's where my love for beer started. In 1984 I joined the Royal Air Force, after trying since leaving school to join, I was called whilst at work and told I could join in two weeks as a Flight systems Mech. I didn't know what to do so I went over to my Dad's place of work and ask for his advise. He had left the airforce by then but he told me to go for it, so that's what I did. So in September 1984 I went through the gates of RAF Swindon to start what was to become a 12 1/2 year career, don't worry about the extra 6 months just yet.

After Swindon, I did my trade training at RAF Cosford. I really enjoyed my time there, we had a great laugh with a fantastic bunch of guys. The Faulton block an amazing building, I can still recall eating in the dining rooms at the centre of the building. I have some fond memories of the line training where we learnt basic aircraft skills, attaching to ground machinery and marshalling aircraft. My first posting was RAF Odiham, a very familiar base. I worked in the avionics bay carrying out 2nd and 3rd line maintenance on all aspects of navigational equipment on the Chinooks. Again this was a fantastic place to work and an amazing extended family. Looking back it's quite emotional when I think of how great it was. When I first arrived, there was no accommodation on camp so we were bused every day to the YMCA at Farnborough. Oh yes, an LAC posted to camp, living on rates in accommodation where we had cleaners and your bed made for you, happy days. When I eventually moved on to camp I lived in fairly new single accommodation where several of us used to blast out Def Leppard Hysteria from our rooms. Our boss was an ex Navy guy who's love for boats got me in to sailing. A few of us spent many a weekend on his boat down in Pompey. I also took part in the Tall Ships race which was an amazing experience, sailing from Helsinki to the Island of Mariehamn on a Russian tall ship. After four days of partying it was back on the RAF Nickolson 55 yacht, for the race to Copenhagen for a few more days of partying.

After a few years at Odiham and an unblemished record, it was obvious that due to the Flight Systems trade being so

overmanned that I would stand no chance of getting a fitters course. There were a lot of Mechs in my trade in the same boat so we all changed trades to either AD or Telecommunications, I choose the latter of the two and then went to RAF Locking to do a DE course as an SAC. They named our courses DFTC rather than DTC. We were to cause a few issues for the staff at Locking - as you can imagine a load of SAC's, a lot of which had been out on squadron flight lines mixing with DE's. Anyway after what seemed like a lifetime and one back course due to me just not getting to grips with the Satellite communications module (the irony), I was left in charge of a load of DE's when I arrived on their course to do Sat comms again.



When I left RAF Locking, I was posted to the place everyone said I would never get as it was like rocking horse doo doo's. I put it as my first choice and got the golden egg. I was posted to The Institute of Aviation Medicine at RAF Farnborough. I was a JT working for a civvie boss. I spent many a day taking part in the Thames valley canoe league as well as running most lunchtimes. When I was not running we used to go mountain biking around Aldershot, those were my finest days. I had my own office and over my time at IAM Farnborough took part in an amazing variety of trials which varied from altitude sickness, time in the centrifuge, being frozen to near death, heated to near death, and a variety of other experiments that were designed to de-sensitise aircrew. It was also to develop equipment for the aircrew in the Gulf - if you can imagine a pilot wearing all the safety equipment necessary to fly as well as a respirator. For aircrew, this was like putting your whole head in to a rubber bag with a tight seal around the neck. In the conditions they flew in you could almost drown in your own sweat. Respect to them all, they did an amazing job. We were working on cooling jackets etc. for them, I went on to the finer details of how they monitored your core temperature. My actual job whilst at the IAM was noise attenuation. We carried out research into noise cancelling headsets for aircrew. This took me to many stations around the country conducting noise trials with a team of civilians. Hotels were the order of the day as they did not

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Aircraft Flown By The RAF - Panavia Tornado



RAF Tornado GR1 ZA546 of No. 27 Squadron in flight; the wings are fully swept back, 1988

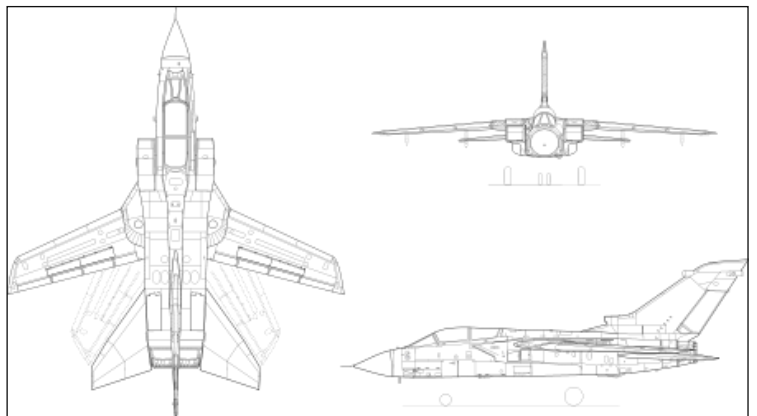
The Panavia Tornado is a family of twin-engine, variable-sweep wing multirole combat aircraft, jointly developed and manufactured by Italy, the United Kingdom, and West Germany. There are three primary Tornado variants: the Tornado IDS (interdictor/strike) fighter-bomber, the suppression of enemy air defences Tornado ECR (electronic combat/reconnaissance) and the Tornado ADV (air defence variant) interceptor aircraft. The Tornado was developed and built by Panavia Aircraft GmbH, a tri-national consortium consisting of British Aerospace (previously British Aircraft Corporation), MBB of West Germany, and Aeritalia of Italy. It first flew on 14 August 1974 and was introduced into service in 1979–1980. Due to its multirole design, it was able to replace several different fleets of aircraft in the adopting air forces. The Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) became the only export operator of the Tornado in addition to the three original partner nations. A tri-nation training and evaluation unit operating from RAF Cottesmore, the Tri-National Tornado Training Establishment, maintained a level of international co-operation beyond the production stage. The Tornado was operated by the Royal Air Force (RAF), Italian Air Force, and RSAF during the Gulf War of 1991, in which the Tornado conducted many low-altitude penetrating strike missions. The Tornados of various services were also used in conflicts in the former Yugoslavia during the Bosnian War and Kosovo War, the Iraq War, Libya during the Libyan civil war, as well as smaller roles in Afghanistan, Yemen, and Syria. Including all variants, 992 aircraft were built.

Origins

During the 1960s, aeronautical designers looked to variable-geometry wing designs to gain the manoeuvrability and efficient cruise of straight wings with the speed of swept wing designs. The United Kingdom had cancelled the procurement of the TSR-2 and subsequent F-111K aircraft, and was still looking for a replacement for its Avro Vulcan and Blackburn Buccaneer strike aircraft. Britain and France had initiated the AFVG (Anglo French Variable Geometry) project in 1965, but this had ended with French withdrawal in 1967. Britain continued to develop a variable-geometry aircraft similar to the proposed AFVG, and sought new partners to achieve this. West German EWR had been developing the swing-wing EWR-Fairchild-Hiller A400 AVS Advanced Vertical Strike (which has a similar configuration to

the Tornado). In 1968, West Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy and Canada formed a working group to examine replacements for the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter, initially called the Multi Role Aircraft (MRA), later renamed as the Multi Role Combat Aircraft (MRCA). The participating nations all had ageing fleets that required replacing; but, as the requirements were so diverse, it was decided to develop a single aircraft that could perform a variety of missions that were previously undertaken by a fleet of different aircraft. Britain joined the MRCA group in 1968, represented by Air Vice-Marshal Michael Giddings, and a memorandum of agreement was drafted between Britain, West Germany, and Italy in May 1969. By the end of 1968, the prospective purchases from the six countries amounted to 1,500 aircraft. Canada and Belgium had departed before any long-term commitments had been made to the programme; Canada had found the project politically unpalatable; there was a perception in political circles that much of the manufacturing and specifications were focused on Western Europe. France had made a favourable offer to Belgium on the Dassault Mirage 5, which created doubt as to whether the MRCA would be worthwhile from Belgium's operational perspective.

On 26 March 1969, four partner nations – United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands, agreed to form a multinational company, Panavia Aircraft GmbH, to develop and manufacture the MRCA. The project's aim was to produce an aircraft capable of undertaking missions in the tactical strike, reconnaissance, air defence, and maritime roles; thus allowing the MRCA to replace several different aircraft then in use by the partner nations. Various concepts, including alternative fixed-wing and single-engine designs, were studied while defining the aircraft. The Netherlands pulled out of the project in 1970, citing that the aircraft was too complicated and technical for the RNLAF's preferences, which had sought a simpler aircraft with outstanding manoeuvrability. An additional blow was struck by the German requirement reduced from an initial 600 aircraft to 324 in 1972. It has been suggested that Germany deliberately placed an unrealistically high initial order to secure the company headquarters and initial test flight in Germany rather than the UK, so as to have a bigger design influence. When the agreement was finalised, the United Kingdom and West Germany each had a 42.5% stake of the workload, with the remaining 15% going to Italy; this division of the production work was heavily influenced by international political bargaining. The front fuselage and tail assembly was assigned to BAC (now BAE Systems) in the United Kingdom; the centre fuselage to MBB (now EADS) in West Germany;



Aircraft Flown By The RAF - Panavia Tornado

and the wings to Aeritalia (now Alenia Aeronautica) in Italy. Similarly, tri-national work sharing was used for engines, general and avionic equipment. A separate multinational company, Turbo-Union, was formed in June 1970 to develop and build the RB199 engines for the aircraft, with ownership similarly split 40% Rolls-Royce, 40% MTU, and 20% FIAT. At the conclusion of the project definition phase in May 1970, the concepts were reduced to two designs; a single seat Panavia 100 which West Germany initially preferred, and the twin-seat Panavia 200 which the RAF preferred (this would become the Tornado). The aircraft was briefly called the Panavia Panther, and the project soon coalesced towards the two-



Left: Forward cockpit of an RAF Tornado GR.4



seat option. In September 1971, the three governments signed an Intention to Proceed (ITP) document, at which point the aircraft was intended solely for the low-level strike mission, where it was viewed as a viable threat to Soviet defences in that role. It was at this point that Britain's Chief of the Defence Staff announced "two-thirds of the fighting front line will be composed of this single, basic aircraft type".



Specifications (Tornado GR4) General Characteristics

Crew:	2 (Pilot, Navigator)
Length:	16.72 m (54 ft 10 in)
Wingspan:	13.91 m at 25° wing sweep, 8.60 m at 67° wing sweep (45.6 ft / 28.2 ft)
Height:	5.95 m (19.5 ft)
Wing area:	26.6 m ² (286 ft ²)
Empty weight:	13,890 kg (30,620 lb[356])
Loaded weight:	20,240 kg (44,620 lb[357])
Max. takeoff weight:	28,000 kg (61,700 lb)
Powerplant:	2 × Turbo-Union RB199-34R Mk 103 afterburning turbofans
Dry thrust:	43.8 kN (9,850 lbf) each
Thrust with afterburner:	76.8 kN (17,270 lbf) each
Performance	
Maximum speed:	Mach 2.2 (2,400 km/h, 1,490 mph) at 9,000 m (30,000 ft) altitude; 800 knots, 1,482 km/h, 921 mph indicated airspeed near sea level
Range:	1,390 km (870 mi) for typical combat mission
Ferry range:	3,890 km (2,417 mi) with four external drop tanks
Service ceiling:	15,240 m (50,000 ft)
Rate of climb:	76.7 m/s (15,100 ft/min)
Thrust/weight:	0.77
Armament	
Guns:	1× 27 mm (1.06 in) Mauser BK-27 revolver cannon internally mounted under starboard side of fuselage with 180 rounds (2× with 180 rounds each in GR.1, GR.1B, and IDS)
Hardpoints:	4× light duty + 3× heavy duty under-fuselage and 4× swivelling under-wing pylon stations with a capacity of 9,000 kg (19,800 lb) of payload, the two inner wing pylons have shoulder launch rails for 2× Short-Range AAM (SRAAM) each and provisions to carry combinations of:
Missiles:	***AIM-9 Sidewinder or AIM-132 ASRAAM air-to-air missiles for self-defence
	6× AGM-65 Maverick; or
	12× Brimstone missile; or
	2× Storm Shadow
	9× ALARM anti-radiation missile
Bombs:	***5× 500 lb Paveway IV; or
	3× 1000 lb (UK Mk 20) Paveway II/Enhanced Paveway II; or
	2× 2000 lb Paveway III (GBU-24)/Enhanced Paveway III (EGBU-24);
	BL755 cluster bombs;
	Up to 2× JP233 or MW-1 munitions dispensers (for runway cratering operations)
	Up to 4× B61 or WE.177 tactical nuclear weapons
Other:	Up to 4× drop tanks for ferry flight/extended range/flight time
Avionics:	
RAPTOR:	aerial reconnaissance pod
Rafael LITENING:	targeting pod; or
TIALD:	laser designator pod
GEC:	Sky Shadow electronic counter-measure pod

RAF History - RAF Tangmere



Above: an original station ensign flag for RAF Tangmere (photographed from reverse side).

‘ Words by Guy Walters

Located just a few miles from Goodwood, RAF Tangmere was a key Allied airfield during World War II, firstly as a base for Supermarine Spitfires, and later with a more clandestine purpose

If you had lived near Goodwood during World War II, you would no doubt have become accustomed to your nights being disturbed by the sound of aircraft taking off and landing at the nearby RAF Tangmere. And if you had been particularly observant, you might have noticed that these nocturnal sorties normally took place around the time of a full moon, and – if you could have glimpsed them – that the aircraft appeared to be neither fighters nor bombers.

The aircraft were in fact Westland Lysanders, and although they were originally designed to be spotter planes and for ferrying around top brass, their role at Tangmere was far more secretive and exciting. For on board were some of the bravest men and women who ever fought in the war, and whose exploits would only be widely appreciated many years later. They were, of course, members of the Special Operation

Executive – more commonly known as SOE – an organisation Churchill famously directed to “go and set Europe ablaze” by carrying out acts of sabotage and fomenting local resistance movements across Nazi-occupied territories.

Some of the most celebrated SOE agents flew out of Tangmere, including Noor Inayat Khan, the organisation’s first female wireless operator, who flew from the airfield on 16 June 1943, accompanied by two other women, Diana Rowden and Cecily Lefort, who were to work as couriers.

Tragically, all three women would never make it back to Tangmere. Khan would be arrested by the Gestapo in Paris in October, and despite attempting to escape, she would be

executed at Dachau in September 1944. She was posthumously awarded the George Cross in 1949. Rowden and Lefort would also be captured and executed. As one Tangmere pilot, Hugh Verity, later remarked, “Looking back to the operational supper at Tangmere Cottage with our cheerful passengers just before take-off, it was almost impossible to imagine that the group would all have such terrible fates.”

The pilots themselves were equally brave. Attached to No. 161 (Special Duties) Squadron of the RAF, they had to negotiate anti-aircraft fire, fog, perilous landing-strips and of course, hostile welcoming committees that would see their planes met with a hail of German gunfire rather than friendly words from local résistants.

Today, apart from Tangmere Military Aviation Museum, open every day from 1 February to 30 November, RAF Tangmere lies abandoned, although there is now a campaign to save the airfield’s control tower, from where so many flights were cleared on moonlit nights all those decades ago.

~With Thanks to
Sara Horrocks,
Goodwood Magazine~

Right: SOE agent Noor Inayat Khan, who flew out of Tangmere and was posthumously awarded the George Cross in 1949



Buzz Hope - 'and in the morning'.... Australian Presentation

'and in the morning...'

Feeling very humbled I returned home today from being invited to dine at the Royal Air Force Club Piccadilly by Wing Commander Dr. Mary Anne Whiting the Deputy Director Community and Industry Engagement Royal Australian Air Force.

Here she presented me with a specially struck medal of a very limited edition on behalf of the RAAF for my work involving the Australian Squadrons that served in Bomber Command during World War Two.

In this morning post was this letter from the Australian War

deserving of this recognition.

Mike Kaehler: Congratulations Nice to see you recognized for your hard work.

Anthony Power: Congratulations well earned recognition!



Memorial...

Julie Chandler: Fantastic Buzz, it was well deserved for all your hard work.....

Ian Lee: well deserved

Dee Bowker: Wonderful Buzz: You must feel proud and so glad your relentless research and efforts are recognised.

Mary Burnel: Congratulations, Buzz!

John Jones: Buzz Well done. You deserve it.

Jan Halvorson: Fabulous and well deserved, Buzz.

David Lauffbacher: Congrats Buzz. Well deserved!

Rich Dawdy: Congratulations Dear Sir. You are most

Patricia Desmier: Heartiest Congratulations once more Buzz and once again Bravo for your meticulous



Berlin Airlift - 24th June 1948 - 12th May 1949 - J. Jardine



It was 66 years last June since the Russians started the land blockade of West Berlin, on June 24th 1948 and the "cold war" came within a hair's breadth of actual war. "Cold War", an expression coined in 1947 accurately describing the situation

that had arisen between the western powers and Soviet Union by the spring of 1947. The Russian aims and objectives were based on the Communist Manifesto which were, "the replacement of capitalism and imperialism with Socialism". After the end of WW2 both Americans and the British demobilized their huge armed forces, while Russia increased her military strength. By 1947 Russia had by various



devious means, set up Communist regimes in all of eastern Europe including their zone of Germany, and sealed off the Borders both politically and economically the "Iron Curtain" had come down. As Prosperity rapidly rose in West Germany the prospect of a strong West Germany was very attractive to citizens of the East. People in East Berlin could buy an underground railway ticket to West Berlin and so escape to West Germany. "The seriousness of the situation was demonstrated by the fact that B-29 atomic bombers of the USAF were stationed in East Anglia UK from July 1948, which provided some sanction against the Soviet military threat. This was a first for atomic weapons on European soil. I served with the British Air force of Occupation part of the British Army of the Rhine as a Ground Controlled Approach (GCA) Operator but my demob number came up in April 1948, some weeks before the Berlin Blockade began. I was stationed at RAF Wunstorf which was very close to the Soviet Zone of Occupation and was the control centre for the Hanover Berlin air corridor. Wunstorf after the occupation was taken over and became an RAF Spitfire fighter base. Because it was only one of two stations in the British zone with GCA radar, aircraft from other bases were diverted there in times of poor visibility.



Airfield GCA Caravans

Tension had been mounting months before the blockade began with Russians using any excuse to hold up rail, road and canal traffic. About this time there appeared to be an increase in troops being flown in from the UK and ground staff were given a refresher course in arms training, we were told it was for riot control. Once the airlift started the fighters were moved from Wunstorf and the airfield was soon crammed with transport planes. At the end of WW2 defeated Germany was divided into four occupation zones by the victorious allies, Russian, American, French, and British. Berlin being the capital also had four zones of occupation, and was well inside the Russian zone. Because of the ideological differences between the Russians and the other three occupying powers it was inevitable there would be a good deal of tension and problems between the two. No formal agreement had been reached guaranteeing the West rail, road, and water access to Berlin through the Soviet zone, they had relied on the good will of the Russians for this. In the event there was only one road access, the autobahn from Hanover with the Russian checkpoint right on the border at Helmstedt, and one railway line also from Hanover whose checkpoint was also at Helmstedt, only ten trains per day were allowed by the Russians. However on 30th of November 1945 it had been agreed in writing that there would be three air corridors 20 miles wide from the west, providing free access to the western sectors of Berlin, two of these in the British zone and one in the American. The two in the British zone, one from Hamburg and one from Wunstorf near Hanover. Initially the Allies had two air fields in Berlin Tempelhof, in the American zone and Gatow in the British, after some time a third was built in the French zone at Tegel, done mostly by hand by 20,000 Germans as machinery was virtually non-existent, however one or two bulldozers were dismantled, flown in and reassembled in Berlin, Tegel was completed in 90 days. By 1947 the Russians had installed Communist regimes in all of Eastern Europe including their German zone, and sealed off the Borders both politically and economically, their aim was to get the West out of Berlin and eventually West Germany. The Berlin Airlift was preceded by nearly three years of constant tension and sniping by the Russians against the Western Allies in an attempt to drive them out of Berlin and West Germany by a variety of tactics, including holding up rail, road and water transport with bogus searches, and blocking even basic supplies, for periods, and intimidating West German civilians. On April 5th 1948 a Russian fighter crashed into a BEA plane on route for Berlin killing all 15 onboard. So West Berlin was the weakest point for the Western Allies being separated from their zones of occupation by 100 miles of Soviet controlled territory. A free West Berlin was significantly important to the Western Allies, and the great confrontation of this phase of the cold war took place and one false move could have resulted in instant war. Trygvie Lie Secretary-General of the United Nation said at the time "Europe lay under the fear of open hostilities" and Ernest Bevin British Foreign Secretary expressed grave concerns to the British parliament about the distinct possibilities of war breaking out, but said the Allies had to stay in Berlin. At 6am on June 24th 1948 all rail, road, and water routes were cut off to Berlin by the Russians. The reaction to this by the American Military Governor in Germany General Lucius D Clay was to use troops to escort supply convoys through the blockade, he said in a speech at Heidelberg on June 24 "to put the USA out of Berlin would mean war" However British Foreign Minister Bevin proposed a massive airlift, the British had been using a mini-airlift for some time to supply their personnel in Berlin. When the airlift had been decided on



The Control Tower at Wunstorf

Berlin Airlift - 24th June 1948 - 12th May 1949 - J. Jardine

General Clay phoned General LeMay the Air Force commander in Frankfurt and asked him if his planes could carry coal, LeMay replied "the Air Force can deliver anything", and so the Airlift got under way on June 26th 1948. Britain asked its Commonwealth Air Forces to contribute experienced transport crews to assist. New Zealand sent 3 crews each with pilot, navigator, and wireless operator from number 41 Squadron, flying DC3. They were seconded to RAF Number 45 Group where New Zealander Group Captain later Air Commodore Ronald Joseph (Nugget) Cohen on exchange with the RAF was Senior Air Staff Officer directing RAF operations. His experience in transport began when he ferried Dakotas from America to New Zealand in 1943. The New Zealand crews were joined in a combined task force by 10 Australian crews, 11 South African, plus RAF and United States Squadrons. The New Zealanders were stationed initially at Wunstorf and then Lubeck on the Baltic coast with RAF Dakota crews several of whom were New Zealanders serving in the post war RAF. For almost a year they transported needed supplies to a city of 2.5 million people taking, food, petrol, raw materials, and coal.



Early Morning Loading of a DC3

The Dakotas carried a lot of the coal which had to be dampened down for fear of igniting. Russia had cut off everything to the western sectors even power. They also carried cement, newsprint, washing powder, fertilizer, and the all-important cigarettes. On return trips they carried mail and Berliners in need of health care out to the west. During the airlift the Russian fighter planes buzzed the transport planes, and they would sometimes be greeted by carefully placed barrages of anti-aircraft fire, they tried jamming allied radar frequencies, firing flares, and using search lights.



Silver City Bristol Freighter on Lease from Bristol Aeroplane

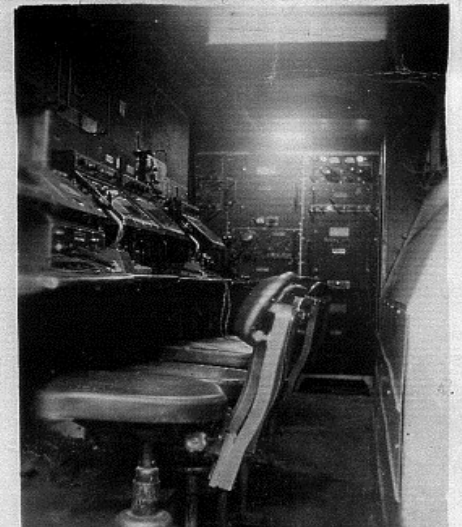
This airlift was a remarkable achievement logistically and the way it was organized, to meet the challenge of deploying a range of aircraft types flying at different speeds through 3 corridors only 32 kilometers wide. The planners designed a rigid pattern of flights, the crews from Lubeck and Wunstorf flew in a one way flow to Gatow airport in the British zone of Berlin and out of Berlin in a direct line to Hanover. They followed a cycle that allowed one aircraft to land every 90 seconds and one to take off every 90 seconds at Gatow. This went on 24 hours a day in all kinds of weather, Ground Control Approach radar helped in times of poor visibility but it required

accurate flying, navigation and instrument work. Even WW2 pilots found it a challenge flying at a set high with others above below in front and behind. The Russians held bombing practice close to the corridors, and their fighters buzzed the supply planes, and they put up a barrage balloon near the end of Gatow airport when the British objected they took it down. There was no circling the city if the pilots were more than 30 seconds late or missed their first chance to land they flew straight back to base with their load.

The pace was unrelenting, on duty the crews flew 12 hour shifts night and day with 2 return trips. After almost a year the Russians had to concede they were not going to get the western allies out of Berlin and they lifted the blockade in May 1949, but the airlift continued until September to build up supplies. The New Zealand crews left Germany on August 11th 1949 having transported 622 tons of coal, 666 tons of other goods to Berlin, they brought out 12,341 kgs of mail and 1135 passengers. The New Zealanders had carried the flag of their country in the greatest airlift in history, winning respect for a job of work well done. Navigator Flight Sergeant EG Saker was awarded the Air Force Medal, while Nugget Cohen was honoured by both the British and the American Governments. On his return to New Zealand he claimed that the airlift taught us more about ground and air control and the possibilities for the carriage of heavy cargoes in vast quantity than could have been otherwise learned in ten years. In all 300,000 flights were made, carrying 2.3 million tons of cargo, 230415 kilometers were flown, 850,000 multi-layer paper sacks were required per month. Coal represented two thirds of all tonnage and had to be dampened before the flights. The RAF operated Avro York's, Dakota's (DC3), Handley Page Hastings, and Sunderland flying boats, these carrying mostly salt. The Sunderland's operated from the river Elbe near Hamburg to the Havel River near Gatow Berlin until ice stopped this in December, they could carry a 4½ ton load. The RAF carried one third of the total tonnage, and 70,000 people. On Easter

Sunday 16th April 1949 a record 1398 flights carrying 12,940 tons without a single incident, a plane landed every 61.8 seconds. A total of 101 fatalities were recorded, 49 Britons, 31 Americans, 17 German civilians. 17 American and 8 British aircraft crashed. A very important outcome of the blockade was the setting up of NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization) which came into force on 24 August 1949 and is still with us today. I served in

the RAF and trained as a radar operator and worked on several types of radar before converting to Ground Control Approach (GCA) which was state-of-art mobile navigational equipment based at the end of the runway and used to land aircraft in times of poor visibility. I was posted to Wunstorf Germany with the British Air Force of Occupation, part of the British Army of the Rhine in early 1947 and was demobbed in May 1948. Further Reading can be found at this link <http://www.myfinepix.co.nz/blog/1798/398880>



Inside the GCA Nerve Centre



Airfield HISTORY - RAF STOW MARIES WWI Airfield



Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome has a unique position as a memorial to the airmen and women who lived and died during the Great War, and to the mainland civilians who suffered attack from the air for the first time.

It is the most authentically complete Great War airfield in Europe, and most probably the world, with virtually all of its original brick buildings still in place.

The Turner family, who had owned Flambirds Farm of some 260 acres since 1911, were approached by the War Office in early 1916 and 118 acres of the farm was requisitioned to build the aerodrome.

Opened in September 1916 as home to one flight of No 37 (Home) Defence Squadron, Royal Flying Corps (B Flight at Stow, with A Flight at Rochford which is now Southend airport, and C Flight at Goldhanger near Maldon). Stow Maries was part of the Air Defence of Great Britain strategy, set up in response to the raids by Zeppelins on the UK, in particular the raids on London.

In these early days the buildings were of a temporary wooden construction, and gradually over time these were replaced by the brick buildings which remain today. Building materials were carted from Maldon West Station, in carts hired from local businesses.

Stow Maries was a key part of the eastern defences on the approach to London, with patrol responsibilities for the Crouch and Blackwater Estuaries which were used as navigation points for the German Zeppelin, and later the Gotha/Giants Bombers coming from bases in Belgium and Germany.

37 (HD) Squadron also took part in the defence of London for the first London Blitz, which was undertaken by the Gotha and Giant bomber force based in Belgium during 1917, and the first few months of 1918.

37 (HD) Squadron transitioned from the RFC to the Royal Air Force on 1 April 1918 whilst based at Stow Maries.



In 1918 the Wing Headquarters moved in from Woodham Mortimer, and Stow Maries became a very busy place. An RAF survey at this time recorded 219 personnel and 16 aircraft. In 1919 C Flight moved in from Goldhanger increasing the establishment to around 300 personnel and 24 aircraft.

Abandoned in March 1919 by the RAF when the Squadron was transferred to Biggin Hill, the Turners had to go to auction to bid for the land, which was being sold by the War Office. No doubt they had to pay more for it than they were paid in 1916!

The site then reverted back to its farming role, with the existing buildings converted to farming and residential use, and the flying field becoming pasture for grazing cattle and sheep. Some of the buildings (the Squadron Offices and Dormitories) were used to house Farm employees and their families up until the 1960's. Others were adapted for agricultural use – Chicken sheds/Animal feed store/Farm equipment storage/Grain storage.

As an airfield it was largely forgotten after 1919 and the site was 're-discovered' during a survey by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments (England) in 1997.

It was farmed by the Turner family from 1919 until 2004, when Hugh Turner, who had succeeded his father Harry,



Airfield HISTORY - RAF STOW MARIES WWI Airfield

died. The aerodrome was put up for sale in 2008. On 17 July 2008 Maldon District Council placed a conservation order on the site in response to concerns about its preservation and it was designated as a conservation area.

The site was purchased in 2009 by Steve Wilson, who along with his partner Russell Savoury wanted a home for their motor racing business. This was housed in the old aeroplane repair workshops, now the shop and Museum.

In 2010 a memorial to the Officers, Men and Women of 37 (HD) Squadron, funded by £10000 worth of subscriptions from across the Country, was erected on the parade ground. In May 2012 all 24 surviving buildings were listed Grade 2. As a result of the sites condition and importance it was included on the English Heritage 'Buildings at risk Register' in the same year. In late 2012 the aerodrome was put up for sale by Steve Wilson and a campaign led by a local resident Beryl Board, in partnership with Maldon District Council and Essex

County Council, led to the acquisition of the site for the Nation on 17 December 2013. It was placed then under the



management and care of the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome Ltd (SMGWA), a charitable trust. To date there are three museum buildings containing historic exhibits, along with two temporary hangars with aircraft. More buildings are being restored over time, with the eventual aim of the Trust to restore the site to its 1918 heyday.

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome near Maldon, Essex

We are now open! Come and visit this hidden treasure.

Explore the early days of British military aviation through our award-winning exhibitions and great events. Ranging from air displays to Great War Living History, modern technology to the proms, we hope to provide something to make your visit special for you. There's plenty to enjoy at this unique venue. You can explore our fascinating site, investigate our Museum exhibitions, full of great interactives and objects, take in the atmosphere in our hangars of late production and replica WW one planes - then why not pop into our Airmen's Mess for a cup of tea and snack? Don't forget to grab a memento from our wide ranges in our shop on the way out! Learn about the incredible work being done, painstakingly conserving the buildings on site; if you have any spare time, why not come and join us? We rely on our volunteer team, as well as renovation experts! Whether you are interested in history or aviation, education or the environment or looking for a fun day out for the family or special interest group, we would like to welcome you to Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome to be part of history in the making. To learn more about RFC Stow Maries, why not get in touch and book a visit?

<https://www.stowmaries.org.uk/whats-on>

Opening Times

From Monday 8th April we start our summer opening hours. Open everyday **EXCEPT** Tuesdays & Wednesdays

Site open from 10am - 4pm

Last entry 3pm

Last tour 2.30pm

Mess Hall Cafe closes at 4pm - Cafe offer subject to availability

Groups and coach trips welcome by appointment every day Please contact us on info@stowmaries.org.uk for details.

Entrance fees

On non-event days:

Adult: £8.00

Children 9-16 years: £2.50

Children 8 and under: FREE

Concessions (over 65): £6.00

English Heritage Members: 2-for-1 on regular adult tickets on non-event days only

Essex Pass Member: 2-for-1 on regular adult tickets on non-event days only

Summer Opening Hours - By Ian Flint

Its been a Manic Spring, with so much on the go we have barely had time to catch our breath!

Now, 101 years after the formation of the RAF, we are about to embark on Summer opening, and a hugely important year for Stow Maries. We have had some great successes in the last 12 months – grants, reviews and profile raising visits.

Now, we need to drive forward. On the site itself we are about to bring another of the buildings back into use – the previous Non-Commissioned Officers accommodation will find a new lease of life thanks to a brilliant grant from the European LEADER fund, and a HUGE amount of work from our volunteers. Our shop and Mess have been redecorated, and the event season is already bursting with pre-bookings. Our membership scheme – The Propeller Club – will be on the website soon but is already available on-site, and proving very successful.

The exhibitions are back in full swing, and we are pushing hard for our museum accreditation application.

Did you know you can use the Mess and Shop without paying admission fee?

Pop into the Shop and see us, grab a wristband and you're away – Cakes are great, and the sandwiches will fill many a hungry Tum.

Come and see us soon....

Ian Flint - Chief Executive

Education

Occupying nearly 100 acres of rich and diverse wildlife habitat, Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome is the only known WW1 aerodrome to survive largely intact. Others have been developed into modern airports or airfields, housing estates or returned to agricultural use.

We offer a unique and hugely enjoyable educational visit and, (weather-dependent), students may see modern or period aircraft take off and land from a close but safe vantage point.

For a variety of your Educational needs - formal, informal or interactive and immersive - we can host and assist in a wide range of curriculum-linked activities, covering a number of topics.

With Thanks to Joe Burton, Events & Marketing Officer and the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome Trust

Meet Your Committee - Mazza Holland, Treasurer

Marion Holland AKA Maz. Nee O'Reilly



My Dad joined the Royal Air Force as a boy entrant and became a batman, there has always been confusion about his age as he changed his birth certificate to gain entry, I believe he was actually 14, he was a poor Southern Irish boy and always dreamed of joining the Royal Air Force and seeing the world. He did his 4 years and was demobbed in 1949, he met and married my Mother who was a WRAF and they married and moved to Nottingham which was my mother's birthplace and family home, he became a Coal Miner, my eldest sister Eileen, came along in 1951 then Linda in 1953 and I quickly followed in 1954, Dad couldn't settle in Civvy Street and he re-joined the RAF when I was 4 years old, I had already been to 2 schools by then and we were posted to Abingdon and school no 3, so began my life as a Scale E BRAT. Dad was determined to fly, he quickly qualified as a Quarter Master and progressed through his career finishing 22 years later as a Master Air Loadmaster at RAF Brize Norton. He flew on many Aircraft during this period and was on Beverley, Hercules C 130 and Britannia. All this gave me the time of my life, I was a seven year old when we travelled to Aden and I lived a dream life in the sun, I travelled in the belly of a Beverley into the desert of The Yemen, I saw the big 5 in Kenya as an 8 year old and spent my teenage years in Singapore under the tropical sun. Sadly my mum passed away tragically on Christmas day 1964 and dad was grounded for 2 years in order to care for his 10,11 and 13 year old girls. Life carried on and he met and married my step mum, who took to our nomadic life very well, and we continued our travels with her. I had been to 10 different schools by the age of 15 and learned most of the things I know now at the University of life. I learned to make friends quickly and say goodbye and leave people I loved behind, knowing that life would go on. I learned about different races and religions and how to cope when life wasn't so easy. Both my sisters married into the services and Linda became a VR during the Gulf War. My whole life has revolved around the Armed Forces and that is why I am so involved with RAFA, I am proud of all the service my family have given over the years and am happy to give my time now to help others who may not have been so lucky in life.

Meet Your Committee - Ian T Kirk, Social Events Coordinator

Continued from Page 3



want me to stay in transit accommodation whilst they were allowed to stay in the officers mess, respect to them for that. Whilst serving at the IAM I did the obligatory detachment to the Falkland's, I was also promoted to CPL and posted away from the best posting in the UK. On promotion I was posted to RAF Oakhanger, so for those of you that know your

geography you will know that Odiham, Farnborough and Oakhanger are all within a stones throw from each other. So the irony of it all which was the reason I was back coursed at Locking, Satellite communications, that's what I ended up doing at Oakhanger. I was working in the SNCC on 'B' shift, this was such a change from my previous RAF career that I never quite enjoyed it as much. As a result, when the massive redundancy scheme came out in the late 90's, I volunteered for it. I would have left a few months before my 12 years was completed and lost my pension. However, as a

result of the total miss-management in the forces, that started with me joining a trade that was 180% over-manned on initial sign up, I ended up being asked to stay on another six months as although I was accepted for redundancy they could not afford to let me go. So I got my 12 years service pension in the end and have had that for the last 22 years, thank you.

On leaving the RAF I started the next week in London working for Reuters. Now the fact that where I worked was about 10 yards from the Sutton Arms in Islington has no reflection on me falling on my feet yet again. What a place - I spent 15 years working for Reuters and at a time when they were still 'old school'. This consisted of lunchtime drinking and a great working environment. I also worked at their main data centre in Canary Wharf, with its own gym, swimming pool and bar.....enough said. I took redundancy yet again, in 2013 as Reuters were shutting down the data centre in Islington and to be honest the London life was not quite the same as the cappuccino brigade took over. I then decided to stop being PAYE and work for myself. I had had so much time off doing shift work in London, that I could train and get all my qualifications to become a plumber. So I started my own business and within a couple of years I took my gas exams, at great expense. I am now a fully qualified Gas engineer doing heating and plumbing, fitting Worcester boilers and also doing bathrooms which is where the hard work comes in. It also gives me the quality of life I want as I become older. I take quite a lot of time off and do not work long hours anymore, we have recently moved to a lovely smaller house in the country which needs a lot doing to it. So when at home I'm busy working on the house or out walking our dog Buddy with my lovely wife, Janine and little ray of sunshine, my daughter, Amelia.

2019 Global Group - Stolen Face Book Photo's

The certificate below was awarded to the branch for having the Best Online Newsletter in the Area. We now go forward to the National Conference in May where we are up against Online & Hard copy Newsletters. Well done Bryn for producing it, the people who contribute to it & to the members for joining the branch website to read it. ALL these factors are taken into account when deciding on a winner!!! Steve Mullis (Chairman)



South Eastern & Eastern Area President, Air Cdre Allan Vaughan, presenting the Best Area Newsletter Certificate 2019, to Global Branch Chairman, Steve Mullis

The certificate below was awarded to the branch for raising over £15k for the 2018 Wings Appeal. We were one of just 3 branches on the Area to achieve this. Well Done all of you!!!! Steve Mullis (Chairman)



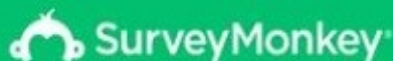
Julie Mullis collecting the £15K Wings Certificate, on behalf of the branch, from the Area President, Air Cdre Allan Vaughan, at the Area Conference 2019

INFORMATION & EVENTS PAGE



Veterans, please help an aspiring paramedic who is researching veterans' mental health for her College course, by completing her short survey
#thanks

**NOTE: To use the link Below. please copy and paste the link
"SURVEYMONKEY.CO.UK" into your Search Engine**



SURVEYMONKEY.CO.UK

What are the Mental Health Outcomes at the end of Military Service?

THE ARMED FORCES TRUST OF CHIPPING NORTON
PRESENTS

**A SWINGING 40's NIGHT
WITH THE SWINGETTES AND
THEIR JAZZ BAND**



**SATURDAY 8th JUNE AT THE CROWN &
CUSHION HOTEL, CHIPPING NORTON**
from 7 pm to Midnight tickets £20
available from Carol Peachey 077857
70812 or West Street Newsagents.

Finger buffet

Raffle

40's dress welcome

**Prizes for the best
dressed couple**

**All proceeds to military
and local charities**

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OPERATION OVERLORD
6th June to 24th August 1944



THE BATTLE
FOR NORMANDY

**ROYAL
AIR FORCE
CHINOOK
DISPLAY TEAM**

**AIR DISPLAY
CALENDAR 2019**

**ROYAL
AIR FORCE
ODIHAM**



MAY 25-26

DUXFORD

JUNE 01-02

TORBAY

JUNE 09

RAF COSFORD

JUNE 15-16

DUNSFOLD

JUNE 22-23

WESTON

JULY 06-07

THE WALES AIRSHOW

JULY 19-21

RIAT

JULY 25

GOIHAM MARHAM FAMILIES DAY

JULY 26-28

SUNDERLAND

AUGUST 10-11

BLACKPOOL

AUGUST 16-17

EASTBOURNE

AUGUST 22

WATTISHAM FAMILIES DAY

AUGUST 23

SIDMOUTH

AUGUST 30 - SEPT 01

BOURNEMOUTH

SEPTEMBER 12

JERSEY INTERNATIONAL

THESE DATES/EVENTS – SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION...



2019 Events For your Diary

March 31st	Mother's Day
April 6th /7th	Big Weekend
April 21st	Easter at Stow
April 28th	Donation Day & start of Car Rally
May 11th	Cross & Cockade at Stow Maries
May 19th	Wings & Wheels *
June 29th	Armed Forces Day
July 13th	Stow Proms
July 27th/28th	Stow Maries At War *
September 14th/15th	Large Model Airshow Weekend
September 21st	Heritage Open Day
November 10th	Remembrance Day

STOW MARIES GREAT WAR AERODROME

FLAMBERDS CHASE, HACKMANS LANE, PURLEIGH, NR MALDON, ESSEX CM3 6RJ

Advance Online booking highly recommended- limited tickets available
Further information available on

www.stowmaries.org.uk/events

REFRESHMENTS, STALLS, MUSEUM, GIFT SHOP & FREE CAR PARK

* Flying displays planned subject to weather, serviceability & CAA conditions

Registered Charity 1151099

