



Newsletter No. 2 – September 2015

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Reflection

Starting on a sad note, we remember five 5BFTS people who have recently passed away. Dr Ray Kerry (Co 5), Arthur Rushworth (Co 17), Jim Moxom (Co 24), Dr Gilbert Guinn (Honorary Member), and John Broome (Co 18). John was our last 5BFTS Chairman and contributed a great deal to making sure the Association continued and flourished. We will miss them all.

This year, we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, which reminds us of those dark days for Britain and the magnificent contribution of the RAF which inspired Winston Churchill's memorable words, "*Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few*". The losses experienced resulted in Britain needing to train more pilots in safe skies, and directly led to the establishment of 5BFTS. 5BFTS stayed with the cadets and their instructors for the rest of their lives; it influenced their families and numerous other people, such as the historian Gilbert Guinn who wrote about the RAF in America. 5BFTS is the catalyst for so much – friendships, comradeship and handshakes across the Atlantic, which are enduring and growing; so much more than the 1,434 graduates, most of whom have now handed in their log books, could possibly have envisaged.

Thanks to the Arcadia Rotary Club, 2016 is the 60th Annual British Memorial Service at Oak Ridge Cemetery. Quite a landmark and really something to celebrate, perhaps with a special lunch in Arcadia or reunion events in Clewiston? Please let me know if you have any ideas – and if nothing else, do come to the 60th Anniversary Service on May 30, 2016.

Good news comes from Clewiston where the City is generously restoring the 5BFTS plaques in the Civic Center Park. They would also like to erect a brass monument of a cadet but don't have the funds for this. What a great idea – but, any ideas out there for fundraising? More in the next newsletter.

**'Their efforts to preserve the freedom of the world were not in vain
and will never be forgotten'**

Jenifer Harding

Five 5BFTS Facts

Opened in
July 1941 at
Carlstrom
Field

Moved to
Riddle Field
September
25, 1941

26 Courses

1434
graduates
(1325 RAF
and 109
USAAF)

Closed in
September
1945



Useful websites:

Clewiston Museum: <http://www.clewistonmuseum.org>

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Archives: <http://www.alumni.erau.edu/archives>

#5 British Flying Training School: <http://www.5bfts.org.uk>

'George Hogarth – Clewiston and Beyond'. Memoires of George Hogarth, 5BFTS Course 3
<http://commons.erau.edu/clewiston-beyond/1/>

US Contact: Harold Kosola – hkairplane@aol.com

In Memoriam

John Broome (Co 18) 1925 - 2015



*John Broome
Course 18 Cadet 1943*



*John and Muriel Broome
On 'Rose', Ashby Canal –
Midland Reunion, July 11, 2001*



*John taking the chair at the last
5BFTS Association Reunion
Bedford, Sept 14, 2013*

John grew up near London. He joined the RAF and found himself in Clewiston in 1943. After he was awarded his Wings, he returned to Britain and did a short spell of flying instruction. He was then posted to the Glider Pilot Regiment, flying troop-carrying gliders preparing for the Rhine crossing. As WW2 was coming to a close, he had a short period flying Halifax bombers. Demobbed in 1946, John worked in his family's hardware store. He married Muriel in 1947. In 1958, John started his own business which he managed until he retired in 1986.

John was a long time member of the 5BFTS Association. In 1996, he joined the committee to manage 'Special Projects'. One of these was overseeing the commissioning of the Arcadia Memorial Painting, presented to the Mayor of Arcadia in April 1998 for the people of Arcadia as a token of respect and gratitude for their continuing devotion to the last resting places of the cadets in Arcadia's Oak Ridge Cemetery. In 2001, a copy of the painting was given to the Bedford Moat House (now Park Inn by Radisson Bedford Hotel) for display in their public rooms in recognition of 5BFTS reunions held there.

'Special projects' also included the newsletter, and John's regular appeal for articles and information bore fruit as his editorship coincided with a period when each edition included articles from ex-cadets about their time in Florida and life since. In July 2003, John was elected to fill the vacant post of 5BFTS Association Vice-Chairman, but was still in charge of Special Projects – including the newsletter! When Harry Leeks died in August 2009, John became Chairman; he retained the post until the Association was disbanded (or perhaps demobbed is a better word!!) in September 2013.

John Broome died on August 19, 2015. He had been in hospital as he was suffering from pneumonia, but sadly it became too much for him and he passed away in his sleep.

Jeff Barwick writes from Clewiston, "We are all greatly saddened to learn of the passing of John Broome, who served as the final Chairman of the No. 5 BFTS Association. Just as his predecessors Chairmen John Potter and Harry Leeks, John Broome was a distinguished gentleman and dedicated to the group and it's mission. He had a warm place in his heart for Clewiston and was always gracious and sincere."

Dr Ray Kerry (Co 5) died August 9, 2015

There will be an obituary for Ray Kerry in the next Newsletter

Arthur S Rushworth (Co 17) 1924 – 2015



*Arthur Rushworth
Course 17 Cadet*



*Arthur proudly wearing his
RAF Wings*



*Arthur in later years
Photograph from Lancaster online*

Arthur Rushworth died January 12, 2015 aged 90 years. Born in Bradford, W. Yorkshire, England, he joined the Royal Air Force in 1941 and became a pilot. He flew a glider into Germany in 1944 on Operation Varsity. After the war, he moved to New York City, where he worked for NCR Paper and became Eastern Zone Manager. Later, he worked for Lindenmeyr Paper as Sales Manager. After his retirement, the Rushworth family moved to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Known for his wit and humor, Arthur was a great arts enthusiast, loved music, movies, theater, modern art and was a gourmet cook. He played drums in a local jazz group and was an integral part of his east side neighborhood. He inspired everyone to read, sharpen their intellect and always learn. He set an excellent example for all of us. Surviving him are Judith, his wife of 36 years, daughters, Wendy and Georgiana, son Jesse, and three grandchildren.

Jim Moxom (Co 24) Died 2015



Jim Moxom Course 24 Cadet



*Kathy and Jim Moxom
On 'Rose', Ashby Canal – Midland Reunion, July 11, 2001*

Jim died during the summer of 2015. He was a long time 5BFTS member attending National, US and Midland Region Reunions. Jim and his wife, Kathy, lived in Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, for many years before moving to St Albans about two years ago. When he died, Jim had been living in a care home for a few months because his health had deteriorated and Kathy was no longer able to look after him at their home.

Dr Gilbert Sumter Guinn (American Honorary Member) 1929 – 2014

Gilbert was born in Camden, South Carolina, and served for seven years in the US Air Force. Graduating from the University of South Carolina (USC), Columbia in 1956, he was awarded a PhD in History from USC-Columbia in 1973. He became Resident Director and Dean of USC at Union and then from 1970-1974, he was Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Lander College, becoming Professor of History in 1974. He retired in 1991 as Professor Emeritus in History at Lander University, Greenwood, SC. Gilbert died April 30, 2014, at his home in Greenwood, SC. His wife, Susan, and three daughters survive him.

Between 1981 and 1982, Gilbert was a Fulbright lecturer at Derby, England. During this time, he made contact with a number of RAF veterans, who had trained in the United States during WW2, to gain research material for a book on British Aircrew Training in the USA 1941-1945. After his retirement, Gilbert wrote a book entitled, *The Arnold Scheme: The training of British Pilots and Navigators in the Southeastern United States, 1941-1943*, and collaborated on a second book, *England: British Naval Aviation in World War II: The U.S. Navy and Anglo-American Relations*.

The 5BFTS Association first met Gilbert during the making of the film, 'The Flying Days at Riddle Field', and in 2002, it was announced that Gilbert had accepted the invitation to become an Honorary Member of the Association. Gilbert and Susan attended the Reunion that year which was held in Mickleover, near Derby, a city that they both remembered with some affection and interest from Gilbert's Fulbright Exchange experience.

Dr Susan H Guinn (Gil's widow) writes: *"Gil's interest in aviation history in general, and the training of British cadets in particular, was of long standing. As a boy, he was the paperboy who delivered at the Arnold Scheme primary school in Camden, SC. (In his research, he contacted several of the cadets who had signed his autograph book). It was no doubt because of this experience that he went into the Air Force rather than the Navy like his brothers.*

He began his work in earnest in the 1970s, planning a large work that encompassed the BFTSs in the US, the Arnold Scheme, and the Towers scheme, which trained naval cadets. Unfortunately, he was quite ill throughout the 1990s and had to put his nearly complete work aside. When he recovered his health, he returned to it, but made the decision to deal with the three programs separately. He completed his book on the Arnold Scheme by himself, but he decided to work with young collaborators on the other two. The first book to be completed was the Towers Scheme work, with which he collaborated with Dr. Harry Bennett of the University of Plymouth. His collaborator for the BFTS study was a Texan, Tom Killebrew, whom he met when Tom consulted him during his research for a book about the BFTS at Terrell. The book they were working on has not been completed (to a great extent because of Gil's extended final illnesses), but I am sure that Tom is still working on it.

Several years ago, Gil began donating the books and other materials that he used in his research to the Thomas Cooper Library at the University of South Carolina. His books are the Gilbert S. Guinn Military Aviation Collection in their special collections unit. library.sc.edu/spcoll/hist/milav.html

Years ago, we visited Clewiston and were amazed to find that the ruins of the BFTS were still there. You could easily imagine the ruins with walls and the cadets bustling around. The photos we took are now at the University."

We remember with thanks these four pilots (and other pilots known to us) who have handed in their logbooks, and those friends, like Gilbert, who have done so much to keep their memories alive.

WE ARE HERE BECAUSE THEY WERE THERE!

The October 2000 newsletter, edited by John Broome, included the following:

The Early Courses at Clewiston referred to Riddle Field Control Tower as 'The Tower'. Later on, the Control Tower was code named Rainbow, and so, at the end of every day, cadets would sign off.....

“Hello Rainbow. On the Line, Off and Out”

From October 2000 onwards, John included this line at the end of the 'In Memoriam' section.

It is a fitting tribute to John to include it now!

The British Plot and the British Memorial Service

Did you know that **May 30, 2016 is a 5BFTS DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY DAY** – the day when the 60th Annual British Memorial Service will take place?



This **60th British Memorial Service**, to remember the 23 cadets who died in training and never left Florida, will take place on **Memorial Day, May 30, 2016**, at Oak Ridge Cemetery, Arcadia, Florida, USA at 10am.

The Service is organised by the Arcadia Rotary Club
Mailing address: PO Box 1492, Arcadia, FL 34265-1492
Telephone for information at 863-444-0664
Email: BritishMemorialService@gmail.com

EVERYBODY IS WELCOME

In 2015, The Rotary Club of Arcadia presented the 59th British Memorial Service – 59 times when people have gathered at The British Plot in the Oak Ridge Cemetery to remember the 23 RAF cadets who never left Florida.

2016 is a Diamond Anniversary – marking 60 years since this service was first held. What a tribute to 5BFTS, the RAF and the cadets themselves that they have not been forgotten and the annual service continues.



It would be wonderful to mark this occasion with some special celebration; perhaps lunch in Arcadia after the service or a reunion in Clewiston – perhaps at the Museum? Although British and American veterans are sadly now small in number, and unlikely to be able to travel to Florida, many of their sons and daughters (and grandchildren, great grandchildren, nephews, nieces, etc) maybe can travel – just being there is an occasion in itself, but a celebration afterwards would make it really special.

Please let me know what you think, and any ideas for celebration.....

Memorial Day 2015 – the 59th British Memorial Service

Memorial Day, May 25, 2015 marked the date of the 59th British Memorial Service to remember the 23 RAF Cadets who “*Crossed the river to rest in the shade of the trees*”. Two of these cadets were part of the Arnold Scheme, training with the US school at Carlstrom

Field (neither died as a result of an aircraft accident), and 21 died while training at 5BFTS in Clewiston. The reason for the difference is the type of aircraft used and the training requirements. Carlstrom Field only undertook primary training and used simple aircraft, such as the Stearman PT-17. At Clewiston, 5BFTS cadets also flew the Vultee BT-13 and Harvard AT-6 for basic and advanced training. BT-13s and AT-6s have much greater power, with complicated equipment and panels suitable for instrument, blind and night flying. The ashes of John Paul Riddle are buried alongside the cadets.

The service was attended by about 200 people and included representatives of the Rotary Club of Arcadia (who organised the service), Sarasota Scottish Society, Daughters of the British Empire, Canadian organisations in South Florida, British and American Veterans, instructors and people of Arcadia. RAF Officers serving at Central Command in Tampa at MacDill Air Force Base raised the Union Jack and RAF Ensign and the Founder of the American Ideals Foundation, Inc , Robert Moffa, gave the Memorial Address.

Jenny Harding writes: *“On behalf of 5BFTS, please can I, thank the Arcadia Rotary Club, and especially, Judy Fitzpatrick, British Memorial Service Chair, for all their hard work and dedication in keeping these memories alive. Thank you and keep up the good work!”*



Officers of the RAF serving at Central Command in Tampa at MacDill AFB

Wing Commander Adrian Jarvis, Major Thomas O’Flaherty, Wing Commander Simon Twose and Warrant Officer Malcolm Solly





Warrant Officer Malcolm Solly and Major Thomas O'Flaherty with Rotarian Vernon Keen



Robert Moffa giving the Memorial Address

Notes from the 'Old World'



The Dambusters



Operation Chastise was an attack on German dams carried out on May 16-17, 1943 by RAF No. 617 Squadron, subsequently publicised as the "Dam Busters". They used a specially developed "bouncing bomb" invented and developed by Sir Barnes Wallis. It is very sad to report that the last survivor of the 19 pilots who set off that night, Les Munro, has recently died in his native New Zealand at the age of 96.

Remembering the 'Many' and the 'Few' – 75 years later

Between July and October 1940, the skies over southern England were the stage for the first decisive air battle in history as the RAF defended our island nation from the numerically superior forces of the Luftwaffe. The Germans had more than 2,500 aircraft sitting just across the Channel with orders to overpower the RAF, while Fighter Command had just 700 fighter aircraft. Yet, thanks to the skill and courage of 'The Few', by October 1940, the Battle of Britain was won and the Germans were forced to postpone their planned invasion of Britain.

Events to mark the 75th Anniversary include:

- **Royal Mint** – issue of 2015 UK 50p Brilliant Uncirculated coin to mark the Anniversary;
- **Royal Mail** - Issue of special Royal Mail postage stamps on July 15 to mark the anniversary;
- **RAF Fly-past on July 10**, watched by the Queen and six ex-Battle of Britain pilots all now in their 90s, included Spitfires and Hurricanes and their modern counterparts, Typhoon jets;
- **Fly-past on August 18** –18 Spitfires and six Hurricanes fly over south-east England on the 'Hardest Day' (the day when both sides suffered their greatest losses);
- **Battle of Britain Day Fly-past on September 15** – About 40 Spitfires and eight Hurricanes will take off from Goodwood Airfield, West Sussex, and fly over places in southern England hit by German bombs (including factories in Southampton and

Salisbury and airfields as far as Exeter and Hornchurch).

- **Day of live broadcasts on Radio 2 on September 18** – from Biggin Hill culminating in the Battle of Britain at 75 concert;
- **Imperial War Museum Air Show September 19-20** – at RAF Duxford, Cambridge.

Obviously no 5BFTS pilot flew in the Battle of Britain, but it inspired many young men to become pilots, including my father, George Hogarth (Co 3). 'Spitfire Saga Rodney Scrase DFC', first published by Spelmount Publishers in 2010 (ISBN 978 0 7524 5859 5), is the story of another Co 3 cadet. Rodney flew Spitfires with No 1 and No 72 squadrons. He became President of No 72 Squadron Association, which still has a few members who were WW2 Spitfire Boys! <http://72squadronassociation.webs.com>

5BFTS Grove - UK National Memorial Arboretum (NMA)

In Newsletter 1, I reported on the poor state of the information boards in the 5BFTS grove of three North American birch trees and two English Birch trees (5 for Number 5). I have had an unsatisfactory letter back from the NMA telling me that the maintenance of any information boards is the responsibility of the organisation that commissioned it (in this case, 5BFTS Association). NMA does concede that this wasn't clearly specified in 2003, and all the paperwork I have read from the (then) Appeals Director implied that the donation included maintenance. I am still in discussion with the NMA and will find out how much restoration (or a new information board) would cost.

As 5BFTS Association no longer exists, if we are unable to find funding for a replacement, the information board is likely to be removed leaving the grove of 5 trees without any information about the donor (5BFTS) or the reason for the five trees.

This would be a great shame and we would lose our UK national memorial for 5BFTS. I hope that I shall have some cost estimates in the next newsletter, but meantime, I am going to appeal to anyone reading this to think about whether they feel able to donate a little (or a lot!!) to ensure that the name of 5BFTS lives on.....

If we have to appeal to relatives and friends of 5BFTS cadets for funding – can you help?

More in the next newsletter.....



#5 British Flying Training School Clewiston, Florida. Website Update



5BFTS Website now has a full list of cadets and a search feature.

Eddie Clanzy-Hodge, website developer and son-in-law of T K Clanzy (Co 9), writes: We have recently looked at every course photograph and have put the names of all the cadets into a list, which is available on the website under the tab "Search" - "Full List". This will give you a full list of the cadets with their course and flight. This is a very long list so we have made it easier for you to find a particular name.

If you go to the tab "Search" – "Search" you can type in the first few character of the surname. This will give you a list of the selected cadets' names with their course and flight.

We hope that this feature will be of help to families looking for their relatives. Previously it was extremely difficult to find a cadet by name

The 5BFTS website can be found at www.5bfts.org.uk



Clewiston Museum Update

Jeff Barwick writes: “The Clewiston Museum’s No. 5 BFTS collection remains a popular attraction with our visitors who usually have questions about the era. And we still have periodic visits from kin of the Cadets who are connecting with their loved ones’ early years and adventures. On the local front, a local dentist has bought the old Dixie Crystal Theater across the street from the Museum. Many of the Cadets will fondly remember the building and the movies. The historic building will become a new and modern dentist office. Certainly, a different form of ‘entertainment’. And, we’ve been working on improving the linking and information sharing between the No. 5BFTS website and our Clewiston Museum website.”



*Dixie Crystal Theater – Built 1941
Picture in Flypaper, December 25, 1942*



Dixie Crystal Theater in May 2012

The Museum continues to receive visitors with interests in those flying days at Riddle Field. The Museum website is www.clewistonmuseum.org. The website also has links to our extensive collection of 5BFTS photos which are stored on the University of Florida's historical archives. The digitization of the Flypapers, the photographs and stories such as the one on George Hogarth ensure that the story of 5BFTS is recorded for eternity.

Jenny Harding writes: *On behalf of 5BFTS, please can I, once again, thank Clewiston Museum, Jeff Barwick and Curator, Butch Wilson, for looking after the 5BFTS archives and doing such a wonderful job keeping 5BFTS alive for the visitors to the museum.”*

Restoring Carlstrom Army Air Field

Carlstrom Field in Arcadia, Florida, was named after the Swedish born pioneering aviator Victor Carlstrom, who was killed in an aircraft accident in Newport News, Virginia, in 1917. It was first developed in 1918 to train US Army pilots. After WW1, some small-scale pilot instruction continued, but this wasn't viable and the field was declared inactive in 1922. The buildings were sold to private individuals, removed by 1926 and the field finally closed.

With the need for primary pilot training brought on by WW2, Carlstrom Field re-opened in March 1941 operated by the Riddle Aeronautical Institute. Carlstrom Field was a USAAF base, which trained RAF cadets as part of the Arnold Scheme from June 1941 and hosted 5BFTS Courses 1 and 2 from July 1941 until Riddle Field at Clewiston was ready for occupation in September 1941. **Carlstrom Field is therefore a very significant place in the life of 5BFTS**; by co-incidence, it is also where John Paul Riddle learnt to fly in 1921!

Course 3 (October 1941-March 1942) was the first to spend their whole 6 months at Riddle Field in Clewiston.

The pictures below are of Carlstrom Field and Arnold Scheme RAF cadets who undertook their primary training at Carlstrom Field between 1941 and 1945. The activities shown are similar to those undertaken by 5BFTS cadets at Clewiston. Carlstrom Field closed in 1945.



Recommissioning of Carlstrom Field, 1941. John Paul Riddle is the man in the cowboy hat in the centre (www.airfields-freeman.com)



*Carlstrom Field 1943
(©Frank Blatra)*



RAF cadets moving into their new quarters at the Riddle Aeronautical Institute, Carlstrom Field, Florida (©Frank Blatra)



RAF cadets in Ground School (©Frank Blatra)

Riddle Field was very similar to Carlstrom Field in design; however, sadly, there is now nothing left at Riddle Field, apart from a few bumps in a field and some WW2 concrete roads. Hurricane Wilma destroyed the last hanger in 2005. At Carlstrom, however, we are very fortunate as some WW2 buildings remain – and, we are even more fortunate that there are restoration plans underway.

After WW2, Carlstrom, and the neighbouring Dorr Fields, were sold to the State of Florida for a total of \$1. Carlstrom Field became the site of the G. Pierce Wood Memorial Hospital in 1947. Many of the WW2 buildings were used by the hospital with the former 6-plane hangars serving as maintenance buildings. The band shell, site of dances and other entertainment during the war, remained on the site. The Hospital closed in 2002 and then the site was used as the DeSoto County Juvenile Correctional Complex, which closed in 2011.

In 1998, and again in 2003, Lou Thole (author of the book 'Forgotten Fields of America') visited Carlstrom. In 2003, he found that some of the WW2 buildings were in the process of being torn down. Although six hangars were planned, only five were ever constructed, and of these five, the two built first were still there. Also still standing were the mess hall, band shell, canteen, administration building, water and sewage plants, and two training buildings.

Now for the Good News.....

In May 2015, the American Ideals Foundation, Inc released a press statement:

"The AMERICAN IDEALS FOUNDATION, INC. is taking the responsibility of preserving an important part of our history by bringing back to life the CARLSTROM ARMY AIR FIELD, U.S ARMY, Arcadia, Florida. It will have museums, a special walk through history building, military art gallery, there will be music composed, artwork, books written, and poetry created about this HISTORICAL site, original mess hall, displays of military vehicles, vintage airplanes, will all be a part of this history. This restoration of CARLSTROM will look, smell, sound and feel like an ARMY AIR FIELD in the 1940's.

We will honor our men and women who served here and trained here. It will honor the Royal Air Force from Great Britain who trained there and the 22¹ who died here. Women pilots delivered planes to this base they will have a special place of honor. One such pilot was the daughter of Victor Carlstrom [after whom the field is named]. There is SO MUCH History to show the visitor. The Foundation is working on having the admission free to the public and the tickets paid for by businesses, corporations and organizations. There is so much more.....The historical airbase will become a destination for Veterans, history buffs, schoolchildren and the general public.

Frank Baltra, the Military Historian of the American Ideals Foundation writes: *"We will be restoring the mess hall, rec hall, administration building, the dispensary and two hangars. We have not [yet] decided which [building] will be the museum. The mess hall will be open to visitors. My idea is to remove the first two feet of the pool and restore it as a reflective fountain for the RAF because one of the Cadets drowned there."*



1998 photo of one of the two remaining hangars at Carlstrom Field (© Lou Thole)



1998 photo of Carlstrom Field's former administration building The only reminders of Carlstrom Field are a plaque on the administration building, placed when it was refurbished by the state of Florida in 1992, and a tired B-17 weather vane on top of the building. (© Lou Thole)

¹ There were actually 23 RAF cadets who died while training in Florida (two Arnold Scheme cadets training at Carlstrom Field and 21 5BFTS cadets training at Clewiston – see pages 5 and 6).

Frank and the American Ideals Foundation are appealing for support and encouragement as they set out to restore Carlstrom Field. Frank is particularly asking for help in three ways:

1. Copies of any contemporaneous photographs (of Carlstrom and Clewiston) showing the base, the cadets, the aircraft, etc; in fact, anything connected with Carlstrom Field and Riddle Field;
2. Artifacts that people might wish to donate for the new museum;
3. Letters of endorsement from organisations in Florida, the wider US and the UK.

Can you help? If you can, please contact Frank at email: mvpaffc@gmail.com

There will be more photographs of Carlstrom Field in the next newsletter.

Meeting up

In Newsletter 1, I wrote about the meeting between Tuck Renshaw and William Coleman, including some information about William's father. Tuck's father, Fred T Renshaw, was an American cadet on Course 12 and William's father was a flight instructor from 1942 to August 1945. Now, it is the turn of Tuck to tell us something about his dad.

Tuck Renshaw writes: "As reported in the newsletter [5BFTS newsletter, March 2015], Bill Coleman and I were chatting at our local men's education group and discovered the common connection. I mentioned I had my father's uniform and wanted to get it to a museum as there weren't many USAAF men who had both RAF wings and USAAF. He put me in touch with Harold [Kosola] who connected me with Butch at the Clewiston Museum. When Butch and I started talking, he was unaware that there were USAAF cadets who had trained with the British starting with Course 12. Once Butch had the background and was agreeable to proceed (and had funds for a mannequin), we made the uniform donation to Clewiston Museum in August 2013."



Fred T Renshaw (Course 12) wearing his uniform with both RAF and USAAF wings



Fred's uniform displayed on a mannequin at Clewiston Museum

Fred T Renshaw (5BFTS Course 12) Short Biography for the Clewiston Museum

Fred Renshaw, (January 1916 to November 2007), was a native of Boonville, Missouri. He graduated from William Jewell College, Liberty, Missouri in 1937 and the Harvard Business School in 1939. General Foods Company hired him after business school and assigned him to a sales territory in St. Louis and later transferred him to New York to their merchandising department. While there, he took flight-training lessons in seaplanes on the Hackensack River and when completed, he enlisted in the Army Air Corp.

First assigned to Maxwell Army Air Base (Sept. 1942) for pre-flight training, he was selected to participate in the British Flight Training School (BFTS) #5 and sent to Riddle Field in Clewiston, Florida (Nov 12, 1942) to be part of Course 12 along with 16 other USAAF cadets. Upon completion of his training, (April 1943), he was commissioned as a Pilot Officer in the British Air Force [Royal Air Force] and as a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army Air Corp, and assigned to the Air Transport Command. He served in the ATC, in the US, North Africa and Europe until discharged in 1946.

Following his military service he entered a career in the fiberboard box industry. He worked for several boxboard companies and in 1963, Fred, his wife Peggy, and their three children moved to Alton, Illinois where he was employed by Alton Box Board Company as a senior executive. Fred retired from there in 1980. Following his retirement, he took on several volunteer assignments with the International Executive Service Corps as a packaging consultant. He and Peggy were sent to Brazil, Turkey and Uruguay for months long consulting projects. Following his volunteer assignments he was involved in the horticultural products business and stayed active in that business until 2000. He was a long time member of the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club where he was honored as a Paul Harris Fellow for his service to the community and the club.

US Course 12 Reunions (information from Tuck)

Throughout the 80's, 90's and early 00's, Fred attended several reunions with the "Yanks" who he met at Riddle Field during Course 12. The Course 12 American graduates started having small reunions amongst themselves in the 1980's. I believe the first was in Columbus Ohio in 1984 and the attendees included: Doyle Alexander, John Gillette, Pete Lazzara, Fred Renshaw, Ralph Rissman, Dick Schmidt, Blaine Schultz, Otis Skubal, Bill Slade and Clif Suhm. I also found notes about one that my father organized in St Louis in 2002 and included a tour of the McDonnell Douglas aircraft manufacturing facility. I don't know for sure when the last gathering was held - but suspect 2002 may have been the last.

Most/all of the Americans who attended 5BFTS were assigned to the Air Transport Command. They had similar continuing training - being assigned to a commercial airline as co-pilot for some months, transporting fighters and other aircraft around the US- from factories to marshaling locations, then were assigned overseas to Europe, North Africa or India. Dad, Ralph Rissman, and I believe at least 4 others were all assigned to N. Africa. From Oran & Marrakech they flew supplies into Italy and brought back wounded soldiers. Following cessation of hostilities, some of them finished their tours returning aircraft from the European theater to Tinker AFB OK and a few other places.

There will be more about the Air Transport Command in a future newsletter.

If anyone has photos of these Course 12 Reunions, please can you let me have copies – it would be great to share them in a future newsletter.

Thank you Tuck – it is so interesting to know what cadets did after Clewiston.

From the Archives about British Cadets at Carlstrom...

On June 9, 1941, Flypaper² reported the arrival of Class of 41-J (later known as Class 42-A) at Carlstrom noting that it was composed entirely of British students. These would-be pilots

² Embry Riddle Flypaper "Stick to it" was the official newsletter of Embry-Riddle from 1940 through 1957. During World War Two the newsletter was published weekly. It included information about Riddle Aeronautical Institute at Carlstrom Field and Dorr Field, Arcadia, and the Riddle-McKay Aero College, Riddle Field, Clewiston.

were Arnold Scheme cadets not British Flying Training School (BFTS) cadets. This meant that they would be at Carlstrom for about 6 weeks to receive their primary training and would then move on elsewhere for further training. The key differences between the two groups of cadets was that Arnold Scheme cadets were trained under US Army Air Force conditions and moved to different places for further training whereas BFTS cadets trained under RAF discipline, were taught by civilian instructors, and stayed in one place throughout their training. BFTS training was more successful as about 50% of Arnold cadets failed to make the grade as pilots (became 'washed-out'), whereas a much higher percentage of BFTS cadets received their wings (overall failure rate at 5BFTS was 23.6%). This difference was often attributed to two things:

- The RAF's wartime operational experience since 1939 made the BFTS programme more effective in training pilots for operational war time duties;
- The enthusiasm of the civilian instructors at 5BFTS.

The early experiences of Class 42-A, however, were similar to those of 5BFTS cadets.

'When do we start flying?'

On June 16, Flypaper reported that this was the first question asked by the 99 fledgling pilots of Class 42-A when they checked into Carlstrom Field after a four-day train ride in day coaches from Canada. The boys reached Arcadia after a perilous trip across the Atlantic to be met by scores of civic-minded Arcadians who plied them with doughnuts, coffee and bushels of juicy Florida oranges – the first they had enjoyed for weeks.

Later, after another breakfast and presentation of the Union Jack, they were assigned to their barracks, stowed their gear and immediately made for the pool. *"Needless to say, some of them have suffered rather severe discomfort in trying on a parachute. Seems as if quite a few shoulders had become more than a little sunburned"*.

The Cadets Corner – written by British Cadet Every (member of Class 42-A)

Cadet Every wrote about the high pilot failure rate (wash-out) at Carlstrom. When the cadets were at a crucial stage in their training having solo flights daily, those who failed to make the grade as pilots ("washing machine wreckage") found solace in the swimming pool and were praying daily that they will soon be posted as observers as *"most of them are as keen as ever to fly even if the controls have been barred to them"*.

On July 22, 1941, he wrote: *"Mail from England has been more numerous this week, and from what I hear, the situation at home is all quiet with little bombing and good weather. One letter spoke with envy of the fruit we must be obtaining in Florida"*.

When it was time for Class 42-A to leave and be replaced by a new British contingent, Class 42-B (around July 22), he noted how well the British and American cadets had worked together. This sentiment would be replicated later at 5BFTS. Class 42-C arrived on August 30, 1941.

Carlstrom to Clewiston - Riddle Field is born

Flypaper August 12 confirmed that 5BFTS would be Riddle McKay Aero College and would provide primary, basic and advanced training to RAF 'boys' who were expected to arrive in groups of 50. Riddle Field was on a 2,500-acre tract of land 8 miles west of Clewiston and the base was to be similar in design to Carlstrom Field. It was scheduled for completion on September 1 to accommodate the first class (Course 1), already at Carlstrom Field undertaking their primary training.

While at Carlstrom, Course 1 (and later Course 2) was known as 'The Rebels'!



The "Rebels" – First group of RAF students schedule for Clewiston.
 Front Row, Centre: Wing Commander Rampling and G Willis Tyson (Photo on www.5bfts.org.uk)

The Clewiston Rebels at Carlstrom

On September 9, Flypaper reported, *"The Rebels are coming into their own"*. The Rebels had received 12 brand new PT-17s to add to their 5 new Vultees BT-15s. They had been held up by a lack of equipment, but now, everything was expected to go forward smoothly.

On September 15, Flypaper reported that the Clewiston rebels (Course 1) had just finished their cross-country flying and were entering a phase of night flying. *"Interesting to note is the fact that they will not use regular floodlights or runway markers but will use a special trick flare now in use by the RAF. The flare doesn't give a very bright light but acts only as a ground marker... so please everyone, don't strike any matches around the field at night, you'll probably have a BT land at your feet if you do"*.

This same edition has an 'RAF Letter' written by Cadet G J Cassidy (Co 2). It is a long and interesting letter – too long to be reproduced here, but includes phrases like, *"We have found in America a second home"*, and the fact that the 50 cadets of Course 2 all agreed, *"This place sure is swell."*

The letter ends on a culinary note: *"Apropos iced tea. It IS served in England, only there isn't any ice in it, and one calls it Russian. If one ordered it in a good class restaurant, it would probably be served hot. Perhaps there is a difference somewhere after all!"*

G J Cassidy wrote a further letter in Flypaper September 30. Called 'Prelude to Departure', this letter was about the difficulties of playing bridge whilst packing prior to Course 2 moving to Clewiston!

- G J Cassidy's first letter - pages 21 to 23, Flypaper Vol 2, No 22, September 15, 1941
- G J Cassidy's second letter - pages 24-26, Flypaper Vol 2, No 24, September 30, 1941
- <http://commons.erau.edu/flypaper>



The Rebels by Brian Keady

"Moving from Carlstrom to Clewiston"

The next newsletter will be published in December 2015. Please can you let me have any articles, information, etc, by the end of November. The more you tell me, the more interesting the newsletter will be – and I would especially like to hear if anyone worked with, or knows, any of the people mentioned in this newsletter. Anecdotes, stories and pictures would be great. So - over to you!

"Until we meet again, "good-bye to y'all".