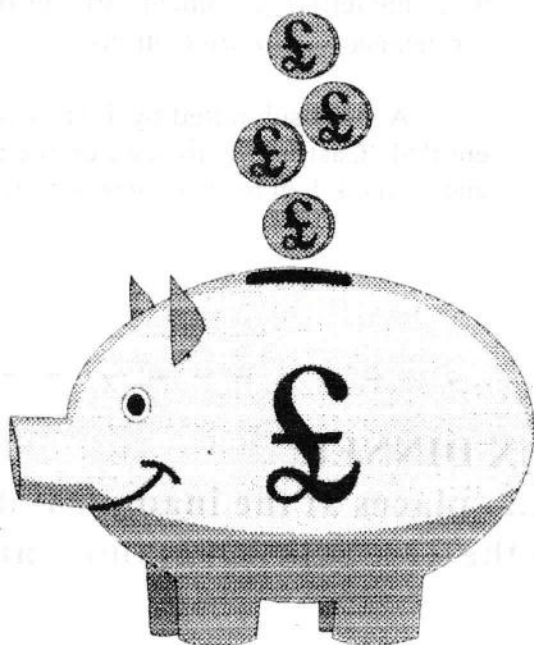


JUNE 1996



NEWSLETTER

Once again the weather was kind to us for the 1996 MAY meeting and strolling around in the sunshine awaiting the photo call were plenty of familiar faces as well as several new members and their partners attending their first meeting. Bob gave his usual polished speech welcoming all and giving apologies for absence for those unable to make it. Several topics were raised at the meeting and these are covered in greater detail below, but first, meet the money pig;



The reason for the happy smiling piggy is two-fold, first- your SUBS are due for renewal, and as the early details of membership have been mis-laid (posh name for lost) we will have to rely on your honesty, but all those who were members up to August 1995 then "It must be you". All those who default on payment will be visited in the dead of night by 'orrible slimy beasties who will nip away at your naughty bits-so be warned!

The second reason for the money pig is to encourage you to start saving for the inaugural **Old Dux Dinner** to be held on the evening of **Saturday September 21st**, (that's the day before the next scheduled meeting on the 22nd.). The dinner will be held in the Officers Mess at Duxford at an approximate cost of £20 per person, more details will be given at a later date once we know how many will be attending, but we do know that there is an impressive choice of menus, and fine wines. Obviously those of us who live a long way from Duxford will also need to arrange overnight accommodation but the committee appeal to all to try and make the effort. We have to pay a deposit of 10% of the cost or £250 whichever ever is the greater, but again, details of this and when to pay will be given out later, initially all we are asking is that you complete and return the coupon as soon as possible so that the arrangements can get underway. If you want to know more before making up your minds please ring one of the committee members. A list of their names is at the end of this newsletter.

A typical 3 course menu on offer consists of:

Chowder of mussels and clams

Breast of chicken filled with herb mousse served with a creme fraiche and herb sauce
Selection of fresh vegetables & potatoes

Half queen pineapple filled with fresh fruits and double cream

Fresh ground coffee & mints.

Given that standard of food, informal and friendly company, and the obvious choice of venue it should turn out to be a memorable and enjoyable evening so start feeding the piggy.

BADGES

As you are aware Bob has been trying to obtain a suitable lapel badge based on the duck logo, now thanks to a lead given by Ian Swindel production is under way and the badges will be available for purchase soon, cost as agreed at the meeting will be £3.00 each.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

At the request of several members an investigation regarding the issuing of membership cards is to take place initially to see what costs are involved, whether they be permanent or issued with each renewal of membership, should there be a different card for each category of membership?. All these factors will be looked at and it is hoped that a solution will be arrived at in time for the next meeting.

NAME BADGES & HOLDERS.

Would all of you who were given name badges and holders please look after them and remember to bring them with you to each meeting, the holders are quite expensive and colouring the badge is very time consuming, to those of you who had their names spelt incorrectly I apologise, the errors will be corrected before the next meeting.

HONORARY MEMBER

The certificate that is to be awarded to Stephen Woolford was on display, unfortunately Stephen was unable to attend the meeting so another date to make the presentation will have to be arranged, at the dinner perhaps ?.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

To refresh your memories here is a list of the committee names and phone numbers,
Chairman; Bob Hope

01554-890520

Vice Chairman(North); Jim Lynn

0191-3853941

Vice Chairman(South); Jim Garlinge

01322-274245

Secretary/Treasurer; Allan McRae*

01709-560771

* I also produce this newsletter and would welcome letters, comments, articles, or stories etc for inclusion in future editions.

A story submitted by Terry Crowley entitled "Castor Oil" follows on the next page, and I thank him for his contribution.

OLD DUX DINNER

We/I should like to reserve..... places at the inaugural dinner to held at the Officers Mess Duxford, on the 21st Sept 1996, those attending be; (Block capitals please)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Dress will be smart informal

Signed.....date.....

Cut out & return to (or call) Bob Hope.

CASTOR OIL

By

Terence Crowley

Imagine a summers morning at RAF Duxford, Cambridgeshire, in the year of 1955, both 64 & 65 Fighter squadrons are taking advantage of this fine weather and are flying sortie after sortie with their Meteor 8 jet aircraft, and on this day the Sergeant Aircraft Engine Fitter on 64 Sqdn (Myself) is called to the telephone.

The caller identifies himself as the Flt/Sgt in charge of station flight (a section of which looked after visiting aircraft) " Terry, I need a favour," pleads Chiefy, " Have you ever worked on Oxford or Anson aircraft?, and if so could you do a daily inspection on the Cheetah engines of an Oxford that is due to depart after lunch?" Bearing in mind that a favour is usually reclaimed, I confirmed that I had Oxford experience and thinking a change of scenery would be welcome I hopped on my bicycle and eventually arrived at the Station Flight hanger and the Oxford which was a twin engined training aircraft widely used during the 1939-45 war.

At this point I must explain why the station flight Chiefy had requested a senior NCO to do a task usually undertaken by a Flight Mechanic. The Air Ministry, in their wisdom, had decided to curtail the training of Flight Mechanics to cope with the internal combustion engine and to restrict their training to the Gas Turbine engines only. The result of this decision meant that it became increasingly difficult to service older aircraft, thus NCO technicians were often asked to recall and use their past expertise of many types of aircraft such as this particular Oxford which was being used by an Air Vice Marshall as a commuter aircraft.

Walking round the aircraft and then sitting in the cockpit I refreshed my memory and eventually started the inspection. I had removed the engine cowlings and checked the main engine oil levels, when I realised what had been nagging me about servicing an 'Oxbox'. There is one check that is essential, notably, look at the oil level in the air compressor (a BTH type as I recall). This unit supplied air for the brakes and, I think, the retraction of the undercarriage, a very important piece of equipment.

Sure enough the compressor reservoir was empty, the small amount of oil required was enough for ten flying hours, so this had been over looked on previous inspections. Now this posed a problem, the oil required was not an ordinary engine oil, but Castor oil, and where to obtain this commodity?

I am now in the Station Flight office asking the Flt/Sgt for some Castor oil, he in turn is looking at me as if I had slipped a cog; "You are joking" he observes " Have you finished your inspection?". "I assure you that I am not joking, and unless I obtain half-a-pint of Castor oil, that Oxford is not going anywhere" I emphatically replied. With a resigned sigh he asked me to explain my unusual request which was done and accepted with the remark "There is no Castor oil in my stores, why don't we try sick quarters?". He had obviously meant this to be a joke, but this was instant inspiration!. "Phone the Medical Officer and request the Castor oil" I insisted "If he demurs tell him he will have to answer to an Air Vice Marshall". After much pleading from the Flt/Sgt the Castor oil eventually arrived in an ambulance driven by a grinning medical orderly exclaiming "The Doc is not a happy man and hopes that one of you will visit his domain so he can extract his revenge"

The Air Vice Marshall duly arrived and asked if his aircraft was ready, he was assured it was!. I hand cranked the engines removed the chocks and waved him off. The Chiefy and I strolled back to the hanger agreeing that we had better not report report sick until a new Medical Officer arrived on the station, but parted smilingly acknowledging that we could both do with a pint in the mess that night.

The end.