



RAFLAA NEWSLETTER

SERIAL 66

JULY 2013

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Hello to you all,

With so much discussion concerning Service related societies, Cranwell, BRATS 92 etc, reminded me of organisation that I have recently become aware. One being the Bloodhound Missile Preservation Society, they seem to be achieving wonderful things putting the Bloodhound II System back into working order.

RAF Sopley which closed in September 1974 has its own Association, the Station closed nearly 40 years ago so they are going well they have their AGM in Christchurch.

Similarly the RAF Butterworth and Penang Association have a good following, even if they are a long way from their spiritual home.

All these Association, and there are many more, have one common theme, to remember the past for the future, before it is too late.

If anyone has a 'pet' Association he wishes to be advertised in the Newsletter please let me have the details.

I noticed at the 2013 AGM several people nodding (or was it that lunch time beer) when I mentioned various Stations now closed but worthy of an article from those posted there at various times so it is with excited anticipation that I look forward to your stories.

I hear on the grapevine that many wives also read the Newsletter, so ladies how about telling us what life has been like married to an ex-Apprentice.

colin.ingram90@gmail.com

Tel: (01288) 331363

Fairhaven

Gooseham

Morwenstow

Bude

Cornwall

EX23 9PG

Deadline for next issue – 20th September 2013 for November 2013

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Colin,

Have had an email from Tony Mooney, who agrees that we have taken the numbering saga about as far as we can go at the present time. Placing a copy of Tony's diagram on the website would seem a natural depository for the record don't you think?

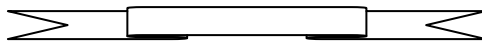
To change the subject, in the last Newsletter I enjoyed reading Mike Colliers time as an instructor at Yatesbury, which prompted me to write a few words regarding a number of visits I had to the same establishment many years ago.

I have attached plus a picture of AI23 which Ian Davis kindly sent me.

Regards

Brian Colby (87th)

The Hut Numbering diagram is now on the RAFLAA Website. ED



RAF Sopley Association has been operating for 15 years and members cover various trades stationed there up to closure in 1974. It meets regularly from September to May in the Royal British Legion in Christchurch with an AGM in April followed by a reunion dinner at the Suncliff hotel Bournemouth (next date April 5 2014)

It may be that you have some connection with Sopley so if interested please contact our Treasurer, Ray Porte at raymond.porte@btinternet.com or 023 8070 1582

Thanks and best wishes

Mike Goodyear

RAFLAA NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the following new members to RAFLAA

Entry			
80	AA	Bob	Chandler
87	AA	Bill	Rudland
87	AA	George	Dixon
101	AA	Roger	Saunders
97	AA	Dick	Newman
97	AA	Geoff	Ray
69	AA	George	Hearnden
97	AA	Colin	Howarth
211	CA	Paul	Laflin
73	AA	Ed	Broome

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.



RAFHAAAGS

ROYAL AIR FORCE HALTON AIRCRAFT APPRENTICES' ASSOCIATION



GOLF SOCIETY FIXTURES 2013

PRESIDENT	Jerry Collier
VICE PRESIDENT	Cyril E. Large
COMMITTEE: CAPTAIN/CHAIRMAN	Fred Crooks
VICE-CAPTAIN PAST CAPTAIN	Peter Tanner Allan Thompson
TREASURER	Fred Crooks
39 Queensbury Place, Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey GU17 9LX Tel: 01276 36025 Email: fred_crooks@hotmail.com	
MEMBERS SECRETARY	Chris Inward
9 Orchard Close, Ramsbury, Marlborough, Wilts SN8 2RQ Tel: 01672 520300 Email: haaagsmemsec@ci643215.plus.com	
FIXTURES SECRETARY	Trevor Bunce
9 Neville Close, Saham Toney, Thetford IP25 7HR Tel: 01953 884400 Email: trevor.bunce@btinternet.com	
HANDICAP SECRETARY	Brian Fuller
1 Edgeworth Drive, Carterton, Oxon OX18 3LN Tel: 01993 842845 Email: bjandhj@tiscali.co.uk	

Membership of the RAFHAAAGS is open to all ex RAF Apprentices, contact addresses are above. I have received the full Fixture List for 2013 and will forward to anyone interested or apply direct as above.

Ed.

APPRENTICE DAYS

THE ORIGINAL LOCKING 76TH

(A potted history)

All history must start at some point in time. That of the 76th began on 13th October 1953, when prospective members sat the qualifying examination at centres throughout the country. Assuming that is, they had provided the requisite postal order to the value 2/6d, payable to the Accounting Officer, Air Ministry.

- 23rd Oct. 1953. - The 24th Entry of Boy Entrants gathered and signed on at Cosford. A select number of these, after extra tuition in maths and science, subsequently sat an examination similar to that above, with a view to transferring to Apprentice training.
- 6th Jan. 1954. - All successful candidates, including the Cosford, B.E.'s, reported to Halton for aptitude tests, a medical and interviews.
- 20th Jan. 1954. - A few days prior to this date, the first of the original 76th had arrived at Halton from Tanganyika. Here, attested and allocated the service number 589262, before transfer to Locking.
- On the 20th, 92 others, including 9 ex-B.E.'s, arrived, were attested and allocated consecutive service numbers 589518 to 589609 inclusive. Additionally, there were three foreign nationals from S. Rhodesia.
- 3rd Mar. 1954. - A tenth ex-B.E. arrived from Cosford. He had been in S.S.O. on the original joining date. Allocated an out of sequence service number 680274, he completed the original entry complement of 97.
- 8th Mar. 1954. - Bushell (518) (one of the ex-B.E.'s) was first to leave, when he transferred to the Halton 76th, to become a *u/t* Airframe Fitter.
- 15th Apl. 1954. - Dickson (536) next to leave, having bought himself out. Subsequently he had to do 2 years National Service in the Army.
- 29th July. 1954. - Maure (262) discharged. Technically unsuitable. Later became a Medic. in the Parachute Regiment for 15 years.
- 22nd Aug. 1954. - Budge (532) F.T.'d to 77th after suffering a serious eye injury.
- 23rd Aug. 1954. - 13 AA's F.T.'d from 75th to the 76th.
- 30th Aug. 1954. - 8 more AA's from 75th F.T.'d to the 76th.
- Sept. - 76th issued with rifles. Four months early, because the 73rd were such a small entry that they would be unable to provide adequate flights for the 70th's passing out parade in December.
- 8th Sept. 1954. - Mackenzie (589) re-mustered, to become a medical Ward Assistant.
- 13th Sept. 1954 - Another 75th AA F.T.'d to the 76th.

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

- 20th Sept. 1954 - Anstee (578) F.T.'d to 78th following a long illness.
- 25th Oct. 1954. - John Robertson (Rhodesian) F.T.'d to 77th after serious illness. The problem persisted and he was repatriated some 6 months later. Subsequently he has become an internationally renowned economist.
- 3rd Jan. 1955. - The end of term 3 exams precipitated a major cull. Alien (526), Baker (569), Barker (551), Carlson (607), Christison (538), Grant (603), Harris (529), Mason (560), Parsons (548), Robbins (586), Russell (552), Storey (562), Tyson (563), Watson (561), Winkfield (581), Wright (588) and Wyness (594) all F.T.'d to 77th. 8 more AA's from 75th F.T.'d to the 76th.
- 18th Jan. 1955. - Another 75th AA F.T.'d to the 76th.
- 31st Jan.1955. - Stiby (531) F.T.'d to 77th.
- 17th Mar. 1955. - Tardif (521) Discharged. Technically unsuitable. Later did a 2 year civilian Electrical Apprenticeship and National Service in this trade.
- 18th April. 1955. -12 more AA's from 75th F.T.'d to the 76th.
- 20th Jun. 1955. - 2 more AA's F.T.'d from 75th to 76th.
- 11th July. 1955. - Another 75th AA F.T.'d to 76th
- 18th July. 1955. - One more 75th AA F.T.'d to the 76th.
- July. - 76th two week Summer Camp at Braunton Sands.
- 22nd Aug.1955. - Budd (573), Christmas (596), Davies (556), Grant (539), Moore (590), and Wright (593) all F.T.'d to 77th.
- 10th Oct. 1955. - Illingworth (520) F.T.' d to 78th.
- 7th Nov. 1955. - One 75th AA F.T.'d to the 76th.
- 18th Jan. 1956. - 2 more AA's F.T.'d from 75th to 76th.
- 27th Feb.1956. - Belford (541), Emerson (598), Fawcett (537), Garner (599), Gordon (522), Palfrey (587) and Phillips (604) all F.T.'d to 77th.
- 28th Feb.1956. - Minns (583) F.T.'d to 77th.
- 1st Mar.1956. - One further 75th AA F.T.'d to the 76th.
- 17th Mar.1956. - Wood (274) died in an accident, riding an illegally held motor cycle, on the A371, near Locking O.M.Q.
- 22nd Mar.1956.- Funeral with full military honours for Wood. Buried in a cemetery in W.S.M.

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- 20th Apl. 1956. - Lee (549) F.T.'d to 78th.
- 9th May. 1956. - 6 Air Radio Fitters plus one Rhodesian, re-classified as u/t Air Wireless Fitters, after failing the board on the second Radar equipment.
- 15th May. 1956. - Jessup (579) and McKenzie (544) F.T.'d to 77th.
- 28th May 1956. - New class formed 76(E)(W) to accommodate the u/t Air Wireless Fitters.
- 20th Jun.1956. - Hayward (525) Transferred to men's service at Yatesbury as a u/t Air Wireless Fitter.
- 28th Jun. 1956. - Paterson (542) Discharged - Indulgence. Initially joined an undertakers business. Subsequently became chauffeur to Bishop of London.
- 29th Jly. 1956. - Bruce (565) Discharged - Medically unfit. A year later rejoined the R.AF. in a Radio Trade on a 6 year engagement.
- 27th Aug.1956. - 7 AA's from the 75th who failed Finals, F.T.'d to the 76th.
- 3rd Sep.1956. - Gale (602) and Kelly (527) transferred to men's service as Radar mechanics. Gale to Honnington. Kelly to Colerne.
- 12th Sep.1956.- 26 Entry members presented with certificates in recognition of athletic prowess in the Higgins Shield Competition.
- 8th Oct. 1956. - Basic Radio Principles 1 Final Exam.
- 9th Oct. 1956. - Basic Radio Principles 2 Final Exam.
- 10th Oct.1956. - Mathematics Final Exam.
- 12th Oct.1956. - Senior Entry on freedom of W-S-M parade. Allowed out in the evening (Friday!!) to attend the celebration ball.
- 13th Nov.1956. - G.S.T. Final Exam.
- 17th Nov.1956. - Education results published.
- 26th Nov.1956. - Final equipment boards commence.
- 29th Nov.1956. - Final results published. Broughton (595), Gillespie (585), Knowles (543) and Slocombe (557) failed. Scheduled to join the 77th, 3rd Jan 1957. Forbes (One of the Rhodesians) also failed but was later repatriated as scheduled.
- 18th Dec.1956. - Passing out parade. Reviewing officer - Air Chief Marshal Sir Waiter Dawson (Inspector General of the RAF.)
- Evening Dinner/Dance at the Grand Atlantic Hotel in W-S-M.

MISCELLANEOUS DATA

Flight Commander. - Flg.Off. Bobart. (Flt.Lt. w.e.f. 26th May 1955.) A "between tours" Shackleton pilot. Nicknamed "Humphrey" by the Entry.

Permanent Staff NCO's Flt.Sgt. Bettell, Sgt. Maxwell and Cpl Love.

First Hut L.AA's - Cuming (73rd), Cunningham (72nd), Litherland (72nd) and O'Toole (73rd).

Entry N.C.O. App's - F.S.AA Farrington (571)
S.AA's. Anderson (608), Dicks (574), Jewson (577),
C.AA's. Armstrong (606), Austin (555), Cowley (597),
Lewis (557) (band), Smith (591), Tasker (609), and Ward (592).
L.AA's. Castle (530).

TOP.

Overall 0 of M. - Jewson (577)
Education 0 of M. - Armstrong (606)
Air Radio Fitter. - Jewson (577)
Ground Radar Fitter.- Armstrong (606)
Ground Wireless Fitter - Davies (568)
General Service Training - Farrington (571)
Victor Ludorum Trophy - Farrington (571)

PASSING OUT NUMBERS

Original intake destined to be trained as :-	Original intake to pass out :-
A R F. - 40 + 3 Rhodesians	12 + 1 Rhodesian.
AW.F. - Nil.	4 + 1 Rhodesian (Failed)
G.R.F. - 25.	11
G.W.F.- 28.	14
Totals 93 + 3 Rhodesians	41 + 2 Rhodesians

N.B.1. No trade was allocated to Bushell before transfer to Halton as *u/t* Airframes.

N.B.2. Of the 41 entering RAF. service on pass out, 5 were promoted substantive Cpl.,the remainder became J/T's.

Greatest Number of Day's Jankers.

Claimed by Huscroft (566) - 76 days.

(He was later commissioned as a pilot, flying Shackletons and Nimrods.)

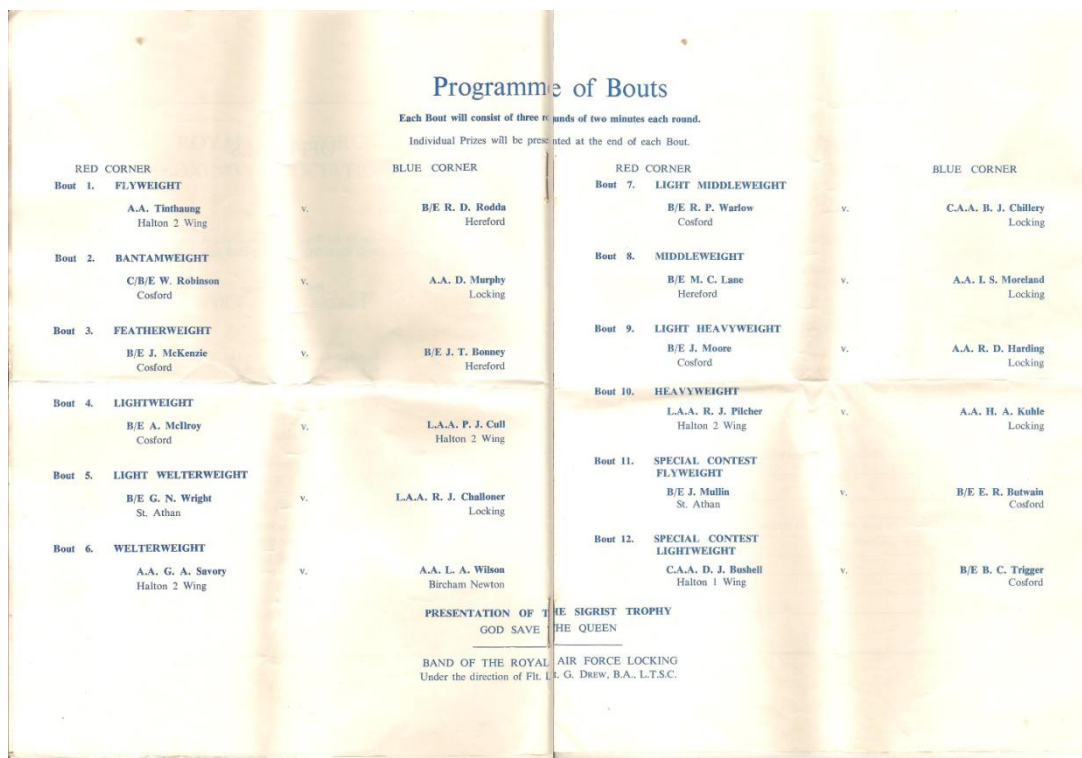
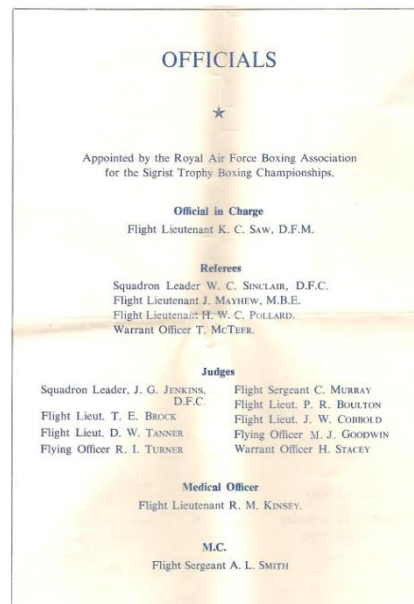
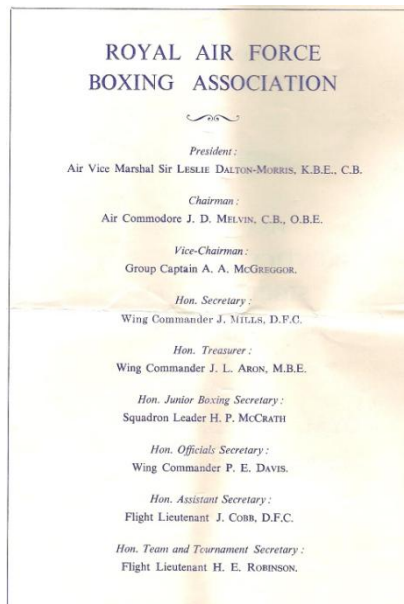
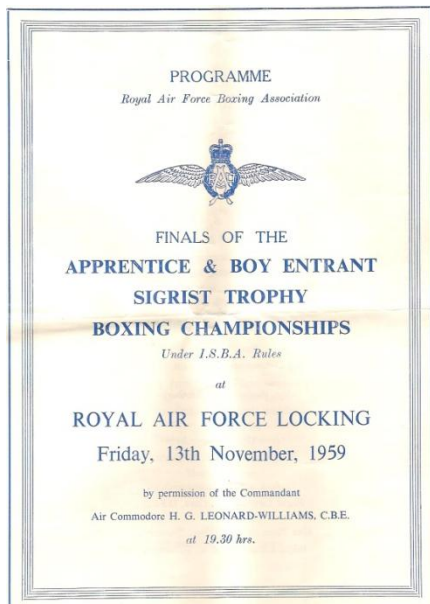
Mike Collier

Congratulations Mike that is an impressive 'potted history' Ed.

SIGRIST TROPHY

I thought you might be interested in this programme I found amongst my papers.
(look at Bout 10)

Ian Davis 91st



LIFE AFTER LOCKING

RAF DAYS

YATESBURY REMINISCES

Reading Mike Colliers amusing tales whilst an instructor at RAF Yatesbury in the March 2013 Newsletter, reminded me of my nefarious Post Graduate courses at the same., and being somewhat grateful for their outcome.

Since passing out of Locking's hallowed gates I had settled down nicely into my first posting, at RAF West Raynham, working on the delta wing Javelin fighter, which allowed utilisation of the same equipment knowledge that we had been taught, such as the crystal controlled 1987 vhf comms. and AI-17 of Second World War vintage.

Happy as a sand boy and with vague hopes that that all those years of 'genning' were long gone, the RAF soon proved this was not to be the case and in its wisdom decided I needed to learn the intricacies of AI- 23, the interception radar installed in the new Lightning aircraft that was just entering service. Just a short 9 months after leaving Locking I was being dragged back to the West Country once again.

Due to a cock up by Raynham's station HQ I had been informed of the posting quite a number of days after the PG course had actually started, so after a hurried clearance I arrived at Yatesbury somewhat apprehensively. The vision that greeted didn't help for, although somewhat reminiscent of Locking, the vast array of wooden billets that stretched as far as the eye could see, made this particular station look to all intents and purpose suspiciously like a POW camp, albeit without the barbed wire and lookout towers.

Coupled to the tiring drive down from Norfolk on my scooter, the fact that Yatesbury was situated way out in the sticks, and an unjustified rollicking I received from the guardroom sergeant, I looked forward to the following 12 week stay with trepidation and wondered just what the heck the RAF had let me in for.

However on meeting some of the class members in our allotted billet, plus more the next day, all these fears were immediately allayed, the lads on the course proved a very helpful bunch to help me catch up and we gelled immediately.

The Ferranti production AI- 23 was a completely different beast to the old AI-17 and there were many new aspects, such as clutch operated dc motors that drove the scanner search patterns, plus a roll resolver system that kept the radar horizontal no matter what the aircraft's attitude, all of which made it technically interesting but, being so new, it also meant that at lunch times and the end of each day, our course notes had to be locked away in a secure classroom cabinet.

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

With no opportunity to carry out any 'genning' during the evenings the inevitable result was that most of the class had already established a routine of nipping out for a pint into Calne or Chippenham and I naturally decided to join them. Nearby Marlborough also became a favourite haunt, as one of the class members, a cpl 'Dickie' Brooks, was well into horse racing and indeed knew a number of the local jockeys. I learnt very quickly that PG courses at Yatesbury, besides imparting knowledge of a technical nature, could turn out to be a fast learning curve of life in general, and in this particular case somewhat lucrative into the bargain.

Surprisingly I had not met up with any ex 87th Entry colleagues in the 9 months since leaving Locking so I was very pleased that this first visit to Yatesbury enabled me to meet up with Stu Colbourne, and the opportunity for us both to catch up on what had happened to us both since passing out and of course reminisce about old times.

Also it didn't take long before I met up with lads from other Norfolk camps, one of whom owned a Ford Consul, which then gave the opportunity to get back to Norwich each weekend. The Friday evening rush to the mess to grab some ham rolls, followed by a somewhat exhilarating dash via Oxford Cambridge etc , making it to Norwich just 4 hours later and more importantly before the Jazz clubs closed, became a regular routine of the early weeks of that PG course. Then after even more jazz clubbing on the Saturday night followed by a brief respite on the Sunday to recharge the batteries, the return in the early hours of Monday morning meant not much went into the grey matter at the beginning of each week. This, coupled with the fact that midweek visits to jazz clubs in Swindon and even Bath ensued, meant this hectic lifestyle didn't bode well for a satisfactory conclusion to the course, and I guess the probability of failure certainly beckoned.

Luckily fate intervened to ensure that the RAF didn't waste so much time on the reprobate that I was steadily turning into.

An advantage of being on a PG course, instead of full time training, meant that us 'oldies' were left to our own devices and with no parades or 'bull' to contend with it was absolute heaven. We also did not have to participate in the regular mid week afternoon sports, and could unbelievably get away with doing whatever we liked without harassment. How different this was from Locking days, the inevitable result being that the Angel Hotel in Chippenham became a regular venue for the class's Wednesday afternoon 'discussion club'.

It was during one such session that on the spur of the moment I decided I would take the opportunity to nip into Bristol to re visit old haunts and set off on my scooter. After a few hours of sightseeing and whiling away the hours I fortunately then took the opportunity to nip into a Wimpy bar for a bite to eat and it was here that I got into conversation with two sisters, one who's name was Brenda.

A fortuitous chain of circumstances had contrived to bring us together, for they had not set foot in this same eating establishment for well over a year, and from that moment on she and I didn't stop seeing each other for the rest of our lives. As you can probably guess we were married a few years later, but in the mean time the trips to jazz clubs and Norwich were seriously curtailed and I miraculously managed to complete the AI-23 course with flying colours in the Sep of 1961, a year exactly since passing out from Locking.

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Amazingly everyone on the course were posted to the same camp at RAF Middleton –St- George way up near Darlington which, although it turned out to be a great station, was miles from Bristol and if I was to continue seeing Brenda on a regular basis. I had to do something drastic.

Consequently, as a means of reducing the amount of my earnings that found its way to British Railways profits etc, the RAF found it had a very keen airman on its hands. Ignoring all the previous advice from my father and the general rule of service life, I proceeded to volunteer for every PG course that was on offer. Over the following 3 years I managed to return to No 2 Radio School 4 more times for SIF Coder, Tacan, UHF radio, finally finishing with another 12 week course on the updated AI-23B, clocking up a total of 38 weeks.

With most of the equipments taught at Locking already obsolete at the time of passing out, especially for Air radio fitters, a number of PG courses were inevitably going to be a way of life. Although my volunteering may have hastened the process I have always been grateful to the RAF for starting me on that road so early, plus it goes without saying the additional electronic techniques learnt came in handy for the various aircraft and equipments I was to encounter during the remainder of my service career and Yatesbury gave the opportunity to meet up with old colleagues as well as make new friends in the process.

Grateful I may have been but as to be expected the RAF got its revenge when years later, just 3 years prior to leaving to join Civvie Street, I found myself involuntarily placed on yet another PG course. This time it was for a full 6 months, learning the intricacies of the Nav. Bombing System (NBS) used on the Vulcan V Bomber which, as any NBS technician will inform, meant going back to the drawing board and re-learning of all things about mechanical computation and cog wheels, what a brain teaser that was. By this time the course had been transferred to RAF Cosford, which had far more in the way of facilities and was closer to our then quarters in Chester.

I look back at the months spent at Yatesbury with a special fondness but the abiding memory I have occurred some years after it had closed.

Driving back to Bristol from Norwich a sudden whim to see the station one last time, gave the opportunity to witness the bizarre vision of what looked like hundreds of giant mushrooms sprouting up as far as the eye could see.

In the process of demolition and with the wooden billets upper structure removed, the expanse of the camp could be appreciated in all its glory, and all that was visible was row after row of white toilet pans, sticking proudly to attention as if on parade in a seemingly last act of defiance, it was quite a funny and amazing sight.

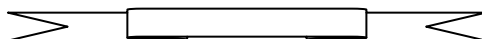
I regret not having a camera to capture the view for posterity, for the following year on a similar diversion, all that could be seen were fields of wheat gently bending in the wind. No 2 Radio School Yatesbury that so many of us had passed through during our service careers, was no more.

From Brian Colby 87th Entry



Typical 2nd line radar bay scene with the Lightning's Ferranti AI-23, removed from its 'bullet', fitted to a cradle and mounted on a test bed, the cradle allowing the radar to be rotated for access.

(thanks to Ian Davis 91st for supplying pic)



A HAIRY FAIRY STORY

In the Royal Air Force of the 1960's, the radio and radar technicians - the aristocrats of an increasingly technological maintenance organisation - were abusively known as the Fairies. In turn, the 'heavy' tradesmen, chief amongst whom - the armourers, but extending to propulsion, airframes, and even electrical and instrument fitters, were known as 'Hairies'.

This erstwhile inst fitt (general) enjoyed his lightweight trade and preferred not to be called a Fairy. But the Powers-That-Be decided that the Service was losing too many technicians after 12 years' service, mostly by then senior NCOs'. They decided to entice some of them - usually those with an aversion to getting their hands dirty, to carry on serving HM The Boss until they had completed 16 years' service or reached the age of 38. At that point they could safely chuck them out as unemployable (after about 8 years' commissioned service most technicians are unemployable - and insufferable!).

By 1965, your little hero ("there's a good Neddy", as Gritpipe-Thynne would say to Neddy Seagoon) had sampled working on aeroplanes - smelly, dirty and dangerous - done some instructing ("Stupid Boy!"), chucked his weight about as a SNCO, and played at tech authoring (writing major servicing schedules for aircraft he'd never-ever seen let alone touched). Time to find a cushy billet. Trouble was one had to do 15 years to qualify for a Branch Commission, or risk all at the 38/16 point. Like dear, dimwit Neddy, yours truly decided to get all career-conscious and apply early for the Supplementary List.

An early visit to the Officers and Aircrew Selection Centre resulted in an 18-month hiatus - beginning to think that himself really was as stupid as he'd often been told, and the truth of which was beginning to penetrate his thick skull. However, the RAF was evidently desperately short of suitable material, swallowed its pride, and sent off the short and stupid Hairy to OCTU. This turned out to be several weeks of running around (and often straight into...) impenetrable bits of Thetford Forest and quite a lot of rivers. By the end of the course, the Directing Staff had found out that being Hairy didn't preclude being able to read and write (very slowly!!) and that this Hairy understood that the RAF was actually run by its SNCO's, on whom he could rely. SNCO's were mostly quite bright, and their officers understood that their orders wouldn't ever get obeyed. Being bone idle, this fitted into the lifestyle of tiny Hairy, so he was duly commissioned and sent to Cranwell for a year to learn all about everything.

Cranwell was best known for turning out the highest calibre of Apprentices, a mantle they passed on to Locking when the Cranwell brats were peremptorily chucked out and sent South. Apparently, the Cranwell Cadet Officers found out that this bunch of technical Fairies were clearly their intellectual superiors. So Number 1 Radio School found a most congenial billet near Weston-super-Mare.

But all these years later, our newly-commissioned Hairy was wallowing in the Theory of Nearly Everything at Whittle Hall, and found himself thoroughly enjoying technical subjects dangerously close to Fairyland. To this day he believes that a waveguide is a little helper from W-s-M! Stands to reason, with a nice billet like Locking that the Fairies would organise some pleasant company for the Promenade.

So cheerful Charlie's fascination with going-the-wrong-way electrons accidentally gave him some good marks for Fairy stories, but a marked aversion to the hirsute. End-of-Course - just 12 months ago he couldn't even spell electronics, let alone taste it! Despite (or is it because of?) repeated threats of a posting to (shudder!!) aeroplanes, little sir Hairy swaps his thick fur for gossamer wings and magic wand (later to be called a Brinkley Stick!). He's off to somewhere in Anglia where the resident Fairies were burned out of their underground palace by the Oops! Staff. Nearly all the Ooperators had gone elsewhere, and the resident Fairies were busy building new radars wherever there was a bit of space - that's a pun, by the way-ho-ho!

In a more serious vein, part of the new-fledged Fairy's rationale for the swift shift of specialisation was that aircraft servicing was mostly box-swapping, whereas ground radars were still built so you could get at the circuits - none-too-advisable in the Transmitter Hall! But a wise old specialist officer taught us all that at 1 RS on the Linesman/Mediator course - and he showed me where to put my wand /Brinkley Stick.

After 3 years of Type 85 experimental flight trials and trying to figure out why it was called the No-Break Trigger when even getting a bit bent was disastrous, our clean-shaven ex-Hairy was next posted to - you've guessed it! - another radar station, this time in Singapore. Aah, bliss - an air-conditioned Display and Data computer room - better than squirming about under an aircraft bang-seat in the hot sun.

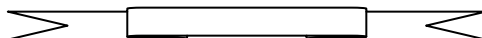
Quite early on, our Hairy friend had asked his posting officer when he was to return to aircraft, to be told that he wouldn't - he was in "radar" for the duration - get used to it! The final parting from the so-called real air force came with his Engineer Specialisation -from now 'till Eternity he would be Comms/Electronics.

Next tour Command Staff. Write to radar stations telling them what to do, safe in the knowledge that radar station Fairies would do it properly instead. Same again for Ministry Of Defence, NATO Supreme Headquarters, and so on.

The new Fairy quickly found that he liked the technicians with the difficult job of keeping radars operating. They were a smart bunch. Their older, mature officers were equally competent and generally a pleasure to work with. Slowly, your distinctly average Hairy became a true Fairy and went on to complete 35 years of thoroughly enjoyable service. He is indebted to Sqn Ldr Jack Marshall - his first boss - and Wg Cdr George Hopperton and to scores of L Fitt GRs who kept him on the straight and narrow.

...and after that there was the Apprentices' Golf Society!!

Jeremy Collier (79th Entry Halton)



TALES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST RAF SHARJAH

I would like to report, that I was one of the few 87th entry who failed to pass out from RAF Locking in July 1960. Instead, I acquired the rank of SAC fitter, and was posted to Honington, near Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk. Some two years later, I became a Junior Technician, and even reached the rank of Corporal Technician, before I became disillusioned with repairing radar sets, and elected to volunteer for aircrew duties.

In 1967, I was now a Sergeant Air Electronics Operator on Shackleton anti submarine/ search and rescue aircraft. One of the advantages of this change in direction was that after eleven and a half year's service, one had automatic promotion to Flight Sergeant, which I attained in 1970. (Much to the Chagrin of two ex 87th Senior Technicians who visited the Sergeants' Mess whilst I was there.)

Volunteering for aircrew duties required being put through survival exercises such as, sea, arctic jungle and desert.

The first one was being thrown from a launch into the sea off Plymouth, and being recovered by a whirlwind helicopter, lowering a strop to hoist one aboard.

The second was achieved by dropping us off in the Pennines in mid winter, letting us walk 15 miles, and then constructing a tent out of the mantle from a parachute. Not quite the Arctic you might think...well, you could be right, but it was still very cold, with deep snow.

Surprisingly, we never did cover the Jungle survival exercise, but the desert was something else.

I was now on 206 squadron at RAF Kinloss, and in the late 60's was detached to Sharjah in the Gulf. There were three aircraft and crews, and some bright individual thought that because we were nearly surrounded by sand, that a desert survival exercise would be appropriate. What a good idea!!

Fortunately it was not our crew, but one of the other crews drove off in an MT bus, followed by a Land Rover, one evening into the desert, in order to spend the night under canvas. The bus dropped the crew in the desert and returned to camp, leaving only the Land Rover for emergency use.

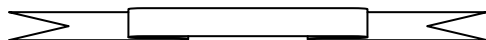
Luckily, it was the individual who suggested the idea of the exercise in the first place, who left the Land Rover lights on, whilst the tents were being erected, result flat battery. As you can imagine, this put a little bit of tension in the crew.

All you need now is an emergency, which by chance occurred.

One of the crew, who happened to be a Master Aircrew, and who liked a tippie or three, and had made it plain that he was against the idea of spending the night in the desert, was confronted by a scorpion. It was not clear whether the scorpion bit him, but that was enough for the exercise to be terminated, by flagging down a car on the road which was about 5 miles away, in order to gain help and recover the crew.

No desert exercises were attempted again, and the scorpion was last said to be recovering well from alcohol poisoning.

Chris Bryan (87th Entry)



THAT REMINDS ME OF A COUPLE OF 'SCORPION STORIES'

We lived in a large villa with a maids room at the rear of the house (no maid), but it was used as a utility room and store room. One day my wife said she was not going into the maids room until that 'dead scorpion' was removed from the shower cubicle. "No trouble I can do that" says I, proceeding to the maids room I located the offending dead scorpion, wisdom decrees poking it with a stick before picking it up. The dead scorpion decides to wake up grabs hold of the stick and stings it – for the last time! How it managed to get into the maids room remains a mystery.

During the winter months we would go camping in the desert, during our first visit a friend warned that when collapsing the tent always tilt it towards you before lifting it. Not sure what that was all about but following his advice the next morning I tilted the tent towards me. Underneath the tent and scurrying in the opposite direction were three big black scorpions, they had been camping under my tent all night.

A MORE APPROPRIATE RAF STORY

Jebel Akhdar (Green Mountain) is one of the largest mountains in Oman and the scene of several battles in the 1950 – 70 era, mostly involving British armed forces. One day taking a drive up the top of the mountain I came across the rusty remains of an aircraft on the side of the road.

After a bit of research I believe it to be the remains of an R.A.F. Venom which came down in 1958 and was based at R.A.F. Sharjah, I don't know the full story but would be interested to hear from anyone that does.

Colin Ingram (88th)

HUMOUR

Actual exchanges between pilots and control towers

Tower: "Delta 351, you have traffic at 10 o'clock, 6 miles!"

Delta 351: "Give us another hint! We have digital watches!"

Tower: "TWA 2341, for noise abatement turn right 45 Degrees."

TWA 2341: "Centre, we are at 35,000 feet. How much noise can we make up here?"

Tower: "Sir, have you ever heard the noise a 747 makes when it hits a 727?"

From an unknown aircraft waiting in a very long takeoff queue: "I'm f...ing bored!"

Ground Traffic Control: "Last aircraft transmitting, identify yourself immediately!"

Unknown aircraft: "I said I was f...ing bored, not f...ing stupid!"

O'Hare Approach Control to a 747: "United 329 heavy, your traffic is a Fokker, one o'clock, three miles, Eastbound."

United 329: "Approach, I've always wanted to say this...I've got the little Fokker in sight."

A student became lost during a solo cross-country flight. While attempting to locate the aircraft on radar, ATC asked, "What was your last known position?"

Student: "When I was number one for takeoff."

DC-10 had come in a little hot and thus had an exceedingly long roll out after touching down.

San Jose Tower Noted: "American 751, make a hard right turn at the end of the runway, if you are able. If you are not able, take the Guadeloupe exit off Highway 101, make a right at the lights and return to the airport."

A Pan Am 727 flight, waiting for start clearance in Munich, overheard the following:

Lufthansa (in German): "Ground, what is our start clearance time?"

Ground (in English): "If you want an answer you must speak in English."

Lufthansa (in English): "I am a German, flying a German airplane, in Germany. Why must I speak English?"

Unknown voice from another plane (in a beautiful British accent): "Because you lost the bloody war!"

Tower: "Eastern 702, cleared for takeoff, contact Departure on frequency 124.7"

Eastern 702: "Tower, Eastern 702 switching to Departure. By the way, after we lifted off we saw some kind of dead animal on the far end of the runway."

Tower: "Continental 635, cleared for takeoff behind Eastern 702, contact Departure on frequency 124.7. Did you copy that report from Eastern 702?"

Continental 635: "Continental 635, cleared for takeoff, roger; and yes, we copied Eastern... We've already notified our caterers."

'Charlie' Trussler (87th)

RAFLAA
ROYAL AIR FORCE LOCKING APPRENTICE ASSOCIATION.

Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual General Meeting of the RAF Locking Apprentice Association,

Held at The Webbington Hotel, Loxton, Weston-Super-Mare
on Saturday 27th April 2012 at 13.30 hrs

Present:-	Air Cdre Martin Palmer	91st	President
Committee :	Tiny Kuhle	87th	Chairman
	Chris Bryan	87 th	Secretary
	Tony Horry	76 th	Treasurer
	Jim Doran	219 th	Membership Secretary
	Colin Ingram	88th	Newsletter Editor
	Peter Crowe	95 th	Webmaster/AA Rep
	Graham Beeston	209 th	Craft Rep
	Rick Atkinson	91 st	Service Rep

There were 58 members in attendance.

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies :- Brian Colby (87th)
Martin Eversfield (92nd)

The Chairman welcomed everyone, in particular Mike Keen (78th) from Queensland Australia and Dave Gunby (72nd), the previous secretary, who is recovering from cancer, and opened the meeting at 13.30 hrs with a reading of the Apprentice Prayer. There followed a minute's silence in memory of the following who had died during the past year:

Joe Holroyd (85th)
Steve Elsmore (97th)
Jess Jessup (76th)
Ken Shires (96th)
Ivan Rann (80th) – a non member

The Chairman reported as follows:

I must, however, speak about our loss of Joe Holroyd, who was the founder, and inspiration to form the RAFLAA. It was his drive and hard work, his ability to persuade others, that the inaugural meeting was held on the 19th June 1993, at 3T Block RAF Locking. Some of us may remember that day, and I remember a great buzz of people, stumbling into old friends, and sorting through boxes of items, which we tried to

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

identify. My thoughts at the time were, what a fabulous idea, and thank you Joe for organising this. Reading back through some of the old files from that time, one can see the time and effort that went into forming this Association. I'm sure that a number of you are aware of all of this, however, it needs to be emphasised at this time. When I took over as Chairman, Joe was a great help to me at times of difficulty at my first AGM, but that was Joe, and he was always there when needed. What I also regret is that Joe did not make it to see us acknowledge that this is the 20th year of that occasion.

I did of course attend Joe's funeral, and in the past several others of our Association, and one of the common themes in the eulogies, was that

'... dad always knew how to solve any problem I brought to him, he would always be able to fix things...'
My interpretation of those sought of comments, is, well that's what our Apprentice training gave us - the knack of making things work again through initiative.

I hope that future training schemes will also build in the idea that if you have the right basics, you can sort out a lot of stuff you've never seen before.

In the Newsletter I had advertised the fact that this year marks the 20th anniversary of our Association, and that ideas for celebrating the occasion would be welcome. Perhaps you could put your thinking caps on and make some suggestions. An idea I had, was of a trip on the old pleasure steamer, the Waverley, down the Bristol Channel for a day. However, other ideas would be welcome. Whatever we do (even if nothing!) it is a shame that Joe will not be here to enjoy the occasion. I must now, however, forget to say that Joe was ably assisted in his efforts, by Charles Hart, whom I hope might make a suggestion or two!

We have a full agenda to cover, and one of the items covers the change in our Constitution, which is prompted by the winding down of the CAA. I won't pre-empt the discussion, only to say that at least one other organisation within the Federation of Apprentices and Boy Entrants, has also closed owing to a lack of active members. So far, we are not in that position, and thanks go to our Membership Secretary who has been able to maintain recruitment. He will elaborate upon this during his report.

The Chairman then introduced the Association President.

2. **PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS AND PRESENTATION OF THE RAFLAA TROPHY**

The President welcomed everyone to the AGM, in particular Corporal Waterson and his wife Claire., who were here to receive the No 1 Radio School, Locking trophy.

The president made the point that trade group 4 were now the only electronics trade group left in a greatly shrunken RAF. There were now barely 30,000 serving members in the RAF whereas during the service of most of us present the RAF numbers were closer to 300,000. This small, modern air force is as much about cyber warfare as air power and computing is used in every aspect of the modern Royal Air Force. This meant that Trade Group 4 had remained robust in terms of their manning requirements and offered good skills for transition to civilian life.

The President went on to say that there were actually more cadets in the Air Training Corps than serving members of the Royal Air Force; a situation he never thought he would live to see. It could only be hoped that the economy improves sufficiently for defence to be given at least 2% of GDP.

The President went on to thank the Chairman and his committee for all of the hard work that they have undertaken on behalf of members during the past year. Without such dedication the Association would not be able to function.

The President then awarded Cpl Waterson with the Locking Apprentices trophy and a cheque in recognition of his contribution to No 1 Radio School.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

A copy of the Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ending January 2013 is available for each member. 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 2013.

The balance sheet for the Association now shows assets of £6,680.76, which is a surplus of income over expenditure of £116.79 for the year. For the previous year (2011/12) we showed a deficit in the account of £4,190.13 due mainly to the capital expenditure of the Memorial to RAF Locking Apprentices at the National Arboretum.

3.1 AGM 2012

The total cost of the AGM 2012 is shown as £3,957.93 which includes the cost Webbington (£3,293); coach (£160); Music (£220); annual award trophy donation of £50.00; Wordsmith (£17.95) together with the deposit for today's event (£200) and other expenses. Due to the changes made to the bar arrangements our subsidy of the event was reduced.

3.2 Expenses

In accordance with the decisions made by the Association no donations in memory of deceased members have been made since the last AGM.

The 2012 AGM raised a donation of £201.00 for Help for Heroes.

We have made a donation to Flowerdown House when we used their hospitality for Committee meetings.

3.3 Advertising

Arranged for advertising of AGM and membership in the RAFA 'Air Mail' for 2013 – this continues at a cost: £34.00.

Last year I recorded that I had purchased a new stock of 31 ties, the cost of which shows in the presented accounts.

3.4 Overheads

There has been a reduction in the overheads this year partly due to a decrease in costs associated with the printing and postage. This is mainly due to the distribution of the newsletter by electronic media.

Travel expenses have reduced this year, due to the decrease in journeys made on behalf of RAFLAA business. (e.g. No visits required to the National Arboretum).

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

PROFIT & LOSS

<u>INCOME</u>	2012/2013	2011/2012
Membership fees	£2,388.20	£2,692.50
Life membership	£0.00	£100.00
Sales - ties, pins and videos	£40.00	£92.80
Donation (AGM fund raise)	£201.00	£131.70
AGM and other misc income	£3,117.00	£2,944.00
Bank interest received	£3.71	£4.65
	£5,749.91	£5,965.65
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Pins	£0.00	£61.58
Ties	£222.12	£0.00
Videos	£0.00	£0.00
Name badges	£4.90	£50.80
AGM and other purchases	£3,957.93	£3,822.00
Donations	£281.00	£330.00
Other - Memorial		£3,715.02
	£4,465.95	£7,979.40
<u>DIRECT EXPENSES</u>		
Advertising	£34.00	£34.00
Bank charges	£0.00	£0.00
Auditing	£50.00	£50.00
Refund	£127.00	£96.00
	£211.00	£180.00
<u>OVERHEADS</u>		
Travelling expenses	£510.50	£783.00
Printing	£294.00	£798.00
Telephone	£42.32	£58.77
Postage and carriage	£109.35	£315.71
Stationery	£0.00	£40.90
	£956.17	£1,996.38
<u>PROFIT/LOSS</u>	£116.79	-£4,190.13

BALANCE SHEET

	2012/2013	2011/2012
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
Deposit Bond	0	0
Business Money Manager A/C	5191.86	£5,188.15
Community Account	1464.57	£1,351.49
Petty cash	24.33	£24.33
<u>NETT CURRENT ASSETS</u>	6680.76	£6,563.97
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
<u>FINANCED BY</u>		
Brought forward balance	6563.97	£10,754.10
Profit and loss account	116.79	-£4,190.13
	£6,680.76	£6,563.97

4. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

4.1 General

We have had the benefit of a rather better year in terms of Membership numbers
Unfortunately we have lost 2 Active members of the association

- Steve Elsmore of the 97th Entry &
- Joe Holroyd of the 85th Entry – former Chairman and Founder Member of the RAFLAA

Other:

- Ken Shires of the 96th Entry
- Ivan Rann of the 80th Entry &
- Jess Jessup of the 76th Entry – (Founder Member of the Association)

One member has re-joined

The biggest group of joiners over the last 2 years is from the 97th Entry with 9 members joining this last year There are a total of 22 x 97th Entry members on the database However, the 87th Entry is prominent by its number of active members on record currently standing at 27.

The 96th Entry are tied with the 97th in terms of Active Members but there is no doubt about the senior entry in our Association with 31 active members on record and that is the 76th Entry.

4.2 Advertising

The Association continues to advertise in the Royal Air Forces Association magazine. Returns from this have not been identified however, our website address is also advertised with the advert and we have had joiners via the website.

In an effort to help increase our numbers I have utilised some more modern media routes to advertise the Locking Apprentices Association – namely, Facebook and Forces Reunited with some success.

I will continue to use such routes and seek out new ways and routes to help keep the association alive. Please also help by taking every opportunity to enlist ex apprentices wherever they turn up.

4.3 Newsletter

The newsletter is available mainly by download from the RAFLAA website and this is the most cost effective way to deliver this to our members. Hard copy is available upon request but please bear in mind that this is a rather more expensive way for the association to provide via this route especially now that postage is at a high level.

Distribution routes and volumes.

I sent out 294 email notifications notifying members that a new edition of the newsletter is available. Unfortunately I do have a number of email addresses that bounce back with an unknown/unidentified notification.

Physical Distribution of Hard Copies is undertaken by fellow apprentice Graham Beeston, a big thank you to Graham for such a good job in producing and distributing these for the Association:

32 Copies to UK Addresses and 3 copies to overseas addresses

8 Copies to families of members who have passed away, mainly Widows

3 Copies to fellow Organisations

3 Copies distributed by the Association Secretary

4.4 Life Membership and Standing Orders

Life Membership members total 74 with no new Life Membership applications over the past 12 months. Payment by standing order is by far the best way to pay annual membership fees and the most cost effective for the Association. Please consider converting to this method of annual membership payment if you don't already do this.

4.5 Membership Changes since the last AGM on 20th April 2012 up to 27th April 2013

We now have 374 active members on the database having recruited 16 new members + 1 re-join. I have initiated the recruitment of yet another member just this week but haven't had the application from him yet. I am very HAPPY to report the recruitment of a younger member than myself, and that is Peter Shelley of the 224th Entry – Welcome Peter. I have another member in the offing via Forces Reunited and he is from the 222nd Entry.

REMINDER. Changes of personal details

Please keep me updated with any changes to your personal details especially for receipt of Newsletter notifications via email and delivery of any correspondence to your home address.

4.6 Associate Member Proposal

The Membership Secretary related a citation about an ex serviceman, William Webb, who served and taught at RAF Locking. The membership secretary proposed that Mr. Webb be granted an Associate Membership. This was seconded by Chris Bryan (87th). When put to the vote there were 35 for and 9 against, with 14 abstentions.

The motion was carried.

5. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

It is with some degree of pleasure, that I have had to write only four letters of condolence during the past year, compared with over a dozen the previous one. It is something I do not like doing, the small pleasure being in receipt of the widow's reply, when they say how much they appreciate the association thinking of them in their time of need.

The "Up side" of being secretary is reuniting old friends and acquaintances, for example, when a new member asks if I have the address of another, and I am able to put them in touch with one another.

At this point I would like to extend sincere thanks to Jim Doran, our membership secretary, who has done such a wonderful job in increasing our membership, so that this year we have a net gain of 14 . Well done Jim.

It is with some regret that I have to announce the demise of the RAF Cranwell Apprentice Association and Brats 192 at the end of 2013. Obviously, new members are not forthcoming, and the depletion of their number by natural causes, make the running of the associations impossible with dwindling funds. Indeed, the CAA's memorial very near ours at the NMA, being built in brick, has serious erosion problems, and they have insufficient funds to have it refurbished. When the problem has become so bad, that the memorial is an eyesore, then the NMA will have it demolished, and removed from the site. Quite a sobering thought.

It was thought by the committee, to extend a welcome to the LAA for the members of the Cranwell Association, when it ceases to exist, but this subject will be discussed later in the meeting under Item 13. so that a general consensus may be found from all members.

I have been in contact with the Secretary of the CAA, Ian Ashcroft, who has attempted to give me a rough idea of the number involved. Ian lives locally in Weston s Mare, but many of the Cranwell members live far afield, and with their age to be taken into consideration, some may not wish to travel a long distance. It creeps up on us all. Ian has suggested that those CAA members west of Swindon may wish to join us, but those East of Swindon may wish to join the Halton Association, who have also extended an invitation to Cranwell. Swindon being an arbitrary cut off point.

It was considered at the last committee meeting that Brats 192 might be invited to join the Boy Entrants at Cosford, but that could be debated also in Item 13.

Finally, I would like to add that I have one more year to run as secretary, and after that time I shall not be standing for re-election, and so would like maybe a younger volunteer to take over. If such a volunteer is available now, I will willingly hand over the reins. The main task is communicating, which can be achieved in just under an hour a week, so the workload is none too great. This can be discussed further in Item 8 of the agenda.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the committee, who do such a conscientious job of keeping the Association together.

6. NEWSLETTER

Thanks to Pete Crowe for the Web Site, improving all the time and makes easy access for ongoing issues, some of which are probably more suited to the web, rather than the Newsletter.

I have to thank all our regular contributors to the Newsletter - Mike Collier, Brian Colby and many others.

6.1 Themes

Falklands – your Falklands stories seem to have been well received and I wish to thank all those that contributed. It was a good reminder that it wasn't just the RN and the Paras who won the war.

So expanding on that theme of Global postings and conflicts I would like to task your powers of recall a little further.

Let's start with the Middle East – I am sure many in the Association have spent some time in the ME during the 50/60/70s and probably more recently.

Aden was a favourite or maybe The Sultanate of Oman, they have had many UK servicemen stationed there over the years. I have recently spent some time there and met a few ex-apps but sadly no-one from Locking, but can't believe some ex-Locking haven't spent time there.

When we have exhausted the ME how about the Far East that was when we had Stations out there!

Most of which have already passed into history, so I hope to shake out a few tales from the past.

6.2 Locking Review

I would like to thank Dave English (77th) for lending me two copies 1955, 1956. I will be attempting to scan these in (carefully) and add to the web site, it will be a slow process, but it should make for an interesting read.

6.3 The Importance of the Newsletter

The bad news most of us will not be around in 100 years time **We** will be history.

But possibly our descendants will be researching their family history and want to know what great granddad did in the RAF (whatever that may called be in the year 2113. Unfortunately most of us will not be around to tell!

The good news gentlemen is the Newsletter and the web site (if archived) this could provide one avenue for those researching their Family History where they could find out what life was like as an RAF Apprentice and the Service years that followed.

If we count how many people in the room, how many Stations you have been posted to or visited, between us we have probably been everywhere that the RAF had Stations, and I am sure 90% of those Stations are now closed and are already in the history books.

So I think we are producing a piece of RAF history when we publish these articles about our Service Career. However how about an Article from someone entitled – 'A week in the life of an Apprentice'.

We should all qualify to write that (if we could only remember) - Starting with: "Good Morning Good Morning the time is 06:30 hours"

Does any of that strike a chord with anyone, has it stirred any memories I hope so and perhaps encouraged a story or two.

So Gentlemen – keep up the good work and between us lets capture our bit of history before the 100 years is up.

6.4 Is the Newsletter relevant!

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Our Secretary recently received a letter from the wife of one of our deceased members, she thanked Chris for his kind words and expressed her wish to continue receiving the Newsletter, which I consider a fine compliment to all of you who have taken the time and effort to write the articles for publication.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our president, and award him this year's "Wordsmith" trophy, for his contribution to the Newsletter.

Thank you for your contributions.

7. RAFLAA WEBSITE

The Chairman gave thanks to Peter Crowe for producing a faultless website.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

8.1 **Chairman**

It was proposed by Chris Tett (92nd) and seconded by Peter Burns (87th) that Tiny Kuhle (87th) be re-elected to the post Chairman for another three years.

The motion was carried.

8.2 **Treasurer**

It was proposed by Harry North (96th) and seconded by Colin Ingram (88th) that Tony Horry (76th) be re-elected to the post of Treasurer for another three years..

The motion was carried.

Consequently the Committee list is as follows: -

In view of the Secretary's re-election which will be due next year, the President suggested that the Secretary's post be shadowed. No members volunteered for the post.

Appointment	Name	Re-Election	Entry
President	Martin Palmer		91 st
Chairman	"Tiny" Kuhle	April 2016	87 th
Secretary	Chris Bryan	April 2014	87 th
Treasurer	Tony Horry	March 2016	76 th
Membership Sect	Jim Doran	April 2014	219 th
Service Rep	Rick Atkinson	Sept 2015	91 st
AA Rep	Pete Crowe	Sept 2015	95 th
Craft Rep	Graham Beeston	Sept 2015	209 th
Tech Rep	Andy Perkins	Sept 2015	109 th
Newsletter Editor	Colin Ingram	Sept 2015	88 th

9. AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

As mentioned in the Secretary's Report about the demise of the Cranwell Apprentices Association and the invitation to ex members to join the LAA, it was considered the Constitution needed amending. The Secretary proposed that in Item 2 of the Constitution the word 'draft' be omitted. Proposed by Chris Bryan (87th) and seconded by Chris Tett (92nd).

The motion was carried.

The Secretary then proposed that in Item 9 the words RAF Locking be replaced by No 1 Radio School. After a lengthy discussion the proposal was rejected with the suggestion that at the next Committee Meeting, members rethink the wording of the proposal.

The proposal was rejected.

10. PROPOSED MEMORIAL FOR THE OLD RAF LOCKING SITE

Tony Horry and Rick Atkinson had had negotiations with the developers and agreement had been reached to retain the street names. In the present economic climate the development had been curtailed owing to lack of financial resources but the Committee would be kept informed of any developments.

11. CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Contrary to last year's motion, it was agreed by the AGM to make an annual donation of £100 to the RAF Benevolent Fund. Proposed by Chris Tett and seconded by Rick Atkinson. The motion was carried.

12. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

At this point of the meeting, it was brought to the Committee's attention that the Minutes from the last AGM had not been agreed. The Secretary apologies for the error and stated that since all members had read the minutes in the Newsletter that the minutes be carried as an accurate record of the April 2012 meeting.

Proposed by Chris Bryan (87th) and seconded by Tiny Kuhle (87th) that the minutes be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. The motion was carried.

11 FABEA

With the demise of both the RAF CAA and the Brats 192, it was agreed that only the ex CAA members would be given Associate Membership which would be ratified at the next AGM after the Constitution had been amended.

12 VENUE AND FORMAT OF AGM/REUNION 2014

It was proposed that the Webbington Hotel be used for the 2014 AGM on the grounds that the prices remain the same as 2013. (Unknown to the Chairman, there had been a slight increase in the charge for the rooms)

This was proposed by Tiny Kuhle (87th) and seconded by Colin Hinson (89th)

The date will be Saturday 26th April 2014.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (including Golden entries 95/96/97)

There being no other business George Ring (95th), Ron Spain (96th) and David Hazell (97th) were invited to relate their apprentice experiences for the Golden Entry award and were awarded their certificates.

The Chairman thanked them for their input.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 16.15

Chris Bryan Secretary 14 May 2013

OBITUARIES

STEVE ELSMORE 12TH FEBRUARY 2013

It is with regret that we have to report the death of Steve Elsmore on the 12th February 2013, the news of his passing was made by his wife to Mike Horton, his friend from Locking days.

Steve was a member of the 97th Entry, passed out as SAA and later became an AEO.
Mike Horton (97th Entry)

Our Secretary recently received the following letter from Mrs Elsmore. Ed.

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your kind letter sending your condolences on the death of my darling husband.

I would like to receive the LAA newsletter to be able to keep up with the names and events. Steve talked a lot of his apprentice days and we liked looking at the LAA website together.

I have had wonderful support from friends and family which I know will continue, and was taken to the National Memorial Arboretum last week by friends to see the Locking Memorial, the Shackleton Memorial and the beautiful RAF Memorial which was a lovely day out.

Thank you for remembering Steve at your AGM next month and for entering his name on the roll of honour, it makes me feel very proud.

COLIN COVE 28TH MAY 2013

It is with great sadness, that I have to report the death of Colin Cove of the 83rd Entry, who passed away on 28th of May. Colin had a long and illustrious career in the RAF and retired to North Cornwall, he leaves a wife, Beryl, two children and many friends.

Colin lived near Camelford in Cornwall, and was cremated on Monday 10th June 2013 at Glynn Valley Crematorium. It is testament to Colin's popularity that the Chapel was full to capacity with family, Service and Local friends. Beryl's brother gave a moving tribute to Colin's time in the RAF listing all his postings both at home and overseas. Colin Ingram (Ed)

"Colin Cove

"The caring response from the 83rd Entry, so many of the Locking apprentices, together with RAF friends has made me realise he was special to others too.

Thank you for your cards, phone calls, wonderful stories, lots of support and very generous donations which made 10th June 2013 a celebration of his life. The RAF meant so much to him.

My sincere thanks. Beryl Cove"

FINAL THOUGHTS

Reunion

*They gave the date and time and the pub
so of course I just had to go there,
take a safe look from the other bar
with the mask of age to disguise me.
There they were having the time of their lives
and I knew the old traveller's tug
especially when one looked over
and, seeing my grey, clearly wondered.
But I felt the cold wind of a wan
backslapping journey's end bonhomie
and evasions that would have to be told
and lies about how it had gone.
So I rose and stood, indecisive,
swilling the past's dregs, not knowing
whether to shuffle into their amiable midst
or fold up my paper and go out the door
before my face could show any feelings at all.*

Peter Lindsey 97th

Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

RAFLAA COMMITTEE

Appointment	Name	Address	Tel/email	Re-Election	Entry
President	Martin Palmer				91 st
Chairman	"Tiny" Kühle	22 Tavistock Cle 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 Clse Rushden Northants NN10 6BF	(01933) 317357 Jimdoran12@hotmail.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
