

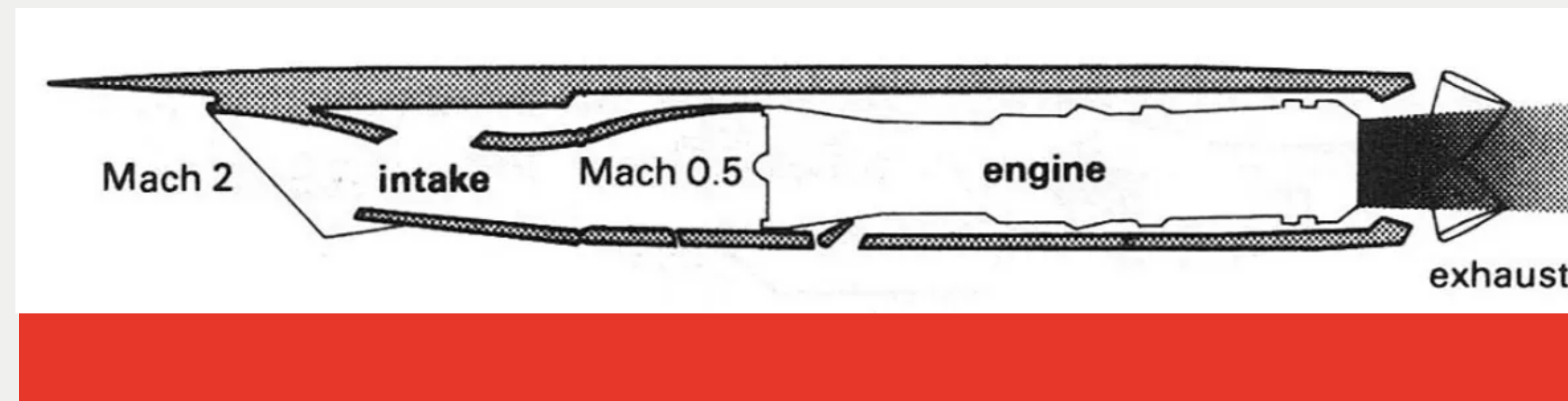
LIZ PEDLEY

Born 1948

Married to Roger Pedley, 1948

Elizabeth 'Liz' Pedley was born in July of 1948, and grew up in Sheffield, as the second of four children. As a child she was often unwell with chest infections which meant a lot of bed rest. Whilst in bed she would do puzzles and logic tests, which began her interest in equations and unravelling difficult puzzles. She went on to study engineering at Loughborough university in the late 60's, where she met her husband to be, Roger.

After graduating she started looking for jobs in engineering but found the attitude to women in this profession a barrier to



employment in this area. She later heard there were jobs at BAE in Filton, where her husband Roger was already working. Upon arrival at the interview, she was told there were no secretarial roles available. After some confusion she explained that she had a degree in Engineering. Upon hearing this a man ran down the corridor and offered her an interview – and then the job.

As a new graduate, she worked on Jaguar aircraft and the electronic control systems on other aircraft. Most notably she worked on the Concorde: a supersonic (twice the speed of sound) commercial passenger jet and the fastest that has ever flown. She was part of the team that wrote software for the control unit, which improved the air intake control system – ultimately allowing Concorde to cross the Atlantic without refuelling. It was



revolutionary and was the first digital system online on a civil aircraft. She boarded Concorde to make modifications and see the system in place.

Although she enjoyed work within her team, her pay was capped to keep it in line with her husband's. Other people in the company often made assumptions that she was a Secretary, suggesting that she couldn't do her job because *"...women's brains are smaller than men's."*

Liz left work in 1978 to have their two children but it was very hard to get back into work once they were born. She worked 1 day a week on Concorde. However, it was hard to work part-time with little outside support and limited childcare, so after a short while she left indefinitely.



Photography Source: Elizabeth Pedley