

# **RETIREMENT CLUB NEWSLETTER**

July 2014 No 299

Manton Lane MK41 7PF

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## **JUNE WALK - Led by David Thomas**



Sixteen walkers met at The Guinea P.H. Moggerhanger for the June walk. After leaving the pub we walked about 300 yards along the A603 before taking a footpath on the right hand side, leaving the noisy road behind. From the footpath we had good views across the Great Ouse valley with Ravensden water tower visible in the distance. After crossing a plank bridge we had an excellent view of the 18C dovecote on the Chalton Manorial site. We joined a road to South Mills then crossed a field towards Blunham, going through a tunnel under the old railway track. On the other side of the tunnel we could see the WWII Farm Camp huts in a row along the edge of the field then went through a kissing gate on to the Kingfisher Way. After going through two more kissing gates we came to Blunham weir where we took the group photograph. Following the River Ivel we could see Blunham Mill across the water. We then crossed the twin bridges on the main road and turned left towards Blunham village. We walked through the churchyard of the 11C church and then turned left back towards the weir, retracing our steps to Moggerhanger and back to The Guinea P.H. where 15 of us enjoyed a good lunch.,

## **JULY WALK**

The July walk will be on Wednesday 9th July and will be led by Chris & Mike Lock. It will start from 'The Greyhound', Northwood Road, Haynes, Beds. MK45 3QD. Please meet at the usual time of 10:15 for a prompt 10:30 start.

## 'JOHN BUNYAN' BOAT TRIP



43 intrepid explorers met at Priory Marina on Tuesday 24 June for a second attempt to explore the upper limits of navigation on the River Great Ouse on board the John Bunyan river cruiser, with the prospect of a cream tea mid-journey. In 2013 a similar trip had to be cancelled at very short notice because of prop shaft problems with the boat.

The dynamics of the floating pontoons at the mooring caused early excitement as our land lubbers prepared to board. On leaving the marina, we turned to starboard to pass Bedford's very own pyramid, the Beach Pool. It was all hands below deck when we had to pass under the first of several low bridges, the Captain couldn't afford to have any of us decapitated by the rusty bridge on the old Bedford to Sandy railway line. The next excitement was negotiating Bedford Town Lock with its traditional wooden gates at the lower end and an electrically operated guillotine gate at the top end. Avoiding rowers was the next challenge, but the John Bunyan's secret weapon was its fog horn. Most of the passengers were deafened by these blasts to clear the river. Continuing upstream, under the Town Bridge then Prebend Street bridge we marvelled at those wonders of architecture managed by our illustrious councils, first the town hall, sheathed in gossamer whilst being destroyed by a demolition crew, then County Hall.

Two new footbridges were the next points of interest. The first was a green one with spectacular circular ramps which crossed the railway line to bypass the low level footpath beneath the lines which is prone to flooding, the other was a silver footbridge over the river, but not yet in use, to let commuters living on the new Britannia Ironworks development leave home 2 minutes later if they should choose to access the railway station on foot. It was then that the rowers started to attack. They were overtaking us on all fronts, but we turned a stiff upper lip and continued undaunted towards the new Sikh temple. Things then quietened down and the tranquillity of the upper reaches of the Ouse was enjoyed. A Kingfisher was seen flying along ahead of us. And then the cream teas were released and the serious business could begin. Eventually, after 3.9 miles from the

marina we reached the last possible point where we could turn round, the river beyond was narrower than the length of the boat. On our return, entering the lock proved challenging for the crew and the John Bunyan's paintwork. The combination of a little wind and current and the 90° turn required, coupled with the fact that the lock had been left empty, all worked against an easy passage.

The lovely afternoon finished all too soon and we had to dash for our cars as the heavens opened. Thank you to Anne Pallister for organising this outing.

### **ANNUAL LUNCH - Wednesday 1st October 2014**

The Annual Lunch will be held on Wednesday 1st October. The choice of venue has not yet been finalised but full details will be announced in the next newsletter

### **One Hundred Years of Aviation July 1914 contributed by John Cherry**

**1st** Today in Washington DC The Office of Naval Aeronautics has been formed to oversee the air operations of the US Navy.

**4<sup>th</sup>** A report received from Australia states that Mr A J Roberts has piloted an Australian-built airship on a short flight, however, he was forced to make an emergency landing in Rushcutter Bay, the reason for the emergency landing and the health of Mr Roberts was not given.

**11<sup>th</sup>** In St Petersburg, Russia, the giant *Ilya Muromets II* aeroplane has today completed a 1,590 mile flight from St Petersburg to Kiev and back carrying up to twelve passengers on some stages, a true rival for the flourishing airship trade.

The aeroplane has four engines and a wingspan of almost 100 feet the cockpit for two pilots is fully enclosed by glass and is fitted with instruments to show speed and altitude. The passengers have a heated lounge and for the brave, an outdoor promenade deck. On 18<sup>th</sup> June it set a flight duration record for pilot and six passengers of 6hours and 33minutes.

**14<sup>th</sup>** Dr Robert H Goddard has been granted a patent for his liquid fuel rocket engine at Washington DC.

**18th** In Washington DC today the Aviation Section of the US Army Signal Corps has been formed, consisting of 60 officers, 260 men and 6 aeroplanes.

Today in Sydney, Australia large crowds greeted the French pilot Maurice Guillaux when he landed his Bleriot monoplane after making the first official airmail flight in Australia having left Melbourne, Victoria two days ago. His cargo was 1,785 letters, some Liptons tea and OT Lemon Squash. Guillaux was in the air for 9hours and 15minutes his flight being held up by bad weather.

**22<sup>nd</sup>** The lady Mayoress of the City of Leeds made history today by paying her respects to the City of Bradford in a most unfamiliar manner: she travelled from one city to the other by aeroplane. The machine, an 80hp Gnome engined Blackburn Christie Type 1 was flown by Mr Harold Blackburn a local aero engineer and well known designer. It was the first flight of a series, flown at half hourly intervals from Leeds to Bradford and back., this is the first scheduled aeroplane service anywhere in the British Isles.

**27<sup>th</sup>** The Short brothers' test pilot Mr Gordon Bell has become the first pilot to drop a standard naval torpedo from an aeroplane releasing the 14 inch torpedo from a Short tractor seaplane.

**28<sup>th</sup>** Today a Royal Navy pilot, Squadron Commander Arthur Longmore became the first navy pilot to launch a 14inch torpedo from a Short tractor seaplane.

In London Lieutenant-General Sir Douglas Haig has dismissed air reconnaissance by saying: "There is only one way for a commander to get information by reconnaissance and that is by the use of cavalry"

**30<sup>th</sup>** The Norwegian aviator Tryggve Gran today left Scotland in an attempt to fly 300 miles to his homeland in a Bleriot monoplane similar to the one that crossed the English Channel in 1909. He took off but was forced back by low cloud. He received a telegram informing him of good weather at his destination so he took off again and was able to climb above the cloud. His flight to Norway took 4 hours and 10 minutes.

Tension is mounting across Europe following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, at Sarajevo in Serbia on 28<sup>th</sup> June. Relations between Serbia and Austria have worsened following Serbia's refusal of Austria's demands to be allowed to investigate the killing and Austria has now declared war on Serbia. Europe seems set on war, and the world is waiting to see what happens next.

A question that must be addressed is:-

#### HOW READY IS EUROPE FOR WARFARE IN THE AIR?

France appears to have 156 military aeroplanes and 15 airships.

Germany is thought to have 246 aeroplanes, 36 seaplanes and a major airship force including 7 Zeppelins.

Austria-Hungary may have 36 aeroplanes and one airship.

Russia could have as many as 200 aeroplanes, 50 seaplanes and several non-rigid airships however, it is difficult to obtain accurate information.

Britain has about 74 aeroplanes ready for war, 71 aeroplanes of the Royal Navy Air Service and seven airships.

<b>FORTHCOMING EVENTS</b>	
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2014, 10:15am	July Walk - Haynes
Wednesday 1st October 2014	Annual Lunch.
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2014	John Taylor Bell Foundry Visit

*Please send any copy for publication to me by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, Keith Rose*

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