



Royal Airforce Locking Apprentices Association

Newsletter

Serial 14

February 1997

AGM and Re-union Weekend Earlier ... and Later this Year!

The committee has decided to hold the AGM at RAF Locking on 7th June, bringing this year's event two weeks earlier than previous years, when it was timed to coincide with the Flowerdown Fair, which ceased last year.

There are several reasons for bringing the event forward, not the least being the fact that 7th June is the day on which the Freedom of Weston-super-Mare is exercised. Since so many apprentices have taken part in the event over the years, it was thought that members might appreciate the opportunity to watch it for a change. This has been made possible, by the decision taken at committee to hold the AGM in the afternoon, giving members an opportunity to travel down to Weston in the morning, attend the reunion and AGM in the afternoon and travel home again in the evening.

The route of the Freedom of Weston Parade will be along the sea front from the Grand Atlantic to the Cabot Hotel, then into town along Knightstone Road, South Parade, High Street, Oxford Street, and past the rear of the Floral Clock. The parade will then continue along the south side of Alexander Parade, past the Odeon and on to the Town Hall, where the salute will be taken by the Town Mayor. The Unit is hoping to find sufficient personnel to mount two flights proceeded by the Western Band of the RAF. How times have changed since the original parade which included two bands and three squadrons.

Sparky, the donkey Mascot, is a bit doubt-

ful these days with decaying feet — so he may have an excused boots chit!

For those who like to make a weekend of it there will be the usual Meet and Greet in the Grand Atlantic on Friday evening, Dinner Dance at Partyscene on Saturday evening and lunch on Sunday.

At the AGM and reunion itself there will be outlets for the purchase of various items. As well as the RAF Apprentices video, the newly acquired Imperial War Museum recruiting video will be available for sale. It is also intended to engage some background music, subject to availability, to play for the two hour period between 12:30 and 14:30.

The Agenda for the Meeting will be on display and copies will be available in the Theatre. Minutes of the last AGM and all Com-
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Editorial

There was I, thinking that by successfully delaying the previous newsletter for a few weeks, I would be able to relax and skip the traditional February edition. However, being a new boy (sprog?) in my ignorance I had overlooked the strategy and cunning of the committee vis a vis softening, sorry, preparing you all for the AGM! So don't worry, time is not accelerating out of control, it truly is only a few weeks since you received your last newsletter.

This edition may seem a little "heavy" since it has to carry a fair bit of official business concerning the aforementioned AGM. However there is some more interesting stuff, and I am particularly grateful to Mike West for his *Life and Times* article. You will also find inside a reprint of the report on the original Freedom of Weston parade as well as some other snippets that have come my way. A word of warning, I deem any mail or Email coming my way as being 'publishable', so if you don't want any thing sent to me made public, say so!

I am pleased to say that I am now starting to get articles 'in stock', BUT, I still need a lot more, so get those creative juices flowing! Actually, the articles that I do have tend to be lengthy ones, so some shorter, snappy anecdotes would be especially welcome (but if you have a blockbuster I need those as well).

If you need any ideas, how about a nice atmospheric piece capturing those cold winter morning working parades, kit inspections, and the march to the training blocks on dark icy roads, hob-nails slipping and sliding, overhead steam pipes creaking and leaking? Sorry, got a bit carried away there!

When you send in your articles, it would be good to be able to publish it with photos. I undertake to return any photos promptly and intact. I undertake to return intact!

Anyway, enough of the commercials — on with the show!

(continued from page 1)

mittee Meetings held since last year's AGM will be displayed. Neil Castle will again be displaying a range of interesting old photographs of Apprentice activities and is hoping for some help in identifying them.

The formal calling notice for the AGM, together with the agenda, will appear in the next issue of the newsletter which is planned to reach you at the end of May. However, since it is a requirement of the Constitution that members be given the opportunity to propose constitutional changes (which must be voted on by a general meeting), you are asked to submit any proposals to the Secretary by 15 April. On page three you will find details of one such proposal which is designed to allow member's address details to be published in a member's handbook similar to the one piloted with the last newsletter.

The audited Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account for last year will also appear in the May edition of the Newsletter.

The format for the dinner dance will be the same as last year. Doug Reid will be beavering away at providing us with a draw, and members can now enjoy wine within the ticket price, which remains at a very reasonable £12-50. An application form for tickets to the Dinner Dance can be found at the end of this newsletter, as do the weekend timings. Hopefully, we will have some guests at the Dinner Dance this year, thereby repaying some of the hospitality that has been given to the RAFLAA.

Going ... going — not yet!

The current situation on the closure of RAF Locking remains uncertain. Officially the Unit closes in late 1998/early 1999, the original closure date of 1 Apr 98 having been delayed by nine months. However, there appears to be some pessimism about this time scale so there is no progress to report to the members, nor can any arrangements be considered for the closure commemoration. All that can be done now is to await further announcements.

Proposal to Release Member's Address Details

by Mike West, Membership Secretary

At the last committee meeting the publication of details of Members address was discussed.

The following topics were covered to test if the Data Protection Act applied to the publication of Members address:

a) Who are Members of the Association?

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. (Ref: RAFLAA Constitution – Membership)

b) What information about Members is stored on the database?

The information held on the database, to which this topic is concerned, covers the Name, Address, Telephone Number and (if applicable) E-Mail Address of each Member.

c) Who would most likely to request this information?

Requests for this type of information has in the past come from other Members of the Association to contact directly fellow comrades.

d) Was the information available to the general public?

Information has not been made available to the general public.

e) Would the information be made available to the general public?

Information about any Member, past or present, would not be released to anyone or any organisation outside the Association.

f) Did the Constitution of the Association allow for this information to be released?

At the present time the Constitution of the Association does not cover this topic fully. (Ref: RAFLAA Constitution – Data Protection Act)

The committee felt that to achieve part of the objectives of the Association it was in the interest of Members and the Association, to allow the publication of Members details covering address, telephone number and E-Mail address (RAFLAA Constitution – Objectives (a & b))

Guidance had been sought, prior to the meeting, on how the Data Protection Act affected the Association. Since it is proposed to release only the Members' name, address, telephone number and E-Mail address from the database, the Data Protection Act appears not to apply.

It was therefore decided to propose the following amendment to the constitution:

Replace Page 4. Item 15 (DATA PROTECTIONACT) with the following text:

Acceptance of the Constitution of the Association shall be implicit in acceptance of membership.

It shall also be implicitly accepted that the membership list may be held on computer file. Full details that are held shall be accessible as privileged information only to Committee Members and those holding Honary appointments made by the Chairman.

However, it shall also be implicitly accepted that the address details may also be passed to other members of the Association. Members shall be provided, on request, with copies of their entries on the membership file.

If the AGM approves the amendment, a Members Booklet will be issued to all members at the end of August which will include address details of all current Members.

The Life and Times of . . .

Michael A. West, 99th Entry

Apprentice training.

I was a member of the two hundred-odd strong 99th Entry at RAF Locking between September 1961 and August 1964. During this time many changes took place on the Apprentice Wing. The main changes were instigated by OC Apprentice Wing, Wing Commander Elkington. Those of us who were at Locking during his reign will remember him well.

Out went good conduct stripes, entry and barrack room mascots (the latter normally fixed to the tannoy at the end of the billet), respect for the senior entry and our civilian shoes. In came the wearing of RAF shoes with civvies, keeping civilian shoes was strictly forbidden. Can you visualise how we all looked, all smart in our Italian style suits like those the Beatles were wearing ... and big bull nosed shoes. The ban was overcome in a number of ways. Some apprentices hid their



Mike in 1961

winkle-pickers between the walls of the old wooden billet blocks. Others, like myself, took the extreme measure of having dancing lessons at Trevor Schofield's School of Dancing in North Street, Weston. This activity *did* count towards the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme ... and another evening out of the camp.

For our entry the best change came in 1962. In this year the entry moved from the wooden huts to the newly built brick barrack blocks with central heating that actually worked. The occupation of the rooms was reduced from twenty to eighteen, and the 'Hook' got a room on his own, this was brilliant. We did move around to different blocks and I ended up in G Block next to Wing HQ. This was not a very good location since if any of the permanent staff working in Wing HQ required someone to do a job it was always our block they came to first.

We survived all of this, and our running battles with the 96th, especially for 'The Mine', ring any bells 96th? I know that all the entries prior to 99th will be thinking "*you didn't have it as hard as we did*". Probably not, nor did later entries have it as hard as us. Ah well – progress!

It was in the last eighteen months at Locking that I met my future wife.

Post RAF Locking.

On 'Pass Out' I was posted to RAF North Luffenham in the county of Rutland, and I got married to Isobel. Rutland was the smallest county in England but due to boundary changes it no longer exists. The county was so small that it only had one real town. Even if it hadn't been combined with its neighbouring counties, half of it has been submerge under a vast man made lake known as Rutland Water. RAF North Luffenham was home to the Ground Radar

Servicing Centre (GRSC), Language School and some other units of which I can't remember anything. It seemed that all of our entry who had anything to do with ground radar was posted there. I don't think that the Innsworth knew what to do with all of us, and found a large station where they could park us until they figured out which station needed what.

I was employed in the Ground Servicing Centre (GRSC) at North Luffenham and was there from August '64 to August '65. I was initially put into the Bloodhound Mk I Flight, but was soon despatched to RAF Norton in Sheffield for a three month period together with a number of my entry. The RAF were closing the Ground Radar Servicing Units (GRSUs) around the country. The idea was to concentrate third line servicing at GRSC and our task was to help transfer equipment to Luffenham without a break in the servicing commitment. At Norton we were all employed in the Ground Radar Flight (B Flight) who had an eccentric Master Technician in charge. Some of you may know him; Master Tech. Jack Deny. On returning to Luffenham I was kept in B Flight. I continued to work on the equipment that I had serviced at Norton, mainly Types 7 and 14 radars, and the Operations Room Type 64 console's EHT units.

This third line servicing was quite a relaxed environment at this time. It came as quite a shock being told, one Monday morning, that we were going to RAF Newton to train on Bloodhound Mk II Type 87 Radar (back to school). This training took place between August 1965 to February 1966.

We all arrived at RAF Newton, a nondescript station having Post Graduate courses as well as basic electrical courses. The only good thing it had going for it was that it was near Nottingham. There were some very good curry shops in Nottingham. Again Innsworth seemed to have our batch of record cards stuck together as most of the new trainees at Newton on Bloodhound were from Luffenham and the 99th. The RAF Newton training staff, not knowing about Innsworth and our record cards,

decided to split us up. Some were trained on the Type 87 Radar, some on the Type 86 Radar, some on the Launch Control Post (LCP) and some on the missile. The unlucky ones were trained on missile handling and the launcher. Unlucky because they worked mostly outside in the rain and the cold.

On completion of the training at Newton, I was posted to No 41 Squadron at West Raynham. My family had now grown, we now had a baby daughter Christine and another mouth to feed on my monthly salary of thirty five pounds. This posting lasted from February '66 to August '71 and was to be my first visit as it turned out. I was employed on building, commissioning and servicing the Bloodhound Mk II Radar Type 87. Yes, you guessed it, most of the same crowd ended up here as well. In the first few weeks it was necessary for the newly trained to go to No 25 Squadron at RAF North Coates (where was this place we asked)? This was for 'Improver Training' on a squadron that had been declared operational. It was also the home of the Trails Flight for both Bloodhound Mk I and II. This station is nearly in hell. It's situated on the Humber Estuary right on the sea wall of the North Sea, I really do mean on the sea wall as those of you who have experienced this place know. There is only one single track road to the camp that goes over the bleakest part of the country you can imagine, dead flat with dykes either side. If you go off the road you end up in a dyke.

I eventually returned to West Raynham and spent the next six years there, although I did go back to RAF Newton in '68 to do a conversion course to the Type 86 Radar. During this period I added another daughter Julie and a son Barry to my family. We decided that our family was now complete. In April 1971 I was placed on PWRs along with most of 41 Squadron personnel together with 25 Squadron at RAF North Coates. This was to be a mass posting of Bloodhound personnel and equipment to RAF Germany.

Eventually the posting orders came through

and I was sent to 25 Squadron at RAF Bruggen in Germany. I was destined to be there from August 1971 to December 1974. I was not alone in this posting, the record cards were still stuck together!

I returned from Germany in December '74 and went back to West Raynham. This time it was to the Bloodhound Support Unit (BHSU) where I was to remain until July 1976. When I arrived at West Raynham for the second time there wasn't any equipment for me to work on. The Type 86 Radar Squadron was still in Germany and the Type 87 had either been sent to No 112 Squadron in Cyprus or put into storage. My employment at West Raynham now was in Engineering Control and I became the Electrical Engineering Test Equipment Coordinator (EETEC) for the BHSU, a soul destroying job. When the Turks invaded the north of Cyprus, the MoD decided to withdraw the Bloodhound squadron in Cyprus and return it to West Raynham. "At last," I thought, "equipment to work on". But this was not to be. In my role as the EETEC, I was moved from the Bloodhound site to an empty hanger on the main camp (the flying squadrons had long since decided that there were far better places than West Raynham to fly from).

In May '76 the MoD decided that RAF Binbrook required protection from any enemy aircraft that managed to get past our front line fighter squadrons. The squadrons at RAF Binbrook flew Lightning's, our first line of defence against attacking enemy aircraft which were so old that there were more in scrap compounds being 'Christmas Tree'd' than the squadrons had operational. MoD had therefore decided to reopen RAF North Coates along with other stations and bring back into service the Bloodhound Mk II Radar Type 87s that were in storage. I volunteered to be posted to RAF North Coates, and eventually went there posted in July 1976, where I stayed until March 1979. At first there was no suitable accommodation on the camp, it had been closed for five years. To accommodate us those nice people from the Ministry of Public Buildings and

Works (MPBW) refurbished some of the officer's quarters for us to live in while other buildings on the station were made habitable. North Coates is cold, wet and windy and if it's going to snow anywhere in England it will snow there.

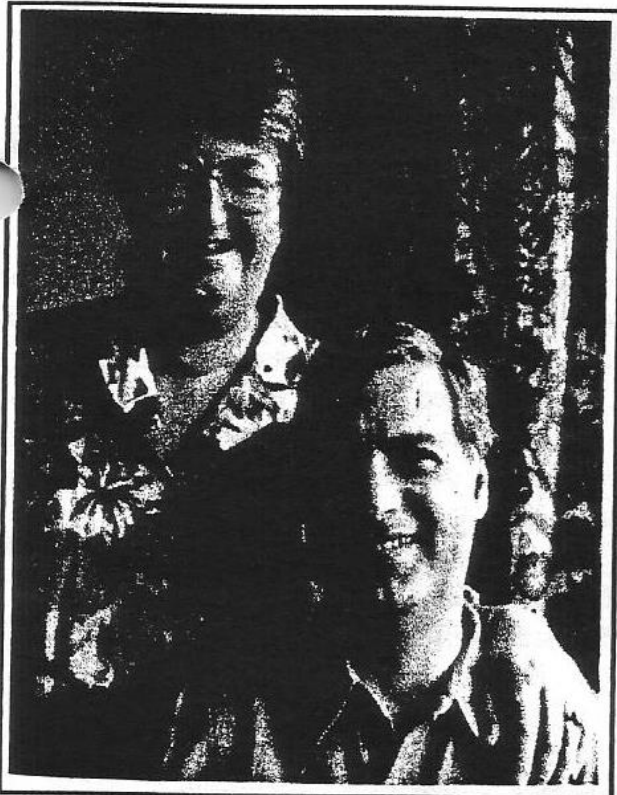
Whilst I was there I decided that a change was necessary and with a recession forecast to hit Britain in the next few years it was time to find a nice civilian job. I therefore gave notice that I wanted out. It was finally agreed to let me go in April 1979, and with leave of various types I said goodbye to service life in March 1979.

Civilian life.

I had found a job before leaving the RAF with British Aerospace Dynamics Ltd at Filton Bristol. I joined the company in March 1979 and stayed with them until 1995. During this period there were some joyous moments and some very sad ones. My eldest daughter Christine was married to Allan and they gave us our first grandchild Martin. A few months after Martin was born, Isobel died of cancer. We had been married for just over twenty five years. The following year my sorrow was turned to joy. My other daughter Julie was married to Jim and later that year I met my current wife Marcia (who had lost her husband also through cancer). The following year we were married. Marcia has two sons Martin and John. Martin is married to Louise and John is still living at home. Just before I married Marcia, Christine and Allan gave us another grandchild, Rachel. Martin and Louise have also presented us with two grandchildren, Jacob and Austin. If you have been counting, we have five children and four grandchildren. My son Barry was married in 1995 to Christine, just John to go now. During this time at work, I was employed in the department looking after the Design Integration of the Tracked Rapier Project for Iran. I will explain what I actually did later but would you believe

it the first person I saw in the department was

Graham Mitchard who I had served with on 25 Squadron. Two weeks after I started work, the Tracked Rapier project was halted by the British Government because of the Iranian revolution. Was I out of a job already? No, in those days companies looked after their employees and didn't just get rid of them. Every one concerned with the project was found alternative employment within the company until



Mike and Marcia

the MoD had been convinced that they should have Tracked Rapier as well as the Towed version.

I stayed on and carried out this Design Integration thing. Actually it was interesting work. My job was to guide designers to design their piece of equipment to interface with the rest of the system which is not that easy. Designers don't seem to be able to see what is happening outside of their area. A good example of this concerns a test truck, an oscilloscope and the connections between the two. Although the designer didn't have to design the oscilloscope which was an 'off the shelf' item, he did have to define the electrical interfaces. A number of times the designer was

urged to seek the interface requirements to the test truck but to no avail. The designer specified a 240 volt 13 amp three pin moulded connector on the power lead. Unfortunately the truck, which was being made 'in country' had 240 volt 10 amp two pin continental sockets, and you just can't get a three pin plug into a two pin socket. All the leads were scrapped and new ones manufactured at considerable cost to the company. If the designer had listened to the integration engineer it wouldn't have happened.

During my time with BAe I had many responsibilities mostly to do with integration in one form or other. My last job concerned the man/machine interface known as Human Factors Engineering. The human has, until recently, been left out of the design loop. Many designs do not take into account that humans have to operate the equipment. Connectors, switches, dials, etc. should be placed where they are accessible to the human operator and that the instructions are clear and concise. How many of you puzzle over what those icons (sorry signs) on your video hand controller mean and how many of us have said 'How does this work'? If these types of equipment were designed with the human in mind then it would all be a piece of cake. We could then show our children how to programme the video recorder and not have to rely on them to do it for us.

At the beginning of 1995 BAe. made me an offer I couldn't really refuse. The company wanted volunteers for redundancy, and as I was going to reach the big FIVE - OH in the April I volunteered. We parted company on 30 June 1995. Looking back I had spent seventeen years in the RAF and seventeen years with BAe. I wonder what will happen at the end of the next seventeen years when I will be sixty seven years old.

No, I will not think about it!

Current employment.

At present I am a non-employed person. That is to say I haven't got a job, nor am I 'Signed On' as unemployed. When I left BAe.

I signed on as unemployed and dutifully signed every fortnight thereafter as 'actively seeking employment'. I even went on an Auto CAD course and obtained an NVQ. It is true though, that when you retire you do wonder how you found time to go to work. I have now decided that I would like my freedom from the Department of Employment and Education. To this end I informed my local Job Centre that they will not be getting my autograph every fortnight any more. I can now devote more time to things I like doing which brings me nicely into the next topic of hobbies.

Hobbies

I have two hobbies that I pursue with some vigour and a number that I like to pass the time with. The first is philately (stamp collecting), I concentrate on collecting British stamps both the definitive and special issues but not 'First Day Covers'.

My second is the keeping cold water fish – mainly Koi Carp – although I do have some Fancies. I have a long term project to build a new home for the fish. I did start digging the foundations for it last year but decided that the location wasn't right. I have now filled it in again but it is still my aim to have a well-filtered pond so that I can keep some more expensive Koi. On a hot summer's day I have found it very relaxing to just sit and watch the fish. Listening to the waterfall and fountain gurgling away, you can very easily doze off.

I play table tennis (badly) most Monday evenings and up until last spring I played Front First Skittles in the Kingswood District. This is a winter skittles' league covering a large area of North Bristol.

Civil duties

Some of you may already know that I am a Magistrate sitting on the North Avon Bench at Yate (so don't speed through the area especially on the Motorway or we may be meeting each other). I was appointed in 1993 and find it a most challenging vocation. If any of you would like to know more about the Magistracy, then either get in touch with your local Magistrates

Court or give me a call. I have been thinking about writing an article for the News Letter on the subject if the editor will allow me to.

Well, that's about it. I hope that you didn't find this article too boring. I hope that it may start the ball rolling with more of you telling us about *your* Life and times.

Come and join us!

A letter has been received from Peter Gates, Secretary of the Huntingdon and District branch of the RAF Halton Apprentices Association. The main purpose of the letter is to invite any RAFLAA members living in an area roughly bounded by Stevenage, Bedford, Ely, Cambridge and Saffron Walden to join them associate members. The Branch meet at 7:30pm on the last Thursday of every month at the RAFA Club in St. Neots.

A full programme of talks is planned for this year. Whilst aviation and engineering form the main theme, other speakers already booked for this year include a Russian academist who has been investigating the aftermath of Chernobyl, Air Commodore Foale who will talk about space flight and will cover his son's flight to the Mir space station in May this year, and the assistant editor of FlyPast magazine. The association also organises visits to places of interest, the most recent of which was to the war time No. 11 Group Operations Room at RAF Uxbridge.

One RAFLAA member, Gordon Shores, has already signed up. If you are interested and require more details Peter can be contacted at **43 Wheatfields, St. Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE17 6YD. (Telephone 01480 467445).**

Apprentices on the Internet.

Despite three attempts (so far) by your hapless editor to get George Burville's URL for his Apprentices Home Page right, I still managed to mess it up! So, for the last time, I hope, here is what you need to type:

<http://www.gedb.demon.co.uk/>

If you have the means, give George your support — it is worth it.

If you are ambitious enough to start your own web page but don't know how to start, George has produced a kit to get you started. For more information email him from his home page, or at:

george@gedb.demon.co.uk/

George Mann Books

This publisher is putting together an international directory of ex-services Organisations, Associations and Clubs to help ex-servicemen in their search for old friends. The RAFLAA has registered in the publication which is to be called *Comrades*, the first edition of which will be published this month (March). Further details can be obtained from the publishers at PO Box 22, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1AH. Telephone 01622 759591.

Membership Matters

Remember the long running saga of the unreadable signature on the Standing Order mandate? Well Bob Finlayson of the 99th has finally owned up to it.

Bob was an up and coming rock star in the sixties as a member of the Incas (remember them anyone?). Check your autograph collection, you may have a valuable signature.— not that you would ever know!

The 72 Association Re-union

by John M Smith 72nd

The 72 Association — formed many years ago — held their bi-annual re-union on 21 September 1996, this time at the Swallow Hotel, Northampton.

Thirty members and their wives had an extremely enjoyable evening. Ripp Rippon DFC, Entry Commander and Life President, and the Vice President, Dennis Ward, former drill instructor were both there.

A sprightly Ripp celebrated his 80th birthday in December. An affable Dennis, now a senior citizen, kept us amused with his repartee and wit (many members of the 60 and 70 series entries may not recognise that description).

Paddy Nichols made his usual trip over from Ontario, Canada. A surprise face after forty-one years was Louie Salih (known in the past as Sally) from Sri Lanka, now living in North Wales.

With Anura Cooray (71st) and Duncan Perera (70th) attending the November Dinner dance prompts the comment, "suddenly there are a lot of them about". Weerasinge (who passed out with the 71st) must be out there somewhere.

In a break with tradition the next re-union will be in Bristol in September 1999.

The following statement is made slightly tongue in cheek. To date, owing to prior engagements, the 72nd Entry Passing-Out-Parade Reviewing Officer, HRH Princess Margaret has been unable to attend any re-unions. Perhaps next time?!

QUICK QUIZ

In 1957,
what was reckoned to be
The answer to
an airman's prayer?

Answer on page 11

THE FREEDOM OF ENTRY INTO WESTON-SUPER-MARE, by "P.P."

The following article is reproduced from the 1957 edition of The Locking Review

On October 12th, 1956, the "Freedom of Entry into Weston-Super-Mare" was conferred upon Royal Air Force, Locking. It is an honour which entitles the Station, amongst other things, to march through the Borough, "with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, colours flying, drums beating and bands playing." A stirring phrase, which quite rightly evokes a surge of martial splendour. Yet behind the gleam of sword and bayonet and the swirl of banner and flag, there lies a deeper meaning which, we at Locking, should always be mindful, as we were when the pageant was first enacted last October.

tion, "The Freedom of Entry to the Borough," was taking place in the Town Hall. The gathering included Dr. H. W. Bradfield, (Bishop of Bath and Wells), Air Marshall Sir George Beamish, (Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Technical Training Command), Sir Ian Orr-Ewing, M.P., the late Air Commodore R. Philipps, and Mr. H.J. Barclay, an Honorary Freeman. The Mayor of Weston, Mr. H. Holcombe, spoke of the distinct local nature and meaning of the Honour.

Alderman A. J. Heybryne proposed the resolution granting the Freedom of the Borough, having previously given an appreciation

"For one memorable day, Locking and Weston were brought together in all aspects of their various lives, ceremonies and social. Yet it was but a concentration of what is constantly happening; a perpetual intercourse between the civic and military communities."

A privilege, graciously given, demands a courteous and dignified acceptance; and so Locking was obliged to prepare carefully for her part of the ceremony. Reflexes for sword and rifle drill had to be sharpened; a formation ground and route had to be simulated on the station; music had to be rehearsed and applied to the Parade. The Parade Ground became the approach to Weston Railway-station where the Parade was to form; the Equipment Section and Gymnasium assumed temporary municipal grandeur, while the members of 'C' Squadron, Three Wing, perfected their sentinel stances from 3 Block to 2 Block. Thus prepared, did representatives of all Units from R.A.F. Locking journey to Weston-Super-Mare on a dull October morning.

While the parade was in progress of formation, the ceremony, conferring on the sta-

of the work of the No.1 Radio School. The resolution was seconded by Mrs M. J. Grey, the senior Councillor, who emphasised the relative youthfulness of the two communities and the value of the newly formed link between them. The Scroll, having been read and duly signed, was received on behalf of the Station, by the Officer Commanding, Group Captain D. N. K. Blair-Oliphant, O.B.E., who acknowledged the honour bestowed upon R.A.F. Locking and indicated how the present ceremony would foster the unity between the R.A.F. and the civilian population, which was necessary today if we were to preserve what we believed to be right, as it had been during the Battle of Britain. Flight Lieutenant J. Hobbs, escorted by two Sergeants, then conveyed the scroll to the assembled Parade for their inspection.

The route-lining Squadron, commanded by Squadron Leader B. J. Hooper, D.F.C., took up its position in front and to either side of the Town Hall, where the Mayor of Weston, flanked by various dignitaries, prepared to take the salute. The Parade, led by Wing Commander J. P. Adams, approached the saluting base as the Town Hall clock sounded noon. And the sun was shining.

No. 5 Regional Band, directed by Flying Officer Hutchinson, played the Parade past the Town Hall. The Queen's Colour for the Royal Air Force in the United Kingdom, was escorted by a Squadron from the permanent staff from Locking, commanded by Squadron Leader Fincher. No. 2 Squadron, was commanded by Squadron Leader Haddon, and No. 3 Squadron of Aircraft Apprentices by Squadron Leader Uprichard. The Apprentice Wing band was a centre of much attraction for the considerable crowd watching the procession, largely on account of the charm of its four-legged, non-playing, member. The Parade made its way by a circuitous route to Marine Parade, where it stood down in readiness for the return to Locking.

A luncheon in the Winter Gardens Pavilion followed for over four hundred representatives of Town and Station. Having wined and dined well, the guests were then entertained

to some excellent speeches. An after-luncheon speech on such an occasion, demands a degree of seriousness, leavened with a touch of humour; all the speakers blended their ingredients well. The Mayor proposed a toast to the R.A.F. to which Air Marshall Beamish responded; Group-Captain Blair-Oliphant proposed a toast to the Borough of Weston-Super-Mare to which Alderman R. W. Brown, the Deputy Mayor replied. The whole occasion was characterised by a pleasant informal dignity.

The more serious aspects of the day were now over. Cinemas were free; a fireworks display was organised for the evening, followed by a dance, at which the airmen were guests of the Borough. As always, Locking enjoyed the amenities to the full.

For one memorable day, Locking and Weston were brought together in all aspects of their various lives. ceremonious and social. Yet it was but a concentration of what is constantly happening; a perpetual intercourse between the Civic and military communities. The granting of the "Freedom of Entry" not only made us realise more fully the value of this association, but it also strengthened it immeasurably, giving it a new and mature quality.

We thank Weston and honour their trust.

(They don't write 'em like that any more!)



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"IMPERIAL"
SALES & SERVICE

44 BOULEVARD
WESTON-S-MARE

37 BALDWIN ST., BRISTOL

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Within YOUR reach — Two
models £26 to £29 10 0 complete
with carrying case. Credit sale

terms from £3 18 0 deposit and 8 monthly payments of £2 19 5.

Programme for the AGM and Re-union Weekend

- 6 June 1997** **8:00pm** **Friends meet in the Grand Atlantic Hotel.**
- 7 June 1997** **10:00am** **Freedom of Weston Parade.**
- 7 June 1997** **12:30pm** **Re-union commences in the Station Theater, 3(T) Block.**
- 13:00pm** **Bar open and refreshments available.**
- 14:30pm** **President presents the RAFLAA Trophy.**
- 14:35pm** **AGM commences.**
- 16:00pm** **AGM completed. Tea served.**
- 16:30pm** **Members disperse.**
- 7 June 1997** **7:00pm for 7:30pm Dinner Dance at Partyscene.**
- 8 June 1997** **Suggested Luncheon location: The Summer House, New Bristol Road, Worle. Tel (01934) 520011**
Conveniently located at the final roundabout before you reach the Motorway at Junction 21.
Booking is recommended.

Application for AGM Dinner Dance Tickets

Return to Mr. George Ring, 9 Milburn Road, Weston-super Mare, BS22 3BF

Venue: Dance and Partyscene, Whitecross Road, Weston-super-Mare.
Tel: 01934 627048

Date: 7 June 1997 Time: 7:00pm for 7:30pm Dress: Informal

AGM Dinner Dance tickets

Name		Entry	
Address			
No. of Tickets @ £12.50 each		I enclose payment of	