



RAFLAA NEWSLETTER

SERIAL 68

MARCH 2014

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Hello to you all,

Welcome to the first edition of 2014 and I trust no one has been too inconvenienced by the effect of 'Global Warming' this winter. My Bucket List for 2014 is growing by the day and I very much look forward to all the articles you will be sending for publication in the Newsletter

As we are all aware 2014 is the National Anniversary of the start of World War I and the majority of Locking Apprentices were World War II vintage and later. But it may be pertinent to remember that the Apprentice Scheme was implemented during and as a result of the First World War and maybe we should produce an article or two for publication during 2014 relevant to the occasion.

The Newsletters of 2013 included some excellent stories from people stationed in the Middle East and not wishing to preclude and more articles from that area I would like to stir the memories from those posted to the Far East, of which I know there are many. Articles relating to Hong Kong, Singapore, Penang, Butterworth, Gan and Borneo I can practically hear the fingers on keyboards all ready. Be honest chaps and tell all, it will go no further than the Newsletter!

I have been attempting to source and archive the original Newsletters, some were probably pre-digital version and thanks to Mike Collier, once again, he has some of the original material and our Honorary Secretary has some of the original Newsletters, so we are closer to producing a reasonable archiving file.

Another little project that is on-going is to produce in digital format the old Locking Reviews, many of which are now available on the web, I still have one outstanding from 1956, thanks to Dave English (77th) which I will scan in when time allows.

Golden Entries for 2014 98th, 99th, 100th

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Deadline for next issue – 31st May for July 2014

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

REFERENCE APPRENTICE HATBANDS COLOURS

From Roy Canvin (81st)

The change occurred somewhere between 1952 – 1955

They were one colour when the 81st arrived in 1956.

Roy Canvin

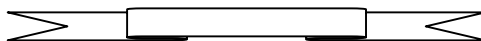
Having checked photographs of Passing Out Parades –

The 64th Entry (Dec. 1952) had chequered Hatbands.

The 68th Entry (April 1954) had single coloured Hatbands.

As Roy has stated the change occurred somewhere in between 1952 and 1954.

Ed.



RAFLAA NEW MEMBERS

A WARM WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS TO RAFLAA

Entry		
92	Roy	Smith
70	William	David

More people – more stories!! Ed.

NOTICES

NEXT REUNION AND AGM

The 20th Annual Reunion and Annual General meeting of the RAF Locking Apprentice Association will be held on [Saturday 26 April 2014](#) at the Webbington Hotel, Loxton, Weston-super-Mare.

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

Full details will follow in the November edition of the Newsletter but put the date in your diary now.

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

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



LIFE AFTER THE RAF

MORE BRAT AT THE B.B.C.

Satisfactory completion of my probationary year as a lecturer at the B.B.C. Training Centre at Wood Norton, near Evesham, allowed me to relax a little. My main involvement, was with a 7 week introductory course for engineering and operational trainees. The students were generally new entrants to the Corporation, with a few current employees, who were being redeployed. The new entrants had either just left college or university and were very keen. Principally, because passing the course was a prerequisite for subsequent employment.

On completing my part, students progressed immediately to a second training phase, also at Wood Norton. Engineers to servicing, fault finding and repair. Operators to practical use of equipment, in either Radio or T.V. studios. For this second phase, there were, on site, a number of Radio studios with appropriate editing and control facilities, plus two full size, fully equipped T.V. studios with ancillary inputs.

At this point I was not involved with the advanced course but there were still areas of the basic part, where my knowledge of equipment and procedures was quite limited. As I was now managing courses, I needed to rapidly resolve this problem. If I lost one of my assistant lecturers, I wanted to be in a position to step in at a moment's notice and take over. Thus, any spare time was spent investigating unfamiliar areas and equipment.

A year or so later, higher authority decided to split the school into Engineering and Operations. With my background, I fully expected to be in Engineering and was very surprised to be allocated to Operations. Offered the choice of Radio or T.V., I opted for T.V. as it appeared more interesting. Management were probably pleased, as they had a surfeit of B.B.C. trained Radio lecturers but not many on the T.V. side.

As a result of the split a new course evolved, "Introduction to T.V. Operations" (I.T.O.). A 10 week course, designed to take new entrants to the Corporation from an assumed, no knowledge of T.V., to a level where they could be usefully employed in a T.V. studio or other related area. There were 4 trade categories, Cameras, Sound, V.T. and Film. Irrespective of nominated trade, all students did the same course. Not becoming specialized until they passed the course and returned to their base.

It generated another very steep learning curve for me, as I now needed a good working knowledge of the operation and use of a wide range of equipment in a T.V. studio and its external inputs, V.T. and Telecine machines. (Telecine converted film into a format suitable for showing on T.V.). Additionally, there was Portable Single Camera (P.S.C) equipment and edit suites, plus 16mm Ariflex film camera operations and film editing. Very hard work but interesting. My boss was helpful, in that although I was teaching on these courses, I was not required to manage one until the first few had passed through the school.

As a Course Manager, I guess I took the responsibility more seriously than my colleagues. I suspect that my experience at Locking greatly influenced how I operated. There, the Apprentices appeared to be very much on their own. You either sank or swam by your own efforts. I am sure that if some extra tuition had been offered, there would have been far fewer F/T'd and C/T'd. Sadly, the instructional staff always seemed remote and disinterested. Possibly because no one appeared specifically responsible for the academic wellbeing of the Apprentices.

Consequently, with my students, I kept very detailed records of their progress and interviewed them regularly to check if they had any problems. A fairly large undertaking, as I.T.O. courses were designed for 30 students and were usually fully subscribed. If required, I would also run extra evening theory or practical sessions. Additionally, the

records were useful when writing end of course reports. A little military type discipline also paid dividends. Other lecturers, when taking my class, told me that they knew, without checking, who the Course Manager was as the group always arrived on time, were well behaved and asked lots of questions. Qualities I actively encouraged. The former of these, I was very keen on. Way back then, the B.B.C. was renowned for its programs starting precisely on time. Unlike now when endless, expensive, often inane trails appear between programs, with total disregard for the delay to the following one. It was not unknown for me to lock the classroom door at lesson start time. A persistent late comer would try and then knock on the door. Without opening it, I would ask for the password. Following their unknowing answer, I would tell them "I will not be late again". The initially muted reply, increased in volume in response to my feigned deafness, much to the amusement of the rest of the class. When finally allowed to enter, without fail, the attendant embarrassment ensured their future early arrival and that of the rest of the group as well.

The pastoral care system proved useful one day, when a B.B.C. Line Manager visited Wood Norton to check on the progress of some of his prospective employees. My boss asked me for information on them and appeared much impressed when presented with my data file. Apparently, he had never seen anything like it before and got some "Brownie Points" from the Line Manager when he looked through it. I got a pat on the back when it was returned.

Subsequently, it provided me with a couple of unwanted problems. The first came about eighteen months later. I had just finished managing a course. Although ten weeks long, they started every five weeks. Ian in the office next to mine, was half way through the following one. I was at home one evening when our phone rang. The call was from my boss, asking if he and the Head of Training at Wood Norton could come and see me right away. There was no explanation but I obviously agreed. It was a totally unheard of event and I spent a very uncomfortable 20 minutes worrying about what I had done. When they arrived, I was told that there had been a very serious incident involving a girl in Ian's class. I never found out what happened but it resulted in the instant dismissal of our specialist lighting lecturer. My boss told me that as his most effective Course Manager, I was to take over Ian's course with immediate effect. On arriving at work the following morning, I popped in to see Ian to discuss the situation. Much to my embarrassment, he knew nothing about it. They had not bothered to tell him! He told me that the girl, though now a student, was originally the secretary to someone fairly well placed in the Corporation. She was pretty useless and did not show much interest. I soon discovered his assessment was accurate. A couple of examples might illustrate this.

Practical exercises operated with groups of two students, in a matrix which ensured that each group did all the subjects over a number of days. One of the exercises was to shoot a short story on 16mm film and edit it in another period. A number of the groups were having problems with the editing, so I ran an extra session in an evening. At one point I noticed the other girl in the troublesome girls group, beavering away editing the film, while the offending one, showing no interest at all, sat behind her filing her nails. At the same time complaining that if her partner didn't "get a move on", she was going to miss EastEnders. As I was running the session in my own time, unpaid, I was not best pleased.

On another occasion, towards the end of the course, the girl, who was scheduled to be a Camera Operator, ran out of her final camera practical test and locked herself in her room in the accommodation block. She complained that she was too nervous to take the test. Management took the problem out of my hands. I assume the results and my far from complementary report, were "doctored" to give her a pass. Sometime later, rumour had it that it backfired on the Corporation. The girl became a Camera Operator in News, where the cameras are remotely controlled. She apparently drove a camera into part of the set and destroyed £40,000 worth of camera lens. The five weeks spent with that class was one of my least enjoyable periods at Wood Norton.

The other problem had a much better outcome, though initially it was a none too pleasant surprise. Somewhere in the upper echelons of the B.B.C. it was decided that a 10 week course for trainee operators was too long and must be reduced to 8 weeks.

Additionally, a whole raft of new, more up to date material must be incorporated. I was summoned to my boss's office and told that he wanted me to do the job. It involved re-writing about 70% of the course, including syllabus, teaching notes, overheads, handouts and tests. I was amazed, there were other T.V. Ops. Lecturers who had been in the Corporation forever. Break off a finger and there was B.B.C. all the way through, like rock and I was an outsider. His argument was that if he gave me the job, it would get done on time. A sort of backhanded compliment I suppose. As I still maintained my normal teaching commitments, it was a demanding task. However, it did get done on time and approval from on high. The good news for me was a double increment at the end of the year.

All of the other lecturers had specializations related to their previous job in the B.B.C. I was a jack of all trades and as such inherited the safety role. Most of the courses had a mandatory safety lecture and I did them all. It also meant that I was a student on a number of courses at R.O.S.P.A. in Birmingham. To broaden my practical experience of "working at heights" I attended a course at the Simon Hoist facility near Dudley. Part of this was a "ride" on a hoist. I seem to remember it was called a Star Lifter. It extended to 200ft. Wonderful views but not a pleasant experience. A second bite of the "working at heights" cherry, found me on top of a very tall building in Whitehall, observing the safety procedures employed to hold the cameras, pointing a long way down into the street below, to cover the route of the State Opening of Parliament. The role provided another fairly hair raising experience, when required to do an Electrical Safety lecture at B.B.C. Cardiff. I sent a copy of what I intended to do, to the manager who had requested the training, which he approved. Expecting to talk to a small group of people, I was a little confused on arrival, when rigged with a radio mic. The disquiet was compounded when I was ushered into a huge theatre and confronted by an audience of around 150 engineers, most of whom appeared very senior. Behind me on the stage, sat four even more senior managers from Cardiff. I had to talk for an hour on very basic Electrical Safety, effectively teaching "Granny to suck eggs". For someone used to a maximum group of 30 in the confines of a standard classroom, it was both terrifying and embarrassing.

As time went on, the experience that I had gained allowed me to work on a much wider range of courses. Sometimes when they ran in parallel with one of mine. A lot of the other lecturers were primarily Operators. Any engineering requirements on their syllabus often appeared on my teaching schedule. Slowly, the number of courses started to dwindle. With the reduction in workload I had time to diversify into other areas I found interesting. One of these was Special Effects equipment, eventually becoming sufficiently adept to give "ad hoc" demonstrations to various classes.

In the summer of 1992, rumours of possible redundancies began to circulate. A short time later they became reality, when we were told that the lecturing staff was to be reduced by 50% (i.e. 30 posts.) It was the first major round of redundancies within the Corporation and the terms were extremely generous. I was offered a redundancy/early retirement package on which we could live comfortably, without a requirement to seek further employment. Although I enjoyed my job, the deal was too good to miss and I accepted. To ease my way gently into retirement, I used up my remaining annual leave to progressively reduce my working week by one day per week for the last 4 weeks. So in the last week I only did one day and that was the day for farewell drinks and nibbles. Thus, on 31st January 1993 at the age of 54, I officially retired. 39 years and 11 days after starting at Locking. Not realizing that the really hard work was just about to begin!!

Mike Collier



APPRENTICE DAYS

LOCKING- OH WHAT A WEEK THAT WAS!!

A spur of the moment decision to visit RAF Locking before too much was changed a few years back, led to finding the Tech blocks already demolished, with the rubble ignominiously piled up all over the parade ground. Thankfully the grassy sports arena was still much the same as we all remember and I was chuffed to stand once again on Farnborough Road, where members of B Squadron formed up outside the block, before marching off for the day's education. Although the wooden huts which had been home for 3 years had long been demolished, my thoughts naturally drifted back to younger days, training to become a radio fitter with the 87th Entry during 1957-60.

Life as an Apprentice at RAF Locking was certainly not for the idle, especially for those that endured living in the war time era wooden accommodation which with minimal heating could be exceedingly cold during the winter months.

The routine to keep body soul and our living quarters clean and up to scratch was the same for everyone, with a once a week evening 'Bull' session, which required all the beds to be moved to one side of the hut, whilst great big dollops of orange polish were applied to the lino. This was then spread over the floor by each having a go on the bumper (who can forget the heavy weighted brush with a hinged broom handle) and the lino then brought to a full shine by members of the billet sliding about on torn up pieces of blanket, known as 'floor pads'. It was always an amusing sight to see 10 or more bods sliding from side to side in crocodile fashion, whilst singing the odd ribald song as a pace-setter. Of course when the bull session was complete and the beds realigned everyone continued sliding about on their floor-pads in an attempt to maintain the shine ready for the following morning inspection. After all this effort it was time to spend bulling our own personal kit, with shoes and boots brought to a high gloss using none other than spit, polish and a soft cloth and, well before anodized or plastic buttons invented, the brass buttons of tunics and greatcoats cleaned using 'Brasso', and a 'button stick', the stick preventing our uniform from being stained. Yes the necessary Bull nights were hard work, but with the usual billet humour, accepted and taken in everyone's stride.

The following morning at 06.30 sharp the daily routine started with the billet Leading Apprentice striding in from his separate little room, with words to the effect of 'rise and shine' or far ruder comments. With numerous moans and groans at being woken at such an ungodly hour, the ever quickening rush to be first to the communal wash block started then, after shaving and getting dressed, the sheets blankets and pillows had to be made up to form the mandatory 'bed pack'. Only then was it off to the mess for a hearty breakfast to give us the energy to cope with what lay ahead. On leaving, mugs and irons had to be cleaned in the steaming hot water tanks provided, then back to the billet again to ensure everything was spick and span just in case we had an inspection whilst we were absent. If the billet failed inspection then a further bull night invariably followed, if an individual's kit was not up to scratch it could be a couple of days on 'jankers' parade, with kit inspection by the evening Duty Officer at Wing HQ, followed by a joyful hour or so down at the mess, peeling a bucketful of onions .

After grabbing the kit needed for the day and forming up outside in flights on Farnborough Road, the LA's invariably inspected each billet group to make sure everyone was clean shaven and worthy of being called an Apprentice, then the whole Wing would march off down Parke's Road to arrive at the Tech Blocks by 8am, to begin that mornings 4 hours schooling in the black arts of radio at 8.10 sharp.

First year 'sprogs' were gently eased into the basics of colour codes, resistor and capacitor networks and ethereal wonders such as Flux density, but as training steadily intensified the nuances and mathematics of the range of thermionic valves and other devices that we would eventually come in contact with had to be absorbed. During our time, large printed sheets of hand drawn diagrams were handed out by the instructors, with each of us having to jot down anything that we thought would help in memorizing the vast amount of info that we were being taught, then the notes were placed into our personal clip folders which slowly over time became quite bulky. We looked after our individual folders like gold dust for they were going to be our only source of reference during training and after we had passed out, for it was years later that the RAF got round to issuing the comprehensive AP 3302 series, which must have made life far easier for those that followed.

The sheer depth of information that we were being taught meant some took it easily in their stride but for the majority, and certainly for me, it was a hard slog. The pressure of the training occasionally took its toll, with individuals falling behind and maybe feeling low at their ability, but in my experience this was invariably overcome with help from more clued up colleagues, the team spirit and comradeship that came with the Entry system ensuring we all naturally helped each other out.

Of course the usual billet banter helped during these low periods, but if an individual continually fell too far behind and merited extra training, transfer to the following Entry was the fall back solution rather than return to Civvy Street.

It was always a relief when the morning session came to an end for by this time many were getting hungry, it's a well-known fact that brainwork requires a lot of energy and Apprentices could eat like horses, so as each class headed back to the Wing, the pace of march quickened till we were going like the clappers to collect our irons and be near the front of the queue. The Apprentice Wing chefs did a brilliant job offering a wide choice of cooked meats vegetables and plenty of puddings and I remember at tea time if anyone was still peckish there was nearly always a selection of cakes and tins of treacle to make up a sandwich. Yes mealtimes were a joy and nobody went hungry but after being well fed and watered mid-day, and a short respite in the billet, it was then back down to the Tech blocks for yet another session of electronic brain teasing.

The quality of training at Locking was without doubt second to none and in preparation for when we joined the wider RAF in our chosen Air or Ground trade groups, we were taught to fault find down to component level on the radar and communication systems we would end up working on.

The many days in the Tech Blocks en route to that juncture, learning valve related data such as load lines, anode gains and classes of biasing, and then simple circuits such as the Hartley oscillator (no not a type of jam) were all a steady progress to more intricate types. Regular practical sessions in the workshops ensured each of us was competent in metalwork and of course the art of perfect soldering, all leading up to eventually wiring and assembly our very own wireless receivers or 2 stage audio-amps which we were allowed to proudly retain.

The circuit functioning of the Super-het receiver, 'Multivibrator pulse generators' and the radar Miller time base, to name but a few were drummed in to us, the whole legion of circuitry that we had to memorise being quite immense. Regular exams kept us on our toes and although putting more pressure on each individually, naturally ensured that all the vast array of information taught was staying in the brain box, the whole of it coming to fruition when we eventually started fault finding on real radar and communication equipment. It was quite a satisfying experience to successfully fix a duff piece of electronic kit using the tools and test equipment of our trade such as the venerable 'Avo' multi-meter, signal generators and oscilloscope, all of which naturally we had to learn to operate and be efficient with.

As a break from the intensity of continual electronic training, at least one period during a week was spent in the gymnasium, with the chance to burn off some of our pent up energy competing in team games such as Basketball and Volleyball. The curriculum also even allowed time for a Wednesday sports afternoon for Football and Rugby as well as a morning's weekly Wing parade which, although it meant extra kit cleaning no doubt ensured our drill and marching skills didn't slacken, confirmed by the 87th proudly winning the Wing inter-Squadron drill competition.

As fit and future members of the Armed Forces, the hectic pace of learning was also interspersed with the odd lesson from the RAF Regiment, who taught us how to strip, clean and reassemble the bolt action Lee Enfield .303 rifle as well as the powerful Bren machine gun, culminating even with the ability to firing them on the camp's very own 25yard range.

Additional classes held in billets opposite to the Tech Blocks, improved further our education in Maths English and Grammar and other skills, where we covered subjects such as the functioning of petrol-engine generators, which we would come in contact with, and each of us was also encouraged to give talks in front of the class on any subject under the sun, all of which undoubtedly helped in future presentational skills.

The wide range of diversions from a strictly electronic schooling, besides making the training far more interesting than could be expected, inevitably increased every Apprentices skill base and knowledge and in tandem their self-esteem and confidence.

Yes the curriculum at Locking was indeed wide ranging and just as at lunchtime, when the 4 hour afternoon session came to an end; everyone was mightily relieved and ready to be marched to the mess and all eager for tea.

Unfortunately the day at this stage was still far from over, for on return to the billet the 'bed pack' had to be dismantled and the bed re-made once again ready for that night's slumber, then when completed, especially if we had been caught out in the rain and the buttons tarnished, out came the 'button stick' etc. for yet another half an hour session ready for the morrow. Yes billet life could be tedious at times but the regular nightly kit cleaning session was countered by the camaraderie we all shared, the telling of endless jokes, listening to the records and the life stories of billet colleagues and, once the kit was sorted, it was then a matter of deciding what to do next, to while away the remaining hours of the evening.

Locking had the normal range of social facilities, but with regard to unwinding mentally Apprentices were encouraged to engage in further physical exercise, so many opted to make their way to the gymnasium for boxing or gymnastic training and for those who were in Football or Rugby teams, there was always circuit or weight training to keep themselves fit and ready for any up and coming matches.

For those that wanted a temporary escape from the hustle and bustle of billet life, the Naafi and Malcolm Club had quiet rooms to read books etc. or, if thought necessary to catch up on what had been taught that day, the ability to do a spot of genning.

Otherwise groups would get together to pass the time with a friendly game of darts, table tennis or just sit around generally talking about the day's events.

The alternative was the Naafi's several TV rooms, to catch up on the latest news or make one's way to the Astra cinema, where for a few precious hours one could revert to being as near to a civilian once more, shout at the antics of Tom and Jerry cartoons etc. and if a good film was being shown, drifting off into a different world from camp life. Then, with what always seemed a long day under our belts, the time came to make our weary way back to the billet before the 10pm lights out where, after a decent night's sleep, we would be ready once again to tackle the challenges of the next morning.

This then, except for sports days and leave periods, was the general daily routine each week, so it was no wonder that we looked forward to Friday nights, especially if there was no Saturday morning parade and kit cleaning could be dispensed with.

During winter months especially, there was usually a Saturday afternoon Rugby or Football match on the arena to watch, particularly popular if there were any visiting teams. Alternatively a few hours from camp life, indulging in the simple pleasures of

shopping, sightseeing and a coffee in 'Fellas' was great, and then later in the evening, especially after a pint in the Captain's Cabin, wandering the length of Weston's pier in the hope of meeting members of the fair sex, dancing (or a form of such) at the Winter Gardens or, for the more adventurous, the Glen ballroom in Bristol, was even better.

Any late returns from such forays always meant a long trudge from the rail station and utilizing well known gaps in the hedgerow to bypass the guardroom, or if lucky to catch one, a fast taxi ride through the officers married quarters.

Yes Saturdays could be hectic but whatever we had indulged in, everyone looked forward to a nice long lie-in come the Sunday morning, with maybe a mug of cocoa and sandwich brought up from the mess by a willing colleague. Unfortunately at least once a month our religious wellbeing was also catered for, by requiring those who couldn't skive off to be marched in best blue uniform at 09.30 hours down to No 3Tech Block, where the padre did his best to keep us on the straight and narrow.

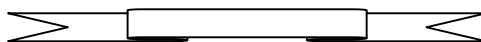
With no chance of a lie in, as can be imagined, these 'Church Parades' were not universally popular, and had the unintended consequence of bringing out the inventiveness inherent in each Apprentice. Various excuse were always proffered in a bid to escape such a duty but, for those forced to attend, the astute resorted to hiding books, newspapers and yes even crossword puzzles inside SD hats, hoping the beady eye of Flt/Sgt Burley wouldn't realize we were praying just a bit too intently.

Yes life at Locking had its ups and downs and although things got easier as each year passed, gaining more freedom and thankfully less parades or inspections as we neared the final hurdles, those free Sundays especially were enjoyed throughout, for each knew that the following morning the next weeks schooling would proceed apace.

We accepted our training at Locking was designed to be thorough, and set about learning with a purpose, for we each knew that every days effort was one more step on the path of our goal, that of hopefully becoming a Junior Technician in the radio trade we had volunteered and wearing the coveted 'Sparks' badge on our tunics.

We also knew that no matter what Entry we were in, each of us would value and remember the comradeship and time spent at RAF Locking for the rest of our days.

Brian Colby 87th Entry



HUMOUR

DEEP THINKERS

What deep thinkers men are... I mowed the lawn today, and after doing so I sat down and had a cold beer. The day was really quite beautiful, and the drink facilitated some deep thinking.

My wife walked by and asked me what I was doing and I said 'nothing'. The reason I said that instead of saying 'just thinking' is because she would have said 'about what'. At that point I would have to explain that men are deep thinkers about various topics which would lead to other questions.

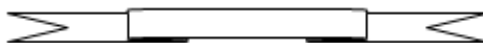
Finally I thought about an age old question: Is giving birth more painful than getting kicked in the nuts? Women always maintain that giving birth is way more painful than a guy getting kicked in the nuts.

Well, after another beer, and some heavy deductive thinking,

I have come up with the answer to that question. Getting kicked in the nuts is more painful than having a baby; and here is the reason for my conclusion. A year or so after giving birth, a woman will often say, "It might be nice to have another child." On the other hand, you never hear a guy say,

"You know, I think I would like another kick in the nuts." I rest my case.

Time for another beer.



USAFUSN HUMOUR IN UNIFORM

On some US air bases the air force is on one side of the field and civilian aircraft use the other side of the field, with the control tower in the middle .

One day the tower received a call from an aircraft asking, "What time is it?"

The tower responded, "Who is calling?"

The aircraft replied, "What difference does it make?"

The tower replied, "It makes a lot of difference:

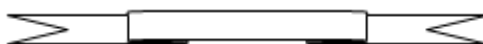
If it is a commercial flight, it is 3 o'clock.

If it is an Air Force plane, it is 1500 hours.

If it is a Navy aircraft, it is 6 bells.

If it is an Army aircraft, the big hand is on the 12 and the little hand is on the 3.

If it is a Marine Corps aircraft, it's Thursday afternoon and 120 minutes to "Happy Hour."

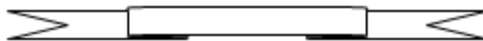


During training exercises, the lieutenant who was driving down a muddy back road encountered another car stuck in the mud with a red-faced colonel at the wheel.

"Your jeep stuck, sir?" asked the lieutenant as he pulled alongside.

"Nope," replied the colonel, coming over and handing him the keys.

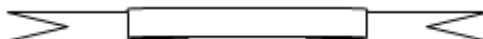
"Yours is."



Having just moved into his new office, a pompous, new colonel was sitting at his desk when an airman knocked on the door. Conscious of his new position, the colonel quickly picked up the phone, told the airman to enter, then said into the phone, "Yes, General, I'll be seeing him this afternoon and I'll pass along your message. In the meantime, thank you for your good wishes, sir"

Feeling as though he had sufficiently impressed the young enlisted man, he asked, "What do you want?"

"Nothing important, sir," the airman replied, "I'm just here to hook up your telephone."



Officer: "Soldier, do you have change for a dollar?"

Soldier: "Sure, buddy."

Officer: "That's no way to address an officer! Now let's try it again!" Do you have change for a dollar?"

Soldier: "No, SIR!"



Q: How do you know if there is a pilot at your party?

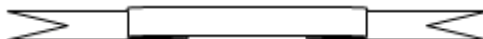
A: He'll tell you.

Q: What's the difference between God and pilots?

A: God doesn't think he's a pilot.

Q: What's the difference between a pilot and a jet engine?

A: A jet engine stops whining when the plane shuts down.



An Air Force Chief Master Sergeant and a General were sitting in the barbershop. They were both just getting finished with their shaves, when the barbers reached for some after-shave to slap on their faces.

The General shouted, "Hey, don't put that stuff on me! My wife will think I've been in a whore-house! "

The Chief turned to his barber and said, "Go ahead and put it on. My wife doesn't know what the inside of a whore-house smells like."

"Well," snarled the tough old Navy Chief to the bewildered Seaman, "I suppose after you get discharged from the Navy, you'll just be waiting for me to die so you can come and pee on my grave."

"Not me, Chief!" the Seaman replied. "Once I get out of the Navy, I'm never going to stand in line again!"

Dave Croft

PENSIONER FUN

The other day, my wife and I went into town and visited a shop. When we came out there was a traffic warden writing out a parking ticket.

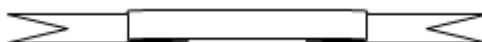
We went up to him and I said "Come on, how about giving a senior citizen a break?"

He ignored me and continued to write out the ticket, so I called him an idiot. He glared at me and started to write out another ticket for having worn out tyres.

Brenda then called him a pillock as he stuck the second ticket on the windscreen so he started writing out even more tickets and this went on for about 20 minutes. The more we abused him the angrier he got and the more tickets he wrote out.

Just then our bus arrived and we got on and went home.

We try to have a bit of fun each day now that we are retired, its important at our age!!



HOW TO LIVE A LONG LIFE

A tough old cowboy from Texas told his grand-daughter that the secret of a long life was to sprinkle a pinch of gun-powder on her oatmeal every morning. She followed his advice right up to the day she died at the ripe old age of 108 years old.

She left behind 18 children, 32 grand-children, 52 great-grand-children, 24 great-great-grand-children and an enormous great hole where the Crematorium used to be.

Brian Colby

RAFLAA
ROYAL AIR FORCE LOCKING APPRENTICE ASSOCIATION.

**MINUTES FROM THE 51ST COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT FLOWERDOWN HOUSE ON
THURSDAY 30TH JANUARY 2014.**

Members present:

Tiny Kuhle	87 th	Chairman
Chris Bryan	87 th	Secretary
Tony Horry	76 th	Treasurer
Jim Doran	219 th	Membership Secretary
Peter Crowe	95 th	AA Rep/Webmaster
Rick Atkinson	91 st	Service Rep.
Graham Beeston	209 th	Craft Rep.
Andy Perkins	109 th	Technical Rep
Nigel Lodge	91 st	In attendance

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

Item 1. Apologies.

Apologies were received from:

Colin Ingram 88th Newsletter

Item 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

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

Proposed by Graham Beeston and seconded by Rick Atkinson

Item 3 Matters Arising

Andy Perkins was to be added to the list of signatories to sign cheques for the Association.

Referring to Item 7, Rick Atkinson (Service Rep) has a design for the monument for the Locking site.

Item 8. The Constitution is to be discussed later.

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Item 14. Members' names to be sorted by County so that members may attend funerals of members in their area.

Action Jim Doran

Item 4 Treasurer's Report.

**RAF LOCKING APPRENTICES ASSOCIATION INCOME/EXPENDITURE -
July 2013 – January 2014**

Brought forward from July 2013

Deposit Bond			Expenditure (Purchases)		
Business Money Manager A/C	£5,193.68		Pins	£38.00	
Current A/C	£1,189.32		Ties	£0.00	
Cash	£24.33		Video	£0.00	
Total Funds		£6,407.33	Social	£0.00	
Income (Sales)			Donations	£40.00	
Membership Renewals			Name Badges	£5.50	
Standing Orders	0	880.00	AGM – 2013	£14.99	
Cheques	0	50.00	Advert	£0.00	
New Members	0	60.00	Bank Charges	£0.00	
Life	0	100.00	Audit	£0.00	
			Refunds	£40.00	
Ties	0	30.00	Bank Charges	£0.00	
Sales - Videos		0.00			£139.09
Sales – Coins		0.00	Overheads		
Sales – wheels			Travel	£300.50	
AGM			Printing	£182.00	
Donation (AGM Fund Raising)		00	Telephone	£0.00	
		1,120.00	Postage	£71.93	
Interest			Stationery	£0.00	
Business Money Manager		1.82	Website (DD)	£21.60	£576.03
Deposit Bond					
Total Income		£1,121.82	Total Expenditure		£715.12
Total Balance		£6,814.03	Surplus/Deficit		£406.70
Deposit Bond					
Business Money Manger		5195.50)			
Current A/C		1,634.62)			
Cash		24.33)			
Total Funds		£6,854.45			

Presented to LAA Committee – 30 January 2014
Tony Horry - Treasurer

Accounts as per the income/expenditure statement for July 2013 – January 2014-01-31

The Bank Statement for period Jan-Feb 2014 is awaited.

It will enable the completion of the FY accounts for 2013/14.

When figures complete I shall arrange for the independent check.

I shall e-mal the completed Accounts to each Committee member

Donations		
Flowerdown House RAFA	40.00	RAFLAA Cttee Meeting (July 2013)

AGM 2014 11 booking forms have been received for the event.

4 people have requested booking for the coach to Tyntesfield

Cheques will be banked to be accounted for next FY – tickets to be sent out.

Atlantic Crossing has been booked for the event.

A Direct Debit is in place to Freeola for Web hosting

Payments of 10.80 were made in September and December 2013.

Offer from RAF Halton AA – Tony Parrott

They wish to reduce stock levels and offer (samples available)

Key Ring £2.98

Tie Tack Whee l £1.57

Wheel Cufflinks £4.00 + £2.50 postage. Are we interested in purchase?

Recommendations:

Income/Expenditure for period July 2013 to January 2014 be approved as presented. The final FY figures will include receipts and payments shown on the bank statement for period January – February 2014, which will be received around 12th February.

Accounts for 2012/13 be approved subject to independent check for presentation to the AGM.

that a donation of 40.00 be made to Flowerdown House for their hospitality for today's meeting.

that arrangements for AGM bar subsidy be confirmed under Agenda Item AGM 2014.

The Treasurer brought samples of cuff links, key rings and lapel badges supplied to him by RAF HAA. It was decided that of the three items, only the key ring would be desirable and that an order of 10 would be placed to be put on display at the AGM. The price if purchased at the AGM would be £4 or if posted £5.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted. Proposed by Rick Atkinson and seconded by Nigel Lodge.

Item 5. Membership Secretary's Report.

Membership Details:

Latest Membership number used is 712 (708 at the last AGM)

Only 4 new members since the AGM.

Sadly we have lost 6 Members of the Association since the AGM

Nobby Clarke (98th) 2013/04

Colin Cove (83rd) 2013/05

Ken Toogood (79th) 2013/07

Norrie Moir (203rd) 2013/07

Ken Farmer (75th) 2013/08

Pete Hoare (92nd) 2013/10

Newsletter Hardcopy Requests

A total of 34 current active member copies of which 3 are overseas: Australia, France and USA.

An additional 3 copies are sent to sister organisations i.e. RAF Cranwell Apprentices, Admin Apprentices Association and RAF Halton Apprentices Association.

Newsletters to Widows stand at 7 copies in total.

Email addresses are an on-going issue to keep up to date with.

Advertising:

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

I have a contact at the RAFA Eastern Area and pursuing the opportunity to network with him in order to notify out to RAFA Branches the existence of the Association. To date I have only had 1 enquiry and so far unsuccessful in converting to a member.

Please also help by taking every opportunity to advertise our existence.

Tiny Kuhle thanked the Membership Secretary for his sterling work.

Report accepted. Proposed by Peter Crowe and seconded by Chris Bryan.

Item 6. Secretary's Report.

Firstly, I would like to welcome Nigel Lodge to the meeting. Nigel has travelled quite a reasonable distance from Norwich, in order to attend this meeting, and in case anyone is not aware, Nigel is taking over from me at the next AGM. as secretary to the association, that is, if there is no other contender for the post, and Nigel is elected by the members. As our president Martin suggested, Nigel is gaining

experience by shadowing me during my final year. I am sure that he will prove to be more than a worthy successor. So, welcome Nigel.

Thankfully, this has been a quiet year for dispatching letters of condolence. From this aspect, it would appear that we are living longer, and so we are prolonging the inevitability of our own demise, which must be a good thing. I thought that the handling of the winding up of both the Brats192 and the Cranwell Apprentice Association, was achieved particularly well. They realized that the end was approaching, and dealt with the situation in a well thought out manner, with any surplus of funds, being donated to the RAF Benevolent Fund. I should think that we have about 10 to 15 years, before we have to confront our own demise. In the meantime, perhaps we should spare a thought for the loss of our two fellow associations, realizing that these places will not be occupied at the next FABEA meeting at RAF Halton next July, and their presence and contribution to the federation, will be sorely missed.

At the FABEA meeting, Tiny and I learnt that the CAA memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum was in a state of decay, so we thought that we would drive up to Staffordshire, not only to inspect the CAA edifice, but also, our own. Cranwell's memorial was constructed from brick, and with the ageing of time, the salt in the brickwork had started to run down the side, and it did look a little tired. The CAA had been warned by the authority at the NMA. that their memorial would be removed, if it fell short of the state of repair which was expected by them. One of the members of the CAA. who wished to remain anonymous, provided the money to have their memorial clad in granite, which would satisfy the NMA authority. Our own memorial, as you know was constructed from granite, and it looked very smart, if a little modest, compared with RAF Halton's contribution of The Grove. Tiny and I decided that a once a year visit would not be too frequent, and even after my retirement from the secretary's post, I would be still willing to travel there, to check that our memorial was still in good condition.

It was mentioned at the last committee meeting that we should look for more ways to advertise our existence, with a view to acquiring more members. It was mentioned that the Admin AA advertised in *The Daily Telegraph* about their AGM. I looked into this, and what they did, was to notify the newspaper after the date of the AGM. and not before. We could try the same method, but it would mean that possible new members would only find out, after the event. Is there any value in this? Perhaps it should be discussed.

In closing, I would like to apologise to all the members of the committee, whose normal arrangements were disrupted by my request to hold this meeting a little earlier than is usual, especially to our veritable treasurer, who on this day of the month, lunches with his friends. Meetings should be back to normal, after the AGM.

I would also like to thank all the members of the committee, who have helped me during the past three years of my tenure, especially our stalwart chairman, without whose expertise, and help, I would surely have foundered long ago. Thank you Tiny.

Tiny Kuhle thanked the Secretary for his sterling work.

Report accepted. Proposed by Jim Doran and seconded by Tony Horry.

Item 7. Amendment to Constitution

Bruce Graham (79th) contacted Tiny Kuhle and suggested that the present wording of the Constitution would not allow the admission of Jason Waterson to the Association so that an amendment was needed.

The amendment to the constitution in italics is as follows:

MEMBERSHIP

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

Proposed by Tiny Kuhle and seconded by Andy Perkins

Item 8. Associate Membership Proposals

Covered in Item 7 above.

Item 9 Halton memorabilia

Covered in Item 4, Treasurer's Report

Item 10. AGM 2014

Tiny Kuhle, Jim Doran and Chris Bryan called in at the Webbington before this meeting to confirm final arrangements for the AGM.

Andy Perkins has chosen the menu.

The bus for the ladies' outing is going to Tyntesfield. Andy Perkins needs numbers by the end of March. Tony Horry will contact Andy Perkins with the numbers of ladies attending. The cost of entrance was thought to be £15.00 which may prove prohibitive to some ladies. Jim Doran to send an email all members and to Pete Crowe to put reminder of the AGM on the website.

After the AGM in 2013 it was thought tea and coffee was difficult to access in one confined corner. Perhaps two locations could be arranged.

Subsidized drinks. Drinks will be subsidized by £1.00 from 11am to 19.30 whilst the bar is open.

Action: Tony Horry and Pete Crowe

Item 11. RAF LAA Web site

The website was thought to be working perfectly and Tiny Kuhle thanked Pete Crowe for his work.

Item 12. FABEA (Demise of RAF CAA and Brats 192)

Chris Bryan thought that the Brats 192 and the Cranwell Apprentice Association had contributed a great deal to the FABEA meetings and that their demise had been carried out in a mature and correct way.

Their presence would be sorely missed at the next FABEA meeting.

Item 13. Newsletter

The following report was received after the Committee Meeting

Locking Review - I am still 'slowly' scanning in some old Locking Reviews plus one or two other relevant publications such as Airwaves and the 50th Anniversary of 1RS. The completed versions are now on DVD which I will pass on to Pete for publication on the web site if he feels it appropriate. I still have one more Locking Review to scan in and a copy of 'Over and Out' - a history of RAF Locking, not sure about the legality of publishing magazines on our web but I check for copyright signs if none then carry on in ignorance.

March Newsletter - A few articles received so far, members seem to be able to dig up 'Humour in Uniform' easier than digging up the past, but our usual scribes have come to the rescue as normal.

RAFLAA Web Site

Congratulation to Pete for the excellent job being done, I see this as the main router for the Association and taking over from the Newsletter a lot of the 'routine' messages to Members. Obituaries in the Newsletter may be months out of date when they are printed, would it be more appropriate to publish them on the web/Reminder in next N/L about Contacts

After a recent surprise from one of my old Entry mates (not seen in 50 years) the system of making contact through the Membership Secretary worked well and perhaps we could expand on that with a link to the Membership Sect.

RAF Comrades Contacts

The Web Site Contacts button links to the RAFCAA site which has been removed!

Future Visits

The Bristol Aero Collection may be worth a visit when it is up and running, the collection will seemingly cover everything from Concord to cars.

For the AGM wives trip should we put up a poster asking for suggestion for the next AGM visit and then take the most popular (within reason).

Tiny Kuhle thanked Colin Ingram in his absence for his work on the newsletter.

Item 14 Any other business

Rick Atkinson had suggested that the Gate Guardian in the form of a granite plinth should be used to mark the old Locking site. He brought photographs of the plinth and suggested ways it could be used. He had contacted several local firms and settled on one, namely Wards of Bristol, which was a family run firm and showed great interest in our project. A stainless steel plate was to be bolted to the plinth and inscribed by the Locking badges and appropriate wording. The cost would be £1200.00 for two badges and an inscription and £1800.00 if it was screen-printed which was the preferred suggestion. Also suggested was a metal plinth would could be installed inside the college if opened on the Locking site.

Tony Horry would contact Mowlams, the developers of the site, to ask for contributions for the plinth.

Action: Tony Horry

Tiny Kuhle thanked Rick Atkinson for his work involved with the plinth.

If the College goes ahead on the site then possibly the plinth outside and the metal stand inside the College could be arranged.

An item in the AGM Agenda should be arranged for discussion about the Locking site.

In advertising our presence it was suggested that the Daily Telegraph be contacted after the AGM with a free advertisement in the Court Circular pages.

Action: Chris Bryan

The 98th, 99th and 100th entries will be contacted to give short presentations of their Golden Entry at the end of the AGM. Each presentation to be 5 minutes or less. Members will be informed by the Newsletter, the website and the Secretary will email all appropriate members.

Action: Chris Bryan

Item 15. Date of next Meeting

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

The next committee meeting would be held on Thursday 10th July 2104 at Flowerdown House Weston-super-Mare commencing at 13.00hrs.

Meeting Closed at 15.20hrs.

Chris Bryan (Sec LAA)

OBITUARIES

PETER HENRY HOARE 92ND

31st July 1943 - 22nd October 2013



Pete was born in Gillingham, Kent, the son of a Navy CPO Artificer.

He joined the 92nd RAF Apprentices on 22nd May 1959 aged 15. Though young, he qualified for training in the coveted ground radar class and passed out three years later with accelerated promotion to corporal.

His first posting was Syerston, before serving at La Buan Island, Borneo, for a year. Posted to RAF Patrington in early 1967 to install a TACAN Beacon, he met his life partner Louise and they were married in early 1968. Pete was sent to Locking on a course and then to RAF West Drayton where he helped to build the new Air Traffic Control System.

At West Drayton their son Christopher was born in 1968 and while Pete was on a Bloodhound course at RAE Newton, their daughter Victoria was born before he was moved on to RAF Bruggen in Germany. It became a family joke that whenever Louise announced she was pregnant Pete would be sent on a 9 month course! Sadly their daughter was diagnosed with cancer in 1976 and died within six months.

Pete was accepted on an OCTU course and was commissioned as a Flying Officer in November 1978 and posted back to West Drayton. In 1982 he was posted to MATO, RAF Uxbridge as a Flight Lieutenant.

Pete decided to leave the RAF in 1983 and, after working three years notice, he retired in 1986. Pete and Louise bought a house in Denham and Pete got a job as Marketing Manager with STC, selling communications equipment to the armed forces.

He was very successful at STC (later Nortel) and sold systems to the Navy for the new frigate fleet, the submarines being built at Barrow; to the RAF for TCW and to the Canadian and Dutch Air Forces.

Pete began to think of retiring and bought a piece of land in a little village just outside Limassol, Cyprus, in 1992. Nortel kept asking him to do just one more job but in 1998 Pete was determined to retire as he would be 55 and entitled to his RAF pension. Nortel made him redundant (as they had been promising to do) so they sold their house and went to live in Cyprus.

Life was good in Cyprus but unfortunately in late 2005 Pete was diagnosed with cancer. He had a major operation and 6 weeks of radiotherapy in England, before going back to Cyprus. He came back to the UK for checkups, and the 92nd and RAFLAA reunions, which he loved.

In 2011 Pete and Louise decided it was probably best if they came back to the UK. Pete went to see his consultant as he had been experiencing problems and he was told the cancer had returned. He had a huge operation that lasted 12 hours which left him with problems swallowing and having to feed through a peg tube.

He did well until July 2013, when he started to become very unwell. On the 19th October he was taken into Treliske Hospital Intensive Care Unit where he died on 22nd October. Louise and Christopher were with him at the end.

Pete had many interests including building his own loudspeakers and driving a steam train. He has flown a plane and done some motorbike and sidecar motor cross. A friend in Cyprus was an art teacher and she taught Pete to draw and paint. He proved to be a very talented water colourist.

Pete was a good man, husband and father. We are all the poorer for his passing and I am proud to have called him my friend.

Chris Tett



FINAL THOUGHTS

Lord Trenchard

(Father of the RAF)

“It was expected that, after, passing a final examination that the majority of Apprentices would pass out as Leading Aircraftsmen (LACs) and aircraftsmen (1st Class) (AC1s). A few would be AC2s and some would stay for another term and leave as corporals (cpls). Trenchard took a close and very personal interest in the progress of Halton and Cranwell. In November 1924 he was the reviewing officer for the 1st Halton graduation. Everyone was stunned when, instead of making the usual sort of speech he tore into the cadets telling them that he was bitterly disappointed in their examination results, there were too few LACs and AC1s. He ordered that AC2s and those who had failed be recoursed and pass out at the next graduation!”

(extract from Short History of the Royal Air Force)

Trenchard’s final comment (about the Apprentice Scheme) on the plan was simple and to the point:

“I have laid the foundations for a castle; if nobody builds anything bigger than a cottage on them, it will at least be a very good cottage”.

RAFLAA COMMITTEE

Appointment	Name	Address	Tel/email	Re-Election	Entry
President	Martin Palmer				91 st
Chairman	"Tiny" Kühle	22 Tavistock Close Woburn Sands Milton Keynes Bucks MK17 8UY	(01908) 583784 Hans.Kuhle@btopenworld.com	Apr 2016	87 th
Secretary	Chris Bryan	39 Fairfax, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG42 1YT.	(01344) 304725. suechris.bryan@googlemail.com	Apr 2014	87 th
Treasurer	Tony Horry	Hillside Cottage Kewstoke Road Kewstoke WSM BS22 9YD	(01934) 628383 Tony.horry@gmail.com	Apr 2016	76 th
Membership Secretary	Jim Doran	11 Saxonlea Close Rushden Northants NN10 6BF	(01933) 317357 Jimdoran1@outlook.com	Apr 2014	219 th
Service Rep	Rick Atkinson	Gateway Cottage 1 Lake Walk Adderbury Oxfordshire OX17 3PF	(01295) 812972 rickatkinson@me.com	Sept 2015	91 st
AA Rep/ Webmaster	Peter Crowe	14 Hillview Road WSM N. Somerset BS23 3HS	(01934) 412178 webmaster@raflaa.org.uk	Sept 2015	95 th
Craft Rep	Graham Beeston	87 Hornbeam Rd Havant PO9 2UT	Home (02392) 346242 Work 07920038690 graham@mapleoak.co.uk	Sept 2015	209 th
Tech Rep	Andy Perkins	107 Balmoral Way Worle WSM BS22 9BZ	(01934) 417323 am.perkins@virgin.net	Sept 2015	109 th
Newsletter Editor	Colin Ingram	Fairhaven Gooseham Morwenstow Bude Cornwall EX23 9PG	01288 331363 colin.ingram90@gmail.com	Apr 2015	88 th



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