

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 2 - SPRING 2003

EDITORIAL

Firstly, thanks to those Members who sent me contributions. Don't worry if they aren't included in this issue; they will be used later. Meanwhile, please keep sending in your news, views, suggestions, anecdotes, memories and questions.

The Association has got off to a good start with some 250 paid-up Members, 80 of whom attended the Inaugural Meeting on the 8th February, an encouraging turn out. The Programme of Events, below, is also growing nicely with plenty of Members willing to give talks. A particular treat is a visit to the Tangmere Museum, with Neville Duke present, to mark the 50th anniversary of his World Speed Record in Hunter Mk 3 WB188, flown from Tangmere and now on display there.

With such enthusiasm being displayed so early in the life of the Association it really looks as if it has a great future - but it all depends on you Members continuing to participate actively and letting the Committee know just what you want.

I hope you enjoy this issue which even includes a "Special Offer"! Looking forward to hearing from you.

Send contributions to: The Editor, Chris Farara, at 24 Guildown Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 4EN (tel. 01483 825955), or by e-mail <chrisfarara@ntlworld.com>.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS - 2003

Saturday 8th Feb	Inaugural Meeting (record only)
Wednesday 12th March	Talk: "Hawker; a great place to work" by John Glasscock.
Wednesday 9th April	Talk: " The Hawker jet era" by Ralph Hooper.
Wednesday 14th May	Visit: Tangmere Museum . Meet inside the Museum entrance at 2.00 pm.
Wednesday 11th June	Talk: "Harrier; putting the record straight" by John Farley.
Wednesday 9th July	No planned programme; Members may meet socially.
Wednesday 13th Aug	No planned programme; Members may meet socially.
Wednesday 10th Sept	Talk: "A few words from a salesman" by John Crampton.
An evening in Oct	Talk at BAES Farnborough: "BAe Heritage" by Ron Hedges. Time and venue tba.
Wednesday 8th Oct	Talk: "The Typhoon" by David Ince, Typhoon pilot.
Wednesday 12th Nov	No planned programme: Members may meet socially.
Wednesday 10th Dec	No planned programme: Members may meet socially.

All Meetings will be at **2.00 pm** at *Hawker Leisure* (the old Sports & Social Club) unless indicated otherwise. There is a well stocked bar and good, inexpensive lunches and snacks are available, of which we hope Members will avail themselves, as the management does not charge the Association for the use of the facilities. There is plenty of free parking space.

At this stage in the development of the Association Members are asked to find their own way to visit venues, Tangmere Aerodrome near Chichester, in this instance. Why not get together and share cars? Buy your tickets and meet inside the entrance at 2.00 pm.

Among many fascinating exhibits, the Tangmere Military Aviation Museum houses Hunter prototype WB188 in its world speed record Mk 3 guise and we are very fortunate to have its most famous pilot with us, Neville Duke. This will be a memorable and unique way of commemorating the Duke-Hunter World Speed Record of fifty years ago.

INAUGURAL MEETING

Saturday February the 8th was a notable date for the Hawker Association when the Inaugural Meeting was held at *Hawker Leisure*, the old Company Sports & Social Club now run by the YMCA for the Kingston Council.

Percy Collino welcomed eighty Members (and sold them raffle tickets - £92 raised) with a wide range of backgrounds in 'Hawkers'. They were given an informal presentation by the steering committee, introduced by Harry Fraser-Mitchell.

Chris Farara outlined the aims of the Association, Barry Pegram explained the membership demography, Mike Hoskins summarised the financial situation and likely expenditure and Percy Collino told some good jokes..... oh, and presented the programme for the year (see above - programme, not jokes). The audience was attentive and a number of useful suggestions came from the floor.

Barry's membership analysis showed that, on a post-code basis, 72.5% are "local" to Kingston and 24.8% are "distant". 2.7% of Members live overseas. Interestingly 25% of Members are still working, so we're not all pensioners!

It was unanimously agreed by the meeting that the present steering committee (Percy Collino, Chris Farara, Wilf Firth, Harry Fraser-Mitchell, Ralph Hooper, Mike Hoskins, Gordon Jefferson and Barry Pegram) become the Association Committee for the coming year. Members with a particular wish to participate in some specific way were asked to make this known to the Committee so that they can be co-opted when needed. Ambrose Barber joined the Committee after the meeting.

Hawker Leisure Manager, Derek Hempston, whose father, present at the meeting, is an old Hawker employee, was thanked for providing the venue, preparing the room and supplying the equipment. Future meetings will be in the bar room.

The restaurant and bar services were enjoyed by many before and after the presentation, and judging by the decibel level, Members were delighted to meet so many old friends and colleagues in convivial surroundings.

BOOK REVIEW AND SPECIAL OFFER

Many Members will remember the always smartly dressed, entertaining and above all, professional Johnnie Johnson, sales and marketing executive at Kingston from 1969 to 1988.

He recently published his memoirs: "Finals, Three Greens - a life in aviation." Wing Commander GW Johnson, DFC and Bar, Croix de Guerre, started his RAF career in 1941, trained in Canada, completed 62 Lancaster operations with the Pathfinders, flew VIPs round the South Pacific and then found himself at the Empire Test Pilots School in 1946 at the start of the jet age. This was just the beginning of twenty eight varied and fascinating years in the RAF, during which he flew over one hundred types, all recalled with wit, humour and keen powers of observation.

The equally enthralling account of his career with HSA and BAe will be of more direct interest to Hawker Association readers who may well be familiar with the people and events but will learn a great deal of what went on behind the scenes.

This book, in Johnnie's inimitable concise and witty style, is highly recommended and is guaranteed to inform and amuse!

Well illustrated and very good value at the cover price of £12.95, a copy is yours for a tenner, including postage, direct from GW Johnson, 12 Hipley Court, Warren Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 2HT; he will even sign it for you, on request.

THE FALL AND RISE OF WT555 - Contributed by John Kendrick

Apart from the historic significance of 2003 in the history of aviation there are two important Hawker anniversaries this year. Fifty years ago, on 7th September 1953, the modified Hunter prototype, WB188, broke the World Air Speed Record and a few months earlier on 16th May the first production Hunter Mk 1, WT555, took to the air for the first time, both aircraft being piloted by Neville Duke.

After a career of Contractor's trials from Dunsfold and Ministry trials at Boscombe Down WT555 was, in 1957, relegated to ground instructional duties as 7499M at RAF Locking before transfer to the Aerospace Museum at RAF Cosford in 1967.

However, one little-publicised event took place at Dunsfold on 19th May 1953, three days after its first flight. The Duke of Edinburgh, following a factory tour, 'christened' WT555 by withdrawing his Royal Standard, which had been draped over the silver Hunter's nose, to reveal his crest which had been painted on the port side just below the windscreen. Amongst the attendees were Sir Frank and Neville Spriggs and the event was recorded by a group of press photographers. WT555, accompanied by WB195, the second Hunter prototype and WB202, the first Sapphire powered Hunter, took off for a celebratory flypast.

Presumably, after WT555 left Dunsfold for Boscombe down and eventual retirement, the significance of the Duke's crest meant little to those dealing with the aircraft and when it came to be camouflaged the crest was simply sprayed over.

When the RAF decided to dispose of the aircraft from Cosford it was purchased by Vanguard Holdings and removed to their storage facilities alongside the A40 at Greenford, West London, where the owner displayed it, somewhat incongruously, on the roof of the building, where it remained for a few years.

When it disappeared from this position the writer called in at the main office fearful that it had simply been dumped but was relieved to find that the absence was only temporary and that the owner intended to return WT555 to its perch where it was, he asserted, a useful publicity tool. The owner proved enthusiastic and aware of the aircraft's history so the writer decided to 'take the bull by the horns' and try to convince him that in view of the upcoming 50th anniversary it would be great if he could see his way to returning WT555 to its original livery. He was provided with details of the Dunsfold ceremony, photographs and a copy of the Duke of Edinburgh's crest obtained from Windsor Castle.

Helped, no doubt, by the subtle hint that the Hunter was more likely to be noticed in an all silver paint scheme, the owner decided to repaint it in its Dunsfold colours. He hopes to have WT555 ready for display by May and to invite both 'Dukes' to re-enact the historic unveiling!

JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER LECTURE

At the Brooklands Museum on 15th January, Simon Hargreaves, ex-Dunsfold test pilot and now Deputy Chief Test Pilot BAE Systems, addressed an audience of over 200 Royal Aeronautical Society and Institute of Mechanical Engineers members, lecturing on the X-35B Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) demonstrator flight test programme.

Simon served in the Royal Navy from 1975 to 1996 where he flew Sea Harriers in the Falklands war. Graduating from the Empire Test Pilots School he served at Boscombe Down where the Sea Harrier FA2 was his responsibility, commanded 899 Squadron NAS introducing the FA2 into service and leading the squadron in Bosnia. He joined British Aerospace Dunsfold as a test pilot in 1996. Now a Commander in the RNR, he has 5200 hrs in his log book, mostly on Harriers.

The multi-billion dollar JSF programme is to develop the 'next generation' strike fighter with versions for the USAF and USN (conventional), USMC, RAF and RN (ASTOVL). A competition was set up by the US Government, the final two competitors, Lockheed Martin and Boeing, to build demonstrator aircraft for a 'fly-off'.

When BAE Systems joined the Lockheed Martin JSF partnership Simon was chosen to lead the ASTOVL (Advanced Short Take Off & Vertical Landing) X-35B flight test team in California, joining BAES engineers already working on the project in Lockheed's famous "Skunk Works". This crucial programme was to demonstrate specified performance, handling and operational aspects in a compressed timescale of some six weeks in the summer of 2001.

Well illustrated with still and video material, Simon's talk took the audience through the complete programme from ground tests at Palmdale to the final flight from Edwards Airforce Base, covering in detail the problems that arose and the solutions implemented.

To those present who had been at Dunsfold in the early days of the P.1127, much of this had a nostalgic ring, heightened by the fact that the design of the VTOL grids used at

Palmdale and Edwards was based on that installed at Dunsfold back in 1960. One big difference, though, was the huge thrust margin available from the F119 shaft driven lift fan propulsion system, so it was quite unnecessary to strip out the airframe as we had to with XP831!

Co-operation between the Contractors: Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, BAE Systems, Pratt & Whitney, General Electric and Rolls-Royce had been exemplary with mutual trust and respect leading to quick decision making. However, the Contractor-to-US Government relationship was less happy due to the highly bureaucratic nature of the control process leading to inflexibility of approach. In spite of this, the programme was completed quickly with all major demonstration objectives achieved and the competitor, Boeing, vanquished. The eventual result will be the manufacture of thousands of aircraft by the industrial partners including, of course, BAES and Rolls Royce in the UK. Somewhat surprisingly, in view of some remaining development problems, particularly lift fan intake flow instability, the X-35B is being retired to the Smithsonian Museum.

The lecture was much enjoyed with many Association members present, including Duncan Simpson just back from his GAPAN world tour, and John Farley, also a consultant to the JSF programme.

RAeS Weybridge Branch lectures are open to all (£2 contribution) and Association Members are regular attendees. Why not come and hear Dick Poole remembering the **Harrier Ski-Jump trials on 19th March** at 6.30 pm?

READERS WRITE

From Dave Fowler - Stress Office - who remembers the origin of a Harrier feature.

During Harrier trials on the aft helicopter platform of HMS Blake the ship's stabilisers were used to induce the desired angle of roll. Whilst waiting for the angle to build up the pilot naturally released the nosewheel steering button. What none of us had realised was that the brakes on the single main undercarriage did not stop the aircraft from yawing on a sloping rolling deck and that when the nose swung sideways the nosewheel was able to castor beyond the maximum steering angle of 45 degrees. Pushing the nosewheel steering button in this condition therefore had no effect so the aircraft nose swung helplessly from side to side until a brave sailor ran in with a chock and stopped it. Ever since then nosewheel steering is engaged continuously for Harrier deck operations.

On a lighter note, soon after one of our secretaries had achieved her ambition of becoming an airline stewardess, one lad in the office wondered whether she had slept with her first pilot yet, whereupon the office wit retorted that surely she would have to sleep with the second pilot first!

From Ralph Hooper - Technical Director - who asks: "How do today's youngsters get equivalent experience?"

In July 1944 Ken Newby, Peter Wroe and Ralph Hooper (age 18), then Blackburn Aircraft Co. apprentices, were sent during the long vac. at the end of the first year at Hull University College, to work for the Fleet Air Arm at Donnibristle, E. Fife, a main

maintenance base. The last named is no Samuel Pepys but the extracts below are taken from jottings in a 1944 diary which has recently come to light.

The last of the first year exams, Applied Maths, had been sat 9-12 am on Saturday 8th July. On Monday 10th the rail journey via York, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Inverkeithing seems to have taken all day thus:-

"10th Mon. Arrived Aberdour 11.0 pm.
11th Tues. Got up late. Met Blackburn Rep. (J Johnson). Taken to place of work, Assembly Four Hangar, Donnibristle.
12th Wed. Work at 7.30, nothing all day. Inspected Maryland, Swordfish, Barracuda and other aircraft.
13th Thur. No work till afternoon. Saw Seafire, Sea Gladiator, Sea Hurricane, Walrus, Sea Otter, Fulmar, Albacore, Oxford, DH86 Dragon Rapide and 4 engined version, DH Flamingo, Beechcraft (Staggerwing), Stinson Reliant, thing like a Crane (but not one), Grumman Avenger, Wildcat, Hellcat, Anson, Proctor."
(The above list covers the space available for the 14th and 15th so):
16th Sun. Slept late (9.30). Walked in morning. To beach and swam twice in afternoon. Walked and climbed cliffs in evening.
17th Mon Worked on trailing edge of Barracuda (having done undercarriage). Walked to Silver Sands and swam in the evening. (We had marvellous weather during most of our time in Scotland. The digs provided only one bath per week, the work was often quite hard and grubby so the emphasis on swimming had a lot to do with keeping clean!)
(At this point our rather erratic scribe gave up. Pity, but what a super experience. One further relevant entry occurs.)
Fri 25th Aug Flew Stinson. 20 - 25 mins, in control 5 or 6 mins, dives, banks, turns, climbs. (The above flight, shared with Ken Newby, was first time airborne for the diarist - doesn't mention the low flying in which our pilot indulged - great fun.)
Sat 26th BACK HOME."

Ken Newby was AD Future Systems in St Giles Court at the time of the New Trainer competition. I don't think this did the 1182 any harm at all!

From George Woods - Head of Full Scale Layout - who remembers the introduction of new equipment and its consequences.

It all started on the P.1182. Roy Adolphus had forseen the benefit of a 'Rout-a-Trace' machine. This was a line-following machine with the ability to offset half the cutter diameter. Prior to its acquisition all templates to aid manufacture were 'lofted' on foil in pencil, printed on 16 gauge mild steel plate then cut, drilled and filed to shape by hand in the Tool Room.

What was needed for the 'Rout-a-Trace' machine was a perfect black line copy of the lofted part duly edited to the Production Process Sheet requirements: the profile and separate lines joining individual sized holes that needed to be drilled. To do this, Contract draughtsmen were brought in to work in a Subsection of the Loft where all templates were traced in ink to be reproduced on white foil in the Photo Loft. This method of producing templates saved thousands of hours of labour and time.

It was this Section that suggested a Christmas Party which was booked at the Bear in Esher where it was held for many years until transfer to the Marquis of Granby. Originally thirty attended but over the years this reduced to the now steady figure of twenty.

On 19th December 2002 the 30th Dinner Party was held. Many nostalgic stories were repeated and new ones told. All agreed that it had been a wonderful time to be at work, on such a good project, the Hawk.

The evening was deemed a great success, again well organised by Mike Whittaker.

HAWKER ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

Thanks to the efforts of Richard Cannon the Association website is up and running.

Visit it at: <www.hawkerassociation.org.uk>

This should be a valuable communication tool. It already contains much information, including current and past Newsletters. Please use the e-mail link to send Richard your opinions and suggestions for additions or changes.

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Names only are given for legal reasons. If you wish to write to a Member put your letter in a plain stamped envelope and send it to the Editor who will forward it for you. If you know any 'Hawker' people who are not members, please tell them about the Association. Especially welcome are Production and Commercial people as they are under-represented at present.

- A:** Ken Alexander, Terry Ansty, Steve Apted, John Arthur, Alan Auld, Bryan Austin.
- B:** Ambrose Barber, Ray Barber, Derek Barden, Peter Barker, Geoff Barratt, Ken Batstone, Dennis Baxter, Keith Bollands, Paul Boon, Cliff Bore, Steve Bott, Bob Bounden, Roy Braybrook, Laurie Bridges, Ian Brine, Doug Britton, Peter Brown, Reg Burrell, Ron Bryan, Roy Budgen, George Bunt.
- C:** Bert Callan, Richard Cannon, Maurice Carlile, Chris Carter, Ken Causer, John Chacksfield, Colin Chandler, Keith Chapman, Reg Chester, Gerry Clapp, John Cockerill, Bob Coles, Percy Collino, Brian Coombes, Paul Cope, Nick Cox, Eric Crabbe, Ian Craig, Shirley Craig, John Crampton, RG Curtis.
- D:** Roger Dabbs, Andy Dalton, John Davie, Ken Davies, Trevor Davies, Norman Devielli, Lambert Dopping-Heppenstal, Jack Dowson, Dick Duffell, Jean Duffell, Peter Drye, Neville Duke, Mike Dyke.
- E:** John Eacott, Andy Edwards, Dave Edwards,.
- F:** Ian Falconer, Mike Fantham, Chris Farara, John Farley, John Farrow, Geoff Fieldus, Wilf Firth, Ann Fletcher, Richard Fletcher, Colin Flint, Dave Fowler, Harry Fraser-Mitchell, Geoff French, Mike French, Heinz Frick.
- G:** Roy Gaff, John Gardner, Sandie Gear, Mark Gerrard, Tony Gibbs, Maurice Gilson, John Glasscock, Roy Goodheart, Eric Goose, John Gough, Andy Green, John Green, James Griffin, Barry Grimsey.

- H:** Douglas Halloway, Clive Handy, Dawn Harris, Brian Harvie, David Hastie, Eric Haywood, Bob Head, Frederick Hewitt, Merlin Hibbs, Peter Hickman, Reg Hippolite, Keith Hobbs, Chris Hodson, Gordon Hodson, Derek Holden, Doc Holliday, Ralph Hooper, Linda Hopkins, Paul Hopkins, Mike Hoskins, Dawn Howes, Terry Howes, Gordon Hudson.
- I:** Pete I'Anson, John Ieronymides, Maive Impey, Brian Indge.
- J:** John Janes, Gordon Jefferson, David Jelley, John Johnson, Johnnie Johnson, Ian Jordan, Trevor Jordan.
- K:** Dennis Ketcher, Bill King, Dave King, Ralph Kuhn.
- L:** Barry Laight, Mike Laker, Charles Lamb, Richard Lane, George Latham, Pam Lawrence, Ron Leader, Geoff Lee, Mark Lewis, Vernon Lidstone, Andrew Lloyd, David Lockspeiser, Norman Long, Gordon Lorrimer.
- M:** Albert Magee, Al Mahoon, Mick Mansell, John Marsh, Bob Martin, Dennis Mason, June McKeon, Ronald Mears, Mike Mendoza, Jim Middleton, Kit Milford, Jack Mills, Brian Moon, Pauline Moore, Nicholas Morland, Pete Munday.
- N:** Martin Nash, Anthea Newman.
- O:** Roger O'Brien-Hill.
- P:** Les Palmer, John Parker, John Partridge, Barry Pegram, Ted Pincombe, Dick Poole, Don Pratt, Dave Priddy.
- Q:** John Quinn.
- R:** Colin Raisey, Brian Ralton, Paul Rash, Diane Raymond, Wally Rayner, David Rees, Francis Rhodes, Geoff Richards, Bill Richardson, Malcolm Roscoe-Pond.
- S:** Helen Sadler, Ray Searle, Jack Simmonds, Sadie Simmonds, Duncan Simpson, Derek Sims, Gerry Sims, Don Smith, Harold Smith, Karl Smith, Pete Smith, Selwyn Smith, Roy Sparrow, Peter Spragg, Vivian Stanbury, Danny Stephens, John Strange, Mike Stroud, Christine Strudwick, Tony Strudwick, Bill Swinchatt.
- T:** David Taylor, Stuart Taylor, Graham Tomlinson, Rod Tribick, Ron Trowell, Frank Tuck, Bert Turner.
- U:** John Underhill.
- V:** Herbert Valk.
- W:** Brian Walden, Terry Walker, David Ward, John Webb, Patrick Webb, Graham Weller, Rob Welsh, Bryan West, Phil Wheatley, Jan White, Annette Williams, Stan Williams, Colin Wilson, George Wilson, Paul Wilson, Dick Wise, George Woods, Len Woodward, Alan Woolley.

This list will be updated in each Newsletter. Please let the editor know if there are any spelling mistakes or incorrect first names.

Sadly we must record that John Apted died recently. Our sympathies go out to his family. His nephew, Steve, continues the Membership.

POSTSCRIPT

Percy Collino needs **raffle prizes**. Please bring suitable donations to the meetings and give them to Percy. ("Suitable" means something you wouldn't mind winning!)

And don't forget to send in your **Newsletter contributions**.