



NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2013



BARNES WALLIS MEMORIAL TRUST
CHARITY NUMBER 518023



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Cover Photo: *The Dams Raid* by Gary Saunt, available as a limited edition (25 copies) signed, fine art print - see page 23 for ordering details.

Editorial

THIS issue of the Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust newsletter includes the chairman's Annual Report for the past year and articles relating to the life and work of Sir Barnes Wallis.

During the year a number of trustees visited Brooklands Museum and were informed of the bid by the museum to restore the Stratosphere Chamber designed by Barnes Wallis. That bid has been successful and work has already started on this ambitious project. I look forward to reporting on the progress in future issues of this newsletter.

Our annual open evening at Howden School was a great success and I welcome the new supporters of the Trust who signed up on the evening when we were entertained by two excellent talks by James Holland and Robert Owen, followed by an interesting question and answer session with Mary Stopes-Roe and 'Johnny' Johnson - the only surviving British member of the Dams Raid seventy years ago in 1943.

Chris Henderson
Editor

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A full colour electronic version of this newsletter is available as a PDF file. To request a copy please email newsletter@barneswallistrust.org.

Articles for Publication

Contributions of articles and photographs for the Newsletter will be most welcome. Ideally they should be sent by email in Word format for articles and a common image format such as JPEG (.jpg) for photographs. However, typed articles and original photographs can be accepted and will be scanned and returned to the sender as soon as possible. Please post to the address on the rear cover or email to newsletter@barneswallistrust.org or.

The views expressed by contributors of articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust.

Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust

Annual Report - 2012/13

A successful and well-attended exhibition was held at Sewerby Hall, near Bridlington, between 31 May and 24 June 2012. Barnes Wallis took a keen interest in education and would have welcomed the fact that the exhibition was viewed by many children. Two trustees, Ken Deacon and Peter Rix, gave associated talks.

Our annual public meeting was held at Howden in June 2012. The theme on this occasion was *Barnes Wallis the Man*. The speakers were Sir Barnes Wallis's daughter Mary Stopes-Roe (Barnes Wallis at Home), Richard Morris (Barnes Wallis the Citizen), and Robert Owen (Warriors).

The Barnes Wallis Award for 2012 at Howden School was judged by Mary Stopes-Roe, helped by Barry Lowe (engineering mentor from Beverley) and Gerry Carroll (Chairman of the Trust). The winner of the award was Robert Shand.

The Trust continues to offer talks to outside groups, societies and clubs. Peter Rix and Chris Henderson gave these in 2012-13; other trustees can be called upon if specialist subject matter makes this appropriate. The talks stretch far and wide both in topic and geography and are a useful form of income for the Trust. If you would like to arrange a talk, please contact us by letter to the address on the back cover or by email to talks@barneswallistrust.org.

Events to mark the 125th anniversary of Barnes Wallis's birth at Ripley, Derbyshire took place on 26 and 27 September 2012. Mary Stopes-Roe, guest of honour, planted an oak tree in her father's memory in the Barnes Wallis Memorial Park. She also gave two talks. Mary opened the beer festival organised by Amber Ales. The brewery produces beers that are named after her father and his work: *Barnes Wallis*, *Grand Slam*, and a more recently *Dambuster*. Trustee Peter Rix gave two talks, one at Ripley Junior School, and another to local residents as part of the anniversary programme.

The Trust continues to benefit from active family support with three members of the family being trustees. It has welcomed two new trustees: James Holland, author and TV historian, and Mrs Elaine Ward representing Howden Town Council. The Chairman thanks his co-trustees for their work and guidance over the last twelve months and looks forward to great progress in the year ahead.

The Trust's collection of documents and artefacts is currently held in store at the Museum of Science & Industry in Manchester, to whom we extend our warm thanks. A long-term home for the collection is under active discussion.

The Trust thanks Gary Saunt for his design and production of our posters and paintings. An example of his work can be seen on the front cover of this magazine. The Trust commissioned a limited edition, only 25 copies, of his work commemorating the events of the night 16/17 May 1943 entitled *The Dams Raid*. If you would like to purchase a copy of this superb work of art, please see the details on page 23.

Finally, if you would like to become a supporter of the Trust or discuss ways in which you could assist its work, we shall be glad to hear from you: contact the chairman at chairman@barneswallistrust.org.

Gerry Carroll
Trust Chairman

The Howden Civic Society R100 Airship Trail

HOWDEN CIVIC SOCIETY is trying to raise funds to produce an Airship Trail which will stretch through the Market Place. The Civic Society aims that this project will encourage the growth of tourism to Howden and ensure that visitors learn about Sir Barnes Wallis and the history of aeronautical engineering in this area, the size of the R100 and the contribution made towards building the airship by the people of Howden.

The trail will be 216 metres long and 41 metres wide running through Howden, that will outline the size of the R100 airship which was built near the town in the years 1926-1929. The trail will be used by locals and visitors, young and old, and will celebrate the R100, its designer Sir Barnes Wallis and its chief engineer Nevil Shute (Norway). It is envisaged that the trail will consist of metal pictures of the R100 inserted into paving stones and that there will also be markers at strategic points to convey relevant information.

Visitor numbers to Howden will be increased by creating interest in the town's links with the R100, Sir Barnes Wallis and Nevil Shute. This will have a beneficial impact on local shops and food outlets, thereby bringing greater trade and more jobs for local residents.

Howden is a small market town and this trail will enable local inhabitants (as well as visitors) to gain a greater understanding of, and pride in, the diversity and changing nature of their environment. Publicity gained will widen knowledge of the distinctive character that Howden possesses. The Trust is fully committed to supporting this project.

Kenneth Deacon

Brooklands Museum - Grant for Stratosphere Chamber received from AIM

BROOKLANDS MUSEUM has received a grant of £120,000 from the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) to restore and interpret Barnes Wallis' Stratosphere Chamber.

The Stratosphere Chamber was constructed by Barnes Wallis in 1947 as a huge laboratory in which high-altitude conditions could be simulated for research into high-speed flight. It formed part of his Research and Development Department, which was set up after the Second World War at the Vickers aircraft factory at Brooklands.

The Chamber, which operated until 1980, is 25ft (7.6m) in diameter and 50ft (15.2m) long, and was able to accommodate complete aircraft up to the size of a De Havilland Sea Vixen, fuselage and cockpit sections of larger aircraft and guided weapons. It was also used for cold-weather testing of objects as diverse as North Sea fishing trawlers, diesel engines and Arctic clothing, as snow, ice and blizzards could also be created. It was capable of generating temperatures between -65°C and +40°C, and being evacuated to 1/20th sea-level air pressure.

The project will include cleaning and repainting the interior of the Chamber and installation of new exhibits and displays. Some of the operating machinery will be restored, together with the Control Room of the Chamber, which has never before been open to visitors. Until now the Museum has not had the resources to restore and properly interpret this unique research facility, so we are delighted to receive this grant from AIM, under its new National Heritage Landmarks Partnership Scheme. This has been set up to distribute Biffa Award funds to create a high-profile network of projects across the UK that will showcase the far-reaching changes in industrial development that have shaped our nation's history.

Brooklands Museum aims to inspire people of all ages, including young people who may be considering careers in science and technology, using the technological achievements of people at Brooklands, both in the days of the motor racing circuit and during the 80 years of aviation on the site. This project will enable these aims to be realised further by sharing the inspirational story of Barnes Wallis, best known for the development of the Bouncing Bomb made famous by the film *The Dam Busters*.

Reproduced from www.brooklandsmuseum.com

High Altitude and Climatic Simulation

Weather to Order

by Dagmar Heller of the British Aircraft Corporation

reproduced from *Engineering* 1972

AIR twice as rare as at the summit of Mount Everest; temperatures colder than at the Poles or desert heat; blizzards, driving rain, ice, snow or jungle humidity; any of these conditions can be simulated in British Aircraft Corporation's High Altitude and Climatic Test Chamber at Weybridge, Surrey. The largest in the country (50ft long and 25ft in diameter) this huge welded steel cylinder has held a bridge-laying tank and fighter type aircraft complete.

The brainchild of Sir Barnes Wallis, the chamber was built by Vickers-Armstrongs at Barrow and erected in 1947. It differs basically from other chambers in that the whole of the working section is encased in a house of insulation rather than insulating the inside, thereby enabling water to be sprayed around, brackets to be welded on to the sides, and so on, and its weight of 250 ton means that this mass of steel has the advantage of being a very good stabilized heat sink. The amount of air to be evacuated from the chamber (at standard atmosphere and pressure) weighs just over a ton and measures 30,000ft³

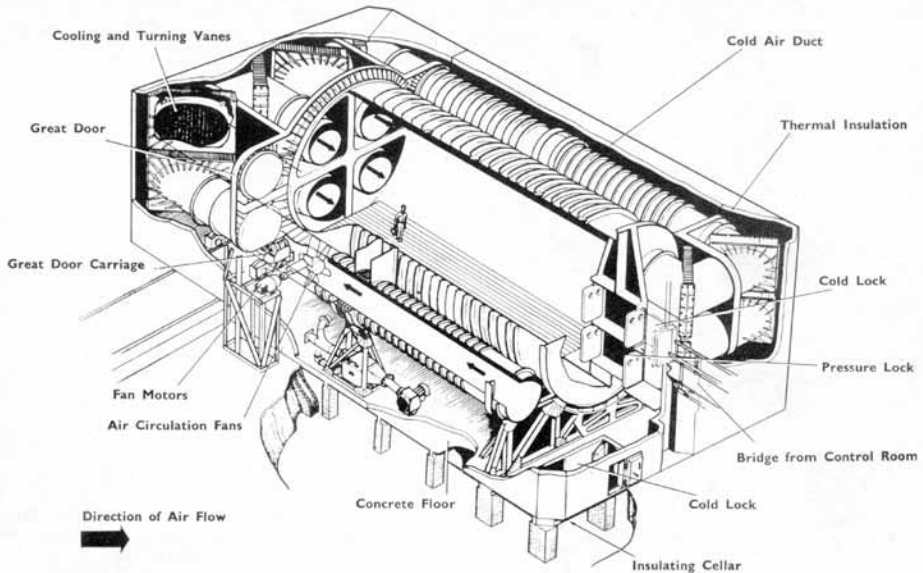


Fig. 1. Above. The size of the BAC climatic chamber can be judged from the man within it. Temperatures from -60°C to +60°C can be attained and pressures from sea level to 80,000ft. Internal diameter is 25ft.

equivalent to that contained in a Jumbo Jet - and the pressure can be reduced to 1/20th of an atmosphere or a height of 80,000ft. Designed originally for the testing of aircraft pressure cabins, its size and the fact that specified conditions of temperature (within the range of -60°C to $+60^{\circ}\text{C}$) pressure and humidity can be maintained almost indefinitely and varied at will, have made it eminently suitable for a wide variety of industrial, electrical, medical and other uses.

The installation and removal of large test specimens is effected by the complete removal to one side of one entire end of the pressure chamber (the 'Great Door') which weighs 65 ton and is mounted on a two-directional carriage. Entry for personnel and small items of equipment is possible under all conditions through one or both of the airlocks at the fixed end.

Vaporized water, blown in with compressed air, is used to produce ice and snow to any quantity. Up to six ton an hour can be achieved, but one ton is generally sufficient and more than this would be impractical to shift. Snow depends on temperature, size of droplet (using different shaped water nozzles), distance of travel and wind speed. Dry, or Canadian type snow, would need a temperature of say, -20°C , whereas the soft, floppy type of snow can be produced at -7°C .

At each end of the working section are the four circular openings of the air circulation ducts, one pair of which passes externally along each side of the main chamber. The ducts are 6ft 9in in diameter and four-bladed fans - one in each corner of the duct - control the speed of the air flow. The usual air flow speed is about 6kt with a normal maximum of 40kt; if higher speeds are required, 60kt can be reached using special nozzles.

The first and second stages of refrigeration are by ammonia gas and methanol respectively, the latter being circulated at the rate of 20,000 gallons an hour through 16 heat exchangers situated at each corner of the four air ducts. The total surface area of the coolers is 20,000ft² and it takes approximately 30 hours to lower the chamber temperature from $+15^{\circ}\text{C}$ to -60°C . To avoid icing in the chamber at low temperatures, the circulating air is passed through an air-drying plant consisting of a bed of silica gel. This plant is capable of supplying three charges (30,000ft³ each) of dry air every 24 hours.

Test programmes

Tests carried out in the chamber have varied considerably. From the simplest - the measuring of the light value of two paraffin lamps at 5,000ft for export to Johannesburg - to perhaps one of the most complex, the measuring of the ice build up on fishing trawlers. Using canvas dams at each end, the chamber was flooded with 60 ton of water in which 18ft models (to 1/12th scale) of the trawlers

were floated. The temperature was then reduced to below freezing level and air blown through the ducts to simulate high winds and to whip up the waves. As the ice built up this was measured until the point was reached when the models capsized. These tests, carried out on behalf of the British Ship Research Association, resulted in improvements in the design of the superstructure of the North Sea fishing trawlers, for example; unnecessary rails were removed, masts skimmed down, funnels streamlined and life boats replaced by inflatable dinghies.



Fig.2. An 18ft model trawler begins its tests under icing conditions; as yet the layer is thin. Driving rain and blizzards can be produced if required.

Line Gear Ltd of Adderbury, Banbury, who manufacture high voltage transmission equipment have on a number of occasions used the BAC Climatic Chamber as this is the only one large enough to hold their equipment. In one of these tests three 8ft long 5ft 6in high isolators which formed part of substation equipment destined for the United States, were tested in rain at -6°C as the switches have to operate with a build-up of ice.

A great many cold starting tests have been carried out on diesel engines associated with electrical generating and air compressing machinery and have also included a complete bus for use over the Andes. This latter test was

interesting as the engine was required to start at -18°C at 16,000ft, but at the same time brakes, grease, oils and transmission were also subjected to rigorous testing. Other tests have included the uncoiling of flight refuelling hoses at low temperatures and minesweeping winches for the Royal Navy which are exposed to wind and weather, sea water and icing. Studies on the behaviour of a number of aircraft and helicopter structures, control surfaces, systems and items of electronic equipment under various low temperature and high altitude conditions have also been carried out, and the ability to mount an aircraft pressure cabin or a complete helicopter is an additional advantage.

Other cold starting tests have been carried out on armoured tracked bridge-layers, bulldozers and recovery vehicles for the Ministry, for whom work has also been done on petrol and diesel engines, gas turbines and outboard motors. Other examples are hot and cold inflation of life-rafts for RFD, the effects of icing on radar scanners for Ferranti, the testing of foul weather clothing for the Medical Research Association, and man-made fibres rope for Id. Bridge windows have been frequently tested for the Royal Navy, this taking the form of heating the windscreen under severe icing conditions and testing the wipers which have slipping clutches to overcome the build up of ice at the sides of the windows. The other end of the temperature scale is easily simulated, heating being supplied from banks of 200kW heaters, and dry or humid heat can be produced at will. Infra-red and ultra-violet light can be used to simulate solar radiation and temperatures for any part of the world can be faithfully reproduced. Some of the machinery tested is subjected to extremes in temperature during the same period of occupation of the chamber, for instance, the diesel engine-driven electrical generator sets have their cold and hot cycle tests carried out consecutively.

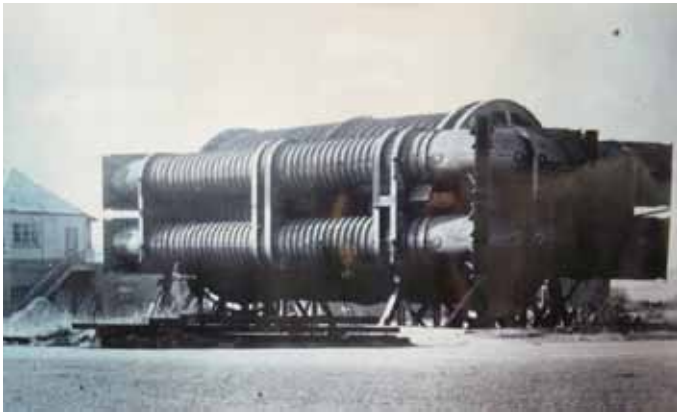


Fig 3. Scimitar fighter being tested for the Arctic

When the chamber is not in use for its climatic function it serves as a vacuum reservoir for a supersonic wind tunnel which is capable of speeds up to Mach 3. The time taken to evacuate the chamber is about 90 minutes and whilst the running time is only a matter of seconds, it offers a cheap and simple method of carrying out selected tests.

The Weybridge High Altitude and Climatic Chamber today helps

to solve diverse climatic test problems in many fields other than aeronautics and offers designers and engineers a readily accessible and inexpensive means for testing equipment which would otherwise have to be shipped to various parts of the world where such extremes in temperature and humidity are to be found. Whilst these engineers would not claim that, in all instances, these tests eliminate the need for on site environmental tests, a number of irksome problems which would hold up very expensive field tests can be found out very cheaply, and it has been known for tests finally to be carried out in the climatic chamber on equipment which had spent several months in the cold areas of the world, such as the Antarctic, because temperatures low enough were not forthcoming that particular year.



The Stratosphere Chamber under construction



Preparing part of a Valiant fuselage for testing in the Stratosphere Chamber

The Work of Barnes Wallis on Stamps etc.

TRADITIONALLY stamp collectors collect stamps by country. However, many collectors combine their interest in stamps with their other interests and collect stamps related to a particular subject, or theme.. This is Thematic Collecting. A thematic collection usually includes a lot more than just stamps showing relevant illustrations. It could include some, or all, of the following : Postmarks, First Day Covers, Postal Stationery, Commemorative covers, illustrations on stamp booklets, Covers with relevant signatures etc. The aim is to tell a story about the chosen theme using as wide a variety as possible of material produced for use in the postal system.

Popular themes include, birds, trains, ships and aircraft. There are catalogues for some of these themes listing all stamps with relevant illustrations issued throughout the world. Stanley Gibbons is probably the best known publisher of stamp catalogues and they have issued a catalogue of Aircraft on Stamps. It lists more than 25,000 stamps issued by countries from Abu Dhabi to Zimbabwe. It also has a very useful cross reference facility so that it is easy to find out, for example, which stamps have been issued showing a Wellington. - The Ascension Islands (1993 and 2008), Belize (1990), British Indian Ocean Territory (2003), Canada (1999), The Gambia (1990), Guernsey (1998), Jersey (2000), Poland (1941,1943), and Trinidad & Tobago (1991) have all issued stamps featuring the Wellington in the years shown..

In 1941 a series of stamps was issued for use by Polish Forces in Exile in the UK. The 1z value is the earliest stamp issued featuring a picture of a Wellington. In 1943 a 5g value was issued showing a Wellington attacking a submarine (see Fig 1).



Fig 1 a) A Wellington attacking a U-boat b) Wellington cockpit c) Wellington in flight

The Wellington also featured in the cover illustration of a stamp booklet issued by Royal Mail in 1980 when first class post was 12p and second class 10p. Interestingly the current (2013) rates are exactly 5 times these rates for both first and second class letters.

The Wellesley was shown on a stamp issued by St. Kitts in 1993 and the Warwick on a stamp issued by Fiji in 1998.

Moving on to another aspect of Barnes Wallis' work – the UPKEEP “bouncing bomb” and Operation Chastise. Fig 2 shows the miniature sheet issued by The Grenadines of St. Vincent in 1990. In stamp collecting terms a miniature sheet is where the stamp, or stamps, form part of a larger sheet which usually gives a bigger scene of which the stamp(s) form part.. If you think these are produced largely to satisfy collectors and have little or no postal necessity you might well be right.



Fig 2 Miniature sheet issued by Grenadines of St Vincent in 1990.

In 1993 Guyana issued a set of stamps featuring aircraft of the Second World War. As well as being available individually these were also issued as a sheetlet with an illustration of the attack on the Moehne dam as the centre piece although this was not the subject of any of the actual stamps, see Fig 3.



Fig 3 The illustration of the Dams raid did not appear on any of the stamps in this set, only on this miniature sheet which showed the ten actual stamps.

In 2003 the British Indian Ocean Territory– a group of small islands in the Indian Ocean to the north of Madagascar – issued a set of stamps to mark the centenary of powered flight. One stamp featured the Wellington and another the Dams raid (see Fig 4). 2003 was the 60th anniversary of the Dams raid as well as being the centenary of powered flight. It is an interesting thought that there was only 40 years between the Wright brothers' flight and the Dams raid, that was 40 years of dramatic progress in the science of flight.



Fig 4 Issued for 60th Anniversary of Operation Chastise.

Guernsey issued a set of stamps in 2003 to mark the 60th anniversary of Operation CHASTISE and in the same year the Isle of Man issued a miniature sheet which featured Robert Taylor's well known painting of the attack on the Moehne dam. In conjunction with the postal authorities in Guernsey and the Isle of Man the Trust produced some commemorative covers with the stamps cancelled by the relevant Post Offices with a commemorative cancellation designed by John Rabbets for the Trust. We then asked relevant people to sign the covers and sold them to raise funds. We only had 50 of each produced and they soon sold out.

In 2008 Kiribati, the former Gilbert Island of the Gilbert and Ellis Islands in the South Pacific, issued a miniature sheet featuring the Dambusters Raid. The stamp part of the miniature sheet only shows part of one of the Lancasters but the whole sheet is a more comprehensive illustration.

Tallboy is not forgotten. The Marshall Islands issued a series of stamps between 1989 and 1995 to mark the 50 Anniversary of the Second World War. In 1994 a pair of stamps featured the sinking of the German Battleship *Tirpitz*. One stamp showed an illustration of the ship and another showed a Lancaster dropping a Tallboy bomb. In the bottom margin of the sheet of stamps was a quote from Winston Churchill, "It is a great relief to get this brute where we have long wanted her."



Fig 5. The sinking of the battleship *Tirpitz*

Moving on from stamps to postmarks the field is much larger. Postmarks are used by Post Offices throughout the world to cancel stamps so that they cannot be soaked off and re-used and to give information about when and where the letter was posted. Usually they are fairly boring but sometimes commemorative postmarks are used. These often incorporate some words explaining what is being commemorated and sometimes an illustration. Rules vary from country to country but for Royal Mail the position is that any organisation can design a postmark but it has to be approved by and applied by Royal Mail.

Fig 6a shows the postmark that was produced for the reunion of 40 Squadron held at Abingdon in 1988. The Squadron flew various marks of Wellingtons from November 1940 through to March 1945. Fig 6b shows a commemorative postmark used in 1999 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Mark III Wellington. The code letters LF refer to 37 Squadron who flew Wellingtons from May 1939 through to December 1944. The reference to Brooklands in the postmark is interesting. Although most of the design work for the Wellington was indeed done at Brooklands production was largely dispersed with each of the shadow factories at Blackpool and Chester producing more Wellingtons than did Brooklands. Fig 6c shows the postmark produced for use in the Isle of Man to mark the 37th Anniversary of the first 1000 bomber raid – that of 30/31 May 1942 on Cologne. Of the 1,047 aircraft dispatched on that raid 602 were Wellingtons.



Fig 6a



Fig 6b

Fig 6c



Fig 6 Various postmarks featuring a Wellington.

In addition to postmarks some commemorative envelopes, or covers as philatelists call them, have an illustration on them. The earliest relevant such cover that I have come across is shown in Fig 7a. The postmark shows that the cover was posted on 28 January 1929. The illustration is of the mooring mast that had been built at Montreal Airport ready for the R100's flight to Canada. Fig 7b shows a cover posted on 13 August 1930, the day that the R100 departed from Montreal to return to the UK after its transatlantic flight.



Fig 7a Cover shows the mooring mast for the R100 at St Hubert Airport, Montreal.



Fig. 7b With R100 commemorative cachet. Posted at St. Hubert Airport, Montreal on the day the R100 left to return to Cardington.

In more recent years many special postmarks have been produced to commemorate particular events, especially anniversaries of the attack on the Dams and the sinking of the Tirpitz. Although these postmarks can be applied to plain covers they are usually applied to specially designed commemorative covers. Many such covers are produced by commercial companies sometimes simply for commercial gain but often in conjunction with appropriate charities. Also many charities produce their own covers. Over a period of many years a number of different series of covers were produced by the RAF Museum and the Joint Service Charity Consortium. An example from the series about Planes and Places is shown in Fig 8. This series of 30 commemorative covers was issued between 1997 and 2001 each featured a type of aircraft named after a place and showed a picture of the aircraft flying over the place. The series includes Wellington as well as the Warwick shown. The illustrations were based on paintings by Tony Theobald who has produced many of the illustrations used on the covers produced by the Joint Services Charity Consortium but he has also designed many stamps.

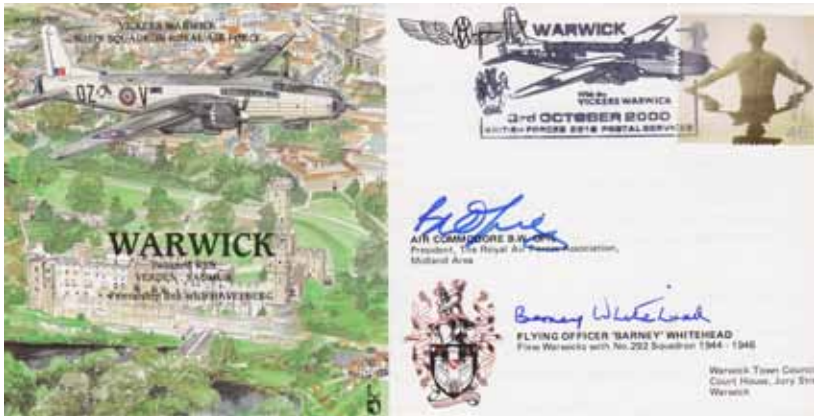


Fig 8 The Warwick - a Warwick flying over Warwick.

Sometimes the design of the postmarks raises questions. Does the one shown in Fig 9 refer to the correct Derwent Dam?



Fig 9 Did they really mean the Derwent Dam in Cumbria not Derbyshire?

Another aspect of interest to many collectors is to have commemorative covers signed by relevant people. These are usually produced as limited editions and are usually individually numbered. These signatures are often arranged by the cover producers themselves but sometimes individual collectors make their own arrangements. One of the most popular subjects is, not surprisingly, Operation CHASTISE. Other operations by 617 Squadron are also popular. Barnes Wallis himself has also been commemorated in postmarks as shown in Fig 10.



Fig 10 The 20th Anniversary of the death of Barnes Wallis.

The ultimate Barnes Wallis cover is that issued by the RAF Museum in 1976 as part of their Historic Aviators series. The cover is illustrated with an image of the R100 and Barnes Wallis. The cancellation features an image of a Wellington and the cover was flown in a variable geometry aircraft – albeit an American one. The icing on the cake is if the cover has been signed by Barnes Wallis himself, as shown in Fig 11.



Fig 11 The ultimate Barnes Wallis cover.

I may return to the subject in later editions of the Newsletter. Meanwhile I would be interested to see a copy of any relevant cover that you have found particularly interesting. I can be contacted by email at talks@barneswallistrust.org.

Peter Rix, Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust

Ripley marks the 125th Anniversary of Barnes Wallis' birth

BARNES WALLIS was born on 26 September 1887 in Ripley, Derbyshire. The house where his family lived at the time still exists and has an appropriate commemorative plaque on the wall. A number of events were organised in Ripley to mark the 125th anniversary of Barnes Wallis' birth.

In the morning of 26 September 2012 representatives of the Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust met representatives of Amber Valley Borough Council and



Mary Stopes-Roe planting the commemorative oak tree

of Ripley Town Council at the Council Offices where reduced copies of the exhibition boards that the Trust had produced for exhibitions in Goole, Beverley and Bridlington were on show. In addition the Library in Ripley had produced their own exhibition. The trustees and councillors then made their way to the Barnes Wallis Memorial Park where Sir Barnes' elder daughter, Mary Stopes-Roe, planted an oak tree. This public open space already has a commemorative stone marking Barnes Wallis' links to the town. The park looks out over the picturesque Derbyshire countryside.

In the afternoon Mary Stopes-Roe spoke at a meeting arranged by the local U3A group about her parents life in Ripley. Mary based her talk on many of the letters and notes etc which her mother had written. Her talk was entitled 'The beginning of a famous career'. Barnes' parents, Charles and Edith, had only moved to Ripley in 1886. Charles was a local GP. They moved away to a new practice in New Cross Road, London, in 1891. After a break for refreshments Mary's talk was followed by a talk given by Peter Rix, one of the Trust's trustees, on 'The Work of Barnes Wallis.' The meeting was very well supported, indeed it was a sell out, and was followed by a lively period of questions and discussions. This showed that there is great interest by the residents of Ripley in the life and work of one of their most famous citizens.

Amber Ales then offered refreshments at their public house, 'The Talbot Tavern'. This was an opportunity to sample the new Grand Slam ale. Amber Ales had also arranged for a celebration cake to have been baked.



The Transport Trust red plaque
on the house where Barnes
Wallis was born

The next morning, 27 September, the BWMT trustees were invited to a special assembly at St John's Primary School. At this Assembly the Year 6 children put on a presentation about Barnes Wallis. This was impressive; the children were clearly very well rehearsed and seemed to enjoy what they were doing. After the assembly, Peter Rix spoke to the Year 6 children about some of the inventions of Barnes Wallis. Because of the work that the children had done in preparing for their presentation to the whole school assembly, Peter started by asking if anybody had any questions as

a result of their researches. There were many and this suggested that the children had found their researches interesting. Peter's talk seemed to be well received and the headteacher did say that she would like to do the same thing next year.

In the afternoon Mary repeated her talk of the day before to an audience in the town hall.



A leading light in organising and co-ordinating these events was Jayn Sterland of Amber Ales. These brewers already had a regular brew of Barnes Wallis ale but for this anniversary they brewed a limited edition of ale which they named Grand Slam. This new beer was launched by Mary Stopes-Roe at the opening Amber Valley Rail Ale Festival at the Midland Railway Centre in the evening of 27th September.

Coincidentally Peter gave a talk to Repton Village Society on 4 October, close to the anniversary date. Repton is about 15 miles south west of Ripley. The Village Society had done quite a bit of publicity and to good effect. They normally get about 50 members to meetings but this time they had 65 plus ten visitors.

Overall these various activities provided a fitting celebration of the 125th anniversary of Barnes Wallis' birth and the Trust is very grateful to all those many people who helped organise them particularly Amberales, Amber Valley Borough Council, Ripley Town Council, the U3A group and the teachers and students of St. John's Primary School.

Peter Rix

Dambusters' 70th Anniversary Commemorative Dinner

ON Wednesday 15th May 2013, forty eight paying guests attended a fundraising dinner, hosted by Sir Gerald Howarth MP, Member for Aldershot. The beneficiaries were the Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust and the Leonard Cheshire Disability Charity. A champagne reception was held on the Terrace of the Palace of Westminster, with guests later enjoying a delicious meal in the dining room.



Wg Cdr David Arthurton, OC 617 Sqn (second from right), members of the Squadron and senior RAF officers

Leonard Cheshire Disability is the official charity partner for RAF 617 Squadron as they commemorate the 70th anniversary of their famous Dambusters' raid this year. The partnership honours Group Captain Leonard Cheshire, one of the most decorated World War 2 bomber pilots who was awarded the

Victoria Cross and commanded the Dambusters in 1943-44. After dinner, Clare Pelham, the Chief Executive of LCD gave an emotional thought provoking talk about the work of LCD.

James Holland, author, historian and Trustee of the Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust gave a valediction.

The Parliamentary Commissioner had given consent to hold a charity auction for a number of exquisite items relating to the Dams Raid, in aid of Leonard Cheshire Disability. The Raffle,



James Holland giving the Valediction



Helen Varey presents the Wellington print

in aid of Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust, included bespoke champagne flutes and a bottle of House of Commons Champagne, kindly signed by the Prime Minister and a print of the Wellington, featuring the geodetic structure devised by Sir Barnes Wallis, which had been donated by the Trust.

The print of the Wellington, *Over the Fence* by John Rayson, was much admired by the assembled guests as it was signed by the artist and a number of wartime members of 617 Squadron. The Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust, in conjunction with 617 Squadron Aircrew Association, had arranged for 50 copies of the print to mark the 70th anniversary of the first flight of the prototype.



Sir Gerald Hawarth MP, Helen Varey, Clare Pelham and Wg Cdr David Arthurton, OC 617 Sqn

Helen Varey, a Barnes Wallis Trustee, representing the Trust on this occasion, presented the much admired print to the successful winner. On her return to her seat learned that she was to take home the champagne and the flutes - a wonderful end to a memorable evening.

Helen Varey

Trust Activities

THE Trust is currently (June 2013) exhibiting its display of the life and work of Sir Barnes Wallis at the Merchant Adventurers Hall in York. Members of the Trust are available to give illustrated talks to interested groups throughout the UK. For further details contact the Trust at talks@barneswallistrust.org.

Details of future exhibitions and open evenings will be published on the Trust's website at www.barneswallistrust.org.

Gary Saunt - Painter

GARY SAUNT is a painter living in East Yorkshire with his wife Janet and daughter Kate. He was born (1951) in Grimsby into a fish curing family. But forgoing the delights of filleting and smoke houses, Gary escaped the family business and took up art instead. He first went to art school in 1966 and studied painting and drawing in Grimsby. In 1970 he obtained a place in Art College in Sunderland to study the same topics, plus art history. He and Janet were married in September 1973 and he completed his postgraduate studies in 1974, adding a teaching certificate.

Prompted by the death of his father, he moved back to Humberside area to be near his step mother and two young half-brothers. With no immediate vacancies in teaching in the area, Gary found himself applying for the fire brigade. Having avoided the hardship of the smoke house, Gary was now a fireman. He was operational for five years riding fire engines in and around Grimsby.

Subsequently, he was promoted into the fire prevention department and policed fire safety in public and commercial buildings for some years. Gary gained promotion moving between front line posts and fire investigation and fire prevention in the Grimsby area. He was Station Officer (red watch) when he was posted to Brigade Headquarters in Hessle. There he did staff work and branched out into Divisional Management in Hull and Holderness areas. After a spell of risk/resource planning, back at Brigade, Gary studied fire engineering and went through the command and management training system at the Fire Service College (Gloucestershire). In the nineties he was put in charge of Fire Safety enforcement for North Humberside then given command of 'A' Division – the western half of the East Riding and the city of Hull. After completing his 30 year service, Gary retired from the Fire Service in November 2004.

Throughout his Fire Service career Gary continued to draw and paint. When he retired his aim was to throw himself full-time into oil painting once again. However, his daughter Kate (BA Hon Fine Art), urged him to get into computer-



Gary Saunt - digital self-portrait

based artwork. Since then he has never returned to conventional paints and canvas.

Gary says that if the old masters were alive today they would not be using the old methods – but be using modern media: “Though oil paint is actually easier to work in, it is limited and lacks the flexibility and creative potential of digital painting. One of the oddest things about it is how my personal style remains exactly as if I was still using oils – I would have thought such a different media and technique would override my style but it does not. I will never again use oil paints (or saw cows in half or pickle sharks).”

Gary feels lucky that his artwork has proved popular – every painting he has shown has sold. He feels that his realistic style and the familiar subjects seem readily accessible to the public. Some work is somewhat surreal; dream-like townscapes often containing a strange mix of objects but there are also celebrities and local figures and familiar scenes portrayed, so that people can still readily identify with these paintings. Gary also maintains a separate and very different theme in his painting – Aviation Art.

“Aviation is an under-rated subject. You are free to compose your picture with the aircraft arranged in any orientation. It is also an interesting challenge to capture the varied surfaces – metallic, canvas, Perspex or flat camouflage. The natural luminosity of the sky can provide great lighting too.”

Gary regularly shows at the Ferens Art gallery in Hull, where this year he exhibited (and quickly sold) three paintings in the open exhibition. He also sells work through the small Myton Gallery in Hull.

With regard to the BWMT, Gary claims he cannot remember how he actually became associated the Trust; though he has vague recollections involving alcohol, photographs and blackmail. However, he is more than pleased to help BWMT with graphics/artwork of any kind.

“I feel I have a bold imagination, tempered by plenty of practical and engineering experience. However, I know that I would never have conceived of bouncing huge spinning bombs over the waves to breach major dams. Nor would I imagine delivery such weapons using heavy bombers at twenty metre altitude - attacking in the dark. Now that really is bold.”

Limited edition A2 fine art prints of Gary's *The Dams Raid* signed by Mary Stopes-Roe and Sqn Ldr George 'Johnny' Johnson DFM are available from the Trust at £50 plus £8 p&p - cheques made payable to BWMT, orders to:

Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust, Springfield Farm, Old Church Lane, Pateley Bridge, Harrogate, HG3 5LY.

Barnes Wallis Memorial Trust

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