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Bloodhound missile on display at the Classic Jets Museum, Adelaide, South Australia  
Peripitus Photos

**From the Chair**

This the last Newsletter for this year. How that time do fly by. We are including the current list of RMSA members as it's some time since the last one was published in the Newsletter. It can't be bad to be reminded of some of those with whom we used visit Filton every working day. Many of us still meet regularly at various venues I know, some probably at very auspicious ones. I go along every last Wednesday lunch-time in the month to the White Horse, Hambrook to meet ex-work colleagues. Anyone is welcome to join us, by the way. There are bound to be other meeting places. Let us know and we'll get the message round via this Newsletter or our new web site.

The RMSA Christmas Lunch is just around the corner– details below. We hope to see a good crowd there. Katherine Bennett, Airbus Director of Communication and Government Affairs and Becky Farmer, Public Affairs Officer have accepted an invitation to join us  
After lunch we are inviting anyone to come along to the bar, next to the Ballroom, to hear first hand and with absolutely no obligation, our Social Secretary, Dave Curtis's plans are for the RMSA next year.

Finally our web site: [www.baermsa.org.uk](http://www.baermsa.org.uk). it now up and running. It has been set up by Rodney Farmer and I think it is quite impressive.

**From the Social Secretary.**

I am making plans for our two usual coach day trips again next year and undaunted the usual Autumn Mid-week holiday – this year's was cancelled through lack of support.

I have been in discussion with Rover European Coaches who have given us some options, from which your committee will make a short list to present to the Christmas meeting for RMSA members to chose from.

**RMSA Christmas Lunch 2009**

This is on Friday 11 December from 11.45am. till 3.00 pm. in the Ballroom of the BAWA Centre Southmead Road Filton, as usual.

The cost is **£15.00 per person including gratuities** and comprises:

- Glass of sherry or fruit juice, on arrival.
- Choice of Starter.
- Main course of either Turkey, Beef or Vegetarian.
- Selection of Sweets.

Wine will be available by the bottle and the bar will be open.

**Closing date for your application (s) is Monday 30 November.**

**RMSA Christmas Lunch 2009 Application Form**

<u>SURNAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>MAIN COURSE CHOICE</u> Turkey/Beef/Vegetarian
1. ....	.....	.....
2. ....	.....	.....
3. ....	.....	.....
4. ....	.....	.....

**Note.** Please make your choice of starter and sweet at the lunch.

TOTAL No. OF PERSONS ..... TOTAL AMOUNT ENCL. ....

Please make cheques payable to **RMSA** and send with a SAE [redacted] s

## *South African Adventures by Ron Frost*

This story starts in 1993. It was a freezing cold day in January. I was doing some paper work at my desk when there was a ring on the front door bell. I opened the door, a lone gentleman stood there. We will call him David. He asked if he could talk to me about the Bible, he was of course a Jehovah's Witness My wife had gone shopping and I had just made myself a coffee.

I did not want the house to get cold and the man persisted in talking, so I asked him to step in closed the door and offered him a coffee. I was sure he would be cold. We talked for a while and discovered that we were both engineers and continued our talk on our common interest. After about half an hour he thanked me and left.

Six months or so later, my wife and I were having our morning break, drinking coffee in the garden. When there was a call from our gate; it was David. I said he had come at just the right time and let him in.

Visits from David came at six monthly intervals for two years. Then we did not see him again for a year. I asked if he had been ill. He said he had been home to South Africa. 'You lucky are thing' I said to him 'that's somewhere I would like to go' He said he owned a bungalow there and that we could stay there if we liked. Thanking him for the offer I said I'd let him know after I had talked it over with my wife.

It was in August 1996 that we decided that we would like to go and I would see David to find what it would cost us before finally deciding. He told me we could stay for up to three weeks and he did not want any payment. We set the date for the first week in November, considered the best time weatherwise and arranged the flight with South African Airways. A friend took us to Parkway Station, for the train to Reading, and a coach on to Heathrow. We flew to Durban. Our destination was a place called Margate, which

was about eighty miles to the west. We arrived in Durban at about 11.00am. A daily flight to Margate had already departed. We discussed how we could get to Margate with several people. We were advised not to travel that far by taxi. Crime in South Africa is extreme and there were stories of people having been shot or robbed and left stranded. There was a minibus to Margate at 6.30 pm, it was our only option. There would be nowhere on the bus to store our luggage. We had not slept on the flight so we were both dog tired and would have stay awake to keep an eye on it.

When the minibus arrived, it was already full but we were allowed on it to sit on our case in the aisle. The road we took was under repair and full of potholes. We had not gone far when a very loud thunder and lightning storm broke with torrential rain that continued till morning. When we were told by one of the passengers that we were nearly there, I went to the driver and asked him if he knew Margate and would he, for extra payment take us to our address. I received a plain No! Fortunately, on hearing this a woman came to me and said that she was sure that her husband, who was coming to collect her, would take us to the address.

We got off the minibus, the rain was still heavy, and crossed the road to a shop doorway. After about five minutes her husband arrived. He was a farmer and his small car was already full of farm hardware. In the rain he restacked these things to make room for us. The ladies sat in the back, I was in the front with our case on my knees.

The address, written on the back of a letter, was something like: 1146 Blah Blah Road. After asking someone, we found the road. It was as black as pitch and there was no street lighting, luckily we had a torch. I would get out to look on gates for the number. I was getting nowhere. Be-

cause of the crime levels, all houses have high, razor wire topped walls and locked gates and man eatings dog in the garden, making it impossible to ask anyone where the address was. I decided to make one dog bark, I was wet, tired and needed to find our beds for the night. I got the dog barking, a man with a rifle came to the door. I shouted "Can you help me please" He came to the gate, I explained who we were I said David's name. That did the trick and he let us in through the gate and took me to the house. To check, he rang the security firm and that checked out. He then walked down the road with us until we arrived at the gate of our house. David had given me a huge bunch of keys. I found that the gate was padlocked on the inside, so with my arms through the gate, tried each key until I found the right one, fearful all the time that if I dropped the keys I might not get in. I opened the double gates and the farmer drove up the long drive to put his headlights on the doors. Yes, there were two, a solid steel one covering a heavy oak one. We were in at last. I thanked the farmer from the bottom of my heart. I do not know what would have happened if he had not helped us. Inside the bungalow all cupboards and doors were locked, hence the large bunch of keys. We found an unmade bed and just lay on it and were asleep in seconds. In the morning the rain had stopped and the sun was shining. Of course we had no food, so my wife walked back to the house to see the people who helped us and they took her to the shops. In the meanwhile I was unlocking doors and cupboards.

There was an old car in the garage that David had said we could use. I reconnected the battery and got it started.

My wife returned with some food. We were both very hungry and ate a hearty breakfast. After washing

*(Continued on page 4)*

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up, I drove us to the garage in town and filled the tank, then did some more food shopping. Now we were set to start enjoying the holiday.

The bungalow was set in about an acre of ground and had a nice swimming pool. We spent the rest of that day there and in the evening, found a nice restaurant and had a nice fillet steak meal with wine. The bill came to about £3. The rate of exchange was seven to one.

We visited many places then the weather turned wet again. We wanted to visit Cape Town so went to the travel shop and booked it. Whilst we were there, the girl serving us said that they had a bargain offer to go to the Victoria falls. It started in Johannesburg Rotunda by minibus to Bulawayo, then by first class train to Victoria Falls where accommodation was provided. This sounded good so we booked it. We were warned that Victoria Falls was a malaria area and advised to get tablets from the Doctor. We did and she charged us £20 for them (£140 in UK money)

We would fly to the Cape from Durban, so I drove there. The plane was leaving almost immediately. It was a nice flight with a light meal provided. We landed in the Cape, there was a young man waiting to carry our case to his vehicle. He drove us to our accommodation. On our way I mentioned that we would like to see some of the sights around the Cape. We had only been in the accommodation a few minutes when the phone rang, it was that young man to say "I'll pick you up at 7.0am tomorrow" Sure enough he was there at exactly that time. He drove in the direction of Table Mountain but when we got there, there was such a long queue that we decided to carry on south to Simonstown and also to the look out point at False Bay, returning by a different route. The scenery was beautiful. That evening we went into Cape Town for a good meal, then a walk around and back to bed.

At 7.00am the next morning, he was there again. This time he took us

north. We passed Robin Island and on to Stellenbosch where we visited the co-operative wine making plant, and many other interesting places.

We had brought our luggage with us as he would take us to the Airport for a flight to Johannesburg. We took a taxi to the Rotunda and waited for the minibus. It was a fast ride of about a thousand miles. The driver stopped at the Bulawayo railway station and he led us to our first class compartment telling us to wait there until the Guard came. We locked the compartment and went to the dining car for a meal. It wasn't very good. Afterwards we walked back to our compartment. A bed roll had been delivered on each bunk bed. I unrolled mine. What I saw I could not believe it was just a bundle of rags. I had better sheets in my garage at home for wiping up dirty oil. It was gone 11.00pm and we were very tired. I just covered myself the best I could and was asleep in minutes.

We had been onboard the train for more than two hours and had not moved out of the station. Sometime later I awoke with a jolt it, was starting to move. We were going for about fifteen minutes when we stopped and did not move for maybe three hours. Again the train started with a big jolt, ran for about fifteen minutes and stopped at a station for twenty minutes or so. And so this went on all night. We were scheduled to arrive in Victoria Falls at 7.0am. At about 5.45 I suggested to my wife that we got up. I went into the corridor and saw a young African girl that I thought might speak English. She did. I asked if she knew when we would arrive. She replied that we were not even half way. About 7.0am I saw the guard. He told me that the train coming in the opposite direction had broken down. It was a single track, so our engine had to uncouple, go to pull the other train to the two line crossover point, then return to so we continue on our journey. We were told we would not arrive until 4.00pm. And if we went to the dining car, we would get a breakfast. When we got there, we were told that they did not stock

food for breakfast, we could have a fried egg, or a piece of bacon, not both. However, arrangements were being made give us something to eat further up the line. We ate our egg and had a cup of coffee and then waited. We pulled into a very large station and immediately a long queue of Africans formed. My wife said she was not going to join that queue, but I did as I was ravenous. There was one of two white men among maybe two hundred and fifty Africans. As I neared the point where they were issuing the food I saw a galvanised dustbin half full of baked beans. Another chap was chopping up loaves of bread on a piece of polythene on the soil. I received a ladle full of beans, a piece of bread on a tin plate, and a plastic cup of orange squash. We got back on the train and continued

However, there was no urgency. Each time we came into a station, the driver and fireman climbed down and chatted with station staff.

Eventually we arrived at Victoria falls and got a taxi to take us to the address given to us. It was a nice, big single storey building run by a woman on her own and we had a pleasant two day stay.

We walked to the falls which are spectacular. We were told that the amount of water coming over was low for that time of the year. The weather was cloudy. I took photos from every angle. We walked to the bridge that joins Zimbabwe to Zambia over the Zambezi river. They were trying to get a young girl to do a bungee jump. I have never seen anyone so petrified. The organizers' were charging eighty pounds per jump and taking a video of it. They tried over and over but she still wouldn't jump. I went to her and advised her to come back on the bridge and she did.

We walked back to the town looked around then went for a meal. We saw 4 or 5 young girls eating a pizza off one plate being all that they could afford, after spending all their money on bungee jumps and white water rafting. The next day the weather was sunny so we went back to the falls and took all our photos again. After eating

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a meal, we walked back to where we were staying, thanked the lady for a nice time and took a taxi back to the station. This time all went to schedule. We arrived in Bulawayo where a car was waiting to take us to our accommodation. This property had a small bungalow a short distance away, where the black servants had lived in more prosperous times. This was to be ours for two nights. We had not been there long, when the owner came to us and asked if we would like to have our meal with them. We said that we would. As we started our meal I said that a friend of mine had come to Bulawayo as a steam engine driver. He had died and if I had had more time, I would have looked for his grave. She asked me the name of my friend. I said John Seager.

John Seager! she said in a slightly raised voice, left the table to go to her sideboard and brought back a photo album containing many photos of John and his family. Bearing in mind that Bulawayo has more than a million population, what a surprise this was.

At 6.00am. we dressed and had our breakfast. We were to be taken to the wild life park by a very experienced and knowledgeable guide. At 7.0am he arrived. He was a black African who had grown up in the area and talking most of the time, told us some African history, how Cecil Rhodes had pressured the tribal Kings to allow him access to the land and get the gold mines working which allowed him to take over most

of the continent of Africa. We saw elephant, hippopotamus, giraffe gazelle, rhinoceros, etc. We walked to the top of a large rock to see Cecil Rhodes's grave cut out of the rock. He then took us to a roofed picnic spot and cooked us a meal, after which we returned to our accommodation.

The minibus called for us the next day, and drove all day to get us to Johannesburg. It was still a while before our flight to Durban, so the driver advised us to book into a hotel to be safe, the crime in that city is high. We took a taxi to the airport. As we approached the booking in desk we were told that we were that we were a day late. Someone had made a mistake in our booking. There was only one more flight to Durban and that was fully booked. They would put us on the stand-by list, behind several others already. We would just have to hope some did not turn up to get us on that flight. It was an anxious time waiting but they did find a seat for us. It was a one hour flight and as things turned out I was glad that it was that short. As an aircraft engineer I have flown hundreds of hours in all types of aircraft, but this was to be the worst flight that I have ever known. The aircraft would fall hundreds of feet then lift back up again. We were to have a meal but it was so rough that the Captain said there could be no food as the flight attendants could not serve it. I have never been so glad to get my feet safely on the ground as I did on that occasion. I fetched the car from the park and drove to the pick up point, loaded the case and set off

back to Margate. The thunder and lightening was still severe. The road was as black as pitch one minute then with a very loud bang like Day the next. A truly dreadful journey. We were very glad to get safely to bed that night.

We spent the rest of our holiday swimming from various beaches along the coast where there were notices warning us to beware of falling coconuts. We met and joined many friendly white African people and generally had a lovely time. It was our last day in Margate. We went to see several families who had helped us and thanked them.

The minibus collected us at 2.0pm and we were in Durban for the 4.30pm flight, which landed in Johannesburg to pick up more passengers. We took off at about 8.00pm and landed at Heathrow at 7.30am. It took about an hour to clear the airport and a coach took us to Reading. At 12 noon our friend was waiting to bring us home. Yes, it had certainly been an adventure and despite the problems we had experienced, would say that we had enjoyed it very much.

So the next time a Jehovah's Witness comes to your door, don't shut the door in his face, it might turn out to be the start of a true friend-ship.

### **OBITUARY**

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

Mr R L Hurd

Our sympathy is extended to his family and all next of kin

*RMSA Membership List September 2009*

Membership List deleted for privacy protection reasons

Membership List deleted for privacy protection reasons

Membership List deleted for privacy protection reasons

## 2009 Summer Day Out

Ken

Tooze

Swanage on the Isle of Purbeck was the destination for our mid week Summer Day-out this year. It had been chosen at our informal meeting of members after the previous years' RMSA Christmas lunch, as are all our social events. It is very popular for those of us of a certain age, although it was my first visit. I thought it was a lengthy journey given that Swanage is not so very far from Bristol. The coach got held up behind a tractor for several miles on a minor road at one stage. On the plus side however, this gave us extra time to see Dorset's spectacular countryside. After all, what's the rush and those Rover coaches are so comfortable!

We arrived at mid-day the weather was fine, and compared to the summer



we were eventually to have was it was a scorcher and there was plenty of opportunity to explore what is now The Jurassic Coast. We didn't do that though, after a good lunch we spent most of the afternoon on the sea-front watching pensioners go by and there were quite a few of us about.

This is a great holiday area, Swanage in the old days had a significant fishing industry. I suppose the only real evidence left of that today is the Old Pier which must look very much as it always has done. At the 'western end' of the town we found the pretty Prince Albert Gardens, next to which is Westsex Water's recently constructed Sewerage Treatment Plant, discreetly constructed in Purbeck Stone and open sometimes for tours which, so the Tourist Guide tells us 'can prove very educational'. We got the Guide from Swanage Railway Station as we couldn't find the Tourist Information Centre. It's from this heritage station, steam and diesel trains take holidaymakers on a 10km journey to Norden near Corfe Castle.

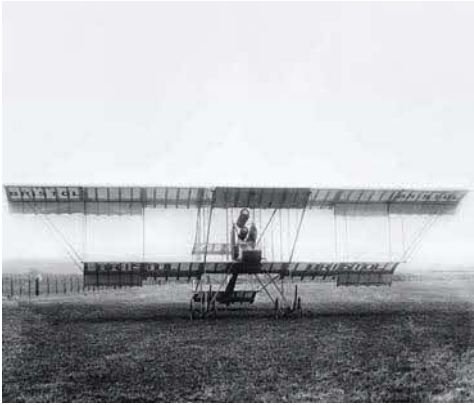
I was disappointed that we didn't have enough time to do it, but it was time to return home. Thanks very much once again to social secretary, David and Rover European



An update from Airbus at Filton on how things are progressing with organising some of the events to celebrate the BAC centenary next year.



## CENTENARY COUNTDOWN - BAC 100



As the Summer slowly fades into the distance and is replaced by the beautiful colours of Autumn, we wanted to take this opportunity to share with you the latest about next year's celebrations to mark the centenary of the founding of the Bristol Aeroplane Company.

The BAC 100 project team have been very busy throughout the Summer with a lot of planning and activity. More sponsors from industry have agreed to contribute to and be involved in the celebrations and people are still registering their interest in the activities planned for next year via the BAC 100 Web site.

We would also value and welcome any ideas and suggestions you may have for the celebrations.

The calendar of activities and events is taking shape and dates have now been agreed for the following:

- 19 Feb 2010 - Launch event to start the celebrations
- Spring 2010 - Publication of an illustrated history of West of England aviation and a Book of Aviation Wonder.
- Spring/Summer 2010 - Rolls-Royce Family Day
- 10 July 2010 - Multi-faith service of celebration at Bristol Cathedral
- 18 Sept 2010 - Airbus Family Day.
- 18 Sept-28 Nov 2010 - Commemorative exhibition at Bristol's City Museum and Art Gallery.

As part of next year's BAC 100 celebrations, it was suggested that the City of Bristol and the South West could celebrate the life and achievements of Sir George White, the founder of the Bristol Aeroplane Company, by erecting a permanent memorial. A plan is currently being prepared by the BAC 100 project team and will be submitted to Bristol City Council very shortly. We will keep you informed of developments.

Today, the West of England is one of the most important centres for aerospace engineering in the world and the BAC 100 celebrations showcase this and recognise the work and achievements of the thousands of people who have worked in the aviation industry (past and present) in the region..



Your involvement and support for these activities is really needed. To register your interest in BAC 100 and your suggestions for activity, please sign up at the website [www.bac2010.ac.uk](http://www.bac2010.ac.uk) or telephone 01225 470180 or write to Andrew Kelly, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, Leigh Court, Abbots Leigh, Bristol BS8 3RA.

**RETIRED MANAGEMENT STAFF ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE (RMSA)**

Chairman	Ken Tooze	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Vice Chairman	VACANT		
Secretary	VACANT		
Treasurer	'Tug' Wilson	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Newsletter Editor	Ken Tooze	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Social Secretary	Dave Curtis	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]m
Membership Secretary	John Poad	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
* Committee Member	John Bartlett	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
* Committee Member	Kevin Cheverton	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Committee Member	Mrs Dorothea Bartlett	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Committee Member	Mrs Eileen Poad	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Committee Member	Dave Welsford	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Committee Member	Fred Napthine	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

We are nearing the close of this year and there are still a few Members who have not yet remembered their 2009 subscriptions. However there is still a chance of redemption by combining the 2009 & 2010 subscriptions and sending me £4. (Just amend the payment slip appropriately.) An increasing number of Members, happily for me, are now making their payments by Standing Order and any Member wishing to do the same can set one up using the information below. Your own Bank will assist you to do this.



Herewith is the subscription of **£2** for the year **2010**  
(Cheques payable to BAC/BAe RMSA)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Please note subscriptions are due on January 1st and should be sent to:  
Tug Wilson, [REDACTED]

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