

The Aldwark Chronicle

Newsletter of the Royal Air Forces Association

- York Branch



**ROYAL
AIRFORCES
Association**

The charity that supports the RAF family

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Club opening hours: Thurs - 7:30pm to 10:30 pm; Sat - 11:30am to 3pm

Our Website is at: www.rafayork.org

Membership: 473

York Branch & Club Official Appointments for 2018

President:	Mr J J Mawson	
President Emeritus:	Air Commodore W G Gambold DL FCMI RAF (Ret)	
Life Vice President:	Mr H R Kidd OBE	
Vice Presidents:	Mr J Allison BEM Ms S Richmond,	
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Please address all general enquiries to the Hon Secretary

Editorial

Hello once again to those who survived Christmas, Easter, the AGM, and the lousy weather. OK, so we had an unexpected three days of glorious sun recently; summer in springtime, as it were. (And that probably was our summer!) And can you believe that people were actually heard to be complaining that it was too hot!

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As seems to be the case these days there has been quite a bit going on at the Club, both inside and out, with lots more to come. Our new events officer - Andy Bryne - has really been pulling out all the stops. Check for coming events on the rear cover. Lists are already up for a lot of these, so get on down there and add your name if you fancy a trip to the RAF Museum at Cosford, etc.

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EASTER BONNET PARADE

Saturday, March 31st, saw the annual Easter Bonnet parade featuring at the Club. With the designs on view it was evident considerable thought and imagination! had taken place somewhere. Judging was by individual ballot. Winner of the Ladies' competition was Patricia Harrington, with a stunning contraption, whereas Dick Gray - winner of the men's competition - looked as if he had been sat (did I drop an 'h'?) by a bunny. The Easter Draw hamper was won by Mary Beattie. This Hamper Draw raised over £100 for the club.

With the Easter Bonnet event taking place just prior the official date of the RAFs Centenary year, a 'Roundel' cake (actually a number of very tasty, individual cupcakes) was prepared, with eldest member present, Norman Berryman, invited to blow out the candles. This he managed with no problems!



The "Cake"



Norman Berryman preparing himself

Overall, the day was extremely successful, most enjoyable, and appeared better supported than 2017. Maybe the cold, wintry weather had something to do with that!

Thanks must go to Gillian McCarthy and her stalwart team of

helpers for organizing the event, and providing the refreshments. Those cup cakes really were delicious

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TURNING OF THE PAGE

The second Turning of the Page ceremony for 2018 took place at 12:00, Thursday 5th April, in York Minster. The Station Commander of RAF Linton on Ouse, Group Captain Keith Taylor attended with a contingent of RAF personnel along with members from our RAF Association Branch in York. Gordon Murden carried the Branch Standard, and the address was read by Branch Chairman, Brian Mennell.

The Page (from the Book of Remembrance) was simultaneously turned by Harold Wood - RAFA York, Wing Commander David Middleton - RAF Linton on Ouse, and Cadet Sergeant Felicity Simpson - 886 (Ripon) Squadron Air Cadets, representing the past, present, and future of the Royal Air Force. The ceremony is always impressive but especially so on this occasion given that April 2018 marks the Centenary of the formation of the Royal Air Force, this ceremony being closest to the actual date of the anniversary. Afterwards, both RAF and RAFA adjourned to Club HQ in Aldwark, to enjoy refreshments and each others company.

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LETTERS AND INCOMING EMAILS

I recently received the following from member and occasional visitor, Les Quigley:

Hi Dave,

Just a note to thank you for your efforts in producing the Chronicle, and to let you know I received and read it as I was rounding Cape Horn! Is this the furthest South that anyone has received it (by satellite) and read it (at sea)?

By way of reply I passed on news that Former Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Squire GCB, DFC, AFC, DL, FRAeS, had passed away aged 72. He was a compatriot of Les', being as they were both in the same entry at Cranwell, the 89th!

Sir Peter, despite being a Harrier pilot, once confessed that whenever trying to land in the Harrier simulator he would always crash! When asked how he would circumvent that, his reply was to the effect, "I would bring it down to around six feet, put it in the hover, switch off and walk away."

I think a good percentage of Les' Cranwell entry achieved Air Rank; other than Les himself, and Dick Schuster, that is. Dick preferred to retain his rank and carry on flying aircraft, rather than attending Staff College and then flying a desk. Les was invalided out due to some sporting injury whilst still at Cranwell, though he still attends the entry reunions, and he appears not to have done too badly for himself out side of the RAF!

A photograph of Peter just before our first jet flight in a French Armée de l'Air Fouga Magister. This was taken at L'ecole de l'air Salon in early 1964 some six months after we entered RAF College, Cranwell.

Left to right - a motley crew propping up a French mini-jet - with now just 3 survivors

Randy Stubbington - sadly killed in a car accident just after he graduated.

Pete Squire - OC 1 Squadron in the Falklands war, retired as Chief of the Air Staff

Snotty Synott - became OC the Queens flight before retiring and becoming a chief test pilot for BAC

Les Quigley - Sustained a back injury - invalided out of the RAF shortly after completing 3 years at the RAF College

Pete Glover - played rugby for England, retired from RAF to become Chief pilot for Easyjet
There's no accounting for what life hands you!



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A Bridge playing friend passed me the Dec 17 edition of the Aldwark Chronicle which I enjoyed reading, particularly the article about Church Fenton (**RAF CHURCH FENTON – HISTORY & MEMORIES**, by **Andy Bryne**). However, I must take issue with your author over his statement “and was then largely mothballed until 1979.” We were very much alive for several years during the period mentioned, with a large number of Chipmunks engaged in elementary training. Primary Flying Squadron moved to Fenton in the late 60s and was joined by the Royal Navy Elementary Flying Squadron (HMS Heron) from Linton in about 1970. I enclose a happy snap from 1971 of some of the PFS instructors. Personally, it was one of the happiest periods of my career!

John Brown



PFS Church Fenton, Autumn 1971.

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Northern Area Conference

March 16-18th 2018

Marriott Hotel, Metro Centre, Gateshead.

During the weekend the delegates were made aware of the changes in the Data Protection Regulations and other laws in relation to: equal opportunities, health

and safety, welfare and naturally Brexit. In the light of these changes one of the resolutions put forward is to review the changes to the branches relationship with the Charity Trust which has strong statutory powers.

The proposal is "to review, research and provide a way forward in the charity section" to be conducted by council.

This is looking at the benefits or otherwise of each branch relinquishing its charity status and going under protection of the Association. One effect of the change is that the Association would have control of the branch monies.

The voting on the resolution resulted in 14 For and 1 Against. The Resolution will now be carried to the National Conference in May to be voted on and implemented if successful.

Sydney Graham, Area Council, proposed that John Allison BEM should be elected life Vice President in recognition of his years of dedication to the RAFA. This was agreed unanimously. Later approved.

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QUOTES FROM OVER THE YEARS

Sometimes, when I look at my children, I say to myself, 'Lillian, you should have remained a virgin.'

Lillian Carter (mother of Jimmy Carter)

Last week, I stated this woman was the ugliest woman I had ever seen. I have since been visited by her sister, and now wish to withdraw that statement.

Mark Twain

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible

George Burns

Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people just once a year.

Victor Borge

Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.

Mark Twain

I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury.

Groucho Marx

My wife has a slight impediment in her speech. Every now and then she stops to breathe.

Jimmy Durante

My luck is so bad that if I bought a cemetery, people would stop dying.

Rodney Dangerfield

Money can't buy you happiness. But it does bring you a more pleasant form of misery.

Spike Milligan

We could certainly slow the aging process down if it had to work its way through Congress.

Will Rogers

Don't worry about avoiding temptation. As you grow older, it will avoid you.

Winston Churchill

Maybe it's true that life begins at fifty. But everything else starts to wear out, fall out, or spread out.

Phyllis Diller

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YORK CEMETERY MILITARY HISTORY VISIT

Photos by the author

Together with members of White Rose Aircrew Association, a dozen or so RAFA York Branch members enjoyed a fascinating guided walk of the historic York Cemetery (which dates back to 1837) on the afternoon of 18th April. The weather was very kind, temperature reaching the dizzy heights of 21°C, unusual after such a miserable winter!

Mr Clive Dawson - Friends of York Cemetery - began by giving us a potted history of the Cemetery, built by private finance to alleviate overcrowding in existing York city churchyards, also to remove cholera victims from within the city walls. The Chapel was designed by James Piggot Pritchett as a part of the original cemetery landscape. Completed in 1838, and based on the temple of Erectheus, Athens, the chapel is considered to be one of Pritchett's most successful commissions.

Interment in the catacombs beneath the chapel was offered as soon as the building was completed. However, this was expensive, and not particularly popular - only 17 people being interred, the last in 1881. Eventually, the cemetery fell on hard times (in part due to the building of a crematorium at Bishopsthorpe in the early 1960s) and went into voluntary liquidation in 1966. Liquidation took 13 years, all that could be disposed of for profit being sold. Sadly, nobody was interested in the site and it devolved to the Crown, all rights of burial and access being lost.

Over a period, the Cemetery became a derelict wilderness, its buildings decaying. Collapse of the roof of the Grade II* listed chapel in August 1984 led to a group of concerned citizens deciding that something must be done, hence the Friends of York Cemetery, and Cemetery Trust, were formed. Today, the area is regaining some of its original splendour, and is also a wildlife reserve.

Equipped with radio ear pieces, we then followed Clive around, with a particular focus on graves and monuments with a military connection: the Cross of Sacrifice (Commonwealth war graves are located in here); the graves of Air Cadet Anthony Lain (17), killed in an air accident in 1946; William Milner, a policeman killed in the April 1942 air raid on York; numerous soldiers from the First World War; and the grave of Thomas Wilkinson VC, a Royal Marine who served in the Crimea, his gallantry - in June 1855 - resulting in the award of the Victoria Cross. There are also a number of graves of civilians who, like William Milner, were killed in the infamous 'Baedeker' raid.

The Attack

Early Wednesday, April 29th 1942, York suffered its worst air raid of the Second World War. It wasn't entirely unexpected as, in previous days, the Luftwaffe had attacked the cathedral cities of Norwich and Bath, the so-called Baedeker raids. It was said that Hitler, enraged by RAF attacks on the historic cities of Lubeck and Rostock, picked up a Baedeker guidebook and ordered that every historic place in England marked with three stars be bombed in retaliation.

Unopposed for almost 90 minutes, German aircrew bombed and machine gunned the City at will. The assault had greater aims than to terrorise the civilian population and lower morale, for the Luftwaffe also bombarded strategic targets, including the railway station, goods yards, Carriage Works, and the airfield at Clifton Moor. York Minster was spared.



Cemetary Chapel



Cross of Sacrifice



Barnbow Lasses

More than 70 German planes were involved, only four being shot down. Beginning at 2.30am, the raid left 92 dead, hundreds injured. Houses were destroyed, schools wrecked, the Guildhall, and St Martin-le-Grand, Coney Street, were burnt out. The Bar Convent collapsed, killing five nuns. Pavements were littered with rubble and shattered glass. Huge craters scarred the streets, and Clifton airfield. Several of the dead lie at peace in the cemetery.

ATC Connection

On 26th July, 1946, 110 (City of York) ATC Squadron were holding their annual summer camp at RAF Leconfield, Beverley. As part of their visit, Cadets were being taken as passengers on training flights in Wellington aircraft, one of which suffered an engine malfunction prior to take-off, its two cadet passengers being transferred to another Wellington.

With the faulty aircraft now repaired, two other cadets now boarded it; Anthony Lain, and Robert Hall, 116 (Archbishop Holgates School) ATC.

This flight took off at 14.00hrs, then flew towards the North Yorkshire Moors. The Wellington carried out a Bomber Affiliation training exercise with two Spitfires, the Wellington was being subjected to a number of dummy attacks by. It was during one of these attacks that tragedy struck at 14.20hrs. One of the Spitfires was making a head-on attack on the Wellington when the pilot of the Spitfire misjudged the distance between the two aircraft. The two aircraft collided head on more or less directly over the village of Appleton le Moors. The Wellington partly broke up in the air, parts being scattered across the main street and houses of Appleton le Moors village. Both aircraft, including the main section of the Wellington, came down near the village football field. There were no survivors. At the inquest, the Coroner gave a verdict of "death by misadventure".

During our visit to Air Cadet Lain's grave, Fred Ullathorne laid a wreath on behalf of the Air Cadets and RAFA.

The Barnbow Lasses

A very poignant reminder of the tragedy of war is the grave of 4 women munitions workers from York who were among 35 women killed on the night shift at Barnbow Munitions Factory, Leeds, on 5th December 1916. An explosion in the shell fuse fitting room resulted in widespread destruction, resulting in many workers being killed and injured. At that time, pay for munitions work was very good, women earning far more than they ever could in other jobs, if they could work at all. The job was not without high risk, not only from explosions but also from skin discolouration (the workers' skin turned yellow, earning them the name of "canary girls") and poisoning from the TNT explosive itself.



Air Cadet Lain's grave



Thomas Wilkinson VC

After the guided walk, we returned to the Chapel for tea and biscuits, Fred presenting Clive with a donation on our behalf for the Cemetery Trust. All enjoyed the visit, even though some of the graves evoke sadness (especially

those of infants). The military history factor alone makes this peaceful and thought-provoking place a must for a visit.

Andy Bryne

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WHEN I WERE A LAD

On my 18th birthday, the 6th of August 1954, I received many cards. Then, 21 was the big one! Among them there was a brown envelope with no stamp but the letters OHMS upon it.

Mum and dad looked knowingly at each other and nodded, I looked at them and obliged by opening the missive. Inside on official note paper was an invitation, asking me to attend at a room in Bromyard Avenue, a huge government office block 5 miles up the Uxbridge road toward London.

I passed my medical, and some sort of intelligence test. I volunteered for the Royal Air Force for 5 years, then returned home. I had volunteered at my fathers suggestion, he had been in the RFC/RAF in 1918 and knew that I had the ability to be a good mechanic. Dad had been an instructor at RAF Halton! I had got his car running at the end of the war when petrol was 1/11d a gallon (those were the days)!

I caught a train to Bedford on the 25th of September 1957, and embarked on my new career, via the back of a Bedford truck. We turned off the main road into RAF Cardington and were confronted by two huge sheds; one had been for the R100, the second for R101, two airships built in the 1920s. 70 years later the sheds are still there! (*Still there today too, one is the film studio where scenes for the James Bond movies are shot. Ed*)

That evening I walked over and looked into the cavernous interior of one of the sheds. Little did I know that I was looking into a career in aviation which lasted almost 60 years. I retired as a master mechanic at the age of 72. I have never looked back, or regretted the decision I made.

Jim Beer 4159245

(Traveller in aluminum tubes)

* *

This was plucked off the Internet, which goes to prove how selective and observant you need to be before accepting anything at face value. Especially from an unnamed source.

There I was, just flying along, enjoying the flight at 20,000ft, minding my own business, and what's so cool is they actually pay me to do this! When.....Hmmm.....What's that strange sound? Something feels different! Hey, why am I looking up? Whoa there. What the hell?? Controls aren't working. Time for a mirror check.....Hey, where's the rest of my F-15? Uh oh, it's over there.....I think I've got a definite.....Aw, sh*t. What the hell is going on here. I gotta wonder, am I the first guy to ever experience a 'cockpit-airframe separation anxiety attack'? OK, enough is enough!.....I'm outta here! But first, the canopy

has to go. Phew.....At least that's out of the way.....OK, now it's my turn. I'm gonna be gone as soon as I find that frickin' lower handle. Got it..... I'm gone!

Kudos to the guy who took these pictures! Just another 'average day at the office'? It was determined that what caused this mid-air break up was the main "longeron" (stringer) behind the cockpit failed due to corrosion. This 'incident' caused the USAF to ground its entire fleet of F-15s. Talk about being in the right place at the right time, for the photographer.



Yeah, on the computer I'd say! Just look at the fields below; he's going pretty slow, even for an F15 in trouble. A helicopter, which is what the photographer would have to have been in, would move further than that!

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NO, NOT JOHN, THE OTHER MAGEE

It is safe to say that the great majority of pilots and aircrew in the English-speaking world have read or heard the uplifting and joyous words of the poem known as High Flight, written by John Gillespie Magee Jr, a teenaged Anglo-American Spitfire pilot of His Majesty's Royal Canadian Air Force. It has been pinned on the bulletin boards of a thousand flying clubs, read at the funerals of astronauts and pilots across the globe and inspired nearly every living pilot to take a moment to realize the spirituality of the very act of flying. I personally have read it at two funerals and I do not know a single aviator who is not familiar in some way with its spiritual rhythm.

John Magee did not live long as a combat pilot but he did, however, live just long enough to pluck 114 words from his heart and string them together to form a hauntingly perfect descriptive strand of aviator DNA. In these words and lines can be found the emotional and inspirational genetic code that reveals the aviator, that explains the passion we have for flight, that inspires us to climb sunward.

Though John Magee was flying Spitfires at the age of just eighteen, he was a particularly thoughtful young man, who, despite being deeply thrilled and moved by flight, saw his role in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) as protector and avenging angel for his beloved England - an England in great national stress at the time of his arrival there as a fighter pilot.

John Magee was, to be certain, a human being first; one with the fears, doubts and bad habits we all have and try to conceal. But I never saw him in anything but the bright white light of his legend. Never imagined him in those shades of grey that colour our own lives - trepidation, fragile self-esteem, longing, homesickness, humour, anger and anxiety. I see him through his photographs, not his letters. Lately, however, I have come to wonder about him as a young man and not an icon. The cause of all of this was learning the story of his cousin, another Second World War fighter pilot by the name of Christopher Lyman Magee.

Both John Magee and Chris Magee were scions of a notable and wealthy Scottish-Irish family from Pennsylvania whose most notable member was the patriarchal Christopher Lyman Magee, a Pennsylvania State Senator,

Republican politician and industrialist from Pittsburgh. The two flying Magees came from different offshoots of the family tree. John Magee's father, John Gillespie Magee Sr, was a Christian missionary in China where the young Magee was born. Chris Magee was born in Omaha, Nebraska but was raised in the South Side of Chicago. Given that John Magee was born in Shanghai and educated in England and Chris Magee grew up, went to high school and attended the University of Illinois, it is most likely that they barely knew of each other, let alone ever met.

I first came across Chris Magee's story when I was researching material about his RCAF cousin. On the Wikipedia page dedicated to him, I read the words "Wildman"... Navy Cross... Ace... Black Sheep Squadron... black marketeer... bootlegger... covert group... drifted between jobs... Haganah... divorce... bank robbery and Leavenworth" and thought I had a great story for some future date. To be honest, I saw a story that contrasted Chris, a screw-up who had squandered his heroic legacy, with John, the standard for purity of purpose and unspoiled innocence. I saw this story in black and white with Chris Magee a foil to John, a story that would leave your head shaking at the distance between their points of view and paths taken. However, I could not have been more wrong about Captain Christopher Lyman Magee of Chicago, Illinois.

After a couple of years research I realized I would have to order copies of two books in which Chris Magee plays a major part: *Once They Were Eagles - the Men of the Black Sheep Squadron* by Frank E Walton, and *Lost Black Sheep - The Search for WWII Ace Chris Magee* by Robert T. Reed.

Frank Walton, a former Los Angeles Police Department cop, was the squadron Intelligence Officer for VMF-214, the highly successful and much publicized Marine Corsair squadron that operated ever so briefly (just 84 days) in the Solomon Islands of the South Pacific in the Second World War. Though not a pilot, Walton was much loved by his pilots for the professionalism he brought to his job, for their shared hardships and for his key part in publicizing their exploits and establishing their public reputation as an aggressive and colourful combat fighter unit. When the television series *Baa Baa Black Sheep* first debuted in 1976, Walton was appalled the "hoked-up phony, typical Hollywood-type of production" that characterized his unit and his friends "as a bunch of brawling bums who were fugitives from courts-martial." He decided then to try to track down all 34 surviving members of the original 51 Black Sheep and organize a reunion. After a second reunion in 1980, Walton got the idea for his book and set out to meet and interview each surviving member.

There was only one man for whom the trail had gone cold - Chris Magee. Few of the other pilots had been able to contact him since the end of the war, no phone books or research could dig up an address. Being a former policeman he enlisted friends in the FBI to help. Though Walton was not able to speak directly to Magee, he did have one letter answered, though correspondence to arrange a place to meet also went unanswered, so Walton simply transcribed that letter for his book. These were words written by the *Lost Black Sheep* himself and showed an intelligent, contemplative, honest and somewhat melancholy man.

Chris "Wildman" Magee was perhaps the ultimate combat fighter pilot. Utterly fearless and totally aggressive, he had the knack of knowing where the action was, plus complete mastery of the airplane; he could make it do things no other pilot could. His record of nine Zeroes was exceeded in our squadron only by Boyington's total.

"Maggie" (as his fellow pilots called him) turned out to be the most difficult Black Sheep to locate. When I finally found him, I understood why, says Walton.

After the war, and his return to the States, he had run into some difficulty with the law; as a result, it took the assistance of my friend, the Chief of Police of Los Angeles, and the FBI to locate him. Finally, I received a letter from Maggie.

Greetings, Frank

Strange how a few words can do more to reveal something of the nature of time than all the equations a team of Einsteins could formulate in a lifetime of blackboard gymnastics. It isn't so much that words throw a bridge across a considerable gulf between "now" and "then" events as it is that they collapse all intervening activities below consciousness, and unite the "now" with the "then" as if by some alchemical implosion, some magic infusion.

Such, somehow dramatized, was the effect of your letters, which I picked up recently when I dropped by my former pad in Chicago Southside to check the possibility that mail may have strayed that way.

I've been to Florida a couple of times this year, roving the Gulf Coast, into the Everglades, and down to the Keys. And Westward Ho! Too. Colorado etc.

A change of pace after six years as editor/writer/reporter for a Chicago community newspaper of approximately 30,000 circulation.

Aside from two days and nights of intense involvement every week, I was free to set my own pace, so there was some compensation in terms of freedom, which I needed.

There was further compensation in the form of a discipline imposed by the ever-present demand of the next deadline. But once a week for six years is a bit too much of that kind of compensation for me.

The paper was sold and the new owner brought in his own editor, so I am free of the printer's ink mold, and have spent a number of months recuperating from a bad case of brainlock, induced by an overexposure to journalese.

Before that job, I edited another community newspaper for a couple of years.

Previous to those forays into the legitimate, I was a house guest of J Edgar Hoover at his resorts in Atlanta and Leavenworth, where, due to SNAFU bureaucratic behavior in the manner of record keeping, teamed with a paranoiac penchant for secrecy, my durance vile went considerably beyond what evidently had been intended.

During my sojourn, I taught a wide variety of high school classes, picked up some 80 college credits via extension courses, and became editor of Leavenworth's quarterly magazine, "New Era", a slick 50-plus-page organ with pretensions to literary excellence. In fact, it was included in a survey and index of literary "Little Magazines." We also had close and friendly ties with Engel's famed Writers' Workshop at the State University of Iowa.

Some of my work was reprinted in other publications around the world that were oriented to more esoteric fare. For instance, the Sri Aurobino Ashram in Pondicherry, India. I was deep into the psycho-spiritual thing long before the recent boom began. And I don't mean the Tim Leary, Baba Ram Das, Allen Ginsberg, Holy Man circuit bit, or any of this swooning over Eastern mysticism. The West has its own tradition, only touched upon by CG Jung.

Anyway, retreating farther yet, timewise, I was active in the Caribbean area in the mid-1950s, and before that was working with construction crews in Greenland, above the Arctic Circle, setting up the air warning network. Earlier, in 1949, I was in Aspen, Colorado, tape recording highlights of the Goethe

Bicentennial Celebration, the event that kicked off Aspen's ascent to an off-the-beaten-path cultural center. Albert Schweitzer was guest of honor; his first absence from Africa in 25 years.

In 1948 I was flying Me 109Gs for the Haganah in Israel (while Herr Hitler did snap rolls in his Nazi hell. Must have been a blowtorch on the bollocks to hear about Jews in Messerschmitts!). But that wasn't until I went through a cloak and dagger underground smuggling operation in New York and Europe.

So, that's a fair abbreviation of my post-Black Sheep days. Although there are those who would say, cynically of course, that for me they never ended, that they in fact became more than an upside-down euphemism, more than a play name adopted by a bunch of great guys who, it would be almost miraculous to reminisce with over a vat of milk punch.

Well Frank, it was a high, hearing from you. I'd enjoy being on the receiving end of any other information you seine from the stream of years.

Chris enclosed one of his own published poems, entitled Postscript from "One Who, Like His Age, Died Young" and prefaced by the following note: "Several years after World War II, the wreck of a US Marine Corps fighter plane was discovered in the interior jungle of New Ireland, the Solomons, by a former Royal Australian Coast Watcher. A jungle kit was recovered from the cockpit of the Corsair; among its items of survival gear was a wax-sealed, fungus resistant plastic folder containing a box of ammunition for a .45 automatic and a sheet of paper with these lines.

I have skimmed the ragged edge of lightning death
And torn from bloody flesh of sky a thunder song.
Across the nakedness of virgin space
I've blistered my frozen hand in feathered ice
And dared angelic wrath to smash
The snarling will of my demon steed.

Far above the sun-glint on winded spume,
High executor of laws no man has made,
I've welded Samurai knights into fiery tombs
And hurled them down like the plumed Minoan
Far down the searing heights to punch
Their livid crates in the sea.

'Enemies,' you say. They were not mine.
More than blood brothers, I swear,
With tawny skin and warrior eye.
Bushido-bred for hell-strife joy.
Much closer my kin, may race than those
Who cud-chew their lives can ever be.

'War-lover,' you say, 'sadist, psychotic'—
That sick cycle of canned clichés masking
Your lust for eternity fettered to time.
Go, epigonic pygmies, make peace with hell,
Drag the myths of our ancient might
Through the miserable muck of a cringer's dream.

What could you know
Who have never heard
The soaring song of the Valkyries,
Felt thunder-gods jousting with livid peaks:
You who have never dared to walk the razor
Across the zenith of your peevish soul?

Subsequent letters to Chris' address have come back marked "Return to Sender - Unable to Forward." Possibilities as to where he is and what he is doing are endless. He may be in Central America; he may be involved in another secret mission somewhere in the world; in view of the Middle East situation, he could very well be back with the Israeli Air Force; he may be in Africa. He may have passed on to Fighter Pilot's Heaven. I certainly hope not. The world has desperate need for free spirits, even those who suffer occasional aberrations.

Dave O'Malley, Vintage Wings of Canada

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This comes from two maths teachers with a combined total of seventy years experience. It has an indisputable mathematical logic. It also made me Laugh out loud. This strictly mathematical viewpoint goes like this:

We have all been to those meetings where someone wants you to give over 100%. So what makes 100%? Ever wonder about those people who say they are giving more than 100%? What makes up 100% in life?

Here's a little mathematical formula that might help you answer these questions.

If: A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z is represented as: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

Then: H-A-R-D-W-O-R-K; $8+1+18+4+23+15+18+11 = 98\%$

K-N-O-W-L-E-D-G-E; $11+14+15+23+12+5+4+7+5 = 96\%$

A-T-T-I-T-U-D-E; $1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 = 100\%$

Therefore: B-U-L-L-S-H-I-T; $2+21+12+12+19+8+9+20 = 103\%$

A-S-S-K-I-S-S-I-N-G; $1+19+19+11+9+19+19+9+14+7 = 118\%$

So, one can conclude with mathematical certainty, that while Hard work and Knowledge will get you close, and Attitude will get you there. It's the Bullshit and Ass Kissing that will put you over the top.

Now you know why some people are where they are!

I've never seen a better explanation than this.

* *

LEXOPHILIA - WHO ON EARTH DREAMS THESE UP?

A lexophile of course!

- How does Moses make tea? Hebrews it.
- Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!
- A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.
- I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.
- Haunted French pancakes give me the crêpes.
- England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
- I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.
- They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Typo.
- I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.
- Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.

- I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid; says he can stop any time.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, then it dawned on me.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.
- I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.
- Why were the Indians here first? They had reservations.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.
- Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher; lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?
- Broken pencils are pointless.
- What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.
- I dropped out of communism class because of lousy Marx.
- All the toilets in New York's police stations have been stolen. The police have nothing to go on.
- I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough.
- Velcro - what a rip off!
- Don't worry about old age; it doesn't last.

* *

EVENTS for RAFA (York) Branch 2018

Dates for 2018 (will be up-dated on a regular basis on website and Club noticeboard)

Please note, it would be appreciated out of courtesy if you intend/would like to attend any of the events listed to inform the chairman so we know numbers to seat/cater for.

Sat 12 May	Eastmoor Memorial Parade	14:30
Sat 12 May	Music Quiz RBL Fulford	19:30
Fri-Sun 11-13 May	Annual Conference, Yarnfield Park	
Sun 13 May	RAF Centenary Service National Arboretm (Tickets available)	
Wed 16 May	Film show at Club	13:00
Wed 6 June	Film show at Club	13:00
Fri 8 June	RAF 100 Appeal Collection in York	Collectors please
Sun 10 June	Cosford Air Show	
Thur 28 June	Wings collection Morrisons Foss Island	
Sat 30 June	Armed Forces Day	
Tue 3 July	RAF Museum Cosford, coach trip - 07:30 B & Q Hull Rd	
Wed/Thur 11-12 July	Wings collection York Railway Stn	
Fri 20 July	RAF Centenary Dinner, Middleton's, York	19:00 for 19:30
Sat 28 July	Auction at the Club	12:00
Sat 4 Aug	Wings Collection Monks Cross Park	
Sun 2 Sept	Allied Air Forces Day, Elvington Air Museum	
Wed/Thur 12-13 Sept	Wings collection York Railway Stn	
Sun 23 Sept	B of B Parade - RAF Linton freedom of City	
Sat 10 Nov	Stamford Br youth Comm end of WW - music & poetry at Club	
Sun 16 Dec	Combined ex Service personnel, Service, All Saints Pavement	10:30

Please note that in relation to all the above Wings/Fund raising events, a list for volunteers will appear on the Branch/Club notice board nearer the event date (as times/confirmation details on some are yet to be ratified).

PS. Please note: 'Themed dining-in dates' may be subject to change/cancellation in order to avoid clashing with other more pressing branch activities/matters.

For the latest events list please check our website - www.rafayork.org

**Aldwark Chronicle is the in-house newsletter of York Branch RAFA.
Any views expressed or implied are those of the editor or contributors.**

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