

On the cover:



[Photo: Alan Manning, APSS]

The APSS conservation team working on the National Museum of Flight's Avro Vulcan XM697 is used to all sorts of people dropping by to see how things are progressing, but this was our first fly-in.

Robin (or *Erithacus rubecula* to his friends) found the co-pilot's control stick to be a comfortable perch from which to cast a critical eye on the work that has been carried out over the past eighteen months by Alan Manning, Brian Wilson and Malcolm Oliver of APSS, under the guidance of the National Museum of Flight's conservator Gary Powell.

An update on the work on the Vulcan is included on p13, in the News from APSS section.

Contents

6 An RAF erk in the Fleet Air Arm

It is a key aim of APSS to record and preserve the first-hand accounts of its members and of local people about their service in the armed forces, or elsewhere in the aircraft industry, or their experiences just as by-standers. Continuing an occasional series in *The Fortune Teller*, Jimmy Flanagan recalls in conversation with George Cunningham of the society's Historical Section some of his experiences when, as a junior RAF mechanic, he was seconded to the Fleet Air Arm in the early years of the Second World War.

12 News from APSS

A regular digest of news and views about the society and its members, including updates on the society's new-build Sopwith 1½ Strutter and glider restoration projects, developments in the APSS radar and radio section, and reports on the conservation work on the National Museum of Flight's Avro Vulcan, Avro Anson, Bristol Bolingbroke and de Havilland Comet 4C.

17 Return to Mühlberg

The late George Carrick described in an earlier issue of *The Fortune Teller* some of his experiences as a prisoner-of-war in Stalag IVB at Mühlberg, near Leipzig. Here, his son — also George — describes the return journey that his father made in 2005 with his family to the prison camp, sixty years after he was liberated.

18 From boy to man

Harry Tait is a local lad of a mere eighty-seven years, born in Leith and now living in North Berwick, a few miles to the north of the National Museum of Flight. Here, he describes how he enlisted at the age of nineteen as a clerk in the RAF, and then found himself posted to East Fortune learning to fly Beaufighters — after a five-year diversion via the Orkneys, South Africa, Egypt, Algeria, Italy and Devon!



[Photo: Bob Thomson, APSS]

The Eurofighter Typhoon thunders along the flight-line with both afterburners lit as a spectacular conclusion to the 2006 airshow at the then plain old Museum of Flight. The Typhoon F2, XJ920 from 29(R) Squadron, made a great impression on even the few sceptics in the crowd, demonstrating its performance at both low and high speeds, and including the "square loop" that seems to be one of its stock manoeuvres. It ended its display and the show with a straight vertical climb from low level, to disappear almost magically into the cloudbase at about 5000ft.

See pp38–40 for more photographs taken on the day.

24 A dirge for the Derringer

Do you remember the Wing Derringer? Gordon Watson does, and he regards it as a thing of beauty. He explains why in this article, and also recalls a few other aircraft that he encountered in his long career in civil aviation — and which he would prefer to have forgotten about.

28 Stopping the rot

APSS is a member of the British Aircraft Preservation Council, and when the BAPC's ninth *Stopping the rot* conference was held almost on our doorstep, society members turned out in force.

The Editor provides a full report on the day, including presentations by APSS members Jim Mattocks and David Mackenzie, and by Thilo Bürgel, Assistant Conservator at the National Museum of Flight.

34 Sargent says ... jump

Twenty years ago, APSS member Tom Sargent volunteered for a parachute jump, to raise money for charity and also to fulfil a long-cherished dream. He describes the preparation for the jump and — graphically — his feelings on the way down.

37 The Bob Wilson archive

Bob Wilson was a founder member of APSS, and before his death in 2004 had donated his large collection of model aircraft to the society, as noted in Issue 13 of *The Fortune Teller*. His widow Helen has now generously made available to APSS Bob's vast collection of photographs and films that record the aircraft that he had observed over many decades and all around the world. We describe here a few of the gems, and outline our plans to catalogue and make accessible this treasure trove of aviation history.

38 Airshow 2006

There was a great deal of disappointment locally when the museum was forced to cancel its planned airshow in 2005 because of air-traffic control restrictions imposed as a result of the G8 summit that was being held at Gleneagles, a few minutes flying time away across the Forth.

The show and the crowds returned with a vengeance in 2006, with attendance in excess of 13,000. Many APSS members acted as stewards on the day, and many others took their cameras along. Here we show a few of the images of classic aircraft, new and old, through the lenses of Bob Thomson.