



RAFLAA Newsletter

SERIAL 57

JULY 2010

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Editor's Notes

Hello to you all,

*Following the article "Broadland Pirates" on page 24 March 2010, Brian Colby 87th has added a photo - Ed
He writes:*

Broadland Pirates (2)

Since I sent you my article entitled Broadland pirates, I have just found one of my 'lost' photos of the event which I will attach.

It shows 'Dickie' Richardson scratching his head wondering where we were heading, myself in the middle keeping an eye on the steering and Geordie Broomfield steady at the wheel of our monster launch in the summer of 1960.



I wished I had found it much earlier as I guess it's too late to add to the article, but thought I would send in any case.

0-0-0-0-0-0-0

I had a note from Mick Rush 87th. He writes:

Great stuff in the newsletter, keep it up. I wonder if the following might interest you.

The article in the March 2009 Newsletter from Dave White (78/79th) set me thinking. Dave was promoted to LAA while on jankers. It could only happen at Locking, but what set my elderly remaining brain cells working was this. We know that apprentice life was chaotic and circumstances could change both quickly and regularly, but who held apprentice NCO rank for the shortest time. May I humbly submit my own experience as a possible record.

I was promoted to LAA, must to the surprise of myself and all who knew me, on 15 December 1959 and demoted, together with 14 days jankers, on 3 February 1960 following the gravest miscarriage of justice in British Military history. (the dates are accurate 'cos I got all my service records from some office in MOD years ago for free before they moved to Cranwell and started charging for the privilege). So, a total of 51 days, and if you knock off the Christmas Grant even less. Can anyone beat that?

In addition, who was charged with the weirdest offence? It's not generally known, but associating with female company on Camp grounds was an offence for apprentices. I wasn't aware of that, but a snoop at the Locking Guardroom was, and I got 3 days for it. Reader, I married her, and later this month we will celebrate the 49th anniversary of that happy day.

Was anyone else charged with a strange offence? - Ed

0-0-0-0-0-0-0

Please keep the comments and the articles coming! It is your newsletter and I know that other ex-apps love to read about what happened to you.

Ed.

Deadline for next issue - 23rd September for November 10

All comments, contributions, ideas and feedback to the newsletter editor:

Chris Tett

Soft copy preferred!

Email: Chris@crtett.plus.com

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Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the 16th AGM of the RAF Locking Apprentice Association

From Dave Gunby, Secretary

Venue: Webbington Hotel, Loxton, Weston super Mare

Date: Saturday 24th April 2010 at 13:30 Hrs

Present:-

Air Cdre Martin Palmer	91 st	President
Tiny Kuhle	87 th	Chairman
Dave Gunby	72 nd	Secretary
Tony Horry	76 th	Treasurer
John Farmer	77 th	Membership Secretary
Peter Crowe	95 th	AA Rep/Webmaster
Andy Perkins	109 th	Tech Rep
Chris Tett	92 nd	Newsletter Editor

Apologies: -

Graham Beaston	209 th	Craft Rep
Rick Atkinson	91 st	Service Rep
Michael Horlock	83 rd	
Robin White	86 th	

There were 50 members in attendance.

My thanks to John Hall (92nd) and Barry Dinnage (87th) for the photographs – Ed

Webbington Hotel



ITEM 1 Chairman's Address

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 13.40hrs with a reading of the Apprentice Prayer. He then referred to those members who had sent their apologies.

There followed a minutes silence in memory of:

Aundray Cooray(71st),David Young(75th),Mike Barker(85th),Brian Cooke(83rd) Bob Holland and Chris Horn(99th).

The Chairman then addressed the AGM thus:

We return this year to the Webbington, which I thought was very good venue last year, so the Committee and I somewhat dismayed at the low turnout this year. The Committee and I asked for your opinions, and the comments that were received were very good, so I hope that there are other reasons for a low turnout. Maybe there are other events that are taking place, (I believe that the V Bomber Force are meeting at this time) or the economic climate is having a discouraging effect. Your committee has worked very hard to ensure an interesting and comfortable venue, with prices that are very similar to last year, so our disappointment is understandable. Having got that off my chest, let's carry on with a review of last year!

Our support of the FABEA continues and this year we hosted the annual meeting of the association members. One of the major aspects of service life of course, is the campaign in Afghanistan, and the lives that are lost there. We also recognised that the people of Wootton Bassett have shown great support for those returning in coffins, and in a way have represented the feelings of the rest of Britain, by their dignified presence on the route from Lyneham. As the lead Association this year, our Secretary was asked to write to the Mayor of Wootton Bassett and the OC RAF Lyneham, to thank, and express FABEA's appreciation of their efforts. We felt it right to acknowledge the painful tasks that the crews at RAF Lyneham have to carry out, frequently under the gaze of the news media.



Tiny Kuhle (standing) with L to R right Chris Tett, Tony Horry, Dave Gunby, Martin Palmer and John Farmer

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

In 2 years time we will be celebrating the 90th anniversary of the start of Apprentice training. At the 80th celebration, a service was held in St. Clement Dane's church, and afterwards, a buffet lunch in the Law Courts just opposite. One popular suggestion for the 2012 event, is that it be held at the National Arboretum where several associations have memorials already. Details will need to be worked out, but the idea has great merit. Your committee has discussed the idea, and also the possibility of our own Association's memorial there - we shall come to that later, at which point you might like to air your views. Whilst we still plan to have a memorial at the old RAF Locking site, the development appears to have ground to a halt.

Our President will shortly present our trophy for excellence to this year's recipient, the award is highly regarded and appreciated by the School, and is now actually presented twice, once here at our AGM, and then again in front of the School at the annual lunch of No.1 Radio School. I understand that the lunch will go ahead again this year, so that aspect is safe in this age of change and uncertainty!

Your committee has as ever done some sterling work to ensure that the Association is kept in fine shape. However, please do not lose sight of the fact that some of the committee have served for some considerable time, and will not be able to continue in their posts. We have mentioned this in the NL, so I urge you to help by getting nominations for some of the positions that are coming up for re-election. If any of you feel you could help, but are not sure what is involved, we could easily ensure that there is adequate 'feed-in' training. So at the appropriate time in the agenda, let's see some - dare I say it - volunteers! I believe that his organisation was formed by the founder members, because they wanted to remember an extremely important part of our lives. It was an experience that greatly influenced our later years, and the successes in our lives. It is why I'm so enthusiastic about this Association, and it can only continue with an enthusiastic committee, so get thinking when item 5 on the agenda is raised!

The Chairman then introduced the Association President.

ITEM 2 President's address

The President welcomed our official guest Tony Voysey (69th) from the Cranwell Association and also Sgt Shani Angel from No1 Radio School. The latter, not only having received the nomination from her superiors but was also commended for her work with young people outside her service life. Disappointingly Sgt Angel did not thank the members formally.

The President read the citation of this year's recipient of the RAFLAA Trophy and then presented the trophy, framed citation and cheque for £50.

The President thanked the Committee for their work during the year and re introduced the Chairman.

The Chairman then invited the Treasurer to present his report.



ITEM 3 Treasurers Report

I hope that you each have sight of a copy of the Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ending January 2010. The full accounts are here if anyone wishes to inspect them. These accounts have been audited and have been declared as a true and fair view of trading for the year and that the Balance Sheet is an accurate reflection of the Association's affairs at 31st January 2010

The balance sheet for the Association now shows assets of £12,453.44, an increase of £192.86 from the previous year. In 2007 the AGM agreed to set aside £3000 towards the provision of a Memorial at the RAF Locking site. The Committee agreed that £5000 should be invested in the bond as we have a healthy surplus. The Bond now stands at £5,578.09. At present, because interest rates remain low at 0.4% gross, we have re-invested in to a Deposit Bond for a further 3 months until June 2010, when the situation will be reassessed.

AGM 2009 Income for AGM 2009 = £3031.50 includes the £149.00 raised at the dinner and the Expenditure was a total of £3,836.45 The payment to the Webbington was £3570.45 ; £200 for the "Atlantic Crossing " Music duo ; £50 for the Trophy recipient ; £16.00 refund for over payment



Total Overall expenditure to the Association of £804.95

Tony Horry, Treasurer

Expenses

Donations		
Peterhead Sea Cadets	50.00	In memory of Sam Allen (76 th Entry)
Troop Aid	150.00	Donation from AGM Fund Raising
"Hearing Dogs for deaf people"	50.00	In memory of Mike Barker (85 th Entry)
RAFA	50.00	In memory of David Young (75 th)
RAFA Flowerdown House	80.00	Hosting Committee Meetings

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

PROFIT & LOSS

<u>SALES</u>	2009/2010	2008/2009
Membership fees	£2,900.00	£3,078.89
Life membership	£700.00	£1,200.00
Sales - ties, pins and videos	£135.00	£194.70
Donation	£0.00	£80.00
AGM and other misc income	£3,031.50	£2,467.50
Bank interest received	£232.67	£323.31
	£6,999.17	£7,344.40
<u>PURCHASES</u>		
Pins	£0.00	£0.00
Ties	£0.00	£0.00
Videos	£0.00	£0.00
Name badges	£20.25	£17.90
AGM and other purchases	£4,112.01	£2,802.95
Donations and wreaths	£380.00	£325.00
Other		£147.11
	£4,512.26	£3,292.96
<u>DIRECT EXPENSES</u>		
Advertising	£24.00	£24.00
Bank charges	£0.00	£0.00
Auditing	£50.00	£50.00
Refund	£77.62	£268.99
	£151.62	£342.99
<u>OVERHEADS</u>		
Travelling expenses	£538.40	£596.20
Printing	£903.94	£912.46
Telephone	£140.61	£88.00
Postage and carriage	£446.89	£420.35
Stationery	£112.59	£130.37
	£2,142.43	£2,147.38
<u>PROFIT/LOSS</u>	£192.86	£1,561.07

BALANCE SHEET

	2009/2010	2008/2009
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
Deposit Bond	£5,578.09	£5,348.63
Business Money Manager A/C	£3,712.44	£3,709.23
Community Account	£3,138.58	£3,183.39
Petty cash	£24.33	£19.33
<u>NETT CURRENT ASSETS</u>	£12,453.44	£12,260.58
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
<u>FINANCED BY</u>		
Brought forward balance	£12,260.58	£10,699.51
Profit and loss account	192.86	£1,561.07
	£12,453.44	£12,260.58

Direct Expenses and Overheads

Costs have remained fairly comparable with those in 2008/09.

Acceptance of the Treasurers report was proposed by John Hall (92nd) and seconded by Glynn Price (102nd) and all agreed.

ITEM 4 Membership Secretary's Report

General

This last year has been quite good as far as member matters are concerned:

The recruitment rate has risen to .92 new member/month from .75 new member/month for last year. The number of members joining still exceeds those leaving and therefore the number of names on the 'active' list continues to grow.

The number of members taking life membership also continues to grow, albeit slowly.

The number of members paying their dues by Standing Order Mandate has grown slightly.

There have been no resignations although several members have been 'terminated' due to non-payment of subscriptions

One member has 'rejoined'.

Unfortunately 4 members and 1 ex member have passed away.

Advertising

The association continues to advertise in the RAFA magazine. The returns from this source have not been as good as in the past, but we live in hope!

The Independent Pilots Association (IPA) continues to offer us free advertising in their magazine on a when required/space available option.

We hope to have an advert in the RAF News later this year.

This year I intend to target RAFA Clubs with posters. If there are any RAFA members present who would care to take a poster for their home club, I have a few with me, it will save on postage!

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Any suggestions with regard to any other (preferably) free advertising will be most gratefully received.

Newsletter

The Newsletter continues to be distributed mainly by down-load from the RAFLAA web site, or by hard copy. There are a very few cases where members prefer a personal copy via e-mail. The system seems to be working well. We are always glad of feedback either to the NL editor or the webmaster.

- I send out 178 e-mail notifications that a new edition of the NL is available on the website, and 3 personal E-mail copies.
- 169 hard copies of the NL to UK addresses and 8 hard copies of the NL to Overseas addresses are printed and posted by Graham Beeston; as are
- 14 hard copies of the NL to the families of members who have passed away, and,
- 7 Hard copies of the NL to brother organisations

Life Membership and Standing Orders

- Life membership continues to be attractive. The number of members paying their subs this way grows slowly but surely.
- The problem with members who pay their subscription by SOM, and who have failed to update the subscription amount paid by their bank (to £10.00) is almost resolved. We have now only 3 members who for one reason or another still cannot get it sorted out.
- Something which has been mentioned before is the few members who have 'dropped off the map'. Last year there were 4 members and I appealed to members present for contact details if known. It seemed to work, as now there are only 2.

The two remaining are:

Colin Stanforth 83rd
Geoff Walton 100th

Morpeth
Pettistree (last heard of in Australia)

We have no contact with them, but their subs continue to be paid by SOM (at the old rate). Again; if anyone has news of, or contact with either, please ask them to get in touch.



John Farmer, Membership Secretary

Membership changes since the last AGM (up to the 21st April 2009)

- We now have 671 names on the database of which 359 are 'active'.
- 10 new members have joined.
- No members have resigned and 4 (active) members and an ex member have passed away.
- 4 members have been terminated so far this year due to shortfalls in their subscriptions.
- More members have applied for life membership giving a total of 76 life members.
- There are now 220 Members paying by SO and 65 members not paying by SO.

Changes of personal details

Please keep me informed in any changes in your personal details, especially those that may affect delivery of the newsletter; (E-mail and home addresses).

Acceptance of John's Report was proposed by Harry North(96th) and seconded by John Trussler (87th). There was unanimous approval.

The Chairman thanked John for his report and introduced the next item on the Agenda.

ITEM 5 Election of officers.

The officers of the Association due for re-election were Hans Kuhle (Chairman) Tony Horry (Treasurer) and John Farmer (Membership Secretary). Nominations were sought from members for the posts of Chairman and Treasurer there being no volunteers and with the willingness of the sitting tenants both were elected for a further 3 years.

John Farmer gave notice that he was prepared to serve a further final 3 years. John's decision was known by the Committee and Andy Perkins (109th) had expressed a desire to volunteer for the post. Andy would shadow the Mem Sec with a view to taking over at some time in the next 3 years. John's offer to continue was accepted.

The secretary reminded the AGM that he had served 1 of his final 3 years and also that a new Craft Apprentice Rep was still needed to replace Graham Beeston.

Consequently the Committee list remains as per the list inside the back cover for the time being.

ITEM 6 RAF Locking Apprentice Memorial

The Secretary reported that there has been no progress in the development of the Locking Parklands site and therefore no progress could be made with the proposed provision of an Apprentice Memorial in that location.

The secretary then addressed the meeting with a view to the provision of a memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum. The Committee had asked the secretary to look into the possible provision. He had done a considerable amount of work and produced an approximate full size model for members approval. Although, only the secretary's idea of what might be provided, it met with enthusiastic comment.



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Members agreed that a presence at the NMA was needed and that the design and colours were suitable. There was a suggestion that the number of apprentices involved should be shown and the secretary agreed to incorporate this in a revised design. Four widely differing estimates had been obtained and the secretary would look into the two lowest ones in fine detail before reporting to the July Committee meeting. Drawings/Photographs would appear on the website as soon as possible with an invitation to members to comment. The secretary also pointed out that the 90th Anniversary of Apprentice and Boy Entrant training would be celebrated at the NMA in 2012 and it would seem right and proper that this Association had a memorial presence.

ITEM 7 FABEA

The Chairman and Secretary would attend the forthcoming AGM on 15th July at RAF Halton. At this meeting it is expected that more flesh will be put on the bones of the proposed celebrations at the NMA in May 2012. They would report to our Committee the following week at Flowerdown House, Weston-Super-Mare.

ITEM 8 Newsletter

Chris Tett thanked members for their contributions over the past year and appealed for more input. This year's "Wordsmith" award went to Brian Colby (87th). Brian had contributed to all of the editor's productions in the past year.

The Chairman thanked Chris for his efforts in producing what is the Association's main vehicle for communication.



Chris Tett presents award to Brian Colby

ITEM 9 RAFLAA Web Site

Webmaster Peter Crowe reported all well with the website. No problems having been experienced during the past year.

The Chairman thanked Peter for his work.

ITEM 10 Golden Entries 86th, 87th and 88th

Roy Abrahams spoke for the 86th

After the goodbyes on Southampton railway station, the 3-tonner ride to Locking and the reception committee Roy came to the swift conclusion that his life would never be the same. One particular story Roy told was that of his attraction to a Dance school which promised, on its plaque outside, something called "social intercourse". At least one of those words appealed greatly to Roy and he duly entered only to find that, as he had to be in uniform, boots were not the thing for the shiny floor or to trip the light fantastic. There were other stories of Summer Camp, Sports day, Long queues at the mess and one concerning a Chinese girl he met in Malaya whose grandmother had run the Chinese laundry at Locking.

Bryan Chillary spoke for the 87th

Bryan spoke entertainingly with many stories of his and his fellow entry members sporting prowess. There were tales of scrumpy drinking, cycle training in civvies, organised fracas on the beach at Weston versus the Teds and the many activities concerning those labelled "Senior Entry". There were on camp activities such as re-positioning the squadron Commanders prized Buggati motor car and others of bikes and bits of bikes together with civilian clothes secreted in and around the wing. Bryan was, in retrospect, grateful for this introduction to life in the RAF which provided him and his 209 colleagues with a sound training and further education and also made him many friendships which have lasted 50 plus years. The final story that Bryan told was that of the whole entry trip on a White Funnel vessel which toured from Weston to Minehead or was it Ilfracombe? Bryan was hoping that the matter would be resolved at the forthcoming first reunion of his Entry in a few weeks time.

Vic Gibbs spoke for the 88th

Vic said that although he started with the 87th illness delayed his progress and he was transferred to the 88th. Vic had been at boarding school for 5 years prior to enlistment so barrack room life was not a prospect he feared as others may have done. Vic arrived as a passenger on a steam train from Paddington. Vic went on to relate much of his working life as opposed to his exploits with the 88th. He did state that if any member wished to visit the World War II bunker at RAF Uxbridge he could make the necessary arrangements.

The Chairman thanked the entry representatives for their contribution.

ITEM 11 Venue and format of the AGM/Reunion 2010

There was some discussion with reference to a new venue on the pier at Weston but as this was not up and running as yet and other difficulties may ensue it was decided to continue for at least one more year with the Webbington "all under one roof" AGM and Reunion. Joe Holroyd (85th) proposed and Charles Hart (71st) seconded and all agreed.

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

ITEM 12 Any other business

- a) The secretary had received a request for information about the sporting achievements of ex RAF Locking Apprentices during their service and civilian life at the standard of Command representation up to Olympic feats. This request would appear in the next newsletter. RAF Hendon museum mounting a display as part of the 90th celebrations.
- b) John Farmer said he had the contact details of a person in Oxfordshire who had surplus radio equipment and if anyone was interested they could contact him.
- c) Tony Horry announced that the entertainers for this evening had cancelled due to ill health but a suitable replacement had been found.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15.50hrs.

AGM Dinner/Dance

On Saturday evening after the AGM, the annual RAFLAA Dinner/Dance was held. Everybody seemed to thoroughly enjoy the meal and there was a good choice of options on the menu.



Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Due to illness, our original duo could not make the venue but the stand-ins, Julie Thursday and Tony, did us proud and were enjoyed by everybody. They supplied just the right sort of music for our age group and the fact that they met with wide approval was illustrated by the large amount of couples who got up to dance. There was also ample opportunity to chat with friends old and new. In short, a thoroughly enjoyable time was had by all and those who did not come missed a treat. Hopefully next year we will see more people at this annual event.



Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association



Our Chairman, Tiny Kuhle, went round parting people from their money, but all in the good cause of 'Help for Heroes'.

Tiny then organised a coin tossing competition where everyone stood up and tossed a coin. Those that failed to match the 'official coin' had to sit down. This was repeated until there was one winner who was Phil Marston 92nd.

A bottle of RAF Locking Apprentice Association Merlot was kindly provided as the prize by Brian Garratt of 87th. Brian brewed the wine, bottled it and made up and printed the label for the wine.

People were very generous and the event raised £150 for 'Help for Heroes'. Their letter of thanks is shown on the next page.





18th May 2010

Mr Tony Horry
Hillside Cottage
Kewstoke Road
Kewstoke
North Somerset
BS22 9YD

Dear Mr Tony Horry,

Donation from RAF Locking Apprentices Association Reunion Annual Dinner and Dance


Thank you so much for your donation of **£150.00** to Help for Heroes. We appreciate every penny that comes in and we will ensure that it is put to use providing support for the men and women who are injured in the service of our country.

When Emma and I decided to 'do our bit to help the blokes', wounded Servicemen and women, we had no idea that so many people felt the same as us. We are proud parents of a soldier and know what it is to have him away fighting; we also know what it is like to see his friends injured with their lives changed forever. We cannot prevent these terrible injuries but by joining together with others in support, we can do something positive and help them on the road to recovery.

Your donation will go towards the provision of services and facilities that will help the wounded launch back into the next phase of their lives. Already we have been able to fund the Headley Court Rehabilitation Complex, assist both Combat Stress and SSAFA in their excellent work and helped fund adaptive sports through the Battle Back programme. We have recently announced a £20m grant to help fund Personnel Recovery Centres in partnership with the Services and The Royal British Legion and we are now working to raise a further £20m to fund the Individual Recovery plans of those injured on duty.

Our work is by no means over, there is a great deal to do but your contribution will make a very great difference to the lives of some very special people. On behalf of all of us at H4H and all those who we will help, thank you.

With thanks


Bryn and Emma Parry
Co Founders Help for Heroes

www.helpforheroes.org.uk

Help for Heroes Limited a company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales under number 6363256. Registered charity number 1120920.
Unit 6, Aspire Business Centre, Ordnance Road, Tidworth, Hants SP9 7QDTel: 0845 673 1760 Email: info@helpforheroes.org.uk

NOTICES

2011 RAFLAA Annual AGM and Dinner Dance

Advance Notice

Subject to confirmation at the next committee meeting, the 2011 RAFLAA AGM and dinner/dance will be held at the Webbington Hotel, Loxton, on Saturday 16th April 2010. The hotel has indicated it will be able to hold room prices at the same rate as for 2010 (£75 for a double/twin room based on 2 sharing and £60 for a single room) and is accepting bookings now. More details will follow in the next Newsletter.

Committee Vacancy

As stated at the AGM, there will be a vacancy on the RAFLAA Committee. Dave Gunby, our Secretary, will be retiring no later than April 2012 although he is willing to stand down at any intervening time. This will give whoever takes up the post an easy takeover as Dave will be around to give advice during the takeover period. Dave has given the RAFLAA six good years and thinks it is time to hand over.

Dave has kindly written the job description below. - Ed

Job Description - Secretary RAF Locking Apprentice Association.

- Time required is 1 hour per week averaged over the year.
- A degree of computer literacy is needed.
- Be a contact point for the Association.
- Maintain contact with other Associations as necessary.
- Prepare Agendas for Committee meetings (2 per annum)
- Prepare agendas for AGM (1 per annum)
- Prepare RAFLAA report for FABEA (1 per annum)
- Write and publish minutes for meetings (3/4 per annum)
- Attend Committee Meetings (2), AGM(I) and FABEA (1)
- Attend No 1 Radio School Annual Lunch when invited.
- Write letters as necessary although this is less of a chore with the advent of e-mail.
- Claim Expenses for Telephone calls (including e-mail), Stationary, Postage and mileage to attend meetings except for RAFLAA AGM.

If you have a question or would like more details please contact Dave direct.

Tele: 01522 525484 Email: dpgraf72@btinternet.com

If you would like to apply, please contact our Chairman, Tiny Kuhle.

Tele: 01908 583784 Email: Hans.Kuhle@btopenworld.com

Parkinson's

From Taff Price 102nd

PARKINSON'S^{UK} CHANGE ATTITUDES. FIND A CURE. JOIN US.

At the recent AGM, Chris Tett issued an invitation for members to submit an item which related them to a Charity. As I have Parkinson's, and I am becoming involved with Parkinson's UK (formerly known as the Parkinson's Disease Society), I thought that maybe some of you out there may not understand what Parkinson/s disease is, and so I decided to accept his invitation and submit this short article.

* * * * *

After some major stress in both my working and home life I did not feel "right" Nearly two years later after many visits to my GP, being treated for a frozen shoulder and depression, undergoing counseling and talking to my Occupational Health Coordinator, I was eventually referred to the Neurology Consultant in Gloucester Royal Hospital in 2002. I was diagnosed with Parkinson's and my initial reaction was shock and horror, as all I ever knew about the condition was this vision I had, of physically distorted, trembling and drooling old people. I was not prepared for this diagnosis at all and it took me a lot of reading to convince me that I was not necessarily destined for this future. Today, with the aid of medication I am able to lead a fairly full and active life. This is not the case for everyone, but I am lucky because my good days outnumber my bad days. Some sufferers have even run the London Marathon. I am currently training to be a volunteer educator for Parkinson's UK. This role involves visiting care homes and other such places, to try to increase the staff's understanding of the condition and to change people's attitudes

PARKINSON'S^{UK} CHANGE ATTITUDES. FIND A CURE. JOIN US.

So what is Parkinson's Disease ?

Parkinson's is progressive and debilitating but not fatal. Parkinson's is not contagious, infectious or thought to be hereditary. Medication is the most common treatment although electrical deep brain stimulation, surgery and chemical stimulation, internally delivered using a surgically implanted pump, have all been used. Unfortunately some treatments have been known to cause hallucinations and nightmares, or lead to compulsive behavior such as gambling.

People with Parkinson's don't have enough of the chemical dopamine, because some of the nerve cells in their brain have died. Without it people can find that their movements become slower so it takes longer to do things. This can make everyday activities, such as eating, getting dressed, or using a phone or computer, difficult or frustrating. Some people need more support than others.

As well as the symptoms that affect movement, people with Parkinson's can find that other issues, such as tiredness, pain, depression, impotence, hypertension and constipation, can have an impact on their day-to-day lives.

Every hour, someone in the UK is told they have Parkinson's. One in 20 is under the age of 40. Because we're here, no one has to face Parkinson's alone. There are about 120,000 diagnosed cases in the UK.

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Parkinson's UK brings people with Parkinson's, their carers and families together via our network of local groups, our website and free confidential helpline. Specialist nurses, our supporters and staff provide information and training on every aspect of Parkinson's.

As the UK's Parkinson's support and research charity we're leading the work to find a cure, and we're closer than ever. We also campaign to change attitudes and demand better services.

Our work is totally dependent on donations. Help us to find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by Parkinson's.

HELPLINE: Call FREE on 0808 800 0303 Monday-Friday: 9am-8pm, Saturday: 10am-2pm

Website : www.parkinsons.org.uk

Or call me: Taff Price: 01452 615265

Or email me: glyn.price@blueyonder.co.uk

Wanted – Details of Your Sporting Achievements

As explained in Item 18 in the minutes of the recent AGM, the RAF Museum at Hendon are mounting a special exhibition as part of their 90th celebrations. They would like information about the sporting achievements of ex RAF Locking Apprentices during their service and civilian life at the standard of Command representation up to Olympic feats.

If you took part, and especially if you won anything, please can you provide details to our secretary.

Dave Gunby,

Tele 01522 525484

Email: dpgraf72@btinternet.com

Address: 23 Toynton Close, Gregg Hall Estate, Lincoln, Lincolnshire. LN6 8AL.

Cenotaph

Every year the annual Service of Remembrance is held at by the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London. Ex-servicemen form up and march past the Cenotaph after the service. The RAFLAA sends representatives each year who march with FABEA (Federation of Apprentice and Boy Entrant Associations).

The Cenotaph in Whitehall serves as the focus for the nation's annual commemoration of those who fought and died in war. The Royal Family, as heads of the armed services, political leaders and foreign ambassadors lead the wreath-laying.

On Remembrance Sunday, the nearest Sunday to Armistice Day - the 11th day of the 11th month when, at the 11th hour, the end of the First World War was declared - crowds line Whitehall to watch the sombre ceremony, pay their respects with the two-minute silence and to applaud the marchers.

In 2010, Remembrance Sunday is on **Sunday 14 November**.

Your RAFLAA is likely to be allocated 6 tickets and it is likely that Tiny Kuhle and Chris Tett will represent the RAFLAA which leaves four tickets. The tickets are free but you must pay your own transport. If you would like to come along to join us and pay your respects to those gone before, please contact our secretary, Dave Gunby on 01522 525484 or dpgraf72@btinternet.com

Reunions

87th Entry 50th Reunion

From Tiny Kuhle 87th

The entry held its reunion of the 50th year of pass-out on the 19th May at the Webbington Hotel. A surprising number arrived on the previous evening, and celebrations did start early, finishing very late on the Tuesday (though really the early morning of the 19th!). Some stout souls did make use of the hotel's swimming pool on the morning of the Wednesday, in my case just to help me sober up (Charlie Trussler still owes me the fiver that said I wouldn't!).



We came from far and wide for our reunion, Australia, Canada, Spain, Guernsey, and though still in the British Isles, Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis, which can be time consuming to travel from. There were 65 of us 'lads' and 56 'girls' gathered together, which is roughly a third of our pass-out numbers. Along the way we have lost a few, and there were quite a number that would have come had they been fit enough.

The programme that we chose was based very much on the format of our AGMs, except that the buffet lunch carried on a lot longer! The 'meet & greet' session was aided by a display of memorable photos, and a rolling DVD slide show, which was so popular that we wished we'd put seats in front of the screen. The buzz was electrifying and the bar was very popular, with me being accused of queue bashing when I tried to buy drinks for someone else - that NAAFI queue syndrome has still not been erased! There were so many memories to recount, and corrected, as 50 years takes its toll on the little gray cells. This is one example of Charlie Trussler's memory:

There was so much to reminisce about those Locking days and to catch up over 50 years of the wide ranging and varied careers we had pursued. How good was your memory? I thought I had done extremely well until breakfast on the day of departure. Dave Smith reminded me of a visit he made to my home. He was able to describe the house, its location and how we "decoked" my Royal Enfield motorbike, he even remembered what Mum gave us for lunch. You know what - I have absolutely no recollection of any of it.

And further:

Some of us talked about the 87th boat trip to Ilfracombe but still no one has admitted to knowing who organised it. I wonder how many of you noticed a group of 6 or 7 small photos showing a

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few of the lads with their own style 87th Entry flag, this flag fluttering on a lanyard (yes it was on the boat) and a pile of beer cans. This was the first time I had seen these photos which were from Will Scarlett. They represent the only evidence that we went on that boat trip probably in the summer of 1958.

Ah yes, the 'boat trip', some of us thought that it was to Minehead - how was I to know? I'd never been to either place, but where ever it was it was a 'grand day out'.

The staff of the Webbington Hotel did us proud, with lots of 87th entry badge logos as direction



signs to guide people to the various function rooms. We also used the duo, 'Atlantic Crossing' for the music, who were much appreciated for performing the 'right' music. We also had a raffle which raised £324.02 in aid of 'Help for Heroes' The first prize was a nice bottle of malt whiskey, with the 2nd & 3rd prizes of wine, produced, and labelled with the entry badge, courtesy of Brian Garratt. To my shame I can't name the winners, but hopefully they will know who they are!

In conclusion, I must give my thanks to 'Charlie' Trussler for the communication work to gather us all together, and Barry Dinnage for the research to get names, addresses, etc, and putting together a superb montage of photos together to remind us of what we looked like those 50 years ago. It made the 2+ years of planning all worthwhile. I did have one nameless volunteer to organise the next one - so long as it's for the next 50th!

87th Reunion Thanks

I also got this note from Brian Colby - Ed

From Brian Colby- 87th

87th Entry – 50th Anniversary Reunion at the Webbington Hotel

Many thanks 'Charlie' Sue, Barry and Tiny for organising such a brilliant reunion, your efforts to contact 114 members and then get 68 of us, together with our wives, for the bash made it all worthwhile. The photos and memorabilia brought so many memories flooding back, it was an absolute delight to meet up once again with so many of the Entry, and your efforts are greatly appreciated.

90th Reunion to Hong Kong and beyond

From Derick Cotton, 90th

The 90th (1958 to 1961) with over 200 members was amongst the largest entries to train at Locking. Since the mid 1980's former members have been sharing triennial reunions along with a wide array of intervening informal and smaller gatherings in various parts of the world. The latest adventure was perhaps the most ambitious to date with plans starting in the Spring of 2007 when a group were enjoying one of a regular series of breaks in Cumbria. Over Sunday morning coffee one of the party (Neil "Taff" Grant) remarked that 2009 would be the year for the celebration of his 20th Wedding Anniversary - his second marriage and one that the rest of the assembly had witnessed throughout. Neil and his wife Maria said that their choice would be a cruise in the Far East. In true apprentice style, by the end of the day, Phil Mills had found a suitable cruise, Taff had completed successful negotiations with two competing travel agencies and 5 couples had booked and paid deposits to share the experience and celebrations! Five more names were added to the list later – but unfortunately two had to withdraw.

Quickly winding the clock forward, the party of 13 met on the rear deck of the Costa Classica in Hong Kong on 24th October 2009 and then enjoyed 14 days together visiting the Philippines, Borneo, Brunei, Singapore, Vietnam and China. The trip included many memorable sights but also included witness of the debris of the Typhoon that had wreaked havoc and death in Manila and a week later the experience of 36 hours of high seas caused by a second Typhoon that again had fatal effects as it passed through the Philippines and created serious floods and loss of life in Vietnam.



A group photo on the Costa Classica (l to r) Neil and Maria Grant (anniversary couple) Keith and Maureen Stevenson, Derick and Barbara Cotton, Mike and Pauline Stanley, Pat and Phil Mills, Dave Gill (seated) – Peter and Gerry Roberts were also part of the party but were unavailable for the picture.

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Following the cruise 4 couples spent a few days in Hong Kong before flying on to Australia. Three couples then drove from Cairns to Sydney enjoying en route, snorkelling on the reef, visits to the Whit Sundays and Fraser Island and sampling wine in the Hunter Valley. The four couples met up again in Adelaide and were then joined by three more 90th Entry couples – now all long term residents in Oz – and shared together a memorable BBQ, lots of catching up - and of course a small amount of the local wine.



The reunion in Adelaide (l to r) Mike Stanley, Derick Cotton, Chris Anscombe, Phil Mills, Peter Roberts, Roger Pyne, Peter Bergman

During the stay in Adelaide chance was also taken to visit Ian Strachan (85th) now a long term resident and well experienced guide to the delights of the Barossa Valley who asked to be remembered to his former entry colleagues.



The visit to Ian Strachan. (l to r) Barbara Cotton, Ian and Eileen Strachan.

The 90th are planning another “last” of their series of Reunions. This one will celebrate our 50th Anniversary since graduating and takes place on Saturday 17th September 2011 in the Royal Hotel Weston Super Mare. For more information have a look at www.tomsnet.org or contact Mick Stanley on mick.stanley@blueyonder.co.uk

94th Entry 50th Anniversary of Attestation

From Pete Purdy 94th Entry

In 2009 I was 'volunteered' to organise a reunion on behalf of the 94th Entry and chose the Honiley Court Hotel near Warwick for the venue. The Entry has been holding annual reunions since 1988 at various venues around the country, usually attended by 20-25 members and wives, girlfriends etc and all have been very successful. The idea for the first reunion came from Graham Holbrook and we all assembled in WSM at the Berni Royal Hotel for a weekend of 'lamp swinging and recounting war stories' which was very successful and we decided that it should be an annual event.

Since my retirement in 1992 I have been trying by various means to find all 68 who passed out in 1962 and we have so far accounted for 63 members. The recent 50th anniversary was attended by, Graham Holbrook, Taff Davies, Al Thomas, Chippy Wood, Colin Clayton, Dave Kirk, Dave Kitching, Doug Bradley, Eric Brown, Geoff Hadley, Jock Sergison, John Bates, Len Kitching, Tiny Edwards, Mick Cross, Mike Pyle, Flash Garratt, Paul Edwards, Rod Austin, Roger Todd, Ron Baldwin, Stuart Hall, Ted Parker, Vic Clarkson, Trevor Gears, and Pete Purdy.

We had a very successful weekend, assembling on Friday 19th March and most departed on Sunday 21st but some of us stayed for the Sunday night and during the day visited the Museum at RAF Cosford which was very worthwhile. I can thoroughly recommend the Honiley Court as a venue, should any other Entry be considering a reunion.



Back row standing: Holbrook, Sergison, Bradley, Austin, Clarkson, Kirk, Edwards M, Parker, Wood.

Centre standing: Kitching D, Todd, Clayton, Hadley, Hall S, Garratt, Kitching L, Pyle, Thomas.

Sitting: Edwards P, Stride, Davies, Cross, Baldwin, Bates, Purdy, Brown.

Sadly the 'Grim Reaper' has been very active within the Entry and we have so far to our knowledge lost 9 members, those being:- Nat Duffy (Shackleton crash), Dave Taylor, Ron Kerr, Joe Hall, Paul Godden (RRAF), Gus Wilson, Alan Marshall, Sandy Gibb, Norman 'Lefty' Wright (Ex 93rd).

Those members still AWOL are:- Bill Jarvis, Tony Snell, Chick Thompson, Fess Parker and Wilf Pinder. If anyone out there knows of the whereabouts of any of the aforementioned, I will be pleased to hear from you at, pete@orsoncart.plus.com or on 01508 570432

Tit-Bits

Proof That The World Is Nuts

From Pete Hoare 92nd

In the Lebanon, men are legally allowed to have sex with animals, but the animals must be female. Having sexual relations with a male animal is punishable by death.

Like THAT makes sense.

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

In Bahrain, a male doctor may legally examine a woman's genitals, but is prohibited from looking directly at them during the examination. He may only see their reflection in a mirror.

Do they look different reversed?

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

Muslims are banned from looking at the genitals of a corpse. This also applies to undertakers. The sex organs of the deceased must be covered with a brick or piece of wood at all times.

A brick?

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

The penalty for masturbation in Indonesia is decapitation.

Much worse than 'going blind!'

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

There are men in Guam whose full-time job is to travel the countryside and deflower young virgins, who pay them for the privilege of having sex for the first time.

Reason: under Guam law, it is expressly forbidden for virgins to marry.

Let's just think for a minute; is there any job anywhere else in the world that even comes close to this?

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

In Hong Kong, a betrayed wife is legally allowed to kill her adulterous husband, but may only do so with her bare hands. The husband's illicit lover, on the other hand, may be killed in any manner desired.

Ah! Justice!

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

In Cali, Colombia, a woman may only have sex with her husband, and the first time this happens, her mother must be in the room to witness the act.

Makes one shudder at the thought.

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

In Santa Cruz, Bolivia, it is illegal for a man to have sex with a woman and her daughter at the same time.

I presume this was a big enough problem that they had to pass this law?

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

In Maryland, USA, it is illegal to sell condoms from vending machines with one exception: Prophylactics may be dispensed from a vending machine only 'in places where alcoholic beverages are sold for consumption on the premises.

Is that a great country? Well, not as great as Guam!

~~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

Thank you all for reading this, if you need to reach me in the future I will be in Guam!

Some Maths +Logic:

From Geoff Corby 92nd

Here is a little something someone sent me that is indisputable mathematical logic. (It also made me Laugh Out Loud.) Remember, this is a strictly mathematical viewpoint. It goes like this:

What Makes 100%? What does it mean to give MORE than 100%? Ever wonder about those people who say they are giving more than 100%? We have all been to those meetings where someone wants you to give over 100%. How about achieving 103%? What makes up 100% in life?

Here's a little mathematical formula that might help you answer these questions:

If:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

is represented as:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26.

Then:

H-A-R-D-W-O-R-K

$8+1+18+4+23+15+18+11 = 98\%$

And

K-N-O-W-L-E-D-G-E

$11+14+15+23+12+5+4+7+5 = 96\%$

But,

A-T-T-I-T-U-D-E

$1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 = 100\%$

And,

B-U-L-L-S-H-I-T

$2+21+12+12+19+8+9+20 = 103\%$

AND, look how far ass-kissing will take you.

A-S-S-K-I-S-S-I-N-G

$1+19+19+11+9+19+19+9+14+7 = 118\%$

So, one can conclude with mathematical certainty, that while **Hardwork** and **Knowledge** will get you close, and **Attitude** will get you there, it's the **Bullshit** and **Ass kissing** that will put you over the top.

Apprentice days

86th Golden Entry

From Roy Abraham 86th

Memories (with poetic licence)

I guess it was the same for many of us; that April morning in 1957, standing on the railway station platform, feelings awry - excitement tainted with trepidation - surrounded by Mum, Dad, siblings and, maybe, sundry aunts and uncles. I wonder how many of us appreciated the extent of the life-changing experience on which we were to embark.

In clouds of smoke and steam our transport arrived – yes, it was the days of steam locomotives – to take us to Weston-super-Mare. For many it was the first time away from home; travelling to an unknown world where we would meet with others from what then seemed far flung points of the compass – north, south, east and west of the British Isles, as well as from overseas – New Zealand, Rhodesia, Malta, and other remote corners of the Commonwealth. Like all young creatures in spring we were fledging the nest (just been watching BBC2's 'Springwatch')!

We realised things would never be the same when, on arriving at WSM railway station, we were greeted by RAF personnel of various seniority (later identified as species known as corporals and sergeants) who told us to load our luggage into a Bedford truck, and then were immediately ordered to climb in after it! Where was the coach!!?

Yes, life would change.

I'll not dwell on the day-to-day experiences during our three year sojourn (?) at RAF Locking because these are common knowledge. Instead, I'll try to recall some of the more amusing events that befell us.

Entertainment in the 1950s still consisted, in part, of visits to the dance hall, but how many of us could dance? For reasons that are pretty obvious, those of us who couldn't decided that lessons were the order of the day. We duly enrolled at the Schofield School of Dancing (thanks to Barry Price, 85th, for reminding me of the school's name) whose motto "For the Promotion of Social Intercourse" was boldly emblazoned on a brass plaque outside the building – clearly, we had chosen the right place. As sprogs we were yet to be allowed out in civvies so our dancing attire featured best blue and boots – not to mention the shirt collar so starched that it felt like wearing an opened sardine can around the neck - more on that later. Unfortunately, this endeavour was short lived. Boots may have been made for walking but they certainly weren't made for dancing. Not to mention contact with the dancing instructress's feet!

So, what could we do with best blue and boots at the weekend? Well, if we included the webbing belt we were fair match for the Bristol Teds. Surely, ridding Weston's citizens of this blight on their doorstep would stand us in good stead with the town. Wouldn't it? Answer: NO! Much to our surprise, after a couple of encounters which involved emerging from behind the sea wall as our prey ambled pass, the local police, and the station commander, did not share our concept of good neighbourliness. But I think it still went on!

Oh well, it'll have to be the pictures. I'm still amazed that on our ten bob a week we managed the bus ride into town, good seats at the cinema – back row if appropriately accompanied - a coffee and cake in Fortes Soda Fountain and still had enough left for NAAFI tea/coffee (I never did manage to tell the difference) and doughnuts during the week.

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The normal daily grind consisted of bull in the billet, morning parades and marching to the Tech blocks to try and make sense of Fourier (who?) transforms; learning that the Colpitts oscillator was not a new method of mining from the Welsh valleys, and that you couldn't obtain bags of electrons from the Squadron office. A release from this monotony was the summer camp. Ours' took place in Dorset at the Army's East Camp near Lulworth and resulted in many sleepless nights because of the tank firing range close by! As well as mock battles in the Dorset heathland, we were also required to undergo a navigation exercise which consisted of teams each equipped with a map being dumped in the middle of nowhere and required to find a way back to camp. I seem to remember that the incentive to be the first team back was a cake(!), and a day in the mess tin room for the last. On the basis that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, my team decided on a cross-country route whilst the other team, much to our derision, formed up to march along the roads. "Too far, they'll never make it" we opined.

We set out across the fields despite the typical summer weather and eventually came to our first obstacle – a stream in flood with no apparent means of crossing. One of our team, a Maltese by the name of Gaglione and of diminutive stature (he even had to look up to WO Parks), decided that said stream was not deep and we would be able to wade across. Having a Mediterranean temperament, Gaglione decided to prove it and leapt down the small bank into the stream. We were able to follow his progress by his beret which appeared to be floating on the surface but as he emerged the other side was still firmly attached to his head. Needless to say, we looked for an alternative crossing and eventually came across a tree which a grown at an angle of about 30° to the surface and provided a sort of bridge. We all crossed without further ado, but immediately the heavens opened and by the time Gaglione had caught us up, squelching water and mud from every part of his clothing, we were equally wet!! Ironic, to say the least! We eventually arrived back at camp to be greeted by our road marching colleagues tucking into their cake whilst we were helpfully give the directions to the tin room. This was part of the field kitchen which was fuelled by a coke boiler that



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constantly spewed out acrid fumes which when inhaled appeared to strip the lining from your throat. The only antidote was to drink copious amounts of milk.

Another amusing event happened during this camp. I call it our 'Corporal Jones' moment – Dad's Army. We were to parade with the army and had duly formed up in threes on the East Camp parade ground. The 'Captain Mainwaring' type taking the parade had us stood at ease and then gave an order which commenced with:

'Paraaaade' At which point our backs straightened, right leg became tense ready for the moment when it would get up close and personal with the left. Tension mounted. Wait for it
Waaaait

'Shun'

What? Pardon? You could hear our brain cells working trying to make sense of this strange . After what seemed an age, but was probably no more than a second after the pongos had come to attention, we had succeeded in the translation and the entire apprentice wing did likewise, as one. Clearly the Lord had endowed us all with CPUs that were precisely matched. However, we made up for this faux pas during the march past (another Cpt. Mainwaring type taking the salute). Thanks again to Barry Price for reminding me of this episode. The pongos marched off first but did so at such a pace that by the time they had reached the saluting base they were hopelessly out of step and looked a shambles. We, on the other hand, had time to make sure our step was perfect and our arms swinging shoulder high, as so lovingly taught us by our drill sergeant, and reached the base giving an immaculate eyes right. It would have been interesting to be a fly on the wall when the pongo squad met up with their RSM!!

A more regular diversion from Tech was the Wednesday afternoon sports which involved many activities of which the one of the most fashionable was cycling because it provided the opportunity to escape from the confines of the camp. It also meant that, again, we could indulge in neighbourly activities by supporting the local economy. The hilly terrain, and consequently our exertions, meant that we always worked up quite a thirst, even after a relatively short period in the saddle. Our route always took us in the direction of the village of Cross which straddles the A38 Bristol to Bridgwater road. And it was here that our thirst strangely reached its peak and the only way we could address this inconvenience was to call in at one of the local hostelrys – the New Inn to name but one - to sample the local produce. Scrumpy is a peculiar drink consisting of a cloudy liquid containing some solid matter (hopefully apple) and having strange powers, particularly over the uninitiated, i.e., non-locals. On us cyclists these powers would allow a relatively safe, but wobbly, passage back to camp, ability to pass the guardroom SPs with feigned exhaustion from such a gruelling ride and into one's pit, after which all went blank for many hours.

The annual sports day was a great event but had some drawbacks, particularly the long queues at the apprentice's mess at the end of the event. To avoid being caught at the end of the queue a number of us decided that a sensible strategy would be to make our way off the sports field and towards the mess just before the National Anthem. Our basis for this was that everybody would be facing away from us singing their hearts out and we could leave undetected. How naive! We reckoned without the guile, and no doubt considerable experience of such activities, of Flight Sergeant Bettel. The Beetle, as he was known, had many of the attributes of his (nick) namesake one of which was to appear, as if emerging from the ground, when least expected. The result of this was not only finding ourselves at the back of the mess queue due to the long lecture on respect for the Monarch, but also three days jankers! Such are the trials of life. Mmmm! Perhaps David Attenborough should have made a TV programme about the species known as the RAF Apprentice (*juvenis trenchardii?*).

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To lead me up to my postscript perhaps I can indulge in a little personal history. After passing out in 1960 I was posted to RAF Coltishall – now sadly HMP Bure - in my beloved county of birth, Norfolk. What bliss! It really was an excellent camp and I, like many ex-inhabitants, mourned its passing in 2006. I was living and working in Malaysia at the time and watched, with tears in my eyes, the BBC Norfolk video of the closing ceremony on my PC. It is now a prison for sex offenders. Have the pen pushers who make these decisions no respect for the part that such stations played in the country's history and social fabric. I'd better not get into that one!!

At Coltishall I was able to put into practice the learning and knowledge gained during the previous three years. I was fortunately allocated to the new AI23 team as 74 Squadron were converting from Hunters to Lightning F1s, which were fitted with this interception radar. This eventually led to a course at Yatesbury – aaaargh!! But I later made up for this by getting a detachment to Boscombe Down with Air Fighting Development Squadron (AFDS) who were undertaking Firesteak missile trials. The accompanying aircraft was Lightning F1 XM135, which was later become famous for being inadvertently flown by the engineering officer at RAF Lyneham (see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iKFYaXDivs> for the story and picture of the aircraft now languishing at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford).

Later, and environmentally in direct contrast to Yatesbury, I found myself on a course at RRE Malvern, this time to become acquainted with AI23B the new airborne interception radar for the Lightning F3 and beyond. This subsequently led to another Boscombe Down detachment with AFDS for the purpose of Redtop trials. Later I moved to Leuchars with 23 Squadron when they converted from Javelin FAW9s to Lightning F3s. I later found myself back at Boscombe Down working with the RN on converting the Buccaneer from a naval bombing role to one required by the RAF. The Blue Parrot radar worked on a similar principle to AI23.

After deciding to leave the service, a decision I regret to this day, I found employment with GEC, Hewlett Packard, and in teaching, latterly at the University of Portsmouth.

Now, as promised, back to starched collars. Seven of my 20 years at the University of Portsmouth were spent in Malaysia managing the University's South East Asia Office based in Kuala Lumpur. The purpose was to recruit international students to study at Portsmouth, a response to the Prime Minister's (then Tony Blair) initiative, which was a five year strategy to attract more international students to study in the UK. There are about twenty UK universities with such offices in Malaysia and the initiative is managed by the British Council. It was at one of their meetings that I was introduced to Tina Yeung, a charming young Chinese lady, who was my counterpart at the University of Sheffield. Her English being perfect I asked her where she was from, she replied Weston-super-Mare. Intrigued, I explained my connections with the town, and it was then that I discovered that her grandmother was the proprietor of the Chinese laundry (Imperial Laundry?) to which Locking apprentices took their collars to be starched. We were not alone during this conversation and this resulted in the entire British expat community becoming aware that Tina's grandmother used to wash my shirts!!

In contrast to my opening statement, it's a small world, isn't it!

87th Golden Entry

Ladies and Gentlemen - good afternoon. (I am Bryan Chillery of the 87th and) my erstwhile colleagues have asked me to address our gathering today about how we remember those days fifty plus years ago when we joined up and spent three formative years under the mantle of Lord Trenchard's legacy, the RAF apprentice scheme.

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The 87th was a very large entry. 210 in all attested on the 18th Sept 1957. So we had lots of peers in the same junior entry boat, and this made for many good friendships. We were bigger than the three senior entries put together, but of course they still picked on us, usually when we were sleeping. One of their favourite amusements was to rampage through the billets in the early hours tipping us out of bed or maybe just stealing our best bulled boots from the tops of our metal lockers. I expect all the ex-apprentices here experienced that ritual either as the perpetrators or the victims - or both. Of course by the time we were the senior entry that sort of behaviour was passé, if I remember rightly...

It's difficult to look back without being nostalgic, because we were in our prime and had so many avenues of opportunity gifted to us. An all round education in a skill which we had chosen, and an almost unlimited variety of sport and hobbies available to us. Flying experience was encouraged. I was taken up for a jolly in a Chipmunk by one of our flight commanders, Fg Off Les Harris. The unusual motion with the smell of cordite and oil caused me to feel so awful it put me off flying for some years.

Our other flight commander was Flt Lt Sachs, affectionately known as 'Daddy'. Probably because we had so many boxers in the 87th, he became the Off i/c Boxing. One evening he came down to the gym in a new tracksuit, and said he would help WO Percy Parkes with the coaching. He elected to spar with the smallest member of the squad who was a little dynamo called Spud Murphy. Well Daddy was probably about fifty and dangerously out of condition so the lesson did not last very long!

Most of my friendships were made in the gymnasium or on the playing field. Tiny I knew from the noble art, he was a very useful southpaw heavyweight. His main claim to fame is boxing in front of the whole station while perpetuating a light duties chit which should have lapsed months earlier. Get him to tell you the story of how F Sgt Burley found him on his pit when everyone else was on parade. He was probably reading a comic with the drill instructors expletives wafting across from the parade square. Very naughty Tiny! Charlie and I related on the rugby pitch. I played scrum half and Charlie was a very fleet fly-half. I would collect the ball from the melee and deliver it to Charlie who was already running like a train. The ball had to be well ahead of him if he was to take it at full pelt, and I like to think we had it off to a fine art. Brian Colby and I were in the basketball and gymnastic teams. We had some very pleasant excursions to fetes etc during the summer months, doing somersaults and vaulting. The inter squadron gymnastic competition was a highlight of the sporting calendar for us. Brian had been a member of his local gymnastic club in



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Norwich, and brought the latest ideas to the floor exercises and scored very well for B Sqn in the process. Nowadays I find it difficult to touch my toes, but of course my arms were longer then. I loved going away with the rugby team. I think I must have been a reserve because I don't remember playing, just the sing song on the return journey. Songs like 'Little Red Wing' and 'The Wild West Show'. Brilliant lyrical graffiti!

Daddy Sachs and Les Harris did their best to keep us in order, but Sqn Ldr Pattinson must have been very disappointed with their efforts when he found his vintage Buggati had, during the night, been rolled down from the officers' mess car park onto the sports arena. It was a very privileged apprentice who was on the steering and brakes for that little escapade. They gave us all a pep talk in the Astra cinema one afternoon. I'll never forget the response to the question of whether we had any points to raise. Almost to a man the shout went up, "What about the bathplugs?!" Of course the shortage of bathplugs was never resolved.

Like most entries, we had members who, despite Wing Standing Orders, kept motorbikes in the local area. (Mine was in a shed in the vicarage at Banwell. And proved to be my undoing when I crashed into a police car late one night on a return trip from Bristol.) Rumour had it that one bike, probably in bits, was kept under a billet in B sqn. Any positive knowledge of that in the audience?

Another story which I only heard about was the organized rumpus on the beach at WSM between the apprentices and the local teddy boys. I expect Charlie was there. Perhaps we'll get more details in the bar later. Come to think of it, I was probably out on my bicycle, training for the annual inter squadron race. Since we were only allowed to leave the camp at certain times, and then only in uniform, naturally we donned our shorts etc and cycled off into the countryside. I remember one trip Taffy Owen and I did down to Cheddar swimming pool. On the way back we were passing the Red Lion in Axbridge and Taffy asked me if I would like a pint. He was a lot worldlier than I, having worked in the Rhonda mines between school and Locking. Inside the pub there were two elderly locals playing dominoes. They were drinking scrumpy at fourpence a pint. That suited us perfectly, and it was only when I stepped outside again and the fresh air hit me that I realized it was fairly alcoholic! I went to get on my bike and fell right over it.

In our last term someone (and we are still trying to find out who) organized an outing for the whole entry on a White Funnel cruise. I went along and had a wonderful time in Minehead, although there are some who maintain that we went to Ilfracombe. No doubt that matter will be settled at our reunion in May.

One hundred and sixty 87th passed out fifty years ago, and next month about a third of those, with their partners, will gather here for a nostalgia fest. With such a large entry, you couldn't possibly know everyone well, and I'm so glad, and grateful, to have the chance, through this association, to renew acquaintanceships and enjoy the company of my old friends fifty years on.

Thank you.

88th Golden Entry

Unfortunately, in spite of reminders, I have had no input from the 88th. Sorry! – Ed

Decisions, Decisions

From Brian Colby 87th Entry

My 3 years at Norwich Tech school had all been setting me for life as a bricklayer, plumber, carpenter or even a building architect of all things but, after spending complete days on a drawing board, thankfully fate and circumstance made me take the train to head for the West Country, where the day I and over 200 eager young lads went into the NAAFI at RAF Locking to take the oath on the 18 Sep 1957 and become an apprentice with the 87th Entry, is as vivid to me now as it was over 52 years ago.

As it was for all apprentices, we had each decided for various reasons to leave the comfort of our home environment and travel the length and breadth of Britain to serve Queen and Country. In doing so we were all thrown unceremoniously into a regime of being bawled at during parade drill, interminable cleaning and polishing everything including even the billet floor, marching everywhere and the unusual novelty of having to make a thing called a 'bed pack' every flaming morning. These plus watching the odd unfortunate falling into the clutches of the 79th Senior Entry during NAAFI visits, tended to somewhat put just a bit of a damper on the initial enthusiasm of wanting to learn the intricacies of wireless and radar.

Also vivid is the time just 6 weeks after learning to live with these little indignities of service life, suddenly being forced into making the biggest decision of my life.

Marching happily back from the Tech blocks after a stint of learning the intricacies of resistor networks, I was suddenly confronted by Flt Sgt Burley who ordered me to forgo lunch and report immediately to the Wing Commander. As I neared the wooden huts that formed the Apprentice Wing HQ I pondered what I had done to deserve this, for it must be unbelievably serious to have to see the likes of such an exalted rank.

Somewhat dreading the worst and quaking in my boots I was greeted by a stern faced Flt Lft 'Daddy' Sachs, our usually friendly B Sqdn flight commander, and an even sterner looking WingCo, to be bluntly asked "Colby - do you actually like the life of an RAF apprentice" and something on the lines of "What the heck have you been telling your mother". Somewhat tongue in cheek I hesitantly said yes to the former, then pondered my reply to the latter.

It transpired that my mother had suffered a slight nervous breakdown after reading something in one of my missives home, with the result that her doctor's letter laid bare on the CO's desk.

I could not explain why this had occurred, as I thought I had kept any irritating aspects of apprentice training from my dear mother, only writing of the joys of square bashing etc, so I was mightily relieved to find that I hadn't done anything to cause me to be rewarded with 'jankers' or even worse. Suddenly however, to my utter amazement, I was then offered the chance of an immediate release from the RAF with completely free return to civvies street if I so wanted. What a turn up for the book.

Since arrival at Locking the thought of quitting had never entered my head, but to suddenly have the option thrust upon me changed everything, my future was again in the balance and it made for the longest weekend of my life as I weighed up all the pro and cons of life as a 'Brat'. This sudden chance of immediately getting away from all the mind numbing polishing and cleaning etc seemed so very tempting and with two lads in the billet already in the process of buying themselves out, I wondered if I too should join them by availing myself of this 'Get out of Jail Free' card.

I was probably the quietest lad in the billet that particular weekend as I pondered my fate, but the following Monday morning I reported to the 'WingCo' to say that I did indeed wish to continue what I had started, hoping to be able to follow in my father's footsteps, who had also trained at Locking, in his case during the War as an engine fitter, and also my Uncle Roy, who as a radar mechanic

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had worked on the 'Chain Home' early warning radar out on the Norfolk coast. Indeed it was his self-constructed radio, complete with magic eye tuning valve, given to our family, which had triggered my fascination with the world of electronics.

After writing a letter home to explain in more detail the 'wonderful' life that befell us all at Locking I was pleased to find on my next leave I had a far happier mother.

I continued the training programme with a new vigour and, with a bit of ducking and diving, managed to evade completely the attentions of the senior entry. Over the following months and years the tedium of bull nights was countered by endless banter and humour, as we all helped each other get over the ups and downs of apprentice training. I well remember the time taken to clean kit every evening magically passing so much quicker, as those in close proximity listened to the likes of billet colleague Bryan Chillery regaling us with his hilarious tales of earlier public school life.

Most of us learnt to actually enjoy parades, so much so that the Entry went on to win the Wing drill competition, and as the tempo of training increased the brainiest of the billet would guide their slower colleagues, as we all mucked in as a team to ensure that as many as possible of the 87th would succeed in eventually passing out.

Of course there were further decisions on the way to achieve that goal, like deciding whether to specialise in ground or air trades, but through thick and thin the vast majority of us did indeed succeed, 160 plus eventually leaving Locking at the end of the three year apprenticeship to start our service careers in the wider RAF community.

The quality of the training and range of skills that we were taught at Locking was second to none, the ability to fault find down to component level especially meant that any new equipments that we came across during our RAF careers and onwards could, with the help of the relevant AP, be tackled with relative ease and it was always an immense benefit.

Eventually leaving the RAF, I found that my service history meant that my interview at British Aerospace was basically a formality and I went on to enjoy a fantastic second career with them, working alongside and making even more friends from the range of civilians and ex Armed Forces servicemen who worked there.

Now having just recently enjoyed a brilliant 1st reunion of 68 members of the Entry I have never regretted my decision to join up in the first place and subsequently become an Air Radio fitter, with its array of subsequent postings. But most of all I am glad I made the right choice on that fateful weekend all those years ago, when I decided to stay with my 87th comrades and finish what we had all started together. For although I have often used the building trade skills to advantage, it was far better to see the world with the coveted 'sparks' badge on my arm and the inherent opportunities to make new friends everywhere in my travels, than the possible life I could ever have had as a simple Norfolk 'brickie'.

The Election

Here is a selection of items sent to me before the election. I feel it alright to publish them now but I have made them anonymous and leave them to the reader to enjoy! - Ed

Gordon Brown

A teacher asked her class how many of them were Gordon Brown fans. Not really knowing what a Gordon Brown fan is, but wanting to be liked by the teacher, all the kids raised their hands except for Little Johnny.

The teacher asked Little Johnny why he has decided to be different...again. Little Johnny said, 'Because I'm not a Gordon Brown fan.' The teacher asked, 'Why aren't you a Gordon Brown fan?' Johnny said, 'Because I'm a Conservative.' The teacher asked him why he's a Conservative. Little Johnny answered, 'Well, my Mum's a Conservative and my Dad's a Conservative, so I'm a Conservative.'

Annoyed by this answer, the teacher asked, 'If your Mum was a moron and your Dad was an idiot, what would that make you?'

Little Johnny replied, 'A Gordon Brown fan'

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Socialism?

An economics professor at a local college made the statement that he had never failed a single student before but had once failed an entire class. That class had insisted that socialism worked and that no one would be poor and no one would be rich - a great equalizer.

The professor then said, "OK, we will have an experiment in this class on socialism. All grades would be averaged and everyone would receive the same grade so no one would fail and no one would receive an A.

After the first test, the grades were averaged and everyone got a B. The students who studied hard were upset and the students who studied little were happy.

As the second test rolled around, the students who studied little had studied even less and the ones who studied hard decided they wanted a free ride too so they studied little. The second test average was a D! No one was happy.

When the 3rd test rolled around, the average was an F. Bickering, blame and name-calling resulted in hard feelings and no one would study for the benefit of anyone else.

All failed, to their great surprise, and the professor told them that socialism would also ultimately fail because when the reward is great, the effort to succeed is great but when government takes all the reward away, no one will try or want to succeed.

It could not be any simpler than that.

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Welfare

"You cannot legislate the poor into freedom by legislating the wealthy out of freedom. What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving. The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from somebody else. When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that my dear friend, is about the end of any nation. You cannot multiply wealth by dividing it."

~~~ Dr. Adrian Rogers, 1931

*And a few one liners -Ed*

A Conservative is someone who lives in the past that never existed.

Honesty in politics is much like oxygen. The higher up you go, the scarcer it becomes.

Marx's tomb is a communist plot.

During Britain's "brain drain," not a single politician left the country.

Freedom of speech is a wonderful idea, right up there with the freedom not to listen.

The government claims it's following the will of the people. I didn't even know we'd died!

What's the difference between feudalism and democracy? In a democracy it's your vote that counts, while in feudalism it's your count that votes.

A politician is a man who stands for what he thinks the voters will fall for.

The Prime Minister is on a tour of friendly countries. He is expected back home tomorrow.

A politician has to be able to see both sides of an issue, so he can get around it.

Why do we use the word "politics" to describe the process of government? "Poli" in Latin means "many", and "tics" meaning "blood sucking creatures".

A little girl asked her father, 'do all fairy tales begin with "Once upon a time"? The father replied, 'No, some begin with - If I am elected.'

The government is sneaky. They raise the tax on alcohol, then make sure that the country is in such a mess that you drink more.

Make your M.P. work - don't re-elect him.

And finally...

Some people tell political jokes... we HAVE them!

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**What have we learned in 2,064 years?**

"The budget should be balanced, the Treasury should be refilled, public debt should be reduced, the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, and the assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest Rome become bankrupt.

People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance."

Cicero - 55 BC

*So, what have we learned?*



## Humour

### Who Said Footballers Aren't Intelligent?

Sent in by Chris Lewis 92<sup>nd</sup>

*With the World Cup in progress as we go to print, I thought this was fitting – Ed*

"My parents have always been there for me, ever since I was about 7."

**David Beckham**

"I would not be bothered if we lost every game as long as we won the league."

**Mark Viduka**

"If you don't believe you can win, there is no point in getting out of bed at the end of the day."

**Neville Southall**

"I've had 14 bookings this season - 8 of which were my fault, but 7 of which were disputable."

**Paul Gascoigne**

"I've never wanted to leave. I'm here for the rest of my life, and hopefully after that as well."

**Alan Shearer**

"I'd like to play for an Italian club, like Barcelona ."

**Mark Draper**

"You've got to believe that you're going to win, and I believe we'll win the World Cup until the final whistle blows and we're knocked out."

**Peter Shilton**

"I faxed a transfer request to the club at the beginning of the week, but let me state that I don't want to leave Leicester "

**Stan Collymore**

"Without being too harsh on David Beckham, he cost us the match."

**Ian Wright**

"I'm as happy as I can be - but I have been happier."

**Ugo Ehiogu**

" Leeds is a great club and it's been my home for years, even though I live in Middlesborough."

**Jonathan Woodgate**

"I can see the carrot at the end of the tunnel."

**Stuart Pearce**

"I took a whack on my left ankle, but something told me it was my right."

**Lee Hendrie**

"I couldn't settle in Italy - it was like living in a foreign country."

**Ian Rush**

" Germany are a very difficult team to play...they had 11 internationals out there today."

**Steve Lomas**

"I definitely want Brooklyn to be christened, but I don't know into what religion yet."

**David Beckham**

"The Brazilians were South American, and the Ukrainians will be more European."

**Phil Neville**

"One accusation you can't throw at me is that I've always done my best."

**Alan Shearer**

**Some thoughts...**

From Chris Lewis 92nd

*The horse and the mule live 30 years  
And nothing know of wines and beers.*

*The goat and sheep at 20 die  
And never taste a Scotch and Rye.*

*The cow drinks water by the ton  
And at 18 years is mostly done,  
Without the aid of rum and gin*

*The dog at 15 cashes in.*

*The cat in milk and water soaks  
And then in 12 short years it croaks.*

*The modest sober bone dry hen  
Lays eggs for nogs, then croaks at 10.*

*All animals are strictly dry,  
Then sinless live and swiftly die.  
But sinful, ginful, rum-soaked men  
Survive for three score years and ten,  
And some of us a mighty few,  
keep drinking 'til we're 92.*

*Anon*

## **Skinny Dipping**

From Phil Marston 92nd

An elderly man in Tennessee had owned a large farm for several years. He had a large pond in the back. It was properly shaped for swimming, so he fixed it up nice with picnic tables, horseshoe courts, and some apple and peach trees.

One evening the old farmer decided to go down to the pond, as he hadn't been there for a while, and look it over. He grabbed a five-gallon bucket to bring back some fruit. As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee. As he came closer, he saw it was a bunch of young women skinny-dipping in his pond.

He made the women aware of his presence and they all went to the deep end.

One of the women shouted to him, "We're not coming out until you leave!"

The old man frowned, "I didn't come down here to watch you ladies swim naked or make you get out of the pond naked."

Holding the bucket up he said, 'I'm here to feed the alligator.'

Some old men can still think fast!

## **Italian Confession**

From Phil Marston 92<sup>nd</sup>

An elderly Italian man who lived on the outskirts of Rimini, Italy, went to the local church for confession.

When the priest slid open the panel in the confessional, the man said: 'Father ... during World War II, a beautiful Jewish woman from our neighbourhood knocked urgently on my door and asked me to hide her from the Nazis. So I hid her in my attic.'

The priest replied: 'That was a wonderful thing you did, and you have no need to confess that.'

'There is more to tell, Father... she started to repay me with sexual favours. This happened several times a week, and sometimes twice on Sundays.'

The priest said, 'That was a long time ago and by doing what you did, you placed the two of you in great danger. But two people under those circumstances can easily succumb to the weakness of the flesh. However, if you are truly sorry for your actions, you are indeed forgiven.'

'Thank you, Father. That's a great load off my mind... I do have one more question.'

'And what is that?' asked the priest.

'Should I tell her the war is over?'



## RAF Days

### **SPOOKED in the 1960s**

From Brian Davies 76<sup>th</sup> Entry

I am sure that many of you whilst in the Royal Air Force have had the odd brush with foreign security services, never mind our own. While I was in the RAF, I did have a few dealings with them but luckily not while I was an Apprentice. Unless you count being asked by an Italian chap what I was doing spending so much time on a wet Saturday in Fellas Café in WSM.

The first time was when I was an instructor at Locking, doing my bit to invest knowledge on cryptographic equipment into the skulls of trainees. As a Bristolian I had many friends in the city and one weekend we all went to a Trad. Jazz club in the centre of town. It was in a part of the city that I was unused to visiting.

It was a great musical night in the cellars of an old building, and at the interval we all went over to the pub across the road. It was there that I was approached by a couple of 'club regulars' who tried to get me to join in the CND movement and go on the anti war marches. They were most persuasive with promises of fringe benefits and how I could help save the world. I still do not know if they knew I was in the RAF but perhaps my short haircut gave me away! It was not until later that I found that the Jazz Club building was the Communist Party HQ for the district, and used for all kinds of nefarious activities.

My next brush with spooks was not unsuspected, just surprising.

I had just finished my tour at Akrotiri and a friend and I had obtained permission to return to UK overland in my car, also to take passage in a Russian liner that regularly cruised on a round trip from Odessa via Famagusta in Cyprus, Latakia in Syria, Beirut, Alexandria, Piraeus and Istanbul. It was the only ship that could take my car at my tour-ex time. This was of course before the days of ferries from Cyprus to the mainland.

All went well but on the second of the five-day trip, we came to the conclusion that our cabin was bugged as (of course we were careful of what we spoke on board) but things we commented upon in the cabin were always spoken of later by the English-speaking purser. He also wanted to know what I kept writing in my travel logbook – this I only did in the cabin. We then unscrewed the vent in the cabin and found a microphone – surprise, surprise. Not being daft we assumed this was not the only mic fitted in our room.

On the second day of the voyage two attractive twenty-year-old ladies made our acquaintance in the ship's bar. They said they were American teachers on an extended holiday and going to Odessa. We kept company with them for the next day and a half until we arrived at Alexandria, and together did a tour of the ancient Egyptian and Greek sites there.

I had been to the USA and it seemed to both of us that these ladies with their strong American accents knew very little of American life or geography. They were very inquisitive about our journey and what we did in the RAF (only the crew were supposed to know that), naturally we did not let out anything sensitive especially as my friend had worked in the secretive Signals Unit on the Limassol salt lake and myself at Akrotiri airfield communications.

The next day as the ship set out from Egypt to Piraeus in Greece, they disappeared and were not seen by us again over the next three days aboard! Obviously we were not being very cooperative in spilling the beans.

When the SS Armenia arrived at Istanbul, we were interviewed aboard by the Turkish authorities who were surprised at two RAF people being passengers on what they said was a Russian spy

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ship cruising around the Mediterranean. On docking, our pro-Turkish Cypriot attitude to the Turks helped us to be on our way in hours, when the usual in Istanbul was a two or more day wait on the dock with baksheesh a requirement.

Our next brush with state security bods happened, as we got to Belgrade in the former Yugoslavia. We had been advised to book in at the Air Attaché at the British Embassy - probably to make sure we had not ended up in Odessa.

After a long chat and a coffee with the Group Captain who held the post there, he invited us to his home for dinner. I wanted to take a bottle of wine so we stopped at a supermarket in the city. Whilst we shopped, I asked the Group Captain did he know that at least two men were following us? He said, "Oh that's quite usual here, they are Yugoslav security and follow me all the time". Nice way to live!

At our next country in our journey we were quizzed by people in a bar in Linz, Austria and later in Waterloo in Belgium but by this time we were getting used to nosy locals all through Europe and couldn't tell which were spook types and which were inquisitive locals. Enjoyable though our six and a half week trip was, it was nice to arrive in UK and normality where people did not give a damn who you were.

### **Guard Duty - part 2**

From Paul Challice, 95<sup>th</sup> Entry.

Jeff Richardson's article in the last RAFLAA Newsletter about guard duty in Aden brought back memories. I was posted out to Khormaksar in January 1967 as a brand new 'Siggy' on the 84 Squadron Beverleys. About the first thing I did on arrival, (apart from a few beers in the Jungle Bar in the Sgts' Mess) was to go to the range to get a new 'gun chit'. I was packed into a 32 seater coach with a lot of other new arrivals, and given a loaded sten gun by the Rockape in charge. Apparently I was part of the armed guard for the coach whilst driving to and from the firing range. I think the briefing was something like 'Try not to shoot anyone until the return journey, 'cos by then you will be qualified'!

I remember that as aircrew my personal weapon was a .38 revolver, always issued with a canvas holster and webbing belt, and 12 bullets in a small cardboard box, a bit bigger than a matchbox. On the frequent trips up country the Beverley and crew would spend perhaps several hours on the ground while the aircraft was unloaded and reloaded, all the time surrounded by (supposedly) friendly Arabs. I used to get my leg pulled for loading my revolver and keeping the spare 6 bullets in my pocket. Then there was always the argument about whether you should load the revolver with 6 bullets, or only 5, leaving an empty chamber for safety. But should you leave the empty chamber under the hammer, or next to it, and if so, which side of the hammer? I used to load all 6 chambers so I didn't lose the spare bullet!

I remember the guard duties as being about once a week for airmen, but only every three or four weeks for sergeants as we did the guard commander duty. I think chief techs and flight sergeants did the orderly sergeant duty, but I may be wrong. In June 1967 the Aden armed police revolted and started firing randomly across the airfield. One poor airman was on duty in a post in the middle of the airfield, positioned to stop people walking around the end of the barbed wire fence separating the civvy and military parts of the airfield. When the firing started the poor little airman called in on his field telephone to report his post was under fire and what was he to do. Rumour has it that he was told to return the fire and saturate the area – with his .303 and 5 rounds!

Around about the same time, I was in my room writing to my girlfriend when I heard a loud explosion outside. Instead of being sensible and getting under my bed, I went outside to see what

## Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

was happening. My room was close to one of the dispersal areas, separated by just a barbed wire fence. When I got outside I saw a hole in the dispersal and a cloud of smoke and dust, no more than 100 yards from my room. Whilst taking all this in, another explosion went off, a bit further away ... and another etc. In total ten mortars exploded on the dispersal, the first one being the nearest to my room. I think one or two Shackletons received slight damage, but nothing serious.

After the mortar attack, as a precaution, 105 Squadron's Argosies were parked under the wings of 84 Squadron's Beverleys for protection! Later still, they build huge blast walls with 45 gallon drums filled with water. At the time water was rationed, with washing water only available for two hours in the morning and again early afternoon, to cater for the normal working day of 0700-1300. If, like me, you used to have to get up early, before the water was turned on, and return all hot and sweaty after the water was turned off, you felt a bit peeved. OK so I had a bottle of water to clean my teeth, but a shower would have made me better company in the mess! Bearing in mind the water shortage, I assumed that the thousands of 45 gallon drums used to build the aircraft pens would be filled with the plentiful sea water. Oh no! That would corrode the pumps of the fire engines used to fill the drums, so they used precious fresh water!

Later, on the run down before we pulled out of Aden, the South Arabian Air Force was formed and moved into the military side of the airfield. This brought security problems, as now arabs could legitimately be on the airfield without the usual armed guard. The solution was to use sergeants for the guard duties around the aircraft movement area. This was popular with the airmen as they had fewer duties, and unpopular with the chief techs and flight sergeants as they had to take over the guard commander duty so the sergeants could patrol the aircraft dispersals etc. As a young sergeant I relished the idea of patrolling behind some dark hangar in the middle of the night with my imagination working overtime. Much better than sitting in the guard room and turning the guys out every two hours!

Finally, I wonder if I was ever guard commander when Jeff Richardson was on guard duty? And would I have remembered to call him 'Senior Man'?





## Obituary

### Brian Cooke 83rd

**16/09/1940 – 20/03/2010**

Submitted by Jeff Bradford,

The Funeral Service for Brian Cooke was held at Bracebridge Heath Methodist Church, near Lincoln, on Wednesday the 7<sup>th</sup> day of April 2010.

Heading the congregation were his wife and three daughters. His brothers and other family and friends were present as were five former members of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Entry of Aircraft Apprentices of which Brian was an original member.

In the address, the Minister outlined Brian's family life, his career after leaving the RAF and his contacts with the church.

A tribute by an Apprentice colleague recalled his first meeting with Brian at Paddington Railway Station in early May 1956, some 54 years ago, as they prepared to make their way to RAF Locking. Brian was noted for his powers of recollection, for he could remember names, places and occurrences - including the lighter moments - from all those years ago. He wrote about these things in an article which he called 'OLD MEMORIES' and which first appeared on the 83<sup>rd</sup> Entry website. He summarized his reminiscences with these words – 'Happy Days' – They certainly were - for the most part.

Brian also looked to the future, for he was the brains and the power behind the three very successful reunions that the 83<sup>rd</sup> Entry enjoyed, beginning with the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2004 and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of joining and passing out in 2006 and 2009 respectively, the last two being held at Weston Super Mare. Had it not been for Brian the Entry might not have got together again.

The tribute concluded with the reading of The Apprentice Prayer.

Who will replace him? Any Volunteers!

.....

The collection in memory of Brian Cooke raised £824 which was donated to The Waddington (Cancer) Ward at Lincoln Hospital

## **Closing Thought**

### **TWO WOLVES**

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people.

He said, "My son, the battle is between two wolves inside us all"

"One is Evil - It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego."

"The other is Good - It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence,



empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee replied, "The one you feed."



## Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

### **RAFLAA Committee**

| Appointment          | Name           | Address                                                                     | Tel/email                                                                                                    | Re-Election | Entry             |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| President            | Martin Palmer  |                                                                             |                                                                                                              |             | 91 <sup>st</sup>  |
| Chairman             | "Tiny" Kühle   | 22 Tavistock Clse<br>Woburn Sands<br>Milton Keynes<br>Bucks MK17 8UY        | (01908) 583784<br><a href="mailto:Hans.Kuhle@btopenworld.com">Hans.Kuhle@btopenworld.com</a>                 | April 2010  | 87 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Secretary            | Dave Gunby     | 23 Toynton Close<br>Gregg Hall Estate<br>Lincoln<br>Lincolnshire<br>LN6 8AL | (01522) 525484<br><a href="mailto:dpgraf72@btinternet.com">dpgraf72@btinternet.com</a>                       | April 2009  | 72nd              |
| Treasurer            | Tony Horry     | Hillside Cottage<br>Kewstoke Road<br>Kewstoke<br>Weston-s-Mare<br>BS22 9YD  | (01934) 628383<br><a href="mailto:horrycorp@aol.com">horrycorp@aol.com</a>                                   | Mar 2010    | 76 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Membership Secretary | John Farmer    | 8 Glenmore Rd<br>Minehead<br>Somerset<br>TA24 5BQ                           | (01643) 705443<br><a href="mailto:RAFLAAMS@aol.com">RAFLAAMS@aol.com</a>                                     | Mar 2010    | 77 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Service Rep          | Rick Atkinson  | Gateway Cottage<br>1 Lake Walk<br>Adderbury<br>Oxfordshire<br>OX17 3PF      | (01295) 812972<br><a href="mailto:rick-jacky@lakewalk.wanadoo.co.uk">rick-jacky@lakewalk.wanadoo.co.uk</a>   | Sep 2011    | 91 <sup>st</sup>  |
| AA Rep/<br>Webmaster | Peter Crowe    | 14 Hillview Road<br>Weston-super-Mare<br>N. Somerset<br>BS23 3HS            | (01934) 412178<br><a href="mailto:webmaster@raflaa.org.uk">webmaster@raflaa.org.uk</a>                       | Sep 2011    | 95 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Craft Rep            | Graham Beeston | 87 Hornbeam Rd<br>Havant<br>PO9 2UT                                         | Home (02392) 346242<br>Work 0778 8795358<br><a href="mailto:graham@mapleoak.co.uk">graham@mapleoak.co.uk</a> | Sep 2012    | 209 <sup>th</sup> |
| Tech Rep             | Andy Perkins   | 107Balmoral Way<br>Worle<br>Weston-s-Mare<br>BS22 9BZ                       | (01934) 417323<br><a href="mailto:aperkins@schaffner.com">aperkins@schaffner.com</a>                         | Sep 2012    | 109 <sup>th</sup> |
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## 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.

Amen

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