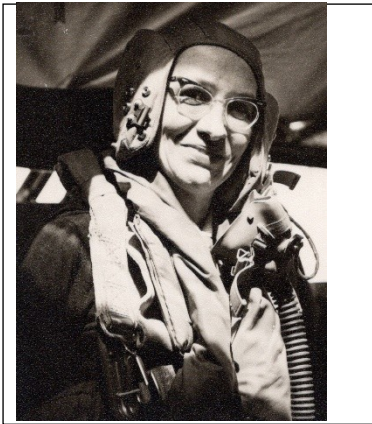


LIFE AFTER TANFIELD



NAME MARGARET TALINTYRE (NEE WANLESS)

PUPIL AT TANFIELD FROM 1949 TO 1956

MY LIFE AFTER LEAVING TANFIELD

After leaving Stanley Grammar School (Tanfield), I went to King's College, Newcastle, part of Durham University (now Newcastle University) to read Mathematics. After graduating I worked at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, in the Maths Department, as a Scientific Officer – a part of the Civil Service. The Maths Dept was a 'service' department, so the work was very varied.

Farnborough was an exciting place to be when I was there. It was the time of the 3 'V's – the Victor, the Valiant and the Vulcan aircraft; and of the beginning of vertical take-off and of rockets. My friend was involved in work on the Blue Streak rocket which was based in Australia. The predecessor of Concorde was being developed, too.

The famous Farnborough Air Show took place in September. All the top guns from around the world were there to witness the first 'vertical take-off'. It went up – and came straight back down, much to everyone's embarrassment. The groundsmen had cut the grass so everything looked good. Unfortunately, the thrust for vertical take-off sucked all the bits of grass into the engine!

My first job at Farnborough was for the Met. Office and when they discovered I had never flown, they arranged for me to go up with them. As I was not trained to use oxygen, we could not go above 10,000 feet. I had to be 'kitted out' for the flight. The women in Supply were in fits trying to find a flying suit for me under 5 feet tall. I wore the smallest available, plus a parachute and a 'Mae West' lifejacket. (see photo)

When I came back to the North to get married, I taught at Dame Allen's Girls' School before moving to Leeds. I taught at Allerton High School and became Head of Sixth Form.

My husband and I did a lot of walking when we retired and after his death I became a volunteer for a local charity and still spend one morning a week doing telephone support.