

RMSA **Newsletter**

Autumn 2010

Issue 84

For more information on the RMSA visit our web site www.baermsa.org.uk

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Photo Dave Curtis

The Central Band of the Royal Air Force 'plays' the newly named **A319 Sir George White** out on to the AAH apron at the BAC100 Launch Event.

From the Chair.

BAC100. This has been a year celebrating 100 years of the manufacture of aerospace products in the West of England. It all started, as I am sure most will know, with the establishment of the Bristol Aeroplane Company by Sir George White. The events put on at Filton by Airbus, Rolls Royce and many other local and voluntary organisations to celebrate the occasion have been amazing.

It started for us with the Launch Event on a very cold morning last February in the East Bay of the AAH to which a small number of RMSA members had been invited (see page 3), when a new Easyjet A319 was flown in to be ceremonially named 'SIR GEORGE WHITE' by his great-grandson Sir George White and culminated in the climax of the celebrations, the Family Day Event in September.

Air shows are mostly well supported and the Family Day surely was, with the all important weather in a good mood. I think Airbus put a particular emphasis on it being for the family and it worked. Our Gazebo idea was reasonably successful, a number of members turned up, I would have liked to have seen a few more. We were allocated a spot next to the 'Vulcan to the Sky' contingent who were there in support of Vulcan XH558 which gave an impressive display of sheer power, only to be eclipsed, I thought, by that given by the A380. Now that was truly amazing, to put an aircraft that size into such tight turns was unbelievable. I heard afterwards from one of the Vulcan team that the financial position of that project is in a crisis state. Hope it's not true.

There is still a number of events left for the **BAC100** celebrations. For those of our members who are not yet 'on-line', I guess there is still a few, I have listed the highlights below. The website for all activities is www.bac2010.co.uk

Our Website. We are pleased the number of 'hits' is steadily increasing and as our webmaster Rod Farmer says in his update on page 5 that we are getting more info. on members who are willing to advise us of their email addresses. You can be assured they will be totally secure and confidential, Rod can give you advice on this better than I. One of the things about it from the **RMSA** point of view is that it makes it easier and quicker to get information out to members.

Social Activities. I would like to say a special thank you to Dave Curtis on behalf of all of us on the committee, for the all the work and time he has put in this year in organising the events for us.

We held a successful informal get-together at Cadbury Garden Centre in July, this in spite of my getting the day incorrect in the last Newsletter. Thanks again to those came along, some very constructive views were expressed for your Committee to consider.

RMSA Constitution. For several meetings now your committee has been discussing this. It was written quite a good few years ago and requires updating. In particular to meet legislative requirements regarding data protection, privacy and freedom of information. I am writing this now to advise that the next Newsletter will contain the updated Constitution, for ratification at the 2011 AGM.

216 (G-OAF). Most members will be aware that it is no longer on public view at Filton, having been moved to the Brabazon Hangar for 'essential maintenance'. No further comment on that.

It is the only complete **Concorde** in the UK, it is interesting to note that moves are afoot by enthusiasts to get **213 (F-BTSD)** in Le Bourget flying again.

Finally, may I express my apologies to **Kevin Cheverton** for omitting his name on the Area 8 article, he wrote for the last Newsletter. It really was a typographical error.

BAC 100 Events. Some of activities still to take place to celebrate this are:

Flight: 100 years of the Bristol Aeroplane Company, a free interactive exhibition at Bristol City Museum till 28 Nov. Open daily 10.00 till 17.00. Late night Wed. till 20.00.

Altitude: The Fantastic Flight Show at At-Bristol till 21 Nov. A free family show open at weekends and holidays 12.30 and 15.30. There is an entrance to At-Bristol.

Free Exhibition at Bristol Central Library on *Early Flight*.

Free exhibition on *The History of Concorde* at Thornbury & District Museum, from 12 Oct. till Dec. Open Tues. till Fri. 13.00 till 16.00. Sat. 10.00 till 16.00.

City sightseeing aviation bus tours. 27 & 28 Nov. For more information call 01173 670208.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF AVIATION IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND. By Dave Curtis

On February 19th 1910 Sir George White registered two companies British & Colonial Aeroplane Company and the Bristol Aeroplane Company. The first project was the Boxkite which made it's maiden flight from Larkhill on Salisbury Plain on 30 July 1910.

On February 19th 2010 five members of the R.M.S. attended the 100 Years Celebrations held in the East Bay of the Brabazon Hangar at Filton. After passing through an airport style security scanner we arrived in the Hangar. The first we saw was six Bristol cars together with Sir George White's own car and two buses of the type used by workers in the early days of the Company. Also on display was a replica Bristol Fighter. Another thing we noticed was that all the catering staff were dressed in Victorian style costume.

While we waited for the celebrations to start we were entertained by the Central Band of the Royal Airforce. At 10.15am an Airbus A319 took off from Bristol International Airport, bringing the V.I.P's to Filton. When the A319 reach the end of the runway the band escorted the aircraft into the Hangar. At this point David Galmston of the B.B.C. was introduced as the narrator for the programme that followed.

The first speaker was Tom Williams Airbus executive vice-president of programmes. 'B.A.C.100' celebrates technology in the West of England, past, present and future. The next to speak was MP Doug Naysmith who read a letter of support from the Prime Minister who said since the Bristol Aeroplane Company was founded by Sir George White, the industry has pioneered some of the most significant technological developments and innovations. This was followed by Kevin Jones Under-Secretary of State for Defence. The next speaker was Andy Harrison, Chief Executive of EasyJet, followed by the great grandson, Sir George White who named the Airbus, 'Sir George White'.

This bought the celebrations to an end. It was now time to try and find any colleagues that we had worked with, I did manage to find three.



Photo Dave Curtis

Dave Welsford, John Tyler and Bob Hewitt looking over exhibits on display in the Hangar East Bay.

From the Social Secretary

****** FORTHCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS 2010 ******

WEDNESDAY 10 NOVEMBER THE AIR FRANCE CONCORDE CRASH AND THE AFTERMATH BY JOHN BRITTON at 11.30 am. in Room 1 of THE BAWA CENTRE at 11.30am. Followed by a buffet lunch.

Cost £6.00. If you wish to attend this talk please complete the booking form below.

Note. Tickets will be made available to non-members from the beginning of November.

RMSA AIR FRANCE CONCORDE TALK BOOKING FORM

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

TELEPHONE NO

TICKETS REQUD..... TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED.....

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO THE **RMSA** AND SEND WITH S.A.E. TO DAVE CURTIS

FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER RMSA CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2010. at 11.45am. till 3.00pm. in the Ballroom of the BAWA Centre

Cost £15.50. 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 6th DECEMBER 2010.

RMSA CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2010 BOOKING FORM.

NAME

MAIN COURSE CHOICE

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 ENCLOSED. £.....

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO THE **RMSA** AND SEND WITH SAE TO: DAVE CURTIS,



Retired Management Staff Association
www.baermsa.org.uk

RMSA – Website News Update – Autumn 2010

Dear Fellow Members,

Our RMSA Website has now been available for members for some time and I am pleased to report that it is attracting large numbers of member visitors.

The latest Version 3.00 has already been announced to members who have kindly advised us of their email addresses and this release contains up to-date versions of RMSA, Area 8 and PENSIONSupdate newsletters, also the Events news pages and calendar has been updated with the latest information. Of special note is the introduction of two mini web sites, accessible from the main RMSA site, which facilitates faster and simpler browsing to the most useful content of the main website. Help files are available from within each of the mini sites.

If you did not receive an email launching this latest version, it is because we do not have your email address. We have launched a campaign to populate our membership data-base with email addresses to allow quicker (and cheaper) communication with our membership. To-date, we have over 40 email addresses on record, but we would ask members who have not yet provided their email address to let us know their email address by sending an email to myself (Membership Secretary) at:
rodney.farmer@blueyonder.co.uk.

Your email address will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to other members without your prior approval.

Over the coming months we will be adding newsletters from 1994 and some other memorabilia items that have already been received from members – this is a large task involving scanning the paper newsletters, converting the resulting files to PDF format, redacting out any personal information and finally uploading the PDF files to the website.

Two Blogs are included in the site which will carry messages from either myself (Website News Blog) or from our Chairman (RMSA News blog), so keep an eye on these from time-to-time.

There is also an RMSA Events News page and Calendar detailing forthcoming events that are available for members and friends.

On behalf of our Chairman and other members of the Committee, we hope you enjoy browsing the site.

Rod Farmer – Membership Secretary & Website Administrator

Email: rodney.farmer@blueyonder.co.uk OR webmaster@baermsa.org.uk

Letter to the Editor

Filton's contribution to the development of Guided Weapons and Space Vehicles

You may recall that last January I wrote to you attaching a letter I had sent to the Royal Aeronautical Society in London drawing the Society's attention to the very limited references to Guided Weapons and Space that were made during the Society's celebration of the first 100 years of aero-engineering in the UK.

You were kind enough to include my letter in the next edition of the Newsletter.

Although I haven't been able to detect any appreciable change of emphasis in the Society's publications I am pleased to be able to report that the Sydney Branch of the Society's Australian Division invited David Farrar to give a lecture to the Branch at the end of June.

David decided that it might be of interest if he were to review his career at Filton starting with his work in the 1940's on aircraft such as the Bristol Freighter and the Brabazon, followed by the successful development, under David's leadership, of a series of Guided Weapon Systems before he returned to Aircraft Division to work on Concorde and a series of very successful Space Projects.

A feature of the evening was the presence of four of David's former Filton colleagues:

LIONEL PITT, an Australian engineer then working in the UK joined the Brabazon team before, for family reasons, he had to return to Australia.

JOHN BURLEIGH, a post war apprentice at Filton, joined the Guided Weapons team as a trials engineer. After involvement in trials at Larkhill and Aberporth he became one of the select team of trial sponsors responsible for looking after a 'trial' from the original concept stage, through construction of the Test Vehicle, transport to Woomera, all aspects of the flight trial and subsequent trials analysis in Australia and the UK. Eventually John decided that it was time to settle down, which he did in Australia.

BARRIE BRYANT, you may recall his contribution on the Spitfire in an earlier edition of the Newsletter. By the time David moved back to Aircraft Division Barrie had already transferred to Filton. After retiring he moved to Australia and was one of David's companions on his earlier walking holidays in Australia. I first met Barrie when the three

MYSELF, as I mentioned in my earlier letter I joined the Guided Weapons team in 1955, straight from University. I stayed until 1969 when I accepted an invitation to join the Canadian Public Service in Ottawa. In 1973 I moved to Canberra to join the Australian Public Service.

Everyone agreed that both the lecture, and the following dinner, were outstanding successes and he may be asked to repeat the lecture to other Branches of the RAeS Australian Division.

Bill Ainsley helped David to put together some of the detail relating to Space Projects and I understand that David has sent him a copy of the finished paper.

In the meantime I thought that members of RMSA might be interested in the background material that the Sydney Branch circulated to its members before the lecture.

Regards,
C C Halton
Australia
12 August 2010

The following is an unedited extract of a lecture published in the Royal Aeronautical Society, Sydney Branch Newsletter: June 2010. Editor

Date: Wednesday 30 June 2010

Time: 18.00 for 18:30 hrs.

Speaker: Mr David J. Farrar, OBE, MA, C.Eng, FRAeS, Hon MIED

Topic: "BAC100 & AUSTRALIA"

Venue: Rupert Myers Theatre, Uni of NSW Kensington

PROFILE: David Farrar was born in London, England in 1921 and educated at Sutton County School, Surrey. He won three scholarships to Cambridge University in 1939. In his second year David (at the age of nineteen) passed the Mechanical Sciences tripos First Class with distinctions and a share in University prizes for aerodynamics and structures. It being the eve of World War II he expected to go into the Royal Air Force, having been an active member of the University Air Squadron, but was assigned to the aircraft industry in the Bristol Aeroplane Company, where he specialised initially in structural design.

By the age of 25 he had devised new approaches to the design of compression structures and was in charge of the structural design of Britain's largest landplane, the Bristol Brabazon.

In 1949, David made in-flight observations of wing buckling in a Bristol Freighter, which then did full power engine cut tests. On the next flight with the chief aerodynamicist and the head of flight test on board, full power engine cut caused the fin and rudder to break and all aboard were lost. The head of flight test was the designated head of the new Guided Weapons department, to which David then succeeded.

DEFENCE FIELD: David was responsible for the: Design and development of many UK guided weapons including Bloodhound 1 and 2, Swingfire and Rapier, and for the vertical launched Sea Wolf concept;

Specification, procurement, installation and industrial service support for complete target detection, operational and launch control and missile interception systems for the RAAF, the Swedish Air Force, and the Swiss Army; Consultant to the British Ministry of Defence on ramjet procurement, strategic ballistic missiles and defence against them, and the cost effectiveness of Government weapons procurement policies.

Former lecturer to U.K Ministry of Defence courses on Project Management, and advisor to UK Department of Industry on the design of incentive contracts; and Former Chairman of the Royal Aeronautical Society's Management Studies and Cost Engineering Groups, the latter now having made available a three day workshop

on cost engineering which could be given in Australia.

INDUSTRY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

BACKGROUND: David led industrial design and development teams which won four Queen's Awards to industry achievement and exports in the fields of aerospace and factory automation. He was responsible for the structural design of the largest landplane built in U.K., greatly advancing the art of structural design and having a significant role in establishing the configuration of today's civil aircraft. Subsequently, was responsible for the design and development of large defence projects involving successful project management, systems, engineering, and overseas sales against international competitors.

As Engineering Director, Concorde, he accurately predicted the failure to sell commercially, ten years before the aircraft went into airline service.

As Director, post Apollo Studies, led three teams on the design of Space Shuttle Orbiter and developed major specialisation in cost engineering.

In 1973 David became Engineering Director at Molins Ltd, developing a range of advanced machinery which achieved unsurpassed sales and profits and which provided the basis for their launch as a public company. In 1979, David became Director of the Centre of Engineering Design at Cranfield University and created with the Engineering Industry Training Board a series of Open learning Modules for designer education and Further education, and a long running series of short courses on the Management of Engineering Design. As consultant in the field, helped large companies to achieve major success, and companies of all sizes to make use of CAD/CAM technology.

David received the OBE for his work on Bloodhound I, and the teams which he led received four Queens Awards for exports and technology. He is an external examiner, South Bank University, former director of Engineering Science Data International, a member of Editorial - Boards of 'Engineering Management International' and 'Professional Engineer', was the first Chairman of the Society of British Aircraft Constructors Guided Weapons Committee, a member of Royal Aeronautical Society council, served on many professional committees, and in retirement lectured for the Institution of Engineering Designers from whom he received an Honorary Fellowship.

In 1950 David married Bridget Kiely. Their two children, Claire and Kevin, died from cystic fibrosis. Ten years after Bridget's death he married Fay McEnaney and emigrated to Australia, where they have two sons, a daughter and grandson.

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Trials and Tribulations in Toulouse (Part 3) by Rodney Farmer

Living and Working in Toulouse:

In the Spring 2010 Newsletter, I wrote about how I and my family came to be living and working at Sud Aviation in Toulouse (Part1) and in the Summer 2010 Newsletter, I wrote about our early experiences on arrival in Toulouse (Part 2).

In this newsletter, I continue the tale, concentrating on the differences between French and British approach to life as we experienced it, both at work and outside of work.

Life continued normally in the office for a few months after the arrival of my team and we managed to get on top of the query sheet (litige) situation. Each day had a similar pattern, the Rum Baba daily 'run' being the highlight! However, on a day in early January 1971 we had our first 'challenge' when 001, flying at supersonic speed experienced an engine surge, which caused one of the movable ramps in the engine air intake to break free. Metal fragments were ingested into the engine and considerable damage was caused. The damaged engine was shut down and the aircraft returned on three engines to Toulouse where it made a normal landing. We got to hear about this whilst 001 was still in flight and I was summoned, along with our technical people, to be at the flight test centre for its arrival.

I will not attempt to give a technical explanation of this phenomenon, there are other RMSA members much better equipped to explain this, other than to describe it in terms of one of the engines experiencing a bout of 'aerodynamic indigestion'. This in turn led to what may be described as a 'supersonic burp', but instead of false teeth being emitted, one of the intake ramps was blown out of the front of the air intake, taking with it, ramp actuators, wiring looms and other bits of equipment – a sad sight to behold when 001 drew up outside the flight test building.

The lower lip of the air intake was also ripped out by the ramp, this being a very advanced and complex piece of stainless steel (or titanium) honeycomb structure and organising a replacement for this article fell to me. I duly contacted Filton with a request for a 'spare' to be delivered over the coming weekend, to be fitted early the next week – the intention being that 001 would be flying again by the following weekend. The reply I received was less than helpful; in essence it would take at least a month to manufacture a replacement.

This information was reported to the Sud 'powers-that-be' and soon an agitated Joe Bresse arrived at my desk puffing fire! He told me that Sud had decided to produce a replacement themselves, having located a suitably sized aluminium billet somewhere in the factory. I was requested to obtain from Filton, a loft foil containing full scale lip profile sections at 25mm increments across the width of the lip, to be delivered on the Friday's HS125 flight. This request did not go down at all well, Filton believing their design authority was being by-passed, which was in fact a truism. Nevertheless, on the Friday morning HS125 flight, the requested foil was delivered and I passed it on to Sud's manufacturing department.

To their credit, over the weekend Sud fashioned the aluminium billet into a perfectly formed new lower lip which was installed during the first few days of the following week – I believe that this lip remained on 001 for the remainder of its flying life – Filton people were 'gob smacked' when I cancelled the order for a new honeycomb replacement lip!!

On the domestic front, we continued the British obsession with washing our car on a Sunday morning. Our bungalow's front door opened directly onto a very wide pavement (the large garden – more later – was

to the rear of the property), and I was in the habit of parking the car on the pavement for the ritual clean. On these occasions, my two pre-school sons would bring their toys out onto the pavement and happily play whilst I attended to the car. Opposite our house, was a block of high rise flats (I guessed this was 'corporation' housing) containing young and elderly families. Gradually, we were aware of young children peering out from their doorways watching our kids at play on the pavement opposite under the watchful gaze of their parents.

Each Sunday, the children opposite would become more and more interested and bolder, eventually crossing the road and joining in the play – language was never a problem for the kids! Eventually the time came when they would knock on our door and play in our house, but not until their parents had given us the 'once-over'. The elderly residents of the flats would emerge at around mid-day and walk in pairs down the road opposite leading to the shops where there was a local wine shop (cave). The men would be carrying huge glass containers enveloped in basket work and the women would be carrying large wicker baskets on their arms. On their return, the glass jars were full of red wine, the men struggling under the weight, and the women's baskets were now filled with long sticks of freshly made bread – we reasoned that this was their staple diet!

Curiosity got the better of us and one Sunday we ventured into the cave carrying a number of empty wine bottles. What we found inside was incredible – huge stainless steel vats, maybe 10/12ft in diameter and of similar length (note the use of good old imperial measurement here!) filled up every Saturday by a massive petrol tanker like articulated lorry, that would arrive late afternoon to discharge its contents using high pressure pumps – a bit like refuelling

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a jumbo jet at Heathrow! Indeed, after sampling the wine, we may well have been better off drinking Heathrow vintage kerosene!!!

I took a lesson from all this which I apply to this day – sometimes the percentage alcohol takes preference over taste (and cost) – it all depends on ones perspective for the reason to take a drink of wine!

There came a time, when the first components of the A300 started to arrive at Blagnac, we were given time off to witness this event which we did by standing on the bridges over the dual carriageway running alongside the factory. We, at the time, were disdainful of the Airbus project, firmly believing in the future of Concorde (how wrong can one be!!). Later in the factory, components were beginning to be assembled and the factory became a hive of activity. I should explain that we occupied an office on the third floor of a building that ran the entire length of the assembly lines, Airbus on one side and Concorde on other, we could look down either line and view proceedings. One day we heard a commotion from the Airbus line just down below where we were located - lots of agitated people were rushing around. Soon we could smell burning which we later discovered had been started by sparks from a welding torch setting fire to a load of discarded packaging. A fire tender eventually arrived - I am doing it a favour calling it a fire tender – because in reality it was a 1920s ‘Noddy’ mobile fire hydrant equipped with a hand pump, albeit painted bright red! The crew dismounted and got to work connecting a hose pipe to the pump, whilst the fire became ever more intense. By this time the whole office, French and Brits had rushed to the windows and were jockeying for the best vantage points, cheering and other wild noises were beginning to be heard. At last the fire crew were ready, the pump having been primed, to take the first ‘in anger’ pull on the pump handle. A hushed silence descended on the gathered onlookers, a small spurt of

water was seen to leave the nozzle, falling well short of the blazing target. Uproar amongst the onlookers - the noise of jeering and clapping was almost too much to stand – and no more water appeared, the fire eventually being put out by hand.

At the time, I remember recalling the fire event at Filton some time before, when the Vulcan Olympus test bed threw a turbine disc and caught fire on the side of the runway opposite the AAH. On this occasion we all rushed to the AAH balcony to secure the best view of this ‘once-in-a-lifetime’ spectacle. On this occasion, the fuel tank was ruptured allowing blazing fuel to leak from the stricken aircraft. Soon the pride and joy of the airfield fire service arrived on the scene – a spanking brand new state-of-art fire tender, to park in front of the Vulcan. The crew soon got high pressure hoses to play on the burning airframe not realising that a stream of burning fuel was heading straight towards this technological wonder machine. The tender was soon engulfed in flame and completely consumed by the fire. I think it was the sound of the jeering that brought this event to mind – it sounded the same in French as it did earlier in English – similar to the kids playing outside our house when I come to think about it now! – do we never really grow up!! However, I was left to ponder which fire service came out best – I concluded that ‘Noddy’ was the winner, given that it lived to ‘fight another war’ as they say.

Our bungalow had three bedrooms leading off a long tiled passageway leading from the front door. One morning we were awakened, by a strange noise coming from the passageway, it was a loud clicking noise and it was getting ever louder. I jumped out of bed, and peered into the passage from the safety of the doorway, my eyes alighting on a moving object heading rapidly in my direction. What could it be I asked myself somewhat rigid with fright; the object was alive and had to be dealt with at all possible haste. I took a deep breath and ran passed it to get to the kitchen, where a large insect spray can was located. Armed with

this ‘weapon’ I returned to the bedroom to find my dearly beloved cowering in the corner of the bedroom, the creature now was between the open door and the adjacent wall. I held the spray can firmly in one hand, holding on to the open door with the other, whilst discharging its entire contents behind the door in the hope that my blind aim would find its target. The clicking stopped and all was well in the house as I left to go to the office where, after all the handshaking, I decided to consult our French colleagues as to what the creature was.

I gave a description, over elaborating the size and noise, whilst our colleagues listened with eyes opening ever wider. I was challenged to go home at lunch time and put the creature in a box and bring it back for formal identification. This I duly did, putting the ‘thingy’ into a large matchbox, which upon my return to the office drew much derision given my earlier much exaggerated description. A French colleague had also gone home to lunch, returning with a very large encyclopaedia of insects – a crowd gathered around the desk amongst much speculation as to the nature of the creature. Eventually, it was identified as a root eating beetle like insect which rarely appeared above ground and was entirely harmless. (From memory its name was something like ‘Coutillier’, but I can find no reference to this in Google).

Eventually, in September 1971, the first A300 was completed and we arrived at the office to see much activity on the A300 shop floor – the completed airframe standing on its’ own in the centre of the hangar. Technicians were arriving with a lot of portable cabinets containing test equipment, which were positioned a little distance from the aircraft. We learnt that this was the day of the first pressure test of the completed airframe. Wire harnesses and pipes were spread all over the factory floor, being readied for this important and critical test. Suddenly, the full size folding hangar doors slowly folded opened, letting the bright autumn morning sunlight stream into the

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otherwise dim factory. Outside we saw a convoy of farm tractors piled high with bales of hay. One by one, the tractors with their trailers were driven into the hangar and parked up adjacent to the aircraft, farm hands wildly brandishing pitch forks were in hot pursuit. They set about unloading the bales of hay, while others began piling them on top of each other to build a 'wall' of hay

between the aircraft and the portable equipment cabinets, this process continued until all the tractors had disgorged their loads at which time . A few 'power dressed' executives arrived to join the technicians 'hiding' behind this unlikely shield and the pressure test began – it lasted several hours after which the hangar doors were again opened and the tractors returned, farm hands at the ready to recover the bales of hay –

the hangar returned to its pre-test state as if nothing had happened. Again, I could not help contrasting this with the enormous water tanks at the rear of the AAH used for Britannia pressure testing!! – were we living on the same planet!!

Stories to be continued.

Rod Farmer

OBITUARIES

It is with sadness that we record former friends and colleagues known to have passed away since our Spring 2010 Newsletter.

- Mr. F.A.S. Tottle**
- Mr. C.A. Partridge**
- Mrs. K.N. Partridge**
- Mr. R. J. Shore**
- Mr. H. Wiltshire**
- Mr. G.H. Gregory.**
- Mrs. M.E. Thomas**
- Mr. T. J .E. Williams**
- Mr. E.J. Gough**
- Mr. R.H. Mayor**
- Mr. B. C. Wright**
- Mrs. M. M. Puddifoot**
- Mr. J. M. Houghton**
- Mr. J.F. Calcraft**
- Mr. A. J. Walters**

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

NEW MEMBERS

Since our Spring 2010 Newsletter :

- Mr. B. C. Portch**
- Mr. I.E. Hawkins**
- Mrs. P.A Hawkins**
- Mr. R. P. Loader**
- Dr. E O'Brien**
- Mr. R. Williams**
- Mrs. S. Williams**
- Mr. R. Day**
- Mrs A. Day**

Have joined us. We extend a warm welcome to you and hope you will participate in the RMSAs' activities and meet up with old (and new) friends and colleagues.



MY WEEK IN A MONASTERY BY STAN LOCK

After the funeral of our colleague Barry Wright at Westleigh crematorium in July, I was chatting to Rod Farmer and Clive Leyman about the contribution of stories for the RMSA Newsletter. Clive

reminded me of my visit to Amalfi on his behalf that turned out to be a convoluted mixture of potentially embarrassing failure and amusing adventure.

I thought I had already submitted this, but on reflection, decided I hadn't.

So the story goes as follows.

In October 1983, I spent a week in an Italian Monastery, not, I hasten to add, living as a monk, but as the Filton representative who was to deliver a lecture on Concorde, to the International Centre for Transportation Studies. More specifically, my paper was an historical review of Concorde Crew Stations. A bit of a shock to think of Concorde being "historical" at that time, but as I write this, maybe "hysterical" is a better description.

It started with our travel office making all the arrangements that promptly started to unravel. My Air Italia B737 flight to Naples was cancelled due to mechanical problems and we arrived back at Heathrow three hours later for a flight to Milan and connection to Naples. After a quick turnaround we set off, arriving late in Milan, where Air Italia had held a DC9 flight for about 6 passengers, to fly on to Naples. We were ushered off the B737, ahead of the other passengers and escorted across the airport by a hostess, to the waiting DC9, which then promptly took off, arriving at Naples, very late by now.

My BAe travel documents said to get a train to Sorrento via the Circum-Vesuviana Railway. This conjured up in my mind a steam

train trip round Vesuvius, which in the event turned out to be a very modern diesel/electric job, but it was now quite dark and stormy with thunder and lightning, so not a good view of Vesuvius (more later!!).

On arrival at Sorrento, where my travel documents claimed I would be met by a car (of which there was no sign), I found a taxi driver to take me on to Amalfi, although he wanted to see the colour of my money first.

Anyway, after a very stormy journey along the coast road, the taxi arrived at the address in Amalfi and stopped by a door in the base of a sheer rock face at about 1:00am in the morning. After pushing a bell and banging on the door, a little man (dwarf even) appeared in his pyjamas and after I showed my identity, he led me up a long flight of stone steps inside, emerging at the top where there was a lift which went up inside a pylon like structure (apparently built by the US army engineers during the war). From there, a horizontal covered bridge led into the building which turned out to be a monastery. The little chap showed me to my "cell", a sparsely furnished room with a comfortable wooden bed. The ablution facilities were quite Spartan, consisting of two alcoves, the first with an ancient copper shower head and a hole in the floor, the second with a hand basin and toilet. Had I come to the right place I asked myself!

The storm had abated by morning, and I awoke to a glorious view of the Bay of Naples from the balcony. I went to breakfast to meet the other contributors, some of whom were quite eminent in their fields such as Gerald Carr - (Spacelab Commander) and Melvin Montemerlo (Space Shuttle Crew).

My lecture on Concorde was

timed for first thing on the third day of the proceedings, so I had plenty of time to study form. Clive had kindly lent me a good library of slides and I had prepared a pack of transparencies for the overhead projector so that I could go from one to the other with bags of information.

The convolutions in this story continue, and I arrived in the lecture theatre early and arranged my slides in the circular magazine of the slide projector and also the pack of transparencies for the overhead one, ready for a seamless lecture. I apologised on Clive's behalf for him not being able to attend and introduced myself and my paper, then pressed the button for my introductory slide. SHOCK/HORROR, in front of this eminent assembly, up came a picture of a US Navy Fighter under the heading The Hornets Nest.. I was nonplussed. After a pregnant pause the next contributor Fred Hoerner (a Hornet Pilot) came to my rescue and explained that he also had crept into the lecture theatre, removed the slides from the magazine and substituted his Programme. So I had to find and reload my slides into the magazine and hope Fred hadn't "shuffled the pack". All went well and my ploy of using the slide projector and a separate overhead projector worked very well. Things were going to plan at last. About halfway through my paper, another guest joined the audience, it was my great friend, Chief C.A.A. pilot Gordon Corps. If there was anyone who knew as much about Concorde Crew Stations as I, or the BAe and Aerospatiale test pilots, it was Gordon Corps. That threw me, and I lost my thread for a few moments until I realised he would have no need to ask any awkward questions as he knew it all anyway. All went well and the Shuttle pilot thanked

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me for a very interesting talk.

However, the twists to this tale were not quite over.

As my flight home from Naples was for 9:00am the next morning, I needed to depart the monastery by about 7:00am.

Because of the 'closing' party on the day on the day of my paper, I think the staff were all sleeping it

off, I couldn't raise anyone. So I left an appropriate amount of umpteen thousand lire in an envelope in reception and went to meet the taxi I had booked. The driver drove me over the scenic mountain road to Naples and gave me a good view of the crater of Vesuvius and I arrived in time for my flight home.

A book of the week's proceedings (now on my bookshelf) was subsequently published and

proved quite useful to my old colleagues back in the Flight Deck/ Electro-dynamics Dept.

Unfortunately, my story has a very sad end ending. My pilot friend Gordon Corps, (who had later joined the Airbus Flight Test Dept.) died of altitude poisoning in the mountains (of Korea, I think) whilst part of a team investigating the crash of an Airbus ST.

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SYNOPSIS: Following John Burleigh's lecture on Bristol and Australia, David Farrar continues the history up to today, when Bristol is celebrating 100 years of aircraft design and manufacture in the same location, a unique achievement. Bristol Aeroplane Company Board policies were at the root of that achievement, but the future risk of bankruptcy was to be seen in the first military aircraft on which he worked.

Two post-war Bristol aircraft were to prove of great value to Australia: Bristol helicopters and the Bristol Freighter. Work on the post-war Brabazon aircraft led directly to the now familiar shape of long range passenger jets.

The workings of Fate: led to his leading guided weapons at Bristol and relations with WRE in Australia; and involved the Bristol Britannia and linked the survival of the aeroplane and guided weapons teams through several crises in ways which until now were closely kept secrets. At the time of aircraft industry rationalisation Bristol Aircraft was virtually in liquidation. It was prevented, and Bristol was able to join British Aircraft

A Day out at Airbus Broughton by Ken Tooze

[It was from a conversation with our principal Christmas lunch guest](#), Airbus in the UK Country Manager and HR Director, Mark Stewart that we were invited to visit the second and largest of the two UK Airbus factories, the wing assembly plant at Broughton, North Wales - the other, of course is Filton.

This opportunity was not to be missed, so we took up the invitation and late last month a party of us set off on a day's visit, considering this was a 'boys thing' I was very pleased to see a number of ladies had joined us. We were met on arrival, by members of Broughton Airbus Retirement Association who had volunteered to be our hosts for the afternoon and escorted to the Broughton Sports and Social Club quite near to the factory entrance, where we were given a short 'Powerpoint talk' on the history of the site and treated to what I thought was an excellent buffet lunch and what became a pleasant social occasion.

The plant used to be known as Airbus Chester because of its proximity to the famous Roman city, situated less than 10km away on the English side of the border. It is only comparatively recently that it has been officially recognised as being in Wales near the village of Broughton, so it is now Airbus Broughton. It's very strange. The site we were told was developed during the 1940s by Hawker Siddeley, it was 'out in the sticks' in those days and away from the attentions of the Luftwaffe and thus became very important for war-time aircraft production, especially Mosquitos and Lancasters. One photo taken after the war, of a line of Comet fuselages stood out for me.

As a legacy of those old Hawker Siddeley days wings and fuselages for HS 750/850/900 business jets are still manufactured on site here.

We visited the West Factory where the truly massive A380 wings are made and saw an Emirates wing set in course of completion, to be transported by a miracle in logistics to Bremen for equipping. On the journey across the site to the West Factory we passed the new A350 wing plant under construction, Airbus's next big and maybe riskiest project. It is due to be finished early next year. Whatever it's called you can't fail to be impressed at the way Airbus is expanding and now employs a workforce of 7,000 people at Broughton. It's sure proof that we can still manufacture something in the

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UK. We were then escorted back to the Club for afternoon tea and biscuits after which we formally thanked our hosts for their hospitality and joined the coach for the journey back down the M5 to Bristol. I enjoyed it all.

Everything in the Garden's Lovely by Ken Tooze



We went to the Royal Horticultural Society's flagship garden for our 2010 Summers' Day Out at Wisley. It is very popular at any time of the year especially so in early July on a day when the sun decides to shine, as it had for us. It was not my first visit and I had forgotten how big it is. We had arrived through the network of motorways and ring roads in this part of Surrey near Woking at mid-day, our usual arrival time at most places on these days' out so it was time to eat. We had lunch in the Conservatory Cafe and Dining Room, one of four eateries in the garden, prices we thought were quite reasonable. I mention this because that came as a bit of a surprise - to me anyway, for those of us who had brought their own, there are two well placed picnic areas.

The Society a world famous research centre, is supporting the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity 'to celebrate the sheer variety of living things around us and think about ways in which you can encourage biodiversity in your own garden, one of the most important havens for wildlife particularly in urban areas'. I guess Wisley could be seen as a specialist centre for garden buffs, it does though endeavour to retain the popular touch with special events throughout the year such as a Latin Dance Night and a Music Festival. There is much to see, I liked it that most plants in the garden have name tags attached, in Latin granted, but most useful.

The Royal Horticultural Society has been at Wisley since 1903 Surprisingly, it was for eighty years, its only garden. It continues to be developed today, three years ago the new Glasshouse was completed, a structure described on the Society's web site as a 'huge cathedral-like glass structure covering an area equal in size to 10 tennis courts and rising to 12m (40ft) in height' and is probably the centre piece for most casual visitors. Built with three interlinked climatic zones it recreates tropical, moist temperate and dry temperate habitats its quite splendid. Not up to the Eden Project in Cornwall, of course, but what is.

We enjoyed the Model Vegetable Garden, 'growing your own' is the thing now and I selected a photograph of it for this article from the Society's website, there is a new head gardener from Italy who was on hand to answer questions on growing Mediterranean veggies in this country. He said it was easy.

RHS Wisley is for garden enthusiast and casual visitor alike - not forgetting us photographers. All this is reflected in the huge number of visitors from this country and around the world.

And so it was back home via a not too jammed up M25 to Bristol.

Do you have a story to tell? Then why not send it to the editor, and it'll be put in the Newsletter. Contact details are on the back page.

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CONTACTS:
Newsletter & General Queries Ken Tooze
Membership Queries Rodney Farmer
Social Queries Dave Curtis

Subscriptions

We are nearing the end of the year and as usual, there are a few members who have not paid their January membership subscription despite a reminder in the Summer Newsletter from our Membership Secretary, Rodney Farmer. They will now receive. in this Newsletter a reminder from Chairman, Ken Tooze.

If you are one of the few, please respond with your payment to me or, if you wish to resign, advise me or Ken so that the 'books' can be completed by the end of the year. The Annual Subscription for 2011 will be £2. So, anyone wishing to be ahead of the game can send it on now. Similarly any non-payers for 2010 can send £4 to cover both years.

A Standing Order can be raised at any time quoting the annual renewal date of January 2nd or thereabouts. The details you need for a Standing Order are as follows, your Bank will assist you if you have any queries.

[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Herewith is the subscription of £2 for 2011 (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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