

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

Roger de Mercado, DHA Hatfield 1957-62

The de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School Old Boys Association was formed at Hatfield in March 1951. Despite the fact that there had always been a few female students, there appears to have been no outcry about the name. No doubt there would be now! About thirty years later the 'Old Boys' phrase was dropped and ever since we have been DHAeTSA.

As a reminder, at one time there were seven DHAeTS schools: at Chester, Christchurch, Hatfield, Leavesden, Lostock, Portsmouth and Stag Lane. The 'headquarters' were first at Stag Lane and then, from around 1934, at Hatfield. The Christchurch and Portsmouth schools were founded under Airspeed management and to this day some students of that time do not consider themselves to be 'in DHAeTS'.

The majority of students passed through Hatfield and this was where the OBA was founded. This account relates the history of the Association, accompanied by a selection of memorabilia.

Correction and additions will be gratefully received. Please send them to me at rogerdemercado@gmail.com

This first issue dated October 2026.

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Inaugural Meeting

The inaugural meeting of the OBA on 3rd March 1951 was reported first in Flight magazine of 16th March 1951, then in the de Havilland Gazette, June 1951 and in DHAeTS Pylon Summer 1951. From 1952 onwards Pylon was titled 'The Journal of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School and the Old Boys' Association' until the last known issue, Summer 1970. By then it was 'The Journal of the Hawker Siddeley Aviation Apprentice Training Schools (Hatfield and Chester) and the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School Old Boys' Association'. (What a mouthful!) Issues sometimes had 'News of Old Boys'.

There was a reference in 1959 to a Constitution, but no known copy has survived and the Association has functioned well for a long time without one.

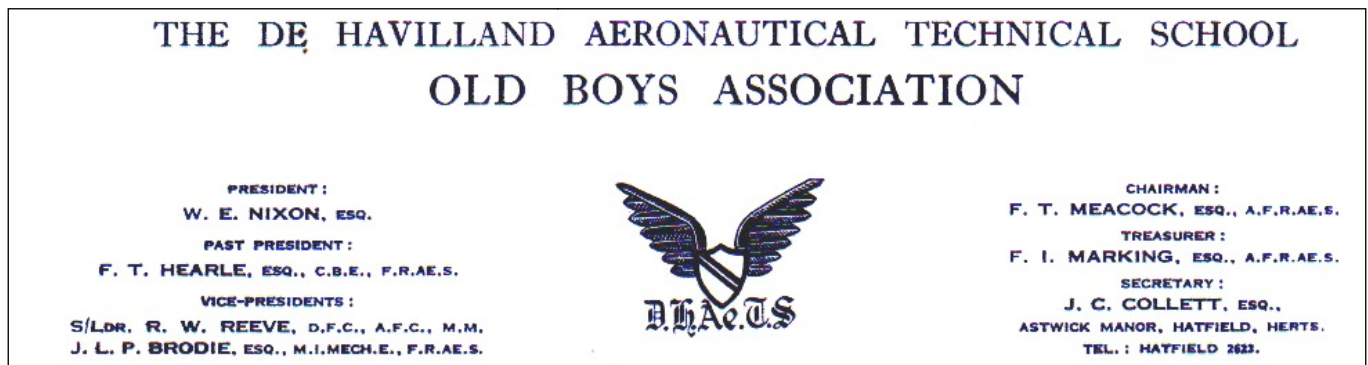
The first President was Frank Hearle, who with Geoffrey de Havilland was the founder of the Technical School. He was succeeded by John Brodie, Engineering Director of the Engine Co. Later presidents were Wilfrid Nixon, A S Kennedy, John Cunningham, Duncan Simpson and Ian Newton. In 1953 Sir Geoffrey accepted the invitation to become Patron of the OBA.

Branch was established almost immediately, primarily by old boys now at DH Canada, producing its own magazine, Chinook, from 1952 – earlier than The Stag and, it must be recorded, of better quality. A small 'branch' was set up in Seattle by DH men at Boeing.

The first newsletter did not appear until December 1954. It was called The Stag and referred to as a journal – 16 typewritten pages in a thin card cover. The Editorial of this first issue is reproduced on page 17. Three issues appeared, card bound in half-foolscap size, in December 1954, Spring 1955 and Summer 1957. Two later issues are known, unbound in full foolscap, dated April 1959 and October 1959. That issue recorded membership of 634, which no doubt will have included members from the earliest days of the School. No newsletters are known of between October 1959 and Spring 1982.

Bruce Bosher joined the committee in 1966 or 1967. His file is the only record as any previous 'official' Secretary's records disappeared long ago. Membership lists – "What Became of Old...?" – dated 1965 and 1966 are on file, showing that the OBA was alive then. The lists give the start date of members' training, so are useful for historical purposes.

Letterhead 1955-1957.



Two early members were from that first intake in 1928: E R Durbec and R V Smith, of whom nothing more is known.

Membership was largely Hatfield-oriented and was restricted to former 'students', i.e. those later known as engineering apprentices, many of whom would have been fee-paying students. Until the early 1950s there was a much wider distinction than later on between those who were to be trained as professional engineers and those who were to learn a trade. On revitalisation in the 1980s as DHAeTSA former trade apprentices, quite rightly, were welcomed.

The main activities initially were informal reunions at Hatfield, mid-summer balls in conjunction with the London Aeroplane Club (operated from 1947 under the overall control of DHAeTS) and formal dinners in London, at Simpsons in the Strand. The latter appear to have been held from 1951 to at least 1959. Attendees were given souvenir copies of the current membership list, nicely bound with ribbon.

A sailing section became the Comet Sailing Club. A Chester Branch was set up and had at least one reunion, but appears to have been short-lived. A North American

In February 1964 there was a dinner dance at the Clock, Welwyn. A Midsummer Ball at the Aerodrome Restaurant (i.e. the Senior Staff Restaurant) was held jointly with the Hatfield Branch of the RAeS in June 1966 and there were Summer Balls in a marquee at Salisbury Hall, by arrangement with the then owner Walter Goldsmith, in 1969, 1971 and 1973. There were plans for a Summer Ball at Salisbury Hall in 1975, but there is no evidence it took place and the next item in the file is dated 1980.

In 1967 and again in 1977 there was a suggestion that the OBA should become a de Havilland Association, with membership open to all former employees. It was not pursued and finally 'put to bed' in 1980. It was suggested then that it would be good to link with the de Havilland Moth Club. This proved to be a Good Idea and developed into the close ties enjoyed thereafter.

In 1968 it was agreed, at the suggestion of Peter Spooner, that AGMs be discontinued. He noted that very few members attended and that other similar organisations did not hold an AGM. From then onwards committee members were recruited on an informal basis as and when it was thought desirable or necessary.

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In 1975 a approach was made by Philip Birtles, of what was then the Mosquito Museum, proposing collaboration between the Museum and the OBA. This appears to have led to a 'referendum' of members proposing amalgamation to which the majority who replied agreed. Little seems to have taken place and at a committee meeting in 1980 the amalgamation was rescinded.

Rejuvenation

There was little or no activity between mid 1975 and late 1980, which is when the rejuvenation into today's DHAeTSA really began. Notices were sent to the DH and R-R house journals and to Aeroplane and Flight magazines. Duncan Simpson, then chief test pilot at Dunsfold, became chairman and Mike Rogers became secretary. The refreshed committee met in February 1981 and really got things going again. At this meeting it was agreed to change the name to DHAeTSA, dropping the OBA. It was also agreed that it was time to increase the annual subscription from 37p (= 7/6 at the time of inauguration) to £1. See page 18 for the minutes of this pivotal meeting.

An invitation was sent to some 300 members who were traced, addressing them all by hand, to an OBA 30th



anniversary reunion. This was held at Hatfield in May 1981, attended by 301 members and their wives.

In Spring 1982, 'The Stag – Journal of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School Association' appeared, the first newsletter of the current series. This was four sides of A4, edited by Mike Rogers. It advertised that on the grand all-day occasion at Hatfield in May 1982 to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Sir Geoffrey, an evening social was to be held in conjunction with the de Havilland Moth Club. In the same issue Mike wondered how the name Stag had originated, surmising that it stood for Society of Trained Aviation Gentlemen! Perhaps it was a combination of a reference to Stag Lane and to the harts on the Hertfordshire County Arms. All subsequent publications have just been the newsletter of DHAeTSA.

Reunions at Hatfield were held again in May 1984, May 1987, October 1988 and October 1991. The 1991 event was in the new single-status restaurant, the Senior Staff Restaurant having been demolished. A final Hatfield reunion was proposed for June 1994, in the Sports and Social Club, then still in its original location at the north

end of the Aircraft site, but there was insufficient support. By then the annual de Havilland Moth Club events at Woburn had become the favoured medium.

Membership Qualification

The OBA was for Students (later classed as Engineering Apprentices) only. Trade apprentices were still considered as future shop floor workers whereas Engineering Apprentices would become professional engineers. Only the latter were allowed to wear a DHAeTS blazer badge.

At some time after the rejuvenation it was agreed that former Trade Apprentices should be admitted. However it was still mandatory that members had to have started in the School while it still had de Havilland in the name. This ruled out any one starting after 1965, by when it had been renamed the Hawker Siddeley Aviation (Hatfield) Training School. This was changed in 2018, when it was recognised that in order to continue the preservation of Hatfield history we should welcome younger former apprentices, who after all had the same training, in the same place, only the name over the door having changed from time to time!.

Previous approaches by the Hatfield Aviation Association about the possibility of a merger had been rejected, but when closure of HAA became imminent in 2021 a change of policy was agreed, again with the intention of the membership including people with an interest in the heritage of the site. HAA had previously absorbed the Forty Year Club, which in turn had latterly admitted Twenty Year members, thus the present membership covers a wide spectrum of long-term Hatfield personnel.

From soon after rejuvenation the spouses of deceased members were offered continued receipt of newsletters, at no cost. At first quite a lot accepted. They were classed as Affiliates. As the years passed and mutual contacts lessened, fewer took up the offer and it is now only offered in particular cases. There have been several instances where a daughter or son has asked for continued newsletters, always by email.

Newsletters

As related earlier, the first newsletter, named The Stag, appeared in December 1954 and the last appeared in October 1959.

The first in the current series was edited by Mike Rogers, the Secretary, who soon handed over that role to Bruce Bosher who edited the next 45 issues. At first all were, of course, printed and posted. In 2005 a few members accepted them by email and the ratio of print to email steadily reduced in ensuing years. With only a few exceptions, newsletters have been home-printed on one device or another — daisy wheel, laser and inkjet.

From Spring 2007 I edited the newsletters, with much of the content in the next few years coming from Bruce. and so far have been responsible for more than 50 issues.

An ongoing index is maintained, also a complete cumulative pdf of all newsletters since 1982.

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Anniversary Reunions

The first of the current series of Anniversary Reunions, commemorating the founding of DHAeTS in 1928, was a dinner in 1988, in the Senior Staff restaurant at Hatfield. This restaurant was originally part of the London Aeroplane Club. The 70th, 75th and 80th anniversaries were dinners at Moore Place, Aspley Guise, Beds., in conjunction with the de Havilland Moth Club Rally. The 85th, in 2013, was a lunch at at the Shuttleworth Collection, Old Warden; many members by then preferred a lunch rather than a dinner. The 90th was at the de Havilland Aircraft Museum, where diners sat beneath the wings of Mosquitoes. The 95th was again at the DH Museum, this time on the Mezzanine Floor of the new Geoffrey de Havilland Hangar. In response to popular request the lunches have become annual events.

At some point a large DHAeTS flag was made. It is still sometimes hoisted at the DH Museum at our lunch events, if a qualified flag-raiser is present!.

The de Havilland Moth Club

Moth Club rallies at Woburn Abbey began in 1980, a direct result of the very successful Famous Grouse Rally at Hatfield in 1979. We were invited to join them at Woburn from about 1984 onwards with more formal arrangements over many happy years from 1985 onwards. Due to foot and mouth disease in 2001, the rally planned for Woburn (home of a deer park) was held at Old Warden. The rallies returned to Woburn in 2002. Events were held elsewhere between 2008 and 2012, with returns



in 2013, 2014 and 2015. This proved to be the final year; it had been an excellent occasion, blessed by good weather, but bureaucracy and costs were increasing while availability of volunteers was decreasing, so the wise decision was made to call a halt. Our gatherings at Woburn are fondly remembered.

In July 1982 the annual Open Day at Hatfield celebrated the 100th anniversary of the birth of Sir Geoffrey de Havilland. On the evening of 3rd July the Association joined with the Moth Club for a buffet social.

The closure of Hatfield was marked on Easter Monday 1994 with what the Moth Club named The Last Great Picnic. Despite poor weather some Moths were flown in. A service was conducted in one of the Robin hangars, at the south end of the factory site, by the Moth Club's

chaplain and Anne Essex, Sir Geoffrey's granddaughter, lowered the DH flag for the last time at the site.

Members have been invited to a series of Moth Club gatherings at venues around the country: Houghton Hall in Norfolk in 2009 and 2011; Belvoir Castle in 2011; the RAF Halton centenary in 2013 and lesser gatherings starting at Bicester in August 2022.

Starting at Hatfield in September 1990 the Moth Club ran a number of 'Charity Flying' events. Initially they were to raise money for charity from fees paid by passengers for flights provided at no cost by members of the Club. From 1998 a sponsorship scheme was introduced, whereby a person or group could donate the cost of an experience flight for a young person. Schools and youth organisations (primarily the ATC) were approached and participants set some sort of competition, the winners of which got a flight. This worked well for many years, with the Association donating money at times as well as individual member donations. It did give members the opportunity to assist the Club in some small way, e.g. by chaperoning passengers to and from their aeroplane. Venues were Hatfield 1990, Old Warden 1994–2006 & 2012 and Halton 2007–2011. There was a pause due to more strict CAA regulations, then a resumption 2017–2019 at Old Warden. The 2020 event was cancelled due to the Covid-19 lockdown. Regrettably, both the dwindling interest by organisations and increasing number of youngsters who failed to thank their sponsor led to the decision not to continue after 2019.

Commemorations

Charles Caliendo (an Old Boy) instigated a memorial statue of Sir Geoffrey at the College Campus of the University of Hertfordshire – the site of the original Hatfield Technical College. DHAeTSA contributed £500 to the fund (the target of which was £350,000) and representatives attended the unveiling by the Duke of Edinburgh in July 1997.

In July 1999 the Association joined the Hatfield Branch of the RAeS, the Hatfield 40 Year Club and the Hatfield Aviation Association for a dinner at the Comet Hotel (where else...?) to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first flight of the DH106 Comet in 1949.

On 25th September 2000 a plaque commemorating the site of the de Havilland Aircraft Co at Stag Lane was unveiled on the exact centenary. Organised by the Moth Club, it was attended by representatives of DHAeTSA, including test pilots John Cunningham, Pat Fillingham and Duncan Simpson – Old Boys to a man.

Intake Year Reunions

A few 'year group' reunions have been held. Notably, the 1952/53 intake met almost every year from 2005 to 2021, all organised by Max Kelly. The 1956/57 intake met once and the 1958 intake also met once.

There were four reunions of former Christchurch apprentices, organised by Garth Rogers. Many of the Christchurch (and Portsmouth) considered themselves

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to be ex Airspeed and in fact some did not feel inclined to join DHAeTSA. The first was in 2003, the 50th anniversary of the opening of the old school at Somerford Way. The last was in 2012.

‘Gatherings’

Association gatherings at Museums were set up a few times, but met with limited response, only 5 to 10 members turning up at venues such as the RAF Museum at Cosford and the Newark Air Museum. There have been two visits to the BAE Systems Heritage Archive at Farnborough, one on the occasion of the Farnborough Air Show and one as a tour of the Archive. The latter attracted about 10 members, plus some of the volunteers at the de Havilland Aircraft Museum.

The Hatfield Heritage Association

When the Hatfield site closed a number of interested organisations formed a group with the aim of preserving the aviation heritage of Hatfield. It was led by John Martin and ran for a few years before his death. DHAeTSA participated alongside HAA, the Hatfield Branch of the RAeS, the de Havilland Moth Club, the Forty Year Club and the de Havilland Aircraft Heritage Centre, as the Museum at Salisbury Hall was then known.

Membership Identity and Subscriptions

Membership has always been lightly managed; numbers have never been allocated and membership cards not universally provided, although cards were issued to those attending some Moth Club rallies. In the 1980s ties were still worn regularly and for a time DHAeTSA ties of various designs were commissioned and sold. By 1995 demand had dropped below the level where it was economic to get them made. Blazer badges were produced for a time and were reintroduced, to individual order, in 2013 when a new supplier was found.

The original subscription of 7/6 (37½p) set in 1951 held until 1980 when it was raised to £1. In 1986 life membership was offered at £12.50 (£20 overseas). The annual fee was increased to £3 (£5 overseas) in 1993 and in 2006 to £5 (£7.50 overseas). Life Membership was offered in the expectation that the Association would soon fold; those who opted for that in 1986 bought the bargain of a lifetime! The subscription for new members was raised to £10 in 2019; it was not retroactively enforced, but members were invited to increase their standing orders and some indeed did so. Alternatively they were encouraged to make a donation if able to, with good results then as before and since. It has been a fact that whenever funds have run short there has been a valuable response. Life membership was increased in 2019 to £50, a popular option for overseas members. It was later abolished because most new members were already elderly!

Accounts are produced at 31st December each year and include budget forecasts.

There have been, and still are, some honorary members, notably Stuart McKay, Secretary of the de Havilland Moth club, Anne Essex, granddaughter of Sir

Geoffrey de Havilland and Sir Ian McFadyen, Chairman of the Geoffrey de Havilland Flying Foundation.

The Photograph Album

At the anniversary dinner in 2008 Ken Watkins displayed his first pages of a Group Photograph Album, all of 10 pages long. It was in a very wide format to match the very wide format typical of group photos in the 1930s and 1940s. From then on he expanded the Album, splitting it into two Parts with Part 1 being formal company photos of new apprentices and Part 2 covering everything else. He offered the Album on CD at modest cost, but there were few takers. By the time



Ken had to give up in 2025 due to failing eyesight there were 525 photos of people plus more of places.

Part 3 of the Album, administered by me, continues the series.

Our Website

The Summer 2007 edition of our newsletter posed the question “Should we have a website?” It was first mooted in Summer 2002 by Alan Clarke and had arisen several times, usually followed by “Yes - but who would do it?” A notice was put in the Summer 2007 newsletter and at the Moth Club Rally that year Bruce Boshier and I were approached by Stan Borrie (a former colleague of mine in Flight Development) who said that he had seen the item and that his son Richard would be glad to assist, having spotted the item when reading Stan’s copy.

By Spring 2008 the website was live, hosted by Richard and administered by me. Richard charged us only for the initial setup and not a penny since.



In the early days some members provided articles, but latterly all have been loaded by me. Some in particular are intended to provide a lasting record, e.g. ‘A Brief History of DHAeTS’, ‘DHAeTS Prospectuses’ and ‘de Havilland Memorials’. The Photograph Albums and the archive copies of Pylon are protected by a password for members only.

Oral Histories

In 2009 the University of Hertfordshire initiated some heritage events, including a reunion of former college

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students and oral histories of former de Havilland employees. Some members of DHAeTSA recorded their reminiscences; at the time of writing these are still on the University website. A number have been downloaded for our digital archive. A book was published in 2010 by the University about the history of the site and included partial transcripts of three of our members' recordings (embarrassingly, one was that of your scribe). 'The de Havilland Legacy - Hatfield Aerodrome Remembered' was printed in limited numbers and never published to the public; copies are now rare.

Pylon Magazine

Pylon first appeared, as typewritten sheets, in the early 1930s. It soon became properly produced and was published at irregular intervals, with a long gap during WW2, until 1970. It was always compiled by students and covered a wide range of topics. Around 2008 Bruce Boshier assembled as complete a collection as possible and gave it to the de Havilland Aircraft Museum.

A compilation of old pages was created for the 70th anniversary in 1998, thanks to the skills of Carol Fulton, daughter of Ken Fulton, our Treasurer at the time. An all-new issue appeared in 2003, entitled Pylon 75. Although the plan had been to publish every five years, there was so much material already to hand that an interim issue appeared at Christmas 2005. (I assisted with the compilation of this issue, leading to me being co-opted on to the committee.) The next was Pylon 80 (2008). These three issues were edited by Ken Watkins. Then followed Pylon 2011, Pylon 85 (2013), Pylon 2015 and Pylon 90 (2018), all edited by Roger Coasby with the help of his brother David. Pylon 2020 was compiled by John Mounce and edited by me. I have edited annual issues from P2021 onwards. With hindsight, the titling should have been systematic!

The introduction of annual issues was prompted by the realisation that three of the contributors to P2020 did not live to see their work in print. In the past a wide range of topics had been covered, but from 2021 onwards there has been more emphasis on encouraging members to relate their own stories.

Pylon has always been professionally printed.

All the modern issues are on our website, with indexes of contents and authors, which it is hoped will be value to people in future.

The de Havilland Aircraft Museum

Closer links with the Museum began in 1999, instigated by the then new Director and General Manager, Ralph Steiner. One consequence was the creation of a DHAeTS display, instigated by Ralph. The small 'Foreman's Office' the last remaining structure of the wartime site, was allocated. Cabinets were made and descriptive material assembled by Terry Pankhurst and Ken Pye. Requests for exhibits resulted in an excellent selection of workpieces and toolboxes. It was formally opened in August 2016 by Mike Ramsden.

Committee meetings were held in the volunteer's crew room for some years, usually followed by lunch at the Crooked Billet in Colney Heath. (The venue for the previous few years for meeting and lunch was the Long Arm and Short Arm in Lemsford, well-known to generations of DH folk and now demolished.)

Our 90th anniversary lunch was the first to be held at the Museum, on a very hot day in 2018. We were seated in the Mosquito hangar, some tables under Mosquito wings; 85 members and guests attended.

The Hatfield Aviation Association

HAA was created in 1992 by members of the Executive Mess at Hatfield when the Mess was closed at the time of the opening of the Single Status Restaurant. In 2016 it absorbed members of the Forty Year Club, which closed when no one would take over from Reg Willoughby. That club had recently allowed Twenty Year people to join.

HAA folded in 2022 when there were no volunteers to take over its running. Members of HAA, 87 at the time, were invited to join DHAeTSA, the agreement by our committee being that these were all people who were interested in maintaining the heritage of Hatfield. 25 were already also members of DHAeTSA. Another 22 joined, of whom 7 turned out to be ex apprentices who had either never heard of DHAeTSA or had not previously been motivated to join.

HAA funds remaining were used to pay for life membership of those joining DHAeTSA. The residual amount was donated to the de Havilland Aircraft Museum.

All HAA newsletters, 1992–2022, have been preserved as pdf. Copies of the compilation have been given to Herts County Archives and to BAE Systems Heritage Archive.

Membership Numbers

The initial membership numbered about 350, some of whom no doubt went back to the first days of the School. In 1959 634 were reported, after which no records appear to have survived until rejuvenation. A huge effort by the committee in writing to all whose contacts could be found resulted in about 400 by the end of 1982, the numbers thereafter steadily increasing to a maximum of 573 in 2011. The number slowly reduced to around 500 by 2019 and thereafter the inevitable attrition of old age accelerated the reduction to about 330 in 2026.

Nevertheless, a trickle of new members and the addition of ex-HAA people has helped to sustain membership.

The Committee

A list of known committee members over the years is at pages 7 & 8; known Presidents are also listed.

Memorabilia

The remaining pages consist of reminders of the past.

Roger de Mercado, October 2026

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Committee Compositions

Inaugural Committee, 1951

Chairman F T Meacock
Vice chairman K E Westover
Secretary J C Collett
Treasurer F I Marking
Committee K T Fulton; W P C Haggar; A D M Hill;
R J K Holland; R W Jamieson; C J Newman;
J M Ramsden; G I Sprent

1953

Chairman F T Meacock
Vice chairman K E Westover
Secretary J C Collett
Treasurer F I Marking
Committee K T Fulton; W P C Haggar; J M Ramsden
G I Sprent; C J Newman

1957

Chairman W P C Haggar
Secretary E J Mann (Tech School office)
Treasurer J McCulloch
Committee D Brown; K T Fulton; Jermyn; F Marking
Meacock; J M Ramsden

1958

Chairman J M Ramsden
Secretary H Wright (Tech School office)
Treasurer J McCulloch
Committee D G Brown; K T Fulton; D A Jermyn; McClure
F T Meacock; M J W Rogers

1966

Chairman J M Ramsden
Secretary H Wright (Tech School office)
Treasurer D G Brown
Committee J Albani (replacing R F Pinder); H F J Bagley;
K T Fulton; D A Jermyn; I P L Newton
(replacing M J W Rogers); P J Spooner; A White

1967

Chairman J M Ramsden
Secretary H Wright (Tech School office)
Treasurer D A Jermyn
Committee J Albanie; H F J Bagley; M B Boshier (replacing
D G Brown); K T Fulton; D A Jermyn;
I P L Newton; P J Spooner; A White

1968

Chairman J M Ramsden
Secretary H Wright (Tech School office)
Treasurer D A Jermyn
Committee J Albani; H F J Bagley; M B Boshier; K T Fulton
I P L Newton (replacing M J W Rogers);
P J Spooner; A White

1972

Chairman D A Jermyn
Secretary H Wright (Tech School office)
Treasurer not named
Committee M B Boshier; K T Fulton; I P L Newton;
F Ogilvie (replacing J Albani); J M Ramsden
P J Spooner; A White

1973

Chairman D A Jermyn
Secretary I B Wood
Treasurer not named
Committee M B Boshier; K T Fulton; I P L Newton
F Ogilvie; J M Ramsden; P J Spooner; A White

1981

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M J W V Rogers
Treasurer F Ogilvie
Committee M B Boshier; K T Fulton; J A B Lambert;
(replacing P J Spooner); I P L Newton;
J M Ramsden, to be replaced by R Woolfenden

1983

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M J W Rogers
Treasurer F Ogilvie
Committee M B Boshier; K T Fulton; J A B Lambert
I P L Newton; R Woolfenden

1987

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee J A B Lambert; I P L Newton; M J W Rogers;
R Woolfenden

1988

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee I F Burns; J A B Lambert; J Moody;
I P L Newton; M J W Rogers; R Woolfenden

1989

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee I F Burns; J A B Lambert; J Moody;
I P L Newton; M J W Rogers; R Woolfenden

1992

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee I F Burns; J A B Lambert; J Moody;
I P L Newton; N Price; M J W Rogers;
R Woolfenden

1993

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee I F Burns; J A B Lambert; J Moody;
I P L Newton; F Ogilvie; N Price; M J W Rogers;
R Woolfenden

1998

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee I F Burns; J A B Lambert; J Moody;
I P L Newton; N Price; M J W Rogers;
R Woolfenden

1999

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee I F Burns; J A B Lambert; I P L Newton; N Price;
M J W Rogers; R Woolfenden

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2000 - 2003

Chairman D M S Simpson
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee I F Burns; I P L Newton; N Price; M J W Rogers;
R Woolfenden

2004 - 2005

Chairman I P L Newton
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee I F Burns; R E C de Mercado; N Price;
M J W Rogers; K W Watkins; R Woolfenden

2006 - 2007

Chairman I P L Newton
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer K T Fulton
Committee R E C de Mercado; N Price; M J W Rogers;
K W Watkins; R G A Willoughby;
R Woolfenden

2008 - 2010

Chairman I P L Newton
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer R G A Willoughby
Committee R E C de Mercado; N Price; M J W Rogers;
K W Watkins; R Woolfenden

2011 - 2013

Chairman I P L Newton
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer R G A Willoughby
Committee R Coasby, R E C de Mercado; N Price;
K W Watkins; R Woolfenden

2014

Chairman I P L Newton
Secretary M B Boshier
Treasurer R G A Willoughby
Committee R Coasby, R E C de Mercado; N F G Harrison;
N Price; K W Watkins

2015 - 2016

Chairman I P L Newton
Secretary R E C de Mercado
Treasurer R G A Willoughby
Committee M B Boshier; R Coasby, N Price; K T Pye;
K W Watkins

2017 - 2018

Chairman I P L Newton
Secretary R E C de Mercado
Treasurer R Coasby
Committee K T Pye; G F Rogers; K W Watkins;
R G A Willoughby

2019 - 2020

Chairman Vacant
Secretary R E C de Mercado
Treasurer R Coasby
Committee R V Nathan; K T Pye; G F Rogers;
K W Watkins

2021

Chairman R E C de Mercado
Secretary R E C de Mercado
Treasurer R Coasby
Committee R V Nathan; K T Pye; G F Rogers;
K W Watkins

2022

Chairman R E C de Mercado
Secretary R E C de Mercado
Treasurer R Coasby
Committee P J Birtles; A Lee; R V Nathan; K T Pye;
G F Rogers; K W Watkins

2023 - 2024

Chairman R E C de Mercado
Secretary R E C de Mercado
Treasurer R Coasby
Committee P J Birtles; A Lee; R V Nathan; K T Pye;
G F Rogers;

2025 - 2026

Chairman R E C de Mercado
Secretary R E C de Mercado
Treasurer R Coasby
Committee P J Birtles; P Catton; A Lee; R V Nathan;

PRESIDENTS

F T Hearle 1951 - 1954 d.1965
W E Nixon 1955 - 1956 d.1970
J L P Brodie 1956 - 1959 d.1959
A S Kennedy 1959 -
1960-1968 ref to a president JC named 1963
1969-1999 no ref to a president
J Cunningham 1999 - 2002 d.2002
D M S Simpson 2003- -2017 d.2017
I PL Newton 2020 - 2025 d.2025

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

The first recorded intimation of an Association was in the Autumn 1950 issue of *Pylon* (note in the last paragraph the reference to Britten and Norman, creators of the *Islander*). Pages 17 and 18 of that issue, under 'Old Boys' News', reported that the notice that had been sent out and published eleven of the replies received so far.

VOLUME VIII. No. 4

AUTUMN 1950

THE JOURNAL OF THE DE HAVILLAND AERONAUTICAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL

EDITORIAL

THERE is one issue of *Pylon* this year instead of two and we have taken the bold step of reducing the price in the hope that this will result in greatly increased sales. Here, we feel, is an opportunity of practically doubling the circulation of our School magazine and every regular reader is earnestly requested to encourage others to take it. We are fortunate in being assisted by a grant, but are anxious to reduce it to a minimum.

THE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

The Old Boys of the School are going to form an Association to renew acquaintances and strengthen friendships which were made when they were apprentices.

When they leave the School, graduates go to every kind of job in the aeronautical field, varying between design and production engineering, transport operation, and maintenance. Their collected experiences must be truly encyclopaedic and the story of one individual is like a piece in a jig-saw, a necessary particle in the whole picture of aeronautical activity. The Association should give Old Boys an opportunity to piece together a considerable part of the picture.

It is early to foresee into what form the Association will grow. Its initial aims will not be ambitious and its organization is intended to be adaptable. The first objective will be to compile a booklet of members' addresses and to circulate this with news of members' activities, and perhaps copies of *Pylon*. Meetings will doubtless take many forms, from the chance gathering of

three or four travellers to take iced pineapple juice on a cool tropical verandah or a party of Old Boys at home here talking noisily in a City "pub".

During the present winter it is hoped to hold an inaugural meeting, when a committee can be elected and the framework of the Association can take shape. An advance notice and agenda for this occasion will be sent to as many Old Boys as possible, bearing in mind that a lot of the School records were destroyed in the bombing of Hatfield in 1940.

The editors hope that the addresses and news of Old Boys will flow in to add to the files of information which already are growing fast. We shall look forward to publishing letters from Old Boys, and hope that some of them will send articles and other contributions to *Pylon*.

We are commencing in this issue the first of a series of articles describing the experiences of Old Boys since they left the School. The first relates to Mr G. C. I. Gardiner.

ULTRA LIGHT AIRCRAFT

In the previous issue of *Pylon* we urged the enthusiasts to build an ultra-light aircraft because we felt that this economic and simple breed of aircraft would contribute to private flying.

In this issue we are particularly glad to review a promising ultra-light which has been built by two Old Boys of the School, John Britten and Desmond Norman, who have designed and built the *Fimbee* since they left the School early in 1949.

In June the following notice was circulated to the aeronautical press in all parts of the world, and we would like to take this opportunity of thanking the many journals and magazines that published the text.

CALLING D.H. STUDENTS

The Editor of *Pylon*, the magazine of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School, would like to make contact with old boys of the School wherever they may be. A list of their present addresses is being compiled and the Editor would like them to become regular subscribers to *Pylon*, and to contribute news of themselves and of other ex-students for publication in it. He also wants to obtain their views on the desirability of forming an old boys' association. There are some 1,900 men who have qualified and gone into the world after serving their engineering apprenticeship at the D.H. School. Will they please write to the Editor of *Pylon* at Hatfield Aerodrome, Hertfordshire, England.

The Editors have received replies from Old Boys of the School all over the world. Letters are still arriving and we are printing some of those so far received.

Amongst the published letters were those from the Chief Engineer of MEA, Beirut; the Engineering Office, DH Canada; the Principal of the Civil Aviation Training Centre, Allahabad; a Chance-Vought project engineer, USA; an aerodynamicist at Avro Canada; the Chief Engineer of the Air Survey Company of India and an engineer at DH Australia. They showed how far and wide former students has spread. Another letter was from the future chief test pilot at Dunsfold and later our President:

R.A.F. Station Tern Hill, Market Drayton.

DEAR MR EDITOR,

Re the paragraph in *The Aeroplane* of June 30, my present address until September is as above.

I shall look forward to hearing details of the formation of the proposed Association which, incidentally, I support very strongly. It is a very sound way of keeping ex-students "in touch"; I can only do this now by all too infrequent visits to Hatfield.

Yours sincerely,

DUNCAN SIMPSON, *Officer Cadet, R.A.F.*

* * *

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

INAUGURATION

The Autumn 1950 issue of Pylon also reported the election of a Caretaker Committee. The Summer 1951 issue described the inaugural meeting and had a page of Old Boys' News..

THE ELECTION OF A CARETAKER COMMITTEE

At the invitation of Sqdn/Ldr Reeve a number of Old Boys met at Astwick Manor on 9 November, in order to discuss the first steps that should be taken to form an Association. A caretaker committee was elected which will make the preliminary arrangements for the Association and notice of an Inaugural Meeting will be circulated to Old Boys in the near future. The date of this meeting has yet to be decided; it is likely on this first occasion to be held at Hatfield, where there is the greatest number of Old Boys.

The Caretaker Committee was elected as follows:
F. Meacock, J. G. Sprent, K. Westover, J. Holland,
J. M. Ramsden, T. K. Fulton, D. Hill.

THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

Present:	Mr F. T. HEARLE	President
	S/Ldr R. W. REEVE	Vice-President
	Mr F. T. MEACOCK	Chairman
	Sir GEOFFREY DE HAVILLAND	
	Mr W. E. NIXON	
	Mr J. L. P. BRODIE	

ON 3 March 1951, occurred a unique occasion in the history of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School. It was a reunion of ex-students of the School, who met to form an Old Boys' Association.

A Caretaker Committee had already been elected to deal with the early business of the Association, and their Chairman, Mr F. T. Meacock, opened the meeting. He said that this was the first flight or engine run of the new Association, and that it was necessary to do a certain amount of business before proceeding to the lighter side. He then introduced the President of the Association, Mr F. T. Hearle, who expressed his pleasure at being invited to be the first President. He was pleased to see so many old faces again, and congratulated the Committee on their preparation of the meeting. He said that the Directors of the Company were glad to see so many young people who had gone into the world of aviation through the Company, and though they might not have stayed with us, they were proving good friends of the Company. Mr Hearle wished to congratulate so many on the progress they had made in the industry of aeronautics, some had extremely good positions, quite a number with the de Havilland Company.

The President then outlined the aims of the Association, which were to bring Old Boys together by the interchange of the *Gazette* and *Pylon*, and where possible to form overseas branches. Already offers had been received from Mr McCulloch in Canada, Mr Andreoli in America, and Mr Kathju in India. The first Social Meeting of the Association was to be at the National Air Races at Hatfield on 23 June. Suggestions had been made for golf, sailing, and gliding sections of the Association.

Mr Hearle moved that the meeting agreed to the aims of the Association, the proposed rules, and to the election of the Caretaker Committee, who would serve for the first year. This was agreed by "show of hands".

The Chairman thanked all who had supported the meeting and Mr Peter Milne proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Hearle for his kindness in coming along on this occasion.

The Chairman also thanked the Directors, Sir Geoffrey de Havilland, Mr W. E. Nixon, and Mr J. L. P. Brodie for sparing their time to come to the Inaugural Meeting of the Association. The lighter business of the meeting was then attended to.

Later in the evening music became audible and at an appropriate interval in the dancing, Paul Kimberley gave us one of his mimics of his idea of Covent Garden opera.

The Staff of the School, past and present, was well represented particularly by Sqd. Leader Reeve and Principal and Mr W. Seeley, Principal in the early days.

Mr M. Sharp and those of the aeronautical press who came were very welcome guests and their most generous support has been of invaluable assistance to the Association.

in Sydney was an indication of the many supporters of the venture in all parts of the world.

A very happy party broke up late in the evening knowing that there were other reunions to come.

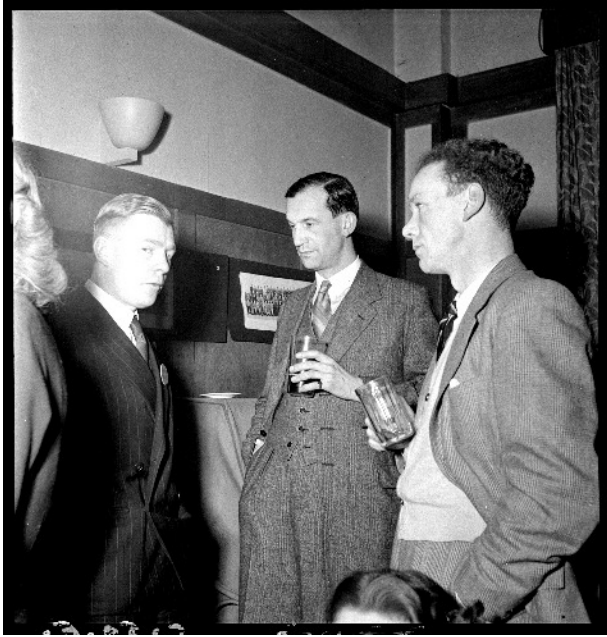


A group of drinkers at the Old Boys' Reunion. Left to right: D. M. Bay, W. P. C. Haggar, P. Hudson, P. H. Milne, H. K. Gordon Burge.

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

THE INAUGURAL REUNION

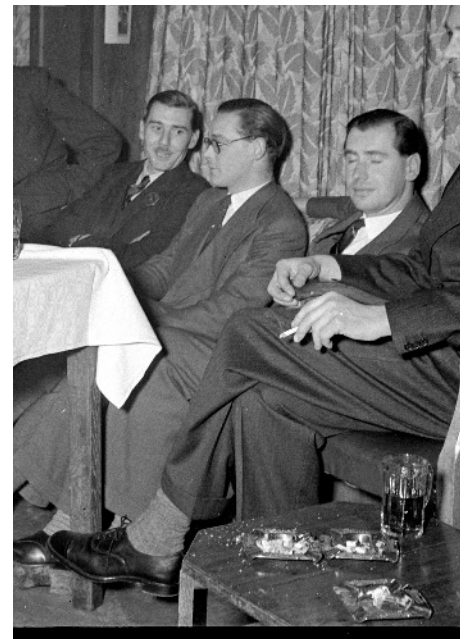
The photographic department took six pictures of the occasion, two of which were used in Pylon and in the Gazette. The other four are reproduced (cropped to suit) below; all six are by courtesy of BAE Systems Heritage Archive. In the DHAeTSA files is a marked-up copy of a page from unidentified publication, almost certainly the DH Enterprise, with some names written in, as shown on the right.



John Holland (1939-42);, Charles McClure (1937-39);
unknown.



Nigel Williams (1946-50); Mike Goodfellow (1947-50);
Max Roberts (1946-51).



Freddie Meacock (1933-35); Phil Smith (1935-37); Peter Owen (1935-38)



Wing Cdr O W Clapp, (Principal 1932-41);
Chris Newman (1946-50)

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

Flight magazine of 16th March 1951 was quick to report upon the inaugural meeting, with a piece partially reproduced opposite. The de Havilland Gazette of June 1951 also reported the event.

A reunion dinner was held at Simpsons in the Strand (established in 1828), at the edge of Covent Garden. A membership list was produced for the occasion – see next page – and for the subsequent dinners which continued until at least 1959.

Technical Old Boys

THE de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School is now 22 years old, and its 1,900 ex-students are to be found—many of them in high places—throughout the world's aircraft industries. Most good schools have old boys' associations, and thus it is no less than fitting that the D.H. Tech School should follow so well-established a precedent—indeed, it is to be wondered at that such an organization was not formed long since. Be that as it may, an old boys' association now exists, and if the inaugural meeting on March 3rd at Hatfield was anything to go by, it would seem to be assured of unqualified success.

Mr. F. T. Hearle, Chairman of the de Havilland Aircraft Company, has agreed to be President of the association, and in his speech said that the inaugural meeting would be a happy evening to remember—there were so many faces there one remembered from the past. He was honoured to be the first President of the association, and hoped that membership during the years would increase. He knew he could speak for the directors of the company in expressing pleasure at the number of Technical School men who had gone out from de Havillands into the aviation world at large, many of them to achieve high success.

Mr. Hearle then stated the aims of the association as being not only to continue the friendships made at the School, but also to be a medium for the interchange of experiences gained by the old boys working in all branches of the industry at home and abroad. This would be achieved by social gatherings in London, Hatfield,

A NEW D.H. FELLOWSHIP



Mr. F. T. Hearle addressing the meeting at which an association of old boys of the D.H. Tech. School was inaugurated. Also in the photograph are, left to right, Mr. F. T. Meacock, Chairman of the Committee, Squadron Leader R. W. Reeve, Principal of the Technical School and Vice-President of the Association, Sir Geoffrey de Havilland and Mr. J. L. P. Brodie.

In 1928, mainly through the efforts of Mr. F. T. Hearle, now chairman of the parent de Havilland Company, the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School was founded. From the first few apprentices at Stag Lane, among whom was Mr. R. E. Bishop, now a director and chief designer of the Aircraft Company, has grown the Technical School as we know it to-day. Since then, many hundreds of de Havilland-trained men have become widely dispersed in the aviation communities all over the world, and the oft-expressed query "I wonder what old so-and-so is doing these days?" has now prompted the formation of an Old Boys' Association.

The first steps were taken on the evening of Saturday, March 3, when a reunion party was held at Hatfield Aerodrome. In view of his early efforts on behalf of the School it is particularly appropriate that Mr. Hearle has

agreed to become the association's first president. On this occasion he addressed some 200 old boys, about half of whom had brought their ladies, and in a short speech he outlined the aims of the association. He hoped that branches would be formed overseas or wherever old boys cared to meet, and that functions formal and recreational would be arranged at home. He announced that a special enclosure and catering tent would be available to Old Boys during the King's Cup Race Meeting at Hatfield on June 23.

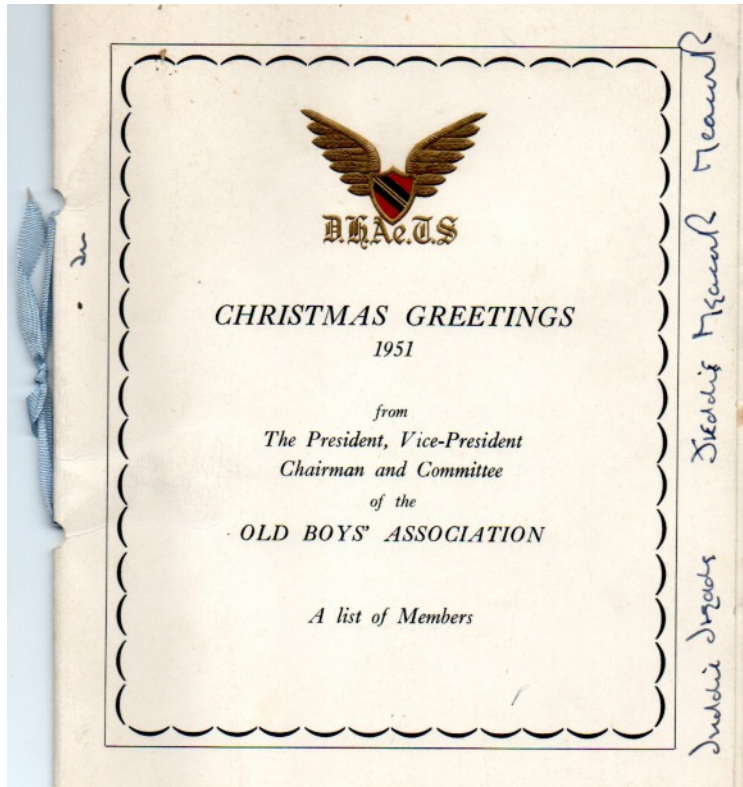
Among those present were Sir Geoffrey de Havilland, Mr. W. E. Nixon, Mr. J. L. P. Brodie, Squadron Leader R. W. Reeve, Mr. F. T. Meacock, chairman of the Association's committee, and Mr. Seeley, a former principal of the School. After Mr. P. H. Milne had replied on behalf of the ex-students the party continued with dancing and refreshments until midnight.

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

EARLY RECORDS

The first membership listing of the OBA was in the form of a ribbon-bound booklet entitled 'Christmas Greetings 1951'. It listed the Officials and Committee, some 350 members' names and addresses plus their year of starting (one 1928, one 1929 and increasing numbers 1930 onwards) and some news, reproduced here. A list of overseas members showed how far they had spread.

The President was Frank Hearle, the Vice-President S/L Reeve and the Chairman was F T Meacock. K E Westover was Vice-Chairman and committee members were K T Fulton (in subsequent years to be long active in the OBA), W P C Haggar, A D M Hill, R W Jamieson, J M Ramsden (later to become very well known), G I Sprent, F I Marking as Treasurer, J C Collett as Secretary and C J Newman as Assistant Secretary. Contacts for the Northern Section were R J T Holland, for the Canadian and American Section J McCulloch and for the Sailing Section, Hatfield E H Crudden.



20		
<u>OLD BOYS RESIDENT OVERSEAS</u>		
<u>AMERICA</u>	<u>EGYPT</u>	<u>SOUTH AFRICA</u>
D. Andreoli - 1938 P. Hatswell - 1944	M.A. Benachi - 1930	E.St.J. Tytherleigh- 1939
<u>AUSTRALIA</u>	<u>IRE</u>	<u>SOUTHERN RHODESIA</u>
B.D. Wadland - 1941 M.M. Waghorn - 1935	H.K. Gordon-Burge - 1935	G.B. Foxall - 1945
<u>BURMA</u>	<u>FRANCE</u>	<u>SWEDEN</u>
M.M. Tin Maung Than - 1945 "Hoke"	P. Seassau - 1946	L. Haggstrom - 1947
<u>CANADA</u>	<u>INDIA</u>	<u>NOTE</u>
H.E. Bagley - 1942 W. Bentley - 1935 T. Burgess R.P. Castle - 1942 J. Canbly - 1942 N. Curry - 1944 T. Dinsdale Murray Ellins J. Foxon J. Gilchrist - 1945 J. Goacher - 1944 D. Gray - 1932 J.A. Houston - 1938 J. Jackson J. Lassam D. Mayne J. McCulloch - 1940 R. McLeod - 1937 R. Powell P. Smith - 1930 L. St.Ledger - 1939 R. Webster - 1938	S/Ldr. D.A.S. Jermyn - 1940 F.D. Kumar - 1931 C.J. Lalkaka - 1938 R.A.P. Misra - 1933 S.M. Rikh P.H. Smith - 1944 R.H. Dickenson - 1942 W.G. Haggard - 1947 A.F. MacKenzie - 1944 A.T.W. Andren - 1940	All Canadian and American Old Boys can be contacted through:- J. McCulloch, Esq., Apt. 26, Anglesey Court, 3, Anglesey Boulevard, Toronto, Canada.
	<u>IRAQ</u>	
	<u>KENYA</u>	
	<u>LEBANON</u>	
	<u>SINGAPORE</u>	

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<u>NEWS FROM LETTERS AND FRIENDS</u>	
PETER SHAW 1947	is in Malta aboard H.M.S. Falcon. He is about to fly Vampires and is interested in becoming familiar with the aircraft from the operators point of view instead of from the constructors angle.
RAY MURDOCH 1946	is with the R.A.F. in Canada taking a Pilots Course
PETER SMITH 1944	is ready to provide liquid refreshment to any D.H. 'Types' who are passing through Iraq.
MEAD, D.J. 1942	recently graduated from Cranfield College of Aeronautics, having gained his Diploma with distinctions. He was also awarded the Governors Prize for the best all round student of the 2 year course.
JOHN GOACHER 1944	has had a free ride over to Canada this summer aboard a Dove which was being delivered from Hatfield to the United States. He is now in the Engineering Department of D.H. Canada.
DENNIS HILL 1942	is off to Australia in January with his wife to join the Engineering staff of D.H. Australia. As a founder member of the Committee we are sorry to lose him, but wish him every success.
DENNIS WALSH	has returned to South Africa and before his departure had a flight in the Comet.
GUILBERT, T.O. 1935	is still employed as a Senior Surveyor with A.R.B., but had been seconded to the Government of Pakistan to act as Chief Aeronautical Inspector of the Civil Aviation Department. H. Ahmad is also on the staff and will be joining the association.
KEN WESTOVER 1931	has gone to Christchurch. We feel that the opportunity of real yachting must have influenced him in the move. We still hope to retain his advice and help in running the association.

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EDWARDS, M.J. 1936	is Chief Engineer to the Orissa Flying Club in India. He and his wife treated Ronald Porteous most hospitably when he was out there recently.
IAN MACKINTOSH 1945	are both at Messrs. Dunlops, Coventry. Ian is in the A.I.D., and Alan is in the Service Department.
ALAN NASH 1946	
WADLAND, B.D. 1941	is now working at the Government Long Range Weapons Establishment at Salisbury, South Australia.
JOHN CUNNINGHAM 1935	We should like to add our congratulations for his two recent awards, the O.F.E., and the British Silver Medal of the Royal Aeronautical Society.
<u>THE NORTHERN REUNION DINNER</u>	
The Reunion Dinner which was held at Chester on Friday 13th July, in the Management Mess, was a great success. Among the guests were:- Mr. & Mrs. W.E. Nixon, Sir Ralph Sorley, Mr. & Mrs. J.C. Corby, Mr. & Mrs. Rowell. Wing Commander O.W. Clapp and his wife came over from Bridlington.	
The Old Boys Committee were represented by:- Messrs. R.W. Jamieson, W.P.C. Haggard, G.I. Sprent and J.C. Collett (Secretary). The School was represented by S/Ldr. R.W. Reeve, Messrs. G.L. Saul-Brown, W. Blackburn, W. Watford, F. Rushton and E.D. Cant.	
D. Michell and L.H. Grace have been elected to serve on the Northern Branch Committee. H.E. Jones and E.R.H. White represent Chester and Lostock respectively.	

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

THE LONDON DINNER

On November 10 some Old Boys, many of them with their ladies, were at Simpson's Restaurant in the Strand on the occasion of the Association's first London Dinner. The informal nature of the gathering was reflected in the address of Mr. F.T. Hearle, the President of the Association and Chairman of the Aircraft Company. It was mainly due to his efforts 23 years ago that the Technical School was formed, and he made some very amusing references to the Old Days.

Among the guests were the Secretary of the Royal Aeronautical Society, Dr. A.M. Ballantyne, and Mr. C.G. Grey. They were introduced by the Chairman of the committee Mr. F.T. Meacock, and each made a speech that was both characteristic and in keeping with the spirit of the occasion. Dr. Ballantyne was in an anecdotal mood; he has the rare gift of not only telling a funny story but of lending to it the appropriate parochial flavour. His bishop, for example, was not just another allegorical ecclesiastic, but the "Bishop of Hatfield". Mr. C.G. Grey was introduced by the chairman as a person whose enthusiasm for aviation is as profound as his knowledge of it. On this occasion he was more light-hearted than cautionary, though he did make a plea for a little relief from the shackles of science in the field of aeronautical design.

The success of the evening was in large measure due to the efforts of the Association's Secretary, Mr. J.C. Collett.

Amongst the guests were Mr. and Mrs. J.L.P. Brodie, Mr. and Mrs. A.W. Seeley, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Sharp, Marcus Langley and Mr. R.H. Cobb.

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CANADIAN AND AMERICAN BRANCH

Thursday 27th September marked the first official meeting of the Association in Canada, and the following were elected as a Caretaker Committee to make the arrangements for their Reunion Meeting that is taking place in Toronto on 14th December:- Branch Secretary - J. McCulloch; Committee - Messrs. R. Castle, N. Curry, T. Dinsdale, J. Gilchrist, J. Goucher.

Over tankards of beer, reminiscent of many a Hatfield gathering, the committee reviewed the situation and were unanimous in their belief that the Branch has a most active future. A diversion in the proceedings was caused when a knock on the door heralded an unknown young man. Armed with forms, he was mistaken for an ex-student arriving late, but on having a bottle of liquid refreshment thrust at him by way of a welcome, he hastily revealed his identity as a representative of the local ecclesiastics taking a census of the parish!

SAILING SECTION

Considerable interest has been shown in the Sailing Section despite the absence of any suitable water close to Hatfield.

It is proposed to adopt the "Yachting World Hornet" as the Club's boat. A group of members will commence to build the first boat in January 1952, and it is hoped that the sight of the "first prototype" will encourage membership of the section and lead to the formation of a racing team.

Among the enthusiasts are Ken Green, D.R. Newman, D. Brown, Peter Kennedy. Will any who are interested please contact Eric Crudden, c/o D.O. Hatfield.

An invitation has just been received by F. Meacock and C. McClure to spend a Land Yachting Sunday at Cranfield. This type of sailing should appeal to members by enabling them to practice during the winter months.

A MIDNIGHT GARDEN PARTY AT HATFIELD

The London Aeroplane Club revives the gay elegance of the days of the Moth.



Soft-coloured floodlighting, fairy lights and flowers enhanced the naturally delightful outdoor setting of the terrace and marquees.

The aerodrome restaurant and terrace at Hatfield made a perfect setting for the Midsummer Ball which the London Aeroplane Club and the de Havilland Technical School Old Boys held on June 27. As on July 21 last year, the weather was perfect (the outdoor temperature did not fall below 72°F. all night) and the occasion could best be called a midnight garden party. With flowers and coloured lights the terrace and marquees, the lawn and trees and swimming pool were transformed into a fairyland.

It was a nostalgic reminder of pre-war days with the London Club, of the vanished enthusiasms of the decade when the Moth was the symbol of sporting flying. The setting was the home of the London Club during the 'thirties

but there were souvenirs of even earlier days. Beside a vintage Bentley the Club's 1925 Cirrus Moth, restored and airworthy, was displayed with a charming tailor's model dressed in the cloche-hatted, low-waisted style of the 'twenties.

Among the guests were Sir Ralph and Lady Sorley, Mr. and Mrs. J. L. P. Brodie, Mr. and Mrs. D. G. Simpson, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Davison, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Masefield, Dr. and Mrs. A. M. Ballantyne, Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Hardingham, Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Loader, Mr. Leonard Bridgman and Mr. and Mrs. D. McConnell.

A fortnight before the dance, on June 14, the London Aeroplane Club had an "At Home" at their Panshanger base near Hatfield.



Jim Prettyman's ticket, 1956

D.H. at Salisbury Hall Again

Salisbury Hall, home of the prototype de Havilland Mosquito and other D.H. types, is to be the scene of the annual de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School Association ball on Saturday evening, September 13.

The secretary, who invites "all former de Havilland people to come and dance around the Mosquito at the moated Elizabethan Grange," is Mr H. D. Wright, Technical School Office, Hawker Siddeley Aviation, Hatfield. Tickets are 2gns each, and profits will go to RAF charities.

Flight 4 September 1969

Left: DH Gazette August 1952

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

From the de Havilland Gazette Feb 1953

ENGINEERING STUDENTS GROWN UP

London Gathering of D.H. Old Boys



Mr. R. E. Hardingham, Chief Executive of the Air Registration Board (left) with Mr. D. M. Bay (1932). Mr. Hardingham was awarded a Certificate of "Guestworthiness" during the evening, and praised the take-off and climb performance of the fellowship.

The second London dinner of old boys of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School, many with their ladies, was held at Simpson's in the Strand on Friday, November 21. Mr. Frank Hearle, advocate and president of the Association, took the Chair. Mr. R. E. Hardingham, head of the Air Registration Board, and Mrs. Hardingham, also Dr. A. M. Ballantyne, R.Ae.S. Secretary, and Mrs. Ballantyne, were among the guests. Mr. Hearle said that Sir Geoffrey de Havilland had accepted to be first Patron of the Association, which now is making firm roots. The Canadian branch goes ahead well and the movement is expected to take on in Australia next. There are some 2,000 old boys, spread throughout world aviation.



Wing Cdr. G. C. B. McClure (1937), Mrs. R. W. Jamieson, and Mr. R. W. Jamieson (1936).



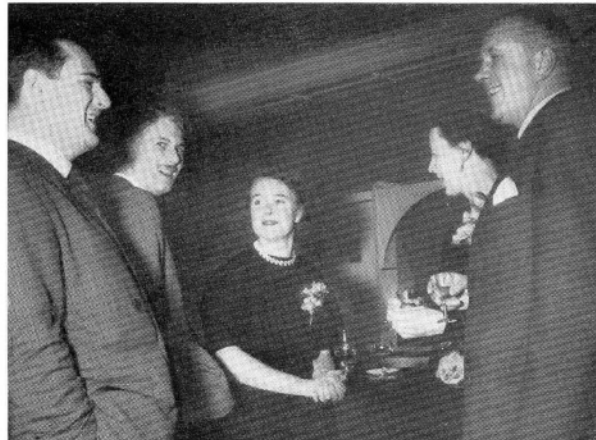
Left to right: Mr. M. Goodfellow, Mr. F. T. Hearle, President of the Old Boys' Association, and Mr. A. E. N. Bolton (1929). Mr. Hearle's enthusiasm did much to get the Association going.



Mr. F. I. Marking (1935) with Mr. John McCulloch (1940), who is Secretary of the Canadian branch of the Association. He was in England on A. V. Roe business.



Left to right: Mr. Marcus Langley, one of the School's first instructors; Mr. R. C. Able (1931); Mrs. S. C. Perry and Mr. S. C. Perry (1930). The proportion of pre-war old boys is high.



Left to right: Mr. I. W. C. Robertson (1940), Mr. A. K. Maule (1936), Mrs. Maule (Public Relations Department before the war), Mrs. C. A. Pike, and Wing Cdr. C. A. Pike, Manager of the London Aeroplane Club.

NEWSLETTERS

The first newsletter did not appear until December 1954. It had 16 pages, in a thin card cover. The first few pages of text are reproduced overleaf. The next two also had covers. The final two early newsletters were on plain foolscap paper, dated April and October 1959.

Dec. 1954



Spring 1955



Summer 1957



THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

Editorial, The Stag No. 1, December 1954

The Association bringing together Old Boys of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School is now well into its fourth year. With the names of over 450 ex-students and apprentices on its lists of members, the committee felt that, following the lead of the North American Branch, a newsletter or magazine should be produced for the benefit of members. This would serve a useful purpose in providing them with the news and experiences of their contemporaries.

We therefore present this first issue. As members will see, it contains news of Old Boys, references to the Association's activities, past and present, and a very fine article by Mr. Marcus Langley on the T.K.1 and T.K.2 aircraft built by the students during the 1930s. Last but not least there is a list of changes of address which brings up-to-date the list of members which was circulated at Christmas last year.

As the theme for this first editorial we would like to make a plea - no, not for money - for news. This means your news, where you are, what you may have done since you left the Technical School.

This need only be a few lines, and it is no excuse to complain of an anti "line-shooting" complex just because the information is volunteered. We would like to have news from everybody, those still with the Enterprise and those who have ventured further afield.

For those of us who have left the Enterprise, we can say from experience that one cannot travel very far in the aeronautical world without meeting someone who has worked at either one or other of the three companies of the de Havilland Enterprise. And it is surprising how many of them are ex-students of the Technical School.

Just as one views a picture from a distance, so one appreciates more the training and spirit of the Technical School-after one has left it. Here is initiated that particular outlook and feeling that constantly attracts one to flying and the aircraft industry. Once started it is difficult to turn away from the peculiar attraction that flying, and the industry and the technology that supports it, provides. It is this, we feel, almost as much as money and the urgency of War, that has accounted for the rapid progress of aviation

Still, enough of this musing, to return The Stag. It is hoped to issue this "gem" of editorial effort about three times a year. Its interest and value, however, depends very much on your efforts in providing the news. In this age of red-tape and form filling it would be a pity to have to resort to sending out a stereotype "career information" forms!

A FEW WORDS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Imitation, we are given to understand, is considered to be the best sincere form of flattery. Whether or not this be so, we are certainly sincere in our flattery regarding the enterprise of our Canadian branch in producing a periodical news-letter. And we have no particular feelings of repentance at not having set the pace in this particular direction ourselves. Indeed, we are only too happy that our lively offspring

has so brightly anticipated the more cautious movement of its much larger parent.

But now the time has come for us to provide our members with news and views of interest to them and to keep them more fully informed of the Association's affairs. In setting out to produce "The Stag", the Association has taken on something of a difficult task. We feel that the effort involved is well worth while and we hope that our members will think so, too.

F.T.M.

THE MARCH MEETING

Following what has now become an established custom, the Association held its annual general meeting at the beginning of March in the senior staff restaurant at Hatfield. Nearly 100 Old Boys and their partners of the fairer sex were present.

Mr. W.E. Nixon, the Association's President, was unable to attend and his position was taken by Mr. J. Brodie, Vice-President to the Association. Chairman of the Association's committee, Mr. F.T. Meacock, after welcoming the members and their guests, made a special welcome to Mr. John McCulloch, secretary of the North American Branch of the Association.

In a brief speech, the chairman told the meeting how the committee had lost two of its members. Mr. R. W. Jamieson and his family had left to settle in New Zealand where he was taking up a post with the de Havilland Company there. Mr. G. Sprent had taken the serious step of getting himself married.

The Association now had some 450 members and its various social functions during the year could be counted as a great success. This was particularly so of the mid-Summer Ball which had been organised for the past three years in conjunction with the London Aeroplane Club.

Referring next to the Association's Sailing Section, the chairman described how they had built a Hornet class racing dinghy which was launched last year. The section's marine headquarters is at the Royal Corinthian Sailing Club at Burnham-on-Crouch.

Two innovations to be made during the year would be the introduction of a special tie for Old Boys of the Technical School, and an essay competition. For the later a prize was to be awarded to the member of the Technical School who produced the most meritorious paper on a subject or subjects to be selected by the committee.

Later in the evening, a ballot was held to decide on the four new members to be elected to the committee, Messrs. J.M. Ramsden and K.E. Westover, whose three year term of office was complete, were "returned to power", and Messrs. D.G. Brown and C.G.B. McClure were elected to the vacancies created by the two committee members who had resigned.

As in previous years, the North-West corner of the restaurant, where the bar is situated, was very much occupied. The self-service buffet was well looked after but we are sorry to report that few people took to the floor to give some encouragement to the musical trio that had been provided for the evening.

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

The de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School Association

Minutes of Committee Meeting Sat 28 Feb '81, held in DH Sports & Social Club, British Aerospace Aircraft Group, Hatfield, Herts.

Attended: Duncan Simpson (new Chairman)
Ken Fulton
Ian Newton
Frank Ogilvie (75%)
John Lambert (new Member of Comm)
Mike Rogers (Hon Sec)

Apologies: Bruce Bosher (sliding down Alp)
Mike Ramsden

Business:

1. An Agenda was circulated and the Committee warmly welcomed John Lambert of the Stress Office BAe Hatfield and Duncan M.S. Simpson, Deputy Director (Technical & Marketing) of the Society of British Aerospace Companies.
2. The Minutes of the previous Meeting 29 Nov '80 were approved.
3. Ken Fulton proposed that John Lambert be elected a Committee Member forthwith and Ian Newton seconded it. The proposal was carried unanimously. The Hon Sec expressed the Committee's appreciation at John Lambert's acceptance to stand at very short notice. The position had been created by Peter Spooner's request to stand down, made in his letter to the Hon Sec of 30th December 1980 and subsequently advised to Committee Members. The Hon Sec will write to Peter S, thanking him on the Committee's behalf for his many valuable contributions in the past to the Association's business. MR
4. The refreshed Committee then formally approved Mr.D.M.S. Simpson's acceptance of their invitation to become Chairman of the Association now that contact had been made by Ian Newton with Dave Jermyn, who had confirmed his wish to stand down as Chairman in view of his fulltime commitment with Airbus Industrie at Toulouse. Duncan Simpson had given his acceptance of the Invitation in his letter to the Hon Sec of 17th February 1981. Duncan said he was flattered to be invited and felt there were other worthier persons who should have been considered. The Committee advised him that their choice had been unanimous when contacted by the Sec. Apart from other considerations, they felt his central post with the SBAC in London would be a most valuable asset.
5. The next Agenda item was to consider the response to the Media Insert sent by the Sec to the previously agreed Aviation journals and house journals of B Ae and Rolls Royce. These were mainly published in Jan '81, with one in Dec '80 and the one in Aeroplane Monthly still to appear in their March issue.

The response received at his home by the Sec by letter and a few phone calls (including one from California) were reported by the Sec as most heartening and he circulated a list of replies to date, mostly from overseas which suggested that a good quantity of ex-students and ex-apprentices of the School would be prepared to attend the May '81 Reunion.

The Sec said replies were still coming in steadily and were likely to continue so as many people had said they were

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contacting other known 'Old Boys'.

Individual Committee members were busy contacting more local prospects and it was felt the turn-out would be substantial.

All

- 5.1 The broad plan for the Reunion was discussed at length. The Sec said the date was now agreed with John Brown, Hatfield Catering Manager, with Mike Goldsmith's knowledge as Friday 22nd May 1981. The Sec had spoken to Mike Goldsmith who's only reserve was the possibility that the 146 might be rolled out on 22 May.

Duncan Simpson said he would speak to people at Hatfield on Monday 2nd March, beginning with John Scott. The Chairman would immediately advise the Sec of the outcome so that the Committee could be informed likewise. Frank O had said try JS. DS

- 5.2 Discussion continued on the assumption that 22 May would be confirmed. An outline proposal for the form the Evening should take was agreed. The Sec would write this up and circulate it to CommMembers with a draft of the circular now needed. The start time was agreed as 7.00 for 7.30pm. The venue would be the Senior Staff Restaurant on the Aerodrome at Hatfield which John Brown had said would cater for 290 max people. MR

- 5.3 Although at the last Meeting it had been suggested that the event be restricted to members of the School only, it was now agreed that wives should also be invited. The Chairman felt that it would be up to members to warn their wives that nostalgic talk would be the order of the evening.

- 5.4 The content of the necessary circular was discussed and will draft-circulated to Comm Members a.s.a.p. by the Sec as above. MR

- 5.5 The Sec sought approval of various names of persons to be invited as guests. These will also be draft-circulated, and included Editors of journals who had taken the Insert and who would be approached again for a follow-up giving news of the Reunion with date. MR

The Sec urged all Comm Members to advise him of names and addresses a.s.a.p. as time was now getting short to say the least. It was noted that the Reunion, if 22 May, was only 11 weeks off. All

It was suggested that the media coverage if willing should be extended to include Air International (Ken F said try Bill Green), Tech Air and InterAvia. MR

6. Proper organisation of the ever-increasing Administration was discussed. Duncan S said he would mention this problem to John Scott as well. DS
7. Hon Sec to contact Barclays Bank and put current balance on to Deposit a/c, less £50.00. At same time, Sec to ask if Bank can supply addresses from a/c's or forward circular. MR
8. New subscription to be £1.00 from date. To be quoted in Circ. MR
9. Title of Association agreed to drop the 'Old Boys' bit; now de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School Association - DHAeTSA.

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9. Ties etc:- Frank O said someone has organised ties at Hatfield and would investigate. FO
Frank O then found he was elected responsible for all 'memorabilia' investigations and activity ready for the Reunion. FO
- 10 Re: Mosquito Museum and possible link up with Association: It was agreed to let the matter float a little longer.
- 11 The Hon Sec reported that Bruce Boshier (absent in Alps) had been in contact with Stuart McKay of the DH Moth Club and the latter was enthusiastic for a link-up. The Committee agreed a loose link should be established and borne in mind for the projected main 1982 event, in that it could be a large Social Gathering at Hatfield, coincident with the DHMC fly-in as proposed.
- 12 The Meeting broke up blearily after a lot of hard work, capped by Duncan having to leave just before the end for his long drive and going in error in Ian Newton's equivalent jacket including Ian's car keys.
(Ian went home with John Lambert and later found a nice pair of pliers of Duncan's in the other jacket and was disappointed when DS rang him next day).

Date of next Committee Meeting: Saturday 4th April 1981, in de Havilland Sports & Social Club subject to availability. MR
The Hon Sec suggested it should be another 7.00 for 7.30pm start as there would be all the detail Reunion arrangements to be discussed.



M.J.W. Rogers
Hon. Secretary to
the Association

(Approved) D.M.S. Simpson
Chairman

16 March 1981

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF DHAeTSA

Flight, 10 January 1981.

The committee of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School Old Boys' Association is again organising events and a reunion at Hatfield in May 1981 is being planned. The association wants to contact members and find out what they are doing now, and if any retired members are willing to help with administration. Contact secretary Mike Rogers, Drumnessie, Ivy House Lane, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 2PP; telephone 04427 4127.

A page of memorabilia contributed by Mike O'Brien.

The de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School
OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION



30th ANNIVERSARY REUNION

22nd MAY 1981
at the
**Senior Staff Restaurant
Hatfield Aerodrome**

7.30pm for 8.00pm

DRESS - LOUNGE SUITS ADMIT ONE

The de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School
OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION



REUNION

18th MAY 1984
at the
**Senior Staff Restaurant
Hatfield Aerodrome**

**Bar open
7pm**

DRESS - LOUNGE SUITS ADMIT ONE



WORN NAME
BADGE.
PROBABLY OUR
BEST VENUE FOR
OUR SUMMER
REUNIONS.