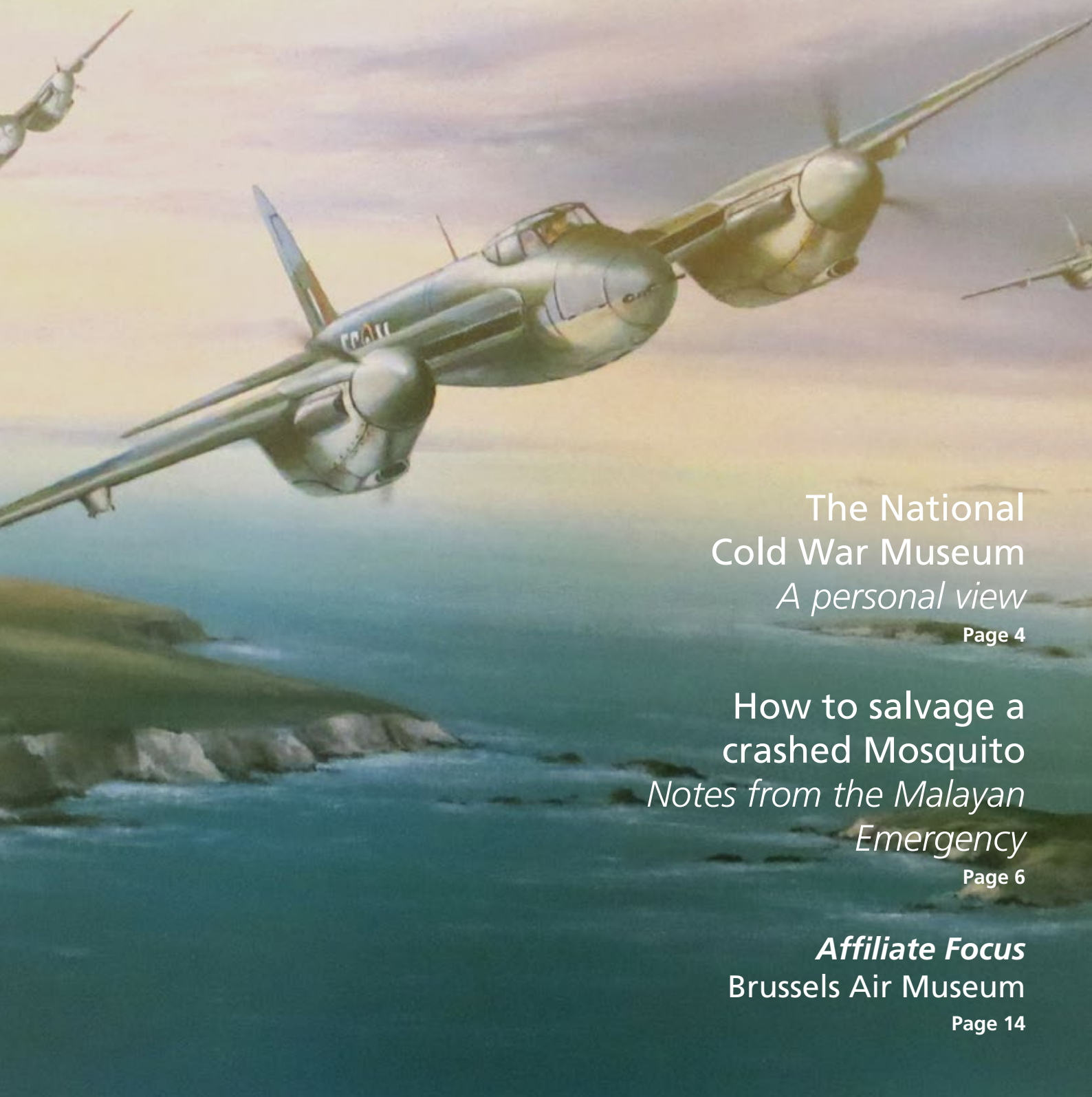
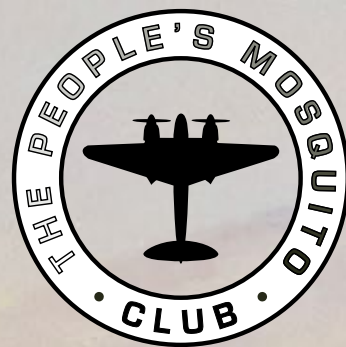


MOSSIE BITES

The quarterly journal of The People's Mosquito Club



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Cold War Museum
A personal view

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Welcome to Issue No.2

Happy New Year to all Members.

With the New Year now upon us it is very pleasing to look back at 2016 and see what a success it has been for The People's Mosquito with many new members joining The Club.

As you browse through this edition you will see we have shared members' letters which have been received in the past year. We thought it would be a nice idea to share them with fellow members, so with the permission of the letter writers we have included them for the first time in this edition of the Journal. We would like to make this a regular feature so if you have any stories you would like to share, albeit your own or stories told to you, together with any photographs, we would be most pleased to receive them. Please get in touch with me at membership@peoplesmosquito.org.uk

We are looking forward to the forthcoming year and to welcoming more new members to The Club. If you find yourself struggling with gift ideas please remember you are able to purchase a membership as a gift.

I hope you enjoy browsing through the Journal and enjoy your membership throughout 2017.

Thank you.

Sandra Pickford,
Club Membership Secretary,
The People's Mosquito Club

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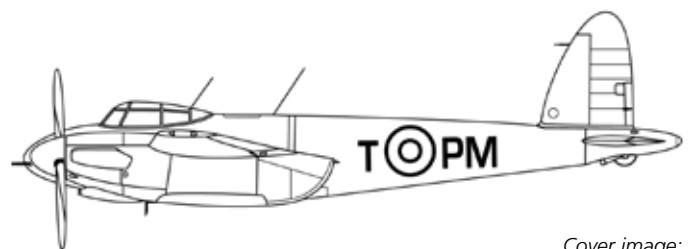
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Dates for your calendar

We are currently looking for articles and other material for Issue No. 3, which will be published in April. If you want to contribute a story, an article or photographs for inclusion, please forward these, by 28th February, to Sandra at membership@peoplesmosquito.org.uk.



Cover image:

'Across the Coast' by Jeremy Whitehouse (detail)

Copies of this print (23" x 16.5") will be available on our stand at events this year.

© Jeremy Whitehouse

A message from our Chairman

Dear Members,

Happy New Year and welcome to the second edition of 'Mossie Bites', the quarterly journal of The People's Mosquito Club.

2017 marks 75 years since the 'Mossie' entered squadron service with The Royal Air Force. As well as celebrating this landmark the whole team will be striving to take the project to a new sustainable level and for this we will be setting our target to fund the fuselage this year! No small task when you are talking £600K, but the tangible sight of those classic smooth lines we believe more people will envisage the aircraft back to life and support us. Therefore I may ask of you to work with us to push the 'Fuselage Fund' hard this year.

As we pledged in the first edition of the journal 'The Club' is aimed to give you more news of the project first, share information, member events and offers. Well, in terms of 'news first', we can share with you two significant updates.

*"..it is of
important
historical
relevance...
a fantastic
resource..."*

First of all we have some exciting news which, for reasons you will appreciate later, I cannot disclose fully at this stage. Apologies for this, but what we can share is that it is of important historical relevance and also will provide a fantastic resource for our project and put us more on the 'Map' within 'Mosquito Community'! Sorry for this teaser but as Club Members we will be sharing more details with you exclusively in the future. We will be announcing this news at our planned launch and press conference at The Royal Air Force Museum Hendon in March. Naturally as Club Members you are invited! Dates to be confirmed soon.

Secondly, on the anniversary of the launch of our Club, in fact on the Club's first birthday,

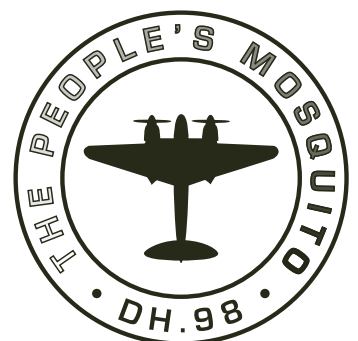
we thought it appropriate to have a party! So please mark May 20th in your diaries! You are all invited to the first 'Club Members' Day' at East Kirkby in Lincolnshire. Former RAF East Kirkby is the home of Avro Lancaster 'Just Jane' and The People's Mosquito is a close friend of this project. We are delighted to announce we will hold the first event in the main hanger at East Kirkby with 'Just Jane' providing a fantastic backdrop to our day. We will issue details of planned events and guest speakers very soon, but for now add May 20th to your diaries!



Thank you once again for your donation and for joining the Club and for your continued support - 'Together We Will Get Her Flying!'

**John Lilley,
Chairman & Managing Director,
The People's Mosquito**

January 2017





The National Cold War Exhibition *by Ross Sharp*

It may seem to be a little odd, but I intend to cover the Royal Air Force Museum's outpost at Cosford before the main museum at Hendon, and – just like the London establishment – it is such a huge venue that will have to be split into sections.

The museum at Cosford began as a storage area for items that could not be easily accommodated at Hendon, and as the RAF Museum's main conservation area – the successor to RAF Cardington (we'll cover that work separately). Obviously, aircraft and other objects move between the two sites, and this allows each museum to be 'refreshed' from time to time.

Now blossomed into a full-fledged museum in its own right, Cosford has set themes, a general collection, and, something the Hendon facility no longer has, some externally displayed aircraft (discounting the 'plastic' Hurricane and Spitfire at Hendon, and their attendant RAF Marine Branch displays). As well, Cosford has, housed in a specially constructed building, a magnificent collection of aircraft, vehicles and



missiles and more telling the story of the Cold War; this is what we will concentrate on, first.

The National Cold War Exhibition was opened in February, 2007 in a purpose-built, multi-level display building of futuristic design. The architects certainly managed to get away completely from the WW2 and 1950s era hangars which house the remainder of the collection.

For those of us who lived through the height of the Cold War, this exhibition brings back many memories, some of them rather frightening. I remember, as a young man, being just outside the perimeter of RAF Finningley when four Vulcans were scrambled in a thick cloud

"The museum at Cosford began as a storage area..."



of black exhaust smoke; all you hoped for was that it was not the 'real' thing. You can relive that very experience by watching a Vulcan scramble video, which plays inside the bomb bay of a Vulcan B.2. ; a H.P. Victor K.2 is nearby.

The Cold War exhibition makes surprising use of the vertical axis. Many museums have aircraft hanging from the roofs of larger

*"The story
of the Cold
War is boldly
told..."*

hangars, but this building mounts aircraft such as the Hunter T.7A at extreme angles, and a Lightning F.1 in a 'vertical climb' – very eye-catching.

There are rarities

aplenty, too, such as a Scottish Aviation Twin Pioneer, a H.P. Hastings and a prototype 'Skybolt' air-launched ICBM. I must admit that I am drawn to the only complete Vickers Valiant in existence, and a very fine Canadair Sabre F.4, which reminds one that the RAF was a Sabre user!

However, exhibits from the 'opposition' are there too, with both a MiG-15bis and a MiG-21PF on display.

The story of the Cold War is boldly told, with interactive displays and civilian and military artefacts being used, and flash points such as the Cuban Missile Crisis being well covered.

All in all, it would be easy to spend most of an afternoon studying this fascinating assemblage of objects including naval missiles,



English Electric Lightning F.1

AFVs and civilian exhibits. The National Cold War Museum at Cosford is simply 'required reading' – and yes, there is a fascinating online version!

www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org

RS

(Photographs by Ross Sharp)



Prototype 'Skybolt' air-launched ICBM



Avro Vulcan B.2 with 'Skybolt'



How to salvage a crashed Mosquito *by Ross Sharp*

It falls to few Royal Air Force Squadrons to make the last operational flight of a truly iconic RAF type, but No. 81 Squadron managed that feat twice, with both the Spitfire (in the shape of a PR.XIX) and the de Havilland Mosquito (with a PR.34a).



Post-war, following an earlier disbandment, No. 81 Squadron had been stood up again by the renumbering of No. 684 Squadron at RAF Seletar, Singapore. This iteration of the Squadron – from 1st September, 1946 – was initially equipped with the Spitfire PR.XIX then

Mosquito PR.34 (and some PR.34a) aircraft which were added to enable ultra-long missions to be accomplished. No. 81 was designated the Far East Reconnaissance Squadron, and as such began to undertake a large amount of strategic reconnaissance and aerial survey work. Among those areas surveyed were parts of Thailand and Java. The range of the Mosquito PR.34 – and especially the PR.34a – allowed 81 Sqn to cover an immense area, even as far as Northern Australia to the south-east and Japan to the north.

The outbreak of the Malayan Emergency on 16th June, 1948 caused a huge upsurge in operational activity for the Mosquitoes of 81 Sqn. Their part in the air warfare over the Malayan Peninsular – Operation Firedog – included aerial surveys and target identification for Royal Air Force and Commonwealth units such as Bristol Beaufighter TF.Xs of 45 Sqn, RAF,

and the excellent Avro Lincoln B.30/30As of No. 1 (Bomber) Squadron, RAAF. Incidentally, the campaign was officially labelled an 'Emergency' rather than a 'War', as to have called it the latter would have invalidated the extensive claims made by the Malayan rubber and tin industries against Lloyds insurance companies.

It was during the period of 'Operation Firedog' that a serious accident occurred to one of 81's Mosquitoes. RG262 burst a tyre and swung on landing at Kuala Lumpur Main on 10th September, 1954. After colliding with a group of trucks, it came to rest, as you see here. Originally built as a PR.34, it was issued to 540 Sqn, then passed to 237 OCU. RG262 was one of a small batch of Mosquitoes later selected for conversion to PR.34a standard, after which it was taken on charge by 81 Sqn.

Sadly, the impact with the parked trucks caused the death of one of the drivers. The pilot of RG262 was unharmed, but the navigator was injured; looking at the way the aircraft nose has been torn off, this is hardly surprising.

"No. 81 was designated the Far East Reconnaissance Squadron..."

We are very fortunate in that Peter Elliston, Royal Artillery (attached to 656 Sqn) was on hand, and able to provide us with this stunning image of the 81 Sqn machine.

All damaged/crashed aircraft, if they are not able to be recovered for repair, are subject to a salvage operation in situ. This can include the

safe removal of all ammunition/pyrotechnics (if carried), radio/radar equipment and other sensitive items and other major reusable units such as engines. Here we see a small salvage team working on the wreck of RG262. As you can see, the fuselage hatch is already open to give access to the rear camera installation and other items. However, that has clearly not proved adequate, and a large rectangular opening has been cut in the upper fuselage, to make the process of stripping out salvaged components easier. It is obvious that the aircraft was assessed as being beyond repair at this stage.

Another interesting point to note is that the dinghy box has already been removed from its location on the spine of the aircraft, immediately behind the cockpit canopy. These boxes were a 'line replaceable' unit (see photograph of dinghy box construction) containing a crew dinghy, complete with its related CO2 inflation cartridge. As such, they would have been recovered, if possible. One of the three members of the salvage crew has just removed the clear-view blister from the top of the cockpit canopy – this was a common feature on late-model Mosquito bombers and photo-reconnaissance machines. The blister would, again, be an item that could be returned to unit stores. Access to the cockpit, with its many re-useable instruments and gauges, would follow.

Two more technicians can be seen working on the starboard Rolls-Royce Merlin 114. It was customary to recovery the Merlins from a crashed Mosquito if they were in reasonable shape and accessible, as these were very valuable engines and could, in many cases, either be refurbished or yield very useful spares.

Fourteen months later, on 15th December, 1955, and one month after the first Gloster Meteor PR.10 replacement aircraft began to arrive, PG314, a PR.34a of 81 Sqn, performed the very last operational flight of a de Havilland Mosquito in RAF service, as part of the 'Firedog' mission. Thus ended a long and illustrious Royal Air Force frontline career for the Wooden Wonder.

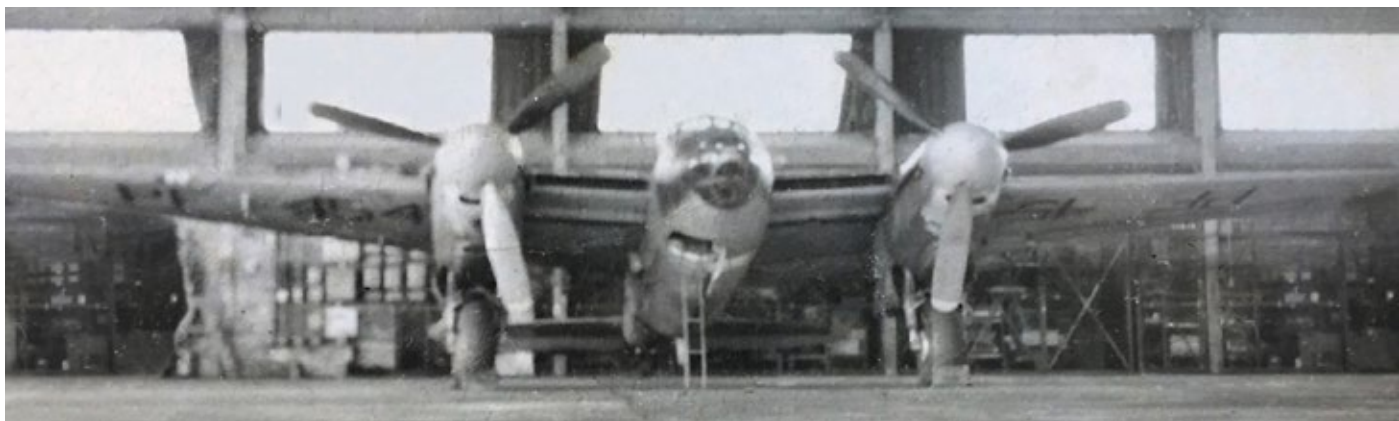
The People's Mosquito is immensely grateful to the Members of 656 Squadron Association for allowing us access to their archives and for the reproduction of their photographs, as well as throwing light on Mosquito operations in the Far East.

RS

"... a large rectangular opening has been cut in the upper fuselage..."



Photograph © Peter Ellison, RA, 656 Sqn Association



Mosquito Memories

Former L.A.C Norman Luff wrote to us to tell us about his days serving in RAF 1655 MTU.

Dear MIs Pickford,

Thank you for membership card and badge.

My pride and pleasure in membership of The People's Mosquito Club leads me to outline my reasons, so I will tell you my history starting with 1942 when I attended aircraft selection board at Oxford University, passed all the education requirements, and was bitterly disappointed when I failed the medical due to perforated eardrums, and was offered a choice of ground staff trades, leading to me arriving at 1655 MTU, as an instrument repairer.

The first function of the unit was to train experienced pilots and navigators to handle Mosquito's, but it was also a fully operational part of 8 group Pathfinder Force, under the command of Air Vice Marshal Bennett, the youngest Group Commander in the R.A.F., who I met on at least two occasions (not withstanding my lowly rank!). In fact when I was walking from Huntington (his headquarters) to camp, his staff car drew up and a flight sergeant jumped out and opened the rear door, saying "Get in boy!". I was a bit slow to realize that

A.V.M. was driving!

The second time I was about to do my daily inspection on one aircraft when who was in the pilot seat in immaculate white overalls? Believe it or not, the signature Bennett was in every trade's column of the form 700!

We speculated, when the bomb bay was enlarged to accommodate the four thousand

pound bomb, as to whether our "Mossies" would clear the airfield boundary, -we need not have worried!

The Mosquito did have a tendency to swing at take-off speed; many times we would be lazing on the airfield on a summer's day and would be alarmed to see an aircraft coming towards us at speed, once or twice the undercarriage collapsed. I can tell the story, so obviously I was not hit by one!

The pilots were blamed for this, there was a notice in the flight hut; Swing on take-off is due to finger trouble. The result is inevitably, posting! Sometime later I think the tailplane was modified, with a small amount of dihedral, to improve the stability, I'm going by memory, and as my age is now 91 yrs., it could be questionable!)

I don't think I need say more.

I must tell you about our C.O. Squadron Leader Ralston, known as 'Tunnel Buster' as he bombed two ends of a long tunnel, with a train in it! He also, in reply to the American friendly "shoot-up" of our control tower, flew towards theirs, cut one engine, and climbed vertically on one engine a perfect example of the capability of this remarkable aircraft!

Norman Luff (L.A.C.) airfields - Marham, Wyton, Warboys.

We responded to this by asking him if he would be happy to share more details. His reply follows.

Dear MIs Pickford,

Thank you for your letter. I was surprised (and

gratified) to learn that my letter was read by the Directors, I almost wrote flattered, until reference to my dictionary indicated insincerity, not one of my many faults!

I have no problems with my letter being shared, and if Ross Sharp feels it worthwhile to write, I will of course reply. I imagine my pleasure in writing about 1655 M T U was evident, it was a small unit, so this was a member of one club to members of another.

Because my father saddled me with his christian name, (Wilfred) in second place fortunately, it was soon known to all in the unit, it was corrupted to WOOF, and transferred to my jerkin, the sleeve-less leather "jacket" we all wore, so that was my "handle" to all ranks, for the rest of my time until I was "posted" overseas.

(A chap who worked in Repair and inspection painted R and I on his jerkin - "R and I", I don't think he realised the name he'd given himself.)

As you can imagine there was a lot of humour, some of it unintentional, e.g., the corporal "rigger" who replied to a question from the C.O., "I don't think so dear. Oh sorry, I thought I was speaking to my wife!"

Our Instrument section had two corporals, one educated at Sheffield Blue Coat school, and the other whose father owned a large timber concern, so we bathed in reflected glory!

This one was calibrating an oil pressure gauge, standing on steps beside one of the "Merlin" engines, and asked one of our "Harry"s, we had two both from London, "Bring the test box,"(very heavy) and bring my tools will you?" Harry said "what do you think I am, a xxxxxx pack horse?

Enough tales, ----- I went with my family to De Havilland's museum at Salisbury Hall in the summer, and I would say to members who haven't been that it's well worth a visit. One or two of the aircraft were open for you to clamber aboard, but as I'm disabled I had to forego that pleasure, but there's plenty to see!

Best wishes to all who have the patience to wade through my rambling,

Yours very sincerely,

Norman Luff

We were pleased to meet Reg Bayliss on our stand at Cosby in August. Reg worked on Mosquitos at 51MU Fradley (more usually referred to as RAF Lichfield) during the post-war period.

He has written to us twice and here we have the pleasure of sharing his correspondence with members.

To The Membership Secretary,

It was with great pleasure and joy to meet your team at Cosby during their Wartime weekend, at which I was a VIP guest in respect of the restoration of Mosquito RL249. During my service with the RAF in 46-48 I was stationed at 51MU Fradley, near Lichfield, as a flight mechanic servicing Mosquitos of all types from PR, night fighter with the dome nose and the preggie one that carried the big bomb. I went back to 51MU 5 years ago and my hangar is still there. Pity the 10 or so Mossies were not there.

I happened to have some B & W photos of the Mossies during my service there, which they were pleased to see and tried to photo them, I hope they come out. The Mossie and the Wellington were my two favourite planes. I managed to fly in the Wellington but sadly not the Mossie. I am in my 89th year and my wish would be to see both planes in the air as I believe there is a Wellington under restoration. I go to many wartime events in the Midlands area starting at Badsey, near Evesham, Toddington near Broadway, the Great Central Railway near Leicester and The Severn Valley Railway. I hope to meet up with your team at one of these events.*

Keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely,

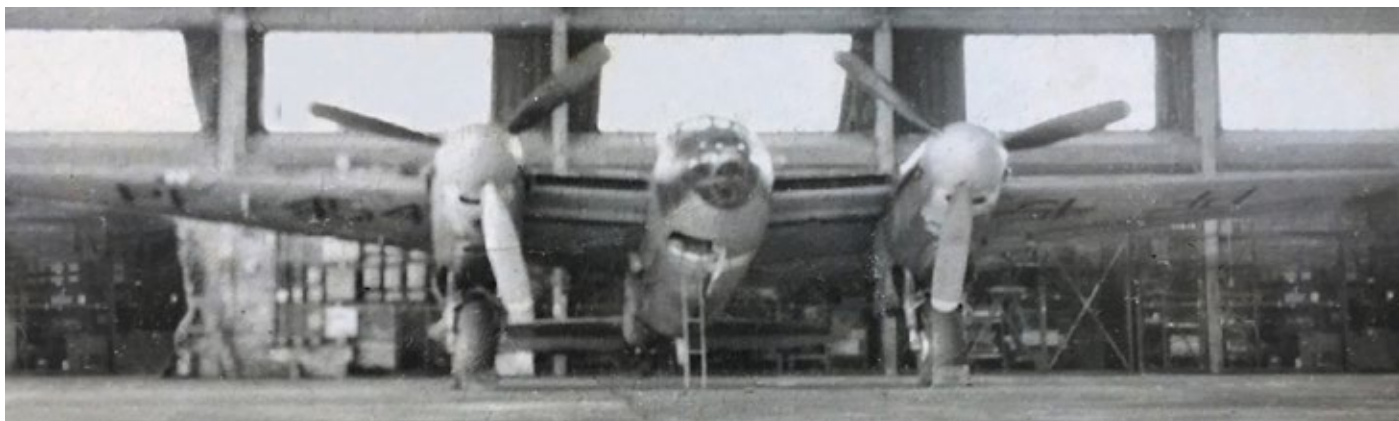
R. H. Bayliss (308467 AC1)

(*Ed's note: the photos did come out - see top left and below)

Here is Mr Bayliss's second letter:

Thank you for your kind letter of 5/10/16. I am very pleased the photos of the Mosquitos came out, they were over 70 years old! I have no objection in you sharing the contents of the letters and photos. I do not recall the last

cont./



Mosquito Memories

time a Mosquito flew, but I was on fire crew on the airfield at Fradley 51MU in May 48 just before I was demobbed and the test pilot had just landed. I asked if he was going off again and I was shortly being demobbed, but he said he was finished for the day but the CO had to keep his flying hours up and that the CO would take me up but sadly not in the Mossie, but an Airspeed Oxford. I don't think they trusted him with the Mossie and I was not surprised. I was glad when we landed in one piece after nearly missing the hangar on take off.

The CO I previously mentioned had all the camp in full kit drilling on one of the hottest days of summer. There were more men laid out on the side of the runway than were marching.

Even the Officers had to march. The MO pleaded with the CO to call a halt only to be ignored. This CO, Wing Commander Jackson had to attend the Nuremburg War Trials and I believe he was certified. I have no further knowledge whether that was true but a man not to be argued with.

I have not mentioned the Winter of 46-47 but that is another chapter.

I hope everything is going well with the project.

Yours very sincerely,

Reg Bayliss.

(Thanks to Vincent Hopper for photo retouching)





THE PEOPLE'S MOSQUITO

To Fly • To Educate • To Remember



Remembering - Douglas Frederick Withington

Mr John Simcox recently contacted us about his father-in-law, Douglas Frederick Withington who passed away on 17th October, asking if any of our members can add to his wartime history with Mosquitoes.

"We know he joined the RAF in 1942 and after initial training and because of his trade he was posted to 151 Repair Unit. We know that he worked in Dingwall, Scotland at some time. We would like to know more about his work in the RAF and with Mosquitoes and if there is anyone that you know that may help us we would appreciate this very much."

Please contact us with any information via info@peoplesmosquito.org.uk.

The family made a collection at his funeral service and very kindly made a donation of £300 to our funds.



Douglas' service number was 1666913

He joined up on 28th September 1942

His effective date of release was 8th January 1946

His Official Discharge was 30th June 1959

His Date of Birth was 19th December 1920

Douglas passed away on 17th October 2016

ROYAL CANADIAN AIR FORCE

R.P. 9280

Remembering - Flt Lt Ron Prankherd

Flight Lieutenant Ron Prankherd was born in Ryde on The Isle Of Wight in 1921. He lived over the top of his Father's bakery in the High St. called 'Bettys', before moving to Cardiff living with his parents in their other bakery called 'Dorothy's', named after his Mother.

Ron joined the R.A.F. at the 'ACRC' (Air Crew Reception Centre) in London on February 28th 1942 and finished as Flight Lieutenant in 1946 at R.A.F. Leamington, doing one engine landing instructing before his demobilization.

Ron was stationed at R.A.F. Hampton Norris before he went to Canada training on Harvards, then was at Medicine Hat,

YEAR		AIRCRAFT		PILOT, OR 1ST PILOT
MONTH	DATE	Type	No.	
1944		COURSE		
OCT	20	OXFORD	614	F/L WILLIAMS
OCT	20	OXFORD	614	SELF
OCT	21	OXFORD	545	SELF
OCT	26	Mosquito	20	F/L NORMAN
OCT	26	Mosquito	18	F/L NORMAN
OCT	26	Mosquito	19	F/L NORMAN
OCT	28	Mosquito	18	F/L NORMAN
OCT	30	Mosquito	178	F/L CATRANO
OCT	30	Mosquito	966	F/L CATRANO
OCT	30	Mosquito	C.	SELF
OCT	30	Mosquito	178	SELF
Nov	1	Mosquito	Q	SELF
Nov	1	Mosquito	656	F/L NORMAN
Nov	1	OXFORD	656	F/L NORMAN
Nov	1	Mosquito	299	SELF
Nov	3	Mosquito	2nd	SELF
Nov	5	OXFORD	L.	F/L SMITH CARRING
Nov	9	Mosquito	C.	SELF
Nov	9	Mosquito	G	F/L SMITH CARRING
Nov	9	Mosquito	G	SELF



Ron (L) with his Navigator, George Richards, in front of their Mosquito FB.VI

Trenton and Moosejaw on Avro Ansons and then Bolingbroke in Kingston, Ontario. He flew one of the first Canadian built Mosquitoes at De Bert Nova Scotia. Ron went back to the UK on The Mauritania to Liverpool.

In the UK Ron did his gun training on Mosquitoes over Weston-super-Mare aiming at targets in the sea offshore, and bombing training over Wales. Following completion of training he then travelled to Calcutta to join the R.A.F. 110 Hyderabad Squadron flying his Mosquito FB.VI.

One of Ron's preferred beloved Mosquitoes was named Rum & Coke! He flew it during The Burma War in 1945, and when they were in Seletar, Singapore for flak repairs he named it that as he liked The Andrews Sisters singing 'Drinking Rum & Coca Cola'. It was also a favourite tippie!

After the war Ron lived in Epsom, then Seaford and finally Highleigh, Chichester. Ron passed away peacefully in his sleep at his care home 27th December 2016.

We salute you.

AIRCRAFT	ENGINE	AD
STEARMAN	CONTINENTAL	
D.H. 82C.	6105V.	
HARVARD II	WASP.	
CORNEE.	RANGER.	
ANSON I.	JACOBS.	
ANSON II.	JACOBS.	
LYSANDER.	BRISTOL	
HURRICANE II	MERLIN	
CRANE.	JACOBS.	
FLEET.	RIVER.	
FLEET SEAWING.		
BOLINGBROKE	BAISTAL	
OXFORD V.	WASPS	
MOSQUITO III	ROLLS ROYCE	
MOSQUITO BN	MERLIN 33.	
MOSQUITO MK6	ROLLS ROYCE	
Mosquito MK6.	MERLIN 2100.	
Mosquito MK6.	MERLIN	
Mosquito MK6	25.	
Mosquito MK6	23.	

Club benefits

In our endeavour to offer more benefits to Club members, we are pleased to announce that we have secured discounts for you at the following organisations:



Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre at East Kirkby. Upon presentation of your TPM Club membership card you will given a £2 discount on entry price.

FIGHTING HIGH

20% off orders from the **'Fighting High'** online bookstore,. Please quote 'Mosquito' when placing your order at:

www.fightinghigh.com



Affiliate Focus - Brussels Air Museum

The People's Mosquito Affiliate programme was set up to build mutually beneficial relationships with interested and related parties across the world. It will act as a means of exchange of information between like-minded organisations. Affiliates all have one thing in common – to promote aviation, aviation history and a raising of awareness of the aircraft preservation and restoration movement. We will be featuring one of our Affiliates in each issue of Mossie Bites.

Many European countries have a solid reputation for cataloguing and displaying their aviation history. Admittedly, some do a better job than others, and Belgium can be ranked amongst those.

The Brussels Air Museum is located in one wing of the Royal Museum of the Army and Military History, in the Parc du Cinquantaire, near the centre of the Belgian capital. This is a most imposing edifice, dating from the latter half of the 19th century and designed in grand style, and on a large scale. It is as if someone had crossed the Imperial War Museum, London with the magnificent Victorian structure which houses the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester.

Given that the aviation museum's first collector,

Louis Leconte, had impeccable taste, and the pick of captured German and Allied aircraft from WW1 to boot, it is to be imagined that the collection was put on a firm footing from the very beginning. Indeed, it contains some early gems, including a Bristol Fighter, an R.E.8 and a locally-designed Hanriot HD.1 (another example of this rare biplane fighter can be found in the RAF Museum's collection).

Obviously, the emphasis is on Belgian-designed/built aircraft (both civil and military) or examples of those types which have served with the Belgian Armed Forces, or fought over Belgian soil, or Belgian coastal waters.

The WW2 era is splendidly represented, with two Spitfires, a Fairey Battle (of course), an A-26 Invader, a Bristol Blenheim (Bolingbroke) and much more.

The Anglo-Belgian agreement of November 18th, 1946 regarding the transfer of aircraft and equipment by the United Kingdom to Belgium included the formation of one night-fighter squadron to be equipped with 22 Mosquito NF30 fighters. Most of the Mosquito NF30s sold to Belgium were WW2 veteran, three of them having claimed a total of four Luftwaffe aircraft.

As well as the NF.30s, the post-war re-equipment of the Belgian Air Force led to the acquisition of several other Marks of Mosquito. These included the FB.VI, and its very rare variant, the FB(TT).VI, the TT.3. These were active for a number of years, post-war, and like the majority of NF.36 – their immediate successor in RAF service – several were fitted with an unpainted Perspex nose radome, to improve the performance of their centrimetric radar.

RK952 was built at Leavesden as a standard NF.30, and powered by high altitude, two-speed, two-stage Merlin 76 engines, which were fitted from



the 31st aircraft onwards. Following initial flights on 22nd May, 1945, it was sent direct to store at No. 10 MU, Hullavingdon.

In the immediate aftermath of WW2, there was a steady demand for Mosquitoes of all versions, from all over the world, and the usual pattern was for de Havilland to buy back surplus Mosquitoes (of all types) from RAF stocks, then sell them on to

"It is extremely fortunate that one of these Mosquito NF.30 still survives..."

foreign entities who were clamouring for high-performance aircraft. Just like the nightfighters for Sweden, the batch of twenty six NF.30 ordered by Belgium was sent to Fairey Ltd at Ringway, Manchester to be refurbished before delivery. This was basically because the parent company was fully involved in ushering into service the first generation of de Havilland jet types.

Assigned, on 4th September, 1953 to No 10 (Night Fighter) Sqn/1 Wing at BAF Beauvechain, the newly delivered 'MB-24', was coded 'ND-N' and wore the standard late-War RAF camouflage scheme of a Dark Green pattern on the upper surfaces over an overall coat of Medium Sea Grey. MB-24 was the last NF.30 to be delivered to Belgium, and was to remain at Beauvechain for most of its short service life, finally being withdrawn from use (the last NF.30 in Belgian service) on 17th October, 1956. It had served, mainly, in the unspectacular but vital role of radar calibration, and as a 'target' for other nightfighters on exercises. All the rest of the Belgian NF.30 fleet were withdrawn towards the end of 1953 due to heavily worn undercarriages,

as well as problems with their engine mountings. It is likely that MB-24's late arrival in service, and the fairly 'gentle' nature of its work led to its survival.

It is extremely fortunate that one of these Mosquito NF.30 still survives, representing, as it does, the last Mark of Mosquito nightfighter to see Squadron service in WW2. Also, it is one of only two Mosquito nightfighters left in the world (the other being Tony Agar's superb NF.II), and the only one with a late-war or post-war 'bull' nose, which would have carried an A.I. Mk X centrimetric radar. Unfortunately, there are many instruments that have gone missing, and the 4 x 20mm cannon have been removed (quite likely for reuse in other fighter types, on withdrawal from service).

Despite this, the aircraft is excellently presented – having undergone at least two major periods of restoration by volunteer groups - but it has been grouped with 'Piston – Bomber Aircraft' in the gigantic display hall, a group which includes the Blenheim, Battle and the A-26!

We are heavily indebted the restoration team of volunteers for the survival of this rare and important aircraft, and they are to be congratulated on their preservation work.

Despite the fact that the Military Museum has had to impose admission charges since 2015, it behooves every Mosquito enthusiast to try and see the only example of this rare sub-type, a late-war/post-war nightfighter!

Opening hours: 9.00 - 16.30 except Mondays and official holidays.

For more information visit

www.brusselsairmuseum.be



© Brussels Air Museum



Dates for your calendar

Whilst we are still in the early stages of planning events for 2017, we thought that we would share with you a preliminary list of airshows that we hope to attend, plus a few talks that are being given by our directors. We will be looking for volunteers to help at many of these shows, but also need help with transporting our equipment to the venues. If you have either a van or a box trailer that you would be prepared to use to help us with transport, or would like to help at any shows, please contact us at volunteers@peoplesmosquito.org.uk.

Sunday February 12th - "The People's Mosquito" talk by TPM's Director of Finance, Alan Pickford, in the Cirrus Room at The Aviator Hotel, Sywell. Lunch will be available from 12:00 with the talk commencing at 14:00. A range of TPM merchandise will also be available to purchase after the talk.

For further details, please visit www.sywellaerodrome.co.uk/events.php.

Sunday March 19th - "Full Circle" talk by TPM's Director of Operations, Bill Ramsey, in the Cirrus Room at The Aviator Hotel, Sywell. Lunch will be available from 12:00 with the talk commencing at 14:00. A range of TPM merchandise will also be available to purchase after the talk. For further details, please visit www.sywellaerodrome.co.uk/events.php.



Monday March 27th - "A Display Pilot's Story" talk by Bill Ramsey for AirACES at the Chichester Park Hotel. The talk will start at 19:30. Admission £3 for AirACES members, £5 for non-members. For further details, visit www.airaces.org.uk.

Sunday May 7th - Shuttleworth Season Premier Airshow, Old Warden. This will be the first show of the season for TPM, and our first visit to Old Warden. For further details and tickets, visit www.shuttleworth.org/whats-on.

Saturday May 20th - TPM Club Members Day, Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, East Kirkby. A celebration of the first anniversary of the launch of the club. More details of this exclusive event for Club Members will be available shortly.

Sunday June 11th – RAF Cosford Airshow. This will be our third visit to this popular airshow in the Midlands. For further details and tickets visit www.cosfordairshow.co.uk.

Saturday June 24th/ Sunday June 25th – Flywheel Festival, Bicester Heritage. Our first visit to this event that is hosted by one of our affiliates. Visit www.flywheelfestival.com for more information.

Saturday July 8th – RNAS Yeovilton Air Day.

Another first for TPM as we look to expand our coverage of shows in 2017. For further details and to buy tickets visit www.royalnavy.mod.uk/yeovilton-airday.

Saturday July 8th/Sunday July 9th – Flying Legends, Duxford.

Check www.flyinglegends.com for more information and to book tickets.

Friday July 14th – Sunday July 16th – Royal International Air Tattoo, RAF Fairford. Our third visit to probably one of the UK's largest shows.

Tickets and further details can be obtained via the RIAT web-site www.airtattoo.com.

Saturday August 5th – East Kirkby Airshow - hosted by Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre. Having missed this show in 2016, we will be back again in 2017. More details will be available from www.lincsaviation.co.uk/events/Whats-On/ nearer the event.

Saturday August 12th/Sunday August 13th – 1940's Weekend, Ayscoughfee Hall Museum & Gardens, near Spalding. We have received an invitation to attend this event in Lincolnshire. Visit www.ayscoughfee.org for more information.

Saturday August 26th/Sunday August 27th – Rhyl Airshow. We hope to make our first visit to this popular show in North Wales in 2017. We will definitely need volunteers to help with this one! No additional information is available at present.

Saturday August 26th/Sunday August 27th – Wings & Wheels, Dunsfold. We plan on having our own stand at this show in 2017, having had representation in the "Vulcan Village" in 2016. Further information and tickets can be obtained at www.wingsandwheels.net.

Saturday September 9th/Sunday September 10th – Scampton Airshow. With this show making a welcome return, we will be in attendance as well this year. Visit www.scamptonairshow.com for more information.

Saturday September 23rd/Sunday September 24th – Duxford Battle of Britain Air Show. Yet again, we will have a stand at what is one of the final shows of the season, and one that has proven to be a very popular show in the past. Further information and tickets can be obtained from www.iwm.org.uk/events/iwm-duxford/airshows/2017/duxford-battle-of-britain-air-show.



The team looks forward to meeting you this summer

The People's Mosquito Merchandise

Our 2016 calendar is still available if you haven't got yours yet! (Or you can think of someone who would like one!)

Featuring thirteen stunning, rarely seen photographs of the de Havilland Mosquito in a number of variants and markings, it's a super 300mm x 300mm, with full-width images and plenty of room for all your notes and appointments.

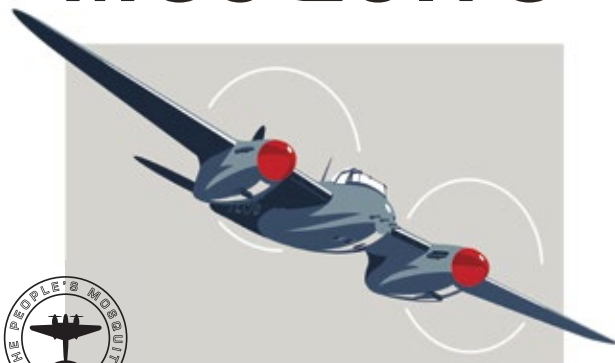
This spectacular collection of images will make our Calendar 2017 a magnificent addition to any wall.

Available at the special Club Members' price of £10 + p&p (non-members £12 + p&p)

Get yours from the Club website [here](#).



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Got something to share?

We hope you enjoyed Issue 2 of *Mossie Bites*. We are currently looking for articles and other material for Issue No. 3, which will be published in April. If you want to contribute a story, an article or photographs for inclusion, please get in touch with Sandra at membership@peoplesmosquito.org.uk. The deadline for material to arrive with us is February 28th.