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AIR YORKSHIRE

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GRAND RAFFLE Tickets can still be obtained at 5p each from the Hon. Treasurer at the Air Yorkshire meetings. First prize is a six volume set in mint condition of the History of World War 2 (worth about £20), and the second prize is four BARG monographs on the Beverley, TSR 2, Meteor TT20, and Javelin 7,8,&9. The draw will take place at the April meeting.

MEETINGS The next gathering occurs at the Yorkshire Aeroplane Club at The Leeds/Bradford Airport on March 2nd at 1500 hours (courtesy of the club directors), and will feature Charles Shea-Simonds talking on the Dragon Rapide with an emphasis on it's parachute service, and Steve Langfield giving an illustrated talk on the development of the British fighter in World War I. All members are invited.

FANCY DRESS BALL The first Air Yorkshire social event of the year is organised jointly with the Leeds Bradford Free Fall Club and will take place in the Yorkshire Aeroplane Club on the evening of March 15th. All members are invited to come along appearing in 'silly' outfits. Prizes will be awarded in a raffle to take place on the night.

COACH TRIPS The first Air Yorkshire outing of the year takes place on Saturday April 26th to London (Heathrow) Airport and the RAF Museum at Hendon. Cost is £2.25 for members, and £2.60 for non-members. Please use the attached form for bookings.

AV ADS

LAAS INTERNATIONAL - Why not join LAAS International? Europe's largest aviation enthusiast society. Our 32 page monthly journal covers such varied topics as world airline news, international register review, industrial news to name just a few. If you become a member, you can save money on our many publications as well as joining our excursions abroad. Send £1.50 or for further details: LAAS Int, 10 Devon Road, Luton, Beds.

NEXT PRESS DATE FOR AIR YORKSHIRE IS MARCH 7

G-ASHJ was the last Rapide to be placed on the British register when she was purchased in 1964 with Rothmans help for use in Germany at the Rhine Army Parachute Centre at Bad Lippspringe. She was banded at Detmold with the Army Air Corps and flew back there after each day's jumping. Occasionally the more experienced jumpers went with her - she simply climbed overhead Detmold and out everyone went, picking their own DZs where they could find them. Peter Sherman recalls one particular evening. "We'd had a rather cocky Canadian officer jumping with us all day, and asked if he could come along for the evening jump-in to Detmold. We climbed over Detmold after having taken off from Bad Lippspringe. 'Where's the DZ?' he said. 'The croquet lawn in front of the officer's mess', said Mick Turner pointing it out. 'Cut!'. And away we went, all hapily going for our own selected peices of open ground. The gullible Canadian officer, however, worked like a thing possessed to hit the croquet lawn. He only just missed, and went clean through the (Closed) French windows into the Ante Room! Soon afterwards the authorities put a stop to it all - very sad!". 'Rhinogold', or 'Ringo' as she was more usually called, finally ended her days at Lippspringe when exposed to the elements caused a deterioration that was too expensive to rectify.

The other Army Rapide is G-AIDL (one time mount of Fox's glacier mints). One hilarous incident with DL concerned Robert Acreman. The load were sitting patiently in the aircraft waiting for jumpmaster Robert. Next minute he's by the door struggling to get a bicycle on board - he had been secretly planning to ride it off the wing and see how long he could remain with it in free-fall. Unfortunately the tears of mirth from the onlookers attracted the pilot's attention who forbade the attempt! DL is still at Netheravon, although currently up for sale.

G-AKNN, 'the Brown Bomber', was first used for parachuting when owned by Bill Tomkins. Barry Tempest was a regular pilot of NN between 66-67, flying her for parachuting at Poddington, and for a variety of roles at Barnstormer air displays. In 1967 she was bought by Bernie Green for use by the British Sky Diving Centre at Thruxton. The following year she went to Dunkeswell, being used for jumping both there and at Compton Abbas until she went for a CofA at Castle Donnington in late 1969. This was going to prove too expensive, so she was broken for spares.

G-AHAG was a late comer to the role of parachuting when she was purchased by Monty de Cartier for use at Compton Abbas. She was in use at Halfpenny Green on July 15th 1972 when she was being used in a big star RW attempt from 10,000ft in formation with the Thurston Aviation Islander. At exit time the Rapide slipped under the Islander. Mike Taylor, having exited the Islander, hit the fuselage rear of HG and broke his femur. Mike Bolton crashes through her roof, smashed both his wrists, and remained in AG until she had landed safely. A unique incident which again showed the ruggedness of the aircraft. AG then went to Lympne for use with Alex Black's club, and is now being rebuilt in a garage in Blandford, Dorset, using many spares provided by the breaking of NN.

G-AHJA was first used for parachuting when operated by Charles Boddington and Barry Tempest in the mid sixties. Later she was based at Castle Donnington with Trent Valley Aviation. The plane was written off when a commercial pilot on a check ride tipped her on her nose after a poor landing during which he braked too coarsly - he failed to check! She was sold to the RAFSPA for spares for SH.

Another Trent Valley Aviation Rapide was G-AKRS which was subsequently based at Shipdam. When John Meacock started the Peterborough Parachute Centre, the plane was a frequent visitor to Shipdam, where once again she rests after shortage of funds prevents her from being made airworthy again in the Arrow Air Services banger.

G-AJGS was used after the war by Allied Airways in Scotland. From 1950 to 1966 she remained in store at Aberdeen, but was discovered by Booker Rapide enthusiasts, having had only 47 hours flying since new. She was re-assembled by Doug Bianchi, and was operated by Aerial Enterprises principally for parachute displays from 1968 to 1970. One such display was in Northern Ireland at an Army School at Enniskellen. "Bill Downes was flying and we put into Newtownards to refuel. GS was probably overladen; apart from the team we also had the DZ party plus all our overnight bags. We then flew to St Angelo, a small disused airfield which was also the show site. Bill made an approach, but the runway was too short. "She's too heavy - I don't reckon I can get her in with this load." "No problem Bill, give us one run at 3,000'". Thus we lightened the load,

