



Woking and District Aircrew Association www.aircrew.org.uk/woking Newsletter

16 July 2020

Next Zoom Meeting

Unfortunately the White Hart still cannot accept us for lunch, so we are back to on-line meetings after an initial surge of optimism that we might be able to meet up at last.

1400 on 21st July

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83149201156?pwd=WmlnVXRmSjU0YklXaXJDZDdmUHFIJZz09>

Meeting ID: 831 4920 1156 Password: 467748

20 June Zoom Meeting

Good to see more members joining our monthly Zoom meeting on 16 June, which lasted over 90 minutes and seemed to be enjoyed by everyone. Mike Jones even joined us from his hospital bed as he recovered from a major operation. Good luck, Mike!

Topics discussed included: the relative merits of Mosquitos, Hornets and F35s; the hazards of flying Sycamores; airworthy Lancasters; activities of the [Polish Airmen's Association](#); possible speakers if we get to have normal meetings again; and an update on plans for re-opening the White Hart in Chobham with outside seating when restrictions allow.

Some came and went, so no picture of everyone.



Editorial

This is the 4th COVID newsletter and I am beginning to run out of material for more. Please do support our efforts to keep the branch together in these difficult times and let me have a contribution. It doesn't have to be a work of literary genius, just something as long or short as you wish, that might interest our members.

Flying and service reminiscences always appeal, but any subject of general interest will be most welcome. Illustrations/pictures always add interest, but are not essential. Please email to akribie@ntlworld.com.

Meanwhile, until we can meet again for pub lunches or outings, we will continue to hold virtual monthly meetings on Zoom to which you are all cordially invited.

David Jackson, Editor

Chiltern News

Graham Laurie of the ACA Chiltern Branch, who entertained us at Fair Oaks on more than one occasion, has been generating their branch newsletters for many years.

Although he said he would relinquish editorship earlier this year, he has continued to produce shorter versions during the lockdown. They all make very good reading and can be found via a dedicated Branch Newsletter page on the main ACA web site: www.aircrew.org.uk [I am webmaster. Ed].

A regular and interesting feature in their newsletters is reminiscences by members. How good it would be if some Woking branch members made a similar contribution to our own newsletters!

Committee Members

Chairman
Vice Chairman & PRO
Secretary & Welfare
Treasurer, Webmaster & News
Deputy Treasurer

Ron Hepburn
Bill Bawden
Tony Boxall
David Jackson
Tony Rest

Gale Harvey

Gale, a dear friend of many in Woking ACA, lost her battle with cancer just before 13:00 hrs on 30 May. She was admitted to Frimley Park on the 23rd April with suspected bowel cancer, having endured breast and bone cancer in recent years, and was diagnosed with inoperable bowel and liver tumours. She was due to be transferred to Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice for palliative care, but contracted COVID-19 during her time in hospital so was trapped there until she finally passed away due to multiple organ failure.

Alan Milton writes:

I first met Gale in the mid seventies when she ran a small aircraft charter company called Merlix Air at Fairoaks. During that time Mann Aviation maintained her aircraft.

In the late 70s, Gale opened the bar in the Flight Centre, which became a very popular meeting place with many events etc.

In late May of 1994 two members of the Woking ACA, Phillip Bridge and Ron Bryant, asked if they could have a drink at the bar. Afterwards they asked if they could hold our monthly ACA meetings at Fairoaks. The rest is history.

Gale agreed to open the bar for our monthly meetings in the clubhouse. Whilst regularly serving us from behind the bar over many years that followed she became a de-facto member of our branch and



Gale with a well-deserved bouquet presented at the 2004 Christmas lunch by then-Chairman Eric Smith.

attended our Christmas lunches as an honoured guest.

At the first Fairoaks meeting I asked the members when they had last flown. Some not since the war! I was willing to take them flying, hence the annual ACA flying evenings began on 29 June 1994. We had a total of twenty one flying evenings and Gale would always have the bar open.

She made a lot of friends amongst our members and was sorely missed when she had to retire due to ill health.

Thank you Gale We will all miss you.

Bryan Doughty

With yet more great sadness, we regret to advise the death at age 85 on 21 June of Bryan Doughty, a long-time member of our Woking Branch.

Bryan spent 22 years in the RAF as a signaller on Shackletons with 228, 37 and 206 squadrons followed by helicopter tours with 18 and 72 squadrons. He served in Aden and Germany before ending his service at RAF Odiham.

After leaving the RAF, Bryan and his wife Gillian followed his parent's example and spent the next 22 happy years looking after old people in care homes.

In 1999 he joined FAST museum at Farnborough where his considerable carpentry skills were put to great use. His major contributions to many exhibits and facilities will be a lasting memorial.

Our condolences go to all his family and friends. We will miss him at our ACA meetings and are so glad that he was able to join us for our 2019 Christmas lunch.



Avro Shackleton



1969



2001

Military Aviation Update

Aeromed Capability Enhanced

Two RAF BAe 146 of No 32 (The Royal) Squadron at Northolt have been modified at no cost using stretcher stanchions already in use on Voyager. This gives additional aeromedical capacity able to operate into smaller airfields than the much-larger Voyager. The project was completed in record time under the Astra programme, which fosters innovation across the RAF.

RAF Mali Deployment Extended

Three RAF Chinook helicopters and 100 personnel based in Gao, Mali and operating in non-combat roles have been supporting French counter-terrorism operations in the Sahel region of West Africa since 2018. Extension of this deployment was announced by Minister for the Armed Forces James Heappey on 12 June following a remote conference with 15 defence ministers of the coalition involved.

COVID-19 Support at Kinloss

Three RAF Pumas have returned to RAF Benson on completion of a 3-month detachment in support of COVID-19 support tasks in Scotland.

Joint UK/Qatari Typhoon Squadron

No 12 Sqn RAF has been reformed at RAF Coningsby as a joint RAF/QEAF unit to train Qatari personnel in advance of 24 Qatari Typhoon deliveries starting in 2022. This is the first multinational UK squadron since WWII.

Expansion of RAF Waddington

Plan have been submitted for a massive expansion of facilities at RAF Waddington in advance of accepting new aircraft types, including the Red Arrows and the new Protector UAV to complement RAF Reaper UAV already being operated from the base.



Protector UAV

Naval Resupply by Drone

The Royal Navy is trialling a heavy lift drone for future use on warships. Details available [on line](#).

F-35s Aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth

First deployment of operational F-35 Lightnings to a UK carrier took place on 9 June when 617 Sq RAF landed on board. The same aircraft are due to sail with HMS Queen Elizabeth on her maiden Carrier Group deployment next year.

USAF Bombers Exercise with RAF

B-1B Lancer bombers from the 28th Bomb Wing have in recent weeks flown from their South Dakota base to carry out exercises over Europe in conjunction with other NATO air forces. The bombers were met by Typhoon FGR4s from No IX (Bomber) Squadron from RAF Lossiemouth over the North Sea.

The B-1Bs carried out refuelling from a USAF KC-135R from Mildenhall and an RAF Voyager tanker from Brize Norton, with an E-3D Sentry from No 8 Squadron at Waddington to co-ordinate the mission. The American bombers then flew on to take part in exercises with the Swedish and Norwegian Air Forces in the Nordic region.

Another B-1B was escorted over the North Sea by Typhoons from No 1 (Fighter) Squadron based at Lossiemouth as it transited to exercises with the Danish and Polish Air Forces over Latvia and Lithuania.

No 22 Squadron Reformed

The Rotary Wing Evaluation and Training Unit at RAF Benson has been re-designated No 22 Squadron and will carry out these functions for all Joint Helicopter Command aircraft types including Chinook, Puma, Merlin, Apache and Wildcat helicopters.

Hercules for Bangladesh

The first two ex-RAF C-130J Hercules C5 aircraft have left the Marshall's facility at Cambridge to join the Bangladesh Air Force.

The Bangladeshi ferry crews had to arrive in the UK over two weeks earlier in order to spend their first 14 days in Covid-19 pandemic quarantine.



Bangladeshi C130J

Closure of the The Aircrew Association Archive Trust

From: Jack Broughton, Chairman & Treasurer

The Trustees of The Aircrew Association Archive Trust, Air Cdre Jack Broughton, Graham Pitchfork, John Goodsir and Ray Flack have decided to dissolve the Aircrew Association Archive Trust on the 30th June 2020.

Two years ago, the Trustees were contemplating closing the charity when it received over £50,000 from the legacies of former members of the ACA. Since then there have been no financial contributions to the funds and the donation of aircrew memorabilia has dried up.

Over the past 2 years the Trustees have donated £10,000 to the Jet Age Museum in Gloucester for the rebuilding of a WWII fighter cockpit and Napier Sabre display engine and £2,000 to the Dumfries & Galloway Air Museum for the repainting of a Meteor 7 aircraft.

At the AGM in 2019, with some £42,000 of funds remaining but with a lack of activity, the Trustees decided it was time to cease trading. It was decided to devote the remaining funds to the flying training of air minded young people. Following negotiations it was decided to make the following grants:

- £25,000 to the Royal Air Forces Association Flying Scholarship Trust for 10 scholarships at the rate of 2 per annum for 5 years.

- £15,000 to The Air League for Gliding Scholarships
- £3,500 to the Yorkshire Air Museum (YAM) for the maintenance of the ACA Archive located there.

On disbandment all the remaining funds have been expended.

Turning to the future, former ACA Charity Archivist Air Commodore Graham Pitchfork will continue to oversee the ACA Archive from his position as Honorary Vice President of the Yorkshire Air Museum and his involvement with the Buccaneer Aircrew Association and Buccaneer XX 901 which on display there and former ACA Vice Chairman Colonel John Goodsir will continue to be involved as a Museum Trustee at the YAM.

- Graham Pitchfork's email: gpitchfork@btinternet.com
- John Goodsir's email: j.goodsir@btinternet.com

The ACA Charity Trustees would like to express their sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to the archive over the past 19 years.

Adios Jack

See details of the Trust at aircrew.org.uk/a3t.html

HEARD ON THE R/T

A British Airways aircraft was overflying Aden as an Aeroflot freighter was departing from what was once RAF Khormaksar

Aeroflot Pilot (heavily accented); "Hey, English, you used to have Aden?"

BA Captain: "Er .. yes, why?"

Aeroflot Pilot: "I have just had to overnight there. You can have it back!"

-----oOo-----

Tower: "Delta Zulu Romeo, turn right now and report your heading."

Pilot: "Wilco. 341, 342, 343, 344, 345..."



From The Woking ACA Archives

Branch PRO Paul Holden gained considerable press coverage of the ACA meetings and other activities in the early years of this century. Here is the report of the January 2004 meeting at Fairoaks. which appeared in the press on 21 February that year.

At their very well attended January meeting, Aircrew Association Woking Branch members re-elected their existing Committee and Officers, with the welcome addition of Stan Instone as their new Treasurer. A very warm vote of thanks went to their stalwart former Treasurer Clive Watt, who stood in again as Treasurer at short notice following the sad loss of their greatly loved ex-Spitfire pilot Freddie Lewis, last year. An exciting programme of visits was announced, commencing with Kinloss in March, Benson, Coltishall, and the 60th Anniversary celebration of their Liberation Day in Verne, Belgium in September.

Following the short AGM, members were treated to an authoritative illustrated presentation by John Farley OBE, AFC, CEng, the Hawker Chief Test Pilot during development of the Harrier, on the 41 years of development of jet powered Vertical or Short Take Off and Landing (V/STOL) aircraft, from the early experiments preceding the Hawker P1127 (the Harrier Prototype) to the American Design Competition for the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Prototype in 2001.



John Farley

John Farley covered the contributions made by key development engineers over the years, since the Frenchman Michel Wibault first suggested rotating nozzles to vector thrust way back in 1956. When he failed to interest Marcel Dassault or the French Government in his idea, this was taken up in Britain by a succession of development engineers, resulting in the "Flying Bedstead" test rig in the late 1950s and the Short SC1 which had 4 vertical lift engines and a fifth engine for forward Thrust. Sidney Camm at Hawkers didn't like the multiple engine concept, and one of his team, Ralph Hooker, developed the idea of a split vectored exhaust, which gave rise to the development of the Pegasus 1 engine, on the Turbo

Fan principle, and the design of the P1127, with stability during takeoff and hover controlled by high pressure air siphoned off from the rear compressor, vented through shuttered jets in the wing tips and fore and aft.



Hawker P1127 prototype at Brooklands Museum

In 1969, the Harrier went into service, not only as a world first jet V/STOL aircraft, but also fitted with a very advanced Head Up Display (HUD), a self contained Inertial Navigation System not depending on any radio transmissions, and a Moving Map Display, with the aircraft position always in the middle of the correctly-orientated map.

In 1978, a brilliant notion by a serving Naval officer led to the introduction of the Ski Jump to enable the Sea Harrier to take off from the short flying deck of LPH (Landing Platform Helicopter) Class ships, which was demonstrated for the first time at the Farnborough Air show that year. The Sea Harrier was adopted by the US Marines to give them close cover for amphibious operations, and they commissioned McDonnell Douglas to develop the Harrier II with thicker wings to carry more fuel. The Sea Harrier FA2 now carries the US AMRAAM missile with a range of 30 miles and with its own Inertial Navigation System and its own radar for final homing, which enables it to attack and destroy targets beyond visual range. This aircraft is still the world's best V/STOL Interceptor, whilst the RAF's GR7 is also the world's best V/STOL bomber. Being fitted with forward looking infrared, Head Up Display and night vision goggles, it is cleared to fly in black night, at 420 knots, 250 feet above variable height terrain, using its totally synthetic vision aid.

It is noteworthy that, following the success of the Harrier, the United States is developing the concept of a stealthy single-seat V/STOL Joint Strike Fighter (JSF). The successful design prototype, the X-35B by Lockheed Martin, was entrusted for its maiden flight to a British Test Pilot, selected as the most experienced in the world in this field of aviation. Its computer controlled, "fly by wire" capability is the legacy of 27 years of continuing Harrier development by British engineers, and it successfully demonstrated all its specified performance characteristics within six weeks in 2001 - a startling tribute to the quality of modern aircraft design techniques.



Polish Airmen's Association UK
Związek Lotników Polskich WB

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812 Squadron RNAS in Hong Kong (5th September – 28th December 1945)

by John Dickson, Pilot 812 Sqn HMS Vengeance

[This is the third and final part of the wartime memories of John Dickson, past member of Woking ACA. Another article, covering his time flying Gannets some time after the war, may follow in a later edition. Ed/

Although we didn't fly for nearly 5 weeks after arriving in the Colony, I have been asked to remember something of our life there at an interesting time in its history.

The Commander of the 11th Aircraft Carrier Squadron (ACS) was Rear Admiral Cecil Harcourt who flew his flag in our sister ship HMS Venerable. The other carriers in the group were 'Colossus' and 'Glory'. After leaving Sydney on VJ. Day, 'Venerable' pressed ahead and arrived in Hong Kong just before the end of August whereupon the Admiral transferred his flag ashore and took up duty as the first Governor of the Colony following the Japanese surrender. Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser arrived in the battleship 'Duke of York' on the 14th September and the official surrender ceremony took place 2 days later.

The day after we anchored in the harbour on the 5th September, I went ashore with a couple of others. I remember we were smartly turned out in our short white uniforms armed with .38 Smith & Wesson revolvers each with 6 rounds. Although the war had been over for 3 weeks, no one knew for sure that all the Japs knew about it. Many were fairly isolated in the hills behind Victoria City and scattered around the New Territories. Sure enough, we had just about got to the Main Square when a whole company of some 60-80 Japs came marching down the road. They were fully armed with rifles at the slope and the three of us felt that we would sooner be elsewhere. Anyway, we stood our ground, the Japanese officer called his troops to a halt and then proceeded to offer his sword as a token of surrender. I don't think he was frightened of our 3 revolvers, which wouldn't have made much of a dent in his troops particularly as we were shaking so much

Anyway, without understanding one another we persuaded him to make his soldiers lay down their guns in the street and then to move his men back where they sat down. We had some sort of HQ set up in the dockyard so we got a message back for them to send some Marines who would know better what to do with our capture.

Hong Kong had been pretty well bombed by the Americans and the whole place was a smelly, dirty shambles with lots of rubble strewn all round. It soon became clear that we were to be here for some while and as there would be no flying jobs for us ashore. The restitution of law and order was the main priority

and our sailors were soon to be armed and made up into patrols to clean up the streets. There had been massive looting and I remember going into a luxurious mansion well up on the Peak and finding little standing apart from the walls and roof. All the woodwork including floors and doors had been stripped. I also looked at a small factory where all the machinery was a tangled mess and all the plumbing and electric wiring was gone.

The Japanese prisoners were still a problem even after they had been rounded up. A few still felt disgrace and humiliation at being captured and preferred to commit hari-kari. Our troops were forced to make comprehensive searches of their kit to ensure that no lethal weapons were concealed. No matter how we tried, a few still found ingenious ways of ending their lives.

The Chinese had suffered badly at the hands of the Japs and during the last weeks of the occupation there was no food, little water and no medicine. The natives were physically violent when the captive Japanese were being marched through the streets and although we managed considerable restraint, we couldn't protect them all. Remembering the treatment of our prisoners at the hands of the Japanese, we had no compunction in lining them up and making them bow to the Union Jack when the flag was run up. Within a few days strict orders came down that all Japanese prisoners were to be treated with civility and in accordance with the Geneva convention. On reflection this was a wise move, although not popular at the time.

The main public buildings, banks etc had wide window sills and I wondered why so many Chinese chose to climb up on to them to sleep. It soon dawned on me that these poor folk were not sleeping - they had crawled up there to die. Many, many more just collapsed and died on the pavements. Once some motor transport arrived, patrols toured the streets at night removing all the corpses.

For the first 9 days of our stay there was no currency! I remember visiting the barber in his luxurious saloon in the basement of the famous Peninsula Hotel. He was happy to cut my hair provided I signed a chit! I don't suppose the chit was ever honoured, but like so many this chap wanted to re-establish his territory and to make sure of the job that was his prior to the occupation. Similarly, I remember signing a chit for a meagre lunch (doubtless the best they could provide) in the magnificent dining room of the hotel which enjoyed spectacular views over the harbour. Some of the Chinese had 'liberated' loads of expanding watch bracelets from a depot and, as these were desirable objects, they sufficed as substitute currency. The Hong Kong dollar was re-instated as legal tender on the 14th September and countless biscuit tins were



unearthed in celebration. Their contents, the pre-war notes, had survived 4 years of internment remarkably well.

The ship's pilot (i.e. her navigating officer) was a very large black-bearded Lieutenant Commander RN whose name was Wyatt. He had been stationed in the Colony at the time of the Japanese invasion, but was evacuated in time. Sadly, his wife had to remain behind and was interned with all the female British population out at Stanley Camp on the western end of the Island. We had a family friend out there and I knew she had twin daughters, June and Maureen, who I thought might appreciate some company. So two days after we arrived 'the Pilot', Pete Stansfield and I were hot foot out to Stanley. The ladies had all survived their ordeal and had established a sensible routine including a school, church and other social activities. Their diet had been meagre but they had fared far better than the male internees who had been kept in a separate camp. Although the girls were friendly and we enjoyed some swimming in the Bay, it became pretty obvious that the old Colonial social strata would not have allowed the young ladies to become too involved with young sub lieutenants whatever our background! Anyway, we soon discovered that the girls had civilian fiancés interned in Japan! They had heard that their chaps had survived and they were soon to be re-united. I had a couple more trips out to Stanley and on the 23rd September went there by bus with Bill Williams. We enjoyed swimming with the girls but were horrified to learn that one of the male ex-internees who had been on the beach at about the same time, was attacked and killed by a shark soon after we left. A tragic end after 4 years in captivity. Needless to say we didn't go swimming for the rest of our stay. The twins and their mother sailed home on the "Highland Monarch" a couple of weeks later.

It may interest some, but we understood that the Japanese had consistently denied that Red Cross parcels sent to the inmates of the camp ever arrived. The ladies knew better because the Japanese soldiery doing manual work on the hot and dusty roads were often seen wearing feminine sanitary items as face masks with the loops over their ears!

On the 10th September Bill Williams and I were given proper jobs. On the Kowloon side was a Royal Navy warehouse, or 'go-down', in local parlance. Bill and I were put in charge until a certain Captain Tilley RNVR, a supply officer, could resume his pre-war duties. Our brief was to clear the warehouse ready for it to be restocked with Naval supplies. The problem was how to do it? Imagine our delight when an ancient looking coolie presented himself complete with pre-war dockyard pass and photograph. He had just walked back from Canton where he'd taken himself and family when the Japs had arrived in December 1941. Although he looked old he probably wasn't more than 50. Anyway, he convinced us that he was the storekeeper in this warehouse and wanted his job back. Bill and I were delighted to make him NUMBER ONE BOY as he spoke good English. He quickly recruited the staff we needed. Very soon we had 41 coolies working for us- probably all his nephews and cousins! Armlets were quickly fashioned so that we could recognise our staff and pay them at the end of each day. The warehouse contained some rice left by the Japs so each worker received one "cattie" (about 3 cupfuls) for a day's work. With the advent of currency we were authorised to pay one dollar a day i.e. 1/3d or less than 7p in today's money.

Any Japanese war material was to go to the Chinese Nationalists, all we needed was a proper receipt and signature. Where all that ended up we needn't ask! Any civilian equipment was to be disposed of as we saw fit and there was a large quantity of blue denim

which was the coolies normal dress. "Number One Boy" knew a gentleman called Chan Tuck (probably his brother-in-law), a tailor on Hong Kong Island, who would know what to do with it. The next morning a fleet of 10 or 12 Sampans arrived in the little dock outside the warehouse and within minutes the blue denim was cleared! Bill and I made sure we had a proper receipt which we filed until the regular staff took over! A couple of weeks later Bill and I were smartly kitted out in grey flannels and navy blue blazers courtesy of Chan Tuck & Co, tailors to the establishment!

We hadn't been ashore more than a couple of days when we found a Japanese army motorbike and side-car - a huge contraption likened, by those who knew about these things, to a Harley Davidson. Heeding the instructions about Japanese war material and the Chinese Nationalists we quickly painted the machine in battleship grey and proudly painted '812 Squadron' on the number plate. The problem was no-one knew how to drive it because there was a hand-operated gear lever (just like a car's) and no obvious clutch. We set it up on the dockside outside the warehouse and poured in some petrol- it might have been 100 octane even! 'Lofty' Rouse and Tony Rickell, two of 1850 Sqn's pilots, swore they knew all the mechanics of this monster and they persuaded us to let them have first go! With one in the driving seat and the other on the pillion they fired up and engaged gear. No one had worked out that this machine had a reverse gear and two very frightened gentlemen nearly disappeared off the jetty. [Both took permanent commissions. Lt Cdr Tony Rickell was testing an early production Supermarine Scimitar at Boscombe Down when he was killed in an accident on 5th July 1955. *[He was a Naval test pilot. JD]*

The motorbike can be seen in various Squadron photographs and we kept it until we got back to Ceylon 8 or 9 months later. It was possible to get 7 people on board, although the one in front of the driver tended to spoil his view! I seem to remember that this monster ended its days in a paddy field near Katukurunda - it caught fire on its lunch time run from the airfield to the wardroom and had to be ditched in a hurry. Apart from a few singed hairs on the legs there were no casualties.

The warehouse was gradually cleared and tidied . In one corner we found a supply of Royal Navy clothing dating back to the 1930s. There were even sailors' white duck uniforms and cap ribbons of ships that had spent happy peacetime days on the China Station. In particular, I remember 'HMS Eagle', a carrier commissioned in 1924 and sunk by a U-boat in the Mediterranean in August 1942.

At first Bill and I lived on board leaving the ship early each day after a good breakfast, taking with us a few corned beef sandwiches from the wardroom pantry for lunch. A ship's boat picked us up in the evening in time for a shower and change of uniform and a quick drink before dinner. One evening there was no boat

to collect us and, in fact, there was no ship either! There had been a typhoon warning and all the big ships had quickly picked up their hooks and made out to sea to ride out any bad weather. As we pondered where we might doss down for the night we were fortuitously befriended by Lieutenant Don Cawley, a paratroop officer just in from Burma, who, sensing our predicament, offered a bed in his mess and even the use of his razor the next morning! We became such good friends and, as he was such a wonderful host, we arranged to move in with him permanently bringing our kit, including best white uniforms, ashore.

All this while our aircraft were kept safely aboard and on enquiring about our ground crew it transpired that they too were spending their days ashore working on the utilities and infrastructure wherever their particular skills could be best used . I was later told that they were having the times of their lives!

I guess it wasn't true, but it seemed that the priorities were to get the brewery, the distillery the dairy farm and the Yacht Club back into business! It would be some time before hops arrived so there was no local beer. The Japs had been distilling a sort of brandy called 'Green Tiger' or something like that Our medics reckoned it was made with neat alcohol and warned everyone off it otherwise we could go blind! There was no sign of any cows in the Colony so I suppose the Dairy Farm was a dead loss until a fresh herd could be imported . Our 'ship's pilot' (Wyatt) had been a staunch member of the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club so the spare manpower was soon busily employed in restoring this key part of the Colony's social life to its pre-war glory. As mentioned elsewhere, the ship's crest and a plaque are displayed there recording our efforts.

Towering over the harbour at the top of The Peak' was a large concrete structure - the Japanese Victory Memorial. Despite our offers to bomb it, it was not considered safe to blow it up until engineers had made a proper survey a year or two later.

Our friend Don Cawley must have had a responsible job because it wasn't long before he was allocated his own car and there weren't too many of those to be seen! Bill and I enjoyed some interesting trips with him as he toured his various outposts. Riding through the New Territories I marvelled at the magnificent scenery and the patience of the Chinese tending their crops - mainly rice in small paddy fields. I wondered if these industrious folk cared who ruled the Colony and would it have made much difference to their simple lives anyway? Out at Sha Tin was the Royal Hong Kong Golf Club. Although the course was derelict and quite unplayable, a few Chinese boys were around - probably caddies waiting for their first customers. A large area of reasonably flat countryside was the site of the Polo Club and a point-to-point race track. Within 50 years it would become one of the top racecourses in the world, regularly catering for 60- 80,000 customers at their weekly meetings

and attracting top quality racehorses from around the world to compete for their major prizes.

Don Cawley had found himself a most attractive lady friend who many months later became Mrs. Cawley. Olga was a tall and handsome lady, the daughter of a well-to-do white Russian family who, like many others, had made their way to Hong Kong after the Russian Revolution in 1917. Incidentally, Communist Russia who fought as our allies in WWII, did not declare war on the Japanese until just before VJ Day. Probably 25 years ahead, Don and Olga became the parents-in-law of the Wimbledon Ladies Tennis Champion, Yvonne Goolagong, who married their son Roger(?) hence Yvonne Cawley. All this is leading to Bill and I meeting two sisters, friends of Olga and the daughters of a Portuguese widow living not far from the Peninsula Hotel. Portugal had remained neutral during the war so their lives had been reasonably undisturbed although the severe shortages meant that existence was hardly luxurious.

Anyway, from that moment on our social lives took a turn for the better and it wasn't long before our group became regulars at the Officers' Club which had been established on an upper floor of the Gloucester Hotel on Hong Kong Island. The main attraction there was our ship's dance band who were a permanent fixture! Most of the band had been professional musicians in peace time and they were excellent. The lead tenor sax had played in Henry Hall's BBC Dance Orchestra - star turns in the 1930's. The band was so good it was in great demand as the social life of the Colony got back on its feet and they even played at receptions in Government House. I remember that the personnel of this excellent band were virtually all Marines from our ship and they were happy to play our particular requests.

Closing time meant negotiating with a sampan owner to ferry us back across the harbour to Don's mess in Kowloon. Although the Star ferry was soon back in business it could only operate a reduced timetable with no late-night sailings. One morning, at first light, I was awakened by some of Don's soldiery asking me to vacate my bed as the mess was relocating to bigger and better requisitioned premises and they needed to secure occupation quickly in case another body of troops got there first! It must have been a heavy night as Bill could not (or would not) be roused. We carefully folded his uniform, tied his shoes to the bed frame, placed his cap on his chest and the soldiers carried him complete with bed out into the street and into a waiting lorry. He eventually came to in a very up-market house about a mile away, but it never registered that this wasn't where he had gone to sleep!

Captain Tilley arrived on the 27th September, but it took us a while to locate him. He seemed in no hurry to take command of his warehouse, preferring to look up old acquaintances first. We were all shipshape when he finally showed up and Bill and I were highly commended for our hard work! It was all really down to 'Number One Boy' and his relatives who received

our appreciation. We made sure the signed chits were handed over and I was able to keep a pair of Japanese aviator's goggles (complete in natty little box) as a souvenir. My guess is that they would have been issued to a kamikaze pilot so they would have been struck off charge anyway! . It was to be another week before Bill and I could return to live on board so we continued to work at the warehouse until we were required to fly again.

The rickshaw boys were soon back in business although it seemed unfair to expect such thin and undernourished fellows to run us around the streets. I got a ride out to Kai-Tak airfield and was amazed to see a few Japanese aircraft left about the place. I remember a Mitsubishi G4M (code named 'Betty') reasonably intact and a sinister BAKA, which was a piloted flying bomb with stubby wings and tail unit. This machine would have been slung beneath a larger aircraft (the 'Betty' perhaps) and then released close to a target. I think there was a small rocket motor which the pilot would ignite to enable him to steer his one-way journey to the target. I believe it had a 2000lb warhead. The tiny cockpit had basic flying controls but no instruments. Round the corner in a small bay were half-a-dozen suicide speed boats whose solitary mission would have been a night attack on an enemy fleet close inshore.

As recorded elsewhere, we flew our aircraft ashore to Kai-Tak on the 8th October and once again we became aviators. A few trips from all the flying we did over the next 10 weeks linger in the memory. PN120, which was a late model Barracuda, became 'my' aircraft and down over Macao (still a Portuguese colony) I put it through its paces to the extent of loops and spins! I passengered a couple of US Navy ratings on a tour of the New Territories and the next day with another passenger on board I proceeded to get lost! The homing beacon was out of action and we had been sightseeing over all the beautiful little bays and inlets which lie North of the Eastern entrance to the harbour. The maps in those days were sketchy to say the least. Anyway, there was a sigh of relief when we made it back just as the bar was opening. The flight home into the most spectacular sunset remains a vivid memory.

On the 16th November I was briefed to fly 2 VIPs to 'White Cloud' airfield in Canton, in that part of China ruled by the Nationalists. Although they were supposedly our allies there was severe political tension and it seemed that my Barracuda intruding into their air space might have been interpreted as a sign of colonial expansion by the Imperialist Brits! Anyway, I was warned to be careful and just to be safe I was given an escort of two Corsairs.

The two passengers turned out to be a Bishop and his Chaplain. Neither was very sensibly dressed for riding in the back seats of a Barracuda and they seemed very tight lipped when I went through the emergency procedures and showed them how to communicate. In the event I don't think we exchanged one word

from beginning to end and I assumed that they would rely on Divine Intervention should we experience a problem. 'White Cloud' airport was basic to say the least. No runways and precious little grass on a dry dusty field. The Corsairs circled overhead while I landed and, sure enough, I was confronted by several troops waving and pointing sub-machine guns in my direction. They signalled that I should not switch off so the two reverend gentlemen had to disembark in the slipstream with the dust blowing up their garments. All most undignified.

I was airborne again as quickly as possible. The Corsairs decided to fly back down the Pearl River at low level to the consternation of numerous junks who surely had the right-of-way. I followed meekly in their wake.

Reg Parton also took a couple of VIPs to White Cloud, but in his case the reception was quite friendly. His passengers were the Swiss ambassador and his aide. Reg was asked to stay overnight so that he could attend the requisite cocktail reception as the ambassador's guest. All went well, although Reg confessed to feeling somewhat underdressed in his old khaki shirt: and shorts and no cap. To save embarrassment he spent most of the evening lurking behind a pillar!

Don Cawley loved flying, so whenever his army duties allowed he would scrounge a ride in any back seat that was unoccupied. On the 15th October I was guilty of bad judgement and poor discipline. Don and Bill were in the back seat and our brief was border patrol and mine search. I thought it would be a good opportunity to say 'good morning' to Olga and another of our lady friends who were employed as stenographers in Government departments occupying part of the Peninsula Hotel. I knew one of the ladies worked in an office on the fourth floor overlooking the harbour so we flew past her window waving like mad. I sadly we must have badly frightened the passers-by on the Strand and many more waiting to board the Star Ferry at the nearby jetty. On reflection it was a stupid thing to do and youthful high spirits could be no excuse.

Retribution came in the form of a Canadian Colonel who I was told was shaving in his room on the fifth floor when an aircraft flew by beneath him. It could be that he cut himself. Be that as it may, but he was quick enough to spot my aircraft's number which was duly reported to the Captain at Kai-Tak with his recommendation that the stupid pilot be court-martialled. On landing I was told to present myself to Captain Surtees DSO RN, who warned me that a court-martial could be set up once the Canadian Colonel had presented details of what he had seen. However, I was not put under any sort of arrest. I was not stopped from flying and neither was I 'confined to barracks'. Even more humiliating was the reaction of the ladies who, far from being impressed, thought the whole episode stupid, frightening and childish. The threat of a court-martial dampened my spirits for a couple of weeks and then Captain Surtees told me that my misdemeanour had been referred to

Captain Neame, our ship's captain, who would deal with me once we re-embarked. The final outcome was a dressing down by Captain Neame who had all sorts of reports in front of him. I believe they were from the Colonel, from Captain Surtees and character references from Captain Tilley and from Cedric Coxon our CO. Captain Neame, endorsed my log book in red ink and pointed out that a court-martial would have meant me staying behind in Hong Kong while the paperwork was sifted, but he had more need of me back on board! My log book remains quite colourful: RED; then GREEN; and finally RED.

Despite the maker's claim's, I could only persuade my Barracuda to climb to 18,000 feet. At that altitude it was barely flying and any attempt to gain a few more feet only resulted in a flat waffle down again. A couple of months later I got a Firefly, which was equipped with a two-stage supercharger, up to 20,000 feet although the maker's claimed a service ceiling of 29,000 feet.

A few RAF Sunderland four-engined flying boats started operating in the bay. I remember one chap taxiing across the water but failing to stop when he met the harbour wall. It seemed a very expensive way of getting a huge flying boat on to dry land. The Navy just stood by and smiled!

At the end of November I was able to 'borrow' one of 1850 Squadron's Corsairs and, after some concerned tuition from the ground crew, managed to get safely airborne. This particular aeroplane was made by the Goodyear Aircraft Corporation in the USA. It was the FG-1D Corsair Mk IV version with a 2,250h.p. Pratt and Whitney Double Wasp radial engine, Mk R-2800-S. The nose of the aeroplane stuck out some 18 feet in front of the cockpit, so with limited forward vision taxiing and landing needed careful attention. Being used to a more laboured progress to operational height I was a bit taken aback to find I was already at 10,000 feet and nudging 300 knots before I had comfortably settled down. After a few gentle manoeuvres and carefully examining all the clocks, levers and switches I was beginning to wonder how to get this handful back on the ground when I became aware of an RAF Spitfire (a Mk XIV) forming on my starboard wingtip. The pilot gave some signals indicating that he 'wanted to play' and presumably a friendly 'dogfight' would have ensued. I managed to convince him that there would be 'no play today' and he left me to sort out my own problems. After a few deep breaths I remembered the landing drill I'd been told, carried out a curving approach to keep the runway in sight and delivered the Corsair back to 1850 in one piece. I had two more Corsair rides in December, but on the second occasion I thought discretion the better part of valour and returned after only 20 minutes as it seemed that the engine wasn't making the right sort of noise.

I met the RAF pilot a few days after our meeting over the harbour and he was at pains to point out that a particular Navy pilot showed no stomach for a fight

when challenged. I explained that I was his man and far from letting the Navy down I was still trying to find my way round the cockpit and had my hands full. We shook hands and I felt much better when he said nothing would have persuaded him to do a first trip on a strange type, on such a restricted airfield! There is a mountain range close in on the downwind leg when flying a left-handed circuit on to the South runway so a tight turning approach was the only way in!

My 21st birthday was fast approaching, so our lady friends were briefed to provide dancing partners for all the lads attending the party. I explained that our CO, Cedric, was a good bit over 6 feet, very lean and handsome so special care should be taken when making a choice for him. The party was to start in the main bar of the Peninsula Hotel and, when the ladies joined us, great gasps of amazement went up from all around. Marie was at least as tall as Cedric with everything in the right place. From memory Raquel Welch would have come a very poor second had she been in competition! Cedric had organised a ship's boat to ferry us across to the Gloucester Hotel for dancing. The poor sailors could barely keep 'their eyes on the road', so it was a most hilarious journey. Poor Cedric was anxiously trying to protect his status as a recently married man and seemed to have great difficulty in deciding where to put his hands when dancing!

Yes, there really were two birthday cakes - one came courtesy of WO 'Cooky' Thullier, officer in charge of the ship's wardroom catering department, and the other was cooked and decorated by the sisters' widowed mum. Everything got a bit hazy towards the end of the party, but everyone reported fit for duty the next day.

The first Christmas after the restitution of the Colony to the British Crown was quietly celebrated but with obvious thanksgiving.

The sisters prevailed upon me to attend midnight mass with them. Having been strictly brought up in the "other faith", I was convinced that fire and brimstone would descend on my head if I so much as set foot in their church. All was peace and serenity, however. The singing and music were wonderful and the rickshaw ride home with the ships in the harbour ablaze with light were a sufficient reward.

Our stay in Hong Kong was now nearly over. The essential services were all back in business. Telephones were working, the South China Morning Post was printing, the Star Ferry was back on schedule, trams were running and the harbour was alive with merchant shipping from around the world. The public buildings and streets still needed major repairs, but when we sailed out on the 28th December it was with the satisfaction of a job well done.

Fairoaks Update

Planning Application 18/0642

This application was withdrawn by the applicant on the 10 February 2020. The identical planning application to Runnymede Borough Council was also withdrawn.

In their withdrawal letter, the applicants stated: *"The site is the most suitable strategic site for allocation in the local SHBC emerging Local Plan on the basis that it provides a wealth of benefits and has been the subject of the most rigorous and robust assessment of any of the potential sites. Fairoaks Garden Village Ltd and its partner will build upon the extensive technical work that was submitted with the planning application to continue to promote the site through SHBC's emerging Local Plan process. Notably our letter dated 30th January 2020 demonstrates how the outstanding technical objections can be resolved through a Local Plan promotion."* This clearly left the door open for a further application for the site.

On the 23 April 2018 Surrey Heath Council received a request for an EIA scoping opinion. An identical request was also sent to Runnymede Borough Council and Woking Borough Council. The council response and other related information can be viewed on the council [web site](#).

Airfield Operation during COVID

Procedure for Recreational Flying at Fairoaks

Following the resumption of recreational flying the airport management have been keeping the situation under review and have decided to relax the restrictions. The relaxation means that the departures permitted each hour shall increase and the available hours shall be increased to ten hours per day rather than the previous six hours per day. The revised procedures, which take effect from Monday 25th May 2020, are detailed below.

The airport shall continue to monitor the level of flying activity and adjust the availability of air traffic and RFFS when appropriate.

1. The airport shall be open from Wednesday to Saturday from 8am to 6pm with air traffic and fire cover available and closed on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday however flights shall be permitted seven days per week.
2. To comply with procedures accepted by the CAA the tower shall be unmanned between 1000 and 1030 (local), 1230 and 1330, and 1530 and 1600 on the days when the airport is open. During these closures circuit flying will not be permitted

and pilots are discouraged, but not prohibited, from taking-off or landing.

closed or send the same information by email to atsu@fairoaksairport.co.uk.

3. When the airport is closed flights are still permitted but circuit flying is prohibited and no services shall be available therefore fuel and aircraft movements in or out of the hangar will not be available but can be requested in advance; however see note 2 below.
4. All flights, except as detailed in 7 below, irrespective of whether or not the airport is open shall be strictly PPR by telephone to 07521 902370 which shall be monitored from 9am until 5pm. PPR requests can be made in advance or on the day of the flight.
5. Each flight shall be issued with a slot time which must be adhered to. The slot shall be a one-hour period during which the aircraft must take-off, however pilots may arrive at the airfield at any time prior to the start of the slot. The number of aircraft allocated to each slot shall be limited to manage traffic levels and to help with social distancing.
6. A slot is not required for the arrival at Fairoaks but PPR is still required.
7. Any requests to fly prior to 8am or after 6pm, and prior to 10am on Sundays must be made by email to alastair.wang@fairoaksairport.co.uk giving as much notice as possible since the email will not be continuously monitored.
8. When the airport is closed the tower will probably be unmanned, but may be manned for non-recreational flights, therefore pilots must conform with the standard out of hours procedures and must make standard RTF calls.
9. Pilots must either complete an out-of-hours form for any take-off or landing when the tower is

NOTES

1. Pilots must not visit the tower. Payments for fuel can either be made at the bowser or by telephone to 01276 857300 or 01276 857700.
2. Fuel or hangar movements may be available but shall attract a charge of £90 (inc VAT).
3. Circuits are permitted Wednesday to Saturday during the times that the tower is open but not at other times.

Mike Smith, to whom thanks are due for getting the above information, adds:

Since the closing of Gama Engineering Ltd facility at Fairoaks and the lockdown the movements are inevitably down. A few of the privately owned aircraft have moved to Blackbushe and White Waltham due to the uncertainty.

Having said that there were over 20 movements of Pilatus PC-12 aircraft to and from mainland Europe excluding the 6 based PC-12s in June. There were also a large number of Beech 200 King Air movements of the the locally based Synergy Aviation Ltd.

Unity Land Llp. are still interested in purchasing the site and to run it as an Airport and they have had as I understand made two bids but they have been turned down.

On a more positive note I believe that the Airport could benefit from increased business from small single engined turbo prop aircraft flying between UK and Europe as it becomes more difficult to use scheduled airlines and large airports.

