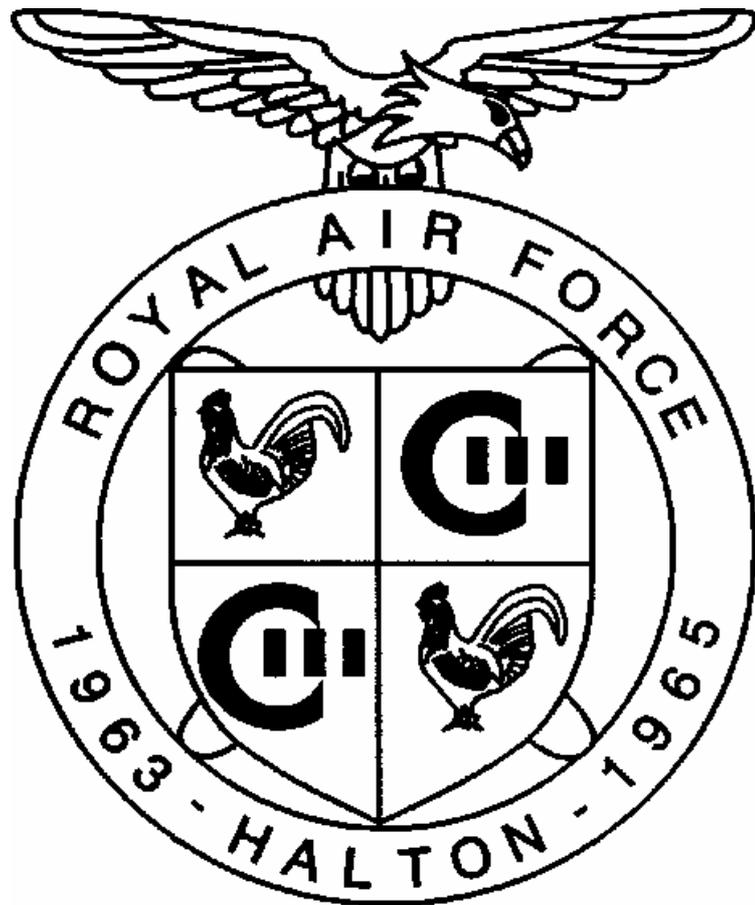


103rdEntry Association

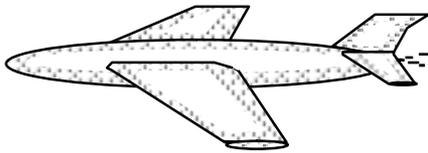
Newsletter



No. 9

March 1994

Editor: C. J. Wales



Editorial

Another 6 months have passed since the last newsletter, and another 17 months to go until our 30th Anniversary Reunion. Suggestions for the venue currently range from the Halton area, Cosford or Beverly. As can be seen from our latest Committee minutes, work is about to start in earnest to finalise arrangements. Nick Smith has confirmed that our finances are in good shape to provide a subsidy for the big event. It has been suggested that priority assistance should be given to helping our unemployed. You may wish to direct your comments to the Committee.

The positive response that one gets when seeking a few written words from members is amazing. However, converting promises into action appears to be more difficult. My thanks go to Ken Bannister and Colin Frame for their contributions to the newsletter, plus of course Les Garden, without whom this pile of prose would not be the same. I am often asked: "You don't really want to read my boring life story, do you?". My reply tends to be that while this may be true, there are many people that do, especially if an effort is made to throw in some humour! So let's have more contributions, PLEASE.

We live in turbulent times. Those of us who are still in the RAF are now suffering as much as our civilian counterparts. Redundancies loom, and nobody appears immune. There is a feeling that if they don't get you this time, they will next time around. Looking back over the years, it is amazing that some of us have been 'in the bracket' for almost 19 years. However, this time yours truly has been given the nudge and will become a civilian before the year is out. Flowers and sympathy not required!

My personal belief is that there is much more that the Service could cut, and radical solutions are called for. Looking at the number of front-line squadrons we now have compared with 30 years ago, do we still need the same rank structure that historically existed? The management pyramid seems to be increasing it's gradient as the base gets smaller. I, for one will be watching with interest.

More on the 155th Entry Graduation

Thursday 24 June 1993 saw the last entry of Aircraft Apprentices to pass out from Halton. Accompanied by Les Shardlow and his wife, Judy, I returned to watch this final act at Halton. For once the weather was kind and approximately 7-800 ex-brats made their way up the hill to the parade ground.

Because there was no following entries to provide the Support Squadron it was left to trainees and permanent staff to man No 1 Support Squadron. No 2 Support Squadron was manned by serving ex-apprentices commanded by an Air Commodore with two Group Captains as flight commanders, all taking orders from a 20 year old sergeant apprentice!

Music was provided by the Entry Band and the Halton Pipe Band, sadly depleted from what we remember. Reviewing officer was the Duke of Gloucester.

During the parade various fly-pasts took place with the Red Arrows appearing as the Royal Salute was taken at the start of the parade. This was followed by Harriers, VC10 and a four-ship formation of Hercules just prior to the final march-past. The conduct of the Parade Commander was excellent and no one appeared to put a foot wrong, although one man did do a Dowdeswell. (Sorry Bill)

Afterwards light refreshments were provided in the Wing Mess. This was a nostalgic reunion with the Halton sandwich, which, after all these years still tastes the same and was probably found during a clean-out.

Seriously, it was a sad occasion knowing that a scheme of excellence has suffered the fate of many others due to a bean counters whim.

However, the spies report that the decision may not yet be cast in concrete.

LG

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A Letter from Ken Bannister

Well, I promised 'The Committee' I would write an update for the newsletter as soon as I had settled in so here goes.

Things have changed a bit since the last article when I called myself "Your Northern/Scottish Representative" - I am now living and working in the Middle East!! How did this come about I hear you ask? All right then, I'll tell you!

In February '93, an advert appeared in Flight International. A new Pilot Training College was being opened in Doha, Qatar (84 nms SE of RAF Muharraq/Bahrain) the first course would start training in November '93. Applications were invited for the posts of flying instructor, ground instructor, engineer etc.

At Air Service Training where I worked as a Technical Lecturer, things were very quiet - in fact, all the training schools in the UK were chasing too few potential students. So, in for a penny, in for a pound - I applied for the job. To cut a long story short, I was successful and was offered the one position of Technical Ground Instructor. NB Of the five final applicants for the Technical Lecturer position, three were ex-Halton.

My wife and I arrived here on 6 October '93 for a 3 year tour. We are living in a 7 bed roomed villa right behind a mosque (no alarm clock needed). The villa is a bit large just for the two of us but it means we have space for visitors.

Consumer goods are not a problem - everything you need is available but electrical goods are a little more expensive so you need to shop around. Petrol - as you might expect - is a bit cheaper! £5 will fill the 60 litre tank on my Subaru Legacy 1.8. I bought the car new at a cost of £8000. Food is cheap and there are plenty of restaurants to choose from, so eating out is not a problem. However, being a Muslim country - no ALCOHOL! To obtain alcohol you need a residents permit and a liquor permit. I got both just in time for Christmas.

We are looking forward to our first course of Gulf Air students. The college has been set up from scratch and I must admit, it was nice being in on a project from the start. Apart from the standard classroom equipment, the college has 3 Piper Archer II aircraft for basic and instrument flying and 2 Piper Seneca III aircraft for the twin

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engine/instrument rating phase. There is also a Frasca simulator for each aircraft type. All in all - a good set up!!

So, if you are in the area and fancy a beer and somewhere to stay - give me a call. My new address is:

CIVIL AVIATION COLLEGE (Gulf states)
PILOT TRAINING DIVISION
PO BOX 4050
DOHA
QATAR
Tel: (0974) 329100/1/2, Fax : (0974) 329103

Another Letter to the Editor

First of all, a big 'Thank you' to yourself and the rest of the committee for all your hard work in producing the Newsletters!

Every time my copy arrives, I read it with interest and think, "I must send off my blurb about what happened after leaving Halton". The Newsletter then gets filed/tidied away in a drawer and it goes out of my head - a common event these days with the passing of the years!

This time however, I have taken the bull by the horns and, spurred on your plaintive cry of not having much news, produced the attached. Please feel free to publish it if you're REALLY short of news!!

I'm afraid that I will not be able to attend the reunion in October due, yet again, to prior commitments. Will you please stop having them when I when I'm away on company business! I promise that I really will get to one of the get-togethers sometime!

I still keep in touch with Bob Mawson and see Bob Proctor from time to time at Warton.

I hope that this is of use/interest - keep up the good work!!

Very Best Regards Colin Frame

Whatever happened to Colin S Frame Y0688601 ? (20)

For those who are interested, read on:-

1966 Jan From Halton went to RAF Chivenor North Devon, routine servicing on Hunters. OK, but it got a bit boring.

- Apr Moved to 1st Line servicing which was very enjoyable.
- Oct Had another 'falling down' do, moved to servicing ground equipment. Definitely NOT the most exciting job in the world! Applied to a number of universities and accepted by Loughborough University of Technology - silly them!.
- 1967 Jan Medically discharged from the RAF. Went to live with parents in Cornwall.
- May Got a temporary job in a hotel (running the bar, what else!!).
- Aug Met a fanciable young guest called Jane - spent two weeks being a "Smooth Talking Bar-steward".
- Oct Set off to the world of Academia. University is a fountain of knowledge where students go to drink - I drank deeply!!
- 1971 Jun Presented with B.Tech (Hons) in Aeronautical Engineering. The fools hadn't twigged me in 4 years!
- Aug Started work at BAC (now BAe) Warton, Lancs as a Stress Engineer. Mainly Canberra then some MRCA (Tomado) IDS and early ADV.
- 1972 Aug Married Jane, now a qualified teacher.
- 1976 May Loaned to the (then) small Composites Section for a period of up to, but not exceeding, 12 months.
- (For 17 years life for Jane & Colin was exceedingly boring - Ed)*
- 1993 Sept Still in the Composites Group! One of these days might get to understand this funny black stuff!

Still happily married to Jane. (She told me to put that!).

Colin Frame

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Book Review

Halton and the Apprentice Scheme

by Bill Taylor, Published by Midland Publishing
 £9.95 ISBN 1-85780-015-x

This is written by an ex-apprentice for other ex-apprentices. It gives a brief history of Halton and the Apprentice scheme coupled with a series of pictures of life at Halton from 1913 to the present day. It is also a photographic record of the aircraft used for training from Snipes to Harriers.

Members of both Pipe and Brass bands will recognise themselves in a picture from the Lord Mayors Show of 1965. This is the only picture where members of the entry can be seen, unfortunately there is no mention of entry numbers.

I would recommend that the book be read either by buying direct from the publisher or by borrowing somebody else's. The author is planning to produce a definitive history of Halton Apprentices in the near future so if anyone wants to contribute please send it via RAFHAAA at Halton. I hope that he has more success than MHFW getting contributions for this!

LG



The RAF Museum Exhibit

As foreshadowed in the January Newsletter, work is under way on putting together the special exhibit at the RAF Museum, Hendon, to commemorate 73 years of Aircraft Apprentice training and the unique contribution Ex-Apprentices have made to the Service and the

Nation. The theme of the exhibit will be "Apprentice Life", covering the barrack room, ceremonial, physical fitness and training through the years together with an indication it could be no more! of the achievements of Ex-Apprentices. It is hoped that the Exhibit will be formally opened in late October, just after the last Apprentices graduate from Cosford. Your Association, together with the Cranwell and Ruislip Associations, is giving the Project its full support but we still need your contributions.

The Exhibit will cost around £10,000 to mount. The Museum can find about half of this and about £1500 will come from sales of the 70th Anniversary Plate, generously donated by David Taylor, who organised that very successful project. That leaves about £3,500 to be found by the Associations, of which ours is of course by far the largest, and the Council has agreed to make a substantial contribution from Association funds. However, with reduced interest rates we need every penny of our investments to provide the income that keeps the Association going. Will you help fund this worthwhile project by making a specific donation? Please send your cheque to Secretary Alan Small, payable to the RAFHAAA, with a note saying it is for the Museum Project.

To complete the exhibit the Museum desperately needs a Macdonald bed and biscuits! Does anyone know where they could be found? We have heard that they were in use at St Athan in the 1950s, that they are still possibly used by the Army and that some are on display in a restored Fort in Canada. If you know where we could lay our hands on either or both, to buy or borrow, please let RAFHAAA Secretary Alan Small know ASAP.

Treasurer's Report - 17th September 1993

The drive to get members to take advantage of the Bankers Order option has been very successful, there are only 6 members who have not taken up this option and 5 of them still have not paid! Reminder letters are about to be sent to them.

As of the above date, the Association has fifty three members. However as already mentioned, five have still to pay their subscription for the coming year.

Since our last committee meeting we have recruited one new member, Chris Bayes. Unfortunately, the recruitment of just one new member does not offset the potential loss of five. Hopefully they can be persuaded to part with a fiver.

At present our bank accounts stand as follows:

Current Account:	£101.94
Savings Account:	£759.23
Total:	£861.17

Although recruitment letters were sent off to the Malaysians quite some time ago, so far I have had nothing in reply.

Minutes of Committee Meeting held at Procon

Electronics - 11th December 1993 @1100hrs

Present: L Shardlow, J Dillon, M Watts, N Smith, B Neal, J Bromley, L Garden

Apologies: C Wales

1. Treasurers report: NS reported that 5 members had failed to renew their subscriptions. Payment by standing order had proved to be a very painless way of collecting the monies and NS/MW to include errant payers in a special effort in the next newsletter to get these members back in the fold.

2. Chairman reported that John Carhart had been in UK on business and had intended to attend the meeting but had been called back home for a business meeting.

3. Reunion 95 is looming closer and work will start at next meeting to start the planning effort. We have already had some suggestions as to venue and would like more input from the membership .

4. Next meeting 5th March 1994 @ 1100.

L G

Minutes of Committee Meeting held at Procon

Electronics - 5th March 1994 @1100hrs

Present: L Shardlow, J Dillon, M Watts, N Smith, B Neal, J Bromley, C Wales, L Garden.

1. Treasurer's Report: As of Jan '94 the deposit account stands at £766. Current account stands

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at £158. We now have a 'Treasurer's Account' on which we pay no charges.

2. Membership: We now appear to have a stable membership; however, with the forthcoming reunion in '95, we need to 'encourage' more of the Entry to join. All members are requested to make extra efforts to recruit.

3. Reunion '95: We have just over 18 months to our next reunion and we require a venue. There is no requirement to stay in the Halton area and committee members are to look at the following options:

- a. Hotels capable of hosting 100 guests.
- b. 'Village Hall' capable of same.
- c. Mess (Officers'/Sgts) capable of same.
- d. Costs from caterers.
- e. Accommodation.

Reminder that Reunion is planned for 28 Oct '95 @ 1930hrs, location TBD.

As these minutes are published in the newsletter, would all members who know of any venue which is suitable please contact myself, or any committee member. I can be contacted on: 0276 31397 (home - answerphone) or 0753 683245 ext 255 (work) or 0753 685040 (fax).

4. AGM: The AGM is to be held at Procon Electronics on 19 Jun '94 following the Committee Meeting @ 1030hrs.

5. AOB:

- a. CW put forward the idea for an Entry sweatshirt. NS to investigate costs.
- b. Would the person who 'borrowed' my set of pictures of Reunion '90 please contact me to arrange return.

LG

103rd Entry Association - AGM Agenda

1. Minutes of Last Meeting.
2. Election of Committee nominations/resignations).
3. Financial statement.
4. Membership statement.
5. AOB.

AGM to be held at Procon Electronics 19 Jun '94 @ 1100hrs, beer and sandwiches provided.



Changes of Address

Barry Neal
6 Grice Avenue, Biggin Hill, Westerham, Kent.
TN16 3EW - Tel: 0959-574465

Kevin Dillon
4 Cromarty View, Nairn, Morayshire, Scotland.

Procon Electronics
Chiltern House, Thame Road, Haddenham,
Bucks. HP17 8BY - Tel: 0844-292200 Fax: 0844-292495

and just in case you missed it in the last newsletter:

Malcolm Watts
Abbotsbury, 162 Main Road, Naphill, High
Wycombe, Bucks. HP14 4RU - Tel: 0494-563381

And finally:

Don't forget to send your newsletter contributions to the editor at his new address above.

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