



RAFLAA NEWSLETTER

SERIAL 71

MARCH 2015

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2015, I trust everyone had a memorable start to the New Year.

Following on from our theme of tales from around the World it looks as though we have exhausted our memories of postings from the Far East. It came as a slight surprise that so few ex-Apps had been to Singapore and Hong Kong, or at least those that wish to own up to being there.

Fortunately a few tales of times in Cyprus have landed on my desk and they are most gratefully received, stories from postings to Malta, Gibraltar and other warm Middle East Countries would be equally well received.

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Deadline for next issue – 31st May 2015 for July 2015 edition

Please send all comments, contributions, ideas and feedback to the newsletter editor. Soft copy preferred!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'FAILED BRAT'

Our Honourable Membership Secretary has been his usual diligent self and been out with the Press Gang looking for new members for the Association. Jim contacted me with the details from one gentleman, who although not yet a member has had a very interesting career.

The gentleman in question failed the fifth term exam and as he describes "he was never fitted for Air Radio Fitting". He left Locking and went to Yatesbury as an AWM u/t by then totally disenchanted with wireless and radio engineering in all its forms he deliberately failed AWM training.

He then became an AC2 Radio Assistant, then a Telephonist 2 and eventually a Cpl Tele Supervisor, but always wanted to be in the RAFP so he remustered to RAFP Station. He finally left the RAF as Sqn Ldr in 1974.

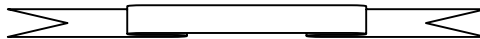
The story didn't stop there, he joined the RNZAF and eventually retired in 1983 having served as NZ Attaché to Thailand.

To put it in his own words "Not bad for an Apps Wing reject, if I say so myself"

Well done Jim – keep looking there are still a few unenlightened ones to find. (Ed)

RECRUITING FILM

I have received a few emails concerning an Apprentice Recruiting Film made during the early '60s, including RAF Locking the link is:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5D83cfphSsA> for those keen to sign up again.



REPLY TO MIKE COLLIER'S ARTICLE

It always seems a shame when there is no response from the readership to some of the published articles. I'm sure there must be some interesting alternative information/viewpoints out there.

In this case I simply couldn't resist putting finger to keyboard in response to Mike Collier's article entitled "How Did They Do That" in the November 2014 edition.

I love the notion of the RAF Locking Station Tailor swinging into overdrive and sewing on new badges of rank on the day after pass-out parade for an entire Entry!!!

My memory is rather different. When the 79th Entry departed Locking in late December 1957 we were wearing Apprentice insignia, each of us clutching a set of Junior Technician or (in 3 cases in my Entry) Corporal's chevrons plus associated "sparks" badges. An abiding memory of that final period of leave before real service life began was stitching the wretched J/T's badges on – surely that was the most awkward badge or rank ever invented to attach to a uniform.

Incidentally, such sewing events included changes to NCO Apprentice rank and good conduct stripes while at Locking and some promotions in later service. The exception was overseas badges of rank on KD uniforms.

I think I can hear the Beetle somewhere in the ether bellowing "Station Tailor?? – what do you think your housewife is for lad!!"

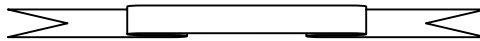
Bruce Graham 79th

RAF AIRBORNE LIFEBOAT

We have had a request from Mr. Neville Cole, he owns and is currently restoring an old RAF Airborne Lifeboat (one of three) that was used circa 1948 - early 1950's as a sailing instructional item at RAF Locking.

"I have proof of this from research carried out by previous authors of books on the type. My request although a long shot is if any of your members remember the boats and are able to supply any information, no matter how small."

Regards, Nev. Cole



LOCKING BA (BEFORE APPS)

In early April 1946 after 'passing' out from six weeks basic training Wilmslow I was granted two weeks leave followed by an onward posting to Locking, near Weston - Super - Mare for a further training course as a Flight Mechanic(airframes).

You may wonder why a musician like myself was involved in something like this, well the answer is in a word, money. The Royal Air Force in its wisdom paid, at that time 4/- (20p) a day to musicians who were classed as clerks (general duties) unless one signed on as a regular (at that time a minimum of 13 years, 5 years' service and 8 on the 'reserve'.) to join the Central Band at Uxbridge, where the pay was slightly higher, but still not enough in my opinion, to commit oneself to the service for that number of years. As a qualified mechanic, I would be able to go on to greater heights as a fitter and earn even more money, in fact 8/6 (42%p) a day. In any case as at Wilmslow, most stations had a band so wherever I ended up there was a good chance that I would still be playing.

During my third or fourth week at Locking, I went together with some other members of the band, to the weekly Wednesday dance that was held in the ballroom over 'Burtons' in Weston (we soon learnt to drop the 'Super-Mare'). We climbed to the first floor with only one thing on our minds, girls. As we listened it soon became apparent that the band was struggling and definitely lacked a beat. In no time at all one of the more astute musicians in our party pointed out that whilst there was a drum set of sorts on the stage there was no drummer. At that time we as musicians wore a distinctive brass lyre badge on our sleeve, and so were readily identifiable. The harassed civilian band leader soon noticed us so for the second time in my life, I was pushed forward to play. This time however, I played the whole evening and was paid for it, I never did find out what had happened to the absentee drummer but I did get to play several paid jobs with the band during the ensuing months which made a welcome supplement to the meagre RAF pay.

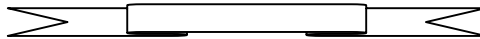
Life passed by pleasantly at Locking, the spring turned into a long warm summer, the duties were not arduous and there were land girls working on the farms nearby. If I wasn't playing on a Saturday night I would go with some of the other airmen to the village of Winscombe to a dance in the local hall. The main attractions there being the local cider known as "scrumpy" very strong and very cheap, in fact only 7d (about 3p) a pint and the off duty land girls. More than often the cider took effect before any romantic liaisons could be established. Remarkably

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

we always seemed to find our way back to camp, to a well disguised hole in the perimeter fence where we could enter after hours unnoticed by the M.P's on duty in the guardroom by the main gate. As the summer wore on the town began to fill with visitors and the public dances were well attended, the young holiday makers were intent on having a good time, now that the war was over. There was enough female company to be found on the beach and in the dance halls to keep even the most ardent of airmen happy. As a result of this I was invited by one of those young ladies to Cardiff. There was a problem however, because of my playing commitments I could not travel until Saturday morning which incurred a lengthy and expensive train journey via Bristol.... Help was at hand however, a new and forward looking company just had established an air service from Weston airfield to Splott field, a short bus ride from Cardiff. The weekend in Cardiff was not a success, in fact the only thing I really remember was the thrill of the flights there and back in the DH 'Rapide' my first flights ever and much more memorable than the many jet trips in later life.

The flight mechanics course came to an end and I passed with good marks, enough to ensure that I returned after my leave to begin a fitter's course and another five months in the band at Locking. In fact the only event which marred my stay there was a tragic accident on a Friday afternoon when a double-decker bus was struck by a 'Boston' aircraft as it landed at the local airport killing several airmen who were going on leave, but for the fact that we played on a Friday night in the officers mess I too, would have been on that bus.

Roy Holiday



BAWDSEY RADAR

Bawdsey Reunion Association Lunch 2015 This year the Bawdsey Reunion Association lunch has been organised for Saturday 12th September at Bawdsey Manor.

As on previous occasions the lunch will be at 1.00pm. A bar will be open in the Green Room from 12 noon and tea will be served there in the afternoon prior to departure at 4.30pm.

There will be a ferry service all day should you be coming from Felixstowe and the Boathouse Café on the Quay will be open from 11.00am.

Bawdsey Radar 16 High Row Field Felixstowe Suffolk

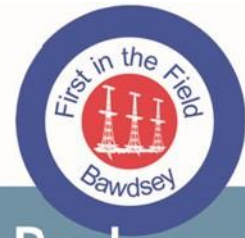
IP11 7AE Tel: 07821162879

E-mail: info@bawdseyradar.org.uk

Web: www.bawdseyradar.org.uk

Further information about Bawdsey, Radar and the Transmitter Block Project can be found on their website: www.bawdseyradar.org.uk

Eileen Dew
(Secretary Bawdsey Radar)



Bawdsey Radar

The World's First Operational Radar Station

Save the World's First Operational Radar Station

The Transmitter Block at Bawdsey was part of the world's first operational radar station. Radar played a vital role in the Battle of Britain and was the starting point for many inventions that have changed the world.

The pioneering work done at Bawdsey helped save Britain. Now Bawdsey needs your help to save the Transmitter Block.

The Transmitter Block Project has received Heritage Lottery Funding to investigate the work which needs to be undertaken to save the Transmitter Block and to develop within it an exhibition and activities that will make it a heritage attraction that is vibrant, fun and worthy of its enormous significance.

An application is to be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £1.4 million but Bawdsey Radar has to raise £300,000 of this amount as match funding. Please help us to do this by making a donation.

Donations can be made by:

Cheque, payable to **Bawdsey Radar Trust**, and sent to Bawdsey Radar, 1 Whitehouse Cottage, Gulpher Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk. IP11 9RJ.

or

Bank Transfer to HSBC Bank, Sort Code: **40-21-06** Account: **51533207**, using **BRA15(your surname)** as the reference.

If you would like to **Gift Aid your donation** please complete and return the form overleaf.

The project will:

- Conserve the Transmitter Block, an historic 2* building of international significance, which is currently on the English Heritage 'at risk' register
- Provide a new thought provoking exhibition that will tell the story of radar
- Increase opening times and make the Block a fantastic place to visit for the whole family
- Provide modern facilities and car parking
- Develop educational opportunities and activities for schools and community groups
- Provide a fitting tribute to all those men and women who worked so hard for the safety and security of us all

For more information:

Tel: 07821 162879

E-mail: info@bawdseyradar.org.uk Web: www.bawdseyradar.org.uk



Bawdsey Radar Trust Ltd. Registered in England and Wales No: 06474550

Registered Office: 18 The Bartlet, Undercliff Road East, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 7SN

Registered Charity No: 1125600

AshtonKCJ

RAFLAA NEW MEMBERS

A WARM WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS TO RAFLAA

Entry		
71	Geoff	Bailey
84	Keith	Runacres
93	John	Ingham

NOTICES

NEXT REUNION AND AGM

The Annual Reunion and Annual General meeting of the RAF Locking Apprentice Association will be held on [Saturday 25 April 2015](#) at the Webbington Hotel, Loxton, Weston-super-Mare.

It will follow our usual format with the AGM in the afternoon and a dinner in the evening.

The hotel rates will be: **£80** B&B for a double or twin room (double occupancy) for a 2 night stay (Friday & Saturday), **£65** for a single occupancy. For the Saturday night only the rates are **£90** B&B for a double or twin room (double occupancy) and **£70** for a single room.

Rooms can be booked now so call The Webbington Hotel, Loxton, Weston-s-Mare, BS26 2HU Tel: 01934 750100 Or Email: sales@webbingtonhotel.ecilpse.co.uk Remember, these rates include the ability to cancel up to two days before the event without penalty so book now.



PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

At the AGM on the 26th April 2014, we discussed the change to our Constitution in order that we could invite Associate Membership to a wider number of people. We had discussed the changes during the AGM of 2013, which had sought to enable ex members of the Cranwell Apprentices Association to be admitted to our Association, as their Association had ceased to exist after Sep. 2013. The Committee also felt that we should be able to admit people who had a strong connection to No. 1 Radio School. The amendment was voted upon, however, a member did point out that as we had not given 28 days' notice to the membership, we could not pass the proposed amendment. The Committee therefore give notice that para 8 of the Constitution should be amended to read as follows:

*'Membership of the Association is open to all apprentices of the Royal Air Force and other Air Forces who underwent all or part of their training at the RAF Locking. Associate Membership may be offered to those former apprentices who have been members of the Cranwell Apprentice Association. Additionally Associate Membership may be offered in selected cases to individuals who had a close association with the training of Apprentices at RAF Locking, or who made significant contribution to the training at **No 1 Radio School.**'*

I believe that this also follows in the spirit of sub-para 8e.

This amendment will be proposed and voted upon at the AGM, so I hope that as many of you can attend on the 25th April 2015. If you cannot attend, you may, however, make your opinions known to the Secretary:

NIGEL LODGE,
9, BROADMEAD GREEN
THORPE END
NORWICH
NORFOLK NR13 5DE

Alternatively you can vote via our web site: www.raflaa.org.uk.

LIFE AFTER LOCKING

LETTER PREFIX ADDED TO RAF SERVICE NUMBER.

Most members of the RAF who were still in the service in 1967 will remember that their service number was amended to include a prefix letter.

The purpose of this letter was to prevent an incorrect service number being entered into key computers at records, which would result in access to the files of the wrong airman. A little thought leads one to imagine the many scenarios that would occur if this simple mistake occurred.

To make this occurrence much less likely, it was decided to create a self-checking service number, where any digit entered incorrectly would prevent its entry. A 'checksum' system was produced, where each digit was multiplied by a different number, and then summed to produce a checksum which was then used to generate a second number. This latter number was uniquely related to a letter in the alphabet which was then added to the service number as a prefix. In theory, the incorrect entry of this prefix letter or any digit would prevent recognition by the computer of the number that had been entered.

When the new prefix was issued, a small buff card, with punched 'Hollerith' holes was issued to all personnel showing the new prefix. I still have mine!

Sometime later, The RAF News published a small article giving details of the derivation of this prefix letter and, naturally, having checked my own, I kept a copy in my wallet for several years. As happens, this was eventually lost.

Since retiring in 1977, I have tried to find a copy of this article, or details it contained, without any success. A member of staff at RAF News was, initially, helpful and said he would check the relevant bound year books they keep. This action would not have taken long as only 25 editions a year are published and each edition was only a few pages, as I remember. Having had no response after several weeks, I again telephoned and was abruptly told by a retired Sqn Ldr. that my request would not be fulfilled. No explanation was given. I began to suspect that this data should not have been published. Because of this rude response I was spurred on to continue my search, however, and spent countless days searching the internet. Believe me, this information is not available were you would expect to find it. Several requests for this information have appeared on service forums over the years (I have read most of them.) but until last week there were no replies. Out of the blue I found an answer in a forum, which I will not identify in case it is taken down, but thanks to that forum I can now enlighten any interested subscribers to this newsletter.

HOW THE PREFIX LETTER IS CALCULATED.

Important :

Add an initial zero if necessary to make Service number up to 7 digits

- *Multiply the first digit by 8*
- *The second digit by 17*
- *The third digit by 4*
- *The fourth digit by 16*
- *The fifth digit by 2*
- *The sixth digit by 13*
- *The seventh digit by 1*

Sum all seven products.

Note this number, which is designated Result A.

Divide **Result A** by 23

Delete decimal places from result but retain integer (i.e., 12.739 would be 12)
Multiply the retained integer by 23.

Note this number which is Result B

Subtract **Result B** from **Result A**

The Table below shows the corresponding prefix letter for each A-B result.

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

A-B	Prefix	A-B	Prefix
0	A	12	N
1	B	13	P
2	C	14	Q
3	D	15	R
4	E	16	S
5	F	17	T
6	G	18	U
7	H	19	V
8	J	20	W
9	K	21	X
10	L	22	Y
11	M	23	Z

*Note that Prefix Letters 'I'
and 'O' are not used to
prevent confusion.*

Table Showing Derivation of Prefix letters

Digit Number	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	Result A	A/23	Result B	Result A - B	Prefix Letter
Multiplier	8	17	4	16	2	13	1					
Service Number	0	5	8	9	5	5	5					
Product	0	85	32	144	10	65	5	341	14	322	19	V
Service Number	0	5	8	8	8	7	1					
Product	0	85	32	128	16	91	1	353	15	345	8	J
Service Number	0	5	8	8	8	0	5					
Product	0	85	32	128	16	0	5	266	11	253	13	P
Service Number	0	5	8	8	8	4	5					
Product	0	85	32	128	16	52	5	318	13	299	19	V
Service Number	0	5	8	9	5	2	4					
Product	0	85	32	144	10	26	4	301	13	299	2	C

The AA Service Numbers in the table are from members of 75th/76th Entry showing derivation of the prefix letters. In accordance with previous text.

I do hope that you found this article of interest. Sad to say it had become an obsession with me to find this information!

Peter Kay 76th Entry Locking (T0589519) Check it out if you wish.

DODGY RAF PEOPLE?

The vast majority of members of the RAF are and have been reasonably law abiding, but I have come across a few scams in the service that beat all. Most of them were caught – but not all.

While serving as an Apprentice at Locking in the 1950s we were often subjected to a somewhat low standard of catering in the Mess. We were therefore not really surprised when one day a station Catering Officer was stopped at the station guardroom (following a tip-off no doubt), on his way home. In his car boot were joints of meat which he was taking home, in other words – stealing them from the RAF. He rapidly disappeared from Camp.

On Christmas Island in 1958, I was located for my tour at the Joint Services Transmitter Station, some miles from the main camp. We always seemed to be short of tools to do our job, and I may have found out why! With each of the very large SWB 8 HF transmitters we had (about 10 or 12 of them), Marconi had supplied a very large wooden chest with a wide variety of tools for each of them – ostensibly for installation and servicing.

At an early stage of my tour I found that the batch of Aerial Riggers we had, had been sending the tools home for their own use over a period of a few months. There was never hard proof of this though, except talk amongst the riggers themselves.

During my year's tour in Bahrain, at RAF Muharraq, a friend of mine (Brian Wilson ex 72nd) took over the part - time job as the Camp's Astra Cinema manager from the PTI sergeant who was tour-ex. On the first pay day for the staff (projectionists and ushers), as each was paid, the new Manager was offered a percentage of each wage. He of course refused the money from each of them. Apparently, the staff said, the previous manager had required each staff member to surrender a portion of their pay each time for the right to keep their part-time jobs. By this time the former Manager was off the island.

At RAF Akrotiri in the mid-1960s, a RAF Regiment corporal friend of mine was apparently secretly helping the rebelling Turkish Cypriots smuggle arms and ammunition through the Greek Cypriot lines. He was occasionally using WRAF girls to pass messages and intimated that I might like to help as I had some Greek and Turkish Cypriot friends. Not being an absolute idiot, I refused and tried to persuade him to stop his activities. Not long afterwards, after a few days questioning at the military police HQ, he was quickly shipped back to the UK – it seems he was on the Greek Cypriot hit list!

Also at RAF Akrotiri, after I had bought a new car I would sometimes smuggle out my current WRAF girlfriend (at night when she should have been in the Camp's WRAF Accommodation) for a relaxing cup of Greek coffee, usually in Limassol's Hero's Square. After the coffee one night, we were chatting and taking in the Square's ambience, at an outside table when a large crowd of locals gathered near the bar baying for our blood. We quickly vacated our outside table and entered the bar. I did not know what the problem was, until a plain clothes member of the SIB sidled up to me inside and said the crowd were incensed by my girlfriend putting the empty coffee cup featuring the cabaret bar's name and saucer in her purse (i.e. stealing them as souvenirs). Annoyed with her, it cost me a £5 note (a lot in 1964) given to the bar owner to pacify things. We rapidly exited Limassol, back to Akrotiri. I ditched the girlfriend the next day.

While serving with 6 TSU in RAF Seletar in Singapore, we all received duty free crates of Tiger beer each month, and very welcome they were too. The Sergeants

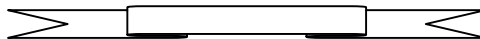
Mess also received a very large amount of Duty Free beer from the Tiger Brewery to serve to members. About the third week of each month the Mess always ran out of the Duty Free cans, bottles and draught and the price of beer went up as we had to buy Duty Paid beer to serve in the Mess for members. Many of us could not believe that we should have run out of Duty Free at about the same time each month! So I volunteered with another Chief Tech to investigate the potential fiddle of the disappearing beer, in our spare time.

We both spent an exhausting nearly three weeks going through masses of paperwork such as invoices and receipts and did interviews with staff, to no avail. There seemed to be a definite fiddle, but we could not locate it. The Mess Steward was obviously more clever than us – or so it seemed. There was an outside chance however that we all just drank a prodigious amount of beer – Singapore is quite a hot place after all.

While not a fiddle, while I was on a two week visit in Hong Kong (1974). I was out in town with the Signals Flight Flt. Lt., who related that he had just been investigated by the services Special Investigation Branch for not spending any of his pay for a year, but still living a good social life in the Colony. His reason was that he had been very successfully playing the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, and did not need to draw his pay.

Goes to show appearances can frequently be explained – but not always.

Brian Davies 76/77th Entries



A 21 YEAR OLD BLOTTING PAPER MIND

The months just before and just after my 21st birthday were full of life's new experiences. Fresh out of RAF Locking as a brand new Junior Technician, my mind was as receptive to gaining knowledge as a kilo pad of blotting paper would be to absorb ink. After three years as an Apprentice I was as receptive to new ideas, experiences and thoughts as I would ever be. The disciplined years as an App. fell away and life blossomed ahead, well not around the RAF Ballykelly sewage farm maybe!

I found that not all Northern Ireland people were thugs (maybe just some of those in the IRA), that many of the Catholic population were disillusioned with the Protestant domination of life in the north of the Island and its highly selective voting rules. And the delights of an Irish fry-up breakfast in Londonderry on my frequent trips there.

The novelty of sea journeys from England to Belfast in very rough seas that did not leave me seasick, and the strangeness of seeing people queueing up for pints of Guinness at the ship's bar when it opened at 5 in the morning.

That betting in Ireland's bookie shops (illegal those days in England) was a mugs game, as the bookies always eventually came out winners. And after I lost my shirt the first time, decided that horse racing was not for me. Phoning from the Transmitter remote site at Barnault to the Camp PBX though, had been useful as they had a direct line to the bookies near the front gate to put on our bets!

I found the delights of Jamieson's Irish whiskey (during my 21st birthday celebration in a Limavady bar). The novelty as a J/T, of learning to fire Sten and Sterling sub-machine guns at the Camp range, then carry them safely at work and on guard duty.

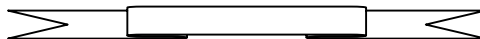
The delights of RAF travel was met by going overseas 3 times within a year of passing out (Ireland, Gibraltar and Christmas Island). The sheer interest of experiencing Londonderry, Tangier (and its Kasbah), New York (and the Statue of Liberty), San Francisco (and Fisherman's Wharf) and Oahu with its local culture, Diamond Head, Waikiki Beach, and my first "easy over or sunny side up" eggs at breakfast.

The bliss of my first (overseas measure) of G & T at a Gibraltar seaside bar under palm trees. Finding that beauty was not everything as I danced at the Gibraltar Police Ball with the Police Chief's gorgeous daughter, who reeked of garlic and Spanish cheroots. And a large mug of tea from the 'Quash' dispenser at Smoky Joe's just off Main Street.

The adrenaline kick of seeing my first H-Bomb explosion (from about 22 miles away). Seeing big sharks and manta rays at close quarters, and two and a half weeks holiday in Hawaii. Then a seven week sea trip, including a return visit to Oahu, the thrill of going through the Panama Canal, visits to Cristobel and Curacao in the Caribbean.

All packed into a year and a half of Passing Out of Locking. Would the rest of my RAF career be as exciting and demanding? As it turned out – yes.

Brian Davies ex 76/77 entries



LUCK

During our service in the Royal Air Force we were all posted several times. Some of us had very good experiences but, given the vagaries of the Air Force personnel management system, sometimes things went awry!! I wonder how many of you believe that luck played a part.

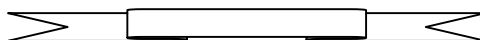
After leaving Locking in December 1957 I was posted to a Vulcan base and in my second year I was placed on the PWR for overseas service. The job I went to was very non-operational, though it did turn out to be very interesting. However this is not where luck comes into the story. I spent the next three years on the staff of the Overseas Experimental Unit, an offshoot of Boscombe Down based at RAF Idris in Libya where all A&AEE hot-weather trials were conducted each summer. During that time I was involved in testing 14 different aircraft types in extremes of temperature. At the end of my tour during an extended period of disembarkation leave I received a telegram (remember them?) from the posters telling me that my next job had been changed and that I had to report to a "Project Officer" at RAF Chessington. No other information was provided. All I knew about Chessington was that it was a Medical Rehabilitation Unit some 20 miles south west of London. When I eventually reported in January 1963 I discovered that **very** good luck had intervened and that I had been selected to join the TSR2 project team based at the (then) BAC factory at Weybridge where the aircraft prototypes were being built.

The next two and a quarter years were spent trying to get to grips with the systems being developed for this amazing aircraft. Eventually we were going to provide the basis for a training establishment but, of course, politics intervened and the project was cancelled in the Budget Speech in March 1965.

Lady Luck had been kind to me and I was recommended for officer training, reporting to OCTU in December 1965.

So, how many other stories are out there concerning the occasional quirks of the RAF posting system?

Bruce Graham, 79th



CARS 'AINT WOT THEY USED TO BE!

After my father died I found a copy of '*The Uig Echo*' circa 1959 among his belongings. The magazine was a newspaper edited by a chap called Dave Caldwell for the benefit of the ninety or so lost souls stationed at RAF Aird Uig in the Outer Hebrides. This article was within its pages and I reproduce it here just as was – warts and all.

It just shows what heaps of junk we could drive around in those days, pre-MOT, pre-breath test and pre-road rage. It sure was fun though!

Alex Gumbrecht

ANY OLD IRON

"Twenty pounds and it's yours," he said with that magnanimous attitude typical of all car dealers. "Done!" said I – very true as I found out later – and I was the proud owner of a 1936 Ford 10 Saloon.

I drove to Ramsgate to show my 'bargain' to my fiancée. After a very unenthusiastic reception amid my hastily constructed explanations about the latest modern bald tyres, doors ventilated with jagged holes for the natural look, with play in the steering for ease of driving, she finally agreed to come for a drive.

We set off oblivious of the incredulous stares of the neighbours, with my future mother-in-law waving a frantic farewell and my future father-in-law looking very dubious and slightly cynical. We clattered along the road, the general effect being somewhat similar to an assorted collection of tin cans being rolled down a metal chute. "Runs beautifully, doesn't she '?" I shouted above the din. I received no reply.

We arrived back about half hour later, my fiancée visibly shaken, especially by the braking performance. I had tried to mollify her by stating that the brakes were safer than was normal because they would not permit the car to skid (in fact, they were so good in that respect that they would hardly stop the car at all), but even she was not quite that gullible.

During the next few months much blood and many tears were shed over that car – my blood and my fiancée's tears. I left a trail of grease and oil everywhere that I had reason to go, which, incidentally was not appreciated by my future mother-in-law. Many is the time I heard the statement, "It's that car or me!", and every time I proved my loyalty to the car and my fiancée was forced to relent.

At last the day came when I considered that the car was fit to be taken on a long drive and so one Friday morning saw myself and a friend hurtling (anything above 20 m.p.h. in that car was hurting) along the road to Guildford. Everything was going well until just outside Canterbury when a clanging sound became apparent and I discovered that my brakes were working even less effectively than before. We eventually came to rest at the bottom of a hill, although it was not through lack of effort that we did not manage to stop earlier. I found that two of the brake connecting rods had snapped, leaving virtually no braking power at all, but nevertheless we

decided to put our trust in the gods and carry on with our journey.

We reached the outskirts of Guildford after having a few mishaps such as crossing various traffic lights at red, failing to stop at halt signs (again not through lack of effort), and once having to turn into the courtyard of a public house to avoid knocking down a member of our illustrious police force complete with bicycle.

"Well, Roger," I said triumphantly as we drove through the outskirts the city, "We've made it", which were the last words I uttered before it happened. Seeing a cat walk out in front of her, the woman driver ahead of us decided to spare its life at my expense, and thus stopped rather suddenly. This simple action left me with a classic "Hobson's choice"; to crash into the rear of woman's nice new car, or climbing a sixty degree grass bank. I chose the bank. By the time my companion had realised what was happening the car had already turned over on to its side and I finished up with him sitting on my head.

"B****y hell!" exclaimed Roger, maneuvering himself so that so that I might extricate my head from under him. "B***** it!" I retorted, at the same time turning off the ignition. Roger opened the nearside door which was directly overhead due to our rather unorthodox position and climbed out looking something like the modern conception of a submarine commander after a particularly hard battle. I followed suit after managing to convince attentive old lady that I was quite all right and did not need a doctor, the fire brigade, the police or numerous other organisations that she knew of. With the aid of six other sympathetic car drivers we managed to turn the car the right way up and I climbed in and pulled the starter. To my absolute amazement it started and I made ready to carry on with my journey. Roger (Corporal policeman at RAF Sandwich) elected to walk the rest of the way into Guildford, saying that he would not ride in my car again, even to get out of the RAF, which as most other ranks will know, is rather a drastic statement.

I finally arrived, at my destination looking as though I crashed into a steam roller instead of a harmless grass verge. Needless to say I never attempted a long drive in that particular car again.

There was one more mishap before the car finally ended its life, when, in the dark, I mistook a 'T' road junction for a road fork with rather spectacular results. A few weeks later the transmission bearings seized up bringing the car to a halt in far less distance than the brakes had ever done. I vowed there and then that I would never again be the owner of a 1936 Ford Ten Saloon and I've kept that vow. I now own a 1936 Ford Ten Tourer.

A. Gumbrecht 75th Entry

NOTES

Not mentioned in the original article is that on the final brakeless stage of the trip, I got stuck in a traffic jam on the hill leading out of Guildford towards the Hog's Back. I had to hold the car on the clutch for something like 15 minutes. When I wanted to turn

right off the Hogs Back to Aldershot via Tongham I couldn't slow enough to take the turn. I ended up having to go via Farnham.

The right hand bracket holding the petrol tank to the car had long since rusted away. The tank was held on by a steel hawser lashed from the spare wheel bracket at the back of the car, under the tank, then tied to the first bit of chassis that hadn't already corroded to dust. This sort of thing was not considered out of the ordinary at the time – not even worth a mention in the article, obviously.

I fitted the engine from the defunct saloon into the Ford 10 Tourer mentioned in the article. This was accomplished in the RAF Sandwich station car park with the aid of a beam of wood, some ropes and a couple of helpers from the corporal's club. Who needed garages in those days? I left the remains of the saloon, with the engine alongside, in the car park until I receive a note from the C.O. stating that, if I didn't remove it he would personally organise the removal and send me the bill.

Just after I got married I drove the Tourer from Ramsgate to Mallaig on the west coast of Scotland. No AA membership, no emergency tool-kit, just a blind faith that I and the car would make it – the optimism of youth! It was then across to Stornaway on the Loch Seaforth (the name of the ferry boat) and a drive across the Isle of Lewis to Aird Uig. The car served myself and my new wife proud during the time we lived in the village of Aird. I sold it on our departure to another RAF guy.

Anyone like to guess how much that Ford 10 Tourer would be worth now? It was a rarity even in 1959. I heard once that there were only a few thousand made and of these only a hundred or so were right hand drive models. I don't know how true this is but I personally never saw another one.

APPRENTICE DAYS

TAKE TWO CODEINE – NEXT PATIENT!

As an apprentice, visits to the RAF Locking Station Sick Quarters were not a very rewarding excursion, especially if one was in pursuit of a skiving opportunity.

Early in our entry phase we can all remember being marched over to SSQ in the corner of the Camp, and subjected to a course of jabs, all with the same blunt hypodermic and with not much care for any pain caused. This was followed (or preceded) by being told to strip down to underpants, and lined up for a 'free from infection' inspection. All in a row in one of the big wooden wards, we were instructed to 'drop em', much to our young embarrassment. The Medical Officer then made his way down the line of apprentices hold a shiny stick which he would use to manoeuvre our private bits to inspect for any type of infection. Maybe later in life we would not have been so unhappy at the intrusion into our collective dignity, but for a young apprentice it was a bit daunting.

The medical Officers attitude to apprentices was a bit on the strict side, as various people tried to get off parades with a 'life threatening' illness. No wonder the usual treatment was two codeine tablets - "that should cure you".

My own experiences with SSQ were a mixture of events. Half way through my apprentice training, I kept suffering with a shooting pain in my right side lower back. After a couple of visits when the MO finally decided that codeine tablets would not do the trick, he admitted me into one of the 20 or so bed wards at SSQ. I stayed there for about 3 weeks, with MOs prodding me frequently but not finding out what the problem was. I was finally discharged with no diagnoses made but had lost enough Tech time to be FT'd. Many years later after frequent doses of back pain, a stone was found, removed and no more back pain occurred.

Another time due to our close quarters living accommodation, I picked up a cluster of verrucae on the ball of my left foot. As it was causing me some agro. I reported sick and the MO said "Oh we will have that sorted in no time" We went into the treatment room, he injected anesthetic around the verrucae and set about attempting to remove them. He was happily cutting into my foot, blood everywhere and an hour later sat back satisfied. I was left with a two and a half centimeter hole in my foot, 4 mm deep. He put a dressing on it and gave me a bunch of – yes, codeine tablets and 5 days light duties, it will hurt for a few days he said. Actually it was agony for over two weeks.

Locking SSQ did have a good dentistry section however, where a sergeant dentist set about correcting the mess my school dentist had made of my tooth fillings. He was excellent and a big difference to the attitudes of the MO s.

Most of us thought the Locking medical Officers must have been trained by the Gestapo, but when one considers the difficulty of dealing with about 900 energetic and devious apprentices, it is surprising we were even given codeines.

Brian Davies ex 76/77 entry

HUMOUR

A FEW GOOD SENIOR MOMENTS

An elderly couple had dinner at another couple's house, and after eating, the wives left the table and went into the kitchen.

The two gentlemen were talking, and one said, 'Last night we went out to a new restaurant and it was really great. I would recommend it very highly.'

The other man said, 'What is the name of the restaurant?'

The first man thought and thought and finally said,

'What is the name of that flower you give to someone you love?

You know.... The one that's red and has thorns.'

'Do you mean a rose?'

'Yes, that's the one,' replied the man. He then turned towards the kitchen and yelled, 'Rose, what's the name of that restaurant we went to last night?'

JOURNALISTS NEVER FAIL TO MAKE ME LAUGH WITH SOME OF THEIR STORY LINES:

"Diana was still alive hours before she died."

"Statistics show that teen pregnancies drop off significantly after the age of 25."

"Federal Agents raid gun shop, find weapons."

17 remain dead in morgue shooting spree."

"Homicide victims rarely talk to police."

"Miracle cure kills fifth patient."

Now for a little interesting history of the condom:

In 1273 the Arabic Muslims invented the condom. They used the intestine of a goat.

In 1873 the British improved this condom, by removing the intestine from the goat first.

I was overweight and when I noticed an advertisement in a magazine offering a unique weight loss system, thought it worth a try. When I phoned the number provided I was offered three variations. A two day, three day or seven day session. To give it a try I opted for the two day version.

The following day my doorbell rang. On the door step stood a nice looking girl dressed in a very skimpy bikini. She said "If you can catch me I'm yours!" Try as I might I could not get anywhere near her but I did lose 3 pounds.

Pleased but frustrated, I decided to try the three day session. The following day an absolutely gorgeous girl dressed in an even smaller bikini appeared on my door step. Same message "If you can catch me I'm yours!" Same lack of success but I did lose 7 pounds.

Fitter and lighter, the seven day variant seemed too good to miss so I called the number again. The person at the other end asked "Are you absolutely sure about this?" To which I gave an affirmative reply. The following day when I opened the door, a huge muscular guy wearing brief shorts was on the door step. His message "If I catch you your mine!" That week I lost 32 pounds.

A young man decided to go to medical school. At the entrance examination the candidates were asked to rearrange the letters -

P N E I S

Then form the name of an important human body part, which is most useful when erect.

Those who answered SPINE are doctors today, while the rest are???



LIFE AFTER THE RAF

RAF NEATISHEAD AND OTHER REMINISCING

After reading Colin Ingram's visit to the Air Defence Radar Museum at RAF Neatishead, I have to agree with our editor, it is well worth spending a few hours there, even for us lightweight radar bods of the air radio trades.

On holiday a few years ago the wife and I passed it on our way to Wroxham to do a bit of shopping and I took the opportunity to nip back and see what was on offer and was really pleased that I had.

It was interesting to see the many items of ground radar hardware on display, ranging from the early WW2 'Chain Home' up to today's more modern equipment, as well as the guided tour of the preserved Cold War Ops room, left exactly as it was on the day it was last used.

I was also intrigued on the free guided tours to learn about 'Pip-squeak', the means used to locate downed fighter pilots during the Battle of Britain. Pip-squeak sent out a 1KHz tone (the squeak) over the voice radio in the spitfire/hurricane, which ground sector operators triangulated on, using nothing more than a plotting board and pieces of string, to show the location of friendly aircraft. This allowed many pilots to be rescued from the sea and indirectly provided a crude form of IFF.

Pip-squeak seemingly got its name from a contemporary comic strip cartoon Pipsqueak and Wilfred which featured in the Daily Mirror Newspaper of the time.

Knowing that my Uncle Roy worked on Chain Home during the war and of course the fact that half of each Locking Entry worked on the heavy stuff all made for a very interesting couple of hours and I hope to return there this summer.

Nowadays, having settled just west of Bristol at Portishead, on our regular shopping trips to Weston –super- Mare, I cannot but help as we approach my eyes glancing over into the distance, to peek at Locking's water tower, still visible for miles around, and briefly imagine what it was like all those years ago. Then, as we wander round Weston, still familiar but much changed, I can visualise when the resort echoed to the laughter and joshing of hundreds of cheeky young lads from the camp, walking along the sea front and pier, relieved to be away from the stresses and strain of learning all things Radar etc. for a few precious hours.

Weston seems so very quiet in comparison-those were the days eh?

From Brian Colby 87th Entry

ROYAL AIR FORCE LOCKING APPRENTICE ASSOCIATION

MINUTES FROM THE 53RD COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT FLOWERDOWN HOUSE, WESTON SUPER MARE AT 13:00 HOURS ON THURSDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2015.

Members present:

Tiny Kuhle	87 th	Chairman
Nigel Lodge	91 st	Secretary
Tony Horry	76 th	Treasurer
Jim Doran	219 th	Membership Secretary
Peter Crowe	95 th	AA Rep/Webmaster
Rick Atkinson	91 st	Service Rep.
Colin Ingram	88 th	Newsletter
Graham Beeston	209 th	Craft Rep.

The chairman opened the meeting at 13:10hrs with a greeting all members, this was followed by the Apprentice Prayer.

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from:

Andy Perkins 109th Technical Rep

ITEM 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was agreed that the minutes of the last Committee Meeting were correct.

Proposed by Rick Atkinson... and seconded by Jim Doran

ITEM 3 MATTERS ARISING

Item 7 RAF Locking Apprentice Memorial; Item 8 Amendment to "The Constitution";

Item 10 AGM 2015 Dinner Dance/Band – each of which were to be discussed in this, the 53rd Agenda.

ITEM 4 TREASURER'S REPORT.

The following accounts were presented by Tony Horry.

Accounts as per the income/expenditure statement for August 2014 to 31st January 2015

The Bank statement for period Jan-Feb 2015 has been received so I am able to complete the FY accounts for 2014/15.

When figures complete I shall arrange for the independent check.

I shall e-mail the completed Accounts to each Committee member.

DONATIONS		
Flowerdown House RAFA	40.00	RAFLAA Cttee Meeting - Jan 2014
Flowerdown House RAFA	40.00	RAFLAA Cttee Meeting - Aug 2014
RAFBF	100.00	As agreed at AGM

AGM 2014 – Cheque (£50) presented to the Trophy recipient

AGM 2015 – 11 booking forms have been received for the event.

A deposit of £31.50 has been paid for the coach, at cost £315.00 for a 21 seater. We need to confirm charge per person. (14 used coach last year).

“Atlantic Crossing” has been booked for the event.

Adverts placed in “Air Mail” for 2015 (£24.00)

Two Direct Debit payments to Freeola for Web hosting.

Payments of £10.80 were made in September & December 2014

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a. Income/Expenditure for period Aug 2014 to Jan 2015 be approved as presented.
- b. Accounts for 2014/15 be approved subject to independent check for presentation to the AGM
- c. That a donation of £40 be made to Flowerdown House for their hospitality for to-days meeting.
- d. That arrangements for AGM bar subsidy be confirmed under agenda Item AGM 2015

Tony Horry, Treasurer,

19th February 2015

The Treasurer's Report was accepted. Proposed by Graham Beeston and seconded by Rick Atkinson.

ITEM 5. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Jim Doran provided the following information:-

Membership Details:

Latest Membership number used is 719 (714 at the last AGM)

5 new members since the AGM,

83 rd Entry	Richard	Dawson
82 nd	Gordon	Wharrie
71 st	Geoff	Bailey
84 th	Keith	Runacres
93 rd	John	Ingham

3 members have passed away since the AGM:

Mike Horlock 83rd – at the beginning of this month

George Ring 95th – October 2014

Geoff Sperling 96th – December 2014

ITEM 5.1 NEWSLETTER HARDCOPY REQUESTS

A total of 34 current active member copies including 2 copies overseas: France and USA.

2 copies to sister organisations i.e. Admin Apprentices Association and RAF Halton Apprentices Association.

Newsletters to Widows - 6 copies in total.

Email addresses are an on-going issue to keep up to date with and since Peter put a notice on the website I have had a very small number of updates.

ITEM 5.2 ADVERTISING:

Remains a necessary requirement in AirMail and I utilise local area events to make the public aware of our existence.

Advertising via member area - free

The Membership Secretary's Report was accepted.

Proposed by Colin Ingram and seconded by Nigel Lodge.

ITEM 6. SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Nigel Lodge followed on from the Membership Secretary's report by adding that the new members had been sent "A Welcome Letter" and where requested a RAFLAA tie. Nigel is currently holding eight ties. If we continue to encourage new members then shortly there will be a need to order more.

One new member – Gordon Wharrie has yet to receive a formal welcome and this will be attended to.

Relatives of the three deceased members had been sent a letter of condolence on behalf of the Association.

The Secretary's Report was accepted.

Proposed by Peter Crowe and seconded by Tony Horry.

ITEM 7. RAF LOCKING APPRENTICE MEMORIAL

Rick Atkinson said that henceforward the word "**Memorial**" should be replaced by "**Monument**".

Rick reported on the current progress as follows:-

Rick produced a free-hand drawing of the main proposal. A copy of which is attached at the conclusion of the Minutes.

The 'architect' with whom he had been in contact is sponsored by Marshalls who are nationwide specialists in the provision of paving and general pedestrian safe areas. The quotation was for an 11M diameter 'apprentice wheel' but as yet no detail had been received about how the propeller blades would be incorporated. However, the price quoted was not fixed but estimated to be around £12.5k. How this was to be funded was not determined and it remained open as to whether this would be part of the Locking Parklands costs.

It was also suggested by Rick that an alternative could be to remove the posts around the wheel, reduce the size to 5M and erect the plinth outside the rim. The cost would be expected to be considerably reduced.

Meetings had taken place with St Modwen Developments and the subsidiary Locking Parklands. The latter is to have overall responsibility for the 'parkland development' and there is to be an annual levy on residence for the overall maintenance of the site – see < <http://www.lockingparklands.co.uk/>>

It has also been revealed that a college is no longer planned for the site as an alternative location has been found.

Rick Atkinson, Peter Crowe and Tony Horry have met with the developers. The plans for The Chapel have not been finalized but it is hoped that the Chapel will be the core of a Community Centre and funding is being sought for this by St Modwen. Whether this is to be part of a Section 106 expense was not revealed.

An alternative to the aforementioned 'wheel' was introduced by Peter Crowe. This design, see copy attached, was for an epoxy molded wheel which would give the appearance of being polished brass. No cost had been worked out but the idea was that it would be set inside a 5M² concrete block coloured in RAF serge blue. Peter's suggestion was comparable with the Halton Apprentices' wheel at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA).

As noted above there was a perceived need for funding for the project. There had been an underspend on the RAFLAA memorial at the NMA but this would not be

sufficient unless Locking Parklands / St Modwen were to come-up trumps. Rick suggested there should be a fund-raising scheme which others thought might best be achieved by inviting the membership to make donations in units of £10. One problem with this was seen to be 'what does one do with the collected monies if the scheme fell through.

The whole matter is an ongoing issue and Tony stated that the negotiations were on-going but that time was not on our side as the developers appeared to have a 6 month schedule for completion of this phase of The Parkland.

The report was accepted.

Proposed by Jim Doran and seconded by Nigel Lodge.

ITEM 8. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION.

This item was tabled by Tiny Kuhle in his position as Chairman. He made the following statement -

The Amendment to The Constitution had been discussed and voted on at the AGM on the 26th April 2014.

A copy of the proposed amendment had been advertised on the website and no objection had been received.

ITEM 9 AND ITEM 10 AGM 2015 AND DINNER DANCE BAND

Prior to this meeting Tiny Kuhle with Jim Doran and Nigel Lodge had met with Sarah at The Webbington to confirm the arrangements for the AGM.

The room rates were fixed and the AGM Dinner was agreed at £19 50

The "Garden Suite" as used in previous years would be the venue for the AGM and overhead projection and roving microphone facilities would be available.

Tea and biscuits would be available at the close of the AGM.

Prior to the AGM, as part of the "Meet and Greet" the bar would be available in the Garden Suit with drinks available at subsidised prices. A request was made for there to be a real ale available and it had been suggested by The Webbington's 'kellermeister' that such might be provided from The Butcombe Brewery.

"Atlantic Crossing" was once again to provide the evening's music and in response to a general request from the last and previous AGMs the volume would be turned down during the dining period. Tables would be set for 8 persons and there would be 4 bottles of house wine per table – 2 each of red and white – this choice could be altered if there was sufficient preference shown for one or the other. There had been an increase in costs since last year and, whilst discounted, the cost would still be £14.25 per bottle.

Action: Rick to provide a seating plan for the dinner.

The booking for the coach trip to Glastonbury was confirmed by Tony. A 21-seat coach was being provided and £17.50 per person. ETD was given as 10:00 with an ETA at Glastonbury 11:00. The return was ETD 15:30 and ETA 16:30. There had not been sufficient interest in the inclusion of a visit to Clarke's at Street and this was no longer included. Weather permitting a walk up to The Tor was possible but stout shoes are recommended!

Action: Tiny to write to O.C Cosford to seek a nomination for the Training Award. The matter was in the hands of Linda Cooper, the Admin Manager at Cosford.

Proposed Colin Ingram, seconded Graham Beeston

ITEM 11. RAF LAA WEB SITE

The website was thought to be working perfectly and Tiny Kuhle thanked Peter Crowe for his work. Peter expressed his professional opinion that the Website might be getting a little 'tired' but this fear was dispelled by Nigel and Jim who agreed that the site was informative and more than adequately fulfilled its purpose.

Peter did however emphasise that the availability of a deputy was something that should be considered.

ITEM 12 FABEA

The Chairman had reported on the last meeting at the last meeting, but confirmed that RAFLAA will be the host association for the meeting on the 7th July.

ITEM 13. NEWSLETTER

Colin Ingram in providing his report said that an 81st Entry member had made available a host of Locking Reviews. Colin said there was in reality too much paper and an alternative was necessary.

There was a need to ensure that associate members were made to feel welcome - as indeed they are - but that is a two-way thing. It is a responsibility for all where possible to ensure that lone persons are included in conversations where possible.

The need to publicise the re-election of members was raised. Currently Rick Atkinson, Peter Crowe and Colin Ingram would be 'tour-ex' in the coming year. There was a need to encourage some younger members to come on-board.

An obituary for Mike Horlock (83rd.) had been sent to Colin Ingram for the News Letter

Following on from the 52nd Committee Meeting whereat there had been a discussion about the Radar Museum at Neatishead, Norfolk.
<http://www.radarmuseum.co.uk/> Colin Ingram referred to his visit to the former RAF Bawdsey site and the development of a museum. Currently the museum is in need of funds - see <http://www.bawdseyradar.org.uk>

ITEM 14 AGM 2016 LOCATION

Following on from earlier discussions a number of options had been looked at for the 2016 AGM. The main concern was whether more members would be able to attend if the location was more central.

In addition consideration had to be given to relocating to a more central position within Weston-super-Mare rather than out at the Webbington at Loxton.

Rick had been to The Royal and all seemed to be OK. There were only 45 rooms and this was a potential turn-away although there was plenty of additional accommodation in the locality some of which might be less expensive.

It was agreed that as a precursor to the AGM members should be alerted to the fact that an alternative location was to be considered and Peter agreed to the following being put on the website:

“It has been suggested that more people might attend the 2016 AGM if the location was changed.

The committee have suggested 3 possible areas and would like some feedback from members prior to the 2015 AGM

The areas are Derbyshire, Peterborough or Weston-super-Mare.

The actual location in the selected area would be selected at the 2015 AGM”

ITEM 15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Jim said he had been asked to raise the matter by a member who was involved in the renewal of an airborne lifeboat.

AIRBORNE LIFEBOATS were powered lifeboats that were made to be dropped by fixed-wing aircraft into water to aid in air-sea rescue operations.

See http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Avro_Shackleton_with_Saunders-Roe_airborne_lifeboat.jpg

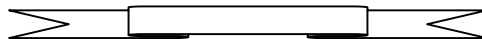
It is not known whether there is a plan to restore one such.

ITEM 16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next committee meeting would be held on Thursday 16th July 2015 at Flowerdown House Weston-super-Mare commencing at 13.00hrs.

Meeting Closed at 16.00hrs.

Nigel Lodge (Sec LAA)



OBITUARIES

GEOFF SPERLING 96TH ENTRY

Regretfully, particularly at this time of the year, wish to inform you of the passing of Geoff Sperling – 96th Entry on Christmas morning after a short time at St Barnabas House hospice in Worthing. He had developed an untreatable tumour in recent months.

Believe Geoff was an instructor at Locking around 1967 so perhaps there are LAA members who were acquainted with him then.

Ron Spain – 96th.

MIKE HORLOCK (83RD)

With great sadness, I have to report that Mike died peacefully yesterday in the St. John's Hospice, Mogerhanger, Beds.

Mike and I were old friends from Apprentice days when we were both in the 'B' Sqdn. boxing team. Mike was the 'hook' in the billet next to mine – I think 380 – and it was soon apparent that Mike's leadership relied on his strength of character rather than bluster and shouting. We met up again in Akrotiri, and remained firm friends ever since. Mike was a founder member of the Association, it was he who put me in touch with Joe Holroyd when Joe was forming the Association. Mike, and his first wife Diane, came to my wedding, with their baby daughter, Penny, who was only about 3 or 4 weeks old at the time.

His last posting was to Oakington, and when Mike left the Air Force, he joined Redifusion in their flight simulator group. He then joined CBS records to manage the production of audio tape cassettes, as this was nearer to his home in Bicester. Mike had a wide and varied career which included sales, and finally as a management consultant conducting training courses for the EU. After retiring, he took up flying, and gained his PPL; something I wished I could have done!

Mike was always good company to be with, a ready smile, and able to put anyone at ease because of his generous nature. Mike will be sadly missed.

*In sadness,
Tiny*

**DAVID JAMES KITCHING (94TH)
(7-10-1942 TO 16-11-2014)**

It is with regret that I report the passing under tragic circumstances of David Kitching of the 94th Entry on the 7th October 2014.

David graduated from Locking in 1962 and later trained as an NCO Air Electronics Operator flying in Shackletons, later after becoming Commissioned he moved to Vulcans and retired with the rank of Wing Commander.

He unfortunately suffered a stroke and suffered partial paralysis, having become wheelchair dependent it became impossible for him to live independently and he moved into the Royal British Legion Home in Bexhill-on-Sea in 2014.

Having been there for a short time David, a committed lifelong smoker was wheeled outside for a smoke and was later found to be on fire, tragically he did not recover from the shock and trauma of the event and passed away later in the day.

The 94th Entry have been holding annual Reunions since 1988 and David was an enthusiastic supporter and had attended most of them, he will be sorely missed at future gatherings.

Pete Purdy (94th Entry)

CLOSING THOUGHTS

ANNIVERSARY OF CHURCHILL'S FUNERAL

Whilst I'm sure a lot of you will know that it was 50 yrs. ago that Winston Churchill died, however, there was a splendid letter in the Sunday Telegraph from Min Larkin of Halton, who recalled that the escorts to the gun carriage bearing his coffin, were RAF Aircraft Apprentices from Halton, as Min said, '... distinguishable by their red hat bands.'

Min pointed out in his letter that Churchill had been instrumental in the foundation of the Aircraft Apprenticeship scheme, and which provided the backbone of the RAF during its difficult early years, and of course, during the Second World War. He went on to say that it was a massive loss to the country when the RAF Apprenticeship scheme was ended in 1993. Churchill would have been proud to know that he was escorted on his last journey by RAF Apprentices.

Min Larkin is now Archivist for RAF Halton, and was instrumental in setting up the Federation of Apprentice & Boy Entrants Associations (FABEA).



RAFLAA COMMITTEE

Appointment	Name	Address	Tel/email	Re-Election	Entry
President	Martin Palmer				91 st
Chairman	"Tiny" Kühle	22 Tavistock Close Woburn Sands Milton Keynes Bucks MK17 8UY	(01908) 583784 Hans.Kuhle@btopenworld.com	Apr 2016	87 th
Secretary	Nigel Lodge	9 Broadmead Green Thorpe End Norwich Norfolk NR13 5DE	(01603) 700 505 Nigel.lodge@btinternet.com	April 2017	91 st
Treasurer	Tony Horry	Hillside Cottage Kewstoke Road Kewstoke WSM BS22 9YD	(01934) 628383 Tony.horry@gmail.com	Apr 2016	76 th
Membership Secretary	Jim Doran	11 Saxonlea Close Rushden Northants NN10 6BF	(01933) 317357 Jimdoran12@hotmail.com	Apr 2017	219 th
Service Rep	Rick Atkinson	Gateway Cottage 1 Lake Walk Adderbury Oxfordshire OX17 3PF	(01295) 812972 rickatkinson@me.com	Sept 2015	91 st
AA Rep/ Webmaster	Peter Crowe	14 Hillview Road WSM N. Somerset BS23 3HS	(01934) 412178 webmaster@raflaa.org.uk	Sept 2015	95 th
Craft Rep	Graham Beeston	87 Hornbeam Rd Havant PO9 2UT	Home (02392) 346242 Work 07920038690 graham@mapleoak.co.uk	Sept 2015	209 th
Tech Rep	Andy Perkins	107 Balmoral Way Worle WSM BS22 9BZ	(01934) 417323 am.perkins@virgin.net	Sept 2015	109 th
Newsletter Editor	Colin Ingram	Fairhaven Gooseham Morwenstow Bude Cornwall EX23 9PG	01288 331363 colin.ingram90@gmail.com	Apr 2015	88 th

ADVERTISEMENTS

Discounts available to Serving and Veterans of the Armed Forces 'Reward for Forces'

Serving personnel and their partners of the Navy, Army, Air Force and Veterans, Service Widows/Widowers, Reservists, Cadets, MOD Civil Servants and the Royal British Legion are all welcome.

www.rewardsforforces.co.uk

'Defence Discount Service'

Who qualifies for the service?

The official Ministry of Defence discount service is available for all members of the Defence Community and you can join for free and start saving £100's a year. The Service is available for the follow:

Serving Armed Forces - Reserve Forces - Spouses/Partners of serving personnel - Forces Veterans - MOD Civil Servants

www.defencediscountservice.co.uk

The Fist and Sparks Lapel Badge/Tie



Contact

www.iolaire.co.uk/sparks.html



RAFLAA Memorabilia

RAFLAA Ties £7.50

Apprentice Wheel £2.00

Label Badges £2.00

Replacement Name Badges £2.75 (free to new members)

Coasters £2.00

p&p extra

tony.horry@gmail.com



The Apprentice Prayer

Teach us good Lord, to be thankful
For all the good times we had,
The skills we have learned,
The friendships we have shared
And the companionship we have enjoyed.
May all who have served the Apprenticeship of the Wheel
Be ever mindful of the needs of one another.

AGM ESSENTIALS

DINNER MENU SATURDAY 25TH APRIL 2015

AGM 2015 MENU

Lightly curried sweet potato & butternut soup

Smoked Salmon Salad

Baked Field Mushroom

Fan of Honeydew Melon & Orange Sorbet

Poached Salmon Fillet

Roast Topside of Beef

Supreme of Chicken Breast stuffed with Smoked Bacon

Lentil Nut Roast

Apple Crumble & Custard

White Chocolate & Fig Tart

Vanilla Cheesecake

Selection of Cheese & Biscuits

Tea and Coffee Served with Mints

**APPLICATION FOR RAFLAA AGM 2015
DINNER, DANCE AND FINGER BUFFET
25TH APRIL 2015**

Name	
Address	
Email Address	
Entry No.	

<i>Description</i>	<i>No of Tickets</i>	<i>Ticket Each</i>	<i>Total</i>
Lunch & Dinner		£30	£
Dinner & Dance		£21	£
Lunch Only		£10	£
Dinner Dance Guest		£31	£
Ladies Coach Trip to: Glastonbury		£17.50	£
TOTAL			£

Application for Coach trip to be returned asap

Cheques crossed account payee, made to **RAF Locking Apprentice Association**

Return application to:

Mr. A Horry, Hillside Cottage, Kewstoke Road, Kewstoke, Weston-Super-Mare, BS22 9YD

Tel: 01934628383 E-mail: tony.horry@gmail.com

Starter	Soup	Melon	Salad	Mushrooms
Number				
Main Course	Salmon	Beef	Chicken	Nut Roast
Number				
Dessert	Crumble	Fig Tart	Cheesecake	Cheese
Number				

Please complete the total number for each choice for all your party and return with your booking form and cheque.

Rooms at the Webbington Hotel. Accommodation contact Webbington Hotel, Loxton, W-s-M, BS26 2HU.

Tel: 01934750100. Email: info@webbingtonhotel.ecclipse.co.uk.

Rooms will be charged @£80 double, £65 single B&B per night for 2 night stay, £90 double, £70 single for 1 night stay. Please telephone the hotel direct and quote **RAFLAA** when booking to secure reduced rates. **ACCOUNTS MUST BE SETTLED WITH THE HOTEL.**

ANNUAL RAFLAA REUNION TIMETABLE

The bar in the Garden Suite will open at 11:00. Following our tradition, the bar will be subsidised, from **11:00 to 19:30**.

N.B. Do not buy drinks or wine in the main hotel bar – you will be charged full hotel prices!

At 12:30, members will proceed to the hotel restaurant for the finger buffet lunch while the hotel staff prepare the Garden Suite for the AGM.

After lunch, members will return to the Garden room ready for the AGM at 13:30 which will be followed by tea & biscuits.

In the evening, members should assemble in the Garden Room from 18:00 prior to the Dinner / Dance. The hotel has agreed to make the Garden Suite Bar exclusively available for the RAFLAA event. Any additional bottles of house wine that you may wish to purchase which will be charged at £11.

At around 19:30, members will proceed to The Brent Suite where the Dinner/Dance will be held.

Friday 24 th April 2015	18:00	Informal 'Meet & Greet' at the Webbington
Saturday 25 th April 2015	10:00	Ladies Coach Trip Departs
	11:00	Bar Facility opens in Garden Suite
	12:30	Buffet Lunch commences in restaurant
	13:30	AGM commences in Garden Suite
	15:00 approx.	Golden Entries (101st/102nd/103rd) presentations
	15:30 approx.	AGM ends. Tea served
	16:30	Ladies Coach Returns
	18:00	Bar opens in Garden Suite
	19:30	Members move into Brent Suite for dinner Bar subsidy ends
	21:30 approx.	Music for dancing starts
	23:59 approx.	Dance ends. Garden room bar shuts
