

THE VULCAN



The official magazine of the Vulcan To The Sky Club
VOLUME 4 No. 1 Spring 2016

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EDITOR'S WELCOME *Lee Broadbent*

Hello and a warm welcome to this, the final all Club produced issue of The Vulcan magazine. The Club has come along way since its smaller beginnings back in May 1997 and that is really what this magazine is dedicated to. It is to say thank you to everyone who has been a part of this great club in its almost 20 year history. That's why we have produced this special final gatefold edition with two covers for you, showing the first ever Club magazine cover (known as the 558 Club then) alongside our cover. Many thanks to Steve Comber for this amazing shot to grace our final cover.

I really hope that you enjoy looking back with us over the club's history as much as we have enjoyed putting it all together for you. It was no mean feat but I am sure you will agree it's all been worth the work. Since taking over the Editorship from Richard Clarke in October 2010, this will be the twelfth magazine I have edited and in that time it's grown from strength to strength.

First off I would like to thank the new design studio I moved to, 'Under the Floor', who were able to bring my vision of how the magazine should look to life. Thanks also to my partner in crime on these magazines, Mark Freshney, who has helped so much to make this editorial team work so well. I must thank Adam and all the team at Stephens and George Printing, for their amazing work on printing these beautiful publications. Next I would like to thank all the Committee who have supported me over the last seven years that I have been on committee. That's why I have put pictures of this wonderful team on the inside of the gatefold so you

can see what we all look like. It's been a pleasure to work with you all, past and present.

I would like to say a very special thank to Malcolm Martin who has contributed more to this magazine than anyone else, I think, making it into all of my 12 issues. Thank you for letting us raid your extensive photo archive.

Finally I would just like to say a massive thank you to everyone who has ever taken the time to send us a picture, or put pen to paper to make this magazine the best it could be over the last 6 years.

Please continue to support XH558 in her new future by joining the Guardians Scheme and becoming a Founding Member. There will be a brand new magazine and newsletter to follow on from where we are now. I hope you have enjoyed what we have put together for you over the last six years. I am sorry if I have missed anyone but there is just not room to thank everyone. So I leave the final words to the man who started all this back in 1997 and I thought it fitting that Colin Mears should have the final words.

Lee Broadbent, May 2016

"Please thank the committee for their outstanding Club, and it truly was an honour to be part of it. I think the magazine is excellent and you have done a wonderful job. Everything about the Club is a total credit to the aircraft, but I especially enjoy reading your magazine. I hope the new version of the Club continues with the high standard you have all set."

Colin Mears, May 2016

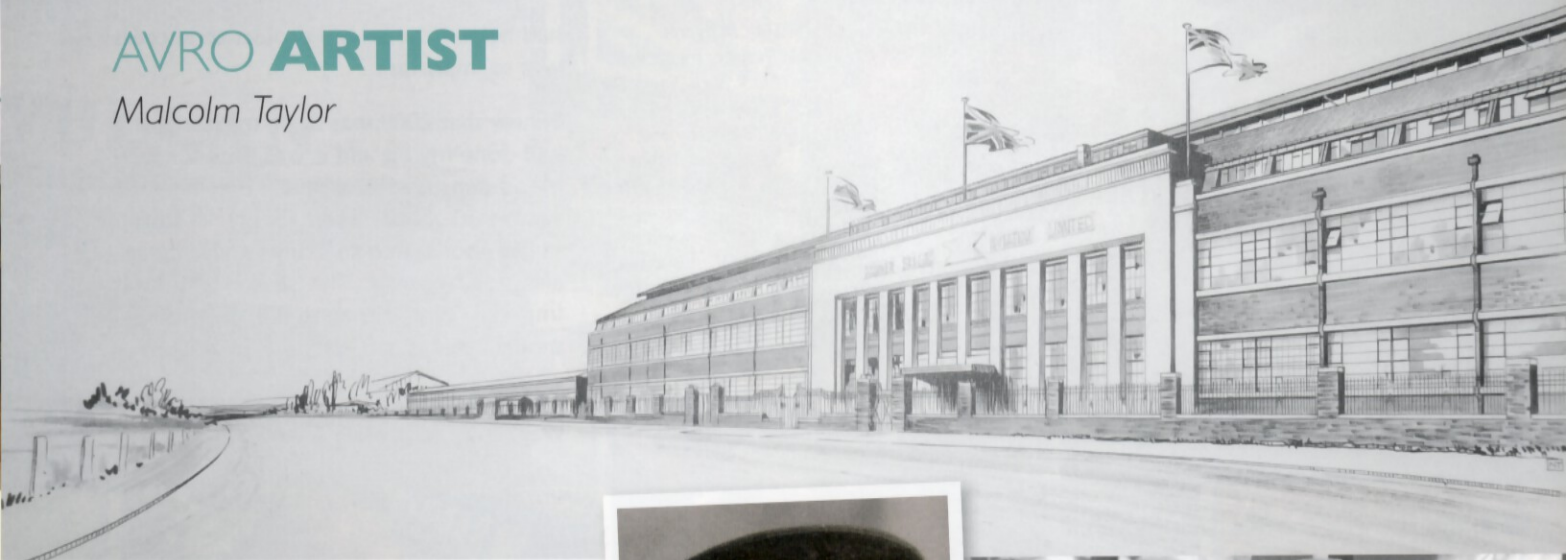


Please send any contributions (photos, stories etc) for the Founding Guardians magazine to Vulcan to the Sky Club, PO Box 7717, Derby, DE1 0RN or email the editor:
lee.broadbent@vulcantotheskyclub.co.uk



AVRO ARTIST

Malcolm Taylor



Norman Taylor retired as Chief Artist at Chadderton in 1977, after a 30-year-plus career in technical illustration, little realising he would have another 30-year-plus career as a watercolourist and fulltime grandfather. The skills that he developed at Art School in the 1930s, honed at a local newspaper and mastered in the Technical Illustrations Department at Avro's were put to good use later in life as he produced a substantial collection of pastoral paintings, sketches and greeting cards.



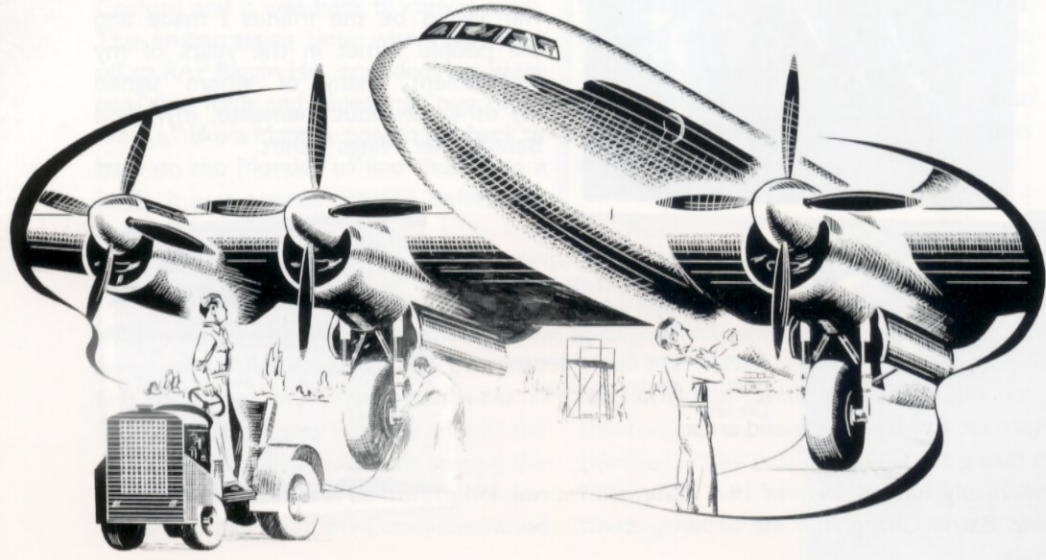
Top: Avro's Chadderton building as sketched by Norman. Above: In Royal Artillery uniform. Right: Norman at his drawing board, Chadderton, 1950s.



Norman was born in 1912, a month after the Titanic was lost and, on leaving Grammar School, he studied at Ashton and Manchester Regional College of Art to polish his natural talents. In 1933 he became a commercial artist for a local newspaper, the Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter, but continued at the Art School as an instructor and also became secretary of the Ashton Art Club. However, political storm clouds were brewing over Europe and Norman, newly-married to Ella Parrish, reported for duty, having been assigned to the Royal Artillery. A twist of fate ensued when Norman contracted scarlet fever, which resulted in his transfer to the Pay Corps and a posting close to home.

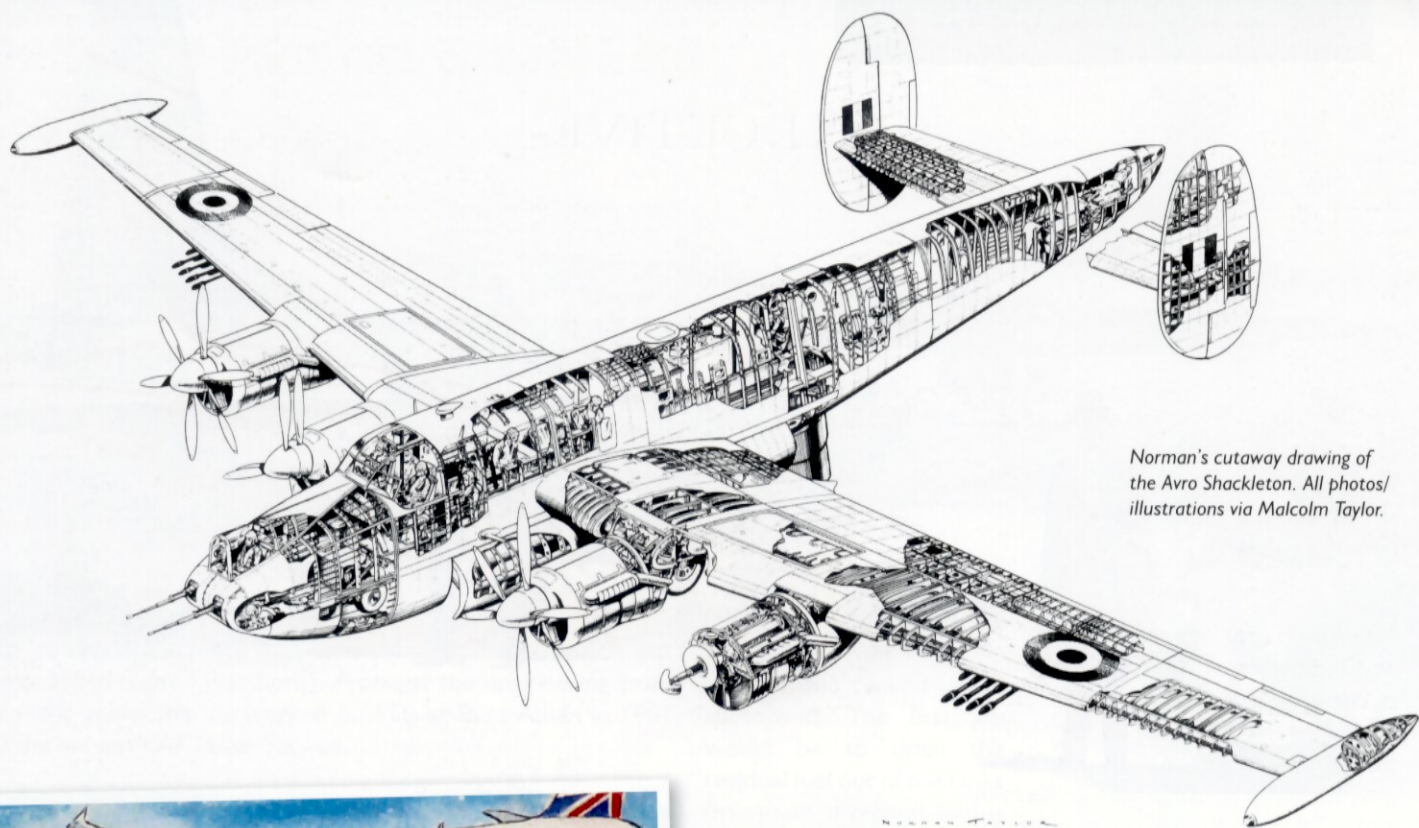
After the War, Norman returned to his old position at the Reporter and, in 1946, he joined Avro. He became a technical illustrator and rose to the position of Chief Artist, witnessing the changes into Hawker Siddeley Aviation and British Aerospace along the way, as well as the evolution from Anson to Nimrod.

These were the days when all illustrations in support manuals and publicity material were literally works of art, hand-drawn by individuals who combined a skill for minute detail with an appreciation of perspective and composition. Norman had these



Left: A 1948 drawing of the Avro Tudor. Below: Norman and Ella at Barden Bridge in 1960.





Norman's cutaway drawing of the Avro Shackleton. All photos/illustrations via Malcolm Taylor.



and Peter commented that Norman "had a great influence on our careers". When Peter joined the Technical Publications Department in 1959, Norman was his boss. He doesn't recall any harsh words, only helpful guidance and encouragement, Norman always being the gentleman, and 'gentleman' he remained for the rest of his life.

Left and below: Examples of Norman's Christmas card illustrations for British Airways in 1999 and Avro in the 1960s.



talents in droves, and he also had an impish sense of humour that would creep into his personal work, such as greetings cards, which he produced initially for his wife and continued in retirement for his grandchildren.

As Peter Carter pointed out in Vol. 3, no. 10 of Vulcan, there were about 30 illustrators, with a similar number of authors to produce the associated text. Peter also referred to the 1960 reorganization that resulted in staff specialising in civil, military and other areas. Norman must have been in the civil group, as he was associated with the 748, rather than the Vulcan.

Peter Carter has good memories of Norman, although during his apprenticeship it was "Mr Taylor". Norman ran evening classes at Oldham School of Art for a group taking the City and Guilds course in Technical Illustration, presumably funded by Avro. Another apprentice on the course was Barrie Chappell,

As Peter became an illustrator in his own right, their relationship became less formal and Peter began to take an interest in Norman's artwork, such as the cutaway of the Mk.3 Shackleton and several pieces for the promotional and sales literature for the Avro 748. Norman's assistant chief illustrator was Eric Williamson and they produced much work of that nature between them.

Jack Waterfall was the head of department and Elsie Ripley was his secretary. Jack and Elsie were later married, after each had lost their spouses. Norman and Elsie were great friends, their families often meeting socially.

Peter remembers seeing some of Norman's watercolours and being impressed by them. There were other good artists in the department who were helpful, but it was

Norman who had the most influence on Peter as an illustrator and artist.

In 1977, Norman retired and moved to Andover, the delightful Hampshire countryside offering many a venue for picnics,

AVRO 748

EXECUTIVE



Above: 1960s sales brochure cover painting of the Avro 748 Executive.

painting and views. Sadly, this idyllic state of affairs was not to last and in 1979, Ella passed before her time. Fortunately, the arrival of grandchildren provided solace that proved to be healing for Norman.

In 1980, Norman visited his son in the USA and was given a tour of Western States, a quantum leap for someone whose travel had previously been limited to the British Isles and France. For an artist, the sights were memorable, starting with his transatlantic flight aboard a 747, quite a contrast to his first flight in an Avro 504K. This was followed by a road trip on which he witnessed the subtle clays of a thousand pinks in the Painted Desert and the breathtaking vistas of the Grand Canyon.

Despite the pressures of work and family, he managed to produce a substantial number of watercolours and a few works in oil over the decades. Norman was particularly adept at capturing the characteristic shades of grey in English clouds, but his real skill showed up in the painstaking depiction of architectural detail, a legacy of his days at Avro.

Gabrielle Brace, a contemporary of his grandchildren and an art student, observed that Norman was a talented watercolourist. The trick to creating a great watercolour being to start confidently and stop before the piece is over-worked, because there's no going back. Norman was totally in control of this unpredictable and un-correctable medium. He knew when to meticulously build a wall and when to make a gesture of a hedge.

In 2000 he moved to be near his daughter's house in Winchester, the proximity to his family being a source of pleasure and stability. He looked after himself ably right up to the end, passing away in 2011 after a brief illness. He had nearly attained the magic 100 years old.

Norman Taylor, 1912 - 2011
Submitted by Malcolm Taylor,
the Artist's son

Below: Painting of the Grand Canyon from 1980 and Winchester Cathedral from 1981.

