



NEWSLETTER

Dec. 2015

www.olddux.org

Compiled by Alan Garner



Dear Members

A reminder of what a great year this has been as we remember back in May the unveiling of the plaque at the NMA, dedicated to all those who served at RAF Duxford from 1917 to 1961. Followed a week later with our 20th Anniversary dinner where 93 sat down with fellow members and friends in The Red Lion to eat, drink and reminisce about those days long ago.

(So who was it that positioned the car on the roof of the Officers mess?).....

Remembrance Sunday on 8th Nov. See pg. 2. So, what's happening with the Officers mess?

As many of you will know already, the Officers mess has been tastefully transformed into a new business centre whilst retaining all its fine features. The business centre was officially opened on 19th Nov. with Les Millgate as the guest of honour, who gave an inspiring speech before unveiling the plaque commemorating the business centre officially opened, saying:

"It's an honour to be back in this building that I know so well and to see it so carefully restored. We all had fun times here, but it was a working airfield, and so I would ask the people that come and work here now to remember the people that lived here, and also those that didn't make it home."



Les as guest of honour swiftly removing the black sheet to unveil the opening plaque

The plaque reads:

**THE OFFICERS' MESS
BUSINESS CENTRE - DUXFORD
OPENED BY
MR LES MILLGATE
(OFFICERS MESS RESIDENT 1952-54)
ON NOVEMBER 19TH 2015
FOLLOWING EXTENSIVE RESTORATION
AND RENOVATION WORK BY
MANTLE
BUSINESS CENTRES
CREATING BETTER BUSINESS SPACES**

IWM Duxford Master Plan Project

Submitted by Esther Blaine-Public Relations Manager IWM

Work has recently started on the development of a Master Plan for IWM Duxford. Looking at the public side of the museum, the aim is to develop a long-term plan to transform IWM Duxford over the next 20 years.

We aim to build on Duxford's heritage and popularity to ensure that the museum thrives into the future, offering a rich historic experience which fulfils the needs of visitors. We'll be looking at all aspects of the visitor experience, from the displays and facilities to the vehicle and pedestrian access around the museum.

The development of the masterplan is due to complete in May 2016.

We'd love to hear your thoughts. Please share them with us by contacting Alicia Gurney, Head of Masterplanning and Engagement at agurney@iwm.org.uk

Our 21st Birthday Annual Dinner 2016

A date for your otherwise virgin new diaries. The dinner is on Saturday May 7th, the cost for the meal is £29.50 and the cost of rooms on the night is £56 for a single and £66 for a double. There will be more information in the spring 2016 edition newsletter.

New members

We welcome, Julie Jennings Ass. Member
Esther Blaine, IWM Duxford Ass. Member
Colin Bell 65 Sqn Eng Mech 1958-61
Robert (Bob) Rushmer MT Section 1952-55

Remembrance Sunday 8th November 2015 IWM Duxford

The following members of the Old Dux Association, family and friends attended the Remembrance Service at IWM Duxford on 8th November 2015.

Allan McRae, Jenny McRae, Del Gates, Les Millgate, Stan Dell, Alan Garner, Anthea Garner, Ann Gange, Les Gange, Chuck Lilley, Ann Lilley, Susan Arnold, Mike Davis, Maureen Davis, Bob Rushmer, Mike Scrivener, Jim Munro, Helen Milne, Louise Milne, Dominic Milne, Steven Milne, David Johnson, Colin Denley, Kerris Denley.

The Service was held in the AirSpace Conservation Hall together with hundreds of others who also came to show their respect in remembrance of all those brave souls who served in all the conflicts from 1914 to the present day and who had paid with their lives. It is a privilege to remember them.

The order of service follows:

WELCOME Esther Blaine, IWM Duxford

Reverend Phil Sharkey - Minister

We are here to worship Almighty God, whose purposes are good; whose power sustains the world he has made; who loves us, though we have failed in his service; who gave Jesus Christ for the life of the world; who by his Holy Spirit leads us in his way.

As we give thanks for his great works, we remember those who have lived and died in his service and in the service of others; we pray for all who suffer through war and are in need; we ask for his help and blessing that we may do his will, and that the whole world may acknowledge him as Lord and King.

LORD'S PRAYER

READING High Flight by John Gillespie Magee, Jr read by Esther Blaine, IWM Duxford

ADDRESS by Reverend Phil Sharkey

PRAYERS by Reverend Phil Sharkey

Let us remember before God, and commend to his sure keeping: those who have died for their country in war; those whom we knew and whose memory we treasure; and all who have lived and died in the service of humanity.

READING 'Forest Fields' by Michael Renyard read by Mark Chennels, Sawston and Pampisford Royal British Legion

READING Extract from 'For the fallen' by Laurence Binyon read by Capt. Matthew Revell of the Royal Anglian Regiment

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.

All repeated **We will remember them.**

CHOIR 'In War: Resolution. In Defeat: Defiance. In Victory: Magnanimity. In Peace: Good Will.'
The Second World War, Volume I: The Gathering Storm (1948)
Performed by 'In Voco Parentis' (the parents' choir of King's College School, Cambridge)

LAST POST Buglers from The Royal Anglian Regiment

SILENCE Two minutes

REVEILLE Buglers from The Royal Anglian Regiment

WORDS FROM THE KOHIMA EPITAPH

Read by Billy Bentley, Burma Star Association Herts, Cambs and Essex Border Branch

When you go home
Tell them of us and say,
"For your tomorrow
We gave our today"

WREATH LAYING

Imperial War Museum Duxford
The Old Dux Association
Duxford Aviation Society
Friends of Duxford
Airborne Assault
Catalina Society (Plane Sailing)
The Royal Anglian Regiment
The Royal Anglian Regiment
Association Cambridgeshire
The Burma Star Association
Col Zamzow, 48th Fighter Wing,
RAF Lakenheath.
The Royal British Legion
The Royal British Legion Riders
Branch
2461 Sawston Sqn ATC
Malaya Veteran's Group
Invitation for others to lay a wreath or
poppy in remembrance



Allan McRae displays the wreath and lays it for us.

Minister Almighty and eternal God, from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted, either by death or life; Hear our prayers and thanksgivings for all whom we remember this day; fulfil in them the purpose of your love; and bring us all, with them, to your eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Minister God grant grace to the living, rest to the departed, and peace, concord and life everlasting to all people. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always...**Amen.**

Officers mess visit

After the Sunday Remembrance Service on 8th November a preview tour was arranged by Esther Blaine (IWM) for the ODA members to see the newly refurbished Officers Mess. As some of you will be aware it has been turned into commercial offices by Mantle Business Centres Ltd. carefully using all the rooms without altering the basic structure. We were shown round by Jo Hart, Business Development Manager for Mantle Centres along with Helen Earl the Centre Manager.

The Officers mess is now to be known as 'The Officers' Mess Business Centre.'

Many of us took advantage of the invitation and enjoyed the tour only to be invited back for the official Opening on the 19th November.... See page one.



Duxford in the '50's.

By Peter Gibbard

1. I was trawling through some happy memories via google and found an item headed "Waterbeach & Duxford, October 1954" it read as follows.

"I remember taking part in the Guard of Honour, 22nd October 1954, at RAF Duxford for the visit of Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie". The item was credited to a James Richardson.

The reason this item sparked my interest is that I too took part in that Guard of Honour. I don't remember anyone called James Richardson (but that may be down to my growing ability to misremember things). I have checked that his name is not listed among the famed members of the Old Dux Association. Does anyone know of him?

2. Another item I found referred to the visit to Duxford of Marshall Tito on March 18th 1953. This was the occasion when two 19 Sqn. Meteors of the aerobatic team collided and crashed, killing both pilots. I was at home on leave at the time and remember seeing the crash on TV. I know that Tito stood and saluted, when the remaining aircraft landed.

Years later I was researching some 65 Squadron history at the Public Records Office at Kew, when I came across a reference to that event. I believe it was a report from the C.O. to the A.O.C.

I was astonished at the blasé attitude; he implied that the "visit was a great success, only slightly marred by the accident".

The loss of two Pilots and their aircraft seemingly was of little importance! I can only assume that wartime attitudes still lingered in 1953 and that Pilot deaths were regarded as "par for the course".

Memories of Duxford recalled

By 1928762 SAC Venables (rtd)

Sitting in the Outpatients Department of our local hospital waiting to have my verrucae drained, the approach of a noisy wheeled trolley full of soiled bedding on its way to the laundry brought yet another anecdotal story to mind of my time at Duxford.

I arrived in 1955 after Boy Entrant training at HMP Cosford and was immediately struck by the comparatively easy-going atmosphere of this, my first posting. No more having to march everywhere led by a full trumpet and drum band (quite unnecessary and very impractical when visiting the ablutions) and the freedom to choose how to spend one's leisure time. I rather enjoyed this introduction to the real world of the RAF that I had chosen as a career, and soon settled into the routine.

My downfall from this euphoric state came one morning when it was my turn for billet orderly which coincided with laundry day, and required me to take the 18 or so tightly rolled-up bundles of dirty washing to the laundry store located near to 65 Squadron hangar I believe. As I placed the bundles into the large sack provided, it began to reach alarming proportions and I realized that I was going to have some difficulty in moving it. At 5'2" and barely 8 stones wringing wet, this was going to be a Herculean task so using all the initiative drummed into me by Cosford's determined instructors and the emerging realization that there was a danger of a double hernia, a cunning plan was formed. If I were to nip over the Sick Quarter's gate I would be almost opposite the gate to the laundry store, thus saving a long slog past the Guardroom and Station Headquarters!

With some difficulty I managed to lift the sack across my shoulder and cutting across the back of the square arrived at the first of the two gated barriers relatively undamaged. Getting the constantly changing shape of the sack over the top bar took several desperate attempts before it flopped onto the other side leaving me to straighten my dishevelled clothing and retrieve my beret that had been dislodged during the struggle. I climbed up the gate to follow my sack and was just straddling the top bar like a ruptured high-jumper, when the CO's car, pennant aflutter, glided past heading towards the guardroom, leaving me no time to give the required salute.

Once over the gate and after a second struggle to get the sack across my shoulders, I staggered across the deserted main road towards the second gated obstacle in a series of drunken-like stop and start manoeuvres. As I approached the gate, sensing success and a job well done, the quiet of the morning was shattered by a bellowing rendition of "AIRMAN" delivered at a volume the envy of a drill instructor, followed by the heavy pounding of studded boots on tarmac. Emerging from the canopy of the voluminous sack I saw the approaching figure of the sergeant SP, accelerating at an impressive rate towards me, his white-topped peaked cap bobbing precariously on his swaying head. I was escorted to the guardroom and informed that the CO had not been at all pleased to witness my unmilitary-like attempts to exit the domestic site, and had ordered the 'sheriff' to "sort that airman out". I believe I was charged with breaking out of camp or something similar and subsequently received 3 days 'jankers'.

Looking back on this incident it was probably the source of quiet amusement for some at the time and in retrospect I can even see the funny side of the situation, although I don't expect Group Captain Pinfold will remember. Today of course I leave all things to do with laundry to my good wife.

Sixty Four Squadron: The beginning

By Ron Pountain

In the 1930's the defence of Egypt was vested in the Demon flights. There were three Demon flights based at Heliopolis, Helman and Abouseir.

Each Demon flight had six Hawker Demon aircraft. Each aircraft had a pilot and an air gunner. I have flown in a Demon aircraft, once. It was not a pleasant experience.

Each Demon fighter was commanded by a Flying Officer who was an active pilot. There were five other pilots in each flight making six pilots for six aircraft. The Battle of Britain would teach the RAF that one pilot for each aircraft was a recipe for disaster.

The ground crew situation was even worse, for at least a year the flight at Helman had just one flight mechanic (engine) looking after all six engines.

In November 1938 the three Demon flights was amalgamated to form number 64 Squadron. This explains why the centre piece of 64 Squadron's badge is the Royal Scarab Beetle of Egypt.

In January of 1939 the newly formed 64 Squadron came home to the UK and took up residence at the just completed 1936 pattern station at Church Fenton half way between Leeds and York.

In February of 1939 64 Squadron and one other Demon Squadron were re-equipped with the newly developed Bristol fighter.

I was trained as an armourer under the 1936 expansion scheme at No.1 Air Armament School at Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey. Having completed my training I was posted to No. 64 Squadron and joined the Squadron in the last week of June 1939.

The lost propeller

By Ron Pountain

The Story of Warrant Officer Hey and the lost propeller.

In 1936, 37 and 38 the Bristol Aircraft Company (BAC) produced the Mk 1 Blenheim bomber, often referred to as the short nosed Blenheim. In 1938 they produced a much improved version, the long nose. Wider, longer, with a padded cushion for the bomb aimer. It also had up rated Bristol Mercury radial engines.

As bomber squadrons re-equipped with the Mk III, lots of Mk 1 aircraft became redundant. In late 1938 BAC offered the Mk 1 aircraft in modified form as a fighter aircraft. All the bombing gear was removed and the bomb bay converted to house a battery of 0.303 Browning guns. A reflector gun sight and a camera gun were fitted. The single Browning gun in the port main plane and the mid upper turret with its single Vickers K gun was retained. The observer's seat on the right hand side of the cockpit was retained but left empty. The new fighter flew only a pilot and gunner.

In January and February of 1939 64 Squadron replaced their Hawker Demon aircraft with Blenheim fighters. Later in 1939 5 other fighter Squadrons, re-equipped with Blenheim fighters.

During 1939 two Blenheim fighters of separate Squadrons, (not 64 Sqn) had port-side propellers 'fly off' the engine. Both aircraft crashed killing pilot and gunner. During the third week of September 1939 a 64 Squadron Blenheim fighter was on air-test following a 30 flying-hour minor inspection. The aircraft was being flown by Warrant Officer Hey. He was probably the most experienced pilot on the Squadron, having flown hundreds of hours on twin engine aircraft. He was flying the air-test without a gunner.

He was approaching Church Fenton airfield when the port propeller flew off the engine. W.O. Hay closed down the over speeding port engine and regained control of the aircraft. He knew that he could only make turns into the live (starboard) engine or risk losing control altogether. He called Church Fenton tower to tell them of his situation and to ask for an 'all rooms' tannoy message to be broadcast to warn everyone on the station of the danger.

We, of course were on dispersal at the far side of the airfield, a mile or so from any buildings. But it seems everyone on the station was outside watching. We watched as W.O. Hey started the down-wind leg, effectively on the wrong side because of his starboard only turns.

As he came towards us on the down-wind leg there were gasps of amazement as the main undercarriage appeared. There were lots of arguments among our pilots as to whether W.O. Hay should attempt a landing, wheels up or wheels down.

We watched him as he turned in on finals, the aircraft seemed as steady as a rock. Down he went. The usual loud squeal and puff of blue smoke as the wheels touched down, off he went followed by the fire engine and the ambulance. I reckon people in Church Fenton village would easily have heard the cheers.

Next day the local policeman came to Church Fenton to report on the search for the missing propeller. He was interviewed by 64 Squadron Adjutant and W.O. Hey. In the afternoon W.O. Hey came into the airmen's crew room to report on the meeting.

At this point I should inform my readers that W.O. Hey's nickname on the Squadron was Noni Hey. The Adjutant asked the policeman if he had found the propeller.

"Ooh ar" the policeman said "it cum down in that gurt field at back of the Green Man pub."

"Was anybody in the field?" the Adjutant asked. "Ooh ar" the policeman said. "Old Jim Featherstone were in't field, ee were ploughing wi two asses." "Was he hurt?" asked the Adjutant. The policeman replied "Well no, he weren't really urt at all, but when that gurt thing come down out at sky, it fair frit them two asses. They took off, an ploughed at furrer near all't way to Tadcaster."

One of our own

Dictated by Tony Harbour

On Sunday the 14th June this year just 3 days after my 80th birthday I found myself abseiling down the 120ft high Grand Hotel Brighton along with others to help out the blind veterans, the lady with me was my guide and the wife of an ex RMP who are both members of RAF Police Association-South Downs Branch. I managed to raise £2198 for my Blind Veterans colleagues and together 6 of us from the branch pushed the total raised to £4898 contributing to the final total of £18100 raised by 110 people. Then on Saturday the 3rd October I stepped up to the wire, that is the Zip Wire from the top of the Blind Veterans Brighton building and zipped down the 130ft drop to the main road below to raise some more money. We raised £1220 from our South Downs Branch being part of the whole event which achieved a total of £10193 for the cause.

Many blind veterans were looking up but could not really see us, then looking down I couldn't see them either. A great time was had by all for all the right reasons. Our safety was well organised by the Royal Marines.



Health issues?

Do you feel that you're getting old or is it just me? I thought growing old would take longer. Do you have feelings of inadequacy and suffer shyness? Do you sometimes wish you were more assertive? If you answered yes to any of these questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist about Cabernet Sauvignon. Cabernet Sauvignon is the safe, natural way to feel better and more confident about yourself and your actions. It can help ease you out of your shyness and let you tell the world that you're ready and willing to do just about anything.

You will notice the benefits of Cabernet Sauvignon almost immediately and with a regimen of regular doses, you can overcome any obstacles that prevent you from living the life you want to live. Shyness and awkwardness will be a thing of the past and you will discover many talents you never knew you had. Stop hiding and start living. You will feel much younger.

Cabernet Sauvignon may not be right for everyone. Women who are pregnant or nursing should not use it. However, women who wouldn't mind nursing a chap or becoming pregnant are encouraged to try. Often.

Side effects may include: Dizziness, nausea, vomiting, incarceration, loss of motor control, headaches, dehydration, dry mouth, loss of money, loss of clothing, loss of virginity, delusions of grandeur, giggling, table dancing, and a desire to sing Karaoke and play all-night rounds of Strip Poker, Truth Or Dare, and Naked Twister. Wow!!

Warnings: The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may make you think you are whispering when you are not. The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may cause you to tell your friends over and over again that you love them. The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may cause you to think you can sing. The consumption of Cabernet Sauvignon may create the illusion that you are tougher, smarter, faster and better looking than most people.

Please feel free to share this important information carefully among our members that you feel may benefit! Now just imagine what you could achieve with a good Shiraz or Merlot....Burp, oops, burp, excuse me.

LIFE IS A CABERNET OLD CHUM! WELCOME TO THE CABERNET!

Ed.

Financial planning

Dan was a single chap living at home with his father and working in the family business. When he found out he was going to inherit a fortune when his sickly father passes away, he decided he needed to find a wife with whom to share his fortune. One evening at an investment meeting he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away. "I may look like just an ordinary guy," he said to her, "but in just a few years, my father will pass on and I will inherit £200 million."

Impressed, the woman asked for his business card and three days later, she became his stepmother.

Women are so much better at financial planning than men.

Ed.

Something for the chocoholics amongst us

By Mike Scrivener

Mr Cadbury met Miss Rowntree on a Double Decker. It was just After Eight. They got off at Quality Street. He asked her name. 'Polo, I'm the one with the hole' she said with a Wispa. 'I'm Marathon, the one with the nuts' he replied. He touched her Cream Eggs, which was a Kinder Surprise for her. Then he slipped his hand into her Snickers, which made her Ripple. He fondled her Jelly Babies and she rubbed his Tic Tacs. Soon they were Heart Throbs. It was a Fab moment as she screamed in Turkish Delight. But, 3 days later, his Sherbet Dip Dab started to itch. Turns out Miss Rowntree had been with Bertie Bassett and he had Allsorts.

Thank you to all members past and present who have willingly contributed to the newsletter items.

The ODA Committee wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you in May 2016. 6