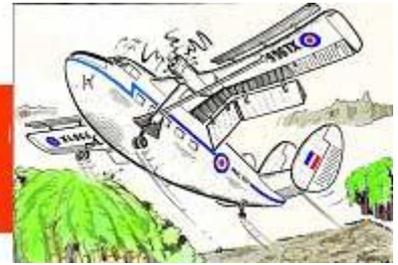


Scottish Aviation TWIN PIONEER

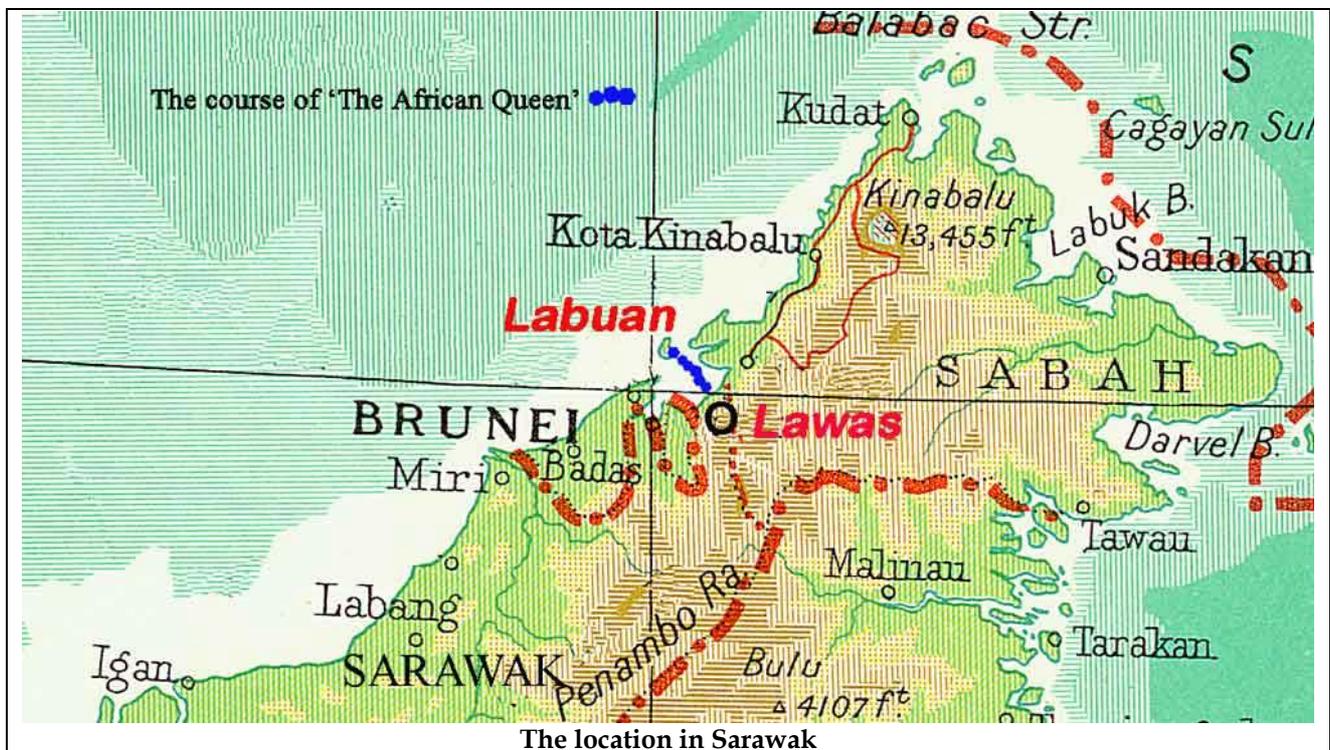


Newsletter Number Twenty Four April 2006

In this Issue

- Return with George Wattersom to Borneo to pick up the pieces again!
- Scottish Aviation riveters strike back! Tension on the tarmac.

On the road again!



This month, George Watterson takes us back to Sarawak, this time to repair VR-OAG. Looking through the records, Scottish Aviation Repair Parties undertook three major repairs from mid 1959 through mid 1960. Bill Nimmo was team leader of all three teams - VR-OAE at Keningau, Sabah, JZ-PPZ at Epotou, Netherlands New Guinea and VR-OAG at Lawas, Sarawak. George was on both Borneo Airways' repairs and I was on the New Guinea repair team. This gives me a clear insight into George's stories - I can remember the difficulties surrounding the meal preparation, personal hygiene and sanitation arrangements. It seems that our surroundings were more pleasant at Epotou than at Lawas - at 6,000 feet, although almost on the Equator, living at the Roman Catholic Mission Post was most temperate and civilised. The long dark evenings afforded an opportunity to 'bone up' on metallurgy 'resit' I had to take at the Tech on my return. George expresses his gratitude to Scottish Aviation for the experiences he had with the Repair Teams and at Prestwick. I, too, often reflect and feel much the same. What has changed at Lawas airport? Everything - the runway is 1700 feet long at an elevation of 5 feet. It has an IATA three-letter code LWY! Lawas itself through the 1970s and into the 1990s was one of the rundown border towns. However, a complete transformation has taken place due to major urban development. Millions of ringitt have been invested and the area shows the results with residential areas, shopping centres, agriculture projects, etc.

Ron Tannock

This Newsletter has no other purpose than to provide a bit of nostalgic fun for a few people who believe that the Twin Pioneer, in some way, had an involvement in their lives. It is published in a liberated way by Ron Tannock in New Zealand.

Contact him at r.tannock@xtra.co.nz

George Watterson and his band of brothers return to



In 1959, whilst the work party (of which I was a part) repaired Twin Pioneer VR-OAE (Twin Pioneer Newsletter Twenty One), Borneo Airways leased G-APLW from Scottish Aviation Ltd., re-registered as VR-OAG, in order to maintain their fleet of two aircraft for the duration of the repair. On completion of that repair Borneo Airways decided to retain VR-OAG, thus increasing their fleet to three aircraft.

Unfortunately, in early 1960, the fleet was once again reduced to two aircraft when VR-OAG sadly came to grief in a remote location near the village of Lawas in Sarawak. It was time to look out the tropical gear, replenish the inoculations and prepare to head east.

The team chosen on this occasion consisted of team leader Bill Nimmo and Bill Bodys from Jackie Logan's Service Department, George Mullen, David Frew and Jimmy Russell from the Palace and Far East veterans, Paddy Owen and myself from the Final Assembly in the Fokker Hangar.

Before we agreed to go, there was some hard bargaining to be done. Paddy and I felt that ten shillings a day subsistence, which we had received the year before, and was once again offered, was inappropriate for what we had been and were about to be doing. Jack Logan finally agreed to offer Fifteen Shillings a day. A 50% increase? We agreed.

Irma did her usual fine job in organising our travel arrangements, including an excess baggage allowance for our tools this time round, and off we went - once more into the breach, as they say!

On arrival in Singapore we met with the Alvis Engine rep. in the Far East, whose name was John Philip. John, or Phil as he liked to be known, was desperate to sample the jungle experience after his pampered lifestyle as an ex-pat in Singapore. Bill Nimmo agreed he could tag along and, after a day's rest; off we all went on the second leg of our journey. It was a nice feeling to be greeted by old friends when we arrived in Labuan, North Borneo, including Stu Hempel. Paddy and I felt like we had come back home.

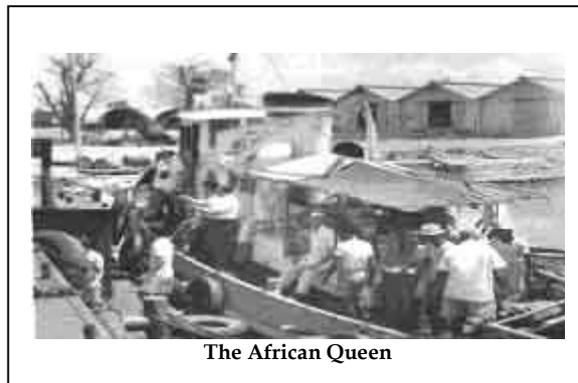
Our first objective in Labuan was to plan a rescue strategy for VR-OAG. Lawas was apparently unsuitable to be considered as a repair site. We therefore intended to bring the aircraft back to Labuan

As part of that plan, we all had various tasks to perform in preparation for the trip. As I recall, Paddy's job was i/c tools and equipment, George Mullen's was the quinine, salt tablets and medical supplies and my job was catering. As such, I was required to purchase as much non-perishable foodstuff, cooking equipment and utensils from the local 'supermarket' as would keep us all fed for a couple of weeks. The task also included the cooking, for which I was ill qualified, but willing to try. If the team could eat it then I could cook it. But the question was, after I'd cooked it, would the team eat it?

Labuan was no shopping metropolis and planning to feed eight men for the duration of the trip ahead was no mean task. What did the guys fancy? Who didn't like what? What was available to buy? What would stay fresh and what would

deteriorate in that climate? All-important questions, and we wouldn't be able to nip down to the shops if we had forgotten anything! We agreed on an en masse shopping trip and we were soon armed to the teeth and ready to go.

We then arranged with the Labuan Harbourmaster to lease a small coaster, a steam powered 'puffer' which we aptly named 'The African Queen', to take us to Lawas.

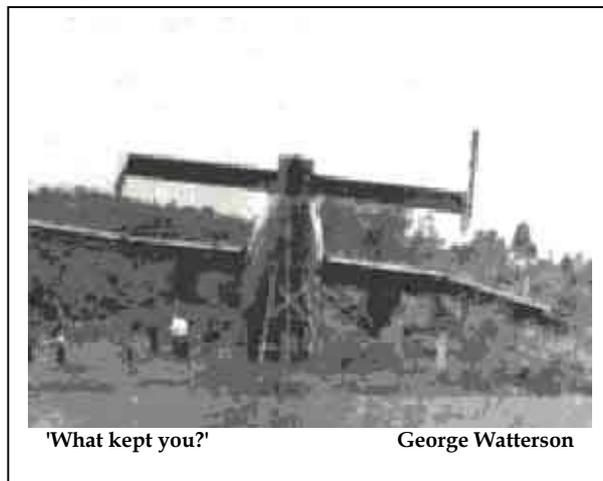


The African Queen

The vessel was around 30 feet long with a canvas canopy to provide shade and shelter, and came complete with a North Borneo version of 'Humphrey Bogart' to crew her and feed the boiler with logs. Her best days were behind her, but she proved to be up for the task, and would be our lifeline back to civilisation.

First thing next morning we loaded her with all our equipment and supplies and chugged our way out of the harbour. For most of the rest of that day we sailed across the South China Sea, down the Sarawak coast and then up the Lawas River. The Lawas was one of those slow moving, mud coloured Rivers usually seen in Vietnam war movies. It was about a hundred yards or so wide with its banks hidden by thick jungle dipping into the water, creating an eerie feeling, wondering what, or who, lay beyond? The mosquitoes were prolific and having a field day, especially as toilet facilities were non-existent on board and all those white backsides hanging over the side!

Eventually we passed the village of Lawas on our starboard side and a quarter of a mile or so further on, just at a bend in the river, was the landing strip. The strip came right to the river's edge and extended away from us for about three hundred yards. We knew we were in the right place, for there at the far end, protruding from the jungle beyond was VR-OAG, three vertical stabilisers held proudly in the air saying 'what kept you?'

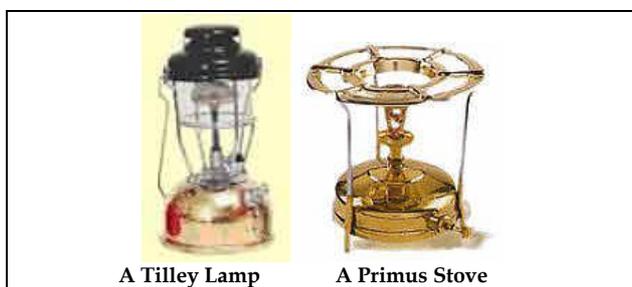


We unloaded all our gear up the steep muddy bank with some difficulty, trying to avoid dropping any of it into the water, waded ashore, and off sailed the 'African Queen' with a toot of

its whistle. The adventure had truly begun and there was no turning back now.

The work begins

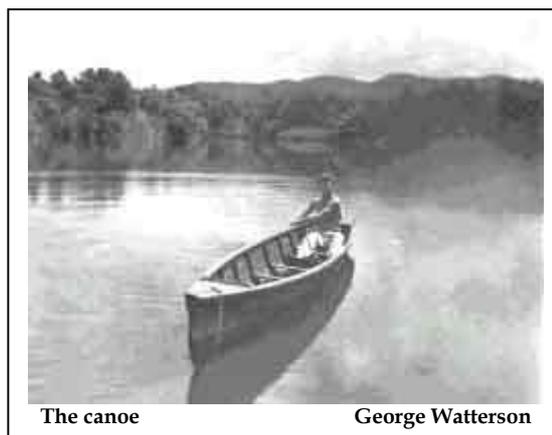
The airfield at Lawas was a desolate place. A woven attap (palm frond) hut on stilts near the river's edge, with steps up to a covered veranda and a small 'lean-to' beside it at ground level, was the only sign of human intervention. This was to be our home for the next 10 days or so. We set up camp in the hut, laying out our camp beds and deciding who would sleep where. The small lean-to would be our supply-store and cookhouse and the river our source of water. The cooker was a Primus camping stove, our washing facilities a galvanised bucket and our lighting a Japanese manufactured Tilly lamp. For those unfamiliar with a Tilly lamp, it had a base containing paraffin (kerosene for our US readers Ed.), similar to a Primus stove, with a pressure pump, a small jet covered by what resembled an old fashioned gas mantle and when lit, it smelled like night-time at a paraffin lamp lit roadworks, hissed loudly but gave off a brilliant white light - until the pressure dropped and it required to be pumped up again.)



One of our first tasks was to dig a latrine, not too adjacent to the hut for obvious reasons, and surrounded it with palm fronds stuck in the ground to provide a modicum of privacy. We then visited VR-OAG at the other end of the muddy grass strip, to find that when the aircraft had overshot the landing area some months before, it had skidded into the long grass just off the end and hit a submerged log with the starboard wheels. The landing gear and wing main strut had sheared off, down came the wing and the aircraft had nose-dived into the edge of the jungle. It was very much *déjà vu*, VR-OAE in Keningau in 1959. As the aircraft had lain there for so long it was in pretty bad shape and we knew we faced a mammoth task. It had been prearranged that the 'African Queen' would return in eight days with a floating crane and a lighter (a flat barge), therefore it would be necessary to dismantle the aircraft and manhandle everything 300 yards to the river's edge, with little time to spare. We discussed our strategy for achieving this as we trudged back to our jungle abode through the mud, looking forward to our first Lawas evening meal.

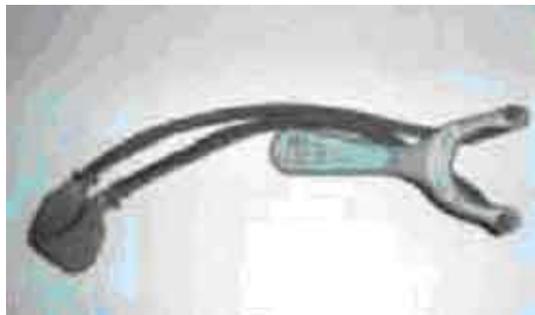
I presented my first meal to the gang after coming to terms with the Primus stove and as I recall it was Fray Bentos tinned stewing steak, potatoes and peas. The meal went down well and everyone seemed to enjoy it. After all how can you mess up tinned stewing steak? After dinner, and just before dark, Jimmy Russell and I, having spotted a dugout canoe on the riverbank, paddled out to the middle of the river and began having a cooling swim in the river, as a means to getting cleaned up. We were enjoying diving off the canoe and generally larking around in the water, when a long canoe with an outboard motor (with one of those lengthy propeller shafts) came chugging across the river towards us. Unknown to us, there was a Catholic Mission on the opposite bank. On board the canoe was a young Dutch priest who had spotted us and who explained, in broken English, that he didn't think it was a good idea for us to be swimming in the river. 'After all he had just returned from the native village, a short distance upstream, where that very afternoon a young boy had lost his leg to a crocodile'. A CROCODILE? (We echoed)

Two men trying to climb into a canoe, in the middle of a river, in a hurry, is no mean feat, but we broke all records for the event. Needless to say that was the end of any further 'river ablutions' for the duration of our stay in Lawas.



We started work in earnest next day. We hired the local village carpenter to cut some timber and manufacture support stands and work platforms and over the next few days removed both wings and all the control surfaces. Using Dexion perforated steel angle (normally used for the manufacture of storage shelving, etc.) we jury-rigged the starboard stub-wing and undercarriage leg and managed to get the aircraft back onto solid ground. With the main part of the aircraft pulled to the river's edge Phil and I set about removing the power plants. The rest of the guys were busy at the other end of the strip, and suddenly I had the feeling Phil and I were not alone. On turning round I saw why. Gathered around us was about thirty or so Dyaks (or Ibans) who had silently emerged from the surrounding jungle and were just standing around the base of our elevated work stand silently watching us. They were a scary sight, some being naked except for all-over body tattoos (from the neck to the wrists and ankles) and elongated earlobes with heavy earrings. They all sported similar, and distinctive, hairstyles, (as if an inverted porridge bowl had been put on their heads and then all the hair shaved off from below the rim). They carried spears and poison-dart blowpipes, and, all in all, looked very menacing. Reading their sign language I deduced that all they wanted was cigarettes. As we got to know them we soon realised that they were not fierce at all, in fact quite the reverse. We soon befriended them and later some of the young men among them, together with some of the local Lawas villagers assisted us with the manual transportation of the rest of the aircraft to the riverside. I remember whilst one of the wings was being carried, the leading edge had been lower than the trailing edge, the slat ran out on its tracks and one of the Dyak lads got his fingers caught in a torque-shaft sprocket. Without as much as a cry of pain he extracted his mangled fingers and continued to help carry the wing. This was a job for our 'medical orderly', George Mullen, who cleaned, treated and bandaged the bloodied and lacerated fingers. We tried to explain that he should come back before we left and have the dressing changed. He never did. Later after we left Lawas, I wondered if he ever had his hand re-dressed, or did he just keep the original bandages on until either they, or his fingers, dropped off? Prior to leaving civilisation, and spotting the entertainment potential when we saw them, Paddy and I had each purchased, a Milbro catapult - the 'posh' variety I could never afford as a boy. We usually made one from a forked branch of a hawthorn bush and for elastics used strips of a car inner tube threaded through holes in an old shoe tongue and tied round the handle with string. The Milbro ones, on the other hand, were the real McCoy with cast aluminium-alloy handles and square-section rubber elastics. The Dyak lads were intrigued when we demonstrated the prowess of our catapults by firing pebbles into the air, and amazing them when the pebbles splashed into the river a good ten seconds or

more later. They just had to try for themselves. Most eventually managed to master the technique, except one, whom I recall gave himself a rather sore thumb, which of course, you should keep well out of the way when using that type of catapult. The leader of the group had to have one, and by sign language, indicated that he wanted to swap his colourful bead necklace for my catapult. A deal was struck and he duly hung the catapult round his neck where his necklace had been, and proudly displayed the word 'Milbro' which was cast into the handle. (I wonder if it is still being worn round someone's neck today?).



A Milbro catapult

After a couple of days of trying to combine working all day with providing the meals, it was obvious I had bitten off more than I could chew. Bill Nimmo decided that it would be a better idea to employ a local to do the cooking, and with the assistance of the local Borneo Airways agent, engaged a guy from the village. He was of Indian decent, and owned an eating-place in the village. He spoke practically no English, and had never produced any western food or operated a Primus stove. My job thereafter was to lay out those supplies which he was required to prepare each day and attempt to communicate with him to try and explain what I wanted done with them. One day I demonstrated to him how to make chips, which the lads thought would be a special treat. I unwrapped our entire supply of cooking fat into a largish pot, and after bringing the temperature up to the correct level (i.e. just beginning to smoke), popped in the prepared and dried off chipped potatoes and, hey presto, produced great chips which the gang thoroughly enjoyed. A few days later I laid out our favourite Fray Bentos tinned steak, and using the sign language that had developed between us, asked him if he remembered how to make chips. "Yes sah, chips" he said, and confirmed his understanding by simulating peeling and cutting up the potatoes and watching for imaginary smoke using an imaginary cigarette between his fingers and blowing. Quite happy that he was switched on to my requirements, I walked up the strip to work and left him to it. When we sat down to eat that evening, keenly anticipating steak and chips, we were disappointed when the meal arrived on the table. The chips were lank, yellow, had black spots and were totally uneatable. I, of course, as the catering officer, I got the flak from the rest of the team. Down to the cookhouse I went to investigate the problem. The pot of hot cooking fat looked a bit odd, and then I spotted the margarine and butter wrappers. 'Where is the cooking fat' I enquired. 'No fat sah' he replied open palms upward and shoulders shrugging. 'But there was a whole pot full', I shouted. I soon deduced that after the first batch of chips a few days before, he had washed the pot out, in the river, and off down stream sailed all our cooking fat. For the rest of our time there we had no cooking fat, and, of course, neither did we have any butter or margarine. Our food supplies also seemed to be dwindling quicker than expected. We could only surmise, but not prove, where it was disappearing! Probably down to the village restaurant. Our new cook did supplement our diet by making a couple of chicken curries, over the next few days, from local produce. Two scrawny chickens that he chopped up - head, feet, guts, bones and all. He also appeared one day with some water buffalo meat that was black, tough as old boots and

totally tasteless. It was hardly 'haute cuisine'. How we longed for a decent meal!



The Lads with OAG at the riverside George Wattersom

Party time

When we eventually completed our task, we had to wait a couple of days for the 'African Queen' to return. It had been delayed for some reason or other. We decided it would be a good idea to celebrate our success by having a party in the village. That afternoon we all walked down to the village, along the jungle path, and installed ourselves in the local café/bar, an open fronted establishment with a few tables and chairs and a rack with shelves at the back with some tinned goods and a supply of bottled Tiger beer. We invited our cook, the carpenter, who had assisted us, and the local Borneo Airways agent to join us. We were having a great time with a singsong and a few beers, whilst the whole village gathered in the street outside watching the daft white men inside. Up at the back of the café there was a rather large, menacing looking Sikh gentleman, beard, turban and all, drinking some local brew or other, and who seemed upset that our locals were fraternising with us. He would get to his feet from time to time, gesticulate towards us and mouth off loudly in the local lingo. Now this establishment was no five-star affair and had no public toilet. When you have to go, you have to go, and after a few beers we had to go, out the back, past this annoying character. After one of these necessary visits outside, Bill Bodys was returning just as Mr Sikh was once again on his feet. He was over 6 feet tall and 'big boned' with it and Bill Bodys was at least 5 feet 3 on his tip toes, but, reinforced with a few Tigers couldn't resist having a 'pop' at the Sikh on the way past. The Sikh retaliated with his Guinness bottle. All hell let loose and a general melee followed. Down went the rack of bottles and cans. The Café owner was going 'bananas' and trying to retrieve his spilled goods. Paddy had put some sort of Judo hold on the antagonist and pinned him to the floor. Phil, being the proper English gentleman, then said to the Sikh 'Come on now my good man, lets be friends' (or words to that effect) and offered him a hand up, whereupon, in an attempt to protect himself from further attack, the Sikh buried his face in Phil's groin and grabbed him firmly round the backside with both hands. I well remember the sight of Phil trying to extricate himself with one hand whilst he fought a losing battle with his ever-lowering trousers with the other. The crowd of locals in the street, never having seen the like before, cheered and applauded. Eventually the local 'constabulary' arrived, four of them, all at least five feet tall, complete with starched khaki drill uniforms and little fez like hats. They took over from Paddy and tried to restrain the Sikh and march him off to the local nick. He struggled and thrashed around as they tried to hold him, and I still have a mental picture of Bill Nimmo, wielding a chair like a lion tamer, shouting 'Throw the b*****d in the river!' - which flowed sedately past on the other side of the street. Peace was eventually restored and the party continued. A few

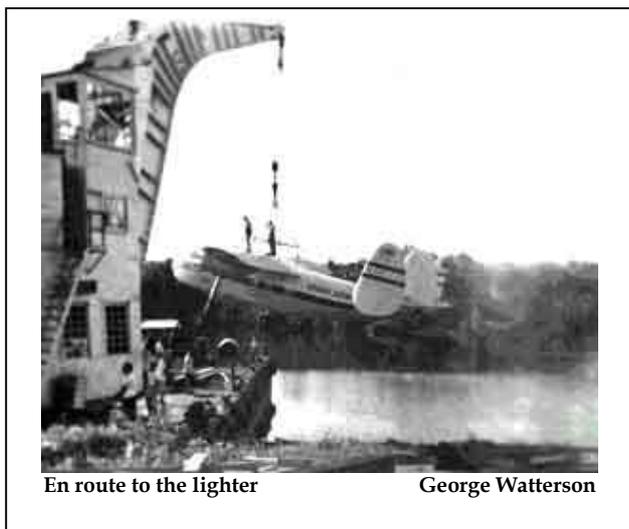
more beers were consumed, and a few more songs sung - and the locals danced in the street.

A Sleepless Night

The following morning we had our first long lie and after breakfast were preparing for our imminent departure when a young English Police Lieutenant visited us. He was full of apologies for the previous evening's fracas. Somehow I didn't feel that the Sikh was entirely to blame. However, the young officer explained that the big Sikh was a regular source of trouble in the community. He was apparently the local entrepreneur, with several businesses of one sort or another, and was feared and despised by the local population and overindulged regularly. He had been accused of several serious assaults and suspected of some unsolved murders in the area. He had also made his fortune during the war as a member of the jungle based anti Japanese People's Army. A guerrilla force whose members had been paid handsomely by the Allies, per head, for killing Japanese occupation forces. He, apparently, was an expert at it! 'And where is he now?' we inquired. 'Oh! He was fined 500 dollars this morning and after he sobered up he was released' said the young Lieutenant. Well that was not what we wanted to hear! That night I lay, wide-awake, ears straining for the slightest sound whilst, by the sound of heavy breathing all around me, everyone else appeared to be fast asleep. My imagination ran riot. I was contemplating what my reaction would be when, not if, our Sikh friend arrived during the night wielding a large machete. If I didn't hear him chopping up Bill Nimmo and Bill Bodys, (who were bunked on the veranda), surely I would hear him chopping up David Frew or George Mullen (who were between me and the doorway). At that point I would be up and running, straight through the attap walls of the hut and across that river like Johnny Weismuller in a Tarzan movie, crocodiles or no crocodiles, before you could say Jack Robinson.

At night, the jungle is a constant hum of insect sounds and occasionally it will suddenly stop, like someone had thrown a switch. Who knows why? Perhaps, the presence of a big cat or whatever. However when it suddenly went silent on this particular occasion, everyone to a man sat abruptly upright. Not a soul was asleep, obviously having the same thoughts as me. There was not much sleeping done that night and the dawn was a welcome relief.

The 'African Queen' Returns



En route to the lighter

George Watterson

Around lunchtime that day the welcome sound of the 'African Queen's' whistle heralded our salvation. Round the bend she came towing a large flat lighter and followed by a huge floating crane, all of which pulled in and tethered to the bank. Most of the day was then spent hoisting VR-OAG onto the

lighter and manhandling all the loose components and all our belongings and equipment on board the 'African Queen', ready for the return trip to Labuan. This proved to be an extremely smooth operation, and in late afternoon, after a quick cup of tea, waved goodbye to the population of the village of Lawas as we sailed past. Thankfully there was no sign of our Sikh friend. By the time we hit the open sea it was totally dark and Paddy and I spent a miserable few hours, on the lighter, in the pouring tropical rain huddled under a groundsheet. We arrived at Labuan very late that night, at high tide, and beached the lighter on the shore of the padang - a sort of village green / recreation area. It had been a long day, and we retired wearily to our accommodation in the Labuan Airport Hotel. Not as luxurious as it sounds but streets ahead of our hut in Lawas. Our first shower for ages, wholesome food and a real bed to sleep on - what luxury!

Next morning we returned bright and early to find the tide out and the lighter high and dry on the beach. We rolled the aircraft up onto the *padang* and eventually on to, for want of a better name, the 'main street' of Labuan. The island was perhaps five or six miles all around and was circled by a road and the Harbourmaster, who took it upon himself to take charge of our local assistance and who owned a large Jaguar car - I can't imagine why such a car was justified with so little road and nowhere to go - took Bill Nimmo on a reconnaissance trip to help choose the best route to the airport, which was on the other side of the island, whilst we prepared for the move. Eventually the aircraft was hitched onto a Land Rover, and like the circus had come to town, set off for the airport. Paddy and I decided to have a break and went into the local coffee-shop for a cuppa and a well deserved smoke as the circus disappeared round the corner at the end of the street a hundred or so yards away. After our break, we hired Labuan's only taxi to take us to the airport, by which time, we calculated, everyone would be there.

Wrong! As we turned the corner at the end of the street there they were - unable to proceed because the bridge over a stream fifty yards round the corner was narrower than the wheelbase of the aircraft. Maybe surveying the route from the back seat of a Jaguar wasn't such a great idea. We reached the airport about eight hours later, after building a temporary bridge for one wheel whilst the other used the original bridge, uprooted telephone poles, ripped up dozens of fence posts and sawed down trees. I well remember a large lychee tree being felled just outside the village school and all the kids, who had come to watch, taking great delight scrambling around gathering the sweet fruit, not to mention the time away from school! What an epic journey that turned out to be!

Labuan

In comparison to actually getting the aircraft to Labuan airport, the repair work it, although extensive - took another three months to complete, was relatively routine. The nose section was completely rebuilt; the main fuselage was extensively repaired, as was the starboard nacelle. New stub-wing mounting brackets installed onto new, hand-hewn, 14 SWG doublers. The starboard wing was repaired and all necessary checks and tests satisfactorily carried out. The aircraft was then reassembled, rigged and test flown. There were no complications that I can recall and it was just a case of nose to the grindstone and get on with it, and once again VR-OAG took its pride of place in the Borneo Airways fleet.

The social side of Labuan was much more civilised than that in Lawas, or indeed Keningau the previous year. We attended beach parties organised by the Borneo Airways families. We could go swimming in the warm sea that was quite adjacent to the airport and the deserted beach was beautiful. We were made honorary members of the Labuan Club for 'ex-pats', where we were able to relax and have an occasional drink in nice surroundings. They also had a weird snooker table with holes and small skittles in the middle, which of course had to be negotiated. They made little difference to me. I was always a lousy snooker player anyway. We were even invited to a

great St. Patrick's Day party at the Harbourmaster's house (I think he must have been Irish!) and, whilst in Labuan, we were able to visit the World War Two Allied War Graves and the site of the Japanese surrender in South East Asia.

The Airport Hotel, a single storey terraced motel type establishment, was reasonably comfortable and beat an "attap" hut hands down and the food was reasonable. I remember climbing a large palm tree just outside my room in order to erect a wire aerial to try and receive the BBC World Service. Kilmarnock Football Club had managed to reach the final of the Scottish FA Cup and Paddy and I were excited at the prospect of listening to the match. We were successful in tuning in on the Saturday; unfortunately we completely miscalculated the time difference, confused no doubt, between British Summer Time and Greenwich Mean Time. When the time duly arrived all we heard was a news item that announced, to our great disappointment - 'Today at Hampden Park, Glasgow, in the final of the Scottish Cup, Rangers defeated Kilmarnock 2-0'.

We had been two hours out in our calculations!

Before leaving for home I did manage to scrounge a trip to Keningau, and it was nice to see our old friends again, not to mention our old stomping ground!



Paddy and George at the Airport Hotel Labuan

I was able to deliver a Sgian Dhub I had brought from Scotland for 'Sam' Sundang as repayment for the ceremonial *parang* he had given me the year before, together with a Grouse Claw kilt pin and some shortbread for Mrs. Sundang - of Tapai fame.

There was one remaining funny incident that occurred at Heathrow on our return. One of our party (no names, no pack drill) was required to open his suitcase for a Customs Officer. There in all its glory was the aforementioned Tilley lamp, filthy, battle weary and reeking of paraffin. From that day he earned the nickname of 'Aladdin'.

As the years have slipped past the world has become a much smaller place. I often smile to myself and feel amazed to see such places as North Borneo and Sarawak being advertised as holiday destinations. It seems incredible to me that things could change that much in 45 years.

I am grateful that Scottish Aviation chose to develop the Prestwick Pioneer and Twin Pioneer - aircraft that were designed to operate in such remote and exotic locations.

The experiences gained in those deployments, as chronicled in these 'Wild Men of Borneo' tales, have been memorable ones and are inextricably woven into the rich tapestry of my life.

I would not have missed them for the world.

Life on an ocean wave!

George's adventure with 'The African Queen' was not the only time that a Twin Pioneer had been barged to a base for repair. When XM939 (C/N 546) nosed over at Sir Abu Nu'air in the Gulf on 11 February 1961, due to a hitting a rock on landing, it was rolled on to a Hippo and towed behind a Royal Naval frigate to Dubai, pulled by tractor to Sharjah, then to UK for repair. John James, a pilot with 152 Squadron, supplied a photograph along with the story. Thank you, John!



Trainspotter's Corner

by

Anorak

- The Editor has just received an email from Dato Muslim who was a Major General in the Royal Malaysian Air

Force and is Chairman of the RMAF Museum in Kuala Lumpur. Dato Muslim has arranged to have the Twin Newsletter posted on the Museum web site. The address is www.malaysian-museums.org/rmaf. - when you reach the Home page click on the Twin Pioneer cartoon. The Chairman has called for stories from the RMAF community. Isn't that just great - the Museum is going to record any stories on tape so there is a strong possibility we will have an audio recordings archive. I keep telling the Editor he should organise some recordings of Alvis Leonides engines. Anybody at Air Atlantique listening?

- Talking about archives - the Editor was asked by Bert Hart to provide Mrs Marie Blair with some footage of the Twin Pin. The Editor had received Twin Pin footage on a DVD from Alan Miller, our US reader, just prior to the Anniversary Weekend at Troon last year. It contained footage of Marie's husband, John Blair, the Twin Pin test pilot, delivering the Royal Flight aircraft to Nepal. The footage also contained some fine shots of John Glanton, the service engineer on the delivery and Alan's grandfather. The footage had been shot on 8mm cine film and transferred to NTSC standard. It played nicely on the Editor's computer. However, when it came to edit it and digitally remaster the video and then burn it to a PAL DVD, it was a challenge. Happily, this rare record is now in the archive in an easily accessible form. This episode has revealed that the demonstration of the Twin in Nepal in 1964 was quite a story. Records from Ian Adams, from John Blair's log book and Bert Hart's memoirs will form the basis of another gripping issue of the Twin Pioneer Newsletter soon!

Twin Pioneer riveters threaten action!

Bert Hart reports from Prestwick that

Peter Platt's story (see last month's Newsletter) claiming that water leaking into the passenger cabin of Twin Pioneer operating was caused by poor quality rivetted joints has been met with dismay and anger. 'Jock the Dolly' McLintock, the local riveters' organiser said his members were 'fair scunnered' by the thought that this scurrilous accusation would go unanswered. He has asked that The Newsletter corrects this untruth and apologises; otherwise his lawyer, Joe Duralac, will be instructed to take action against the publication and the author.

Bert writes -

As Borneo Airways can confirm, following their investigation, the ingress of water was through the centre section/fuselage fairings, into the centre section over the glass fibre cabin roof panels and down through the panel joints into the cabin. The cure was to apply a fabric tape doped along the fairing edges. Scottish Aviation subsequently introduced improved fairing seals and before delivery each aircraft had a water test. I often wondered if I dousing with a fire hose simulated battling through a tropical downpour at 110 knots.

Well there you are then! Thank you, Bert. Readers will note that the report came from the Sales Department. Where were you production people when you were needed? Please be assured that an apology has gone to Jock and his members.