

OBITUARIES

It was with great sadness and a true sense of loss that his friends and colleagues learned that **Frederick John Worton** had died on 2nd October, 1992. To all those who knew him, Freddie Worton represented the dedicated professional in his approach to aerial navigation and photography.

Born on 24th December, 1922, he enlisted in the Royal Air Force in 1940 and was soon to become involved in the work of reconnaissance photography. Worton was seconded to the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough in 1942 where, early among other duties, he was to be engaged with trials of a special F.24 camera magazine designed for recovery by parachute following ejection from an aircraft. His interests made him well suited to the experimental work being conducted at the RAE at this period, which included film processing and various aspects of automation in the operation of an air photographic laboratory. Later he transferred to become a flight observer, but continued in the work of trials, these being directed more towards the acquisition of tactical, strategic and night reconnaissance photography, together with some aerial survey.

After leaving the RAE in 1946, Worton joined the Air Survey Company as their first air photographer/navigator. Although the Air Survey Company was later to become Fairey Air Surveys and, subsequently, Clyde Surveys, he continued with his work through the changes, having been promoted in 1956 to the position of flight trials manager. In this position, he was to have both a broad view of evolving technology and the practical insight that was provided

by contact with the equipment and flying that comprised the trials. These trials usually involved the use of a Dakota aircraft which, over the years, became much modified for the required work. These modifications gave rise to some humour among his colleagues, when it became evident just how many holes had been made in the fuselage to accommodate the instrumentation.

While the nature of his work prevented Worton from discussing it (and he was a very private person anyway), nonetheless those who knew him were aware that it included trials related to anti-vibration mountings for cameras, various photographic trials sometimes undertaken jointly with R. C. A. Dando and the evaluation of electro-optical systems for reconnaissance and surveillance. On another occasion, they were to include trials of high altitude storm weather radar.

His keen personal interest in the field of his work, coupled with the broad experience accumulated while working for the RAE, were to be further extended into photogrammetric applications while on survey flying and photography of the McMahon Line in the Himalayas. This work was done while on secondment to the Indian Air Survey and Transport Company. His approach to this wide range of work brought him recognition and respect from all those who knew him.

Worton's professional commitment was evident early on in his civilian career when he joined the British Institute of Professional Photographers in 1949, becoming an Associate in 1961. In 1952, he joined the Royal Photographic Society, gaining the distinction of an Associateship in 1961. He was appointed a Fellow of the RPS in 1971, and later made an Honorary Fellow in recognition of his contribution to aerial photography and to the RPS Aerial Group. In 1972, he became the UK Correspondent to Commission I of the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and in 1980 he was responsible for the formation of Working Group 5 of that Commission. As chairman of the working group, he saw it to be concerned with the acquisition of aerial photography and the role of film and film processing in aerial survey and reconnaissance photography. When the activities of the working group passed on to Germany in the normal course of rotation with ISPRS responsibilities, the UK based work that stemmed from Working Group 5 was continued as the Survey and Reconnaissance Working Group of the RPS Aerial Group. In addition to the strong support Worton gave to all these activities, he played a key role for 14 years in publishing the highly successful RPS *Aernewsletter*, continuing in this work until after his retirement. In the course of these activities he became known to many people as someone who could always be relied on to make a knowledgeable contribution to technical discussions.

The Photogrammetric Society recognised his distinctive contribution to progress in air survey photography with the award of the President's Medal for 1981. Worton was a significant contributor to *The Photogrammetric Record* between 1976 and 1983 and his publications are listed below.

Freddie Worton's polite but firm manner enabled him diplomatically to set the record straight with those who ventured outside their sphere of competence but, at the same time, he was able to give helpful advice to those who wanted it. His energetic approach to life continued after this retirement, therefore making the shock of learning that he was so ill all the greater. His passing has left us all with a real sense of loss for so many personal and professional reasons and we offer his family our sympathy on their great loss.

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- WORTON, F. J., 1977. Airborne camera environment. *Ibid.*, 9(50): 279-286.
- WORTON, F. J., 1979. The representation of minority interests. *Ibid.*, 9(54): 877-878.
- WORTON, F. J., 1980. Processing aerial films to obtain optimum speed with reduced contrast. *Ibid.*, 10(56): 233-241.
- WORTON, F. J., 1981. Airborne metric camera vibration. *Ibid.*, 10(57): 359-367.
- WORTON, F. J. and CHEFFINS, O. W., 1981. A practical photogrammetric test of thin base aerial film. *Ibid.*, 10(58): 493-496.
- WORTON, F. J., 1982. An oblique view of some early survey flying. *Ibid.*, 10(59): 517-528.
- WORTON, F. J., 1983. Aerial photography and quince jam. *Ibid.*, 11(62): 236.