



Royal Air Force Locking Apprentice Association

Newsletter

Serial 20

Locking Closure Edition

August 1998

I Wonder . . .

Who could it be who acts so free,
Who fools about in endless spree,
Who couldn't care less for anyone,
Who frequently sings some low down song?

Who keeps sick people up at nights,
Who argues 'till you say he's right,
Who lays in bed when reveille sounds,
And often smokes when out of bounds?

Who polishes buttons and spits on boots,
And joins the Band of bull mad brutes,
Illegal creases and crew cut hair,
Yet when skiving comes, he'll do his share?

Who wears those shining slashed peak caps,
And doesn't like the NS chaps,
Who often chases N.A.F.F.I. girls,
The ones who don't have pinned up curls?

Who pays no attention in class each day,
Who hacks at desks in friendly play,
Who pushes in that N.A.F.F.I. queue,
Then passes the blame back onto you?

Who whips away to Worle Golf Club,
Then quietly slips to the Windsor pub,

Who whips wireless spares to sell in town,
Any thing for a gash half-crown?

Who goes special sick when its P.T. or drill
And says he's in pain or has a terrible chill,
When its CO's parade and it's all Best Blue,
Who hides in that field behind SSQ?

Who could it be that spends his time
on 'Jankers' parade for some silly crime,
Who jeers and shouts in the Astra at nights,
And is always fusing electric lights?

But being more serious, who can smile,
And have a joke when others writhe
and muck in together and share the rough
And prove he really is quite tough?

Who proves that Service spirit's great,
And is always prepared to help his mate,
And isn't really a bad bloke you know,
Well who is it?

An Apprentice

— I'm telling you so!

*(Reproduced from the 1957 edition of the
"Locking Review"; Author unknown)*



The Scroll Granting the Freedom of Entry into Weston-Super-Mare to Royal Air Force Locking

EDITORIAL

Well here it comes, the much heralded closure of RAF Locking.

To mark the occasion I have included some 'nostalgic' articles from past issues of the Locking Review which I hope will rekindle some memories for the more senior entries amongst us.

Actually it struck me that, although 'language fashions' change, over the years the apprentice system did not change all that much, as some of the articles illustrate.

After all the fuss has died down, what then? Well the News letter will continue, and we have some radical (for us at least) e.g. colour printing and better photo capability. More news next time, but lets enjoy the celebrations — see you there.

Federation of Apprentice and Boy Entrant Associations Meeting

by Charles Hart

This year the Chairmanship of the Meeting fell to 'Brats 192' otherwise known as the RAF Locking BE Association. John Luke, their Chairman hosted the meeting and quickly welcomed the other members.

This year saw the attendance of one more association; Jim Wilcox and Bill Huggins, Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the newly formed Administrative Apprentice Association were heartily welcomed. They represent all the apprentices of the post war Admin Apprentice scheme who were trained at places like Hereford and Bircham Newton; there were others units involved but are lost to memory. Also present for the second year were the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Polish Apprentice Association. Artur

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Committee Jottings

Because the next Committee meeting is not scheduled until after the printing date for this issue, there are no minutes to report this time. Charles Hart has stepped into the void again to bring us up to date on some of the ongoing activities.

Freedom Parade Notes

So that we all get there on the same day and at the same time, the parade is to commence at 11am on Wednesday 23 September 1998. RAF Locking's aim is to have 3 civilian flights (even though we have serving members); as well as one for the Locking Apprentices there will also be a Locking BE flight and one other for anyone who has served at Locking during their Service careers. The original requirement for a flight of 30 plus one has already been met but the SWO is hardly likely to turn away anyone who really wants to go on.

Those members wishing to take part in the parade are to arrive at the North end of the Winter Gardens at 10-30am. Ian Norris the SWO will be there to brief you and to allocate places on the flight.

Those wishing to view the ceremony and not take part are advised to be in position by 11am. Because it is a Royal event there will be increased security; street barriers; crowd control; a large police presence; road closures and, hopefully, a lot of people. So, to avoid frustration, it is recommended that you arrive earlier rather than later. Because the event is a civic responsibility there is unlikely to be any spectator seating.

The SWO will move the civilian flights to the front of the Winter Gardens immediately the road is closed. The uniformed flights will then be marched up afterwards.

The Royal Salute and fly-past will be at 11-30. The flights will then be marched past the saluting base. The uniformed flights will march off round the town behind the band; we shall be halted and dismissed near the

Cabot Hotel about 100yds along the road at approximately 11-40am. If you need to use the bar of the Cabot, please remember that the reunion and lunch commences at 12-30pm at Dance and Partyscene and the food will not last for ever.

Dress for those on parade we leave to personal choice. The preferred option is blazer and grey flannels or lounge suit, Association tie and miniature wheel (worn on left lapel). Medals are to be worn. Please feel free to enjoy yourselves.

Open day

The RAF Locking Open Day will commence at 8-45am (Yes. A quarter-to-nine!) on Thursday 24 September 1998. For those attending, cars are to be parked on the square before heading for the Roundel Club (100yds). Coffee will be available and the Station Commander, Group Captain Simon Rooms, will give a welcoming brief. This will be followed by a presentation on the role of the Station lasting around 40 minutes. There will then be a visit to the museum and a general walk about to any part of the training facility up to 12pm. Visitors are then invited back to the Roundel club where the bar will be open for goodbye drinks.

If you would like to go to this event you will have to obtain a visitors pass for yourself and your vehicle from the SWO.

A proforma is included to help you achieve this. Please remember when applying to enclose an stamped addressed envelope for your passes.

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Hangar Dance

The Hangar Dance commences at 7-30 pm in 3(T) Block on 24th September. It promises to be a very nostalgic affair featuring the big band sound in 'Squadronaires' style played by the Western Band of the Royal Air Force. Tickets are priced at £6-00 and this includes an excellent hot buffet. Other features include a parade of Standards from the RAFA and some tear jerking last night at the proms 'Land of Hope and Glory' stuff at the end.

Tickets are available from the SWO and you can use the same proforma supplied for the open day. The same passes cover both events.

President to attend HRH Luncheon

A civic reception will follow the Parade and a formal Royal Luncheon is to be held. Our President, Martin Palmer has been invited along with wife Gilly.

Flowerdown House Presentation

Our presentation to Flowerdown House explaining the reason for its name has now been installed. It has turned out rather massively to fit with the area of wall on which it is mounted. Hopefully, a photograph of the picture will be included in the next Newsletter.

'Over and Out'

As part of the commemorative closure of RAF Locking, the Unit has produced a light-hearted history of its 60 years of existence and it is a very good informative and amusing read. The quality printed paperback consists of many anecdotal tales by people who have served there over the years; some, in fact, written by our own members. The text is supported by cartoons and photographs and is competitively priced at £12.95.

The book can be ordered by post from the

SWO, Ian Norris, in which case the all-in cost is £14.90. The history will also be on sale at the open day.

Cenotaph Parade

It was agreed by all Associations at the FAEBA meeting (see page 2) to air the matter of participating in the Remembrance Day Parade in our respective newsletters. The aim is to gauge what the response would be if were to organise a App/BE section in future years. It would be an opportunity to enjoy a long weekend in London with a real purpose for being there. The numbers of WW11 participants is now reducing fast and the Royal British Legion is having to put in extra effort each year to maintain a viable parade. Organisations such as years. If you have a view on Remembrance please write and let us know your thoughts.

Another Bob's Filler

A visitor to Ireland was driving through the country side one day when he discovered that he had a slow puncture. Stopping outside a seemingly deserted country garage, the chap looked for around for a pump. A man came out from the pub across the road and asked if he could help.

The car driver asked "Do you have an airline around here please?"

The man thought carefully, "No we don't Sorr, but there's a bus which comes by twice a day".

When I have a gash space to fill, I resort to some "fillers" sent in by Bob Storey (99th). If you can't stand them give me something else to fill up all spaces!!

The Free From Infection Inspection

Mass medication of yesteryear

by Mike Fiske (71st)

This might not seem a serious tale, but for those concerned, it was at the time. It is a true story of Royal Air Force en-mass Preventative Medicine as practiced many years ago. In an age gone by it would not have been permitted to write such thing on a public stage – for it may have been considered rude cheeky or even an Official Secret . . .

The Free From Infection inspection (FFI) — which should not to be confused with IFF, an airborne Radar Set designed to let the radar people know you were not an enemy raider — was intended to ensure that young gentlemen, returning from long leave had not contracted any of the sexually transmitted diseases generally known in the service as ‘a dose’ or ‘the clap’. In the Royal Air Force catching ‘a dose’ (like getting sunburnt), was considered a self inflicted injuries for which you could be charged and punished, as well as getting your lower bits covered in gentian violet.

I was just sweet sixteen and a half, with my first long summer leave just over when I experienced my first FFI.

We had returned to our billets after a morning of DC theory and Magnetism and were expecting to go for dinner. (Erks or lower grade airmen did not have lunch - it was dinner).

In comes our beloved drill instructor and mentor, Corporal Dennis Ward.

“Stand By Your Beds! FFI.” Yet another parade order!

There was a wicked glint in his eye which could only mean humiliation for us erks. The sort that an Alaskan venomous boa constrictor would have – if you know what I mean!

“When the MO (Medical Officer) is inspecting the man on your right you will come to relaxed attention, drop your trousers and underpants and remain at relaxed attention.”

Relaxed attention?

“When the MO has finished, you will redress and stand at ease. GOT THAT?” he barked.

The MO then entered the hut accompanied by a big black labrador dog and followed by his Flight Sergeant medical man, his Cpl Medical Clerk, the Officer I/C our Flight and the Flight Sergeant Discipline. Cpl Ward stood by with mandatory note book.

The MO’s equipment was very basic — a twelve inch boxwood ruler. He used this to lift up a long shirt or vest — or used it to move and inspect the necessary organ. He looked as bored as a meat inspector on the production line in the Harris sausage factory in Wiltshire.

Then followed a short lecture on the perils of going out with wayward women — not wayward men you notice!

Now when you are being inspected by a long line of people in authority — and a bloody big black eyed, friendly, sniffing, tongue licking labrador dog but inches away from your ‘Future Action Plan’, well you have a right to be nervous folks.

How the Cpl enjoyed himself as 40 Aircraft Apprentices got an intimate inspection of the goolies in full public view.

For one, there was ridicule. I cannot remember who it was, but he had white, non standard jockey shorts with a little personalised bird on a strategic front access panel. He became know as ‘Quacker’, for a while.

Apprenticeship in the RAF

Starting a Career Second to None

For boys under military age. i.e. from 15 1/2 to 17 years, vacancies for apprentices in the R.A.F. (regular force) are available from time to time. Here are details.

Aircraft Apprenticeship in the Royal Air Force is the first and most important step in a career which has been proved second to none.

Almost every boy is sufficiently a man to realise that truth, and any youngster with a fair record of school work to his credit need not despair of piloting an aircraft or helping by means of his acquired trade to keep that same aircraft in the air as evidence of Britain's supremacy in aviation and craftsmanship.

Boys have no need to be told such things, but parents sometimes require reminding of this splendid alternative to a black coat and bowler hat for the son who is about to start life away from his immediate family circle or school.

Medical attention, good and plentiful food, clothing, general welfare, liberal leave, and adequate pocket money are all given to the boy whose parents have decided that he shall also be given highly skilled and continuous instruction until he becomes equally skilled in one of the many trades which are necessary to the maintenance of the Royal Air Force.

Fitters, Armourers, Electricians, Wireless Operator Mechanics, and Instrument Makers are mentioned,

among others, as callings for the boy who has received as sufficiently good education as will enable him to profit by his training after entry at no less an age than 15 1/2 years.

There are two methods of entry

- (a) Success in a competitive examination.
- (b) Direct Entry.

Those applying under the second heading must produce School Certificate showing "credit" standard in mathematics and an approved sci-

ence subject.

The Entrance examination must usually be undertaken 12 weeks before

the month of actual entry and candidate must not have attained 17 years on the first day of the month of entry. The normal number of entries has had to be reduced, but it is anticipated that there will be an entry in August, 1941, and that thereafter in both February and August each year.

Space does not permit of the inclusion of all conditions and circumstances which are likely to govern a boy's life before and after successful candidature; such are widely embraced in Air Ministry Pamphlet No 15 issued gratis from the Air Ministry. A few extracts of general interest are given below. Changes are liable to occur and they are to be considered subject to the detailed regulations issued from time to time by the Air Council.

What the Service Offers

1 The Royal Air Force aircraft apprentice scheme provides educational and technical training for boys aged 15 1/2 to 17 1/2 years at entry with a view to their becoming skilled tradesmen in the service. Aircraft apprentices receive pay and free food, housing, clothing and medical attendance.

2 The trades open to aircraft apprentices are:

- (i) Fitter, (ii) Fitter (armourer), (iii) Wireless operator mechanic, (iv) Electrician, and (v) Instrument maker.

3 the period of apprenticeship is normally two years, but general and technical education continue throughout service life.

4. An aircraft apprentice on joining is attested

for a period covering his apprenticeship and twelve years' regular service from the age of 18, that is, from the date of joining until he reaches the age of 30.

5. On attaining the age of 27 all airmen may be selected to re-engaged from the age of 30 to the age of 42 ; if re- engaged he becomes eligible for pension.

6 The health and general welfare of aircraft apprentices receive careful and continuous attention. Special attention is paid to games and outdoor exercise and to suitable employment leisure time.

7 Apprentices are accommodated separately from men.

8 Towards the end of his training the apprentice will be examined , and if successful will be posted for duty in his trade. After posting, provided he has attained the age of seventeen and a half, he will be granted the classification of Leading Aircraftman (L.A.C.) or Aircraftmen 1st class (A.C.I) or Aircraft 2nd class (A.C.II) according to his passing out marks

9 After his classification an airman is eligible for promotion to non commissioned rank when a vacancy occurs. An ex-apprentice airman who volunteered before passing out to be trained as an airman pilot may later be selected for that training.

10. Apprentices may be granted leave for approximately 6 weeks in the year, and during leave will receive pay and an allowance in lieu of rations. For the two main leave periods free return railway tickets are supplied, and for shorter leave periods half-price tickets.

Entry Abroad

In a country where there is an R.A.F Command sons of British residents, Including Service personnel, may apply to the Air or other Officer Commanding for a nomination to an apprenticeship.

Experts at the Air Ministry are very ready both to advise and direct parents, guardians and

school teachers, who are prompted to discover a career for boys whose spirit and character render them deserving of every help to approach the future in the right way, time and place.

All sounds a bit familiar, but not quite what we experienced? That's probably because this article appeared in an old RAF Benevolent Fund publication circa 1941, entitled "The Royal Air Force as it is Today", The article included some photographs of Apprentices studying in a "well stocked library" as well as apprentices working on various bits of aircraft equipment. Unfortunately the photo copy of the photos wouldn't reproduce. Many thanks to Robin White (86th) for sending in the article..

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Rynkyewicz their Vice Chairman an ex-Cranwell apprentice we had met before. This time he was accompanied by the Chairman, Eugene Borysiuk, ex Halton.

Items discussed this year were the ratification of the Federation's Articles of Association kindly produced by the Cranwell Association, the wash up of the St Clement Danes Memorial Stone - within budget and on time despite a little administrative error by the stone mason - and some discussion on a proposal to hold an annual social event. Recruitment of other Apprentice and Boy Entrant Associations was also talked about and information on the Cenotaph Remembrance Parade was outlined.

The 'administrative error' referred to was one of those classic cock-ups so beloved by apprentices! Apparently it wasn't until the stone was firmly embedded in the pavement that some bright spark pointed out that it referred to the Royal Airforce rather than Royal Air Force! So it was back to the drawing board for the hapless stone mason.

Apps in Training

by Brian (Dai) Davies (76th)

One of the good things on being posted back to Locking as a corporal instructor, just two years after passing out of the apprentices, was that scams and schemes by pupils were seen through fairly easily.

I was posted as a Ground Wireless instructor in January 1959, and soon found myself teaching airmen fitters, mechanics and post grad students. The cream on the pudding was when I got my first apprentice class.

It as an achievement, other instructors said, to teach them I found that my apprentice training gave me a head remember that we were often the scourge of our

One essential each apprentice class thought, was to get to lunch a shade earlier than the others to miss the queuing. Its amazing how the threat to hold the class back for five minutes at lunch time focuses their attention on the work in hand. Unofficial threats to them I know, but it worked very well.

A singular lack of trust of App students actually saved the life of one small blonde lad. I was teaching a 93rd entry class the HS series of HF transmitters, and these brutes have doors on the power units for entry to service them.

The air blowers make quite a bit of noise, so as I took the class through some tuning points at the front I noticed a certain amount of shiftiness in the class. Not trusting Apps from experience, I stopped running up the 4kW transmitter and checked the inside from the rear.

Inside sat on the large 6000 volts 3-phase transformer, on the exposed terminals was the little blonde lad named MacPherson. had been forced by his compatriots to sit there because the instructor (me) said so, he later said. I immediately threw the emergency earth breaker and saved him going up in smoke. Apprentice jokes did sometimes get out of hand.

That little blonde lad later became one of my sergeants when I was a Chief Tech. in Singapore, and never realised how close a call he had that day.

BRANDED AN FT

Also by Brian (Dai) Davies. This time of 76/77th Entries! Read on ...

From joining the RAF as a member of aircraft apprentice entry number 76 on the 20th January 1954, I had come to accept the privations and brutality of life as a junior entry at No 1 Radio School.

The cooking wasn't like Mum's and I had never had whale meat or tinned cabbage with

meat stew before, and the grotesquely rough uniform was surely designed to permanently mutilate the body's tender bits. But strangely I was getting to like it. My friends at home said they always thought I was a potential masochist.

I had chosen the RAF against becoming an

apprentice at the Bristol Aeroplane works at Filton, and life moved at a mysterious and educational pace as I learnt about electrons and how to file bits of compo at an angle when it was supposed to be flat (sorry Mr. Pearson), and how to march in a straight line. I also was again taught the wonders of Maths and English and the history and workings of the Royal Air Force - now that last bit WAS interesting.

Then came the crunch as I approached the end of my second year. Like others I had fallen foul of those unfeeling and disbelieving people called Medical Officers at Locking's SSQ of that time. "Take these two tablets and you will be OK - next one!" I, like others was quite sure they were leftovers from the Third Reich torture camps and not 'real' doctors.

I'm sure it was not the scrumpy or other illegal drinks quaffed in a hurry in a WSM pub back room, but anyway I developed a terrific pain in the lower back which would not go away and forced me to report sick. After two visits and each time coming away clutching my Codeine tablets, the rather bored MO decided he had enough of this and slung me into bed for observation and treatment.

A week later, I was still in pain and they were no wiser. This went on for a further two weeks then the pain disappeared as quickly as it came. This was a relief to the Doc's as my affliction was obviously beyond their knowledge, so I was sent back to work, no follow up and seemingly no further care.

Its amazing how much tech. one missed in three weeks. I had always been in the middle of the classes in achievement, but suddenly my results dropped through the floor.

Very quickly I was summoned to the Educational HQ and told by three senior officers that I would have to be put back for further training. Doom. Gloom. Despondency. I didn't exactly get on my knees to plead for clemency - but offering to work long and hard to catch up with my classmates.

No go. Sentence was passed that I must catch up with my missed work and as the pace was so fast (???) I must go to the 77th Entry for the dreaded Further training if I had any hope to Pass Out at the end of my apprenticeship.

The 76th entry was a special entry and they definitely thought so themselves. Arrogant the other entries called them, but they had an extreme overdose of that fabled 'entry spirit' which although causing 'them in charge' and senior entries problems, made life in the entry more than bearable. Then and later as an instructor at Locking for nearly four years, I could see that they were definitely unusual and I would miss the esprit de corps.

Life in the 77th started in a hut near the Squadron Office. It was full of apparent 'misfits' like me who had been FT'd and they were from the 76th, 75th and even the 74th entries. At least half disappeared over the next few months to become SACs, Boy Entrants or civilians, while the rest of us lost more Tech. training time while waiting to be reclassified.

At first we were not welcome in our new entry and life for a month or so became quite miserable as we felt we were the great 'unloved'. The 77th was a smallish entry and soon we were as one with them and they proved a good crowd. The really good bit was that much of the work I did at Tech. was for the second time for me and my class marks were rather astounding for a considerable number of months.

However, those three senior Ed. officers were quite wrong. I covered very little of the work in class that I missed by being in SSQ, having to do it by extra out of hours work. Just think, I could still have passed out with the 76th and got all that extra J/T's money four months earlier.

Incidentally, that same pain came back twenty years later and proved to be a bladder stone, which was removed with one days stay in hospital.

Ah, progress.

From Snakes to Sabres by Dave Croft (98th)

As a preamble to the title of this contribution, membership of the Association and also of the RAF Seletar and Butterworth and Penang Associations prompted me to search out long hidden paraphernalia relating to these formative years. I was in luck, a note book compiled by me on Malaysian sea snakes, a blowpipe from Borneo, kukhri, black Chinese umbrella, snake skins (skinned and cured by yours truly), 1950's issue jungle green shirts and some photographs of Locking days saw day light for the first time in years. The photographs included a series of six taken at different angles of the 'Spit on a stick' as it was being lowered on to the plinth. Also included was a summer camp picture of denim clad Apps playing cards and a room bulling mob posing on a mirror finish floor of one of the old wooden huts.

The notebook, plus the snake skins reminded me of sub-aqua visits along the reefs of Singapore where we attempted to catch (sometimes with success) swimming sea snakes for the Van Kieef Aquarium. Naturally such visits were always linked to occurrences and adventures in their own rights such as the time at a diving club social held at the Seletar swimming pool where a popular member (the name escapes me, but he was called 'Brummie') visited the gents and zipped up his trousers far too quickly then was good for him. In pouring rain four of us provided an umbrella escort to the sick bay, leaving the poolside to the tune of 'Zippedy doo-dar, zippedy day' courtesy of the wives. On another occasion four of us accompanied a young WRAF officer on her first open water dive. On finishing the dive it was normal practice to switch over to snorkels, unbuckle weight belts and air bottle harnesses and pass them to the boat whilst treading water. Being gentlemen we invited our WRAF member to pas her gear up first

which was fine until she passed up the air bottle harness. Somehow during the dive her bikini top had become unfastened and entangled in the harness and when she offered up the equipment to the boat there it was for all to see. As I said we were all gentlemen and to avoid embarrassment to her we reverted to air bottles and gently sank below the surface until the situation could be sorted out.

During my time at Butterworth snakes were to play a major role in my life. The site was fairly well littered with cobras and these were usually 'chopped' by the grass cutters scythes. From a previous member of the squadron I learnt there was a need for cobra venom at the hospital in Georgetown so I set about to collect the snakes....alive!

The grass cutters were eventually persuaded to not kill the snakes but to let me capture them. This was the easy part as snake loops and large bins were used. However transfer to a more transportable cardboard box was more difficult, especially when the Flight Sergeant thought I was certifiable and, initially, would not let me use the servicing bay for the job. The boxes containing the snakes were well secured and labelled in Malay to the effect that the occupants were poisonous. This did not stop the ever curious Chinese on the Straits ferries eventually gathering around and attempting to put their fingers in the air holes. After an angry snake had made its presence felt they would usually settle down...at a safe distance! After disrupting the Georgetown public transport system on what was becoming my frequent visits to the hospital, the squadron kindly put a Land Rover and driver at my disposal. On reflection many years later it is easy to see how tolerant my squadron bosses were, it would have been much easier for them to have banned the whole enterprise from the start.

Needless to say every unit has a know all and 33 Squadron was no exception. One 'expert' (whose interest in the snakes was always from a vast distance) proclaimed to all and sundry that a cobra could only inject poison once and after that it was harmless until the venom sac had refilled. What a load of cobras!!!

A healthy adult snake was soon acquired and for safety reasons (and the proclaimed 'experts') was tipped into the tyre bay cage where I proceeded to upset it with a LONG HANDLED broom. Seven 'doses' of venom were released on the broom before the snake 'dried up' Naturally this made us all much more wary of these creatures especially me as I thought the 'expert' to be right at first, but you don't let on do you?

Where do the Sabres come into the story ? Butterworth was an Australian Air Force base and at the time the RAAF were replacing their ageing Sabres with the Mirage III. I was fortunate to be able to see both aircraft in use whilst hard at work running the gauntlet of Gen. Fitts. using their grease guns as short range weapons on us poor radar fitters. Your average [which means all~ general fitter always appeared to be a coarse unsophisticated chap, always covered in thick grease who would rudely refer to us a 'fairies' and then proceed to fire grease guns at us. Perhaps they missed out on our intellectual conversations in the crew room as we understood words of more than one syllable! However back to the Sabres. One fine day an Aussie pilot flying his Sabre at some 20, 000 feet over the sea decided to leave his aircraft in a hurry and elect to be successfully rescued by RAF Air Sea rescue. This event made the news in the English printed national newspaper, The Straits Times, as "the pilot ejaculated successfully at 20, 000 feet" what some people will do for thrills!

Finally may I make some requests ? Is anyone able to loan or let me have a 'sparks' badge ?

If one is loaned it will be returned almost straight away after being measured for an embroidery pattern (for my wife). Also does anyone have photographs of Radars Types 80, FPS 6, 86 and 87 and Bloodhound Mk II missiles that I can borrow and copy for personal use only ? If there is a possibility someone may be willing to help (and I realise not every one will want to 'loan' photographs) I can discuss it further over the telephone 01262 - 677520

or by E-mail DMCrof~20@aol.com, or by letter!

ers..Letters..L

I joined the Association last year and was pleased to receive the list of members, although disappointed to see hardly any 81st Entry and also very few C Squadron (75 & 78) names.

Two of the 75th I remember from the list were Alex Gumbrecht and particularly "Chip" Rafferty who's younger brother was in my hut. I wonder how he is doing now.

Of many memories of Locking during that period, one that comes to mind is the Freedom of Weston Parade, as at the time I was a member of the Band, and SAA Alex Hay (75th) was the Drum Major.

For the last two years I have played golf for RAF Cranwell ex-Apps in the annual match against Halton ex-Apps. I was roped into this by Sqn. Ldr. Ben James (56th) on the basis of the links with Locking. The Cranwell team is somewhat short of numbers and Locking golfers would be most welcome. Any one interested should contact Wing Commander Alex Lax MBE, 15 Mead Close, Marlow, Bucks SL 1HR.

The next match will be in May 1999 at Henley Golf Club

Peter Tanner (81st)

RAFLAA 1998 Reunion and AGM Programme

The following programme has been approved for the 1998 Reunion and AGM

- | | | |
|--------------|---------|---|
| 22 September | 4:00pm | Rehearsal and Brief for members taking part in the Freedom of Weston Parade (if require). |
| 22 September | 8:00pm | Informal meet and Greet, Grand Atlantic Bar. |
| 23 September | 11:00am | Final Freedom of Weston Parade Royal salute and fly past 11:30am. |
| 23 September | 12:00pm | Annual General Meeting at Dance & Partyscene, Whitecross Road, Weston. |

The AGM programme is as follows:

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|---|
| | 11:45 | Members start to arrive at Dance & Partyscene. |
| | 12:30 | Buffet lunch and Bar available. |
| | 14:30 | AGM commences / facilities closed down. |
| | 16:00 | AGM complete, Tea served. |
| | 16:30 | Members disperse. |
| 23 September | 7:30 for 8pm | Dinner Dance at Dance & Partyscene.
Tickets £12-50 by application. |
| 24 September | 10:00am to
12:30pm | Final visit to RAF Locking Training facility. |
| 24 September | 8:00pm | Hanger Dance at RAF Locking. |

Please send contributions for publication to:

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