



## 103<sup>rd</sup> Entry Association

# Newsletter

Issue 28  
January 2008



Battle of Britain  
Memorial Flight

## Editor's comments & Editorial

### Hello Readers,

**Happy New Year to you all.**

**Well** it's time again for another newsletter and there is plenty inside to keep you going. At the last committee meeting in May 2007 it was decided that these Newsletters will now be once a year.

**It** is with sadness that I report on the death of Chris Bayes. Don Avery has written a fitting tribute which you will find on page 2.

**Unfortunately** there were no letters to the editor for this Issue. Your articles are still

urgently required for the Newsletters so please sort out an old photo or a memory you are willing to share.

**Send** anything for inclusion into the Newsletter to me either by e-mail or by letter if you prefer to actually put pen to paper. It doesn't have to be RAF related; maybe you have had an interesting experience that you remember.

**See** the back page for where to send your article, comment or memoir. *Ed*

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## Chairman's Note.

As many of you already know, this year has seen some changes to the Association Committee - I have taken over as Chairman from Les Shardlow, and Ken Bannister has become Deputy Chairman. Les Garden is still Secretary and Mick Woodhouse, Treasurer.

Les Shardlow was the founder and creator of the Association, and it was his enthusiasm and foresight that enabled it to flourish so successfully. We presently have contact with 102 ex-members of the Entry, with 61 as full members of the Association. Les has

accepted the post of Honorary Life President of the Association in recognition of all his efforts and hard work over the years. On behalf of us all, Les, thank you very much for bringing us to where we are today.

*Barry Neal*

## Entry Window Re-Dedication - May 2008

**We** are going to re-dedicate the Entry Window in St George's Church at RAF Halton on **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2008**. We plan to make a day of it and I hope that as many as possible of you and yours will join us. Coffee and biscuits will be in Halton House Officers' Mess at 10.30 am, followed by the Church Service. We will then lay a

wreath at 'The Tribute' in memory of our departed colleagues; 14 that we know of.

**Lunch** will be taken in Henderson Mess and the Museum will be open afterwards to re-ignite those old memories! The Association will be paying for coffee, biscuits and lunch,

and the 'Golden Oldies' Pipe Band will play at the church, at 'The Tribute', and at Henderson Mess.

**There** will also be a casual get-together at the Holiday Inn Aylesbury, Aston Clinton Road, at 7.00 pm on **Saturday evening, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2008**, with a buffet and subsidised bar. Those of you

who want to stay overnight will have to arrange your own accommodation. There are more details of the weekend on the website - [www.103rd-entry.org.uk](http://www.103rd-entry.org.uk) - where you will also find details of accommodation options. Please contact Chris Wales via the website for more information (See also the back page for e-mail or address) and to let us know if you will be coming. We need to know the numbers for catering.

**We** are hoping to have a guest with us for the weekend; someone you will remember

who influenced your development as a young man - Peter Ayerst,

*[Who is Peter Ayerst? I hear you all saying.*

*The question is: 'do you remember who Peter Ayerst was in connection with our time at Halton?*

*Answer: Our former squadron commander.]*

**Peter** was a decorated Battle of Britain Fighter Pilot and should be happy to sign any copies of his book, Spirit of the Blue - A Fighter Pilot's Story, if you have one.

Even if you cannot make the Saturday evening then please do try to make the Sunday for a really nostalgic event. Please remember you don't have to be an Association member to attend. This is for **ALL ex-103 members**, so why not come along for this special occasion and enjoy the great weekend that is being organised.

**We** look forward to meeting old and new faces. It promises to be a great event.

*Chris Wales  
(Contributions from BN & KB)*

## Chris Bayes 1946 — 2007 from Don Avery

Chris Bayes was born on 16 February 1946 and was a proud Yorkshireman from Huddersfield.

He trained at Halton as an aircraft electrician and during his time on the 103<sup>rd</sup> Entry also represented the Royal Air Force at swimming and water polo. Chris was also awarded Halton colours for representing the school in canoeing, when he completed the Devizes to Westminster race. Always a car enthusiast Chris was one of the first in the Entry to own his own car and his Triumph Herald Coupé was his pride and joy. He frequently followed the Aircraft Apprentice weekend ritual of walking some 2 miles to the local lock-up where his car was stored (hidden). No parking on the parade ground in those days!

On completion of training, Chris was posted to St Athan where he worked on Beverley major servicing. He often complained that for the first 3 months of his tour he only saw daylight for an hour at lunchtime, spending the rest of the day working like a miner in the crawl way in the Beverley wing.

By now married to Anne, the girl he met when he was 13 years old, Chris saw plenty of sunlight on his next posting, when St Athan was followed by an unaccompanied tour in Sharjah where he worked on the



helicopters.

On return from the Middle East, Chris found himself back at St. Athan and after that tour, it was north to Kinloss for an opportunity to work on the "mighty hunter". Whilst at Kinloss, Cpl Bayes became Sgt Bayes and he also decided to apply for a commission. His application was successful and he was commissioned as a

branch officer. He had always hoped for a tour of duty in his beloved Yorkshire but the RAF was determined to give him a Welsh accent and his first appointment as "Flt Lt" Bayes was back at St Athan. His background as an electrician was put to good use when his command responsibilities included the Painting and Finishing section! A stint at Swanton Morley followed, and introduced Chris to staff appointments and the joys of Norfolk where he and Anne set up another new home in the local area. On promotion to Sqn. Ldr., Chris was moved to another desk job at HQ Logistics Command at RAF Brampton; this was an appointment Chris did not enjoy and when the opportunity of the redundancy came along he decided to leave the RAF. Service life was replaced by 5 years as a Retired Officer still working within HQ Logistics Command, but now at RAF Wyton. During his time at Brampton and Wyton, Chris commuted by car daily from his home in Norfolk and finally, in 2001 at age 55, he retired to enjoy family life, golf and walking - the three real loves of his life.

Since retiring Chris had suffered a couple of health scares but had apparently overcome these and was able to enjoy a surprise 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration organised by Anne and his two daughters Kate and Liz. Family members and many of his old friends turned up to share

Chris's birthday and enjoy an excellent party evening in a local hotel. Anne had even organised hangover cures as the party was followed the next day by a round of golf!

Less than a year later, came the devastating news that Chris had cancer. For many months he

endured painful and debilitating chemotherapy but on 30 Aug 2007 Chris died at home.

*Don Avery*

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## Chris Bayes Funeral – Brian Lee

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2007 it was with a heavy heart that myself and Les Shardlow attended the funeral of another member of the entry, Chris Bayes.

Known to many of us for his swimming prowess and his interest in all things sporting this hail fellow well met Yorkshireman had, after a brave fight against cancer gone on his last posting.

The service was held in the beautiful Colney Wood Chapel near Norwich and was very well attended by his many friends of which some paid tribute to him from his early career as a young airman at St Athan to his retirement a few years ago.

On a personal note Chris had been my last Flight Commander before I left the service from Swanton Morley in 1986 and had even signed my discharge papers. He was a good boss who

always had time for people no matter who or what they were, was even tempered and would add comments to a situation that left you thinking "Why didn't I think of that"

In conclusion I can only echo the words of a tribute payer:-

"Chris Bayes Officer and a Gentleman. I salute you."

*Brian Lee*

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## Welfare – Barry Neal

Colin Worth has been very seriously ill for a number of years now. He requires full-time care and is in a nursing home in Plymouth. It is good for him to have as many visitors as

possible and, if you would like to visit him, please contact me

(on [tupnce@aol.com](mailto:tupnce@aol.com)) and let me know and I will make the necessary arrangements with his sister who lives nearby.

We get advice on welfare from the RAFHAAA welfare officer, and I recommend that he is the first point of contact should you need advice.

*Barry Neal*

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## Letter from our Cyprus Correspondent - Jeff Lloyd

### Turning Golden in the Sunshine.

A common sight at this time of year are long rolls of absorbent paper stretched out on the ground and covered with the small green sultana grapes that have recently been harvested. Cypriot housewives are busy drying sultanas to store away for the winter months.

As soon as possible after the grapes have been picked they are dipped in potassium carbonate mixed with a little olive oil and water. This cleans

the fruit and helps the sultanas to keep their beautiful golden colour as they dry, the stalks are painstakingly removed. The grapes are very gently turned each day for about eight days so that they shrivel just a little – condensing their sugar content – and their skins turn to a rich golden colour.

This method of drying fruit in the sunshine has been attributed to the Persians, but in Cyprus it is has been done for several hundred years. Grapes

that are dried lose 75% of their body weight in the process.

A popular snack in Cyprus is a handful each of sweet sultanas and almonds, ideal as an accompaniment for an end of day 'keo sundowner'

Yia mas !!

*Jeff Lloyd*



## Letter from Australia – Jim McKenzie

### One Aspect of the Impact of European Agriculture Methods on Australian Flora and Fauna.

For this article I will assume that you are aware that Australia is an ancient continent and consequently over the eons the processes of erosion through wind and water has impoverished its soil. Despite this there has developed a high diversity of flora and fauna, but with the settlement of Europeans this has changed and is the subject of this article.

A common held precept is that the farming methods and introduction of exotic creatures such as the cat have been the major contributory factors to the demise of flora and fauna. However, the cause and effect and the relative importance between the two is little understood by the majority of people. For a more informed view I have drawn on the literature of "Earth Alive" by Mary E White. In this age of the Greens, global warming and the ozone layer a better understanding of what is relevant and the consequences of our activities to sustain our population in Australia and probably elsewhere can be inferred.

In his Foreword to her book the Chief of Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) acknowledges that microbial diversity has driven the evolution of all life on earth and that soil microbes are central to the ecological sustainability. Their activities

determine how soil accepts, stores and transmits water and associated solute strongly influences the nature of rivers, springs, lakes and wetlands.

As an example on the affects of the European impact on the Murray Plains landscape serves useful. Originally the landscape supported productive, species-rich grassy layer beneath the main canopy of the forest, the ground was soft, and the soils easily crumbled. With one inch of rain the soils became soft, spongy and absorbent. With European grazing practices the land quickly became a hard clayey smooth surface. Consequently when it rained the seeds, sands, bacteria and nutrients were washed away. This then led to the ground being impenetrable, but did allow for the flow of water into man-made dams for livestock and, hence was considered beneficial to maintaining livestock.

With the reduction of vegetation and the hardness of the soil many of the small mammal fauna could not survive. Hitherto these mammals were scratchers: that is they disturbed the soil incorporating organic matter and aerating it, improving filtration, and spreading seeds and the spores of fungi. Why does fungi matter? Well some plants have a symbiotic relationship with the fungi to draw nutrients out of the soil to survive. Significantly

the bacteria that was essential for the soil's condition occupied a thin veneer on the surface and was quickly washed away. These mechanisms caused by farming could be considered as more devastating than the cat on the fauna population that appears to be the common understanding.

I hope this short article has been illuminating on the balance of 'nature' and that the food chain does indeed depend on the bacteria that we generally assume or through most advertising to be considered as harmful. I must stress that the example provided is only the tip of the iceberg as nature is most devious at inventing methods of survival.

There is one conclusion I can draw no matter how badly we act the Earth will recover with an amazing diversity of fauna and flora, but can do without us. However, if we collectively put our minds to it this richness could be enhanced.

*PS* I do not vote for the Greens and I am not a cat lover – vicious little bastards that they are, but not the main culprit.

**Take** care everybody.

*Jim McKenzie*

*(There will be more from JKM on life down under in our next newsletter. Ed)*

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## Battle of Britain Memorial Flight – from Ken Bannister

### Battle of Britain Memorial Flight RAF Coningsby

They say 'never volunteer for anything' but I did and volunteered to become a tour guide at the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight based at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire. The

Flight consists of a Lancaster (one of only two left flying in the world), a Dakota, 2 Hurricanes, 5 Spitfires and 2 Chipmunks with one Spitfire being rebuilt. One of the 2 Hurricanes (LF363) has been returned to the Flight after a repaint at RAF Duxford and now represents the

Hurricane flown by Flying Officer 'Birdy' Wilson during the Battle of Britain in the summer of 1940. (See photo below)

Birdy Wilson's Hurricane and Sqdn cockpit art showing 3 flaming swords of vengeance heading towards the Third

Reich. (BBMF Hangar, RAF Coningsby)

During his flying training in 1938, Birdy Wilson suffered a crash in which his fellow pilot was killed and Birdy Wilson suffered severe burns to his face. As a result of these severe burns, Birdy Wilson lost his nose. Archibald MacIndoe, a pioneer burns specialist, rebuilt his nose over a period of 6 months and Birdy Wilson has the distinction of being 'Guinea Pig number 2' of the famous 'Guinea Pig Club'. Birdy Wilson went on to rejoin his squadron in time to be posted to France in support of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). Before the fall of Dunkirk, he managed to get back to England in his Hurricane via Guernsey/Jersey to rejoin 17 Sqn at RAF Tangmere on the South Coast of England. From

then it was straight into the Battle of Britain. With other pilots of 17 Sqn, Birdy Wilson shared several kills against



enemy aircraft and was credited with two personal 'kills' and numerous 'probables' and 'damaged'. His luck ran out on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1940 when he was shot down over the Thames but he managed to bale out, once again suffering from burns. He had just become the 40<sup>th</sup> victim of the high-scoring

German fighter ace, Adolf Galland.

After a long and distinguished career in the Royal Air Force, Birdy Wilson retired in 1974 as an Air Vice Marshall.

No 17 Squadron is now the Typhoon Operational Evaluation Unit based at RAF Coningsby alongside the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. Coningsby is, therefore, home to two types of aircraft operated by 17 Sqn separated by 65 years, one (the Typhoon) demonstrating the cutting-edge technology of the present day and the other, a dangerous and crucial period in the Squadron's and the United Kingdom's history.

*Ken Bannister, 103<sup>rd</sup>.*

## RAF Halton Triennial - September 2007

**Another** triennial was held at RAF Halton over the week-end of 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2007.

**Usually** it is only on a Saturday but this time, for those who were 'game' could pay and stay over night in the barrack blocks and eat in Henderson Mess. We were allocated the block opposite Burnett Gym. There were many takers and it was quite an experience to be back in such an accommodation. Life has obviously changed as there were no 'Bed Packs' because all recruits are now provided with 'Quilts. I ask you!

**One** thing I found difficult to comprehend, was seeing female recruits (*no offence meant to our*

*female readers*) marching with male recruits and doing 'jankers'.

**We** arrived on the Friday night and after sorting out our room went to Henderson mess for a meal. Quite different to what I remember and very orderly with a fair selection. We had been invited to use Halton House in the evening for a drink or three which was very enjoyable as a pint of beer was under £1! Next morning we all mustered outside the block to be 'marched' up to the mess for breakfast. Well ambled really.

**It** was then a pleasant walk down to the airfield where we met up with other entries and friends and a look around. The

'Golden Oldies' Pipe Band, along with our Ken Bannister on the Bass drum, were there playing.

**After** a pleasant lunch we all marched up the church with the GO's leading the way. There was a small service and those who wanted could have a look around the workshops. Again, these were very much changed with only a few of the areas being used. The swimming pool is still very much in use though. From here it was a march again up the hill onto the parade ground for the final salute and dismiss.

A great day.

**Chris Wales**

Here are a selection of photos of the day taken by myself and Les Garden.



3 Wing barracks



Maitland Mess



Maitland Mess



The Guardroom 2 Wing



Help yourself  
Henderson Mess



Enjoying a chat



Ken on the Bass Drum



Who can you recognise?



Chris & Barry enjoying a pint



Ken & Brian



The Church window wall



The Entry Window



The Museum (Old Gym)



Burnett Gym



The swimming pool



2 Wing



2 wing NAAFI



The 'Golden Oldies'



March back from the Airfield



Looking down to crossroads



The 'Astra'



Memories in the museum



Recognise your block?



Or was it this one?

## RAF E-Mail List

\* \* \* Here is something that you should all be aware of and action as soon as possible.

There is a website called the 'RAF E-Mail List' which publishes e-mail contact details of ex-Apprentices and Boy Entrants; there are a few ex-103<sup>rd</sup> Entry details on there. Please take a look at it - [http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Chris\\_McBrien/emailist.htm](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Chris_McBrien/emailist.htm) - and contact Chris McBrien directly to remove, add or amend details. For Data Protection reasons the Association cannot do this for you.

## Letters to the Editor

Unfortunately there are no letters for this issue.

## Miscellaneous Section

### Dear Abby,

I've never written to you before, but I really need your advice on what could be a crucial decision. I've suspected for some time now that my wife has been cheating on me. The usual signs: phone rings but if I answer, the caller hangs up. My wife has been going out with the girls a lot recently although when I ask their names she always says, "Just some friends from work, you don't know them." I always stay awake to look out for her taxi coming home, but she always walks down the

drive, although I can hear a car driving off, as if she has gotten out of the car round the corner. Why? Maybe she wasn't in a taxi? I once picked up her cell phone just to see what time it was and she went berserk and screamed that I should never touch her phone again and why was I checking up on her. Anyway, I have never approached the subject with my wife. I think deep down I just didn't want to know the truth, but last night she went out again and I decided to really check on her.

I decided I was going to park my Harley Davidson motorcycle next to the garage and then hide behind it so I could get a good view of the whole street when she came home. It was at that moment, crouching behind my Harley, that I noticed that the valve covers on my engine seemed to be leaking a little oil. Is this something I can fix myself, or should I take it back to the main dealer?

Yours faithfully,

**Bob**

### Sudoku

Answer to Newsletter 27 Sudoku puzzle.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 8 |
| 7 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 1 |
| 4 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| 2 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 9 |
| 1 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 6 |
| 6 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 3 |
| 3 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 5 |

There is no Sudoku puzzle this time.

I thought you deserved a rest.

Hopefully there will be another mental agility type puzzle in the next issue.

### Competition – NL28

I should think that many of you know the answer to this question. So again I am expecting a flood of answers.

***The bronze guns captured by the British from the Russians at Sebastopol in 1855 were melted down and used over a period of time for a very special purpose. What purpose?***

Send your answers along with your name and address to the editor at either of the addresses below by Monday 28th April 2008. The first correct answer drawn from the hat will win £10 worth of gift tokens.

### Answer to competition - NL27

There was only one entry this time to what was probably the easiest competition question that has been asked:

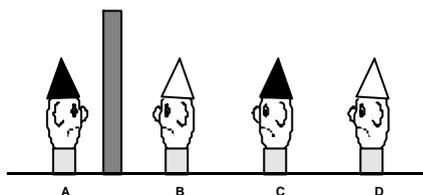
***What is the name given to the study of Flags?***

The winner is Alan (Tiny) Cowsill with the answer:

***Vexillology.***

Alan wins the £10 gift voucher. Congratulations on his successful entry. (Alan, please contact CJW)

**A puzzler.** This was something for those who don't do Sudoku but still like a challenge.



Four men are buried up to their necks with a wall separating A from the others.

They cannot move and can only see forward.

They know that between them they have 4 hats – 2 black and 2 white – but they don't know which colour hat they are wearing.

In order to save themselves from execution one of them must shout out what colour hat he is wearing.

If he gets the answer wrong, they will all be shot!

Their executioners have given them just 10 minutes to decide. They must not talk and have no way of communicating.

After just 1 minute one of them calls out.

**Which one was it? Why was he so sure of his answer?**

NB: A cannot see any of the others

B cannot see any of the others

C can see B

D can see C and B

**Answer.**

Well there were no responses to this puzzle. Obviously far too hard for you. Never mind.

However, here is the answer.

Man 'C' calls out 'BLACK', correctly. Reason: Man C can only see a white hat in front of him. He knows that the man behind him (man D) can see two hats and reasons that if they were both the same colour either both black or both white man D would know what colour he was wearing and call it out. As he doesn't say anything, man C reasons it is because man D can see two different colour hats and therefore wouldn't know his colour. So man C now knows that his hat is black. Easy, wasn't it!!

**Did you know...**

Britain has more lending libraries than any other country.

### **Dates for your Diary**

#### **Next Committee Meeting:-**

29<sup>th</sup> March 2008 - Barry Neal's House. - 11:00hrs.

#### **103<sup>rd</sup> Entry Window Re-dedication at Aylesbury & RAF Halton.**

Saturday/Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> /11<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

(See front page for more details)

### **Committee Members:**

Barry Neal, Ken Bannister, Les Garden, Mick Woodhouse,  
Chris Wales, Malcolm Watts, Brian Lee, Les Shardlow.

### **103rd Entry Association Newsletter**

#### **Editor:**

C. J. Wales

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comments, for sale, for rent etc. etc to:

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