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Mosquito in 75 years...



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THE PEOPLE'S MOSQUITO

To Fly • To Educate • To Remember

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Testing the Stainless Steel Straps

Over the last few months Retrotec has been completing the manufacture of all components, bulkheads, the cockpit floor supports and assemblies which fit within the volume of the mould.



The next phase of the project will be to begin to cover the moulds with the aircraft grade plywood for the inner fuselage shell.

In preparation for this we have been fitting out the moulds with all of the parts and assemblies we have created so far to ensure that they are a good fit and are correctly aligned and positioned. Once all parts are situated in the mould the process of finishing the outer profiles of these parts can be completed by the manual planing, filing and sanding of all parts to ensure they conform perfectly to the profile of the moulds.

The delivery of the plywood in the next few weeks has been timed to allow us the most effective timescale for its usage. Due to the seasonal temperature fluctuation within the woodworking shop we are giving ourselves the maximum working time for the adhesives being used, within the seasonal temperature window.

The ply will be cut, laid, glued and screwed to the outside of the bulkheads already fitted to the mould. The strap clamps are then fitted to ensure that the inner skin conforms to the profile of the mould whilst the adhesive cures.



Testing the stainless steel straps for the inner skins.



Testing the strap fitment with the balsa infill and second skin applied.



The diagonal plywood sample that shows the material we are awaiting to arrive in the next few weeks. We have until the end of April to find another £50,000, so as not to delay the build programme.

Once this process is completed the stringers, frames for access panels and doors are then fixed on to this inner skin.

At this point the famous balsa wood is used to effectively fill the gap between the inner and out fuselage shells. Only once this is complete can the outer skin of ply start to be applied.

We just need the funding to cover the next 4-month of complex work that will employ '4 Engineers' that will complete the fuselage shells.

See the article below on how you can help today.

'4 Engineers' - funding needed by end of April

Donations need to increase over the next month

- Can You help? -

We need to secure the remaining funds, presently relating to some £50,000

before we can contract the engineers we will need to build both fuselage shells over the moulds.

We have received over £2,000 to the '4 Engineers' appeal in the last week and have less than 5 weeks to go!

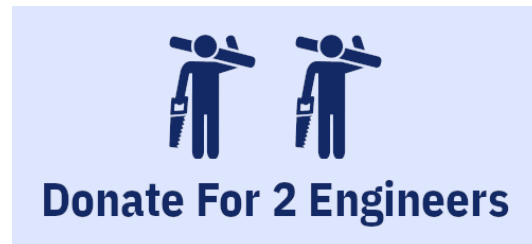
With month end fast approaching - can you make a BIG difference this week?



As always, we remain extremely grateful for those that give and give regularly.



Donate £20 to £80



Donate £40 to £160



Donate £60 to £240



Donate £80 to £320

We will track progress each and every week

CLICK HERE IF YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT SOME HOURS

Thank you!

Mosquito Video Theatre

A lot of the initial footage in this video shows you the process that will be undertaken in the coming months - just so long as we can attain our fundraising target.



Geoffrey de Havilland Jr. - Test Pilot - Part 5

The account of the life of Geoffrey de Havilland junior is the transcript of a lecture given by David Tipper to the Hatfield Branch of the Royal Aeronautical Society on 18th June 1997.

GEOFFREY THE PILOT

The story I have told so far has been more about the de Havilland company than about Geoffrey himself.

I have to admit this partly reflects where my interest and knowledge lay when I started to prepare this lecture. But Geoffrey's success and fame came because he was a spearhead of the highly talented team that designed and tested de Havilland aeroplanes in the war years. Before the war, he had shared disappointments and learned with this same team. By the time that he first flew the Mosquito, if not sooner, he had become a first rate test pilot. The stories that I have told describe only a small part of the job that he did so well. As well

as the problems that the various aeroplanes presented and which I have described and, no doubt, many more that I have never got to hear, there was the need to get the handling right.



This involved changing tab gearing, trying devices such as elliptical pulleys, g weights and the like until the controls were effective, light to operate and harmonious in all conditions.

It was a job at which Geoffrey excelled, getting there quickly and giving his aeroplanes a distinctive and widely admired character. Most aeroplanes did and, for that matter still do, have imperfections. Even Spitfire pilots had to put

up with ailerons that were very heavy at the highest speeds.

Geoffrey was a very good communicator. Although not analytical, he described things clearly in written reports that could be relied upon to arrive promptly, probably a lot sooner than auto-observer records that had first to be developed, then read and then plotted before they were available for analysis.

He was thorough and careful and seems to have set higher standards for himself than he did for others. We have seen this in his forbearance after the Albatross mishap and again in his distress after the wheels up landing at Tangmere. But he was intolerant of people who did not measure up to his expectations. So, one novice flight observer who became very ill through no fault of his own was left in the cockpit for someone else to sort out.

His total flying time amounted to 5223 hr 5 min and he flew about eighty different types. For his time Geoffrey's total of types flown is modest. It may seem a lot but Eric 'Winkle' Brown who is probably the record holder, managed 487 basic types. The data that I have is incomplete but it is clear that the vast majority of Geoffrey's early experience was on single engined types. At the time that he took over the Albatross programme, his only four engined experience was the DH 86 and the highest performance the DH 88.

The greatest broadening of his experience seems to have come in his early years as Chief Test Pilot, when he added Hart, Hurricane, Spitfire, Defiant, Hawk 75, Tomahawk, Lightning, DB 7, Maryland, Blenheim, Whitley and Wellington, amongst others, to his score. In 1945, he only managed three non - DH types: Albermarle, Meteor and Tempest 2 whilst, in 1946, the only strangers are a Proctor and the Danish KZ III.



He showed little interest in systems. In those days he did not really have to, since systems development was left largely to their manufacturers; the need to integrate was not strongly enough felt.

Unfortunately, his disinterest applied especially to the use of radio and navigation aids where a mental block seems to have existed. Whilst in the USA, he avoided piloting ferry flights as this would have involved beam navigation and he might have 'put up a black'. This difficulty would have been an ever increasing problem in the post-war world with its rapidly increasing dependence on control and aids and where he would have been amongst pilots who had grown up with ground controlled interception, airborne radar and an ever increasing number of navigation aids and were better prepared.

Geoffrey was also an outstanding demonstration pilot, a job which he enjoyed. His flying was accurate and he sought out the special capabilities of his mount and displayed them. An outstanding example was his single engine roll and climb with the Mosquito. There were probably earlier aircraft that could do this but Geoffrey made it his own, impressing observers with the performance and controllability of the Mosquito, as intended. He would also exploit the local topography to good effect, such as his use of the clear approaches of Washington National Airport or the streets of downtown Toronto.

In matters of safety, he was probably more concerned with the aeroplane than with himself. Test pilots were expected to take risks. Many made narrow escapes and some died, notably Kenneth Seth-Smith and Frank Furlong. At a Hollywood party, Geoffrey met an American freelance test pilot, Vance Breeze, who had given test technique and safety some thought. Breeze investigated shock stall by making a series of dives and pulling progressively more g each time. Geoffrey found this approach novel and seemed to be unsure whether it would work.

It is certain that the hectic pace at which the flight envelope of TG306 was expanded will never be repeated. But, at the time, the risks were recognised and accepted. In 'Sky Fever', dH wrote: "I was always well aware of the risk element in flying, and especially in test flying, and naturally gave this a lot of thought when my sons made this their career.

In the early stages we often openly discussed the risks involved, especially compared with those in a ground or office job. Neither Geoffrey nor John took these talks very seriously. They started a strange habit of refusing to call aeroplanes by their proper name. Geoffrey usually referred to them as 'boilers'.

"If I take a boiler up and it blows up" he used to say, "it's just bad luck. But nothing is going to stop me."



But not before De Havilland's had undergone a remarkable transformation and gone much of the way towards realising a great ambition. The Mosquito, Vampire and Hornet were pre-eminent amongst combat aircraft - a domain from which the company had been excluded until 1940.

The final extract of this series concludes in next week's edition.



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by the [de Havilland Aeronautical
Technical School Association.](#)

Official TPM Merchandise



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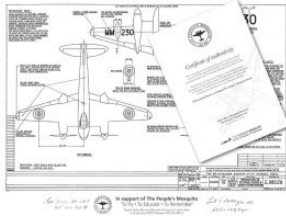
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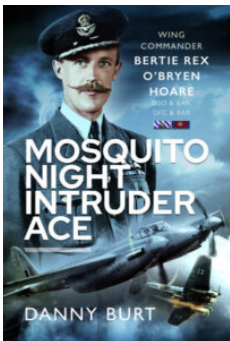
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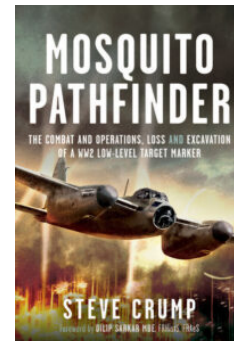
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