



# RAFLAA NEWSLETTER

SERIAL 67

NOVEMBER 2013

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

*Hello to you all,*

Thank you Gentlemen for helping fill in the gaps in the Newsletter once more, you have provided me with some interesting and thought provoking articles. There are some fascinating tales around even if they seem rather mundane to the writer, others see them as reminders of a lifestyle we used to have and enjoy which will hopefully nudge someone else with a follow up article. For instance who can provide some answers for Bruce Graham's article "Things for the Archive" I am sure there is someone who can help.

Well the RAFLAA has had its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and thanks to Tiny and Barry we had a week-end to remember, both technically at the Museum and socially in the bar, and as a follow up what next - any ideas for the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Another Christmas looming and no idea what to get for 'you know who' but then that's nothing new, it's always best to wait as late as possible, then panic sets in and that helps resolve the problem.

I wish you all a premature Happy Christmas and Very Best Wishes for 2014 I hope it brings you good health and happiness. Plus lots of articles for the Newsletter.

[colin.ingram90@gmail.com](mailto:colin.ingram90@gmail.com)

Tel: (01288) 331363

Fairhaven

Gooseham

Morwenstow

Bude

Cornwall

EX23 9PG

Deadline for next issue – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2014 for March 2014

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

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THINGS FOR THE ARCHIVE

For those who began their Apprenticeships in the mid-1950's the transition from Cranwell to Locking traditions was almost complete. As the demise of the RAFCAA grows ever closer, I got to thinking about how the move was accomplished and what some of the ramifications must have been.

According to the immaculate records maintained by the RAFCAA, No. 6 Radio School finally moved to Locking in November 1952. In the meanwhile, the 71<sup>st</sup> Entry had entered training – at Locking – in April 1952 followed by the 72<sup>nd</sup> in September, before the Cranwell hordes descended. Why the two Entries didn't simply report to Cranwell and then transfer with the Apprentice Wing is a mystery (known only to "The Planners") but does have some interesting corollaries.

To satisfy my own curiosity as to how things worked out, I had a conversation with Charles Hart (71<sup>st</sup> Entry) at the recent 20<sup>th</sup> RAFLAA Anniversary gathering at Bletchley Park. Charles confirmed that when his Entry arrived in the absence of the Apprentice NCO hierarchy they were "administered" by the permanent staff NCOs. So, for the 71<sup>st</sup> there would have been none of the "guidance" by Senior Entries. Nor presumably, Sqdn or Wing Parades. I wonder what they did for church parades?

Charles also told me that at the end of Term 1, six of the Entry (including Charles) were appointed as LAAs to look after the 72<sup>nd</sup> when they arrived in September 1952. My conversation did not extend to the changes that occurred after the move from Cranwell to Locking in November 52.

Did the 71<sup>st</sup> LAAs survive?

How did the Cranwell Entries that would normally have supplied LAAs at the end of their first year adapt?

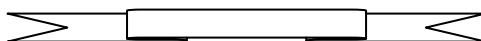
It must have all been a bit of a mess.

Charles also said that when the 71<sup>st</sup> (and I suppose the 72<sup>nd</sup>) started training they wore the chequered hatbands used at Cranwell. When, I wonder, did the Locking single colour hatband begin?

So many questions – answers please.

*Bruce Graham (79<sup>th</sup>)*

*Well Gentlemen Bruce has thrown down the gauntlet, who is going to respond. Answers to the Newsletter Editor please. Ed*



## NOSTALGIA

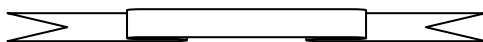
Webmaster, I read with interest of the development and dissolution of the Apprentices.

I was part of the "transition" entry, the 69th". Whilst Locking lacked the cache of Cranwell it was a much better location for local enjoyment. The White Hart (?) at Banwell was a great resource and at four pence a pint for scrumpy within our ten bob a week compass. A good move all round.

Recollection of both places brings back happy memories. The unhappy memories seem to have dissolved, happily.

I see that there are only three 69ers enrolled. I will readily make that four.

*Regards, Ron Griffiths.*



## ENTRY BOXES

Following the recent death of Ken Toogood - 79th and RAFLAA Wordsmith award winner - we are expecting a significant increase in the number of items in the 79th Entry Box, of which I am the custodian. We have a group of 27 members of the 78th and 79th who have formed a correspondence group and the subject of what will ultimately happen to our "Entry Box" has been raised. It is something that the Association committee might like to consider and perhaps raise at an AGM for the following reasons:

1. I have no idea how many Entry Boxes there are or who is the custodian.
2. For the older entries (all of the members of the 78th/79th are at least 74 years old) the question of ultimate disposal becomes a real issue...
3. The collective information in all of the said "Entry Boxes" might be of interest to archivists (RAF Museum?). But only if the Association can find a means of locating the data and protecting its disposal. This of course applies equally to the soon to be defunct RAFCAA.

I hope you can see the drift of all of this. The committee may not wish to get involved but I thought I would at least air the issues.

*Bruce Graham 79th*

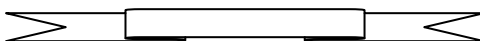
**RAF WEST BECKHAM**

I have received a request from Jim Doran our Membership Secretary for any information about RAF West Beckham in Norfolk.

RAF West Beckham was a CH Early Warning radar site and closed in 1958 but apparently someone is writing a book and researching the history of the Station. Jim has spotted the potential for a few new recruits into RAFLAA.

So Gentlemen anyone with any knowledge of the Station, or knows of anyone stationed there please take one step forward, Jim will be more than happy to hear from you.

*Colin Ingram 88<sup>th</sup> Entry*



**CELEBRATION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RAF LOCKING APPRENTICE ASSOCIATION**

In order to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the inauguration of the LAA, the membership decided by a large majority that a visit to Bletchley Park, the home of the "code breakers" during the Second World War, should be organised.

Our veritable Chairman, Tiny Kuhle, and Barry Dinnage who both live near the establishment, set about the task.

Our Chairman collected all the names of prospective visitors, and informed them by way of the website the timings of the visit, whilst Barry, who does volunteer work there, acquired the tickets for our entrance.

We were provided with a most knowledgeable guide, who extolled the brilliance of the code breakers, answering all our questions. The visit was a great success, after which we assembled at the Milton Keynes Hilton, for dinner.

I would like to add that at the dinner, Tiny provided a bottle of wine for each table out of his own pocket.

For this most enjoyable engagement, I would like to extend the thanks to Tiny and Barry from all those who attended, for providing such an enjoyable day out.

Many many thanks to you both.

*Chris Bryan*

*(Sec RAF LAA)*

*The real code breaking challenge for the day was negotiating the Milton Keynes roundabouts, only Tiny and Colossus were capable of that! Ed*

## RAFLAA NEW MEMBERS

A WARM WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS TO RAFLAA

<b>Entry</b>		
<b>208</b>	<b>Alan</b>	<b>Pilkington</b>
<b>97</b>	<b>Tony</b>	<b>Lee</b>
<b>97</b>	<b>Mike</b>	<b>Ballard</b>
<b>97</b>	<b>Tony</b>	<b>Chiltern</b>
<b>206</b>	<b>Andy</b>	<b>Powell</b>
<b>224</b>	<b>Pete</b>	<b>Shelley</b>
<b>212</b>	<b>John</b>	<b>McHugh</b>
<b>97</b>	<b>Mike</b>	<b>Obrien</b>
<b>93</b>	<b>Tony</b>	<b>Smith</b>

*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](mailto: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.

***MENU AND BOOKING FORM AT THE REAR OF THE NEWSLETTER***





## LIFE AFTER LOCKING

### LAST POSTING

Cosford is one of only two stations in the U.K., to which I was posted, that is still operational. Arrival there in mid 1965 produced a new experience. I was offered the opportunity to live off the camp and did so for the whole of my time there. The accommodation provided was at the "Hobbins", A.M.Q. for the by then defunct R.A.F. Bridgnorth. A 26 mile round trip each day but quite a nice quarter. Possibly because of this, Cosford always seemed a rather nondescript, uninspiring station to me.

My S.T.R. 18 empire arrived safely from Yatesbury and was reassembled reasonably quickly. Work returned to normal, the brick built building a considerable improvement on its previous "home", a wooden hut in Wiltshire. Apart from this, the only other noticeable difference was a much larger complement of civilian instructors and another new experience, a civilian supervisor. I never discovered his equivalent service rank but he garnered scant respect from the uniformed part of his empire. Nevertheless, the Yatesbury refugees received a friendly welcome and were soon absorbed into the Cosford system.

In the autumn of the year, an enthusiast at the Hobbins formed a football team (R.A.F. Bridgnorth) to compete in a local league on Saturday afternoons. As no facility existed, we had to create our own pitch on a large, disused area near the quarters. By Christmas, the enthusiasm of the enthusiast had evaporated and I took over. Getting enough people, to form a team each week proved very difficult. Good news of course, for the regular nucleus of 7 or 8. No matter how badly they played, they were always guaranteed a game the following week. Eventually, I took to importing people from Cosford. Another major problem was a lack of changing facilities for the visiting team and the referee. To solve this, every couple of weeks, the kitchen/diner of our quarter was pressed into service, using every chair we could lay our hands on. My long suffering wife and our neighbour (whose husband was a team member) worked minor miracles organizing tea and cleaning up the mess when everyone had gone. At the end of the season, the team finished in mid-table. As no volunteer was forthcoming, to take over for the following season, I resigned the team from the league. Thus ending my brief excursion into football management.

However, I do have one unforgettable memory of that time. One of our stalwarts worked as a steward in the Officers Mess. Via him, we received a challenge to play their team on a Sunday morning in the Cosford stadium. My boyhood sporting hero had been Bert Williams, the then Wolves and England goalkeeper. He was my inspiration to elect to play in that position. On the appointed day, when we ran out onto the pitch, who should be playing in the opposite goal but Bert Williams. Apparently, he was an honorary member of the Officers Mess. It was the undoubted pinnacle of my far from glittering career in football, when I shook his hand, prior to kick off.

Considering the number of Senior N.C.O.'s there were at Cosford, station duties seemed to come around pretty regularly. Orderly Sgt. in the Boy Entrant Wing, the most common. I found that summoning the Flt. Sgt. Boy to my office and explaining that it would be his neck on my chopping block if there was any trouble, gave me a quiet night. I had more problems with their mascot, a huge Pyrenean Mountain Dog called Ben. He insisted on sleeping on one of the sets of stairs in Fulton Block. Virtually impossible to get by him, if that was the set you wished to use.

Another unfortunate experience was as N.C.O. i/c the flight of "Bogmen" detailed for the daily flag raising ceremony. Having called the roll, I got them formed up and ordered "single rank size". By this time the Flt. Lt. i/c had arrived. After numbering, splitting into two ranks, right and left turn, quick march precipitated chaos. Apparently, "Bogmen" had not done single rank sizing before. With the Flt. Lt. growling behind me, I went into the two rank routine. I think he was pretty p-----d off,



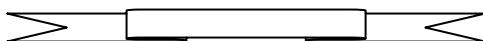
because he ordered me to charge one of the flight, who he considered in need of a haircut. The first and only time in my whole career I preferred a charge. I seem to remember he got 3 days.

At one point, skiving by reporting sick, reached epidemic proportions, particularly amongst the Boy Entrants. The hierarchy responded by posting in a woman (Sqdn. Off.) as S.M.O. She rapidly developed a reputation for demanding the removal of a patient's trousers, irrespective of the malaise. Sick parade numbers dwindled to almost nothing. I managed to damage the ring finger on my left hand and requested treatment. True to form, off came my trousers and I had in effect an F.F.I ---- for a swollen finger! When she said "if it gets any worse, it will have to be cut off", I was much relieved when I realised she was referring to my wedding ring.

A more pleasurable experience at Cosford was being reunited with an old friend, our worthy treasurer, Tony Horry, also an instructor there. Six years earlier, he had been our best man. It was supposed to be a mutual agreement but by the time it was my turn to reciprocate, I was 10,000 miles away, basking in the sun at Hickham A.F.B. The R.A.F. I guess, would have been a mite reluctant to repatriate me for the event. We ultimately shared a relatively unusual distinction. On leaving Locking, we were posted to Bassingbourn together. At the end of our R.A.F. service, we both left from Cosford.

After about a year, I was invited to move to the Basic Electronics Squadron. I was delighted with this, as I much preferred teaching theory rather than practical. A secondary benefit was unloading my S.T.R. 18 inventory. Additionally, it made it easier to organize day release to Wolverhampton Technical College to pursue my H.N.C. studies. Demob was lurking on a distant horizon so any civilian qualifications would be useful. I did take and pass the Ch. Tech. board and toyed briefly with the idea of applying for a commission as an Education Officer. Memories of passed events however made me fairly certain my future lay outside the R.A.F.

*Mike Collier*



### **YATESBURY 1959**

Funny how the old brain cogs rotate when reading something familiar - mine were positively whirring. Mike Collier and Brian Colby's anecdotes re Yatesbury in July's Newsletter brought back some strange NBS gear wheel orientation for me.

Unlike Brian, itching to get back to West Raynham and the Norwich area. I was on the opposite side of the coin, working on 207 Sqdn. Valiants at Marham (my first posting) and with a home not 6 miles as the crow flies from Locking (Clevedon).

Marham, I hated with a vengeance - nicknamed "El Adam with grass".

Orange Putter was the tail warning Radar for the Valiant and utterly useless in the then emerging days of radar seeking missiles and radar tracking radars. Nevertheless, Sgt (as then) Dave Potter (69th Entry?) must have volunteered me for the course and as so eruditely fashioned by Mike Collier in his conversations with Sqn.Ldr Florjack, - DaveyP was a Locking trained technician, knowing very little about being an NCO! Dave was however trying. (Very! bless him). As were the motley mob of about 13 Radio, Radar and Wireless Corporals that inhabited 207's N.C.O.'s crew room who also masqueraded as N.C.O.'s whilst me, the only JT, got stick - shed loads of it!

A PG course at Yatesbury would at least get me out of their hair for a while and allow me to get home in good time on a Friday night before the pubs shut, instead of a seven hour train ride to arrive at Bristol Temple Meads at midnight and then a two

and a half to three hour walk cross country to the coast, hoping to hitch a lift that rarely came.

If I remember Yatesbury Courses started on a Thursday and students assembled on a Wednesday by 16:00 latest at the Guardroom.

I started "Clearance" from Marham on the Wednesday at 8am and with just one signature to go at 11am, I entered the Station Warrant Officers Office, stood rigidly to attention and waited - and waited! He was reading a document and never looked up. The eventual conversation went like this:

"What do you want laddie?"

"A Clearance Signature Sir"

"Why?"

"I'm clearing to go on a PG course at RAF Yatesbury in Wiltshire. Sir.

(I was hoping I sounded as if it was urgent, with the deadline of 4pm)

Unperturbed he said, "Where are you from?"

"207 Squadron Sir"

"Man from the swamps eh! Get a new uniform!"

And with a back handed waving gesture and him still not looking up I was dismissed - in sheer panic.

I raced to the Clothing Store mindful of the then clothing allowance and got a new uniform, battle dress, tapes and radio flash. Back to the billet and proceeded to try and press the ruddy thing, sew on the tapes and miss Lunch. I did then, have a motorbike, an obsolete Douglas 350cc flat twin. It had a tendency to seize up if not constantly topped up with oil. With bald tyres and me with no money, it did the job - just. Some of the lads returned from lunch and queried why I had not left. One, much wiser than me said, "The SWO will be at lunch. Nip back to the General Office now, see the SWO's Corporal, he'll sign and you can forget the new uniform." The good Corporal obliged and I was off.

Downham Market - Little port - Ely - Cambridge - St Neots - Huntingdon - Bedford - Bicester - Oxford - Swindon, on and on to Yatesbury on the A4. Milton Keynes was being built, I could see the cranes. No motorways, just a short dual carriageway on the A1.

I arrived at Yatesbury around 7pm and was surprised when no one batted an eyelid at my late arrival. I was given a billet number and told to return and collect blankets. Fortunately it was early summer and the evenings were light. My billet consisted of a hotch potch of trainees and no-one on my course. Thursday saw the class assemble and going through the arrival motions. I stated in my (brief) RAF history that I had been a member of the Locking Apprentice swimming team as a water polo player and diver. Friday I was away like a rocket and hoped to be in Clevedon by around 7pm. However the bike gave up the ghost, seizing solid in Fishponds on the east side of Bristol and I was lucky enough to find an open Garage to store it. I caught the bus to the Centre of Bristol and then on to Clevedon arriving just before closing time, "The Regent" on Hill Road. The weekend saw me carousing with friends and being introduced to two girls from Swindon, visiting Clevedon for the weekend. Sunday saw me cadging a lift with an old friend who just happened to be on a Course down the road at Compton Basset. He dropped me off on Sunday night. On Tuesday during lessons I was summoned to see the flight commander who just happened to be the Oic Swimming. Would I like to go to St Athan for a few days to Dive for the Station in the Training Command Championships - It was not a request. There was to be a swimming training night in Swindon on the Wednesday and the coach left at 6pm. I was on it. The others in the "team" were permanent staff at Yatesbury and me, still broke, knowing no-one. After the session we stopped for Fish and Chips in the town. I waited outside, chip-less, leaning against the wall when two young ladies waltzed down the road and yelled my name. The same two I had met in Clevedon the

previous weekend. "Come back to our place for a coffee" "Delighted" - but a with a stern warning from the Sergeant i/c the bus, to be back in 30 minutes or they would not wait. After strong coffee and a glass or two of Parsnip wine I began to wonder how I was going to get back to Yatesbury.

Midnight saw me on a borrowed ladies push bike in the centre of Swindon looking for a town map. I spotted two Policemen standing in a shop door way and decided to ask the way "home". Not such a good move as I was looked on with suspicion, accused of stealing the bicycle and because I could not remember the surnames of the two ladies or the street they lived in, faced a night in a cell! The second and younger policeman came out of the shop doorway looked at me and said "Your name is Paul Kite! I sat next to you at school in Bath". I won't repeat what I said, more in shock than anything else but it was Constable Paul Roberts an old school friend from three years before. They kept me chatting till 1am when a Church bell struck and then proceeded to say they were off shift and if I went in that direction, I would get to the A4 and Yatesbury. , via Marlborough. The ride was uneventful save for being overtaken by a Van which stopped at the top of an incline as I struggled up. The occupant leaped out raced into a field, there was a bang and he raced back to the van dangling a Hare and shotgun and roared off before I reached him!

All this is led up to me making regular trips to Swindon and seeing one of the ladies. My motorbike was shot and after a single trip to Swindon to return the bicycle, I then used the bus which conveniently arrived back at Yatesbury around 7:30am. One romantic evening was aided by someone in the Billet nicknamed "Cannonball" from RAF Kinloss. He was to say the least, odd. Short and thick set with a shaved head - not a la mode in the 1950's. He would sit on the end rail of his bed with a Ukulele and compose what can only be described as sung ditties, to the annoyance of most of the billet. He told me he went to Swindon on Thursday's and if I met him outside the town Dance Hall, he would give me a lift back. Cutting a very long story short. I discovered that he attended the dance hall every Thursday night. He would take a very small suitcase containing his Dancing Pumps and a book. He would sit in the pub opposite the dance hall, read and drink Guinness (Dutch Courage? - I don't know) and slightly inebriated go on to the Dance. I was outside the Dance Hall at 10pm and waited for him to emerge. He had a young lady on his arm, who to me looked quite worldly wise and had an air of confidence and poise which gave her a maturity beyond her years. Even with no make up, she was very attractive. Cannonball came over to me and said he would get rid of her. I said "No don't worry I will get a bus and turned to go. He held me back and said "Wait!" He walked back to her and within earshot said

"Do you mind if I ask you a very personal question?"

"No", she replied, "I have probably heard them all!"

"Are you a Virgin?" He said, staring her straight in the eyes.

There was a loud smack as she planted one on his cheek and with a twirl, about faced and strode off! Oh dear. Cannonball came over to me and said "That's that then - let's go!" I took the little suitcase and climbed on the back of his bike. If memory serves it was a Vincent Black Shadow, whatever; it was powerful. He had a paratroopers type crash helmet no peak that looked like a "cannonball" perched on his head, me on the pillion looking over the top of his and hanging on for dear life as he careered round bends laying the bike over as if in the IOM TT.

We arrived back at Yatesbury at dusk and I signed us in at the Guardroom. He said "Hop on". I said, "No. You go on I'll walk" - Pillion passengers were not allowed on Camp Roads. "Get on!" he said, "There's no one about." By this time I realised he was drunk of course. I should have walked away but like a fool climbed onto the pillion. He roared off down the long straight road that led past 1 Wing NAAFI - there was a Dance that had just finished. It was throwing out time. A "Snowdrop" in full uniform, white gaiters and all, waving a torch up and down like a man possessed, to slow this crazed motorcyclist down. I shoved the little suitcase as far down the mudguard as I could hoping to cover the number plate. Cannonball yelled "Hang On!" and he opened the throttle ripping through the tripping throng. The Snowdrop was far

less than an arms length from me as we charged into screams from the women and yells from the men. Fortunately no one was hit and we must have got to 50mph along that long road before he turned and let me off. I cut back to the billet as fast as I could, dumping his little case on his bed.

He arrived about 20 minutes later saying he'd hidden the bike and his helmet and strolled back from a different direction.

Nothing happened the next morning, though I expected to be called out of class. At lunchtime Cannonball came into the billet and looked at me.

"You're wanted at the Guardroom pronto to see the Provost Officer. Some one from the NAAFI recognised you and told the copper. They found the bike and traced me but I said I'd picked you up as a hitchhiker"

This is it, I thought and made for the door, gullible as ever. "Come back he said, you're in clear, they believed the hitchhiker bit.

"So what happened?" says me with some relief.

"I was called to see the Provost Officer who said that he would do me for: speeding on camp roads, failing to stop. Carrying an unauthorised pillion passenger, reckless driving, driving without lights, and a host of other things. I told him that I panicked and would not do it again. He gave me a helluva rollicking and said he would ban the bike from Camp if there was one more infringement. I was a bit lucky though because I've got no driving license, tax or insurance and he didn't ask me!"

To this day I really don't know if he ever went to the Guardroom or was pulling my leg.

And what of the swimming? I didn't get a place in the Diving and missed most of the Orange Putter Tuition - took the final exam in a box room and Failed. The Girl? We agreed to part and I returned to "El Adam with Grass" for another 18 months before winning the best posting prize anyone could wish for - RAF Support Unit Australia for three and a half years with the RAAF at No 1 Air Trials Unit - Evetts Field in Woomera. I played water polo for the RAAF (Woomera) in goal. And in Adelaide, we were put against the Hungarian Olympic back up team and got white washed. But that's another story.

*Paul Kite - 81st-82nd-83rd.*

## TALES FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

### BAHRAIN

As I sit here recovering from our Golden Wedding celebrations, thought it time to catch up on RAFLAA newsletters.

Had met my beloved on a blind date courtesy of 'Mac' Galbraith (80<sup>th</sup>) going temporarily blind and needing a driver to take him to see his girlfriend. She brought a friend along and 51 weeks later we got married in March in August. 'Mac' recovered sufficiently to see his way clear to being our best man.

We had to get married in a hurry (not what you are thinking) – PWR made my mind up and in October 1963, found myself on the tarmac at RAF Muharraq together with Phil Mann (87<sup>th</sup>) who was also newly wed. We entered the Families Officer's room together.

'Name?' 'Mann' 'One year - No Chance of your wife joining you – Next'.

My heart sank – I was there for two years.

'Name?' 'King' 'Fill this in, your flat in Manama is still being built – your wife will be with you by XMAS'

Phew... what a relief.

'Report to Marine Craft in the morning'

'Whats Marine Craft?' 'Boats you idiot – you are the Cpl King who has done the Decca seaborne RADAR course?'. 'Not me Sir' 'Are you Cpl King A' 'Yes Sir' 'You are the only one on the flight with that name and initial – be on the bus in the morning'.

I wondered what 3 years at Locking as a designated Air Radio (Bomber) fitter followed by spells at Honington, Cottesmore and Wittering on Victors 1 1a and 2 had been for. Not to mention Yatesbury and the dreaded ECM. Was there some secret plan to retrofit this gear to the RTTLs and RSLs? I got on the bus.

My new charges performed the role of Air Sea Rescue for Bahrain and that part of the gulf. I won't say that the radio gear was archaic but it features in the film 'The Dam Busters'. The RTTL (Rescue and Target Towing Launch) was powered by two marinised Shackleton engines – we achieved 48kts for a photo shoot. The RSL (Range Safety Launch) was smaller and slower.

Two years quickly passed. It rained every October 25<sup>th</sup> without fail. Wet drill for aircrew – amazing how quickly they got in their dinghies in water frequented by sharks, stingrays and sea snakes. They would then be located by the resident Beverley and showered with toilet rolls.

The lowest point of all was on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1964 when I arrived at the jetty (a former Imperial Airways seaplane staging post) to find the RTTL being refuelled. 'Skipper wants to see you – now'. 'A Caravelle has disappeared on approach to Dahrán. It is too rough for the Navy, the Shamal (sandstorm) has grounded all our normal aircraft – we have been out once but the Radar has packed up – fix it'.

'What about power?' 'No chance – we are refuelling' I cannibalised the other boat.

Refueling stopped and we were off – 'I can give you 15kts for 10 mins then we have to crack on'

The box swapping did nothing – a mast head problem – no chance, I reported to the Skipper.

He said, 'I see it this way' 'You say it's a mast head problem – get yourself a blanket and get up the mast – you can be the bl\*\*dy Radar'.

I was totally in awe of how these guys work as a team – charging along at 40kts in a sandstorm with viz about 400 yds. ‘Lookout’ ‘Sir’ ‘You should see a red buoy in 15 seconds’ Got it’ one quick circuit then off on the next leg. Three legs later and into clear air – a spotter plane appeared and flew over then up then around an over then up – there was a wingtip about 5 feet out of the water. We commenced our search pattern down wind and down tide.

The Wireless Op appeared briefly on the bridge, threw up and was sent to the sick bay. Now I was not only the Radar but now the Wop as well. ‘Sir – I don’t know Morse’. ‘Just bloody get on with it’. I got on the Dam Busters gear – found the voice option and hit transmit.

The word ‘Protocol’ came back – I said I would do a proper course and learn Morse later – just listen to what I am telling you. The Beverley appeared and started a search.

‘Skipper wants you on the bridge’ ‘Cpl – deal with those bloody helicopters’ 3 US of A copters were then contacted and asked ‘Would the one who has found something – please circle’ – I watched – ‘That one over there Sir’ – we found a wheel.

Fuel then necessitated a return to base via the crash site. Divers and a small barge were now active and appropriated our shark repellent from many lifejackets we had on board. With no reported survivors, we returned to base where she was refueled and back out.

These guys then carried out the really grim task when they hit the ‘body’ area – a 68’ launch is not designed for this and apparently there were bodies down below, laid along the decks in piles and the RTTL would fill then back to the crash site to offload then back round to repeat the task.

I think by the time they had finished, the recovery area had reached the size of 20 miles wide by 60 miles long and only one casualty was unaccounted for. There had been 43 passengers and 9 crew and pilot error in confusing the ASI and the altimeter was given as the probable cause. Apparently their position was swapped over on different marks of Caravelle.

A very subdued Marine Craft Unit then picked itself up and early next morning saw 2751 approach ensign at half mast – the whole unit lined the jetty in silence – the reserve crew took over as she was seen to her berth and cleaned down.

Next day – back to the standard crash call which was invariably a medical emergency on a prawn fisher – we were never short of prawns at the MCU.

I have the greatest of admiration for the MCUs of the day manned for the most part by guys who had been youngsters and seen service during the war. These were now ‘Chiefies’ with old fashioned bull-shit values which had no place for somebody like me. I was ordered to change a perfectly serviceable ‘box’ because it was a different colour black to another one. It was this particular Chiefie who opened my eyes – I started writing to companies.

The younger guys were great, I bought some fresh tomatoes back from U.K. and one did a duty for me in exchange for one. He examined it, then sniffed it for about 5 mins before slicing it into the thinnest slices possible – placing each sliver on his tongue and fully savouring it as it melted. Simple pleasures.

One day – returning back to the flat – a woman in purdah appeared and made signs for me to go through a door – she was very insistent. As one door opened, another closed and I went through a number of passageways before emerging at the side of my flat. A full blown riot was in full swing and the mounted police had just commenced a clearance charge. What chance a single unarmed uniformed Cpl Tech radio fitter just happening to walk into that scenario. I had never ever seen anybody on the walk to work or back. I was obviously known and looked after.

We returned to UK and I bought myself out joining IBM in January 1966.



A long career with them through the golden age of computing initially hardware then software before finishing up as a fork-lift truck driver in my own flooring company jointly with my son-in-law. We have just commenced our 21<sup>st</sup> year.

A lot else happened in the Middle East, 'Johnnie Johnstone' saw to that – and it also kicked me off on my lifelong passion for sailing. I have had an amazing working life built on a foundation of a Locking apprenticeship, 1 A-level gained via correspondence course in Bahrain and my only formal qualification – RYA Yachtmaster Ocean. My son-in-law says that I can blag for England.

Locking days were great.

We arrived with a flu epidemic and anybody fit went straight into the Rugby first XV.

Promotion to LAA followed a blind side try right under the noses of the Officers. That took me out of 'B' Sqdn to 'C' where I stayed until passing out.

Promotion to CAA followed kicking an impossible conversion from the touchline to tie an intersquadron blood bath.

Promotion to SAA followed a great final season captaining the wing second XV with some appearances for the firsts.

The obligatory motorcycle kept at somebody's girl friends in W-S-M. The Saturday night return in the non-corridor train from Bristol – somebody had to do a number two and we had to make sure that he was 'moonin' on the non platform side. Lots of fun. Great training for now joining the ranks of Boring Old Gits.

*Alan King formerly*

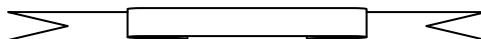
*SAA King. A (87<sup>th</sup> Entry).*

#### **POSTSCRIPTS.**

Found out years later – Cpl King A who had done the Decca course arrived in Singapore to be told that he was working on aircraft. Similar scenario in reverse (I am an Air Sea Rescue fitter – your name is King – get on with it etc).

The actual RTTL was 2751 – it has been refurbished once or twice and is now at Shoreham. I visited it when it was viewable from the M27 at Swanwick. Nostalgia is not what it was.

Saw a prog on Mae West shark repellent, they stuffed a tuna with about 8 of them – the shark scoffed the lot.





### MASIRAH AND SALALLAH

It was late 1972 and I was a JT on my first tour out of Locking, sat in the crew room at High Buston transmitter site, RAF Boulmer, when a signal arrived with news of my next posting to RAF Masirah detached RAF Salalah. Having no idea where these places were, I asked the guys in the crew room and a Cpl called Jeff Moore just laughed and said "you'll soon find out" and said no more. I eventually found out that RAF Masirah and Salallah were in Oman somewhere in the Middle East and I was going on a 9 month tour starting in March 1973. However, I needed to attend a couple of crypto courses and so it was back to Locking, first for 6 weeks and then for another 2 weeks. PG courses were always a good break away from Station routine.

By February 1973, I had completed my courses and reported to stores at RAF Boulmer to be kitted out with the necessary items of Khaki Drill (KD). This consisted of knee length socks, long sleeved airtex type shirts with rubber buttons and shorts that came down to below the knee and fastened at the sides. Luckily I didn't get a pith helmet! I was told that they couldn't tailor any of this and that it would be done when I arrived in Salallah. They didn't have many of the items I needed, such as desert boots and so I received a deficiency chit and again told I'd be issued with the missing items in Salallah. It's good being young and gullible as you just accept all this and get on with it.

So one Monday in March, I jumped on the train down to Swindon station and reported to the forces travel office that was then on one of the platforms and was ushered onto a coach to RAF Brize Norton. Once at Brize I was allocated a rather nice room, with another ex apprentice, in the Gateway Hotel. For those who haven't had the pleasure, the Gateway was the RAF's attempt at providing hotel like accommodation for military personnel and their families trooping to the far-flung bits of the empire that were left. In the 1970s it was really very good compared to the usual transit accommodation.

As with most RAF flights, we were woken up at the unsociable hour of 0200 for breakfast in readiness for a 0500 departure on a Britannia aircraft, with the first stop in Cyprus to drop off passengers and refuel. We landed at Akrotiri and were told to stay on the aircraft as it would be a quick turnaround, but after 2 hours it was obvious that there was something wrong and so eventually we disembarked and were taken to transit accommodation. This was definitely not as nice as the Gateway and what made it worse was that they would not off load the baggage and so you were stuck with what you were wearing. It took all night to fix a problem with one of the engines and so the next morning we were back on the aircraft heading for the next stop, Sharjah, to drop off some more passengers. Whilst sitting on the pan at Sharjah I looked out of the window and saw the Air Engineer on the wing with the cowling off one of the engines, poking about with a screwdriver. This didn't exactly instill much confidence but after a while he put everything back together and we took off for Masirah.

We landed on Masirah, an island off the southern coast of Oman, on Wednesday afternoon where those posted to the island were met by someone from their new sections. Soon there was only me left in the arrivals hall and the movers were packing up. I asked one of them when the next flight to Salalah was and he told me there was one due out on Saturday. He advised me to go to the guardroom to see about some transit accommodation and so dressed in a jacket and tie with all my luggage, I set off for the guardroom in the afternoon sun with the temperature somewhere in the 30s C. Transit was in an old hut with several rusty iron beds, a few very old lockers and a large slow ceiling fan, with me the only occupant. That evening I headed for the NAAFI and a welcome cold beer and found it occupied mainly by ex Locking apprentices from the 214, 215 and my entry 216. It was a great evening and I stumbled back to my hovel in the early hours but made the mistake of switching the on the light, revealing a scene resembling an Indiana Jones movie with all manner of insects covering the walls and floor. Luckily the light scattered them

back to their holes and a mixture of travel weariness and alcohol resulted in a good nights sleep.

I wandered around Masirah until Saturday when I reported back to Movements for my flight. I was loaded onto a Hercules C130 along with all manner of equipment, food and ammunition for the trip down the coast to RAF Salalah. On landing the Herc taxied into a large berm made up of oil drums filled with sand and as the aircraft ramp was lowered I saw an armour plated three ton truck with a General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG) on the cab roof, waiting to take us to the Movements hut. The rather exotic transport coupled with an airfield that looked like a scene from a WWII desert film was an indication that this was going to be a tour with a difference.

At Movements, I was met by the Chief from GRSF who asked where the hell I had been as they had expected a JT Palmer to arrive last week. I explained that I was JT Parker and showed him the movement documents I had been given, to which the Chief said, "never mind you'll do" and we jumped in the landrover to take us to the section. I met the rest of the guys from GRSF and the ComCen, who were again mainly ex Locking apprentices, and was then taken to the hut that would be my home for the next 9 months. Of the eight of us sharing the hut, four of us were ex 216 and the others ex 215 entry and so it was like being back at Locking but with more sun and sand.

They introduced me to the situation in Salalah where, since the mid 60s, the British had been supporting Sultan Qaboos, and his father before him, in a conflict with communist backed insurgents of the Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf (PFLOAG), locally known as the Adu. RAF Salalah was commanded by a Wg Cdr with around 80 RAF personnel, the penguins, and was home to the Sultan of Oman's Air Force (SOAF). The pilots were mainly seconded from the RAF and flew Strikemaster (armed variants of the Jet Provost) attack aircraft, Caribou and Skyvan transports. There were also a few helicopters, with some provided by the Shah of Iran complete with pilots. The base was protected by the RAF Regiment, 2, 15 and 51 Field Sqns who rotated every three months and spent most of their time in forward positions called Hedgehogs situated on the plain between the camp and the hills, manning GPMG's and Mortars. Salalah also had an Army Field Surgical Team, Royal Signals personnel and Royal Artillery for the 25 Pounder and 5.5 inch field guns. However, the main players were the SAS known as the British Army Training Team (BATT) who lived in the hills with the Sultan's troops, supporting local tribesmen and fighting the Adu. Finally there were the mercenaries who were paid by the Sultan and came onto the camp every now and then to bring in the necessary Adu body parts needed to prove their kills and collect their bounties. The annoying thing was that they were allowed to use the NAFFI and had the money to buy up all of the good stuff leaving us waiting for the next supply ship.

As I didn't have a full set of KD uniform, I took my deficiency chit and tailoring request to the stores where a Geordie Sgt took one look and burst out laughing. He then told me he had no KD but would let me know if any arrived and suggested I do the same as everyone else and wear what bits of uniform I had along with some flip flops from the NAFFI. He did however, issue me with a steel helmet but advised me that he only had two inner linings of which, he had one and the CO had the other. I also received a cape for the monsoon season and so spent most of the tour in shorts and flip flops with a cape draped about me during the monsoon season looking like a refugee from Disney.

Our accommodation Twynham was called the 'Shell Inn' and was surrounded by oil drums filled with sand for shrapnel protection, as the Adu would regularly fire rockets onto the camp in the hope of hitting something important. This usually happened between 1700 and 1800 as the light was fading so that they could set up the rocket launchers on hidden baseplates in the hills and send in several rounds before the RA got their bearings from the Green Archer back projectile radar system and fired back. The Strikemasters were also scrambled to try and locate the Adu before they dispersed and I'll always remember the first time I saw two aircraft delivering a napalm strike on the hills just as the sun was setting. The rolling fireballs lit up the

darkening skyline and a large area of the hills appeared to be on fire. I certainly wouldn't have liked being amongst it.

In early 1973 the Adu were using small 75mm RCL rockets that you were not aware of until they exploded with a crump and scattered shrapnel around the place, which meant that as soon as someone shouted 'incoming' you hid under whatever afforded protection. When the RA saw a lull in the incoming rounds on Green Archer, they would sound the siren for everyone to head for the shelters. Unfortunately, the shelters were holes in the desert with corrugated tin and earth roofs and old ammunition boxes to sit on. Therefore, they attracted most of the nasty things that live in the desert, including snakes, scorpions and camel spiders. This provided an interesting choice of either staying above ground with the rockets or risking an encounter with something nasty in the shelter, including some strange SNCOs.

I had only been there for a few days when I experienced my first rocket attack. It was late in the afternoon and I was stood in the outside doorway to the section talking with a guy from General Office as their door was opposite us across a small patch of bondoo. There was an explosion near the armoury and a column of black smoke. I turned back from looking to say that there must have been an accident but the other guy had disappeared. It was then that there was another explosion closer to the section with pieces of shrapnel ricocheting off the walls and it slowly dawned on me that we were under attack. I crawled down the corridor into the workshop and hid under a bench until I heard the siren and then ran outside to the nearest shelter. Just as I sat down our Sgt told me I was on the Station Defence Team and as such should be at the armoury collecting my weapon. This was news to me but being an ex apprentice and conditioned to obeying orders, I set off across the bondoo towards the armoury, known as the Alamo, which unfortunately was where the first rocket had landed. Although this didn't seem like a good move, there were others heading that way and so I continued and arrived at the sandbagged maze entrance where a queue had formed. I asked what was going on and was advised that normally you ran in and picked up a rifle and magazine but unfortunately, there was a new armourer who was making everyone sign for their weapon. Thankfully this didn't last long as the Regiment Flt Sgt turned up and had a 'friendly' word with the armourer and we quickly went to our allocated positions. I was told to go onto the armoury roof to act as the rifleman for the Light Machine Gun (LMG) team manned by two RA personnel and had the embarrassing task of asking what it was I was supposed to do. No wonder the army used to give the crabs a hard time, but after some good natured ribbing they schooled me in workings of an LMG team and how to cover them whilst reloading.

The work in GRSF and the ComCen was very varied and enjoyable for an L Fitt GC as basically you were expected to look after anything that used electricity, which included all the Nav Aids, HF, VHF, UHF transmitters and receivers, teleprinters and all the other ancillary equipment. I was also the crypto tech and so had the on line and off line cryptos to maintain. This included the off line crypto used by the BATT in the hills that was like a slightly more modern version of an Enigma machine and being electromechanical, was regularly brought into the section choked full of sand and grit. We also looked after some of the medical equipment from the Field Surgical Team such as electric respirators and the Blood Bank, which was basically a big fridge. I didn't like being called out to look at the Blood Bank as they used to keep all the bits they chopped off in surgery until they had enough to warrant a burial run and so you never knew what to expect when you opened the door.

Once a month we would hold a masalam or goodbye night in the Wobbly Wheel Club, which was the all ranks bar, for those who were tourex and off home. This was the highlight of the month and held on a Thursday as we followed the Arab weekend and had Friday off. They were usually all night sessions followed by breakfast and then a run down to the beach in the armoured three ton truck with a local Askari guard to watch over us while we slept it off. The beaches were stunning with fine white sand backed with palm trees and not another soul to be seen. I believe they are now a popular holiday resort with excellent hotels.

The town of Salalah was about 4 miles from the camp and serviced by the only tarmac road in that part of the country. It was like stepping back into biblical times

with traditional Arab buildings and a great souk where you could buy all sorts of strange things. You could even buy an AK47 assault rifle and ammunition for about £20. There was a new hospital and school as the Sultan was beginning to provide more services for his people and invest in new infrastructure as part of the 'hearts and minds' campaign. The Station donated new Tannoy systems for the school and hospital and naturally the task fell to GRSF to install them. We spent a couple of our Fridays off working in the hospital and school, much to the delight of the locals and were well looked after, as the Omanis are a very hospitable people.

It was certainly a very interesting and enjoyable tour but after 9 months, with my chuff chart complete, it was time for my masalam and the presentation of my gozome tie, which I still have. It was a great tour, full of great people and events even though everything was very basic and make do, which is an environment where I believe British service men and women excel

*Jeffrey Parker (216<sup>th</sup>)*

*Thanks Jeff for a great read and as an adjunct to that there is a good book around called SAS OPERATION STORM, a true story of nine SAS soldiers fighting against four hundred Adoo. It took place in a village called Mirbat north of Salallah in 1972. Masirah and Salallah are both now holiday resorts for those that like plenty of Sun!  
ED*

*Colin Ingram (88<sup>th</sup>)*

## HUMOUR

### ACTUAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN PILOTS AND CONTROL TOWERS

The German air controllers at Frankfurt Airport are renowned as a short-tempered lot. They not only expect one to know one's gate parking location, but how to get there without any assistance from them.

So it was with some amusement that we (a Pan Am 747) listened to the following exchange between Frankfurt ground control and a British Airways 747, call sign Speedbird 206.

Speedbird 206: "Frankfurt, Speedbird 206! Clear of active runway."

*Ground: "Speedbird 206. Taxi to gate Alpha One-Seven."*

The BA 747 pulled onto the main taxiway and slowed to a stop.

*Ground: "Speedbird , do you not know where you are going?"*

Speedbird 206: "Stand by, Ground, I'm looking up our gate location now."

*Ground (with quite arrogant impatience): "Speedbird 206, have you not been to Frankfurt before?"*

**Speedbird 206 (coolly): "Yes, twice in 1944, but it was dark, -- And I didn't land."**

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While taxiing at London's, Gatwick Airport, the crew of a US Air flight departing for Ft. Lauderdale made a wrong turn and came nose to nose with a United 727.

An irate female ground controller lashed out at the US Air crew, screaming:

"US Air 2771, where the hell are you going? I told you to turn right onto Charlie taxiway! You turned right on Delta! Stop right there. I know it's difficult for you to tell the difference between C and D, but get it right!"

Continuing her rage to the embarrassed crew, she was now shouting hysterically:

"God! Now you've screwed everything up! It'll take forever to sort this out! You stay right there and don't move till I tell you to! You can expect progressive taxi instructions in about half an hour, and I want you to go exactly where I tell you, when I tell you, and how I tell you! You got that, US Air 2771?"

"Yes, ma'am," the humbled crew responded.

Naturally, the ground control communications frequency fell terribly silent after the verbal bashing of US Air 2771. Nobody wanted to chance engaging the irate ground controller in her current state of mind. Tension in every cockpit out around Gatwick was definitely running high. Just then an unknown pilot broke the silence and keyed his microphone, asking:

**"Wasn't I married to you once?"**

One day the pilot of a Cherokee 180 was told by the tower to hold short of the active runway while a DC-8 landed. The DC-8 landed, rolled out, turned around, and taxied back past the Cherokee.

Some quick-witted comedian in the DC-8 crew got on the radio and said, "What a cute little plane. Did you make it all by yourself?"

The Cherokee pilot, not about to let the insult go by, came back with a real zinger: **"I made it out of DC-8 parts. Another landing like yours and I'll have enough parts for another one."**

*'Charlie' Trussler (87<sup>th</sup>)*

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### OLD DOGS

An old Doberman starts chasing rabbits and before long, discovers that he's lost. Wandering about, he notices a panther heading rapidly in his direction with the intention of having lunch.

The old Doberman thinks, "Oh, oh! I'm in deep sh\*\* now!"

Noticing some bones on the ground close by, he immediately settles down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat. Just as the panther is about to leap, the old Doberman exclaims loudly,

"Boy, that was one delicious panther! I wonder, if there are any more around here?"

Hearing this, the young panther halts his attack in mid-strike, a look of terror comes over him and he slinks away into the trees.

"Whew!" says the panther, "That was close! That old Doberman nearly had me!"

Meanwhile, a squirrel who had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree, figures he can put this knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the panther. So, off he goes.

The squirrel soon catches up with the panther, spills the beans and strikes a deal for himself with the panther.

The young panther is furious at being made a fool of and says, "Here, squirrel, hop on my back and see what's going to happen to that conniving canine!"

Now, the old Doberman sees the panther coming with the squirrel on his back and thinks, "What am I going to do now?" But instead of running, the dog sits down with his back to his attackers, pretending he hasn't seen them yet, and just when they get close enough to hear, the old Doberman says

"Where's that squirrel? I sent him off an hour ago to bring me another panther!"

**Moral of this story - Don't mess with the old dogs. Age and skill will always overcome youth and treachery! Bull Sh\*\* and brilliance only come with age and experience.**

*Pete Crowe*



## RAFLAA

### ROYAL AIR FORCE LOCKING APPRENTICE ASSOCIATION.

#### 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY VISIT – BLETCHLEY PARK

At the AGM, we had a vote in the evening to decide on an interesting 'day out' to commemorate the formation of our Association, which had been set in motion by Joe Holroyd (85<sup>th</sup>) and Charles Hart (71<sup>st</sup>). At the dinner that evening each table had a list of venues, and after a count (I think it was by Tony Horry), Bletchley Park became the choice.

Whilst few of us were ever involved with cryptography, we were all familiar with the radio side of things, and signals traffic, plus the eventual development of computers that was prompted by the need to unravel the Enigma codes used by the Germans during the war. We were very fortunate to have Barry Dinnage (87<sup>th</sup>) help us with organising the trip, as he's a volunteer helper at the Park. Even so, there was a last minute change to the admissions process, which led to Barry having to give us his credit card details, as now groups have to pay up front. This can work fine for a coach load of people, but not so easy for us arriving at different times from all parts of the kingdom! So poor Barry had to make sure that he got his money back from everyone, and I'm pleased to recount that he didn't have any chasing to do, and 44 of us commenced the tour, led by one of Barry's very knowledgeable colleagues at the Park. Whilst some of the original park land has been sold for development, there are still some 29 acres of the site left, so I think we were all pleased that the early morning rain stopped whilst we were going from one building to the next in the afternoon. The history of the Park is very interesting, but it was in 1938 that the Code & Cypher School moved to take up residence there. Its location was ideal, as the railway station is only some 5mins. walk away, the A5 running almost through Bletchley, and a good, modern telephone exchange, at Fenny Stratford. Bletchley was just a nice quiet market town, so an ideal place for code breaking and intelligence gathering. Nothing to make it interesting at all to anyone, particularly enemy agents. Bletchley Park was of course served by many listening stations, which all had simple station references such as 'Station Y', there was also a 'Station X', but that was actually in a tower in the Mansion, but the 'X' was number 10 in Roman numerals, because that was MI6's station numbering practise. I've read a few books on Bletchley Park, and knew of 'Station X', but I didn't know that it was station 10!, trivial, but interesting.

There is so much to see, that one afternoon can't cover it all. The working replicas of the 'Bombe' calculator, and Colossus, the first programmable computer, are fascinating, but there is still a lot of refurbishment going on, so that there will be even more to see in the near future.

I think that a lot of us were quite pleased to check into the Milton Keynes Hilton to rest tired feet! Not too long though, and then gather in the bar for some liquid refreshment prior to the restaurant and a well-earned meal, and a few glasses of wine. We certainly did a lot of chatting and catching up with friends, but the hotel had given us a nice corner of the restaurant to ourselves!

Some people have already suggested that we could do a '21<sup>st</sup>' celebration, I certainly hope that we could manage one at the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, but I'm sure that you'll let the committee know what you think of these ideas. As this visit was such a success, I hope we can squeeze a few more in.





*Tiny*

## NO 1 RADIO SCHOOL ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM 2013

On 3<sup>rd</sup> October this year, a representation from the LAA., were invited to attend the No 1 Radio School Annual Symposium at RAF Cosford. The representatives were our President Martin Palmer, Chairman Tiny Kuhle, Secretary Chris Bryan and past Secretary Dave Gunby.

On arrival, we were met by the CO No 1 Radio School, Wing Commander K. Rayner and socialized with the speakers over coffee and biscuits.

Three speakers, Air Commodore Richardson, Group Captain Rowland and Group Captain Moore, gave their ideas where the RAF was going and in particular the effect the output of No 1 Radio School was having on the conflicts around the World. It was not just a case of setting up a field telephone for the Army Commander, who was at some remote outpost, but providing him with up to date intelligence via internet terminals. Not to mention control of remotely controlled aircraft, used during conflicts.

After the presentations, lunch was served in the Sergeants Mess, and the awards given to the best students of that year, one of which was Corporal Jason Waterson, who was given the award for excellence by our Association this year at the Webbington.

A letter of thanks was sent to the CO No 1 Radio School and the speakers, for their kind invitation.

*Chris Bryan*

*(RAFLAA Secretary)*





**No 1 Radio School Annual Symposium & Lunch  
3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 RAF Cosford**







Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Total Income	£4955.82	Total Expenditure	£5229.25
<b>Total Balance</b>	<b>£6,407.33</b>	Surplus/Deficit	-£273.43
Deposit Bond			
Business Money Manger	5193.68 )		
Current A/C	1,189.32 )		
Cash			
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	24.33 )		
	£6,407.33		

Presented to LAA Committee - July2013

*Tony Horry - Treasurer*

Accounts as per the income/expenditure statement for Feb – July 2013

**Donations**

Flowerdown House RAFA	40.00	RAFLAA Cttee Meeting ( 31 Jan 13)
Help for Heroes	135.00	Fund Raising at AGM - 2013

**AGM**

	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Webbington costs</b>
	£3,369.00		68 Lunches = £612.00
Webbington		£3,541.50	109 Dinners = £2125.00
Trophy Presentation		£50.00	80 Tea/Biscuits = £200.00
Trophy Expenses			40 Wine = £480.00
Bakers coach		£285.00	249 (125) Bar = £249.00
Music(Atlantic Crossing)		£220.00	
Wordsmith		£	2014 - Deposit paid £200.00

## Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Refund: Brian Farrell		£42.00	
Refund: Roger Sanders		£42.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£3,369.00</b>	<b>£4180.50</b>	<b>£3741.50</b>

**AGM 2013** - cost to the Association = £811.50 (£640.93 in 2012)

**AGM 2014** - £200 Deposit has been paid to the Webbington

A Direct Debit has now been set up to subscribe to Freeola for Web hosting. The first payment of £9.12 was made on 7 June 2013

### Outstanding Cheque Payments

100 722      Graham Beeston      133.69      Printing & Postage (June 2013)

**Adverts in Air Mail.** Unfortunately the advert intended only for the Jan – March 2013 edition for the AGM 2013, has also been repeated in the July – September edition. I have contacted Air Mail and it has been agreed to include the date of the next AGM (26<sup>th</sup> April 2014) in the next edition.

Mike Curtis requires a supply of lapel badges

Following the death of Joe Holroyd the Association has only three cheque signatories: Charles Hart; Peter Crowe and Tony Horry

### **Recommendations:**

- Income/Expenditure for period Feb to July 2013 be approved as presented.
- That a donation of £40 be made to Flowerdown House for their hospitality for to-days meeting.
- That arrangements for AGM bar subsidy be confirmed under agenda Item AGM 2014 together with the booking of "Atlantic Crossing" as required
- That it be agreed that ... become a cheque signatory in place of Joe Holdroyd
- That the Bank Mandate be agreed

Tony Horry also stated that there was a shortage of lapel badges. Chris Bryan would look into the matter with a view to purchasing more badges.

*Action: Chris Bryan*

With the demise of Joe Holdroyd a further signatory was required to sign the Association's cheques. Andy Perkins was put forward in his absence because he resides in the Weston super Mare area.

The Treasurer requested a copy of the elected Committee members which will be provided.

*Action Chris Bryan*

The Committee agreed to pay Nigel Lodge's travel expenses from his home in Norwich to RAF Halton to attend the FABEA meeting.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted.

*Proposed by Rick Atkinson, seconded by Colin Ingram.*



**Item 5 membership secretary's report**

**MEMBERSHIP DETAILS:**

Latest Membership number used is 709 (708 at the AGM) Only 1 new member since the AGM but I am expecting 3 enquirers to convert.

Membership Numbers as at today – according to the data I hold there are currently 368 active members.

Sadly we have lost 4 Members of the association

Nobby Clarke (98<sup>th</sup>)

Colin Cove (83<sup>rd</sup>)

Ken Toogood (79<sup>th</sup>)

Norrie Moir (203<sup>rd</sup>)

+ an Ex Apprentice but not an Association Member, Dennis Ward believed to be connected with the 72<sup>nd</sup> Entry

**NEWSLETTER HARDCOPY REQUESTS**

A total of 35 current active member copies 3 of which 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 now down to 7 copies in total.

Email addresses are an on-going issue and none more so that a contact that went through to Pete stating that he had left Qatar in 2009 and moved to Scotland and would like his email included in the email notifications. It turns out that he was 1 of the email addresses that kept bouncing back as non-existent – he has now communicated with me via an up to date email address.

**ADVERTISING:**

Remains a necessary requirement in AirMail and I utilise and local area events to make the public aware of our existence. Please also help by taking every opportunity to advertise our existence.

**Item 6 secretary's report**

Firstly, I would like to reiterate Tiny's opening address and welcome Charles Hart to our meeting. As you may know, Charles was the first secretary to the association, and was instrumental in devising our present constitution. When we arrive at item 8 on the agenda, I am sure we will benefit from the input from Charles.

At the last AGM., I announced that I would be retiring as secretary to the Association at the AGM in 2014, and our President suggested that it would be a good idea if a volunteer could be found to "shadow" me during my last year, so that some continuity in the job could be preserved, and that the new man would not be thrown in at the deep end. It is my pleasure to report to the committee that Nigel Lodge from the 92<sup>nd</sup> entry approached me after the meeting with a view to taking over from me. Whereas I was talked into the job by our smooth taking chairman, because no one else would do it at the time, Nigel is a keen volunteer, and has already taken part in the FABEA meeting at RAF Halton, which Tiny and I attended earlier this month. Nigel lives near Norwich, which is quite a distance from WsM, but was unable to attend this meeting.

In order to attend the FABEA meeting, Nigel drove to Tiny's house, and Tiny conveyed him to Halton. I would, therefore, ask the committee to sanction payment to Nigel for his fuel costs for that journey.

I will propose Nigel as our future secretary at the AGM., as I feel sure that there will be no other volunteers.

With regard to the CAA's memorial stone at the NMA., the association announced at the FABEA Meeting, that one of it's members had donated the money for it's refurbishment anonymously, so that the immediate threat of it being dismantled by the NMA had receded.

Apart from the demise of Brats 192 and the RAF Cranwell Apprentice Association at the end of this year, two subjects arose, which might be of interest to us.

The first was that RAF Halton appears on Wikipedia, and that perhaps RAF LAA could be featured as well. I have had a quick look for RAF Apprentices, but found nothing. Perhaps we could all search to see if any information can be found.

The second item concerned the Daily Telegraph. A week prior to the AGM of the Admin Apprentices, the secretary writes to the newspaper giving details of the meeting, which the newspaper prints free of charge on the same page as the Court Circular. Perhaps we could do the same for our AGM. just in case it catches the eye of one or more of our colleagues, and they wish to join us. However, I would suggest that more than one week's notice was given.

That ends my report, unless there are any questions from other members.

#### **Item 7           RAF Locking Apprentice Memorial**

Pete Crowe and Tony Horry to visit the helicopter museum in Weston super Mare and contact the manager with a view to understanding more about a possible grant from English Heritage for the Memorial at the old RAF Locking site.

The principal of the Weston Super Mare Technical College, Paul Phillips, had secured a £10million grant to go towards the annexe of the college on the Locking site, and so he would be approached to reinforce our wish to establish a memorial there.

Ian Norris, secretary of the RAFA, also requested a memorial on behalf of the RAFA. It was suggested that we might join forces to have a joint memorial that way the cost of funding could be halved.

Tiny Kuhle suggested an item in the Newsletter requesting donations from members for the memorial for the Locking Parklands.

Rick Atkinson suggested that the memorial should be in the shape of the Apprentice Wheel, mounted on a plinth and that he would find out about costing from local merchants.

Fibreglass was suggested as the material to be used. A plinth has already been identified at the gate of Locking Camp on which to mount the memorial wheel.

*Action: Rick Atkinson*

The designer of the monument is to be discussed at the next AGM.

**Item 8            amendment to the constitution**

The Constitution needed to be revised in order to accommodate the apprentices of RAF Cranwell on the demise of their association. Charles Hart, the LAA's first secretary, was invited to attend the Committee Meeting to input his knowledge with regard to the revision of the Constitution.

The Committee decided that Item 6 in the Constitution, Charitable Donations, should be deleted in total.

Tony Horry proposed that Item 9 in the Constitution, Membership, should read as follows:

**'MEMBERSHIP**

9.        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 RAF Locking. Associate Membership may be offered to those former apprentices who have been members of the RAF 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 a significant contribution to the training. The conditions under which Associates are appointed are as follows:'

*Action:    Chris Bryan*

In the absence of the Membership Secretary, Item 4.6 of the last AGM (Associate Member proposal) would be further discussed at the next AGM.

An updated Constitution would be forwarded to all Committee members and Pete Crowe would publish it on the website.

*Action:    Chris Bryan, Pete Crowe*

The Chairman proposed that Corporal Jason Waterson, the receiver of last year's Apprentice Trophy should be invited to become an Associate Member of the LAA.

*Proposed by Tiny Kuhle, seconded by Graham Beeston.*

The Committee agreed.

*Action:    Chris Bryan*

**Item 9            agm 2014**

It was agreed that the date of the AGM 2014 to be held at the Webbington Hotel, Loxton on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April and that the duo, Atlantic Crossing, would be booked for the dinner/dance in the evening. Drinks at the bar would be subsidized by the Association by £1 from 11am at the Meet and Greet until 7.30pm. There were requests for tea and coffee to be provided after the AGM at about 16.00.

*Action Chris Bryan*

Rick Atkinson volunteered to provide a table seating chart similar to last year's.

*Action:    Rick Atkinson*

It was proposed that the ladies' day out visited Tyntesfield, the National Trust property near Bristol. Tiny Kuhle nominated Andy Perkins to organize the coach.

*Action:    Andy Perkins*

**Item 10      RAF LAA web site**

A reproduction of the RAF Locking badge displayed in the foyer at Flowerdown House is to be put on the website.

*Action:    Pete Crowe*

After Pete Crowe's predecessor had died, the website was inaccessible so Pete Crowe suggested he should forward details of the website hosting to the Secretary and other committee members so the problem does not recur.

*Action:    Pete Crowe*

Tiny Kuhle thanked Pete Crowe for his staunch work on the website.

**Item 11      fabea (demise of RAF CAA and BRATS 192)**

*No further action required.*

**Item 12      newsletter**

At the AGM I suggested we use the Newsletter to record our own piece of history during our time in the service of our Country. The drive for the stories was recently triggered by a local history group in our Parish where they are trying to collate local facts and tales from the area before those with the knowledge are no longer around to supply the information. So by using the Newsletter I am hoping we can capture and record our own stories whilst in the RAF and provide a legacy for those that follow. Someone at some time in the future may wish to create an interesting booklet on some of the places and associated stories that followed us around the World.

So to start with I asked for some tales from overseas postings such as the Middle East, Far East and Near East, most of which are now closed and forgotten.

Unfortunately this seemed to have fallen of deaf ears other than Chris who was possibly the only ex-Apprentice to serve abroad, and I thank him for his amusing contribution

I also requested articles on everyday life in the RAF especially to some of the more exotic overseas postings again to try to create a portfolio of RAF in the 1950 – 1980s with pretty much the same success as the previous request.

My last request at the AGM and I know this applies to all members of the Association was to be titled "a week in the life of an Apprentice", again the response was muted, perhaps age is taking its toll of the memory cells.

But I will put a reminder in the next Newsletter and perhaps folks may put finger to keyboard.

I recently attended the funeral of Colin Cove 83<sup>rd</sup>. I certainly didn't know that he only lived within 25 miles from me. Speaking to Colin's wife after the event she said she was very thankful to RAFLAA and his Entry for their support and good wishes. There were many friends and family members present to help but it may not be the same for other families and two things concerned me as a result.

1. I had no knowledge of RAFLAA members living locally who may at some time need help or advice or more likely their family may need assistance prior to bereavement. Should we as a Committee be more aware of people in our area?

2. As we have stated in the Constitution that we should provide support for Members and dependants. The level of support we seem to offer comes after bereavement and not when perhaps it is needed most. Should we have a dedicated person on the Committee to fulfil that role. Not for financial support but just as a POC for other organisations i.e. RAFA, RAFBF etc

Tiny Kuhle extended his thanks to Colin Ingram for the Newsletter.

**Item 13      20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the RAF LAA inauguration**

In order to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the LAA, a visit to Bletchley Park is to be arranged by Tiny Kuhle. Dinner, bed and Breakfast would be at the Milton Keynes Hilton Hotel. After Tiny Kohl's meeting with the manager of the hotel (Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July), members would be able to book rooms on-line for the event on 6<sup>th</sup> September. Cancellation would be possible up to 4pm on the same day without charge. Tiny Kuhle would send details to Pete Crowe who would then put this information on the website. Charges at the hotel are as follows:

Double room, dinner, bed and Breakfast £90

Single room, dinner bed and breakfast £65.

The cost of entry to Bletchley Park will be £13. Members attending should arrive no later than 1pm. Signing in at the hotel should be at about 5pm with extra staff being employed to accommodate the numbers. Dress should be smart casual.

Tony Horry proposed that Tiny Kuhle should be indemnified by the Association for any loss incurred with regard to organising the hotel booking.

Seconded by Chris Bryan

The Committee agreed the proposal.

*Chris Bryan proposed a vote of thanks to Tiny Kuhle for organising the event.  
Agreed by the Committee.*

**Item 14      Any Other Business.**

Colin Ingram attended Colin Cove's funeral and suggested that members' addressed could be arranged in an area or county format so that members in the region of a deceased member could attend the funeral.

Chris Bryan would look into and consult with Jim Doran.

*Action: Chris Bryan, Jim Doran*

**Item 15      Date of next Meeting**

It was decided that the next committee meeting would be held on Thursday 30th January 2014 at Flowerdown House Weston-super-Mare commencing at 13.00hrs.

Meeting Closed at 15.40 hrs.

Chris Bryan (Sec LAA)

## **OBITUARIES**

### **KENNETH FARMER**

It is with regret that we have to report the death of Kenneth Farmer 75<sup>th</sup> Entry, he passed away in August 2013, we have no further details.

### **KEN TOOGOOD**

I have been advised by his family of the death of Ken Toogood (79th Entry). Ken won the "Wordsmith" trophy 4 or 5 years ago. He has been very ill for some years.

*Bruce Graham (79th)*

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

### **LIFE CHANGING DECISIONS.**

Many of the items written for the Newsletter, materialize in embryo form, during my daily cycle rides around the delightful Worcestershire countryside.

Our worthy editor is generally kind enough to include them, possibly more in desperation than desire, as so few members appear willing to write contributions for him!

On a recent ride, I began to ponder on the significant decisions we have made in life. Were they good, were they bad? Luckily, I could not think of many of the latter. Following this train of thought, I reduced the number of good ones to three, then rated them in degree of importance.

If everyone did this and submitted their conclusions to the Newsletter editor, I'm sure he would be eternally grateful. To start the ball rolling, here are my three.

#### **NO.3. DECIDING TO RESIGN FROM A WELL PAID, SECURE JOB WITH BRITISH AIRWAYS AND JOIN THE B.B.C.**

It released me from a job I had come to dislike, in an area in which I did not relish living. Though my new employment only lasted 10 years or so, it was thoroughly enjoyable, in a very pleasant part of the world. Ultimately, it enabled me to take redundancy/early retirement at the age of 54, with sufficient income to preclude any requirement to seek further employment.

#### **NO.2. VOLUNTEERING FOR INSTRUCTIONAL DUTIES IN 1963.**

The move required leaving a post at R.A.F. Linton-on-Ouse, which was almost idyllic, for one at R.A.F. Yatesbury which was pretty demanding and not in the most appealing surroundings. Though initially done as a stepping stone to promotion, it resulted in a 30 year career in teaching most of which was very rewarding.

#### **NO.1. AT 18 YEARS OF AGE, PROPOSING TO THE GIRL I HAD COURTED THROUGHOUT MY TIME AT LOCKING.**

I would happily have done so much earlier but there was probably a Q.R. somewhere forbidding it and I could not envisage "Humphrey" our Flight Commander approving an application to live out. We would also probably have starved to death on the pittance we received as A.A.'s. The lady concerned has been the most wonderful companion for the last 54 years and has, without doubt made my life complete. The 7/6d for the marriage licence was the best investment I ever made!

*Mike Collier*



## RAFLAA COMMITTEE

Appointment	Name	Address	Tel/email	Re-Election	Entry
President	Martin Palmer				91 <sup>st</sup>
Chairman	"Tiny" Kühle	22 Tavistock Close Woburn Sands Milton Keynes Bucks MK17 8UY	(01908) 583784 <a href="mailto:Hans.Kuhle@btopenworld.com">Hans.Kuhle@btopenworld.com</a>	Apr 2016	87 <sup>th</sup>
Secretary	Chris Bryan	39 Fairfax, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG42 1YT.	(01344) 304725. <a href="mailto:suechris.bryan@googlemail.com">suechris.bryan@googlemail.com</a>	Apr 2014	87 <sup>th</sup>
Treasurer	Tony Horry	Hillside Cottage Kewstoke Road Kewstoke WSM BS22 9YD	(01934) 628383 <a href="mailto:Tony.horry@gmail.com">Tony.horry@gmail.com</a>	Apr 2016	76 <sup>th</sup>
Membership Secretary	Jim Doran	11 Saxonlea Close Rushden Northants NN10 6BF	(01933) 317357 <a href="mailto:Jimdoran12@hotmail.com">Jimdoran12@hotmail.com</a>	Apr 2014	219 <sup>th</sup>
Service Rep	Rick Atkinson	Gateway Cottage 1 Lake Walk Adderbury Oxfordshire OX17 3PF	(01295) 812972 <a href="mailto:rickatkinson@me.com">rickatkinson@me.com</a>	Sept 2015	91 <sup>st</sup>
AA Rep/ Webmaster	Peter Crowe	14 Hillview Road WSM N. Somerset BS23 3HS	(01934) 412178 <a href="mailto:webmaster@raflaa.org.uk">webmaster@raflaa.org.uk</a>	Sept 2015	95 <sup>th</sup>
Craft Rep	Graham Beeston	87 Hornbeam Rd Havant PO9 2UT	Home (02392) 346242 Work 07920038690 <a href="mailto:graham@mapleoak.co.uk">graham@mapleoak.co.uk</a>	Sept 2015	209 <sup>th</sup>
Tech Rep	Andy Perkins	107 Balmoral Way Worle WSM BS22 9BZ	(01934) 417323 <a href="mailto:am.perkins@virgin.net">am.perkins@virgin.net</a>	Sept 2015	109 <sup>th</sup>
Newsletter Editor	Colin Ingram	Fairhaven Gooseham Morwenstow Bude Cornwall EX23 9PG	01288 331363 <a href="mailto:colin.ingram90@gmail.com">colin.ingram90@gmail.com</a>	Apr 2015	88 <sup>th</sup>



# 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

**DINNER MENU SATURDAY 26TH APRIL 2014**

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**AGM 2014 MENU**

**Mediterranean Vegetable Soup**

**Crab Cakes**

*Fried and served with tomato salsa*

**Chicken Liver Pate**

*Served with red onion relish and French toast*

**Fan of Melon**

*Honeydew melon with raspberry coulis*

**Asparagus Spears**

*Wrapped in Parma ham with parmesan shaving and olive dressing*

**Fillet of Chew Valley Rainbow Trout**

*Grilled with honey and almonds*

**Medallion of Pork**

*Slices of fillet stacked with black pudding and cider sauce*

**Roast Leg of Lamb**

*Prime English Lamb with redcurrant and rosemary gravy*

**Steak & Ale Pie**

*Tender pieces of beef cooked in a beer sauce topped with puff pastry*

**Vegetable Chop Suey**

*Seasonal Vegetables and bean sprouts fried with sesame oil and soya sauce*

*All Served with Boulangère Potatoes, Broccoli, Swede & Sugar Snap Peas*

**Chocolate Torte**

**Raspberry Pavlova**

**Cheddar Strawberries**

*Topped with clotted cream*

**Mixed Ice Cream**

**Selection of Cheese & Biscuits**

**Tea and Coffee Served with Mints**

## APPLICATION FOR RAFLAA AGM 2014

DINNER, DANCE AND FINGER BUFFET  
26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2014

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Email Address</b>	
<b>Entry No.</b>	

<i>Description</i>	<i>No of Tickets</i>	<i>Ticket Each</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Lunch &amp; Dinner</i>		<b>£30</b>	<b>£</b>
<i>Dinner &amp; Dance</i>		<b>£21</b>	<b>£</b>
<i>Lunch Only</i>		<b>£10</b>	<b>£</b>
<i>Dinner Dance Guest</i>		<b>£31</b>	<b>£</b>
<i>Ladies Coach Trip to: Tyntesfield House (NT) Fee for House/Gardens payable at Entrance</i>		<b>£15</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£</b>

Application for Coach trip to be returned by: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014

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

Return application to:

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

**Tel: 01934628383** E-mail: [tony.horry@gmail.com](mailto:tony.horry@gmail.com)

<b>Starter</b>	Soup	Melon	Asparagus	Crab	Pate
<b>Number</b>					
<b>Main Course</b>	Trout	Medallion of Pork	Leg of Lamb	Steak & Ale Pie	Veg. Chop Suey
<b>Number</b>					
<b>Dessert</b>	Pavlova	Strawberries	Ice Cream	Choc. Torte	Cheese
<b>Number</b>					

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

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

Tel: 01934750100. Email: [info@webbingtonhotel.ecclipse.co.uk](mailto:info@webbingtonhotel.ecclipse.co.uk).

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