

Newsletter No. 7 – March 2017

Editor: Dr Jenifer Harding (daughter of George Hogarth, Co 3)

jen@jennyharding.co.uk



Reflection

In 1804, William Wordsworth wrote his famous and much loved poem;

*"I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.*

*Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance"*



It is said that Wordsworth was inspired to write this poem by seeing a 'long belt' of daffodils; if he was in Britain right now, he would be inspired many, many times over, as along numerous grass verges in our hamlets, villages, towns and cities, daffodils are blooming, heralding the return of spring and the promise of new life.

The first three months of 2017 have shown that 5BFTS is very much alive. Recently, I received a letter from a Course 4 cadet who was very pleased to hear that the 5BFTS Association had been brought back to life. Sons and daughters of cadets are getting in touch, visits have been made to and from both sides of the Atlantic, our links with IWM Duxford are strengthening, we are sharing 5BFTS information with the 1BFTS museum in Texas and we are hearing from people who are just interested in the young men who went to Florida as cadets and came back as pilots over 70 years ago.

**'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

Reminder - Annual British Memorial Service 2017

This year, the **Annual British Memorial Service** will be held on **May 29, 2017**, at the British Plot, Oak Ridge Cemetery, Arcadia, when we gather to remember the 23 RAF cadets who *"Crossed the river to rest in the shade of the trees"*. They died during training and never left Florida to return to their homeland. John Paul Riddle's ashes are buried alongside the cadets.

Last year marked the 60th time the service had been held and was a very memorable occasion in the life of 5BFTS; every annual service, however, is special and we owe an ongoing debt of gratitude to the Rotary Club of Arcadia for the organisation of the service and to the many others who contribute. Please join us on May 29, 2017.

	<p>The service starts at 10am</p> <p>The Service is organised, as it has been for the past 60 years, by the Arcadia Rotary Club</p> <p>Mailing address: PO Box 1492, Arcadia, FL 34265-1492</p> <p>Telephone for information at 863-444-0664</p> <p>Email: BritishMemorialService@gmail.com</p> <p>EVERYBODY IS WELCOME</p>
--	---

And afterwards: If you feel in need of refreshment, can I recommend lunch at **Mary Margaret's Tea and Biscuit**, 10 South Polk Avenue, Arcadia, Florida 34266. Reservations are a good idea – phone 863-494-0615 or email nbruden@msn.com. For more information about Mary Margaret's Tea and Biscuits, and details of their menu, please visit: <http://marymargaretsteaandbiscuit.com>

Get well soon!

Harold Kosola, a 5BFTS American Honorary Member and current US contact, had a stroke on December 24, 2016, and was in hospital all through the holiday period. It is very good to know that Harold was able to go home at the end of January and started home rehab then. I have heard from him and he is doing well.

Harold, who has had an interest in 5BFTS since he was a small boy, took over from Blaine H Schultz (Course 12) as US contact in 2005 and has attended many US and UK reunions.

Harold – we all wish you well for a speedy recovery



Harold Kosola in London on the way to the 2004 Bedford Reunion

In Memoriam

T J Lees (Co 17) died January 15, 2017



Course 17 C-D Flight

Cadets Lees and Laurie Moore (also Co 17) at Clewiston

T J Lees died in Kemble, Gloucestershire, on January 15, 2017, aged 93 and almost 20 years to the day since his wife died on January 7, 1997. He died after a short illness lasting about 8 weeks. His memorial service was held in Kemble Church on February 6. He was a member of the 5BFTS Association from the early days until it was disbanded in 2013.

Cadet Lees crossed the Atlantic on the Cunard White Star ship, RMS Mauritania, which had been converted to a troopship. He travelled to Florida via Moncton, Canada, where he was issued with a (Canadian) Pilots Flying Log, and New York, and was at Riddle Field from October 4, 1943 to April 15, 1944. When WW2 ended, he was on a troopship on its way to Japan and was diverted to India where he was on riot control as the country was partitioned.

His son, Ian Lees writes: *"After my father's death, I searched through the top shelf of his wardrobe (probably out of his reach as he grew stiffer in the shoulders) and was overjoyed to find not just his Log Books but a photo album taken at the time, including AT6A Number 234 on its nose which he said happened because it was overloaded with stolen oranges!"*

Sir Jack Hayward (In Memoriam March 2015) was a fellow Co 17 cadet. Ian remembers his father saying that *"Jack 'could get away with murder'!"* Other stories Ian heard about the cadets' escapades include:

- *"Landing an aircraft (possibly a Stearman) on the roof of a hanger which was too short for it to take off again, so it had to be dismantled and taken down bit by bit."*
- *Looping an aircraft and at the top of the loop a donkey (or possibly a jeep?) fell out through the roof."*

All very believable!

Ian says that there is no record of his father actually flying AT6 Number 234, but the cadets were very adept at covering up their more colourful antics (in the case of oranges – it could be a very colourful incident indeed!), so who knows.....photographs below, captioned with the comments written in T Lees' photograph album.



*It was after overloading
the ship with oranges
stolen from Wimauma*



that I made my contribution to the scrap-heap.

We also remember with gratitude the following 5BFTS Association Members who have died:

- Wg Cdr Dennis Luke (Course 5) died August 2013
- John Jorgensen (Course 11) died January 2016
- Alan Bruce DFC (Course 11) died November 7, 2016

There will be more information about these cadets in the next newsletter

We remember with thanks these pilots who have handed in their logbooks, and to other pilots, Riddle Field staff and friends known to us who have done so much to keep their memories alive.

WE ARE HERE BECAUSE THEY WERE THERE!

Notes from the 'Old World'



Time does not stand still – an update on an extraordinary tale.....

In previous editions, I have mentioned the watch found by Mike Altuccini inscribed "Riddle McKay Aero College N.C.TUFNELL. Best Overall Cadet Course 6". I am very please to report that Nevill Tufnell's family have been found and told about the watch. They were thrilled and excited to hear the story and I hope that I can bring you more details in the next newsletter. Suffice to say at this time, that I have spoken with Nevill's daughter and cousin and they have filled in some of his life story.

This wasn't the only watch that was presented to a cadet. F/O Albert E Sloman wrote a letter to Flypaper (March 31, 1944). Albert wrote, on February 23, that he had just come home on disembarkation leave after serving in the Mediterranean and North Africa to the very kind gift of a watch from the College. He ended his letter *"To Mr Riddle and all of you, I say a very sincere 'thank you'"*. Albert, a member of Course 3 (October 1941-March 1942, won two fold honours as Best All Round Cadet and Best Ground School Cadet. Albert went on to give more very interesting information about what he had been doing since he left Riddle Field – this will be included in a later newsletter.

Through the Overcast

This is the name of a book written by Assen Jordanoff and published in the US. In November 2016, we had the following enquiry.....

"My name is Andrew Houiellebecq and I'm a member of the 7 Overseas (Jersey) Air Training Corps. Recently I was given a copy of a book on the weather that had the name D F Wilson written on the inside cover and then underneath 5 B.F.T.S, Clewiston, Florida". Andrew went on to say that he tried to find out some information about D F Wilson and came to us for help.

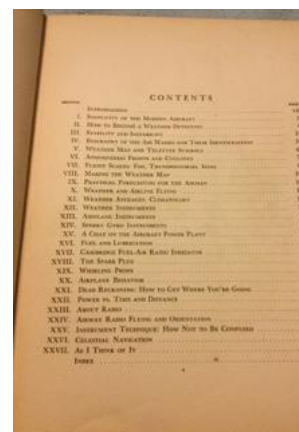
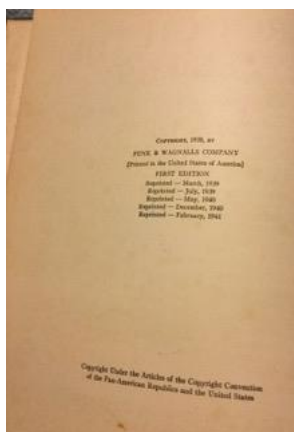
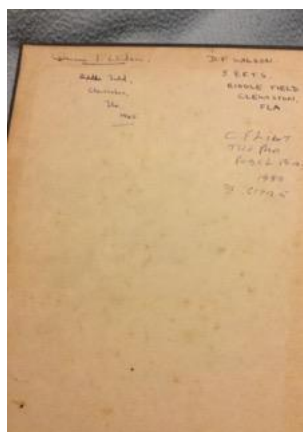
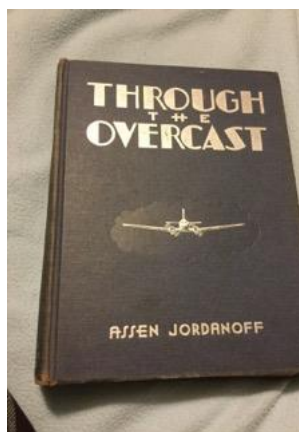
DF Wilson was Duncan Fairlie Wilson. He was a scot, born in Currie, Edinburgh in 1921 and died in Milnathort (near Kinross) in 2005 aged 84. He attended Edinburgh University and joined the Edinburgh University Air Squadron (EUAS). He was a member of Course 3 and was one of the 13 cadets on Course 3 who came from Edinburgh University and EUAS. Course 3 was noteworthy (and unique) for three reasons:

- It was the first course to have all their US pilot training (primary, basic and advanced) at Clewiston - 5BFTS was established in July 1941 but the Clewiston airfield wasn't ready and so Courses 1 and 2 started their training at Carlstrom (Arcadia, Florida)
- Course 3 was composed of cadets from EUAS and Oxford and Cambridge University Air Squadrons. This meant that these cadets were already familiar with aircraft and the very basic essentials, and so they did very little (if any) initial flying training in the UK but went straight out to America.
- Of the 50 cadets, 46 graduated as pilots and because they were all students at either Edinburgh, Oxford or Cambridge, they were all commissioned on graduation and returned home as pilot officers. This was the only course where all the graduates were commissioned as officers before they left Florida.

Of these 46 new pilots, at least 12 were killed between 1942 and 1944. A couple more were known to be POWs. The majority of the rest were promoted to Flight Lieutenants (via being a Flying Officer) on March 14, 1944 - two years after graduating from Clewiston. This included Duncan Wilson.

Duncan was with 542 Squadron in 1943 and while still a flying officer, was awarded the USA Air Medal. After WW2, he flew with BEA and then lived in Jersey, marrying Sylvia Jean Law.

Andrew is investigating Duncan's Jersey addresses – if we manage to find out any more information about Duncan, I will include it in future newsletters. Assen seems to be quite renowned in the aviation field both originally in his native Bulgaria and in the US where he went in 1921; he wrote a number of instruction manuals, etc If anyone reading this recognises this book, please get in touch.



It is just about twelve months since Anne Hughes a volunteer researcher at Imperial War Museum, Duxford, contacted the 5BFTS website to ask for our help in researching people included in a copy of the 1942 5BFTS First Anniversary Book which had been donated to Duxford. Little did Anne know then that her enquiry about 5BFTS, which focused on cadets from Course 13 who had signed this copy, would lead her from knowing very little about 5BFTS to a visit to Clewiston last month when she flew into the airfield that was Riddle Field and is now Airglades (see under Clewiston Museum update for Anne's account of this amazing experience). In between time, Anne has developed a 5BFTS section on the American Air Museum Internet Archive and met Eric Denham, ex-Course 13 and one of the few surviving cadets.

It is just over twelve months since Nick Jordan first made contact. Little did Nick know then that his quest to find out more about his father's time in Clewiston would lead him to Duxford to see Anne and me last month and then to Oxfordshire where he met with Eric Denham and found out more about his father's time at Clewiston. Nick's father is of course John Jordan who was also on Course 13 and took many of the photographs that have been included in past newsletters.



Eric Denham, Mr and Mrs Young and John Jordan. Orange Grove, Sebring 1943.

Mr and Mrs Young 'adopted' Eric and John while they were in Clewiston



Eric Denham today at home in Oxfordshire

Eric was able to enlighten Nick about one aspect of his father's flying career – John became an instructor, and Nick had always thought that this was because he was graded as an 'average' pilot at Clewiston. Not so - according to Eric, all the cadets were graded as 'average'. Nick writes: *'Hearing this, I checked my father's Log Book – he too was graded as average!'* In 1942, George, my father, became a night fighter – he was 'average' as well! In 1943, Eric and John knew that they wouldn't be posted to an active 'in action' squadron, and in fact, had to volunteer to do the job they ended up doing when they returned to England. Hence John ended up as an instructor at RAF Sealand and Eric flew target-towing tugs.

Last May, Nick, who now lives in British Columbia, Canada, came to Arcadia for the 60th Annual British Memorial Service. John had made a scrapbook of his time in Clewiston, which included pictures cut from his copy of the 1942 5BFTS First Anniversary Book. Over lunch, Nick produced the remains of John's First Anniversary Book in the hope that someone would be able to fill in the blanks. We could do better than that; Nick was amazed and overjoyed when I produced a copy of the Duxford First Anniversary Book and he saw not only his father's signature and home address from 1943 but also signatures and addresses of John's fellow Course 13 cadets, many of whom feature in John's photos.



For me, the 5BFTS highlight of the year so far, was a trip to Duxford in February to meet with Anne and Nick. Thanks to the generosity of the IWM and Carl Warner, Research and Information Manager, we had a wonderful day at Duxford and it was so good to meet with Nick again and share experiences.

American Air Museum, IWM Duxford



L-R: The Editor (Jen), Nick Jordan and Anne Hughes



Nick and Jen looking at the Duxford copy of the First Anniversary Book



Anne and Jen getting down to some 'serious' research work

If you haven't been to Duxford yet, I strongly recommend that you visit if you are in

Cambridgeshire – but allow a full day, as there is so much to see there! Visit iwm.org.uk for more information.

To read more about Eric Denham, please visit
<http://www.americanairmuseum.com/person/241503>



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



The passing of the Old Year and the start of the New always seems to be a time for reflection and thinking about lives past – or maybe it is the popularity of the BBC programme 'Who do you think you are' which focuses people on wondering 'who they are'. Whatever the reason, this January and February, the website had three people whose fathers were cadets at 5BFTS make contact seeking information about 5BFTS.

- Ian Lees' father, **T J Lees** was on Course 17 and sadly died on January 15, 2017 – see 'In Memoriam'.
- Thibault Beverton's father, **Norman H Beverton** was on Course 22. Thibault's family has some old air mail letters, which Norman wrote to his parents. In these, he speaks of the wonderful camaraderie there was at the base.



*Children L-R: Nancy, Johnny, Sally
Cadets L-R: 'Uncles' Tony, Norman
and unknown. Clewiston 1944-1945*



*Vanderbilt Mansion, Fisher Island when owned by William K
Vanderbilt*

He also gives an example of the spectacular hospitality enjoyed by the cadets; Christmas 1944, Norman and his fellow cadets went to Vanderbilt household for an amazing Christmas dinner. I think this must be the Mediterranean style Vanderbilt mansion on Fisher Island (an island just off Miami Beach still only accessible by ferry or boat) built by William K Vanderbilt in 1936 with lush landscaping, gracious guest homes, tennis courts, swimming pools and a golf course; at the time, the Vanderbilt family was the only family living on the island. Vanderbilt completed the estate in 1941 and died in 1944. His widow sold the estate in 1945; it is now an hotel and exclusive Club complex. William and his wife enjoyed entertaining the luminaries of their time on this island paradise; while the 5BFTS cadets were hardly 'luminaries' at that time, they seem to have been in just the right place at the right time to sample the renowned Vandebilt hospitality.

- Julie Barlow's father, **Frank Barlow**, was a cadet on Course 26. Julie told us that her father died from leukaemia aged just 34 years, when she was only 7 months old. Her mother kept his memory alive with photos and stories of his life in the RAF at Clewiston and then their life together and this inspired Julie to join the RAF herself and become a nurse in the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service (PMRFNS). Julie has photos of his time in Clewiston including the football team, aircraft, airfield, and others. We look forward to seeing them.

Any photos that are passed to us will, with the owner's permission, be uploaded onto the 5BFTS website and if relevant, to the American Air Museum Archive at Duxford so that we can all share them.

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



Clewiston Museum Update

My visit to 5 BFTS – Clewiston written by Anne Hughes

Approaching from Northern Florida and flying over the end of Lake Okeechobee, the familiar plan of Riddle Field was easy to identify but I must admit to an emotional moment while continually pressing the shutter on the camera. It's now two years since I first started my research at Duxford into No.5 BFTS and, until that flight, the stories, the instructors and trainees and their voices from the Flypaper were almost real – flying in as they did in their Stearmans and Harvards to land on runway 13. Now, with thanks to the kindness of my friends Dave and Karen Gillespie and a very comfortable seat in their Grumman Tiger, I had enjoyed an amazing flight from Spruce Creek and on arrival we could see Jeff Barwick waiting to greet us.



Riddle Field – taken between November 1942 and July 1944



*Riddle Field (Airglades) today
© Anne Hughes*



Riddle Field towards the end of 1941. The 5BFTS Station HQ is at the bottom of the diamond perimeter road © Clewiston Museum



*The 'diamond' perimeter road today – the location of the 5BFTS Station HQ is on the left hand side
© Anne Hughes*



Recently completed 5BFTS Station HQ – Fall 1941 © ADEQ Historical Resources Inc



The concrete base is all that remains of the 5BFTS Station HQ 2014 © The Editor



Airglades reception - Jeff Barwick, Anne Hughes and 'an American serviceman' © Anne Hughes



Anne in front of Airglades Airport © Anne Hughes

In the modern arrival area of Airglades Airport it was good to see how photos from No. 5BFTS had been used around the hall and an American serviceman, albeit a mannequin, waiting to have his photo taken with a little lady from England! Photos duly taken by the flagpoles, it was time to reflect on that “special relationship” between the USAAF and RAF and the many sacrifices made on both sides in WW2.

Clewiston Museum is full of interest and finding out about the general history of the area, visiting the local café where the RAF trainees would have accustomed themselves to new culinary delights, and seeing the cinema where they were entertained, brought home the feeling of how much the local community welcomed them. When I talked with Eric Denham recently in Oxfordshire, he still had fond memories of his “adopted” American family [Editor's note – this is the Young family of Sebring – see photo included in the Duxford section].



Anne in Clewiston Museum in front of 'The Boys'

I hardly need to tell you about No. 5BFTS as it is with great thanks to Jeff, Jenny Harding and Nick Jordan that I am filling in the gaps in my knowledge and feeding the americanairmuseum.com website with the information you share with me. I am hoping that you too will feel able to share your stories and photos now on the website and look forward to meeting up with those of you who can make across the pond!

Our return journey to Spruce Creek was memorable too. I wonder what those servicemen would have made of a close look at the Kennedy Space Centre on their training flights!

The Museum website www.clewistonmuseum.com has display information and links to connect to photographs and other archives on the subject of 5 BFTS.

Jenny Harding writes: *"Thank you Anne, for this account of such an exciting and memorable time. 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

A reminder that Frank Baltra (archivist) and the American Ideals Foundation are still appealing for support and encouragement as they 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

~~~~~

### **TENNIS GREAT DON BUDGE INSTRUCTED NO. 5 BFTS CADETS**

Don Budge became Embry Riddle Director of Athletics in August 1942 and, following an exhibition match played at the Tech School with staff member Cam Gillespie before 200 'tennis devotees' (Don won 6-1, 5-7, 6-0), he held a series of tennis clinics starting at the Tech School and Main Office in Miami. Accompanied by his wife, he came to Riddle Field the following week for his first clinic, which was repeated every Wednesday afternoon at 2.30pm.

On that first Wednesday afternoon, he spoke with about 100 'fellows', followed by three matches all of which Don Budge won:

- Don Budge v Ian Weir (Course 10): 6-0
- Don Budge v Howard Thomas (Course 7 - cadet singles champion): 6-3
- Budge and Weir v M Wheble (Course 7) and A Henriquez (Course 10): 6-0

This was followed by a clinic at which 20 of the 'boys' took part. In the evening, Don Budge defeated Jack Woolley (Course 9 - runner up singles champion) 6-2. Budge and Jack Hopkins then played R Temple (Course 9) and C LeMesurier (Course 9), the doubles tennis champions, winning 6-3.





*Don Budge conducting one of his regular tennis clinics at Riddle Field*

***Jeff Barwick has contributed the following article about Don Budge***

**CITIZENSHIP:** USA **BORN:** JUNE 13, 1915 IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA **DIED:** JANUARY 26, 2000 **PLAYED:** RIGHT-HANDED

In 1938, John Donald Budge became the first player in history to accomplish what had previously been considered the unattainable: he won the singles championships at Australia, France, Wimbledon, and the United States, completing the first ever Grand Slam. With those victories came a rarified place among the tennis elite. While the great Bill Tilden won more major titles than Budge – 18 to 14 – the 6-foot-1, 160 pound redhead is widely considered the more complete player and in some historical circles, the best of all time.

In his book, *The Wimbledon Final That Never Was*, fellow Hall of Famer Sidney Wood called Budge the greatest player of all time. Wood wrote, "In 1938 Don was the first winner of a Grand Slam and for six decades he has been recognized by his peers as the one player to have commanded not only every shot in the book for every surface, but also to have been blessed with the single most destructive weapon ever – a bludgeon backhand struck with a sixteen ounce Paul Bunyan bat." Tilden may have taken Budge's praise a step further, if possible, saying, "I consider him the finest player 365 days a year who ever lived."

With his Grand Slam heroics, Budge earned a monumental milestone that took 25 years to equal in the men's game, allowing the significance of his achievement to balloon in importance and increase in value like a finely aged wine. Rod Laver, ironically another redhead, is the only man to have repeated Budge's feat, winning the first of his two Grand Slams as an amateur in 1962 and a professional in 1969.

The 1937 to 1938 time period was a spectacular chapter in Budge's illustrious career. Not withstanding his Grand Slam, in both 1937 and 1938 Budge won all three Wimbledon championships – singles, doubles, and mixed doubles. In 1938 he crushed the field without losing a set, the first player in history to sweep the field in such a fashion, and in the final he deposed of Britain's Bunny Austin, 6-1, 6-0, 6-3. Afterwards, Austin said, "Donald was unstoppable that afternoon, almost unplayable at times. He was a true great. It was an honor just to be on the same court."

The 1937 and 1938 U.S. National Championships were a near carbon copy as Wimbledon, except Budge lost the 1937 doubles final to Germans Henner Henkel and Gottfried von Cramm, the latter a great rival. The Budge-von Cramm matches were historic battles, leading *Time Magazine* to rank their rivalry as one of the Top 10 best of all-time. They began when Budge easily defeated von Cramm at Wimbledon in 1937, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2. It transcended into an epic 1937 Davis Cup Inter-Zonal final, leading tennis pundits to call it the "Greatest Tennis Match Ever Played."

Returning to Wimbledon Centre Court, the match had all bulletin board trappings necessary to build the fervor. Budge was from a blue collar, working class family in Oakland, California



and learned to play tennis on public courts. Gottfried von Cramm was a German aristocrat. Budge stood for American freedom. Gottfried von Cramm “represented” Nazi Germany. Budge, coming off his easy Wimbledon straight sets victory, was expected to breeze to victory without much resistance. But prior to the match von Cramm, who had refused to join the Nazi Party, supposedly received a call from Adolph Hitler that had a motivating affect. The German won the opening two sets 8-6, 7-5 and the atmosphere tightened. The steely Budge rallied with 6-4, 6-2 wins in the third and fourth sets. He fell behind 4-1 in the fifth set and, as darkness began to settle over the court, waged an epic comeback. Budge changed his strategy and attacked at every chance off von Cramm’s serve. He capably held his own serve and ultimately went ahead 7-6. The German fought off five match points on Budge’s serve, but on the sixth, a lunging Budge forehand winner after a lengthy rally sent the American sprawling to the grass with an 8-6 victory and a 3-2 U.S. triumph. Author Marshall Jon Fisher chronicled the accounts of that remarkable match in *A Terrible Splendor*, published in 2009. Two months later, the pair played another whopper at the U.S. Championships; Budge winning the 1937 title, 6-1, 7-9, 6-1, 3-6, 6-1. The pair became friends afterwards, but the competition between the two never reached the same heights.

Budge’s game was often described as being “heavy” – a big forehand, a punishing serve and one of the greatest backhands the game has ever seen. *Time Magazine* featured a high-flying Budge backhand on its September 2, 1935 cover, one of the greatest tennis action shots of all time. He was mechanically sound, fluid and graceful – what many in the tennis world called the “complete package.”

"Playing tennis against him was like playing against a concrete wall," said Sidney Wood. "There was nothing to attack."

Budge turned professional in 1939 as big paydays were hard to ignore. He made his debut before 17,725 riveted fans at Madison Square Garden in New York, defeating the great Ellsworth Vines in straight sets. On tour, Budge had winning records against Vines, Tilden, and Fred Perry and defeated Bobby Riggs in straight sets for the 1942 United States Pro title. With the termination of the pro tour in the States in 1942, Budge joined the U.S. Army Air Force for the remainder of the war.

Hardly an article is written about Budge that doesn’t mention his popularity, his affability and his gentlemanly manner. He was a man of great intelligence, a product of a solid education at the University of California at Berkeley, and was noted for his courage and integrity.

Budge joined an illustrious group of athletes pictured on a Wheaties cereal box and was featured in the era’s major magazine’s such as *Look* and *Life*. He even had his own signature tennis racquet manufactured by Wilson Sporting Goods.

One of his most interesting promotional endeavors as a product pitchman appeared in a 1940 *Life* magazine advertisement for Bromo-Seltzer -- an antacid used to relieve headaches, steady nerves, and settle an upset stomach. Given the heartache Don Budge gave his opponents, it was an appropriate way to describe his tennis mastery.

### **Lois Heflin Blount - Riddle Field Remembered**

In May 1943, Lois Heflin was 16 years old. She had just graduated from high school and was about to start her first job as a secretary at Riddle –McKay Aero College.

When I met Lois last May at her home in Clewiston, she told me a little about the people she worked with and told me more in a letter this November. One of the women who worked at Riddle Field was Hazel Townsend. Hazel worked on the flight line helping the mechanics. One of these was Guy Hand (not Guy Green as reported in the last newsletter) who subsequently married Hazel. They had two children, Guy Hand Jnr and Cindy. Cindy married Richard, the son of Lois and Lewis Blount, and therefore became Lois’ daughter-in-law. Hazel lived until the age of 99 years, only passing away in 2015.

In January, Lois wrote that the temperature was 66°F (19°C) on her back porch that morning and that her son Raymond had okra and tomatoes growing outside in his garden. How lovely!

There will be more memories from Lois in the next newsletter.

### **Memories - In January, I heard from Bob Lasham (Course 4)...**

Bob (R L C Lasham DFC and Bar) was a member of Course 4, which was the first course to travel from Canada to Clewiston in uniform (Courses 1 – 3 were issued with grey 'Burton' suits in which they travelled to meet the strict US laws on neutrality). The chaps already at Clewiston were very surprised to meet their new colleagues for the first time when they entered the Mess for breakfast after travelling from Jacksonville, FL, wearing Air Force Blue.

Bob's Primary instructor was Mr EE (Tom) Carpenter (who instructed Bob and three other cadets), his Basic instructor was Mr Frank Derigibus and his Advanced instructor was Mr Charlie Miller. Bob comments that all four of Tom Carpenter's cadets got their Wings – he must have been good! *[Editor's note – Bob's use of the title of Mr. for his instructors was the correct form of address].*

Bob remembers being in Miami on Pearl Harbor Day *[having a wonderful weekend out of camp – no doubt!]*

When WW2 ended, several RAF pilots were seconded to the BOAC No. 1 line. While at RAF Northolt waiting for release, a number were headhunted by BEA. Bob was released from the RAF on August 18, 1942, signed a BEA contract that same afternoon and started his command (as captain) the following Monday! He flew a number of different types of planes before retirement from the BEA De Havilland Dragon Rapide (8 seater biplane) to the Hawker Siddeley Trident. He retired in 1973, but through the 'Old Boys Network', flew for another two years, finally hanging up his Wings in 1981. Duncan Wilson (Course 3) *[see Notes from the Old World]*, Peter Cowell (Course 5) and John Pickard (Course 4) also flew for BEA.

Bob is a member of a Bridge Club, which he helped to set up some years ago. One of the members has a brother who lives in Clewiston and she gave Bob a street map of the City – Bob remarked, *"what a change from the 'village' we knew"*.

Bob finishes his letter as follows:

*"I must stop rambling but not before saying what wonderful and generous hosts the Americans were. They really went out of their way to look after us".*

Thank you Bob for these memories. Do they jog any memories? Please let us know. You can get in touch with anyone contributing to this newsletter via me ([jen@jennyharding.co.uk](mailto:jen@jennyharding.co.uk)).

The next newsletter will be published in September 2017. Please can you let me have any articles, information, etc, by the end of August 2017. 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 and ..... ***"Until we meet again, "good-bye to y'all"***.