The Real Aeroplane Club Newsletter
October 2018

The Gate Guardian
...and all things brighton

Articles Wanted...
All members are invited to write a piece for the newsletter including:

- 'Meet the Member…'
- 'I got into Flying…'
- General Aviation

Please email rachelrealaeero@outlook.com
Events Update 2018

'Meet the Member' - an article by Julie Ball

'Time Target' - An Archaeological Adventure by Tom Hope

'I got into Flying...' - an article by Ian Robinson

'Skive or Bust...' - an article by Charles Sunter

'RAF Breighton...and Medals' - an article by David Bradley

'Caption Competition'

From the Chair  (Inc. Notice from Burn Gliding Club)
Events 2018

The Real Aeroplane Club's next event for 2018 is the Halloween Party and takes place on Saturday 3rd November. All members are welcome but please let us know if you are coming along by the 31st October as we need to know for food numbers. Thank you.

Our café ladies will be providing pie and peas (including a veggie option) on the evening. If you would like to make a weekend of it we can help organise accommodation and transport.

The aerodrome itself is 5.5 nm north-east of Selby, North Yorkshire. Further details here - http://realaero.com/air.htm

03 Nov - Halloween Party at the Clubhouse (including hot food, music and gin tasting by Louise at the Jug & Bottle).

11 Nov - Remembrance Sunday Service - Our usual bugler will play 'Last Post' and we are planning a poppy drop with missing man flypast.

01 Dec - Christmas Party at York Marriott (the booking list is now up on the club events board, if you would like the hotel booking link sending please email: rachelrealaero@outlook.com)

All of our members and family are most welcome and encouraged at all of our events - including the Christmas Party! (Please note the wingwalking days and helicopter flight days are listed on the website - http://www.realaero.com/bugle.htm). We'd love to see you there and hope you are able to join us - thank you for your continued support.

If you have any enquiries regarding the events please email: rachelrealaero@outlook.com
The Real Aeroplane Club Invites you to our...

HALLOWEEN PARTY

NOVEMBER 3rd

18:00 till LATE - $5.95 for pie & peas (inc. veggie option), desserts also available

BRIGHTON CLUB HOUSE

*Music
*Fancy Dress Welcome
*Bring your own Drinks

Please email rachelrealalero@outlook.com to book your place
Christmas Party

Saturday 1st December 2018
York Marriott Hotel
- Tadcaster Road, York YO25 1QQ -

3 Course Festive Dinner
Private Function Room with Bar and DJ
The Marriott have authorised a late bar and music licence until 1am
PLUS a 10% reduction on bar drinks

- £34.95 per person -
Payable BEFORE 19th NOVEMBER to
Rachel (rachelrealaero@outlook.com)

Limited rooms held for our party available at discounted rate of
£109 for a double room (single occupancy) and £119 (2 people sharing)
with FREE entry to the spa (other rates available for singles and twins).

www.realaero.com
Breighton Airfield my adventure...

My partner Ray & I bought a little lodge near waterloo farm Howden last summer May 2017. Much to our surprise and joy on our weekends at the lodge we kept seeing bi-planes flying over and wondered where they were heading.

We went to investigate one Saturday and found the airfield and was instantly hooked; we needed more interaction! We used to sneak up the little dirt track and sit and watch the planes, the wing walkers and plucked up courage to step in and go to the cafe and what a delight! We found the club house cafe to be serving delightful food. I then knew I needed to be a legal member, drive in through the gate and enjoy this airfield to the full.

I investigated on-line and found Breighton airfield opened their arms to new members and low and behold covered us in a class “Museum members”, “that will do nicely” I immediately completed the application, worked out my fee and sent cheque and application and waited with excitement not really knowing what to expect or if I would be considered. The post arrived…an unusual envelope “ what is this we said”, opened it and was instantly overjoyed we had been accepted and had received our membership card. We actually entered through the main gate – drove up the drive-way past the new hangers and sat in the car in complete awe watching the bi-planes come and go feeling an association and a bond with Breighton airfield.
With Brexit looming, the country’s divided. There are deep cracks in the political opinion of our population; still there’s one uniform truth which no one can deny - whichever way you voted, you are watching history being made.

You think you’re a Brit? Nah. You’re probably a Dane, maybe Italian, French or possibly German. My family’s mostly Norwegian by all accounts – probably of Viking descent. Almost all of us are the offspring of European settlers – invaders who married and bred their way into British history. And yet, it doesn’t matter which invading force we’re talking about, our ancestral landscape shows us our modern political concepts aren’t new: to protect, to defend and to control. It’s as true for the Iron Age Celt as it is for Brexit. Echoing my last articles’ comments about context, I thought I might use this opportunity to take you on an aerial tour, the subject of which: Our National Identity.

Three thousand years in the shaping of Great Britain.

We’ll start with the Iron Age. Not because that’s the oldest form of hill-fort but because I can’t find my photos of the Bronze Age sites. Below you see Stonea Camp in the Cambridgeshire Fens – it was built nearly three thousand years ago on a gravel bank just six foot above sea level – the lowest hillfort in England. Looking at it you might think to yourself ‘pah, this is boring – it’s tiny...this isn’t a hillfort’; and yet, during the time we’re talking about, all the surrounding area would’ve been consumed by marshy bog and reeds – all that was needed was a small platform to conceal the inhabitants. You need to re-member, at this point in history, England was tribal. It was a time of Guerrilla warfare – of suddenly attacking, then retreating and hiding in the marshes. When the Romans marched in (a full seven or eight hundred years after Stonea was built) many of England’s Guerrilla forts were seized and reused. Interestingly, the one and only Boadicea – ‘Queen of the Celts’ (and if you don’t know who she was, stop reading this now – you ignorant heathen – and go find out) supposedly used this place as her base to fight back the invasion. Sword-battered human remains were found by archaeologists scattered beneath the surface - including the cleaved up skull of a child - leading them to believe it was the site of a violent Roman battle in AD47. Most probably trapped inside, the inhabitants were attacked when the settlement was breached. Tellingly, a multi-storey Roman tower was found within the walls of the settlement – necessary to see further into the fens – but doubling up as a warning to other tribal resistance across the country. Don’t mess with us, we’re Roman.
Moving on, still in the same period – the Iron Age, below is Burrough Hillfort in Leicestershire - at its very latest, the earthworks you see here are two thousand years old although the site itself is probably much older. The surrounding wall would've been made from timber with an entrance and an exit; raised wooden structures would've allowed the tribe inside to keep an eye out for would-be Celtic warriors. While Burrough is clearly much higher than Stonea, there are still many similarities; you see a familiar shape in the earth, a change in the field systems surrounding the site and the same distinctive flat, raised platform. Again, just as with Stonea, the Romans loved this prefabricated fortress – and it didn't take them long to add it to their growing collection. A pre-Roman Celtic chariot was unearthed here in 2010. To put this into context, this kind of find is exceptionally rare, only a few have ever been discovered here in Britain. It's worth noting that this was alongside all sorts of other ancient and Roman gubbins - spears, knives, brooches, shields and human remains.

It's important to note that by the time the Romans landed en masse, they'd actually 'popped their heads in' in 55BC – almost a full hundred years before they came, saw and conquered. Rumours would've been prevalent throughout the country's tribes of strange men with dark hair, bright armour and weird languages landing on the South East coast. Nevertheless, these strange invaders finally arrived here for good in Kent in AD43, 1,975 years ago. They bargained, they fought, they traded, they bred and they settled. As far north as Scotland and as far West as Devon. For almost four hundred years, they ruled Britannia. We need to remember that these soldiers weren't Italians per-se, they were French, or probably Germans who'd been drafted into the Roman army as the Empire expanded and swallowed up European countries.

They took tribal hillforts, they built fortresses, they introduced civilization as we know it. While it's true some Roman fortresses differed in their construction or layout, generally each one looked and functioned the same. Here's a collection of Roman Camps from the north region of Britain; while the interiors of some haven't been exposed, if we were to take off the topsoil, the same features would be seen. Granaries, barracks, HQ, sometimes a hospital and of course the CO's quarters. Here's the (exposed) Vindolanda and Houstead fortresses from the northern border.
Here you see the standard fortress footprint; now look below at some of the other camps in the North of England. Malham, Cawthorne and Bainbridge. They're all the same; curved Mediterranean fortress walls, oblong structure, entrance and exits on the long-side.

Now, I'm sensing you're probably getting a little tired of this essay - you'll be pleased to know the Saxons (and the Vikings) didn't really leave much archaeology for us. Their buildings were largely wooden; any archaeological evidence of this time period is very limited. Compared to other periods in our history, our understanding of this age is very foggy - one might even say dark. Que the Dark Ages.

And that's all I'm going to write about that - frankly because there's not really that much to see from the air of the dark ages...because they're, well, dark. And I don't have a night rating.

Moving swiftly on, the Anglo Saxons and the Vikings occupied Britain for nigh-on six hundred years. Between themselves, they've battled for territory, lost and won ground and generally raped and pillaged their way into the history books right up to 1066. For the benefit of anyone a little foggy on their knowledge of The Conquest, here's a little article I wrote recently:

“1066 and Edward the Confessor dies without an heir. He's a Saxon and he's supposedly given the Kingdom to William the Bastard (French chap, not to be messed with, fought his own way to power and became William Duke of Normandy in 1035); unfortunately the senile old codger he's also promised it to Harold Godwinson (a powerful Saxon Earl).

Harold seriously pissed on Williams' bonfire by declaring himself king on the same day as Edwards' death - this is after, I might add, Harold had shot off to France, met with William and sworn an oath that the latter should be king when Ed pops his clogs.

William wasn't going to stand for this so mounted an army to claim the throne. Normans or 'northmen' for those who don't know the meaning were actually of Viking descent who'd intermarried with the French and sacked off the pagan tint for Christianity. And there they were, righteous, pumped up Christians on the northern coast of France in...
Normandy (north- men- dy)...just a stones throw away from Harold...

By the time William landed on the coast of England in September 1066, Harold was fed up with Vikings. He’d just won a bloody big bust-up with his brother and an army of Norwegians up here in East Yorkshire at Stamford Bridge, knocking the socks of the invading forces only to find that William’s landed on the South Coast and he’s not happy.

Harold gets back in a matter of days, rolls his sleeves up and puts up one of the most spirited battles this country’s seen. For nine hours straight he and his men fight the Normans. But Saxon England had had its time. You know the story – Harold catches an arrow with his face and that’s it, England falls to the Normans.”

William (ex Bastard and now ‘Conqueror’), takes front and centre and he’s not going to be made a fool of again. Violence plagues his early reign of Britain. In true medieval style, he torches villages, kicks the living snot out of the population and orders the building of six hundred castles all over the land. These are known as motte and bailey castles and they’re everywhere. The term motte is French for ‘small hill’ – you can make this out clearly on the below photograph of Pickering Castle.

The Bailey refers to the surrounding area within the castle walls. The theory was, if the castle walls were breached, the soldiers could retreat to the keep atop the motte. A place of safety.

Similarly, here’s Bytham, Hallaton, Boston and Skipsea motte and bailey, again their distinctive fea-

The Norman period takes us right up to our recent history, the Tudors – when Henry Tudor beats Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth. It’s interesting to note that while there’s certainly a lot of history following the Norman invasion, on the subject of castles and defensive settlements, nothing much really changed – that is, until we get up to the Civil War, the birth of Parliament (and democracy) as we know
the birth of Parliament (and democracy) as we know it.

For the benefit of those who don’t know, this powder keg ignited when King Charles I, accompanied with armed soldiers, burst into the House of Commons in 1642 and demanded the arrest of five members accused of attempting to turn the country against him. Famously, the King sat in the Speaker’s Chair and, not seeing ‘The Five Members’, commented “I see the birds have flown”. He then turned to The Speaker, asking if he could identify the five. The Speaker replied: “May it please your Majesty, I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak in this place but as the House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am here”. A stark turning point in history – no longer is the country governed by the will of its monarch, it is governed by the will of the people.

Boom, up goes the firework and Britain’s population is at war with itself. History is made as the Royalists (wrong but romantic) and Parliamentarians (right but repulsive) fight it out. All over the country old fortresses were being reused and new ones built. Below you see Horsey Fortress – and look at the difference. The characteristic star shape defines this as a ‘Bastion Fort’. Each of the triangular points would’ve had a cannon mounted on it to cover not only the battlefield but the fortress walls as well. Comparing this to fortresses of earlier periods, there’s no better example of how the development of gunpowder and technology reshaped our means of defence.

There’s a great many events in our countries past I’ve either skimmed over or missed out entirely in this article – but then, an accurate history of this country wasn’t the point. Looking back isn’t it fascinating that those three key elements we looked at earlier, those three basic constituents present in our national identity: to protect, to defend and to control have been silently reflected for three thousand years only to sky, birds and pilots?

Unless we’re flying abroad, when we think about touring, we’re conditioned to think about airfields and lunch. We fly for an hour, we eat, we talk, we come home. But why does that need to be the gig? For every one airfield, there’s a thousand different sites, near and far – and you, you lucky sod, you’re licenced to see things other people can’t.

All through the seasons, in changing light, in varied weather at different heights; your licence, your ability to take a machine into the sky and put it back on the ground is (or should be) one of the most important things you’ll ever possess. That is your gift; and the only thing you’ll ever tangibly own to validate that – your logbook – is both metaphorically and physically in your hands.
I was probably about 15 years old when I was invited to have a glider flight at Rufforth airfield many many years ago, it was the silence of the flight that sticks in my mind and the sheer wonder of flying, effortlessly in the sky.

It was not until the 2nd May 1995 that I took a trial lesson in a flex wing microlight at Full Sutton, now sort of hooked, this followed with many days of driving to the airfield, only to find out the conditions were unsuitable for flight, eventually the microlight school was later moved from Pocklington to Sandtoft, over the next few months the desire waned and my 11 hours of flight came to an end.

I have often thought I should restart the flying bug but our business always seemed to come first and time seemed to be in short supply.

Then Harry arrived in our lives (second son) ......! not that this actual event made much difference to flying, as there was very little, if none at all, well not until he was 19 when through his own funding and the fantastic, friendly York Flying School Harry achieved his ppl

This was it I thought, I better get on with it, before it's too late !!

We now share a jodel D120 G-ATLV which most of you are familiar seeing Harry whizzing round in.

The idea of shared ownership now allowed me to ‘learn to fly’ in a tailwheel, many comments of “stick and rudder Ian” and “it’s not over till it’s in the hanger” were given to me, this was very apparent on my first flight with the very capable Ed of York Flying School, he must have been very brave (or stupid as someone said) to sit there in the right seat,....... with no brakes !!!!!

After many more hours of bravery from Ed, my flying was at last improving, then the moment comes, as every student pilot will remember the words of the instructor...
"right I am getting out"

I will always remember telling myself.... just do what you have done all these times!! and off I went into the circuit......Solo !!!

A few minutes later I landed (bounced) on 28 and taxied back to the apron......absolutely elated, tea was offered ??????? crikey something a little stronger than tea would have gone well !!

One comment I will always remember and chuckle at was (can't remember who said it )

" well done Ian, all 17 landings were great"

So 'onward and upward' no pun intended, cross country was the next challenge, with that completed and skills test on the horizon the day came.

Nervous ??....... bloody hell you're not kidding !!!!

Aircraft fuelled and ready for off, Mickey in the right seat this time, kept telling myself 'Just remember what Ed kept telling you”

2 plus hours later and after a few take off and landings, taxied to the hanger and shut down, the announcement from Mickey was 'well done, you have passed your skills test"

Not only was this probably the best achievement I have done for a very long time but I then found out it was also one for York Flying School

The first EVER student to complete a tailwheel ppl from scratch.

Well with ppl completed Harry and I were off, firstly just locally a bit and then the need to extend our trips was mentioned, 'what about France Dad’ was Harry’s question, so with some planning (most by Harry) and advice from experienced 'channel' crossing pilots we flew to France and back in two days.

Amazing we will definitely be doing that again.

I must add, all this would never have been possible without the confidence inspiring attitude from Ed and the professionalism from Mickey and York Flying School...............Oh and half of Harry's aeroplane - thanks Harry

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Mickey and everybody at York Flying School all the BEST for the future, and safe flying to all.

Thank you
Ian Robinson

AKA Harry's Dad to people that don't know me!
We arrived a day early for what promised to be a weekend of vintage aircraft performing aerobatics antics of a world class standard. I say we, the Bruce had two little friends travelling alongside; the Jungmann G-TAFF piloted by Les and the Jungmeister G-AXMT flown by Taff.

Taff and Les were to take part in the competition whilst the Bruce carried the luggage and ground crew; John Jinx, Andy Wood, Richard Taylor and myself. Proving valuable ground transport support were Dave Sharpe and Dave Cabury, who had both driven to the event.

Our Journey started at Breighton on a Tuesday morning, and to accommodate the maximum range of the Buckers it was broken in to legs of no more than 1½hr flights. The UK leg being Sywell then Headcorn.

Launching from Headcorn we crossed the channel in near perfect conditions and routed up the cost through the airspace of Korsijde and Oostende before landing in Midden Zeeland (The Netherlands). A very well-kept grass strip. Refuelled we departed for our final leg of the day to Hoogeveen, 1km of a lovely grass strip in the middle of an industrial estate (Netherlands, and close to the German Border).

Day one airspace: English, French, Belgian, Dutch.

Wednesday morning brought with it the usual interpretation of, and discussion over the weather forecast, and once the aircraft were ready we departed for St Michaelisdonn (Germany). 700m of tarmac boarded to the south by a wind farm and to the west a town. St Michaelisdonn was a ‘ghost town’ of an airfield. As far as we could ascertain there was one chap running the airfield and our arrival brought out a handful of spectators from the neighbouring campsite. Of all the airfields we visited this one was strangely surreal, and yet I would return.

Aircraft refuelled, and crews watered we headed north out of Germany and into Danish airspace. The route took us through the overhead of Skrydstrup Air Base, a Danish military base and into Vamdrup. With cross runways the wind was favouring the 700m westerly grass runway.
'Skive or Bust...' An article by Charles Sunter

Our trip to the Vintage Aerobatic World Championships 2018
Our trip to the Vintage Aerobatic World Championships 2018

The final leg saw us transiting the airspace of Billund and Karup and our arrival late afternoon at Skive.

Day two airspace: Dutch, German and Danish.

Skive is a gliding site, with a few powered aircraft and a terminal building signifying that it is also a regional airport, albeit a very quiet one.

Thursday; arrivals & practice day, and the airfield became alive with a symphony of vintage types adding to the promise of a good competition, a good weekend.

Over the course of Friday and Saturday the competition raged. At a world championship level beautiful classic aircraft performed set pieces, displays to music and team formations.

Now, you may think that this article should go into detail about the competition, but rather than give a blow by blow commentary I will allow your mind to picture the spectacle of bi-planes and mono-planes twisting and turning in a blue sky with a backdrop of fluffy white clouds.

Our boys did well with Les coming second in the Looping the Loop category and Taff winning the sportsmanship award; for ‘Passion, dedication, energy, helpfulness, talent, wisdom, fairness’ and much more.

The return journey home was as per the outbound, with the exception that instead on St Michaelisdonn we went into Nordolz, a German Navy Air Base with a 2.4km hard runway and a 725m grass runway.

The grass strip was operated by the local flying club and that’s where we were heading. Coincidently, they were having an ‘open door’ day for the locals to visit the airfield. I am not sure if our arrival disturbed the peace or brightened their day. It certainly caused a bit of excitement.

Now of course such a trip would not be an adventure if there weren’t a few challenges along the way. With thorough planning, a perfect team and a little luck, we covered some 1,644 miles with 2 vintage Buckers and the Broussard. We saw some beautiful scenery and were always met with a very warm welcome and hospitality at every airfield, which was second to none.

Charles

(Pictures by Andy Wood)
I’ve collected medals all my life, well to be exact, since being about 13, when a school friend bought a camera from me and gave me a selection of World War medals that he had to hand.

Since becoming associated with the Real Aeroplane Club, I’ve been on the look-out for anything associated with RAF Breighton, and I recently had a chance to acquire a few items in this regard. I thought members may be interested in some examples related to the history of RAF Breighton

These medals were issued to 1817777 Flt Sgt E Charles 78 Squadron. Eddy Charles completed ‘28’ missions totalling ‘177.40’ hours in the period September 1943 to June 1944. All were undertaken from Breighton, flying Handley Page Halifaxes. Eddy Charles was a mid upper gunner

Destinations were as follows:

It being around the 75th anniversary, here are some details from the mission 5-6 September 1943.

The destination was Mannheim, with the intended target the chemical plants that supplied material to the German war effort
Halifax ‘D’ (LW226) took off in the evening of 5 September.

A similar aircraft (‘B’, 78 Squadron code ‘EY’)

On board that night were.

Flt Lieutenant J R Gordon-David Skipper Pilot

Pilot Office P R Jones Fingerwind Navigator

Flt Sergeant J Stark Hammer Flight Engineer

Flt Sergeant C Laws Nipper Bomb Aimer

Flt Sergeant E Charles Eddy Mid Gunner

Flt Sergeant C A C Wanbon Wang Rear Gunner

Over the target Eddy Charles spotted an Me210 night fighter and advised the pilot to take evasive action. LW226 was caught in a searchlight at the same time. As the two planes approached each other, each opened fire. The Halifax sustained damage from both flak and the Me210, but the Messerschmitt was struck in the nose and the port engine and fell away leaving a smoking trail.

‘D’ LW226 returned safely to Breighton after an 8 1/2 hour flight.

On completion of the crews’ tour of duty the 78 squadron Commanding Officer, recommended Eddy Charles for a Distinguished Flying Medal, this was accepted.

Picture of Charlie Wanbon holding a photo of the crew, an example of which is now on the wall in the clubroom. Eddy Charles is pictured centre right in a Life jacket.

Related photographs

Skipper, Wang, Hammer and Eddy Charles
Caption Competition!

Please send your entries to rachelrealaero@outlook.com. The winner will receive a £10 Marks & Spencer Voucher (answer will be revealed in December's newsletter)
In this edition of the Gate Guardian I would like to focus on and reiterate the ongoing request for articles, no matter how large or small. I’d also like to inform you that planning for 2019 has started, with an events team meeting later this month, to drive this forward. Should you have any thoughts or ideas for the airfield and or events that you would like considered please let me know within the next week.

Those of you who have confirmed attendance on the ROCC course. Don’t forget this is on Sunday 14th October. I will contact you separately with times.

I hope very much that you will join us for the Halloween party and, if you intend coming to the Christmas party but haven’t yet put your name down please do so. This event takes a lot of planning and knowing numbers in good time helps tremendously. I hope you enjoy October’s edition of the Gate Guardian.

*Blue Skies*

*Charles*

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**NOTICE FROM BURN GLIDING CLUB**

Burn Gliding Club has contacted me regarding concerns over continuing overflights by GA aircraft at Burn Airfield. BGC is by no means pointing the finger at Breighton members but wishes to bring the seriousness of this to everyone’s attention.

They have had a recent spate of overflights across the airfield at dangerously low heights, as well as one close Air Prox with a GA aircraft to the near North of the airfield. The ever-increasing number of such incidents has caused BGC management committee to give serious consideration to seeking CAA assistance on this issue.

BGC is a busy gliding site that operates every Thursday and the weekends and, during the soaring season (April – October), they frequently operate on other days during the week. Whilst they generally operate from about 10am – 6pm, they can (and have) started before 9am on training course weeks and, on a good soaring day, gliders can often be returning ‘home’ from cross-country flights into the early evening. Accordingly, all GA pilots should assume that the airfield is ‘active’ during daylight hours.

BGC launches gliders by means of two winches and two tug aircraft. The consequences of a powered aircraft hitting a cable whilst launching a glider are highly dangerous and are likely to be fatal for the occupant(s) of the GA aircraft, as a wire will slice clean through a fuselage or wing. Please therefore plan to give Burn a wide birth when flying in the area and always keep a good eye out for gliders.