

Final countdown?

Lookout: "Bridge, bogies visual, bearing red 034!"

Bridge: "Roger. Can you identify them?"

Lookout: "er...not sure sir."

Bridge: "Not sure!"

Lookout: "Well it doesn't seem possible but I'd say one is a, er...Hawker Hunter, and the other some old French job. Not sure about the other."

Bridge: "I say, I don't suppose we have a 1963 copy of *Jane's* handy do we?" (Worried about defence cuts, or delayed programmes? Spare a thought for the Royal New Zealand Navy which is now forced to rent historic warbirds for exercises because the nation's fighter wing was disbanded last year. In recent war games involving the frigates Canterbury and Te Kaha, the fleet was engaged by three historic aircraft preserved by the Warbirds Association: a Hawker Hunter, Fouga Magister and Cessna A37B Dragonfly.)

Day of the Hunter

Meanwhile, somewhere in Florida, AeroGroup International has just completed the first phase of initial tasking orders with the US Navy for a classified mission. The two aircraft used for this special task? Why – Hawker Hunters of course!

Mile 'high' club

USAF F-16s were scrambled the other week to escort a US airliner inbound to New York's Kennedy International from London Heathrow after two male passengers had 'acted strangely' on the flight. The full-scale security alert was triggered after the unnamed pair had made several trips to the lavatory together, and on being asked to remain in their seats by the crew, had refused to co-operate. On landing the two were arrested and admitted, among other things, to have smoked drugs in the lavatory. However the report concludes "the men were not found to be carrying any drugs, and were not charged. When the plane touched down, authorities said, they were both fast asleep."

Bumped off

A very large rugby fan, travelling by air to see Wales play Ireland, had been forced to buy two seats to accommodate his ample proportions. After seeing his side crash to a 54:10 loss at the hands of the Irish at Landsdowne Road, imagine his dismay when he checked in and was told: "I'm sorry sir, but we can't seat you together." His allocated seats were not only in different rows, but on opposite sides of the aisle!

You can run, but...

For anyone seeking long-lost comrades-in-arms, your Uncle Roger is pleased to tell you about a new website called oldfriendz.com. Similar to the very popular friendsreunited.com, the new site aims to "reintroduce anybody across the global community including former servicemen and women from the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force." If you fancy a blast from the past, give it a try.

Scissors beats paper...Ginger gets to fly with the dog!



Hawker Hurricane Is of 3 Sqn, RAF Kenley, 1938

FLIGHT

and
AIRCRAFT ENGINEER

FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL 29.02.1952

Defence in Darkness

It was with real satisfaction that we beheld last week the first jet night- and all-weather fighter squadrons of the R.A.F. flying their Vampire N.F.10s and Meteor N.F.11s as to the manner born, though the crews have only recently converted from piston-engined Mosquito N.F.36s. The units

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concerned are part of a rejuvenated and expanded force now being established in Fighter Command and are appropriately based at West Malling, near Maidstone, Kent, which station has for many years been

particularly associated with night fighting – as, indeed, have the squadrons themselves.

An official Air Ministry statement points out that the Vampire and Meteor night fighters are capable of intercepting enemy aircraft farther from our coasts than their predecessors, and, thus, of achieving a higher percentage of successful interceptions before the raiders can reach their targets.

The Re-rising Sun

Following the first signs of a revival of Japan's air-transport industry – one company, under American control, has been operating for some months – there is news from Tokyo that aircraft manufacture is now likely to begin. With government assistance, production on a small scale is likely to be started towards the end of this year. Japanese engineering firms are already tendering for the supply of armaments, such as trench-mortars, to the US armed forces.

Synthetic Parachutist

The S.B.A.C. last week disclosed details of an unusual line of research at present being conducted by a parachute firm on behalf of the Ministry of Supply. Development tests of a new type of parachute are of such a nature that live drops would be inadvisable: among other things, they call for accurate simulation of an unconscious man. Elaborately constructed rubber dummies are, accordingly, being used.

London Airport Noise

Following recent discussions arising from local residents' complaints about noise in the vicinity of major airports, the MCA has started a series of investigations into the problem of sound created by engines running-up at London Airport. Temporary screens of corrugated asbestos are to be built to test their effectiveness in reducing the noise. These screens will form a large bay and different heights and widths will be experimented with.