

# NEWSLETTER

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BAE SYSTEMS, AIRBUS & DEVOLVED COMPANIES  
RETIRED MANAGEMENT STAFF ASSOCIATION

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A Bucker Jungmann similar to the type described in the article on page 2  
Photograph taken at the Sywell Airshow 2008 near Northampton on Au-

## *Some Retirement by Bernie Childs*

*Bernie continues the story of how he has helped his son after retiring*

On arrival at Clutton from Almondsbury the Pietenpol Air-camper was found to have a crack in one of its main wheels, so I designed and fitted new hubs based on the Lambretta scooter. I also installed a throttle control in the forward cockpit.

Clutton, however, was proving to be much too expensive and in the Autumn the aircraft was flown to a field near Portishead and disassembled. The wings were taken immediately to the Docks, with the rest following on. I remember on one Occasion, police driving at high speed in Bristol Road looking most surprised to see someone waiting near a bus stop, with an aeroplane fuselage

We acquired another shed in the docks train-shed compound and after doing some essential weather-proofing stored the incomplete ARV1 Super 2 and Aircamper wings in it..

During that Winter I did a lot of work sorting out the various aircraft parts.

In the Spring of 1997 we reassembled the Aircamper and had it taken back to Clutton and then flown to Blisworth, from where another friend of ours, Ben was able to fly it for the next year.

We later sold the ARV1 to a local builder who made a good job of completing its restoration Work on the CASA 1-131 Buckler Jungmann continued in the disused docks train-shed, covering and camouflage painting the wings and adding German insignia.

The following January I was asked back to Bae to carry out four weeks' Concorde drawing work. In the event it lasted for ten months, mainly loft work on a A300-600 conversion contract for U.P.S.

During this time the Jungmann and Aircamper were taken to a farm strip at Felton near Bristol Airport. It was now time to prepare the Jungmann for flight.

On 3rd.May after having a few

engine problems and with the air vice marshal as pilot and Paul, my son in the front seat, it took off on a flight to Compton Abbas in Dorset, taking on fuel at Bristol Airport en-route.

It was a very emotional time for me and I wasn't even flying in it. Twenty take-offs and landings were accomplished there and the aircraft was then flown back to Felton.

On 8th June a near tragedy occurred, the Jungmann struck a tree stake whilst making a 'dead stick' landing at Portishead. Luckily no one was injured ,but the aircraft was badly damaged.

The fuselage was sent back to Cam for repair, Paul went off to Spain to buy two new wings, landing gear, exhaust stubs etc. and I set about straightening everything else out. There was a large empty shed situated on what is now the Waitrose car park in Portishead for sale, so we bought it and transferred the partially broken 'piston' Provost from Paul's garden to it and started reassembly. There was also enough space there to work on the Jungmann as well, so when the newly repaired fuselage arrived we were able to start re-installing its engine, landing gear etc., this in spite of having to find some room for my youngest son's band gear and several cars. He is a member of a rock group.

At this time the Aircamper was finally moved to Kemble. In the Spring of 2002 the Jungmann was ready to be taken by road to Kemble for final assembly and flight preparation. It had a new propeller and I had also designed a new fuel system that was 'pilot proof.' It was cleared to start test flying which was progressing very well until the air vice marshal, performing a stall turn, held the aircraft vertical until the engine stopped and would not restart. It stalled again when another aircraft got in its way on a landing approach. This time we let the insurance company do the repairs. After this delay and with a permit to fly finally granted, several flights

were made during 2002,Early the following year the air vice marshal left us to seek his fortune elsewhere. This severely limited our flying capability and arrangements were made to fly the Jungmann to Duxford where Ray Hanna agreed to 'house' it for us free of charge and flew it from time to time.

However, we had to sell the 'car-park' shed, leaving the partially completed Provost under canvas in the train shed compound. This was far from satisfactory so we built another building adjacent to the train shed , in which we were able to work on various parts of it and also other items.

Around about this time I remember, Paul asked me to accompany him to Chertsey to view a patrol torpedo (PT) boat - Paul had always wanted a motor torpedo boat (MTB) - it was just a hulk though, but he decided to buy the engines and fuel tanks. We were in fact making these enquiries of the British Military Power Boat Heritage Trust at Batchwood, near Southampton and they told us that a 1950's Vosper built MTB - named *HMS Gay Archer* in her Royal Navy days-was for sale at Northwich in Cheshire. 'Gay' having different connotations in those days. We travelled north to inspect her and met the widow of the owner and her son. It was soon to be scrapped, but they sold it to Paul for £1,000 'as it was going to a good home.' He took over the boat in Autumn 2003 and the following Spring sold his house and moved into a caravan next to it, with his new wife.

My wife fully supported me throughout the time I'd been doing this work. In January 2004 however, there was another priority, we went to Los Angeles, to visit our other son James, his wife had presented us with a grandson.

On our return a lot of work had been done to get *Gay Archer* up to a seaworthy state. She is constructed of wood and had been out of the

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*Gay Archer moored in the docks at Bristol during the Harbour Fest 08*

*(Continued from page 2)*

water for fifteen years, so the bilges were loaded with rock salt and eight tons of water to get the hull in the right condition.

I applied a fibreglass coating to the newly built conning tower and assisted in repairing the keel and keelson. All of this work was expensive and took many months. By the Summer of 2005 *Gay Archer* was ready for re-launching. We were now able to live aboard as the conversion included installing three bedrooms, a galley and toilet. At this stage the vessel weighed some twenty-three tons, in Naval service state it would have been fifty. We moved her up to the slipway and lowered her into the water with two cranes and then into a river berth. The engines and propellers had lain on the dockside for many months, having been removed from a "Plastic Fantastic" cruiser. I was in the US when they were installed and was now able to finally position them and fit the drive shafts. In October 2005 having been issued with the

appropriate certificate, we were ready to sail to our first destination Saltford Quays, Manchester. Fitting out continued, one engine though was giving us problems. In March 2006 we headed down to Ellesmere Port having repaired the engine and was now ready to sail on Good Friday 2006 as there was a suitable 'weather window.' So we started off on the voyage to our home port of Watchet in Somerset.

The sea, apart from in the Mersey estuary was pretty calm. We called in at Milford Haven to take on fuel and then slowly cruised up the Bristol Channel to arrive safely in Watchet Harbour.

*Gay Archer* had stood up to the elements very well indeed. Sadly we heard of the demise of Ray Hanna and Duxford asked for the Jungmann to be removed. The air vice marshal, who had returned to the UK from China was able to sell it to the German aircraft museum, Quax Fleiger at Hamm near Bremen. Poor health meant he would not be able to renew his pilot's license and

at the end of September made his final flight in the UK, piloting the Jungman to Hamm, accompanied by a Tiger Moth. It was great satisfaction to us to know that the engine ran well all the way. It makes regular flights and can be viewed on the Quax Fleiger web site.

Work continues on *Gay Archer* and recently both the Aircamper and Provost have been transferred to a site at Westonzoyland.

We heard of another 'piston' Provost at Exeter airport and Paul decided to buy it as it had seats, tanks, propeller and instruments. After connecting the electrics and putting in some fuel it started up and ran well, and is now with our collection at Westonzoyland. It can be viewed on the web at YouTube-piston provost.

Well, there it all is then. Plenty of work in the future to raise this aircraft to flight status.

## 2008 Summer Day Out

*On the coach trip, to Windsor this year we had two options, a cruise on the River Thames, or a guided tour of Eton College. Ken Tooze describes the boat trip and David Molyneau the college tour.*



This was a complete contrast to our visit to the Black Country Museum in April.

We were bang in the middle of the Home Counties in the grandly named Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, where Her Majesty has the largest of her three official residences.

We arrived in the coach park in the centre of town at lunchtime just right for everyone to scatter for a bite to eat. It was late June, the weather looked pretty good and we had an afternoon trip on the River Thames to look forward to.

It was a short walk to the Old Station where there was an eclectic mix of cafés and restaurants with meals for all tastes and pockets, as befits one of the UK's top 20 attractions. After lunch we avoided that retail therapy and strolled around Windsor enjoying the many sights, until it was time to join the crowd at the river pier for the boat trip.

Not so long ago there were more pubs per head here than anywhere else in the country, make of that what you will,

Windsor by the way is a town which is 'full' of plaques commemorating the many famous people who have lived there.

One in particular at No.10 Alma Road, adjacent to the coach park, caught our attention because it was there that aircraft designer Sir Sidney Camm of Hurricane fame lived for many years. In 2001 there was a move, at long last, to recognise his historical importance and the plaque was placed on the wall of the house. Another is on a site in the town where he and his friends had a workshop. Plans are in hand to erect a replica Hurricane in the town centre



School Yard Eton College

When we got to the pier there were so many people milling around looking for the various trip options, I wondered how we were going to know which boat to get on, as no one in authority seemed to be interested in telling us which boat was going where, as far as I could see. Eventually, we all sorted ourselves out and then, I'll be darned, our party had a boat, that could hold seventy people maybe, all to ourselves.

The cruise was for a leisurely two hours, up the meandering river to Bovenay Lock and back, with Windsor Racecourse on one side of us and Eton's Brocas Meadows on the other for much of the way 'taking in' the houses whose gardens slope down to the river. I didn't think much of the onboard commentary though, especially given the significance of this river and the surrounding area.

On returning to the pier it was time to stroll back to pick up the coach and head for home.

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We arrived at the 'The King's college of our Lady of Eton beside Windsor' to give it its full title after a leisurely walk up the main street and arrived about half an hour before the tour was due to commence.

This gave us ample time to inspect the restoration work which is well underway on the exterior of the chapel; very informative display boards explained exactly what is needed to be done and showed the progress to date. The chapel

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was founded by Henry VI in 1480, forty years after the college itself, which was originally intended as a school for 25 poor underprivileged scholars. What we see today is a much smaller building than was intended; sadly for Henry, money had to be used to fund the Wars of the Roses. It is due to the generosity of Bishop Waynflote that we have this much smaller building, which today is somewhat changed - the wooden roof, had become infested with death watch beetle and was replaced in the 1950s by stone faced concrete fan vaulting.

Our guide had arrived early and was obviously anxious to start the tour so we speedily moved to School Yard where we were instructed on one of the rules of the college - always pass to the right of the statue of the founder of the college, Henry VI, so that your heart is nearest to the king.

The walls of the cloisters contain many memorial plates to Old Etonians who have died in the service of their country. Most of these date from the First World War, when the life expectancy of a junior Guards officer on the Western Front was at best, a few weeks.

Of the 5687 Old Etonians who have fought for their Country, no less than 1160 have been killed and 1467 injured in action.

On some memorials we saw a few recognisable names including several generations of the family of Joyce Grenfell and of a more recent time, Colonel H Jones V.C. killed serving in the Falklands war, as well as a soldier from the Blues and Royals, killed in Iraq.

Moving on to the chapel, our guide gave us a very informed account of the living conditions for the boys, which were probably no better than those endured elsewhere. She explained the differences between King's Scholars, who attend Eton by virtue of scholarships awarded by public examination, and Oppidans who pay their fees. The chapel has a number of wall paintings dating from the late fifteenth century; they have a remarkable history having been whitewashed over in the mid sixteenth, rediscovered in the late nineteenth and restored in the twentieth centuries.

Our tour finished with a visit to the college museum, which is arranged along traditional lines.

After a fifteen minute video, which to my mind seemed rather disjointed, there was time to study the various display cabinets which contained all manner of mementos, many of them donated by well known Old Etonians. A very interesting experience, but it was nice to be out in the fresh air and making our way back to the coach

## ***Mombasa to Dubai by Frank and Esme Webb***

Frank and Esme continue with an account of their holiday cruise last year

Wed 7<sup>th</sup> Feb Snow was forecast for our departure tomorrow so rang the taxi firm for an earlier pick up. It was essential we get to Gatwick on time.

Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> Feb. There had been an overnight snowfall. Usual comfortable journey to Gatwick with no problems. Checked in straight away, had a meal then relaxed. Took off on time for the nine hour flight to Mombasa, arriving at 6am.

Fri. 9<sup>th</sup> Feb. Mombasa very hot, with no air-con on the coach taking us to our cruise liner, *Black Watch*. We were wilting by the time we arrived. Our accommodation seemed perfect

to us, but the maid insisted that she dusted and got a little helper to vacuum everything. She kept apologising for her "bad presentation" and hoped we would not report her.

The only items missing were two dressing gowns, but these were produced immediately. I said I thought Fred Olsen must be economising, I don't think she quite understood. She eventually calmed down. Soon canapes arrived and after a G&T, the world seemed a much calmer place.

At 6,30 we had a light meal in the Garden Café. We prefer this it is "buffet" with very extensive choice, also much quieter. The Captain Waiter was a bit OTT with his wel-

come but a super fellow, he allocated us the same table for the rest of our stay and said he'd inform the Maitre de in the Main Restaurant that we would not be dining there. Our reserved table would be given to someone else. Never had this treatment before. When there were special "theme" nights he would come and whisper that he had already booked us in. We think he was imagining a good gratuity when we left the ship.

Sat 10<sup>th</sup> Feb. Early start today, left boat at 8am for a Dhow Adventure, lasting approximately eight hours. Had a good view of Mombasa from

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the coach – not very impressed  
Numerous wars have been fought for the possession of the city and power has changed hands many times over the centuries until Kenya achieved independence in 1963.

Travelling north we arrived at Kenya Marineland, the launching point for the dhows. We were given lemon tea and small cakes, very refreshing in a temperature of 97F and saw some very attractive wood carvings, you could order a plaque with your name engraved on it and could be collected on returning from the trip on the dhow.

Could not resist spending our first dollars. We were taken to see a giant tortoise and many other small animals, all very used to tourists and posed obligingly. I was fascinated by a very friendly python which was placed around my neck, I think he preferred his owner though.

A chameleon also changed colour for us I managed to get a picture when it was an excellent shade of green. It was very pleasant on the dhow, there were two, so there was plenty of room. We sailed into the Indian Ocean and it was all hands on deck to help raise a very dirty sail, which the Dartmouth Harbour-master would definitely not have approved of. Entertainment was provided by a guitarist and very quiet background music, just loud enough to be good to listen to. After about 3 hours during which we were pampered with ice cold drinks and a very informative crew, we returned a good buffet lunch. I have never seen so many different types of kebab – hippo, ostrich, smoked fish, crocodile zebra and chicken, all

served from dishes appropriate to the animal involved, a very good choice of salads and wine or beer to drink. For dessert there was an abundance of fresh fruit.

Then it was back to the dhow to rest after the meal and a “quiet” sail. On board for our entertainment there was a group of male acrobats and their performance was first class, culminating in limbo dancing. For their last act a pole was placed with a coke bottle resting on each end. On the pole were small pieces of linen which were set alight just to make things more interesting. There was absolute silence as a very slim young man proceeded to limbo accompanied by appropriate music. He made it look so easy. You could examine the pole and the bottles afterwards to make sure they were genuine The



speed of the dancing in all that heat was unbelievable.

The other dhow was tied alongside so all could see the show. Two ladies came onboard to do henna tattooing and hair braiding. There were not many ladies on board with long hair but they managed to put three braids in my short hair and I also had a butterfly tattoo on my leg which lasted three weeks – all done with much laughter- even some of the men joined in for the tattooing – I think the young girl was the attraction.

At 3pm we returned to the Marinel Quay to rejoin the coach for the journey back to Mombasa. The area we drove through looked like a shanty town but there must be better parts. Quite a number of flat roofed buildings and roads like dust tracks. Further from the town the housing improved but still of poor quality.



Mombasa is built on an island with two bridges to the mainland of which they are so proud.

It was a very good day out.

Back on board *Black Watch* and at 5.45 we had lifeboat drill, more than half of the passengers had probably “been there and done that”. The drill was very efficiently carried out. Just time for canapés and G&T before dinner. Sun has now gone down so it is a little cooler.

Sunday 11th Feb. At sea. Very lazy day, went to a lecture on Mahe in the Seycelles. Not very impressed with the lecturer. He had worked for the Foreign Office and negotiated the independence of the Seycelles in 1976. Looks very interesting we shall see on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Weather still excellent but with quite a swell, the pool was very active – no need for a wave-making machine.

We are beginning to change colour so after lunch it was back to the cabin to sit on the balcony and watch the waves, nothing else to watch, not a boat in sight or even a flying fish. Captain’s Welcome Cocktail Party tonight but as we have attended a few we gave this one a miss.

Our stewardess delivered the duty free spirits we ordered, one litre each of Sapphire Gin and Jameson’s Whisky at £12 per bottle not bad has to last three weeks.

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Feb. Another hectic day by the pool. A few ‘white horses’ on the sea, so pool was quite a challenge. Went to a lecture on Praslin Island. Asian evening at dinner tonight – food very good.

Looking forward now to visiting the Seycelles.

*To be continued in the next newsletter as Frank and Esme ‘cross the line’ get to visit the Seycelles and Maldive Islands and finally Dubai*

## *Unidentified Spitfire*

There were a couple of replies sent in to identify Alan White's Spitfire shown in the Summer 2008 Newsletter. Thanks to you all. The most comprehensive must be from Barrie Bryant, a member who now lives in Australia and is reproduced unedited below.

Particulars of Alan White's mystery *Spitfire* are set out below, extracted from "Spitfire – The History" by Eric B Morgan & Edward Shacklady and published by Key Books in 1987-2



Portrayed is P8661, a Mark II B version assembled at the Castle Bromwich Aircraft Factory (Government owned but managed by Vickers from mid-1940). This aircraft was delivered to 5 MU on 25 May 1941. It reached 308 Squadron on 3 July, then passed to 315, 610 and 123 Squadrons. In the course of a ferry flight on 24 November it was extensively damaged and consequently struck off charge on 6 December. Further explanations are my own, memory being confirmed wherever practical from published sources.

The name "L.T.R. FIGHTER" stencilled on the fuel tank cowling indicated that an individual or group had contributed £5,000 for the privilege of "adopting" an RAF aircraft. This scheme started late in 1940, partly to popularise the Royal Air Force but also to absorb spending power for which peacetime luxuries were no longer available. Words commonly identified the donor, as in this case, but were sometimes an exhortation. I have no information about the organisation whose initials were LTR but London Rubber & Tyre Company is a plausible speculation. It was widely, but wrongly, assumed that the donation paid for a *Spitfire*. The amount approximated to the airframe price but excluded the engine, propeller and other equipment. These items were purchased separately by the Air Ministry (Ministry of Aircraft Production from mid-1940-MAP) and provided assemblers on Embodiment Loan. Their total cost was probably a further £5,000.

The published print provides further clues about the photograph. Airframe contractors didn't normally fit operational equipment until the latter part of 1940

The empty 20 mm. cannon front mounting on the port wing leading-edge thus indicates that the picture was taken either at CBAF or on arrival at the RAF Maintenance Unit. In either case it was probably made for transmission to the donor. Alan's postcard may have other markings which confirm or negate my speculation

The eventual delivery from Supermarine, Castle Bromwich, Westland Aircraft and Cunliffe-Owen Aircraft of more than 22,000 *Spitfires* and *Seafires* in many variants is widely known

Only after the war did I learn that a year before P8661 was built any such expectation would have been improbable. The first AM contract for 310 production *Spitfires* dated 3 June 1937 was completed in August 1939. A second order to Supermarine for 200 was dated 20 April 1939 and another for 450 more on 9 August 1939. A contract to CBAF for 1000 Mark II A versions was dated 12 April 1939. Outstanding orders at the outbreak of World War II thus totalled about 1,600 machines for the RAF plus 200-300 for a dozen foreign governments. AM intentions were that *Hurricane* production would be replaced by *Typhoon* and *Tempest*, powered by 24-cylinder engines (*Vulture* and *Sabre*) while high-altitude interception would be assumed by Westland *Whirlwinds* (twin-engined but single-seat).

Ministry planning was that Supermarine should phase out *Spitfire* production in 1940 in favour of the Bristol *Beaufighter*. To this end the Works Manager and his staff paid exploratory visits to Filton, probably 1940's momentous events, military and otherwise, upset these tidy bureaucratic intentions.

Aircraft procurement passed from the Air Ministry to a newly-formed Ministry of Aircraft Production with fresh perspectives. Earlier initiatives by Supermarine and Rolls-Royce also contributed.

P9834 was a "Schneiderised" high-speed *Spitfire* powered by a "sprint" *Merlin* engine giving an output of 2,000 hp at ground level for short flights. Flying in early 1939 it failed to raise the world's landplane speed record, but demonstrated that a *Spitfire* with minimal airframe changes could accommodate a huge increase of power

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Rolls-Royce evolved supercharger developments promising production Merlins with 20% more power at first then 50% with a second stage added. The two firms jointly devised a scheme to fit the next generation *Griffon* engine within the *Spitfire* envelope. Its capacity was 37 litres (an increase of 10 litres) but still 12 cylinders from which 1700 hp could be expected, and later more than 2000hp following the *Merlin* development path.

Meanwhile:

The 24 cylinder engines were delayed by various problems

*Whirlwind* failed to meet expectations-production was curtailed to the initial contract.

More significantly, the Air Force displayed enthusiasm for *Spitfire* which the Air Ministry previously lacked.

MAP consequently placed orders on:

9 June 1940 500 for Mark 1 *Spitfires* from Supermarine

22 June 1940 500 for Mark 1 *Spitfires* from CBAF

19 July 1940 for 500 Mark 1 *Spitfires* from Supermarine

August 1940 for 300 Mark 1 *Spitfires* from Westlands

24 October 1940 for 1100 Mark 1 *Spitfires* from Supermarine

24 October 1940 for 1000 Mark 111 *Spitfires* to be built at CBAF

These 3,900 orders brought the backlog to more than 5,000: *Spitfire* moved up the priority ranking; expansion of *Beaufighter* production would avoid the Southampton area. Supermarine output was seriously interrupted by Luftwaffe bombings on 24 & 26 September and subsequent dispersal to improvised premises across Hampshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire. Deliveries of a hundred per month resumed in 1941 and reached around 150 by 1944. CBAF had however commenced deliveries in June and their rate was increasing – they would achieve 300 per month in 1944.

As “parent firm” Supermarine delivered the photographic reconnaissance marks IV, X, XI & XIX; pressurised fighter marks VI & VII; all mark XII, XIV, XVIII as well as initial batches of whichever latest variant was most urgent. *Sea-fires* formed the bulk of Westland and Cunliffe-Owen output while CBAF accounted for all mark II, most V, IX, XVI, 22 and all mark 21 & *Seafire* 45.

## Remembering the Bristol Blitz Victims with Keith

### Jones

Keith Jones has been in the RMSA since taking early retirement. In 1995, with Frank and others, they succeeded in establishing fully recognised pensioner representation within BAe Systems, becoming elected representatives on Area 8 Committee.

Five years ago Keith developed Dystonia a neurological disorder affecting speech, it causes involuntary muscle contractions, leading to abnormal movements and postures. Fortunately other brain functions, such as intellect are unaffected and he decided to stand down as a pensions rep.

Where he can, he continues with other voluntary activities and writes to us to say he has become involved in moves to erect a memorial to honour all those civilians killed in Bristol during World War 11, estimated at some thirteen hundred. This includes one hundred and thirty-one killed in September 1941 in a daylight raid on the BAC works-to whom there is a memorial in Filton Church-and a night attack on Bristol Docks, which claimed two hundred and fifty-four lives.

After talks with Bristol City Council and the involvement of English Heritage there has been a successful outcome and the Memorial in the form of five locally made plaques, four carrying the names of those killed and another giving the reason for them, are to be placed on the walls of the bombed ruins of St Peters Church in Castle Park in Bristol after a ceremony, on Monday 29 September at 10.00am.

Afterwards, local historian John Perry who takes a special interest in those times, will be giving a short talk and video presentation in the Baptist Chapel in Broadmead Bristol.

## *Working Memories by Graham Ferrier*

Graham was a much travelled man in his career

In my retirement I often think about the old days when I worked at BAE and frequently my memories are of the trips I reluctantly made during my time in the Design Office. All the names have been abbreviated to protect the guilty!

In 1961 when I came back to Filton after a ten year absence at Hatfield, Canada and the USA, I was sent up to Ferranti in Edinburgh who were one of the pioneers in computer aided machining, during the works tour I was told by our guide that I was worse than the Japanese because I asked too many questions and I kept lagging behind to watch the machines working. In those days we had to share bedrooms with our travelling companions and on the first night I was surprised to see Mr. H get out a syringe and inject his arm. I thought I was sharing with a drug addict, but it was only because he was diabetic. We were not far from Murrayfield, which not only has the famous rugby ground but also an ice skating rink. Now although I had roller-skated as a child I had never been on ice skates even in Canada, but Mr. H had. I was surprised to find the ice was covered with a fine film of water. I fell over frequently and my best suit was soaking by the time we left.

When Concorde design started I was the Group Leader on the Intermediate Fuselage which was to be manufactured in Sud's Helicopter factory at Marignane near Marseilles. I made my first visit with my boss Mr L who hated flying, so one Sunday afternoon we set off by train to London, then another train to Paris and then the over-night sleeper to Marseilles. On arrival at about five in the morning we persuaded the Hotel Terminus staff to let us doze in the lounge till breakfast time, after which we went out to the factory. We did this several times until Mr. L got tired of going there and allowed me to go on my own. We were told that Marignane was famous in the Sud Aviation chain for three things

the wonderful Provencal weather, the excellent canteen which had two hour lunches and their consistent delivery times..

On one occasion I was asked to stay for a complete week so that I could make any alterations found necessary by the Loftsmen, who were drawing out all the details I had brought with me. During the week-end I went to a nearby beach (again in my best English suit) and changed into my swimming trunks on the beach wrapped in a towel borrowed from the hotel. I must have looked a strange sight.

We also had to go by train on the first visit to Toulouse. The Aerospatiale car would drop us off at the Hotel Capitole after work. One time when we were booking in Mr. L was given a letter, We had arranged to meet for a meal after a wash and brush-up. Afterwards standing on the steps of the Hotel he said to me, "This is the Place Capitole and over there" pointing across the road "is the Place Wilson, there are plenty of restaurants there, have a nice evening. See you in the morning" and he was off to meet his girlfriend for the night, an Aerospatiale employee.

After design work on Concorde was over we began to look around for other work and as a temporary measure I went up to the Warton D.O. and talked to their structure people about making forgings for any machined parts usually made from bar. I took away drawings for about twenty such parts, the largest of which was for the wing pivot bearing a cotton reel shaped piece of titanium. We did a forging drawing for it and it was decided that it would be made in Germany by the Otto Fuchs Company. I arranged to meet their English rep. at London Airport and we travelled together to Bonn airport. At their office next day we had a good meeting with their various specialists who didn't find much to criticize in our drawings, but then they brought in their Chief

Draughtsman who was a few years older than me. As he pointed out things on the drawings, I noticed he had lost one finger. My mind went a complete blank as I wondered how he came to lose it.

We were taken for an excellent meal by the Sales Director that first day, who said one of his men would do the same the next night. This chap picked us up from our hotel in a rather older car than the Sales Manager's new BMW. All went well until we were on a section of divided motorway when the car came to a lurching stop just before the top of a hill. Like all good Englishmen we got out and gave the car a push to the top of the hill, only to see it disappear down the other side leaving us all alone in the pitch dark, in the middle of the Ruhr, ankle deep in snow-it was January. Neither of us knew any German, there was no-one around to talk to anyway. After what seemed ages another car drew up and a German voice asked "are you two the English" as if there were lots of people standing around in the snow. It seemed that the first man had phoned his mate to come out and rescue us and take us to a local well-known beer cellar which, of course, just happened to be closed when we eventually got there. So we ended up scrounging a sandwich at our hotel, instead of the lovely meal and beer we had been promised.

In 1981 I was in a group who went to De Havilland of Canada to do the detail design of the Dash 8 wing. We started in early March in Toronto. One day Mike Davy, the Vice-President in charge of design took us on a local flight in a Turbo Beaver which scared the living day-lights out of several of our party who had never been in a small plane before. Mike had a cottage north of Toronto by a lake. In winter he used to fly there in the Beaver equipped with skis and in summer, with floats.

In June I took the first batch of

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drawings to Toronto and they were so pleased they gave us the flaps to do as well, and told us that Grumman who were also doing some subcontract work for them were in dire trouble with their computer produced drawings.

The first set of wing skin panels for the A310 were subcontracted to Rockwell (the old North American firm) in Los Angeles and they asked for some help from us. Their biggest problem seemed to be the incompatibility of their Fax machine with ours at Filton but a quick call to Filton sorted that out. My biggest problem was that we had been told that they were going to use a five-axis skin-milling machine, but it didn't seem to be on the shop floor. When I asked about this I was told "Oh, that belongs to the Military and it is now at our Oklahoma plant working on some other project. We had to re-dimension the drawings to suit their three-axis machine. However, worse was to follow. Soon after my return home I went to Chester to debrief the Production Team, in the course of which I was summoned to the Managing

politely why I had left the hotel in LA without paying my bill. I explained that when I was reception waiting to pay, the Rockwell man as usual, arrived to take me to the plant and he said 'you don't need to pay, Rockwell will settle up' I was able to prove that I had returned all of the dollars to the travel office I had been allowed and the matter blew over, but it was rather unsettling to be accused of absconding like that.

Going back to Concorde days, we had frequent meetings with our French partners and used to invite a few of them home for a meal. They had installed a young production engineer at Filton and after one such meal my wife asked him if he would like some more, he replied very politely in his best English "No thank you Madame I am fed up" We could see where he was coming from, but it was an unfortunate slip which caused our two daughters a great deal of amusement, and we still use the phrase to this day. On another occasion at a meal with his boss, who had very little command of English, my wife who had made three desserts, asked Monsieur M

which he would like and he calmly said he didn't mind in which order he had them.

I have much happier memories of working with the Marignane crowd than with those in Toulouse, who always seemed much more serious people

One final memory of my Marseilles visits is of when I was invited to join some BAe inspectors at a restaurant along the Old Quay. After we had finished and settled up they all stayed seated, this mystified me until their boss went over to the *patron* and asked for his book of receipts which he brought back to the table and gave each of us a fresh sheet to make out a slightly higher bill to present to the accounts people back at Filton. This got over the usual problem of being 'out of pocket' on each trip because of not being able to account for the occasional cup of coffee or beer, unlike the French who had a generous daily allowance.

The Production boys were always ahead of us in Design in this respect



**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

Since our last Newsletter we have acquired new Member:  
Mr J Hurley

We extend a warm welcome to you, and hope you will participate in the Association's activities and meet up with old friends and colleagues

**OBITUARIES**

It is with sadness that we report former colleagues known to have passed away since our last Newsletter:

Mr B P Dawson  
Mr A J Griffin  
Mr A Lewis

Our sympathy is extended to their families and all next of kin

**BAE & BAC RETIRED MANAGEMENT STAFF ASSOCIATION(RMSA)**

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