

UPDATE

CONTROL COLUMN 2013

THE E-MAGAZINE OF THE AEROPLANE COLLECTION

1962 - 2012 50 YEARS OF AVIATION PRESERVATION IN THE NORTHWEST
NUMBER 3 ISSUE 2 2013



Ready for the Lord Mayors Procession in Manchester

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www.theaeroplanecollection.org



NEWS FROM HUT 28

The only project on the go at the present time is the restoration of the Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire ready to go on loan to Sywell Aviation Museum at Sywell Aerodrome, Northamptonshire, for display with their Hawker Hunter.



NEWS FROM THE WEBMASTER

Work on the Website progresses slowly, Facebook link has been added and Flickr. Please feel free to add comments to the Facebook site. Flickr will be used to record trips out and aeroplanes we own and have been saved by us.



BA Swallow G-AEVZ will feature in the saved list and now based in Spain. Seen here at Redhill in Surrey,

Meetings and Events

Trustees Meetings at
Castle Park Arts Centre
off Fountain Lane
Frodsham, Cheshire
Last Monday each month

Hooton Park
Open days
Last Sunday each month
1:00pm till 3:00pm

Social Evenings
At Frodsham
4 times a year
Check with the Secretary
For dates

WHO'S WHO AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

Chairman & Archivist
Colin Schroeder
Hilbre
6 Oakdale Drive
Greasby
Wirral
CH49 3PZ
T: 0151 678 7798
E:colinschroeder@hotmail.com

Vice Chairman & Website Co-Ordinator
John Davidson
38 St. Marks Avenue,
Altrincham,
Cheshire.
WA14 4JB
T: 07939 605354
E:john.davidson1@yahoo.com

Secretary
Dave Arkle
46 Sylvan Avenue
Altrincham
Cheshire
WA15 6AB
T: 0161 969 2697
E:d.arkle@ntlworld.com

Treasurer
Graham F Sparkes
7 Mayfield Avenue, Stretford,
Manchester. M32 9HL
T: 0161 866 8255
E:mayfieldsparkes@aol.com

Registrar
Mike Davey
33 Ennisdale Drive, West Kirby,
Wirral. CH48 9UE
T: 0151 625 9971
E:michael.davey10@virgin.net

Flying Officer William Alan Alderson Dutton RAF (Retd)

‘Seventy Years of Flying’

My first flight was in 1935 in an Avro 504 with a second in a Leopard Moth from Speke (now John Lennon International Airport) to Hooton Park in 1937. I joined the RAF in 1943 and did my first flying with them from the King’s private airfield in Windsor Great Park on Tiger Moths. I was then posted overseas to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) for the rest of my flying training – getting my ‘wings’ there before being posted up to Cairo and then on to Jerusalem for a spell before going down near the coast to RAF Lydda (now Ben Gurion International Airport).

By now the European war was finishing but we found ourselves involved in the Arab/Israeli conflict. Our two main jobs there were firstly to fly military and civil VIPs around the Middle East including Palestine, Egypt, Damascus, Beirut, Cyprus and TranJordan.

Our second responsibility was to shadow Jewish refugee ships trying to reach Haifa and patrolling roads and railways to look for terrorist activity – it was a time when we were ‘pig in the middle’ and both sides wanted us out. We were equipped with Avro Anson 12, 19 and 21’s, Percival Proctors, Fairchild Argus 2 and 3’s and Auster 3 and 5’s. After completing my three years overseas posting I came home to be posted to RAF Finningley giving ATC cadets flying experience in Ansons.

By now the wars were over and after a spell as Leading Observer in the Royal Observer Corps I returned to flying at 19 RFS, Woodvale flying DH Chipmunks. I followed this becoming a radar Fighter controller with 3611 FCU here and in Germany, where we were tasked with keeping Supermarine Spitfires and Gloster Meteors from getting too near the Russian border!

Just for interest, I have flown in seventeen types of aeroplane as pilot and in fifty two types as supernumary crew or passenger.

So there we are – flying gets in your bones once you are bitten.



Bill with Auster 3 at Lydda

Bill Dutton reflects on one operation he was involved in.

Field Marshall Sir Bernard Montgomery visits.

The date, according to my log book, was June 15th, 1946.

Every night came news reports of attacks by the IZL or the Stern gang on various installations of the Army and Air Force throughout Palestine. On that day Field Marshall Sir Bernard Montgomery was arriving in Palestine at Lydda and was to be flown up by AHQ Levant Communications Flight to the small air strip at Kolundia some seven miles north of Jerusalem. Our VIP Pilot F/O Dixon would be picking up the Field Marshall in Anson XII PH605 at 1300 hours to arrive at Kolundia at 1320. I was detailed to fly our Auster V 627 up to Kolundia, there to collect two officers of the Royal Air Force Regiment and fly along the road between Kolundia and Jerusalem to ensure that no terrorists were hiding on either side of the road or in the surrounding hills to attack the Field Marshalls car. Although at this time the Army had its own Austers, they had not yet been posted out to Palestine and it was therefore our job to provide such light aircraft and pilots as necessary for such work. The Auster should have been ideal for spotting work in this very hilly country to the east of the Plain of Sharon, but we had already experienced some difficulty with them due apparently to the fact that high grade octane petrol did not suit the tiny four cylinder Lycoming engines.

The type of trouble we were having was illustrated very vividly to me on this flight of June 15th. I took off from Lydda and bounced my way in to the hot air currents up to Kolundia. Here I collected my two R.A.F. Regiment Officers and we were soon airborne again to follow the road through to Jerusalem at a height of some 50 feet. Within a few minutes my two Regiment Officers had opened their voluminous maps and in the confined space of our cabin there was very little room for me to see out at all! However, my two friends seemed to know exactly what they were doing and I put myself entirely at their disposal to fly them where they wanted and give them the fullest co-operation in ensuring that the mission was successfully carried out.

We flew the length of the road to within a mile or so of the boundaries of Jerusalem, but there we had to turn back as no aircraft were allowed to fly over the Holy City. Having ensured that the roads and the fields on either side were clear to the best of our knowledge, we headed eastwards into the hills in order to take in the wider aspect of the operation. After some ten minutes flying, all the time at something between 25 and 50 feet above the ground, I found myself in a long valley with hills towering above me.

To be continued

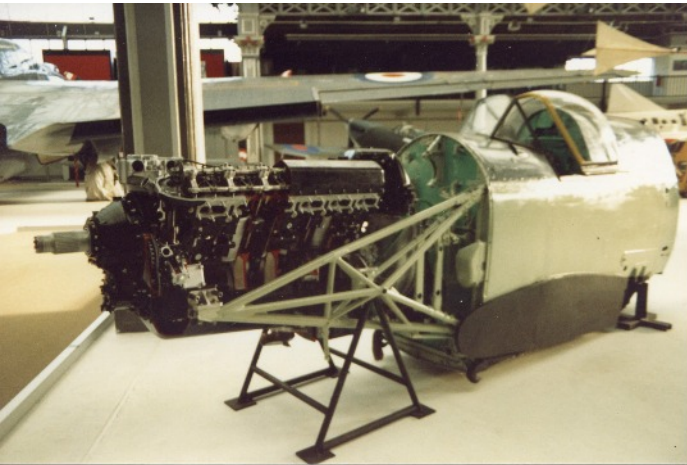
1983 - 2013

30 years of the Air & Space Gallery in Manchester

This year commemorates the 30th anniversary of the Air & Space Gallery at the Museum of Science & Industry in Manchester (MOSI). Many TAC members were also members of the Friends of the Air & Space Museum. It is proposed to issue a commemorative addition of Liverpool Road News, copies will be available for TAC members.



SPOT THE MEMBERS



Fairey Firefly Cockpit & engine - Scottish Aviation Pioneer



Swiss Air Force DH Vampire - General view of the gallery



Landican Liberator CrashCont'd

By Colin Schroeder

Chairman - The Aeroplane Collection

Thoroughness of the investigation

Only three weeks before, on September 27th, the 445th had suffered the highest group loss in 8th Air Force history. Out of 37 B-24s dispatched on a mission to industrial targets at Kassel, no less than 30 were lost and only four made it all the way back to Tibenham. Through a navigational error, the 445th became separated from the bomber stream and friendly fighter cover and were singled out by waves of Fw.190s and Bf.109s. A total of 236 men were reported missing and 112 of them were later confirmed as killed in action. The effect on morale must have been devastating but the following day the 445th contributed 10 aircraft to another raid on Kassel, this time without loss. With this background perhaps a lesser disaster was not investigated as thoroughly as it should have been?

There had also been, just eight weeks earlier. Another Liberator crash 30 miles away at Freckleton, when 57 people had been killed, 35 of the British casualties, were children. Had this been in the minds of the investigators and, thus, the reason why, with all-American casualties, the incident was apparently, so perfunctorily investigated? Were they just relieved not to be looking at another 'Freckleton'?

Present day

Doug Darroch never forgot the accident and was determined he would put up a memorial to the dead. Doug and his family organised a tribute. It is located on a small triangle of land donated by David Williams, a local monumental mason on the North Cheshire Trading Estate, at Junction 3 off the M53 Motorway not far from the crash site. On this Estate, at the side of Brook Way is a two-ton granite stone, given free of charge by a North Wales quarry, with David Williams carving the inscriptions. In October 1996, Howard Mortimer organised the unveiling of the memorial by Mayor Myrra Lea and its dedication by Rev. Canon Alan Poulter Rural Dean of Birkenhead. It was witnessed by a small gathering, which included Lieutenant Colonel Patrick D. Mullan Assistant Air Attaché at the American Embassy and eyewitnesses of the crash. The inscription on the plaque reads: *'In memory of the 24 American Servicemen of the U.S. Army Air Force who died when their aircraft exploded in mid-air over these fields on 18 October 1944'*

During 2001 Doug arranged for an additional plaque containing all their names from a list supplied by the American Embassy. This list however contained the names of all the American airman killed on the Wirral in October 1944, and included that of 2nd Lt Jay F. Simpson, killed in a P-47 Thunderbolt that crashed on a test flight from Burtonwood on 9th October 1944 a few miles away at Saughall Massie. Simpson's name was added in error, but it seemed appropriate to leave it in situ. Surprisingly the M53 Motorway misses all the fields into which the wreckage fell, To day there is still a large depression, where the major portion of the fuselage fell and small waterlogged pit, presumably where the wing section was dug out and which seems to have been diligently avoided by the farmer ever since. The cornfield has a large area of distinct colouring where the engines fell and burned.



Doug Darroch beside the memorial on the North Cheshire Trading Estate

Final thought

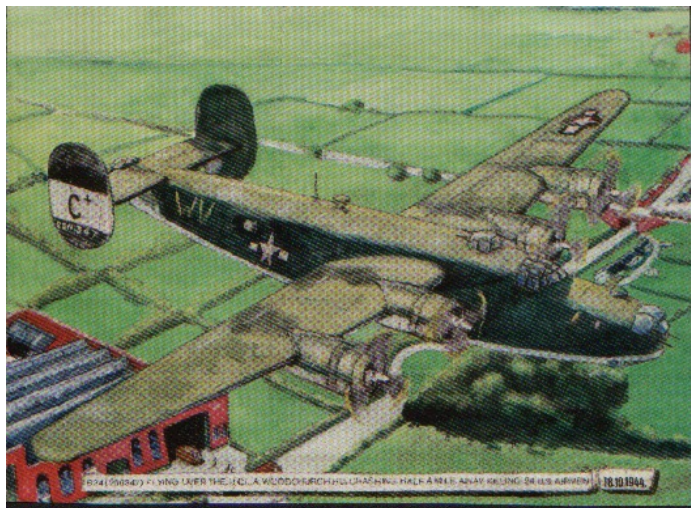
Captain Driscoll's crew were comparatively senior and probably operational veterans; however, the passenger crews consisted mainly of junior ranks recently arrived replacement crews, detailed for this duty to gain experience of flying in UK conditions. The debacle suffered by 445th Bomb Group would imply that squadrons of that group would have received many replacement crews in early October. This born out by the history of one of the passengers 2nd Lt Blake's aged 21, the son of Mr and Mrs Henry G Blake, from Prattville, Alabama. He was among the graduating class at the Blytheville Army Air Field, Arkansas in April 1944 he was commissioned as a second lieutenant and awarded the silver wings of a military pilot.

Landican Liberator CrashCont'd
 By Colin Schroeder
 Chairman - The Aeroplane Collection

He had travelled to the UK on the 15th September 1944 to be killed on this fateful flight.

The true facts will never be known, but it is worth bearing in mind that the plane was flying southeast over Oxton when the first 'explosion' occurred, possibly a lightning strike, causing minor damage and throwing out small bits of wreckage. The pilot realising that he was in trouble and, being over a built-up area, could have turned sharply right (south west) towards Storeton and Landican and their open fields. Then, almost immediately the second massive explosion, probably a gas explosion, blew the plane apart with the result as graphically described. Had it crashed on a densely built-up area, with its large fuel load, the result could have been carnage. Thus, it could be that Captain William Driscoll may have saved many innocent residents of Bebington or Port Sunlight from a dreadful fate, just as schools were letting out.

Captain Driscoll and Lt Olson were assigned to the 703rd Bomber Squadron, but the unit's of the other casualties is not known other than Sgt Smith who was with 565th Bomber Squadron part of the 389th Bomber Group based at Shipdham.



Painting by the late Mike Carrol of the Liberator over the UCLA building Woodchurch Road, now the site of the ASDA store.

Compiled from articles by David J. Smith in Rapide Iss. 2 & 3 and the Wirral Champion by Colin Schroeder colinschroeder@hotmail.com 0151-678-7798, 07765-077385

Crew

Captain William Driscoll	0-800852
Flt Officer Roy W. Sechler	T-62887
1 st Lt Harold W. Olson	0-705779

Passengers

1 st Lt Vincent P. Hamilton	0-712560	Navigator
1 st Lt John P. Hennessey	0-700151	Navigator
1 st Lt William F. Price	0-687910	Navigator
1 st Lt Reginald H. Gehman	0-1637490	Signal Corp
2 nd Lt Richard M. Blake	0-828371	Pilot
2 nd Lt Edward F. Brick	0-206103	Navigator
2 nd Lt George J. Leary	0-170052	Navigator
2 nd Lt Roland F. Mosher	0-836627	Pilot
2 nd Lt Stephen J. Nagy	0-833971	Pilot
2 nd Lt Olesen H. Tenney	0-827078	Pilot
2 nd Lt Ralph G. Wills	0-827111	Pilot
2 nd Lt Loran A. Umpleby	0-769082	Navigator
T/Sgt Robert E. Boyd	17029961	Engineer
T/Sgt Robert L. Marshall	13111851	Radio Operator
T/Sgt James E. Patterson	17157473	Engineer
T/Sgt Floyd K. Relyea	32662360	Radio Operator
Sgt Joseph L. Arrigotti	13104959	Radio Operator
Sgt Albert Engasser	32926406	Engineer
Sgt Fredrick L. Mootz	32912698	Radio Operator
Sgt George S. Moss	33719171	Engineer
Sgt Clarence K. Smith	13127331	Signal Corp



THE EDITOR GOES WALKABOUT

PICTURES FROM THE PAST



On Mark Marksman (Modified Douglas B-26) & Bristol Britannia about to be scrapped both in the later 70's early 80's



Constellation awaits the axe man & Beech 18 passes through both at Coventry.



Avro Vulcan flypast at Woodford & Scimitars & Sea Vixens at Waddington