



# NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2014 [www.olddux.org](http://www.olddux.org) Compiled by LARRY CROSS



Dear Members

The 10<sup>th</sup> May dawned wet and grey but it mattered not, we were off to Duxford. As we had a call to make en route Doreen and I arrived later than usual but there was still quite a few friends enjoying drinks in the bar.

Ann Gange had chosen the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of W.W.I as the theme for the dinner and Ann, ably assisted by Jan and Stan Dell had just finished adding the place settings to the beautifully laid tables in the restaurant. (Copies can be seen in the Gallery)

The company assembled at 7.00 p.m. for what I'd call the happy hour, meeting old friends and making new ones over a glass or two and at 8.0'clock we were duly seated.

The food was exceptional and taking into account the special needs of the guests, arrived in a well ordered manner, serving seventy two guests with three courses, added to that we had a raffle - WOW!

I too had a winning ticket and chose the miniature watercolour donated by Jean Beddison which she had sent from Oz- at no little expense, many thanks Jean.



In his after dinner speech Bob warmly welcomed everyone to his our 18<sup>th</sup> reunion dinner and if proof of it's popularity was needed we had with us again all the way from the USA: Ron Stern, good old Ron. Our Association President Sir Richard Johns, was warmly welcomed by us all, sadly Lady Elizabeth was not able to join him. John Delafield ex 65Sqn pilot with his fiancée` Marion, were also in the company, they plan to marry later this year. Attending for

the first time, Sallie & Mike Blundell, Ted Ridgeley and Don Davis whom I'm sure will agree were made most welcome.

Bob thanked Ann for once again formulating and putting together this years Reunion Dinner ably assisted by hubby Les. Also Jan and Stan Dell for all their behind the scenes work. As a small token of our appreciation a bouquet of flowers was presented to Ann. (Photo) Last but by no means least he thanked everyone for their donations to the raffle and also the ticket sellers, Jan Dell and Anthea Garner.

A minutes silence was then observed for lost partners, friends, and all those who gave their lives in conflicts past and present. Unexpectedly Bob then called for the kitchen staff to be assembled, something that has not happened before to thank them on our behalf. Sayed and Laura Jayne,(management) and Maya the Head Chef and her team filed in, but before Bob could say a word the restaurant exploded with applause, that said it all.

Les Millgate then stood and asked for a round of applause to Bob for being such a good Chairman together with the other members of he committee.

Sir Richard was asked to make the Royal Toast after which he spoke in glowing terms of Bob and the way he has led our unique association so successfully and for so long. (Loud Applause).....as predicted it was a reet good do!

On Sunday the weather was fine which was good for the members who left early to take advantage of the opportunity of seeing as much as possible of the I.W.M. exhibits as possible.

The meeting took place in the AirSpace Hangar promptly at 13.00hrs in Learning Space One and as per usual Bob welcomed 80 members and guests to our 19<sup>th</sup> O.D.A. Annual General Meeting.

Those attending for the first time were

Ted Ridgley & brother, Derek & Maureen Parks, John Delafield & Fiancee` Marion Welton and Sallie & Mike Blundell.

Apologies from Allan & Jennie McRae, Ann Brinkley, Dell Gates, Bill & Shirley Amos, Ben Ellis, Terry Crowley, Jock Nico, John Corby, Don Dalton, David Law (seriously ill) Don Chappell and Jim Garlinge.also from Gordon & Emm Kennard, who live in Greece and have made a generous donation to the O.D.A

R.I.P. Eric Massey, Doug Sturgeon, Alan Hambidge, Tom Hutchinson, Tom Holman, and Greta Sansam. Bob then called for a minutes silence for absent friends.

As is required Bob asked for volunteers to form a new committee... no one blinked!

It was then proposed that the present committee continue for another year which they agreed to do. Bob then thanked us all for our continued support.

It was decided that identity badges should be worn at future meetings, especially at the dinners, these will be supplied in due course.

**The October Meeting will be on Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup> and as previously mentioned will be held in the Astra Cinema, more details will be in the September Issue.**

The O.D.A. Remembrance Day Wreath was once again kindly arranged by Kerris and Colin Denley. The Association Emblem will again supplied by Allan McRae, thank you Allan and Ann and Les Gange have been asked to lay the wreath on the day at the I.W.M. Service.

Our grateful thanks to Jean Beddison, now living in Australia, who again donated two of her watercolour paintings to the O.D.A. the second of which will be raffled at the October meeting.

Air Shows on 12<sup>th</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> July and 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September

require volunteers to man the recruiting desk for the above dates. A ticket and parking space is supplied. We start at 10am and close the desk at 3pm, we don't all operate at the same time, leaving parts of the day free and once we have cleared away, plenty of time to watch the rest of the show. If you are interested contact Stan, who is temporarily coordinating arrangements. 01494 863428 [janstandell1@btinternet.com](mailto:janstandell1@btinternet.com)

*Nobby pictured with Ann and Pat Scott*

**Suggestions were asked for as to what the committee might consider to enhance the celebrations of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our unique association's Annual Dinner....send answers on a postcard to Nobby Clark. (not)**

Carl Warner, Research & Informations Manager gave a very interesting presentation of an insight to his involvement in the American Museum's upgrading project. Our sincere thanks to Carl for generously giving up of his own free time

To bring our successful meeting to a close, Nobby Clark was again called upon to relate both interesting and hilarious tales of his time spent in the sands of R.A.F. Amman, Jordan.



## An Old Man's Memories

by Ron Pountain

On New Year's day 2014, I watched a film on television; "The Glen Miller Story, It included the music "In the Mood", "Chattanooga ChooChoo" and "Pennsylvania Six Five Thousand". The film brought back surprisingly vivid memories of my time in the Western Desert 72 years ago. I spent the night of New Year's day remembering with almost frightening clarity, evenings in the Western Desert listening to the wireless.

I served in the Western Desert on a fighter bomber squadron equipped with Kittyhawks, we loaded two 500lb bombs per aircraft and 1000 rounds of .5" Browning ammunition. For a I2 aircraft sortie my hard grafting armourers would load 24 bombs and 12,000 rounds of ammunition.

As the light faded at 8pm local time we sat in the sand around the Armoury Trailer, each of us with a mug of tea, to listen to the wireless. From 8 until 8.30 we listened to the BBC World Service News. We tried to work out whether we were winning or losing. We could never work it out.

From 8.30 to 9 we listened to the German propaganda programme presented by AXIS SALLY. A strange choice but the music was the attraction.

Sally always opened and closed her programme with the great German singer Ute Lemper singing (in German,) Lily Marlene. Strange, really, Lily Marlene was the song of the German Africa Corps sung by Ute Lemper though, it was a wonderful haunting melody. Sally would follow on with a medley of Glen Miller records. Great Music, and we could ignore the propaganda talks in between the music.

Perhaps the most unusual member of my armament section was Jim Shirley. He was more than 20 years older than the rest of us and had served many years in the army. His greatest claim to fame, so he himself said, was that he had spent several years as a corporal bugler to the General Officer Commanding India.

In 1940 he went to an Army Recruiting Office to re-enlist. They turned him down flat. In his own words, he walked across the street, to an R.A.F. recruiting office and 15 minutes later he was in the R.A.F.

His favourite of all of Axis Sally's offerings was the Andrews Sisters singing "The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B". He was by no means the best armourer in the squadron but he was always cheerful, had lots of stories and was always a willing helper.

At 9pm local time, bed. For most of our time in the desert we lived in slit trenches, each of us had a two man bivouac tent which neatly covered a slit trench. First, however, check one's blankets to make sure that there were no sand spiders or scorpions in residence. And sleep. The hard graft starts at first light tomorrow. This was our world for more than 2 years. No days off and no leave.

So 1<sup>st</sup>. January 2014, brought back very vivid memories of men who served with me 70 years ago. It was, to some extent, a quite disturbing experience. My four great corporals; Johnny Walker and Chunky Parish in "A" flight, Dave Scott and Taff Evans, in "B" Flight.

My hard grafting armourers. I cannot remember all the names, but here are some of them. Lofty Burrows, Eric Lacey, Stan Graham, Jim Shirley, Ken Thomas, Phil Wilson, Roy Martin and Bob Davis.

These men served with me through the heat and the dust and the flies of the Western Desert, from 1941 to 1943, 2 years and 15 weeks, then on to Sicily and Italy.

Lady Astor called us the "D" day dodgers". She will never be forgiven.

Just an old man's memories. From (1941 — 1943) 633697 Sgt Pountain 260 Squadron, 239 Wing, Desert Air Force

## THE YOUNG SOLDIER by Glen Bartle ©

He sat there looking thoughtful a letter in his hand  
The letter that he's been reading was from his motherland  
He was just one of Thousands come here to help us out  
I could tell that he was wondering what it was all about

He arrived here on the sixth of May in nineteen forty four  
And was ordered to pitch his tent for just a week or more  
His friends were all around him doing much the same  
And somehow he'd got to thinking that this was not a game

So many of these soldiers from way across the sea  
Were only a few years older than the likes of you and me  
But they were armed up to the elbows with guns, tanks and planes  
For off to war they were going to fight in freedoms name

They'd chatted to the locals, played rounders  
on the green  
And told us kids great stories of places they  
had been  
They gave us gum and Mallows asked for  
nothing in return  
But the debt that we would owe them we had  
but yet to learn

Came the evening of 5th of June when the  
sun was going down  
There seemed to be more movement in and  
around our little town It never really crossed  
our minds as we headed back to home



That this would be the last we would see of our friends so far  
from home

The morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> of June was very misty and not clear  
There was something different some - thing strange hung in  
the air. There was a heavy silence it almost weighed one  
down Even the birds stopped singing at least in our part of  
town

As we carried on our way to school we suddenly realised That  
the camp site it was barren no tents did greet our eyes.  
The things that were there yesterday had up and gone it  
seemed It was as if the weeks before had really never been

So the answer to the question what had happened on that  
night Why had all our young friends vanished out of sight  
It wasn't until a day later that the reason we finally knew  
Just why all our young friends had melted into the blue

It was on the news that evening the news from the  
BBC  
We learnt that the boys had landed on the beaches  
of Normandy  
They had gone to fight for our freedom gone to  
drive back the Hun  
And would not stop in their mission till the battle it  
was won

Often I think of that soldier with the letter in his  
hand  
And wonder if he'd made it back to his motherland  
Or did he like so many on that fateful day  
Perish on the beaches and die the hero's way

Only years later did that examination of the rivets make sense. Because I became a pilot myself and having flown Spitfires only realised the importance of that incident after the war ended. My friendship with Schofield continued until war broke out when we had little time to relax and only met on duty. Approximately two months later, if I recall correctly, two strange characters arrived on the station. Although a Flight Sergeant and Sergeant respectively, they seemed unaccustomed to wearing uniform and by their measured gait and deportment were obviously policemen. In fact, they were the first members of the SIB (RAF Special Investigation Branch) most of us had ever seen since joining the service. As their identity was not disclosed they became the subject of much speculation around the station. Especially in the Sergeants' Mess where they spoke to no one and kept very much to themselves. These two individuals always went about the station together and it was very clear to everyone that they were there for a definite purpose. Then, one Tuesday morning I discovered the reason when ordered to the report to the Station Warrant Officer. A dour Scot with years of service, the SWO, as he was known brooked no nonsense, yet dispensed discipline and justice with the wisdom of Solomon. Consequently any airman summoned to his presence was usually in trouble, but could at least expect a fair hearing. Upon my arrival, the SWO sat at his desk with the two policemen seated at a separate table with an empty chair facing them. Ominously I was told to sit, something never done by an airman in that sanctum. Without any preamble I underwent a long, sustained grilling which left me stunned and very subdued. It began with threats of a court-martial and imprisonment if I withheld any information, followed by the order to sign an Official Secrets Declaration Form. The hostile attitude suddenly changed and I was given permission to smoke, yet another indication that something serious lay ahead of me. My apologetic preference for a pipe accepted, the two interrogators waited patiently while I filled the bowl and lit up before they proceeded.

First I was asked how well I knew LAC Schofield. My rather hesitant description made little impression and the questions began to probe more deeply. All my answers met with a stony silence. However, my telling of the arrogant uncle did produce a grim smile and a sharp reaction. "Did Schofield know you were detailed for the static aircraft?" demanded Sergeant. "Probably. All squadron duties were posted on the notice board well in advance." I replied. "That fits", muttered the Sergeant, at which his companion nodded. Suddenly the Flight Sergeant produced a brief-case and extracted a leaflet which he placed before me. It depicted a British Tommy sitting upon a chair outside a cafe with a French girl on his knee. The Tommy had his hand under the girl's skirt, while in the background a French poilu bearing shouldered rifle was shown marching off towards a representation of the Marginot Line. "Can you read French?" I nodded. "What does the caption say?" the Flight Sergeant demanded.



My translation met with approval. It read. "Frenchman! See what the British do to your women, while you're away at the Marginot Line". "Good enough!" said the Flight Sergeant patronisingly. "Have you ever seen this cartoon before?"

When I shook my head in amazement, the two SIB men looked at each other. "Are you certain?" they demanded in chorus. "Very." I asserted. "What's it to do with me?" Both men looked at each other again, then one turned to the SWO saying, "The 'uncle' tale is interesting. Otherwise, we reckon this chap know little more than the others. Agreed?" "Agreed" muttered the SWO. By this remark I gathered that other members of my squadron had already interrogated for the same reason. It transpired that the SIB had made a careful survey of Schofield's colleagues and selected those most likely to provide relevant information. I was the last in line and one of very few to hear the astonishing explanation which followed. "For your information," began the Flight Sergeant, addressing me as a teacher would a recalcitrant pupil "This leaflet was dropped on our troops by a German aircraft in France two days ago and the original drawing was found in your friend Schofield's sketch-pad." "You're joking!" I expostulated, to learn very quickly that the SIB had zero degree of tolerance on duty and thought my remark too flippant. "Shutup and stick to the questions! he snapped. "Do you still maintain you're seeing this cartoon for the first time?" Christ, I've already said so. Don't you believe me?" I gasped a long silence followed until the

Flight sergeant put the leaflet away and closed the brief-case with a loud snap, saying in commanding tones, "Ok, but listen carefully and this time consider yourself lucky. We believe you, because that bastard's fooled everyone on the station." He paused for me to digest his verdict, then continued more amicably. "Look, my lad, take my advice in future and be more careful in your choice of friends. The information you've given tallies with what we already know. which satisfies me you told the truth. So now I'll tell you what we're up against. But keep your mouth shut after I let you go and think of that form you signed. Breathe a word to anyone and it can put you inside for life, if needs be. Understood?" I nodded, whereupon he proceeded to give me a lengthy explanation as to why I had been subjected to such an ordeal. It began with Schofield's uncle, about whom the SIB knew a great deal. Apparently he was indeed an aeronautical engineer, but not working at Vickers. Instead he was German and a member of the Messerschmitt design team, temporarily attached to the German Embassy in London for espionage purposes. In fact British Intelligence had known about him since shortly after his arrival in the UK a few weeks prior to the Empire Air Day display. His visit to Duxford confirmed their suspicions, but he had been left unmolested in order to find a more dangerous accomplice thought to exist, but hitherto unsuspected. Keeping the German under surveillance led to Schofield, but both were allowed to continue their operations in the hope of bringing more Fifth Columnists into the net.

When enquiries were complete, the uncle whose name I have never known, was arrested, apparently along with other suspects. The prize however was Schofield, but the SIB still needed proof and the leaflet provided a sorely needed break.

Because the Germans recognised and used his talent as a cartoonist Schofield foolishly retained his original drawing, never dreaming it would betray him. Fortunately his kit had been searched surreptitiously by the SIB and the sketch-pad content carefully noted. Allowed to perform his duties as normal, Schofield seemed unaware of these activities. Yet when confronted very suddenly with pad and leaflet, such was his enormous ego, he confessed openly to being a spy. His history prior to joining the RAF was subjected to careful scrutiny and revealed a serious blunder made by the RAF recruiting system. His mother was an English nurse who had married a German at the end of World War I. The father died shortly after Schofield was born and his mother returned to England with her son.

Sent to an English school Schofield studied German, having a solid grounding from his mother who spoke the language fluently. During holidays he visited his German grandparents on numerous occasions and became inducted into the Hitler Youth Movement with strict instructions not to discuss it with anyone at home. So gradually these seeds of subversion began to germinate and there was no turning hack. After successful brain-washing by Nazi instructors in the Youth movement, German Intelligence considered him an ideal choice for training as a Fifth Columnist. When preparations were complete he left school to join the RAF and chose the trade of photographer.

**To be continued**



## TRAPPED UNDER THE SEA

A Tribute to Norman Ryder

Continued

The sea was much rougher than he thought, waves were running six or seven feet high as he sped at about eighty miles an hour toward the trawler which was still half a mile away. Then the Spitfire hit a wave with a crash. There was a great noise which the pilot afterwards remembered perfectly, before he was knocked out and rendered unconscious. As the Spitfire dived below the surface the sea surging over him brought him back to consciousness and his recollection of what occurred while he was trapped in the cockpit is so remarkable that it is worth placing on record. "I remember sitting in the cockpit and everything was bright green. I was fascinated by the stillness of it all - it was amazing, and I recall watching a lot of bubbles running up the windscreen before my eyes and parting as they got to the front. I sat there fascinated by the sight and not a bit afraid, the calm was so restful after the noise. The green colour about me was lovely, but it turned to blackness before I got out, I started to get out by undoing my straps. I stood on my seat and just when I thought I was clear I found that my parachute had caught under the sliding hood and I could not move. Owing to the nose of the aircraft being down, the front of the hood when open was above him and as he rose it pressed against his back sliding down between his body and his packed parachute. Any attempt he made to force his way upwards while the hood was caught under the parachute was doomed to fail and would only have wedged him more securely and led to his death. In his efforts he swallowed a great deal of water, yet his mind in that crisis worked so clearly and calmly that he at once knew what he was caught on and did the only thing that would enable him to escape." I got partially into the cockpit again and at this point noticed it was getting very much darker as the aircraft sank. I was again nearly hooked up by my parachute, but I wriggled and got clear. By now it was very black and I just saw the silhouette of the tailplane pass my face, I still had on my parachute which hampered my movements, but I managed to dog paddle my way upwards"

These vivid words describe not only the most remarkable escape of a pilot during the war, but one hitherto unique in the history of aviation

His struggle for life was by no means over when he reached the surface, the fact that his parachute had caused him so much trouble made him decide to get rid of it as soon as possible. His thick flying clothes, being saturated with water, weighed him down; he had not blown up his Mae West which would have supported him on the surface, but he felt sure that he would get along much better without being hampered by the weight of his parachute. Although able to take a breath now and again he was so heavy in the water that instead of being able to surmount the six or seven foot waves they rolled him over and submerged each time. His efforts to escape from the sunken cockpit had naturally used up much of his strength. Now buffeted and swamped by the waves he fought to undo the straps of his parachute harness, it was no easy task yet he managed it. As he started to sink he managed to grab his parachute pack which floated on the surface and hang on grimly with his left arm as the waves kept washing over him. He was so exhausted that he could barely retain his hold on the life saving parachute. It began to dawn on him that as he weakened under the buffeting of the seas that he would not be able to hang on much longer, it was as much as he could to get his breath between each wave. As a big wave passed he saw the trawler approaching and heard men shouting words of encouragement. Then something touched him and, weak as he was he remembered grabbing a boat-hook and being lifted out of the sea by numerous strong hands. The fishermen took him back to their trawler - it was quite small, no more than forty foot long - and laid him down on the deck until he had partially recovered from his exhaustion, then they carried him below and placed him in a bunk. He was frightfully seasick owing to the rough seas, the little craft rolled and pitched so badly that once he was flung right out of his bunk on to the floor. When rescued he was about fifteen miles from Hartlepool, a distance he had flown in three minutes, but it took the fishing boat six hours to reach port. While on the way he heard the wireless report that he was missing, but the skipper of the smack notified a destroyer that the missing fighter pilot was safe. The destroyer made to take him off but the skipper was loathe to give him up, having made the rescue, he wanted to finish the job and put the fighter pilot safely ashore.

"Not likely!" remarked the skipper as he got the signal from the destroyer. "I'll stove in my plates if I go near you." consequently he plucked along back to port with the sea sick pilot down below. It was not surprising that the young fighter pilot who had shown such calmness, courage and resource in escaping from the cockpit of his Spitfire as it sank in to the sea was recognized by the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross

FINIS

### From David Brown Station Sick Quarters 1959- 61

A friend of mine who is a member of IWM Duxford showed me a programme he had kept titled "R.A.F Duxford at Home" - "Battle of Britain Week" dated Saturday 14th September 1957 (price 1/-) - those were the days!!

During the War years No.65 Squadron had maintained an excellent record and although many of its operations were unspectacular and uneventful they were none the less vital, In all, some 11,000 operational sorties totalling well over 16,000 hours were flown and 119½ enemy aircraft were claimed destroyed in combat.

With the War over, the squadron gradually reverted to normal peacetime training as a fighter squadron, and in early 1946, moved to Horsham St. Faith and re-equipped with Spitfire XVI aircraft.

Here began the long association and friendly rivalry with No. 64 Squadron which continues to this day. Later that year it again re-equipped, this time with Hornet Is, and conversion training was still in progress when the squadron moved to Linton-on-Ouse. In 1948 the Hornet Is were superseded by Hornet IIs and in May of that year a goodwill visit was made to Sweden. This was the highlight of a year in which flying was devoted almost entirely to routine squadron training, including interception exercises with B29 aircraft of the U.S.A.F.

March, 1949 saw the squadron changing its role to Daylight Low Level Intruder. Training for this lasted until December, 1950 and included a great many low level navigation exercises over long distances. However, in December, 1950 it reverted to its old Day Fighter role and shortly afterward received its first jet aircraft - Meteor F.4s. These were replaced in February 1951 by Meteor F.8s. and on the 15th August, 1951, the squadron moved to Duxford where it presently remains.

The Meteor F.8s stayed with the squadron until 21st March, 1957 when they flew for the last time and were replaced by Hunter F.6s, which had been arriving during January and February. Although delighted with the new Hunters for which they had waited so long, it was not without a twinge of regret that the pilots laid aside the F.8s which had been their ' mounts ' for six years.

With its Hunters the squadron continues to train and operate in the Day Fighter role as part of the air defence of the United Kingdom. It also retains as its badge the "black lion of Dunquerque" superimposed on fifteen swords under which is the motto "VI ET ARMIS"(by force and arms).

Since childhood the RAF Battle of Britain pilots were my wartime heroes. I was 5yrs old in 1940 so if I was to join any service it would be the RAF.

Like most men I didn't want to take part in National Service but there was no choice.

In 1956 I left Chelsea to go to Bedfordshire for a week of medicals and uniform fit-outs. It was quite a calm week which suddenly ended at 5.00 am one morning by a drill instructor kicking open the door and shouting, "Get outside in five minutes", we then knew we had arrived, and we were soon on our way to Padgate for Square Bashing.

Padgate had a reputation as the hardest camp in the RAF; it was indeed a hard place to be and were not allowed to leave camp for nine weeks. After a week we were told by Corporal Thomas to send our civilian clothes home but I kept my running kit with me. Corporal Thomas noticed this of course and told me to have it off the camp by 08.00hrs the next day (no chance) In our billet was an England rugby union player who had been allowed to retain his kit which was kept in Corporal Thomas's room. He kindly suggested that we kept our kits together which worked o.k. Needless to say the Corporal later checked that my kit had gone.

From Padgate we went to the RAF electrical school at Melksham and this was so different from Padgate, it was like being on another planet.

The time was coming when I would join the RAF at the sharp end was posted to Wattisham in Suffolk and assigned to Station Flight. Working with me were some great characters one of whom was Sergeant Kennedy also known as the 'Bilko' of the RAF. He could do and did anything, from getting leave, new (RAF) clothing, dodging parades and weekend passes. Every Friday at around 7.00 p.m. coaches would arrive on the parade square to take the airmen home and Sergeant Kennedy would be at the wheel in his drivers hat ready to take us to London – What a man !

National Service was hard disciplined work but it was also fun. One pleasure was to be driven in Pete Richardson's van to Butlins at Clacton who paid a man at a side gate to let us in; we had a few great nights at Butlins 'like being on holiday.'

I was then posted from Wattisham to 65 Squadron at Duxford the most famous base in the U.K The first person I met on the squadron was Taffy Allsop from Tiger Bay, Cardiff. Taffy was a boxer who I had previously met at Padgate and Wattisham; it was good to be in the real RAF at last. The squadron was armed with Hunter 6's they were silver, fast and powerful and working on them as a team was hard but rewarding work. I found that working and maintaining a jet fighter was a huge responsibility, knowing the possible consequences if the aircraft suffered any breakdown. Signing the F700 was a big deal your name was there to say this aircraft is fit to fly. I served at Duxford from November 1957 – June 1958 and during that time a certain event stood out in my mind.

One weekend I was asked by the electrical Flt/Sergeant to fly with Flt/Lieutenant Harvey to Tangmere to collect some electric motors. This was my first ever flight and we took off in an old twin engined Anson; flying across London on a sunny evening, and wishing I was down there. As we approached Tangmere one of the engines stopped. Flt/Lieutenant Harvey, an ex B of B pilot could see that I was worried - my first flight remember, and assured me he could fly the thing with no engines ! As we got nearer to Tangmere we were flying towards high voltage cables the pilot managed to clear them with a bit of a struggle and as we descended I could see a Fire Engine and Ambulance at the end of the runway, they followed us along as we landed, and fortunately their services were not required Whilst mechanics worked on the defective engine I went off to collect the electric motors and when Flt/Lieutenant Harvey decided it was time to go we took off and landed back at Duxford in one piece.

Whilst in the hangar some weeks later a ticking sound was heard coming from one of the Hunter's engines. Being the thinnest airman present I was *volunteered* to crawl into the engine, the speculation was, could the IRA have gained access to the jet, however, I was pleased to find the noise was caused by dripping fluid. I was now enjoying life at Duxford, maintaining the electrical systems and seeing the Hunters take off each day, I was part of all that and had now reached the rank of S.A.C.

It was not all work, Cambridge was close by and a few of us would visit jazz clubs there, the Anchor pub on Silver Street held a jazz club every Tuesday night. Jazz on Wednesday night was organized by Cambridge University Jazz Club (apparently still going) not only was the music good, it brought us in touch with the people and life in Cambridge. I remember especially a 21year old student and an actress from the Cambridge Arts Theatre – both interesting (and pretty)

At about this time – early 1958 there was talk of the squadron going to Cyprus. The U.K. was fighting in a war of independence with Cyprus at that time. The squadron did eventually go but sadly after I was demobbed and missed out. We also had a visit from a Dutch squadron on a goodwill visit, and I was standing with others at the end of the runway, when they arrived they beat up the runway and we had to drop to the ground to avoid being hit ... ..mad men ! They stayed at Duxford for about a week and spent the whole time showing off.

Another incident occurred as a Hunter was coming into land with its Port wheel still up. The plane circled round and round and eventually the pilot decided to land on the grass. The pilot did well, the Hunter remaining upright until the last moment then dropped onto the Port wing to a safe landing.

Another incident happened one Friday evening about 4.30 p.m. All the aircraft were down except one, we were scanning the skies, wanting to leave for a weekend off but no aircraft was in sight. Then we saw it, it was spinning out of control but at the last minute the pilot gained control and on landing we learned that he had suffered a blackout. The outcome could have been a lot worse.

In May 1958 I was told that I would be demobbed two weeks early so began signing off from various departments, the last person I had to see turned out to be an attractive, long legged blonde WRAF Officer, she was the Careers Officer but I had never seen her around the camp before. She said, exposing her knees, "Are you sure you are doing the right thing in leaving the service? You could have a good career in the RAF."

All that I could think about was her short skirt, long legs and blonde hair.....Then I came to !

I revisited Duxford in 2008 and bought the book RAF Duxford by Richard C. Smith and having read it felt glad to have been part of 65 Squadron there.

The book also gave details of the Old Dux Association which I was more than happy to join.

## Membership Registry

The current updated membership registry is now available,- price £1.50 by post. - Silver Surfers - Free Tel. Larry on 01903 207056

## Terry Crowley Writes

I am not sure whether I let you know of an interview which an organisation called 'Legasee' did of me talking about my experience, of the 'Berlin Airlift. This organisation compiles stories of veterans. [see and hear Terry Crowley] on: [www.legasee.org.uk/the-archive/terry-crowley](http://www.legasee.org.uk/the-archive/terry-crowley) Click on : TerenceCrowley/Aircraftman-Legasee Select the numbered buttons shown to see the interview which lasts approx. half an hour. I hope you and possibly our members will find it of some interest.

Ref. back page: and the 'Battle of Britian' open day recollection.

I still have that programme and also the 1956 programme, if I can find it? On the 1956 day I was in charge of the static aircraft display with a group of 64 Sqdn. personnel. At 1700 hours a pilot of a De Havilland Venom expressed the wish for my party to keep the crowd of onlookers away to enable him to commence the 'start up' procedure and then taxi towards the runway. The lads were aware that the Venom had a large starter cartridge and, on engine turn over, it would exude a cloud of black smoke. There was such a press of people that we only managed to coax them back for a few yards. Noticing that we had sufficient space I signalled to the pilot to 'Start'. The startled crowd took to their heels when the cartridge spun the engine, which, in turn, emitted the usual scream and whine of the 'Goblin' gas-turbine engine. I marshalled him away and a grinning pilot gave me the 'Thumbs Up' sign.

## Military Aircraft Crash Sites

Paul Johnson and his two pals visited our stand at the last airshow. They were eyeing up the Meteor Mk.VIII which was next door and eventually came over to chat. They explained that they are very much into exploring Military Aircraft Crash Sites (web site) and had been unable to identify a certain part of a Meteor Mk VIII. Attempting to describe it was futile and agreed to e/m a copy of their photograph after I had agreed to consult some of the experts among us. See Photo



First person to contact me with the answer wins a coconut ...and the undying gratitude of Paul and his mates!.  
Tel. 01903 207056

A lady at the bar on a cruise ship orders a Scotch with two drops of water. As the bartender gives her the drink she says 'I'm on this cruise to celebrate my 80th birthday.' The bartender says 'Well, since it's your birthday, I'll buy you a drink, this one is on me.'  
As the lady finishes her drink the lady to her right says 'I would also like to buy you a drink.'  
'Bartender, a Scotch with two drops of water.'  
'Coming up' says the bartender. As he serves her the drink, he says, 'Ma'am, please forgive me for asking, why the Scotch with only two drops of water?'

'My dear boy, when you're my age, you've learned how to hold your liquor... Holding your water, now that's another thing.'

*Paddy Scott*

'OLD' IS WHEN..

Your friends compliment you  
On your new alligator shoes  
And you're barefoot!  
'OLD' IS WHEN...

A sexy babe or hunk catches your fancy ...  
And your pacemaker opens the garage door!  
'OLD' IS WHEN...

You are cautioned to slow down  
By the doctor instead of by the police 'OLD' IS  
WHEN...

'Getting lucky' means you find your car  
.. In the parking lot. 'OLD' IS WHEN....

You don't care where your spouse goes  
.. Just as long as you don't have to go along



## Dating in The 60s.....Remember those days? -

It was a hot Saturday evening in the summer of 1963, and James had a date with Annabella. He arrived at her house and rang the bell. "Oh, come on in" Annabella's mother said as she welcomed James. "Have a seat in the sitting room. Would you like something to drink? Lemonade? Tea?" "Tea, please", James said. Mum brought the tea.

"So, what are you and Annabella planning to do tonight? " she asked interestedly. "Oh, probably go to the flicks and then maybe grab a bite to eat at the coffee bar, perhaps have a walk on the beach afterwards" "Annabella likes to screw, you know ", Mum informed him. "Really? " James gasped, surprised to say the least. "Oh yes", mother continued, "When she goes out with her friends, that's all they do!" "Is that so?" asked James, incredulously. "Oh yes", she said. "As a matter of fact, she'd screw all night if we let her!" "Phew! Well, thanks for the tip!" James said, as he began thinking about alternative plans for the evening.

A moment later, Annabella came down the stairs looking pretty as a picture, wearing a pink blouse and a hoop skirt and with her hair tied back in a bouncy ponytail.

She greeted James. "Have fun, kids!" mother said as they left. Half an hour later, a completely dishevelled Annabella burst into the house and slammed the front door behind her. "The Twist, Mum!" she yelled angrily to her mother in the kitchen....."The bloody dance is called the Twist!"

*Submitted by Ian Swindale*