

# **RETIREMENT CLUB NEWSLETTER**

December 2014 No 304

Manton Lane MK41 7PF

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## **NOVEMBER WALK - Ron Stone**



Thankfully the rain clouds had disbursed and the sun had begun to shine, as seventeen walkers set forth on a four-and-a-half mile walk from the White Horse public house, Tilbrook.

From the pub car park we turned right and walked along the grass verge of the B645 until we came to a bridleway on our right. Turning into this and heading north, we walked alongside the 'choked up' river Til to a metal bridge which we crossed over. Strolling along at a leisurely pace down the leafy lane, we came to a footpath on our left which we followed until we arrived at a parting in the hedgerow, walking through this we came to a way marker directing us diagonally across a field. Once over the field we turned right and made our way via footpaths to a metal gate. Going through the gate led us onto the Covington to Catworth minor road. Following the road in a south westerly direction, we came to a footpath on our right and two small bridges which we went over. We then continued north westerly until we reached a muddy, slippery incline that luckily we all managed to negotiate without any mishaps! We now found ourselves on the outskirts of Covington and at this point we stopped for group photos. From here can be seen views of the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Northamptonshire countryside. We were now approximately 260 ft above sea level and, although the lowest hill of the 'Historic Counties of England', it is popular with people who enjoy the sport of 'hill bagging'. Proceeding downhill and passing the back gardens of houses in the village, we reached the corner of the field, rounding the corner and passing haystacks as we went. Going left along the bottom edge of the field, we finally reached an intersection to the minor road we had earlier turned onto. Left and right turns took us through a small wooded area and

crossing over a bridge that spanned a deep ditch, we turned to our left and walked round the perimeter of the field. In due course we came to Tilbrook Mill farm, where a small herd of Llamas quizzically studied us as we went by. We turned left, then right and with the spire of Tilbrook church in view, we followed the river bank. Eventually we reached a small wooden bridge at the top of the field, crossing over this and the larger metal bridge we had previously crossed at the beginning of our walk we re-traced our steps back to The White Horse pub for lunch.

**Tilbrook** is mentioned in the Domesday Book, the manor belonging to William de Warenne. It was assessed at 5 hides with a value of 100 shillings. It was called Tilebroc in the 11th century and Tillebrok in the 14th century. The church is dedicated to All Saints. The river Til flows west to east and joins with the river Kym to the east then flows towards the Great Ouse. At one time it was 1½ miles north-west of Kimbolton railway station on the Kettering, Thrapston and Huntingdon branch of the Midland railway, which was opened in 1866. Up to its closure in 1963, the line had been used to carry freight and passengers. Henry Norris owned the manor of Tilbrook, but in 1536, was found guilty of undue intimacy with the king's wife Anne Boleyn and was executed, the manor was then confiscated by the crown.

**Covington** lies mainly on the south side of a ridge looking down over the valley of the river Kym. The rivers Kym and Til merge at Tilbrook Mill. In the 11th century it was known as Covintune and in the 13th century as Kuvuntone. Recent archaeological excavations have revealed the remains of an Iron Age farm, a poor Roman farming community and medieval village.

## **DECEMBER WALK**

No walk has been planned for December as the ARA Christmas Buffet is held on the second Wednesday of the month.

## **ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF AVIATION December 1914 contributed by John Cherry**

4<sup>th</sup> The imperial German Navy has today, formed its first seaplane unit.

9<sup>th</sup> The Royal Navy is to commission a special warship HMS **Ark Royal**, this newly built ship has been designed to launch, recover and house naval seaplanes. The machines will take off using jettisonable trolleys, land on the sea and be hoisted aboard into the ships hold by crane. The seaplanes are likely to be Short 184s now being developed and the ship will hold up to ten of these machines.

10<sup>th</sup> Today the Russian Army has formed its Flotilla of Flying Ships (EVK) which has been equipped with **Ilya Muromet** four engined long-range reconnaissance bombers designed by Igor Sikorsky and first flew on February 12<sup>th</sup>. It is expected that 40-50 of these machines will be attached to the unit.

11<sup>th</sup> The RNAS has now been ordered to drop the Union Flag insignia on their aeroplanes as they were ordered to adopt on October 20<sup>th</sup>, in favour of a roundel (blue and white rings with red in the centre) as used by the French.

16<sup>th</sup> Today two US Army Lieutenants demonstrated a two-way radio communication between ground and aeroplane. The aeroplane used was a Burgess-Wright.

**21<sup>st</sup>** Today saw the first German air raid on Britain. Two bombs fell into the sea at Dover. The aeroplane was probably a Taube Monoplane.

The first night flight of the war was carried out by Commander C R Samson of the RNAS. Flying a Maurice Farman biplane fitted with a rear mounted 130hp Canton Unne engine for a raid on the German held port of Ostend, Belgium. Samson intended to bomb the German U-boats but was unable to locate them in the dark however spotting German batteries he unloaded his 18, 16 pound bombs. With only a Very flare pistol and a torch he landed safely on the beach at Dunkirk.

**24<sup>th</sup>** At 10:45 am today the first German bomb landed on British soil, it landed close to Dover Castle and exploded in the back garden of Mr Thomas Terson causing £40 worth of damage and left a crater 10 feet wide and 5 feet deep. The aircraft involved was a Friedrichshafen FF29 seaplane. A Royal Navy Wright pusher was sent up but was too slow in climbing despite its 200 hp engine to catch the raider.

**25<sup>th</sup>** Today seven RNAS seaplanes were launched from the seaplane carriers HMS **Empress, Engadine** and **Riviera** from a position north of Heligoland to attack the Zeppelin sheds at Cuxhaven.

Today L A Strange of No5 Squadron RFC in a Christmas day prank flew to the German airfield at Lille in north-eastern France and "bombed" it with footballs and returned safely.

### **SENIORS GET TOGETHER**

The next Seniors Get Together will be at the Horse and Groom public house in Clapham. Beds on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 meeting time around 07:30 pm

Any queries Tony Dickason  
phone 01234 824741 email [anthony.dickason@btinternet.com](mailto:anthony.dickason@btinternet.com)

### **RAeS LECTURE - 12 NOVEMBER 2014**

Clive Rustin will be talking on "55 Years of Flying Fun" at ARA on Wednesday 10th December. Meet at 18:30 for 19:00.

### **MARY HUNT**

Those members of the Retirement Club who were at ARA c.1970 may remember Mike Langley and Mary Hunt who married whilst at ARA. Unfortunately Mary was diagnosed with cancer about two years ago and passed away on October 24th this year.

## **OBITUARIES**

We have had the recent sad news of the death of two of our pensioners.

Mr Pete Elder - Mechanical Engineer  
Mr Mike Anderson – Senior Programmer

We offer our deepest sympathy to both of their families.

<b>FORTHCOMING EVENTS</b>	
Wednesday 10th December 2014	ARA Christmas Lunch
Wednesday 10th December 2014 18:30	RAeS Lecture, ARA

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