



*Royal Air Force
Photographers
Association*



Flashback

*Edition 62
Spring 2016*



Royal Air Force Photographers Association

(Formerly RAFBEPa)

www.rafpa.org.uk

Edition 62
Spring 2016

Contributions for **Edition 63** must
be received by: **19th May 2016** by
post or eMail - thank you

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FROM YOUR EDITORS DESK



As a perk (possibly the only one!) of being your editor I receive a complimentary copy of the newsletter of the RAF Boy

Entrants Association. I notice that at their Annual Reunion they have a Parade - come on Chairman/John there is loads of tarmac at the side of the Stourport Manor Hotel!

There was at least one glitch (there were probably more that have yet to come to light!) In edition 61. On two occasions I added an 'e' at the end of Jack Eggleston's name, I have made my apologies to Peter, Jack's son but was heartened to read his reply in that it had been a life-long issue which he thought would cease with the arrival of the computer era, but no, even recently BT had decided to use up some of their over-stock of 'e's' and had added one to the database that generated his telephone bill.

I must be losing my touch, I think there is only one motorbike pictured in this edition, a very

modest James at Wattisham. Have you seen:

<http://www.motogiroitalia.it/en/>

My project this summer, a first time competing (well trundling around) on an International motorcycle event.

Would anyone have the technology to transfer the contents of a single Hi8 video cassette on to a DVD?

The guy who runs the camera shop in North Walsham gave it to me as a going away present - he is closing down! It came inside a camera he bought in and he says it was a d-I-y video about something to do with RAF training.

Knowing my link to the RAF Photographers Association he thought it may be of interest.

I never did this format, the cassette is marked: Hi8 MP - 90.

Front Cover

**RAF Chinook at Camp
Bastion, Afghanistan,
July 2011 by
Sgt Ross Tilly, RAF**

Please note **Secretary/Gerry** new address and telephone number:

**75 Grimshoe Road
Downham Market
PE38 9WF**

Telephone - **01366 380143**

Post sent since his move will be re-directed, as long as you have remembered to pay your subs there will have been something to re-direct!

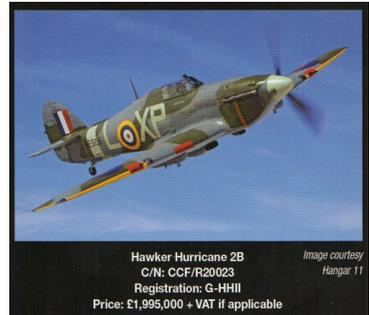
Love it or hate it this is my most diverse edition of Flashback, some stats:

Admin inc covers - 10%
Committee input - 18%
Members input - 20%
RAF interest - 30%
Military (other) interest - 12%
News/photo stuff - 10%

I have two Members articles pending plus hope to have an Enigma/Bletchley Park feature for the Summer edition (DH are you ready!). Members memories always needed. Also in our Summer edition I intend to do a feature on the Vickers Valiant. If you did a stint on 543 how about a bit of input.

While looking around for something for my birthday (20th March if needed!) I came across this little gem offered for sale by Platinum Fighters. I make that just under £2.4m inc, I wonder if my skills gleaned from watching

Bargain Hunt would come in handy? Alternative, Cheffins have a sale in Ely (only an hour from home!), on March the 19th to include a 'Full size fibreglass replica Spitfire. It would look really neat on the driveway!!!



Tickets for the Cosford Air Show now on sale - be quick it is bound to sell out well before the event.



John

Chairman's Chat

Let me first of all thank Dave Derrick, our Regalia man, for his sterling work in getting our new Association ties from 'the drawing board' and into production - I think they look very attractive and I hope that you do too. Remember, it was your design at the last Reunion and I look forward to seeing many on show at our next gathering in November. I am particularly grateful as David is not in the best of health at the moment and is about to start a course of 'chemo' therapy, I am sure that you will want to join me in wishing him every success in this ordeal and for a speedy full recovery.

The question on everyone's mind at the moment and certainly is receiving much attention in the media - and rightly so - is, should we be IN or OUT of the EU? Well, I have to admit that I have been out of country since the governments announcement to go to the Poll on 23 June and as such, it has been difficult to have a meaningful discussion with my UK friends and colleagues and get a consensus view. It has however allowed me to seek views from our European partners. Always an interesting subject to debate and whether you are 'fore or agin it' - a very personal decision and one that we will have to live with - it is interesting that I have yet to find a fellow European, be it German, Dutch, or Spanish, who would like to see us leave! I wonder why?

I let you draw your own conclusions as to why. Most of us served in Germany during the Cold War and spent many years enjoying the delights of travelling around the continent. My time was during the late 60s and early 70s. Today Europe is very different, for the past twelve years or so I have motorhomed to many countries and spent some 3 months each year exploring many regions. I have to say that all the countries I visited seem to have prospered of late under the EU umbrella, particularly those that were previously in the Eastern Bloc. That is of course with one exception.....the UK. It appears that we are being left behind

whilst others enjoy the benefits of EU membership. I am therefore like many, very very undecided. May I wish you all well in your EU deliberation.

*Yours aye
John*

..... Chat Ends



Departure of Pete
Grigsby from Cosford
in 1981 or 82 - are you
pictured or who do
you know?

Image from the archives of:
The Royal Navy Photographers Association

Rob Anderson

I was saddened to learn of Rob Anderson's recent passing. Rob was a stalwart member of the Photographers Association for many years and indeed was made an Honorary member some years ago in recognition of his long service. I know I speak for many Association members when I offer my deepest sympathy to his friends and family in the Birkenhead area. He will be sadly missed.

John

Wg Cdr J S Barry MBE RAF (Rtd)
Chairman - RAF Photographers Association



RAF Cosford

Defence School of Photography

A member of the Joint Information Training Group

Part of the Joint Information Training Group (JITG) with its HQ at Chicksands, DSOP is responsible for delivering Phase 2 and 3 photographic training for all 3 Services. Dedicated to Defence, the DSOP also delivers a number of courses supporting other government departments. The vast majority of DSOP's learning population is operationally focused, who learn specific photographic skills, to support their primary function and assigned role in the Armed Forces. The short courses delivered by DSOP are bespoke to customer requirements and some attract NVQ and VRQ qualifications. The highly regarded career professional photographic course (28 weeks long) covers all aspects of photography and graduates work towards an Advanced Apprenticeship (AA) in Photo Imaging and also have the opportunity to join the British Institute of Professional Photography (BIPP).

JOE OLIVER

The subject for the 2016 *Joe Oliver Photographic Award* will be "Great Britain and the British". As usual prints of A4 or 10" x 8" will be accepted with as much "PhotoShopping" as you wish.

So there are lots of opportunities for scenics, traditions and even the quirky - even portraits. Most subjects will be accepted except explicit studies of the naked female form, which may be sent to the organiser for perusal but sadly will not get into the final judging. Nothing too explicit please as this poor old soul has a pacemaker!

Since the introduction of the competition we have had just two winners, Mick Muddiman three times and John Barry twice!!! Come on, let's try and break the pattern.

The sound of criticism was heard at the 2015 event, don't complain just take a turn at trying to win!!! As recently mentioned we have about 150 members and all of you have had some claim to fame in photography. Plus it has never been easier to take photographs.

Entries to me please at: **10 Hughes Close,
Northway, Tewkesbury, GL20 8SA**
By: **31st October 2016**

Many Thanks - Dave Newham

JOE OLIVER

NATIONAL MEDIA MUSEUM IN BRADFORD TO CLOSE

The historic Royal Photographic Society photographic archive is being moved to London. The treasured archive has been held at the National Media Museum (NMM) in Bradford since 2003, when it was moved from the RPS's base in Bath. When it initially opened in 1987 the Bradford museum was known as the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television



As well as precious photographs the RPS archive contains 8,000 pieces of photographic equipment and 31,000 books, periodicals and documents, charting the invention and development of photography over the past 200 years.

FILM NATIONAL
MEDIA TELEVISION
RADIO MUSEUM WEB
PHOTOGRAPHY

The RPS fears the move will spell the loss of a 'national museum of photography' able to focus on the science as well as the art of photography – leading to a 'selective and narrow appreciation of photography'.

It was announced that more than 400,000 objects from the Science Museum Group's three-million-strong photo collection will be sent to the V&A in London. The move to the V&A is expected to take place over the summer. Although the RPS says it has received a 'commitment' that the collection 'will be retained as a

AMATEUR Photographer

WITH THANKS TO IPC MEDIA IN COMPILING THIS BRIEF REPORT

distinct entity' within the V&A, it adds that the transfer will mean 'no future national museum of photography'. Once transferred, the RPS Collection will be stored, digitised and 'made accessible for study'.

The Kodak Gallery will remain at the NMM. The transfer of the RPS collection will allow the NMM to bolster its focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics.



There has been no announcement regarding redundancies or early-retirement offers to staff with the initial announcement, leaving the NMM staff in considerable difficulty about their future.

***NATIONAL MEDIA MUSEUM
BRADFORD
WEST YORKSHIRE
BD1 1NQ***

***GALLERIES AND MUSEUM
OPEN DAILY 10:00 - 13:00***

***TEL: 0844 856 3797
EMAIL: TALK@NATIONALMEDIAMUSEUM.ORG.UK***

*When you go home, tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrows these gave their today.*



John Maxwell Edmonds 1857-1958

27th April 1944
Mosquito FB.VI - NS828
487 Squadron Royal New Zealand Air Force
Flight Lieutenant John Paterson RNZAF
Flight Lieutenant John Mellar RAF

While returning to RAF Swanton Morley after carrying out practice formation attacks on gun positions at an Army Gunnery School on the north Norfolk coast, the aircraft developed a coolant leak in the port engine, requiring it to be shut-down.

At 1810 hrs a landing was attempted but the aircraft was too low on approach so an over-shoot was instigated. While attempting to climb away from the runway with flaps and undercarriage down, at just under 200 feet the aircraft stalled, spun to port and crashed, pilot F/L Paterson (aged 24) and navigator F/L Mellar (aged 29) were both killed.



In preparation for the D-Day Landings 487 (NZ) Squadron had flown up from RAF Gravesend to complete 5-days of low level bombing and gunnery practice on the Grimstone and Bradenhan bombing ranges plus gunnery attacks at Stiffkey.

The memorial stands alongside the B1145 near North Elmham.

From: Stu Usher

John

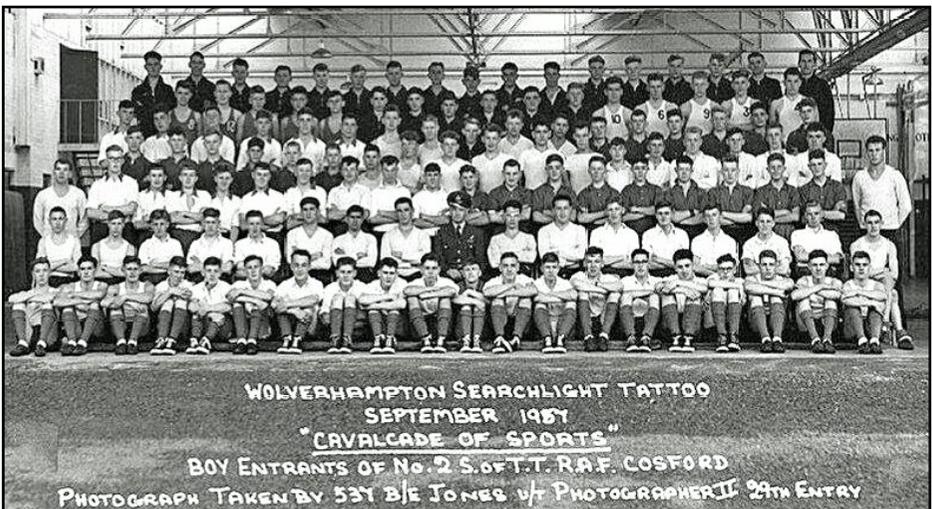


This is a photo of the 29th Entry that I don't recall ever having seen before. It came to me from my old friend John Usher who lives in Norway. He's a member of the B/E Telegs Association, who always keeps in touch with me, given that I was a 29th Entry Teleg at Cosford right at the start of my B/E service. I was only with them a month or so as I recall until my remuster came through.

I can't see myself here, and I don't recall being involved. I wasn't that much of a sportsman - just a half-decent tennis player at the time. Difficult to recognise anyone - the quality is pretty low res, but I think that may be "Jumbo" Weeks 6th from the right in the front row. The other 29th guys might know.

Interestingly, the caption says that our own (29th Entry) David "Ferdinand" Jones (1932537) sadly no longer with us, took the photo!

How time flies eh? - Stu



ROYAL AIR FORCE 1947 - 1991 COLD WAR

RAF WATTISHAM

RAF Wattisham was built by John Laing & Son Ltd during 1938/39 and commissioned for use in April 1939, its first two Squadrons being 107 and 110, both flying Blenheims, who's first operational mission was against shipping at Wilhelmshaven that September. In the next couple of years nine different light bomber squadrons were based there but in 1942 the station was handed over to the USAAF. The Americans used Wattisham as an engineering facility to support all US fighter aircraft based in the UK plus operated a three squadron Fighter Wing from the station.



In 1946 the airfield was returned to the RAF and was initially the home to 266 Squadron flying Meteors. By 1954 Hunters had arrived and Wattisham was firmly established as a fighter base. In 1955 the RAF display team, the Black Arrows flying Hunters were based there and in 1960 the first Lightnings arrived, eventually replaced by Phantoms in 1974. The station closed in October 1992 and was handed over to the Army Air Corps in March 1993, to become one of their major rotary wing bases. The RAF operated Sea Kings in a SAR role until their recent replacement by a civilian Coast Guard operation.



Today Wattisham is a major military base, operating six AAC squadrons flying Apache and Lynx helicopters, also with large REME and Royal Logistic Corps units accommodated on the base.



Wattisham Station Heritage own a complete Hunter and Phantom plus the nose section of a Lightning, which are displayed in a HAS. In addition in a separate building there is a brilliant display of Wattisham memorial.



Address: Wattisham Airfield, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP7 7RA

Open on selected Sundays during the year, visit their

website for more information and to book a visit. Booking three days before your visit is absolutely essential to gain access to this active military establishment. If you don't book you don't get in!

www.wattishamstationheritage.org



Credit for all photographs: Keith Rimmer

RAF WATTISHAM - MY VISIT AND IMAGES

For those of you who have been stationed there, there is probably not a lot of change to rural Suffolk, just far more vehicles! Even my 'less than perfect' Nissan sat-nav IP7 7RA got us there OK. I did not see any 'airfield' signs on approach so you need to know where you are going!

As you approach the Main Gate (c/w armed guard) park on the left (3-spaces) and all in your party should report to the security hut as you all get your photograph taken. As you have booked your visit in advance your name/s will be on the list – not on list, no access. All visitors will require photo ID (Passport, Bus Pass, Driving Licence), collect your personal and vehicle pass and someone from the Heritage Centre will be on-hand to meet and greet you and then escort you to the admin side museum.

There are loos, a small shop and the opportunity for a good look around the exhibits – an amazing collection (go anti-clock!) of artefacts, clothing, models and kit. Having completed your lap of the hut, with a bit of chat to the volunteers this for us was

about 40-mins you will be offered the opportunity to visit the tech site element, which is a 10-min drive through the camp and a lap of the airfield. The Heritage Centre keep their two and a half aircraft (still looking for a complete Lightning!) in a Cold War Hardened Aircraft Shelter, the aircraft are in fantastic condition and come with an array of armament and kit. Also a couple of helicop-



Peninsular Club

RAF Akrotiri

early 1970's

I lived in the 'photogs block' at the top of the hill and although the the Pen Club was not my usual haunt just sometimes it was worth drifting through the Lounge late in the evening.

The Lounge was mainly occupied by the RAF Regiment and and the ladies of the WRAF, although they normally did not sit together, just in small groups perhaps occasionally glancing towards one another!



Strolling back to my comfortable but remote accommodation I entered the Pen Club via the main entrance then hung a left to go into the Lounge, just as an interest to see who was ogling who, or who had got lucky, trust me that is not a sexist statement!

The juke box was located to the left of the door on my exit route. In that era, without doubt the most *damn awful* record in creation was Yoko Ono 'singing' "Don't Worry, Kyoko" 4 minutes and 52 seconds of pure hell, it was C16 on the box. It seemed a modest investment to ruin many others evenings. Just amble up, insert coin, make selection - and run like hell! Some of those Rocks had a good turn of speed, even with a gallon of Keo inside them.



ROYAL AIR FORCE

AIRCRAFT
TODAY

The Chinook is a very capable and versatile support helicopter and has been involved in UK Operations with the RAF in: Falklands, Northern Ireland, Gulf War, Balkans, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq.

The aircraft's main tasks are: Tactical movement of troops, weapons, ammunition and support stores in the battlefield. Casevac, removal of casualties and medical emergencies from forward areas (Up to 24 stretchers can be carried) and SAR.



With a crew of four, two Pilots and two Loadmasters the aircraft is 51ft (15.54m) long with a rotor diameter of 60ft (18.29m) and a top speed of 185mph and it can lift about 10-tons over approximately 1000 miles. .



The aircraft can carry up to 55 troops or up to 10 tonnes of freight. Optional armament consists of 2 x M-134 six-barreled Miniguns and an M-60 machine gun.

The Chinook is well equipped for its varied roles, fitted with satellite Global Positioning System, Instrument





**Photograph: Sgt Rupert Frere, Royal Logistics Corps
Winner: Army Photographic Competition 2015
“Air Assault” - Helmand, Afghanistan**

Landing System, comprehensive avionics that enable them to fly in airways plus an extensive radio suite. The aircraft cockpit has a full night-time capability when operated with night-vision goggles, thus allowing low-level night operations in a hostile environment. The aircraft also carries dual-mode landing lights that can be switched between white and infrared light, which are supported by infrared searchlights operated by the two crewmen.

The Chinook is well equipped with defensive aids and has a Radar Warning Receiver, an Ultraviolet and Doppler Missile Approach Warning System, infrared jammers and chaff and flare dispensers which can be manually or automatically fired.

The RAF Chinook fleet is operated by 7, 18 and 27 Squadrons all based at Odiham. 7 Squadron operates as the RAF Special Forces Flight and forms part of the Joint Special Forces Aviation Wing along with Army Air Corps 657 Squadron.

In May 2015
18 Squadron
celebrated
its 100th
Anniversary
– complete
with an
especially
liveried
aircraft.



RAF 2015 Chinook Display aircraft of 27 Squadron.
Yes this photograph was taken from ground level!



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RAF Chinook

'35 years into its service, the Royal Air Force Chinook continues to be the prime

battlefield workhorse of the British Armed Forces. Numbering 60 aircraft of 3 variants – the Mk 4, 5 and 6 – with over 100 military operations completed and 100 state and gallantry honours collected. The aircraft is as trusted by those who operate it as those who rely on it – evacuees, refugees, hostages, troops, VIPs and sometimes cattle! Shot at, hit, blown apart, submersible, amphibious



and through every kind of weather and storm, the aircraft will get you home in the most extreme and exceptional circumstances. Versatile, adaptable and truly capable, it has no match in the field of long-range, opposed, heavy lift.'



**Air Vice-Marshal
Andrew Turner
CBE MA MSc BA FRAeS
FCMI RAF**

former Station
Commander/Chinook Force
Commander RAF Odiham

Hunter F.1 - WT680

WT680 first flew in October 1954, regrettably as with many F.1s her service career was fairly short and she was retired to ground instructional duties, being moved to the Defence Test & Evaluation Organisation at Aberporth in November 1957, where WT680 was looked after by 1429 Squadron ATC.

In 2005 Mr Harold Payne purchased the aircraft for display in the car park of the Anglia Motel & Café at the southern end of the A17, 18 miles north of Kings Lynn. If you have driven past you would have seen WT680, together with a selection of other military vehicles at the front of the cafe.

For her age WT680 is remarkably complete with engine installed and cockpit instrumentation but as with any aircraft standing in the open the on-set of corrosion is inevitable.



Sorry it is a rather inferior photograph but it was early on a January morning and raining hard!

In aid of British Military Veterans bookings are now being taken for this years Normandy trip plus Mr Payne's military museum collection will be on special display on the: 1st, 2nd and 3rd July 2016.



Anglia Motel & Cafe

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*In the last five years we have collected
Approx £82,000 pounds For the wounded
soldiers in our Counties And would very
much like to add to that amount this year*

NORMANDY TRIP JUNE 2016

Now is the time to book for our trip
To Normandy.

For further details please contact
Mr Harold Payne
At Anglia Motel, Fleet.

Anglia Motel
Washway Road Fleet, Holbeach Lincs
Telephone: 01406 422766
Website: www.angliamotel.co.uk

All YOUR yesterdays? Looking back at the RAF

RAF Nicosia 1963-64 by Mike Speake



Back in 1963 I was excited to get the news that I was posted from Lindholme to Nicosia, apart from a weekend 'jolly' to Gutersloh I had never been anywhere overseas.

The warm Mediterranean sun on my 'mooney' skin and being in KD for the first time was brilliant. I was assigned to the Station Photographic Section, run by a rather unpleasant and despotic Sargent who did little to make young airmens lives pleasant. This however mattered for little as to me Cyprus was paradise after the cold English climate. Work was varied and interesting, with the occasional flight in a Hastings or Army Air Corps Auster plus photographing functions and parades.

I spent some time on the flight-line of 29 Squadron, working on the gunsight recorders and cannon G45 cameras on their Javelins. This was a big lump of a fighter and was very noisy getting aloft with its twin reheated engines incinerating the runway as it roared into the big blue skies.

70 Squadron, who flew Hastings were also based at Nic with the AOC's aircraft left in its polished aluminium state, and aptly nick-named the 'shiny bomber'. I



managed to wrangle a flight to RAF El Adem on one of the Hastings and after seeing what the place was like - sand and a few buildings in the middle of the Libyan Desert I was very grateful to get back to Cyprus!



I had the good fortune to go photographing the RAF Mountain Rescue Team (MRT) one weekend in the Kyrenia Mountains, where the Team was rock climbing. I don't know if it was a deliberate move, but the next thing I knew I was on top of one of the crags photographing the lads practicing lowering a stretcher with some unfortunate strapped in it. By this time it was getting late, so the Flt Sgt in charge, George Bruce (sadly now passed on), informed me that I was going to learn to abseil instead of clambering back down. So, thankfully with a top rope, I experienced the marvellous sensation of zooming down a cliff face for the first time.



After that I was hooked and spent many a wonderful weekend walking and climbing the rugged Cypriot mountains, Pentadactylis being my favourite. I shall never forget sitting atop this great rock, with the breeze sighing through the crags, and gazing over the Med to the distant Turkish mountains with only the sound of the goats' bells clunking away from the valley deep below. As if this wasn't all marvellous enough, we had the wonderful beaches east of Kynenia town.

By this time I had bought my first brand new motorcycle, a Suzuki 250cc 2-stroke twin and used to zoom over the Kyrenia Pass and enjoy swimming in the crystal clear and warm Med. One memorable afternoon I managed to persuade the lovely SACW Jackie Baxter to come with me on the bike and will never forget the sight

of her as she strolled towards the water in her bikini, she really was 'The girl from Ipanema'.

Nicosia itself was known for its bars and restaurants to us young airmen, and we had many a good evening there, sometimes enjoying a kebab atop the Old City walls. Rickety tables lined the pavements, with waiters holding loaded trays aloft scurrying between the traffic to bring delicious food, all washed down with cheap Cypriot Kokinelli red wine or a frosty Keo.

Working hours were 0700hrs to 1300hrs so a lot of afternoons were spent in the Station swimming pool, inevitably filled to the brim with "ScaliE" brats and their parents. No sweat to us "Singlies", where we would loudly and boisterously proclaim our aquatic patch soonest, but sometimes getting us a ticking off from the whistle-blowing PTI on duty.

The Airmen's Mess however, is not remembered with much favour. This can probably be put down to the cooks always being huddled around a NAAFI table getting plastered, no matter what time of day. I was at the servery one lunchtime, with a hangover it must be said, when a cockroach obviously kitted out with asbestos bootees made a dash between the hot trays. The Cypriot RAF Auxiliary cook smashed it with a serving spoon right in front of me. This exacerbated my bilious state and I legged it out of the Mess *toute suite*, later recovering for a fried egg sandwich in the NAAFI, where the cooks were still throwing it down the necks.

When one of the armourers was tour-ex I inherited his dog, "Monty", quite a character, he would sneak into the Mess and wait un-



der the table for any scraps that came his way. When I got posted to Akrotiri Monty 'got posted' with me and became the MRT dog, he loved the winter and the snow up in the Troodos Mountains.



One afternoon fellow photographer Des McCoy and I rode up to St Hilarian Castle, and sat chatting up on the ancient battlements. On our return we noticed a lot of fires burning in Nicosia town, and the roads were deserted. When we arrived at the camp gates there were loads of guards there with rifles, and an RAFP Flt Sgt demanded to know where we had been. "St Hilarian, Flight" I said. Red faced he shouted, "Don't you know there's a bloody war on?" "No Flight, we didn't..." But that's another story!

RAFFA 2016

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to order**



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or Bow Tie - see
enclosed order
form**





You could not expect me to let such a momentous event pass without donating a couple of pages to our man in space



Tim Peake is the UK's second *astronaut* (or should it be *cosmonaut* from where he was launched?) and the first since Helen Sharman in 1991. Every 90 minutes Tim completes a lap of our planet, travelling at 17.5k mph 245 miles above the Earth's surface and he has got to go for a look around outside!. Major Tim, an ex Brown Job (still no one is perfect!) was launched on 15th December 2015 and will be in the International Space Station for 6-months, his main task being to perform and monitor a number of experiments in the Principia program.



The International Space Station (ISS) is normally habited by a crew of six but at times there can be eight persons on board, not recommended as there are only two loos! Its first component was launched in 1998 and it is now the third brightest object in the sky – Sun, Moon and ISS. It can often be seen in the night sky with the naked eye.



Tim was transported to the ISS by a Soyuz TMA-19M from Kazakhstan, the world's largest landlocked country which until 1991 was of course part of the USSR. Soyuz has been launching astronauts from Earth since 1967 with only one malfunction and then the two crew escaped injury due to the escape system which lifted the crew compartment away from the exploding main rocket motor.



Tim Peake, who was born in 1972 is a former Army Air Corps officer, with whom he completed 17-years' service and flew over 3000 hours in helicopters. After graduating from Sandhurst in 1992 initially he served with the Royal Green Jackets but in 1992 he qualified as a helicopter pilot, graduating from the Empire Test Pilots School in 2005. Tim completed a BSc (Hons) degree in flight dynamics at the University of Portsmouth

Tim was one of over 8,000 applicants for one of the six places on the ESA's astronaut training program in 2009 and is currently the UK's only astronaut with the European Space Agency program. He was the first British citizen to be selected as an astronaut by ESA.



After the US landed a man on the Moon in 1969 America had what was called the 'Apollo Effect' where considerable numbers of youngsters chose science and technical subjects in education leading to an era of considerable innovative development and manufacturing, which generating a research and design boom. This era considerably strengthened the US economy, increased employment and raised living standards. 2016 and beyond would perhaps be a good time for the UK to benefit from such an 'effect'!



Dr Helen Sharman OBE FRSC was born in 1963 and is a chemist, she became the first Briton in space and the first woman to visit the Mir space station in 1991. After receiving a BSc in chemistry at the University of Sheffield and a PhD from Birkbeck, University of London Helen was working for Mars (the chocie bar not the planet!), researching the properties of chocolate when she heard of the search for the first Briton to train for a flight on the Russian space programme - the rest is history!

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All YOUR yesterdays? Looking back at the RAF

Red Sea Hotel, Aden

– luxurious gateway to the Persian Gulf!

5-star luxury at a rock bottom price with catering that Egon Roney would have been proud to call his own! Been there, stayed there – am I over selling it?



My first visit there was greeted, within 20-minutes of my arrival with building being hit by a RPG, or whatever the locals had in those days. The Mess Hall, in the interest of safety (that's not Health & Safety!) had been sandbagged up from the outside, no air-con just a couple of ceiling fans driving the hot air down (basic physics!), even for early-shift breakfast it was probably about 30degC.

A highlight of my first week was an early evening film show, one of the *linies* brought a crate of Tiger back from Khormaksar and a cook stowed it the refrigerator. There were three of us to share it, me in the middle with my Bondu boots resting on the crate. We have had; surround sound, 3-D, stereo, widescreen and even IMAX but this could have been the first ever screening with "sweat'o'vision". The ambient was sky high and the humidity off the scale, but it was totally realistic as we watched - Lawrence of Arabia!

Going to the ASTRA at Khormaksar was not much better. I once asked a bloke in the Photo Sect if the place was air

conditioned. "Yes" he said – totally correct, no ruddy roof on the place!

Other excitements while visiting Aden included being stranded at Khormaksar after a 20-hour shift when a bolshie Snowdrop objected to me being in shorts at 0330 hrs and had me turfed off the Shuttle Bus.



On another occasion, on the way down to Steamer Point I got mixed up in a FLOSY ambush on the army truck, ahead of the vehicle I was in, there were casualties and for the first in my life I heard the sound of passing small arms rounds, the first was novel,

the second exciting but by the third it was just bloody frightening!

My first visit to the NAAFI at Khormaksar was brilliant, after only one can of Tiger I thought I was drunk, powerful stuff! I was having a problem focusing on the empty tins on the table, they seemed to drift about with a hallucinatory effect - but no, panic off it's just the condensation from the cans draining onto the table and then being driven around by the draft from the ceiling fans.

Next to the Red Sea Hotel was a VW repair shop and a real highlight of my first visit there was seeing a *Volkswagen Karmann Ghia* – such a rare car in those days, surprisingly today there are 656 on-the-road in the UK, all pre-1974.



Philip Nalden supplied the more recent photograph of the Red Sea. Phil is an ex-W01 RMP who was a 'sort-of-civvie' when more recently he was being chauffeured about Aden and took

this photograph, which as he described as a 'snatch shot' – photography was not encouraged! I wonder if those two 'gaggies' ever finished painting the outside? Or more recently have the Saudis levelled it with an air-strike!



My mission while on a number of visits to Aden was mainly tending to the needs of 37 and 224 Squadron Shackletons, a F24 and a couple of F117's, not really demanding but inside the tail of a Shack in the middle of the afternoon was a really good way of losing weight - could do with some of that now!



I did a roll-over on two detachments (there were only two of us in Gib and my Corporal was not interested in travel) so I spent over 30-days there. A few years ago I made a bid for an Aden bar to my GSM but as I had travelled there on a Squadron F540 (probably all carefully filed away at the National Archives) I was not able to prove my attendance.

On 37 there was no problem generating grip on your Bondu Boots. Just outside the *linies* Crew Room there was a shallow tray with about half inch of hydraulic fluid in it. Just stand in it for 30 seconds and then walk briskly around in the sand - instant grip on any surface!

I had reason to visit the Squadron Engineer Officer one day and I noticed amongst the row of clipboards on his wall was one titled - Khormaksar Snow Plan, see even Officers have a sense of humour!

WW1 Princess Mary 1914 Christmas Gift

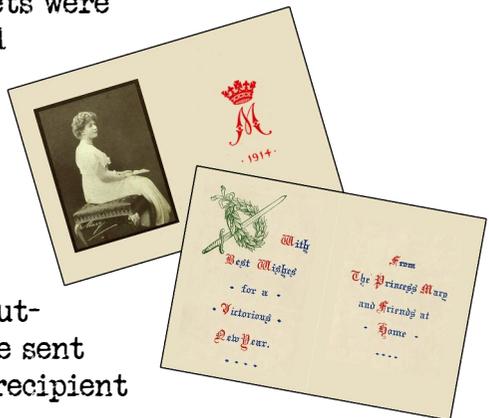
In November 1914 an advertisement was placed in the national press inviting financial contributions to a *'Sailors & Soldiers Christmas Fund'* which had been created for Princess Mary, the seventeen year old daughter of King George V and Queen Mary. The purpose was to provide everyone wearing the King's uniform and serving overseas on Christmas Day 1914 with a 'gift from the nation'.



The response was truly overwhelming, and it was decided to spend the money on an embossed brass box. The contents varied considerably

depending on circumstances and could have included; pipe, tinder lighter, loz of tobacco, or twenty cigarettes. A bullet pencil, writing case, and sweets were provided for non-smokers and boys. Indian troops often got sweets and spices and nurses were treated to chocolate. All boxes contained a greeting card with a picture of the Princess.

Those which were not distributed until after Christmas were sent out with a card wishing the recipient



a 'victorious new year'. The wounded on leave or in hospital, nurses, and the widows or parents of those killed were also entitled to the gift. Prisoners of war at the time had theirs reserved until they were repatriated.

More than 355,000 were successfully delivered by that first Christmas. When the fund finally closed in 1920 almost £200,000 had been donated for the provision of more than two and a half million boxes.

I recently acquired one of these boxes, regrettably empty but the contents *could* have been enjoyed by either of my Grandfathers, both of whom were suffering the delights of active service in northern France.



'Tommy Atkins' enjoys his Christmas Box



News Flash

Although with most of my articles by the time you read this it will be too late! To be sold at auction - Lot 99 - English Electric Canberra PR9 – Guide price £50,000 - 70,000

Appointed by the Receivers of Midair Squadron Limited, Bohams Auctions offer for sale at 13:00 hrs on Saturday 19th March 2016 at the Goodwood Estate, Chichester:

1959 English Electric Canberra PR9 XH134 (G-OMHD)

Auction Notes

XH134 first flew on 9th October 1959 and is one of twenty three built by Short Brothers in Belfast during 1958 – 1959. XH134 has served with 13 Squadron, 39 (1 PRU) Squadron and 58 Squadron and was retired from RAF service on 31st July 2006 after 47 years of service and has accumulate a total of 9281:20 airframe hours and 4556 landings

Should it be required the aircraft will be ready for collection from Monday 21st March 2016.



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