



Newsletter

Spring 2010

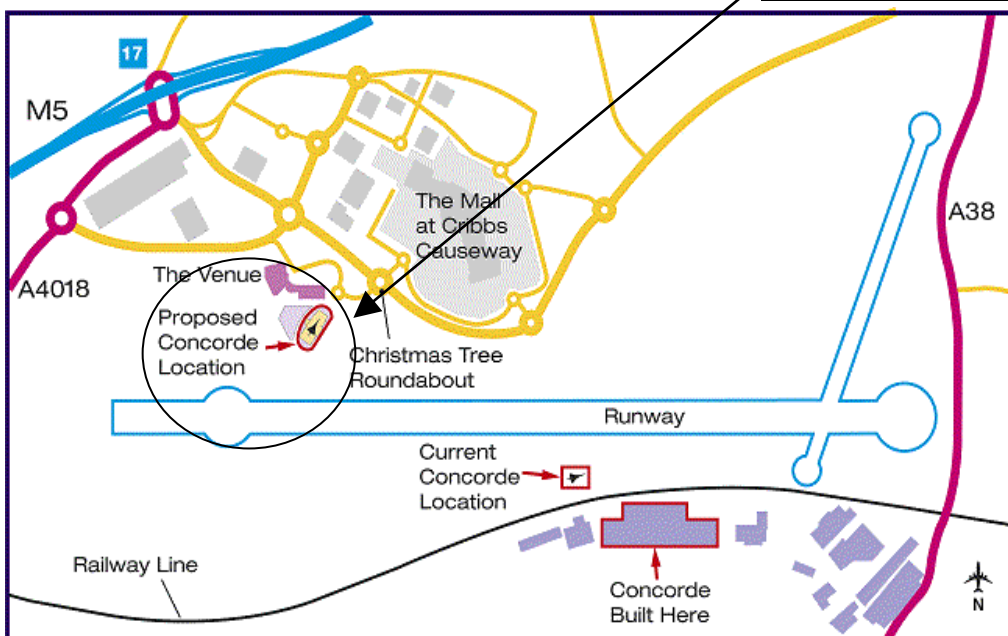
Issue 82

For more information visit our website www.baermsa.org.uk

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New Concorde Visitor Centre Proposal



Both pictures have been taken from the Bristol Aero Collection website.
www.bristol aero.com

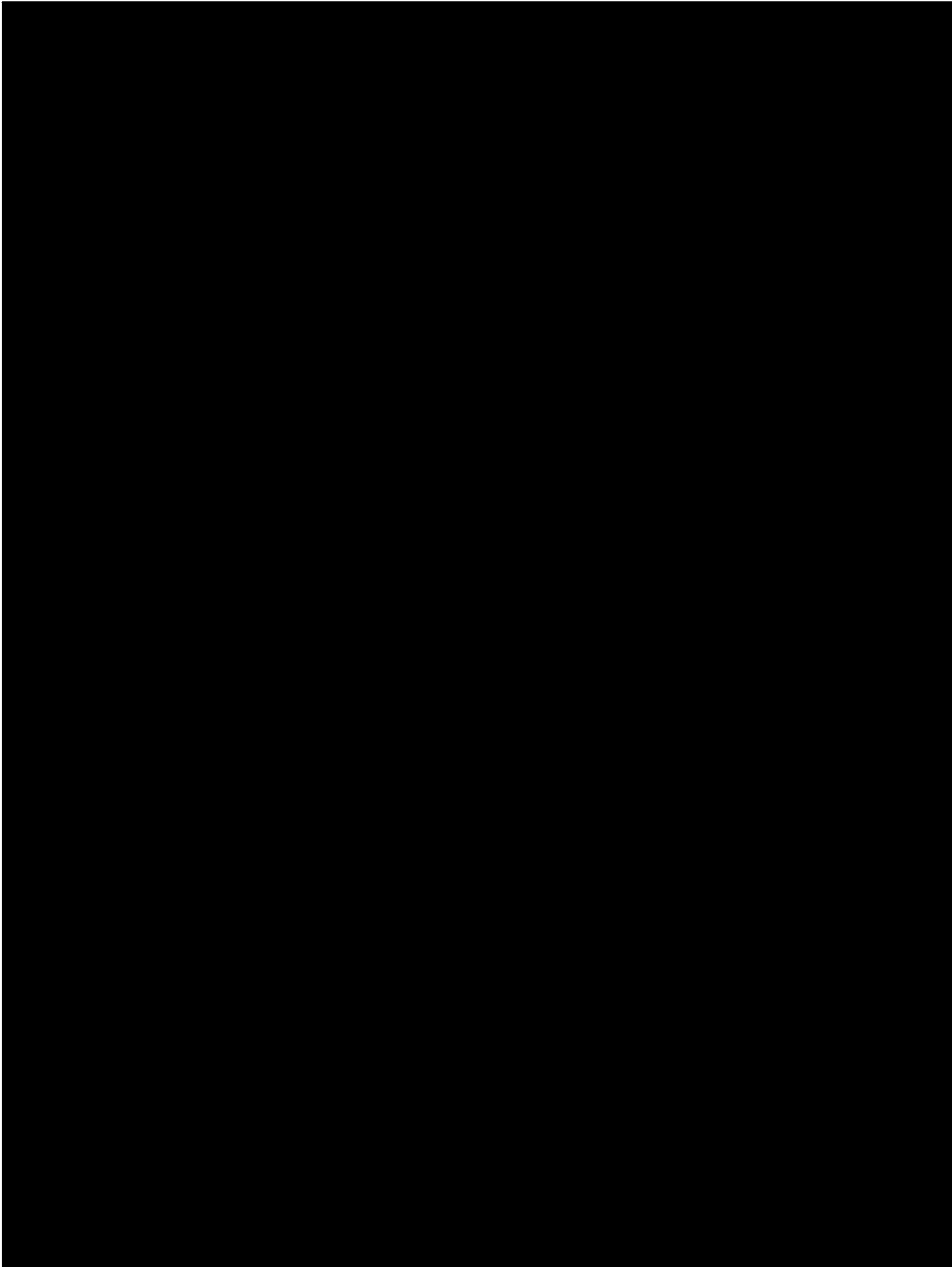
Notice of the 30th RMSA Annual General Meeting
in the Concorde Suite BAWA Centre Filton
on Friday 12 March 2010 at 10.00am

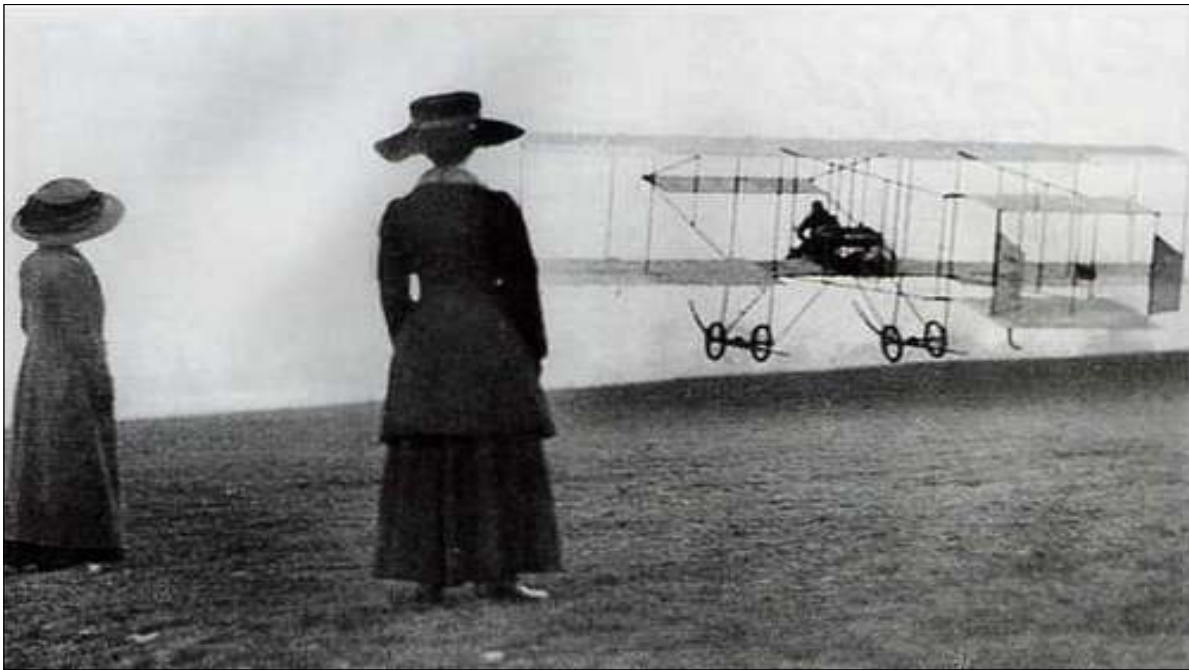
AGENDA

1. Opening address.
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Minutes of last Annual General Meeting.
4. Matters arising.
5. Obituaries.
6. Chairman's report.
7. Treasurer's report.
8. Social Secretary's report.
9. Newsletter Editors report.
10. Pensions matters.
11. Special Business. To consider the situation re. the vacant Vice-Chair and General Secretary positions. According to rule 5.3 of the Association's constitution these may be filled at an AGM, duly proposed and seconded from the meeting.
12. To re-elect committee members who are standing down by rotation, in accordance with rule 5.4 of the Association's constitution:
 - Mr K Tooze
 - Mr J Poad
 - Mrs E Poad
 - Mr 'Tug' WilsonAll of the above have agreed to stand for a further term of office.
13. Re-election of Accounts Examiners.
 - Mr G Hastings*
 - Mr C Needs*
14. Any Other Business
 - * Have agreed to stand again

Please note that Mr F Napthine was elected at the last AGM. Although, this was not recorded as such in the 2009AGM minutes.

Your committee also want to treat this as a social occasion, an opportunity for members to meet up if you like. Refreshments will be available when the meeting is over, at no cost. There is no chance we will try to coerce you into taking any duty on. Honest! We will be very pleased to see you.....





Departure time 1910 style

From the Chair

May I on behalf of all of us on the committee wish you all, A *HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR.*

These new years' they do come round so quick. We hope that we have put together an interesting programme of social events for you this year, Dave Curtis reveals all elsewhere. They supplement those arranged by Airbus UK and Rolls Royce who are celebrating 100 years of aerospace manufacturing in the West of England this year namely the BAC100 Celebrations. A diary of events for this is on page 6. They were kicked off for us at our Christmas Lunch at the BAWA Centre, as we were fortunate in having as our guests Mark Stewart, Airbus in the UK Country Manager and Human Resources Director, together with Katherine Bennett, Director of Communication and Government Affairs and Becky Farmer, Publicity Officer. There was also a static display laid on for us and at the end of the lunch a short talk by Katherine on the years' events. Not a bad do at all I thought

Survival of the Fittest

Although' 2010 BAC100' is celebrating much more than Filton's aerospace activities, it is after all where it all started in the West of England all those years ago. Sir George White in 1910, an entrepreneur if ever there was one, with a tramcar manufacturing business at Filton decided to set up the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company to make a Farman type biplane which came to be called a Boxkite, powered by a French Le Rhone rotary engine. In a very short time he changed the company's name to the Bristol Aeroplane Company and in 1920 acquired, under pressure from the Air Ministry, the near bankrupt Cosmos Engineering Company together with the brilliant Sir Roy Fedden and his design team, and thus the way was set for it to become what at one time was the largest aircraft and engine manufacturing site in the world, through two world wars known far and wide as 'the

BAC'. In 1956, it was split into two separate companies, Bristol Aircraft at Filton and Bristol Aero Engines at Patchway.

When I started work at Filton in 1961 as a trainee draughtsman it had been further broken up into Bristol Aircraft, Bristol Guided Weapons (CAD & GW) and Bristol Cars; this last one, by the way continues to the present day as a separate private company. In 1958 Bristol Aero Engines at Patchway, had joined forces with Armstrong Siddeley to form Bristol Siddeley Engines, this again was the result of Governmental pressures. These changes were to accelerate with the nationalisation of Bristol Aircraft including Guided Weapons, English Electric, Vickers and Hunting's merging them all to become the British Aircraft Corporation.

In 1977 Hawker Siddeley Aviation, Hawker Siddeley Dynamics and Scottish Aviation merged with the British

Aircraft Corporation, the whole lot becoming the nationalised British Aerospace (BAe).

In 1966, Bristol Siddeley Engines was taken over by Rolls-Royce which was nationalised in 1971, after getting into severe financial trouble over its first big turbofan the RB211.

Then the whole industry was to be returned to private ownership by the Thatcher government during the 1970s and 80s. I like a quote from some wiseacre 'all modern British aircraft have four dimensions: span, length, height and politics.' I can vouch for that.

During this long period, events both military and civil fields were also moving fast on a Europe-wide front. Researching in Google and Wikipedia for this article, BAC at Filton was in the middle of it all with its guided weapons, space systems

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and Concorde projects. There was always British and French Government concern over Concorde financing, especially as other civil projects were being funded as well. The A300 programme started back in 1967, in collaboration with Germany was one, the aim there being to compete more effectively with the US in the manufacture of civil aircraft.

But to cut this long and complicated story short, European co-operation in this field was 'kicked off' when Airbus Industrie was formally established in 1970. Hawker Siddeley Aviation already working on that first Airbus project; the A300 was given 'privileged sub-contractor' status with a 20% ownership. It was designing and building the wings using expertise, much coveted by the French, which it had gained from its Trident airliner.

Having formed BAe as a public enterprise, the UK government eventually inherited a 20% stake in Airbus Industrie. Initially the success of the consortium was poor, but orders for the A300 picked up and by 1979 it was to embark on a more advanced aircraft, the A310 and then the A320 in 1981.

That guaranteed the status of Airbus as a major player in the civil market as that aircraft had over 400 orders before first flight, this compared to 15 for the A300 in 1972.

In the late '70s early '80s BAe, with its civil aircraft side in the doldrums made Filton its main Airbus wing design centre, with some manufacturing capability, commencing with

these new A310 and A320 projects. The industry now faced considerable contraction, with many well known sites facing 'the chop.' I remember the fighting and pressurising that went on to try keep Filton open.

Defence consolidation also became a major issue in 1998, with numerous attempts by European defence groups at mergers. BAe decided to link up with Marconi Electronics Systems which had been sold off by GEC. This new grouping became BAe Systems in 1999, confounding all the pundits. The remainder of the various European companies joined together to create the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS) of which Airbus is now part.

The new BAe Systems now Europe's largest defence contractor subsequently sold off the major part of its civil aircraft interests to Airbus.

Rolls-Royce meanwhile, since being privatised has kept its own very exclusive identity and is now among the largest aircraft engine manufacturers in the world. It continues to maintain a significant presence Patchway.

So there it is, Filton and Patchway sites have so far survived and to a great number of West Country people they collectively are still 'the BAC.' I wonder what Sir George White would have made of it all; I suspect he would have been a major player.

Concorde 216

I thought I'd put some pictures of the projected Concorde Visitor Centre at Cribbs Causeway on the front of the Newsletter this time, as a reminder to us what it may look like. I go past

'216' regularly, and see it from the A38 forlornly parked by the runway in all the elements. A Charity the Concorde Trust has been set up to raise the £12 million required. It is hoped to be ready sometime in 2011.

Mr R. L. Hurd.

We reported Reg 's death in the Autumn Newsletter Obituary Notice. Many members will recall that he was a long serving Treasurer for the RMSA. He retired when he left the area to be with his family. Our thoughts and sympathies are with his family and next-of-kin.

Colonel F.J.J. Bartlett.

It is with sadness that we report the death in December of John. He was also an RMSA Committee member and one of our representatives on the BAe Systems Area 8 Pensions Committee. Our thoughts and sympathies are with his family and next-of-kin.

Future Social Activities.

We are always concerned whether we are keeping in with what you as members want from the RMSA on the social side. To this end we are looking for feedback with ideas. We recognise the limitations to this, particularly with such a widespread membership.

Ideas that have been put to us are theatre and garden visits, country walks; all made up of small parties and maybe combining with other 'aircraft' pensioner groups. There is also our new website* to use to open up a dialogue between members.

Please let us know if you have any suggestions..

*baermsa.org.uk



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Since our last Newsletter we have acquired new Members:

Mr R F Chappell
 Mrs S A Chappell
 Mrs J G Jefferies
 Mrs M Perry

We extend a warm welcome to you, and hope you will participate in the Association's activities and meet up with old friends and colleagues

OBITUARIES

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

Mr R W Collins	Mr R H W Fox
Mr K W Prosser	Col F J J Bartlett
Dr G Milton	R I Evans
Mr F J Morle	Mr H S Lewis
Mr B J Allen	Mr M R Bailey
Mr A F E Perry	

Our sympathies are extended to their families and all next of kin



CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS - BAC 100

Diary of Events 2010

- 10th February WEAF Annual Conference
- 19th February Centenary Day
- 9th March RAEs George Dowty Lecture
- 7th/8th May RAEs Barnwell Lecture, Dinner and Branches Conference
- May/June BAC100 book to be published and distributed to employees
- 29th May – 7th June Bristol Aero Collection, Kemble open during half term
- 3rd July Rolls-Royce Family Day
- 10th July Service of Celebration
- 19th – 25th July Farnborough Airshow
- 18th September Airbus Family Day including Bristol Car Owners Club "Concours d'Elegance"
- September/ October BAC100 Conference
- 18th September – 28th November Exhibition at City Museum and Art Gallery
- 11th November Public Lecture/Debate
- 12th November Gala Dinner
- 24th November WEAF Gala Dinner

Also happening in 2010...

- 19th – 20th June Kemble Airshow
- 17th – 18th July Royal International Air Tattoo, Fairford
- 17th December Wright Brothers Day

For the latest information, please refer to www.bac2010.co.uk

Further events taking place up till June.

Olveston Parish Historical Society. On Sat.13 March, a BAC exhibition and book launch at Olveston Parish Hall, Tockington, for one one day at this venue. For further details contact Les Harper, [REDACTED], Further details at www.lesnjanet@hawlane.freeserve.co.uk

Olveston Parish Historical Society. April-May, a BAC exhibition at Thornbury & District Museum. Further details at www.thornburymuseum.org.uk

An Exhibition on the Bristol Aeroplane Company and its legacy. April– June at Frenchay Village Museum (Tuckett Museum) Further details at www.frenchaymuseum.org.uk or contact John Norton [REDACTED].

Lecture: The History of the Bristol Blenheim by Patrick Hassell on Tue.18 May at Yate & District Heritage Centre. Pre-booking essential, contact David Hardill [REDACTED] Further details at David.hardill@southglos.gov.uk

Bristol Aero Collection will have extended opening hours from Sat.29 May till Mon. 07 June, with special events taking place over the ten days. Further details at www.bristolaero.com

From the Socsial Secretary

SPRING DAY OUT TO SALISBURY WEDNESDAY 28TH APRIL 2010

A ONE AND HALF HOUR BLUE BADGE CONDUCTED TOUR OF THE CITY HAS BEEN ARRANGED. THE COST OF THIS TOUR HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN THE OVERALL COST.

DEPARTURE TIMES TO BE ADVISED.

PLEASE RESERVE.....SEATS AT A COST OF £14. 50 PER SEAT.

NAME(S).....TEL NO.....

PLEASE ENCLOSE S.A.E. AND CHEQUE PAYABLE TO R.M.S.A. TO DAVE CURTIS, [REDACTED]

CLOSING DATE FOR BOOKINGS 20TH APRIL 2010.

SUMMER DAY OUT TO R.H.S. WISLEY THURSDAY 8TH JULY 2010.

PLEASE RESERVE.....SEATS AT A COST OF £24. 50 PER SEAT. THIS PRICE INCLUDES ENTRANCE FEE. FOR MEMBERS OF THE R.H.S. THE COST IS £17 00.

NAMES.....TEL NO.....

MEMBERSHIP NO. OF THE R.H.S.....

DEPARTURE TIMES TO BE ADVISED.

PLEASE ENCLOSE S.A.E. AND CHEQUE PAYABLE TO R.M.S.A. TO DAVE CURTIS, [REDACTED]

CLOSING DATE FOR BOOKINGS 1ST JULY 2010.

OCTOBER SHORT BREAK BEST WESTERN ROSE AND CROWN HOTEL, TONBRIDGE, KENT.

Monday 11th October 2010 to 15th October 2010. (4 nights)

Please reserve the following accommodation:-

Names.....Tel. NO.....

(Double/Twin/Single (please indicate as applicable)

The overall cost is approx £263. 00 (40 paying passengers), £290. 00 (30 paying passengers).

No single supplement subject to availability. If there are no singles available, there is a charge of £60 00 per person.

A deposit of £40 00 is required per person. £9 00 per person is required to cover insurance (Compulsory unless you have your own travel insurance) is required.

Overall and insurance cost will be adjusted when finalized. SEPARATE CHEQUES TO COVER DEPOSIT AND INSURANCE ARE REQUIRED MADE PAYABLE TO R.M.S.A.

PLEASE SEND A.S.A.P. (NOT LATER THAN 31ST MARCH 2010) AND INCLUDE

S.A.E. TO:-

DAVE CURTIS, [REDACTED]

Arrangements are in hand for a visit to the A380 Wing Production Line at Chester in the late Spring/Early Summer of 2010. If you are interested in this day out please complete the form below:-

Name.....Tel. No.....

Address.....

No. of seats required.

Please forward to:- DAVE CURTIS, [REDACTED]

Trials and Tribulations in Toulouse by Rodney Farmer

1. How it started.

It was late winter in 1967, I was working as a section leader design draughtsman in No 7DO and I was proud to be a member of the structures group under Roy Lawrence.

A rumour was going around the office that the 'powers-that-be' were looking to set up a UK design group in Toulouse to produce repair and concession drawings to cover design/build problems on the pre-production Concorde 01.

The background to this was that for the prototype 001, our Sud Aviation design friends were producing all these drawings on our behalf (under the supervision of a small group of liaison engineers) and submitting huge invoices to BAC.

Those 'powers-that-be' led by Fred Pollicutt had decided it would be much cheaper to set up a BAC design group in Toulouse for the preparation and issue of those drawings.

At the time, I was just curious, as the many rumours that swept through the office in those days almost made it worthwhile turning up for work!! – The pay certainly didn't!!

Anyway, it turned out that quite a few of the established 'seniors' in the office had been approached to lead this new group and had turned it down for a variety of reasons. After all, re-locating to Toulouse for a 3 year secondment was not everyone's idea of fun, given family commitments and the rest.

I well remember being called into RL's office late one afternoon, and after some 'stately dancing' the subject of this new post was raised and it was suggested that this would be a good opportunity for me to consider and could I let him know my answer the next day.

Now, of course, I realised that I had

been approached because none of the 'seniors' had accepted the position, so for me, it was going to be difficult, because in those days, it was well known that if you did not accept such offers you could be overlooked for future opportunities.

At the time, I had two young children of pre-school age, so turning the job down on the grounds of schooling was not an option. That evening I discussed the situation with my Wife, who was less than keen on giving up her friends and interests for 3 years.

So I came to work the next day with a 'fool-proof' strategy of putting forward a preposterous set of conditions which I felt sure would be rejected thus giving me a way out. These conditions included a huge pay increase, and promotion to management staff grade Cat B. The coup-de-grace being that I wanted a company car for the duration of the secondment (not a shared 'pool' car).

Armed with my 'fool-proof' strategy, I duly presented myself in RL's office at the appointed time, having rehearsed the strategy and considered the likely outcomes. I was invited to sit down and without any preamble RL told me that I would be given a 20% increase in salary together with substantial tax-free expenses, a promotion to Cat B and a car for company and own private use – the strategy was no more!!

I returned home that evening and told my wife that we would be leaving for Toulouse within ten days. So we set about renting out our house and learning some basic French for survival purposes – we were not to know that our induction into the French way of life was to be marred by French politics.

Within 10 days I found myself driving en-route to Toulouse with enough French to book into a hotel and order 'bif steak and frites' (it was a two day drive – pre-auto routes).

I aimed to arrive in Toulouse at about 4:30pm, thinking that this would be a quiet part of the day, I knew that I had to follow the signs to Centre Ville and then having crossed the Canal du Midi, turn immediately right and park beside the Canal opposite the Hotel Bristol where I had a reservation for 2 weeks. In the event, the traffic was horrendous and the standard of driving got progressively worse the nearer I got to Toulouse. By the time I arrived I was a nervous wreck, and the car stayed parked for the entire two weeks I was in the hotel. Those who know Toulouse and the Hotel Bristol will recall a building on the street corner opposite, I suppose 'red light' would be the best way to describe it, followed by the word 'interesting'.

My wife arrived two weeks later by HS125, in the intervening time, I had rented a bungalow in Colomiers and had organised all the furniture from a huge out of town cash-and-carry store, having hired a large van to collect it and so we commenced our secondment in Toulouse.

2. Getting established.

The grand plan was that my team of 15 designers were to follow some two weeks after I arrived, giving me time to set up our small design office and getting to know the ropes. My local boss was Joe Bresse, a swarthy down-to-earth Breton, who was in charge of the Bureaux de Mise au Point, now universally known as the MAP office.

On my first Monday in the office at St. Martin, I was duly presented to JB who seconded one of his underlings to show me around. What I was about to discover was quite unexpected. It transpired that Sud Aviation had been told of BACs' intentions to set up their own office some considerable time earlier, and had decided to stop work from that date on any response to litiges (query sheets) or derogations

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(concessions) – all drawing work having been terminated - they were upset at losing their nice little earner and deeply suspicious of me and my team – job losses I think were on the cards!!

I was presented with a huge pile of these unanswered papers, all handwritten in French, literally hundreds of them. To make matters worse, only one member of my team (Chris Calder) had a working understanding of the language – he was a very keen cyclist and had learnt it French cycling magazines – he was to be a life-saver for our team, and I shall be forever indebted to him for his help.

I was also informed that we were expected to reply to these documents in French, which of course was quite impossible – no Google Translate in those days! Drawing dimensions were to be in metric, which was not too much of a problem because we were used to putting dual dimensioning on BAC produced Concorde drawings. Limits and fits however, could be a bit problematical. JB pre-empted my request for a full time translator by letting it be known that this service was not going to be provided – no time to think of a strategy here!!

I was then taken to the area of the office, where we were going to be stationed, on that day it was completely devoid of any office furniture. The next day I was house hunting and so it was on day three, that I arrived in the office to find that all our SUD provided office furniture,

desks, tables, drawing boards etc. had arrived. What I really mean is, it was just dumped in our allotted area as it was delivered.

I surveyed the scene with dismay, because a more decrepit load of junk would have been hard for anyone to find. Broken down swivel chairs, desks standing at ungainly angles and a set of drawing boards only just about standing with most having incomplete drafting machines or none at all except for the mounting brackets.

How would my team, which was due to arrive in ten days time, react to this welcome?

I decided that my only option was to confront JB. Now JB was not a man to be messed with, but I decided that a direct approach was the best ploy, and I invited him to come with me and view the sad spectacle of our office furniture and to reflect on how it would appear to HIS new team. (Anglo/French diplomacy probably began here - I think we were still arguing at government level about the spelling of Concorde - with the 'e' or without).

JB took one look at the sight before him and yelled at one of his minions, I of course could not understand a word of what was being said, but body language is much the same anywhere in the world and I rather gathered that JB had had no idea about what furniture was being made available to us. He turned to me and said it would all be sorted by the following Monday. I decided that I would put off telling s him we were going to reply to the litiges and derogations in Eng-

lish until the following week – even at the young age of 28, I was not that daft!!

The next Monday came and I arrived to find a complete office – laid out with spanking brand new furniture, desks, chairs, filing cabinets and drawing boards you could die for.

I decided we would try to answer the documentation in French!!!!

On the domestic front, my family duly arrived and were introduced to the bungalow at 6 Chemin de Fer, which was to be 'home' for the next 3 years and a pre-school place (Maternal), was found for my eldest child.

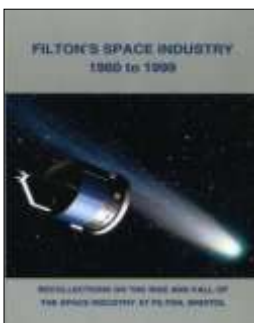
We soon met our French neighbours, one being the owner of our bungalow, and the other, a pilot flying DC3s in North Africa, with two cracking teenage daughters – I looked forward to teaching them English!!!!

And so we were all set for a French way-of-life which we regarded with a mixture of excitement and trepidation.

To be continued...

The *Bristol Aero Collection* has recently published the following:

FILTON'S SPACE INDUSTRY – 1960 to 1999 Recollections of the Rise and Fall of the Space Industry at Filton, Bristol



65pp in A5 format. Space activities started with the Bristol Aeroplane Company and continued in its successor companies, BAC and BAe, and eventually finished under the ownership of Matra Marconi Space. The book is a compilation of recollections from people who worked in Filton's Space industry and highlights the background and history of the Filton projects - successes and disappointments - from the perspective of management and engineering.

Price £5.95 plus £0.85 p&p. Make cheque payable to the Bristol Aero Collection – available from W J Ainsley, 5 Jenner Close, Chipping Sodbury, S Glos BS37 6NL

Anyone interested in looking at articles in past RMSA Newsletters? We have them going back to issue 65 (Summer 2004) so far, in the archive on our web site. Our websites 'easyread' Article Index is reproduced below.

Rodney is currently archiving Newsletter articles going back to 1992 on the site. Those are the earliest ones we have. It looks like though, that the RMSA could go back to 1980. If anyone has by chance, got any copies going back to those days, we would be grateful if you will send them to us for inclusion in the archive, address details are on the back page. They will of course be returned to you. Many Thanks. Ed.

RMSA Newsletters - Article Index				
To access newsletter articles visit the RMSA Web Site at: www.baermsa.org.uk				
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	67	9	Bristol Enigma	Doug Holdaway
Autumn 2004	66	2	Brabazon and On (Part 2)	Tony Wilkey
	66	4	Electricians (Part 1)	Ted Talbot
	66	6	Cowes	Jeff Brackstone
	66	6	Princess Flying Boat	Ron Frost
	66	7	Cheap at half the price	Reg Hurd
	66	8	A Date with a Tractor	John Payne
	66	10	Summer Day Out - Somerset Surprise	Bill Brand
Summer 2004	65	3	An Exciting Flight	Stan Lock
	65	6	Brabazon and On (Part 1)	Tony Wilkey
	65	7	Early Warnings of Supersonic Problems (Part 1)	Ted Talbot
	65	9	We are Survivors	Tom King
	65	9	Flying Boats	Sinclair Wilson
	65	10	Spring Day Out - Cardiff Bay	David Welsford

Last Autumn Newsletter's front page photo of a Bloodhound missile stirred the memories of some of our ex-Dynamics members, provoking a number of comments. The letter copied here, received from Mr C. C. Halton and now living in Australia is typical.

I must apologise for the poor print reproduction. Reducing the letter to A5, scanning and page number limitations took their toll, I'm afraid.

Ed.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

10 January 2010

Dear Mr Tooze

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

The photograph of the RAAF Bloodhound I in the museum in Adelaide reminded me that in the numerous articles I had read during 2009 relating to the 100th anniversary of the start of aero engineering in the U.K. there had only been the occasional reference to the development of Guided Weapons and (later) Space Vehicles.

David Farrar usually spends the first week of January on holiday at a coastal resort south of Eden on the NSW/Victoria border and I had already arranged to have dinner with him while he was there.

The attached copy of the letter to the Editor of the RAeS 'Aerospace Professional', written after that dinner, may be of interest to (many) members of RMSA.

[REDACTED]

C.C. Halton

6 January 2010

Dear Editor

As a member of the Australian Division of the RAeS who, after completing 'under and postgraduate' studies at Queen Mary College, University of London joined the then Bristol Aeroplane Company (BAC) in the 'Cold War' period after the Second World War, I have watched, with pleasure, the various initiatives that the Society has taken in the UK to celebrate the first 100 years.

Understandably the emphasis has been on Civil and Military Aircraft, including their airframes and engines. However I think that it is disappointing that there has been so little mention of the contribution that the UK industry made to the post war development of guided weapons and space vehicles.

After earlier work at RAE, 1949 proved to be a crucial year. The UK Government decided that a number of companies, not all drawn from the existing Aircraft Industry, should be invited to participate.

One of those that accepted the Government's invitation was BAC, already a prominent manufacturer of airframes and aeroengines. The Company agreed with the Government that it should concentrate on the development of Surface to Air Guided Weapon Systems.

By the end of 1949 there also agreement that, after rockets had been used to attain supersonic flight, the company's engine expertise should be focussed on the development of ramjets for the cruise phase. Equally important was the choice, supported by the Government, of Ferranti to work with BAC on the development of 'semi active homing' guidance and the related ground based systems.

Several series of Test Vehicles were flown, initially the Coastal Range near Aberporth was used but, by the time I joined Guided Weapons Division in August 1955, test flights of the XTV 5 series were concentrated at Woomera.

The test vehicles were built in the UK, shipped out to Australia while the trials engineers responsible for the tests to be undertaken with that specific 'round' were flown out to Adelaide. The detailed records of the pre-flight checks as well as the flight trial itself were taken back to the UK for more detailed analysis and the results fed back into the design and manufacturing teams for any necessary action.

When I joined the Aerodynamics Group I kept hearing references to Job 1220. It was sometime before I realised that that was part of the 'code' used to avoid drawing too

much attention to what David Farrar's project team was really committed to achieving. In 1955 we were beginning to talk about 'Red Duster' and the XRD1 series of test vehicles, followed later on, by XRD 2.

By 1958 flight trials at Woomera had demonstrated that Red Duster could hit airborne targets at a variety of altitudes and range and, equally importantly, the Royal Air Force was satisfied the complete weapon system met the operational requirement.

However there was still one important decision to be made. The Bristol 'tradition' required all projects that had successfully completed development to be named B*****.

Because the project used semi active guidance and the vehicle was 'locked on' to the target before launch Red Duster became BLOODHOUND.

The initial deployment of the Bloodhound 1 weapon system took place in the second half of 1958 and related to the defence of Britain's nuclear deterrent. The first operational weapon section was commissioned at North Coates RAF Station in October 1958.

The Bloodhound 1 weapon system was also sold to the Defence Forces of Sweden and Australia. At a later stage Sweden also bought Bloodhound 2 as did Switzerland and the UK.

In 2010, more than 60 years after the start of Job 1220, I understand that there are still some 1800 engineers, technicians and system specialists working on guided weapons and space projects at Filton. Fortunately the buildings they occupy are much more modern than those used for the first twenty/thirty years and they are still within the site boundary!

I understand that Filton is the only remaining location in the UK where there is still a physical presence directly related to the decisions made by the UK Government in 1949.

Recently I have seen references to plans to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the launch of the initial predecessor of the Bristol Aeroplane Company at Filton. I hope that those plans give due credit to the Guided Weapons and Space activities that have now completed 60 years of continuous and profitable activity at Filton.

Finally I must mention David Farrar the young aeronautical engineer who must be given pride of place among the many who have made major contributions to Guided Weapons and Space at Filton.

David was born in London in 1921. Going up to Cambridge in 1939 in his second year he passed the Mechanical Sciences Tripos First Class with distinctions and, as part of the war effort, was assigned to the Bristol Aircraft Company. By the age of 25 he was in charge of the structural design of the Bristol Brabazon, Britain's largest landplane.

When, in 1949, BAC agreed to be involved in the design of a surface to air guided weapon, David was nominated to be one of the senior members of the new Guided Weapons Department. A few weeks later the designated head of the new team was killed during a flight test of a Bristol Freighter and David was chosen to replace him.


David remained head of the GW department through the various organisational changes within the Aerospace Industry until, in the mid 1960s, a single GW Division was formed within British Aircraft Corporation. Although appointed Technical Director of the Division David was not comfortable with the new arrangements and he transferred to the Aircraft Division as Engineering Director, Concorde at Bristol.

He received the OBE for his work on Bloodhound 1 and the teams which he led received four Queens Awards for exports and technology. He was the first Chairman of the Society of British Aircraft Constructors Guided Weapons Committee, a member of the Royal Aeronautical Society Council and served on many professional committees.

In retirement he moved to live in Victoria, Australia but visits the U.K. almost every year. I had dinner with him earlier this month and can report that he remains in good health, is very active and retains a keen interest in all things aeronautical.

I am sure he would be delighted to contribute if the organisers of BAC's 100th were interested in giving appropriate recognition to Filton's contribution to Guided Weapons and Space Projects since WW2.

Yours Sincerely


C.C.Halton CBE, MSc., FRAeS,

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

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