



Newsletter No 97 March 2014



EDITOR: **Pete Ralph (46th):** ralph82@ntlworld.com / 07901551753 or 01923491785 / 82 Gammons Lane, Watford WD24 5HZ

ASSOCIATION NEWS

NEW YEAR HONOUR

Our congratulations to Peter Corfield (30th) who has been awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List for leading the group that opposed the closure of Ludlow hospital, which resulted in its continued use. Another former Admin Apprentice, Bryan Clark (27th), was instrumental in obtaining recognition of Pete's efforts with the MBE.

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

To help us to reduce Association running costs, if you receive this Newsletter by post and it could be sent to you by email, (which means you receive it on the day it is issued rather than up to one week later by snail mail) please let us know your email address at chairman@rafadappassn.org.

ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

Current contact details for the Association Committee and Regional Reps are appended at the end of this Newsletter.

ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Your Committee will be meeting on Saturday 12th April at Boddington, near Cheltenham, and will cover, amongst other items, any propositions for the Annual General Meeting in June. If you have anything at all that you wish the Committee to discuss, please let the Secretary have your written request by 7th April at 3 Humphries Close, Carterton, Oxon OX18 3HS or by Email: r.wise285@btinternet.com. Bob Wise will acknowledge your request.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

The 2014 subscription of £10 was due on 1 January; at the time of going to press 37 members have failed to pay this year's subscription. If you have yet to pay your 2014 subscription, please forward your payment to the Treasurer. If payment is not received before the issue of the next Newsletter (June) no further Newsletters will be dispatched to non-payers and their membership will be considered lapsed.

AGM 2014 – RESOLUTIONS AND AGENDA ITEMS

Resolutions for AGM 2014 (14th June) or any items for inclusion in the AGM agenda should be forwarded to the Secretary not later than 7th April so that the AGM agenda can be finalised at the Committee meeting on 12th April and published in the June Newsletter. Bob Wise will acknowledge your request. You do not have to attend the AGM to submit an item for consideration but it will require a proposer and seconder on the day.

2014 REUNION - ATTENDANCE

Full Reunion details and a final attendance list will be published in the June Newsletter. However, as at 01 March, bookings have been made on behalf of the following members attending the 2014 Reunion at the Peterborough Marriott Hotel on 13/14/15 June:

ENTRY ATTENDEE(S)

1st	T Davies
2nd	S Robathan
4th	R Wise
5th	D Burlingham, R Osborne, J Wilcox
11th	M Heritage
13th	J White
14th	J Gent, B Richards
15th	T Moore
16th	G Singlehurst
17th	R Blundell, B Bullivant, D Valentine, G Wright
19th	A Cowan, J Evans, D Hobden, I Thomson, J Waltham
23rd	P Bullock, D Marshall, J Reynolds, R Shepherd
24th	D Bulleid
28th	E Barker, B Kent, M Owen
29th	A Bell, R Burrow, B Croucher, D Davies, H Trumbell
30th	B Philpott, P Reed, P Williamson
32nd	B Scott, M Wilkinson
33rd	R Danes, P Hall, B Schofield, P Watson
34th	A Godfrey, M Needham, R Orr, A Peters
36th	B Vecicchis, P Holland, L Porter
38th	A Burchell, M Day, M Dunning, J Nash, C Rowe, B Wass
40th	P Charnell, W Dean, K Edwards, M Hamill, R Harden, T Price-Rees, N Pringle, I Ritchie, G Stevens
41st	T Jones
42nd	H Gilbert, R Hedinburgh, W Hoggarth
44th	J Butcher, J Upton
45th	I Hunter
46th	J Dyer, P J Ralph
301st	W Beedie
305th	A Hammonds
307th	B Hoare, S Sanders
313th	D Johnson
314th	E Reilly
318th	T McKnight
324th	A Lanning
330th	G Hoyland
Associate	B Collins, J Muirhead, S Wright
Honorary	Mrs S Craycraft, Mrs C Holman, Mrs S Hopewell

There are still a number of rooms available and if you would like to attend please contact Bryan Hoare, the Social Secretary **immediately** (or Bryan Schofield if Bryan H can't be contacted).

AMENDMENTS TO MEMBERS' DETAILS

- Trevor Moore** (15th): Callington, Cornwall: 01579 384378:
(Email remains babstrevem@btinternet.com)
Alan Howling (24th): Oakham, Rutland
Dick Smedley (24th/25th): dick.smedley938@btinternet.com
David Pyant (32nd): david.pyant@cloud.com
Brian Scott (32nd): irene-lee@o2.co.uk
(Incorrect in last Newsletter – sorry, Brian! **Editor**)
Bryan Schofield (33rd): bryanschofield33@btinternet.com
Mike Needham (34th): jrmandmj@gmail.com
Ed Billings (35th): ed@billings.me.uk
Ron Muggleton (38th): 0116 2810857
Jim Calder (309th): maduinn@hotmail.com
Graham Dinsdale (309th): graham.dinsdale@ianallan.co.uk

RESIGNATIONS

592200 **Anthony (Bash) Johnstone** (3rd)
592465 **Bob Watts** (10th)
593636 **Des Casey** (35th)

NEW MEMBERS

594882 **Michael William (Mick) Allcock** (304th): Stockport:
07704344558: mick_allcock@hotmail.com
8008843 **Ian R Kingsnorth** (315th): Rotherham, S Yorks:
01709 372821: kingsnorthian@hotmail.com
8001793 **Dave Williams** (324th): Credenhill, Hereford:
01432 760792: david.williams57@btinternet.com



It is with sorrow that we have learned of the death of the following members:

591472 **Clement Smith** (51st Ruislip)
592415 **Thomas John (Paddy) Taylor** (8th)
592590 **John Dodd** (14th)
592819 **Alan Key** (18th)

The Association extends its condolences to all family and friends.

OBITUARIES

592415 JOHN (PADDY) TAYLOR (8TH)

Paddy and I first met at RAF Hornchurch in 1949 before we actually signed on. We were close friends during our 20 months training and met many times in many places over the following 20 years. I was stationed at RAF Aldergrove in 1953-1955 and Paddy always spent a day with my wife and I when he went home on leave to County Tyrone. He and I had several 'interesting' evenings out in Belfast! He lived life to the full and knew how to enjoy himself. We kept in touch by telephone over many years and every chat would end up with us (even as elderly men) reminiscing about our youth and always ending up laughing. Sorry you're gone Paddy.

Ray Lynch (8th)

593729 GARRY KEAT (37TH)

Whilst I did not know Garry very well, my limited contact with him led me to write a few lines. One of my RAF jobs was Pre-AOC's P Staff Inspections in Strike Command, with Brian Morrison. Few of us are keen on being inspected but we know it is a fact of life! We found some units neutral in their welcome, some almost aggressive! (Mind you, once when I was being inspected, the IO dropped off to sleep!). Garry, at Mountbatten, was most welcoming and helpful, arranging a boat trip for us with the MCU, and entertaining us in the evening. I subsequently met Garry and his wife at our local reunions, and noted with sadness his medical problems, yet despite these, he always had a smile and a laugh when we chatted. Over recent years, a number of our members had deteriorating health problems, but all, yes all, retained their sense of humour to the end. Vale Garry, many of us will long remember you.

Skriber

REGIONAL GROUP NEWS

CYPRUS

G'day Gentlemen. We held the 15th Meeting of the Cyprus Group of Ex-Admin Apprentices on Monday 2nd December 2013 at The Captains Bay Restaurant in Pissouri Bay on a very agreeable day. For December it was very pleasant and quite warm as we quaffed a few Keos and watched the waves washing up the beach. There were three of us in attendance; myself, Ian Dennis and Ben Casey. Apologies were received from Phil

Tobutt and Dave Pyant. This is 50% of the membership so we will continue to thrive. My thanks go to Ian Dennis for providing me with a DVD of Cyprus winning against Austria and also some footage of recent Limassol Crusaders games. Ben Casey couldn't stay long but stayed long enough for lunch and some chat. This ends our meetings for this year and completes three years for the Cyprus Group. The meetings for next year have been planned for the following dates: Monday 10th March at Pissouri Bay, Monday June 2nd at Kyrenia restaurant, Avdimou Beach, Monday 8th September at Kyrenia Restaurant, Avdimou and Monday 1st December at Pissouri Bay. I attach the usual picture just to prove we are still here!

Ray Burrow (29th)

Contact: raymondo@logosnet.cy.net / (00357) 99-303572 or (00357) 26 621662.



DORSET

The final 2013 meeting of the Dorset Branch took place in the Blue Boar in Poole on 30 Nov. Those present were: John Gent (14th), John White (13th), Tony Richards (14th), Peter Reed (30th), Tony Peters (34th) and Shay Foley (46th) - with apologies from Mike Hamill (40th). Next meeting is in the Portland Heights Hotel, Portland on Saturday 22 Feb 2014 - 12 noon for 1pm.

As planned (see above!), the first 2014 quarterly meeting of the Dorset Branch was held on Saturday 22 Feb in the Heights Hotel in the Isle of Portland. What a beautiful location - the hotel overlooks the Chesil Beach, Portland Harbour and Weymouth. A must for any visitor. Those attending were (in descending order of importance and seniority!) John White (13th) Tony Richards (14th), Peter Reed (30th) Tony Peters (34th) Mike Hamill (40th) and Shay Foley (46th). Apologies from John Gent (14th). The next meeting will be in the Half Moon Inn, Sherborne on Saturday 10 May 14 - 1230 for 1pm. Please be aware that the car park at the Half Moon is strictly controlled so make sure you have paid the appropriate fee. Contacts in the first place to: Mike Hamill on 01935 3899232 or in the last resort to Shay Foley.

Shay Foley (46th)

Contact: heights73@talktalk.net / 01202 631652

GLOUCESTER

Our second area luncheon of 2013 was held on Wednesday 27th November. It had been almost seven months since our last 'get together'. Once again we all met at The Royal Oak in Birdlip which seems to have become our regular haunt. (It seems to suit the majority of our group!) We had an excellent turnout of 13 members plus 5 ladies. I think this has been the largest for some while. I brought over from Carterton (RAF Brize Norton) a full car which included Brian Kent, Bob Wise and Tom Worsfold which was his first attendance. I think everyone enjoyed the afternoon and hopefully our next meeting in 2014 will be sometime towards the end of March. Look forward to seeing some new faces! Anyone who wishes to join our group please contact me.

Mike Day (38th)

Contact: mikeday28@hotmail.com / 01993 841026



From left to right: Back Row: Brian Yost (22nd), Stuart Wright (Aff), Phil Flavell (45th), John Dyer (46th). Middle Row: Sean Barbour (6th), Brian Kent (28th), Bob Wise (4th), Mike Day (38th), Tom Worsfold (5th). Front Row: Dave Buley (22nd), Peter Hoyle (42nd), Jim Wilcox (5th), Barry Sturgeon(36th)

SOUTH-WEST HERTS

The Southwest Herts Group met at its now regular venue of the Three Crowns in Bushey (down the road from the old RAF Bentley Priory) on 1st February 2014. This was our first gathering without our founder Trevor Moore (15th) who had moved to Cornwall before Christmas. We were delighted to welcome again Jack Marshall (56R) the report of whose demise had been greatly exaggerated by his bank. Jack brought along a fascinating album of excellent photographs recording his time serving in Cape Town and India during WW2 including historic pictures of barrack interiors and a smart parade commanded by Lord Wavell. Enjoying the customary good fare with Jack were Ken Roost (1st), John Summers (18th), John Forshaw (20th), Phil Gough (31st), Noel Hayes (31st), and Peter Ralph (46th). We welcomed as guest John ("Dixie") Dick - Chairman of the RAF Changi Association - who lives nearby. Apologies were received from Tony Parsons (19th), Haydn Illingworth (21st), and Gerry Singlehurst (15th) who is unwell. Our next meeting will be in the Three Crowns on Saturday 3rd May 2014 from 1100 hrs on, with the remaining 2014 meetings on 2nd August and 1st November.

Phil Gough (31st)

Contact: pgough@ntlworld.com /_01923 466956

ARTICLES

RAF BIRCHAM NEWTON HERITAGE CENTRE OPEN DAYS 2014

Open Days for 2014 are: Easter (20 & 21 April), Early May Bank Holiday [4 & 5 May], Late May Bank Holiday [25 & 26 May], Sunday June 29, Sunday July 27, August Bank Holiday [24 & 25 August] and Sunday 28 September. Special arrangements for group visits outside the scheduled programme can be arranged by prior contact with Denise Goff MBE [01485 578527] or Avril MacArthur [01485 578588]. Further details about RAF Bircham Newton and the Heritage Centre can be found on our website www.rafadappassn.org or on the RAF Bircham Newton Memorial Project website www.rafbnmp.org.uk

Dixie Dean (40th) - RAF Bircham Newton Liaison Rep

SUPPLIER IS A JOB FOR GIRLS!

I have just read David Drinkwater's letter re Reg Drinkwater. (Newsletter No 96 – **Editor**) As the Bell referred to in the letter I thought I would mention an interesting tale linked to our swap. Like David, I was not a happy bear after a few months as an apprentice. Filing bits of metal and testing tensile strengths of

strips of steel did not do a lot for me. I applied to remuster as a supplier. I had heard that the trade included movements and a raft of jobs that sounded like a lot more fun than being an armourer. I was 15 and easily swayed by the possibility of service in many different parts of the world working on transport aircraft and troopships. My trade senior manager at Halton called me before him and after a long nervous wait as I ensured my appearance was up to scratch I was marched in. He was not at all happy. He started by asking me why I was incorrectly dressed. I had no idea what he was referring to so I stood, at attention, dumb in front of him. "If you want to be a supplier you should wear a skirt, it is a job for girls". The interview went downhill from there and he finally agreed to let me remuster. His name was Group Captain Markey. Some years later as a sergeant I was serving in the Supply Sqn at Tengah, Singapore, and a new Supply officer i/c the Electronics Storage Group was posted in. His name was Peter Markey. He was the son of my former Group Captain. To add to the tale, I was serving as a flying officer at RAF Hendon many years later and another Supply Flying Officer was posted in. He was Chris Markey. This was another son of the Groupie who thought that supply was women's work. I asked Chris what his father thought of both his sons becoming Suppliers. It seems he was not a happy daddy. The footnote to the tale was that again many years later I was told to prepare a briefing for a visiting AVM. He was the first supply officer to be appointed to head up a new logistics organisation where he would command many engineers. It was Peter Markey. My own career was all I had hoped for. I served in supply initially and when the movements trade was formed in its own right I went down that route. After 20 years I took a commission and worked in supply and movements posts at UK and overseas units and finally wore a logistics hat as a staff officer when the Support/Logistics concept was introduced.

John Bell (31st)

CHIANGMAI

Having seen the pictures taken by David Cartwright in Chiangmai on Remembrance Day (on the Association Website - www.rafadappassn.org - Editor), I thought some of our readers together with David Cartwright might be interested to read about my experiences in Chiangmai in 1962. Sometime towards the middle of 1962 Laos invaded Cambodia and there was fear that they would also invade Thailand in conjunction with China who were supporting them. We had some sort of agreement to support Thailand at that time and suddenly certain substances "hit the fan". At this point in time I was serving with the Supply Squadron at RAF Tengah Singapore. I was placed on standby to travel to an unknown destination with 20 Squadron Hawker Hunters based at Tengah. This state of affairs existed for a few days and I continued to travel back to my family at my Hiring" at the end of each day. One day I travelled to work with all of my extra kit just in case as usual, only to find that the 20 Squadron detachment had departed the previous night and that I was in serious trouble for not being with them. I was charged with all types of nasty things but eventually exonerated due to a breakdown in communication. I was then despatched in a hurry with a few others in a vehicle to Changi complete with a rifle and five bullets to assist me in repelling the Chinese hordes who were supposedly gathering on the borders of Thailand. At this stage I still did not know where I was destined for. Somehow I managed to get a message back to my dear wife. We climbed aboard an old Hastings and set off somewhere north. We stopped off at Bangkok to refuel and carried on flying north, eventually landing on a very small airstrip at a place unheard of in those days called "Chiangmai". As we stumbled out into the blazing heat we were greeted by Wing/ Commander Pedder attired in a sarong but wearing his service cap ! He was the detachment commander and a very nice man who later became Air Marshal Sir Ian Pedder and after retirement Chairman of Dan Air. We were greeted with the words "We are pigging it a bit here but you will soon fit in. We lived on the edge of the airstrip in a

tented encampment with field kitchens and thunder box latrines. It really was quite an experience as we never knew how long we would be there or what was coming next. I worked with a Flt Lt and a Sergeant and we had to get all the replacement a/c spares up from Seletar via Changi to keep the six Hunters flying. In addition we had to get all of the domestic supplies up and running, set up contracts for laundry and fuel etc. We were situated a few miles outside of Chiangmai town but we managed to get in most evenings using the scooter taxis. The American Green Berets were with us and they were a crazy bunch. This was pre Vietnam but there quite a few American forces about in Thailand at that time. The place seemed to be crawling with snakes and I had a lucky experience with a "Banded Krait" that decided to crawl into my tent and sleep under my bed one night. It was discovered by someone else who fortunately managed to kill it with a bayonet. The town seemed to be full of brothels and venereal disease was rife, unfortunately attributed to our American allies. I must admit that I refrained from any sexual encounters but on one occasion out of curiosity looked in on a bamboo hut brothel having noticed that our Majesty's Government Representative in Chiangmai had parked his Land Rover outside of the brothel with the Union Jack Pennant flying proudly from the front of the bonnet. Having been unable to control my curiosity any further I entered to see the diplomat sitting in the queue next to our Squadron Leader Admin. I made a quick exit with a smile on my face. We used to drink "Mekong" whiskey in the Blue Moon night club which was often full of Americans and the Whiskey which could send you blind if you drank too much sold at about 25p a bottle. Many of the lads were sent back to Changi Hospital with unpleasant sexual diseases. One day we were informed that the King and Queen of Thailand wished to visit us. You can imagine what that entailed. The morning of their arrival when everything was spick and span, our dear American friends with their super F100 Low flying jets, decided to bomb us with toilet rolls. You can imagine how many small pieces of toilet paper covered the area and could not possibly be picked up entirely. It was a bit like a comedy film really, to protect the royal couple the Thai army surrounded the camp with tanks and machine guns and thousands of soldiers. I was unfortunate enough to be placed on the guard of honour for the King and Queen. This caused another embarrassment as we did not have any rifle slings for our .303 rifles. The Royal couple I believe declined the offer to stay for lunch. Can't say I blame them as the food was pretty grim. On another occasion an American general flew in a light aircraft, a colourful character like General Patton complete with pearl handled six guns. He immediately enquired as to why we were not all armed as the "Commie Bastards" were only a few miles away. Fortunately the communist incursion never happened and after two months of discomfort I was eventually replaced and anxiously flew back to my wife and baby daughter who I had managed to contact by letter. I spent a night in the Trocadero Hotel in Bangkok on the way home and after sleeping in a snake infested tent for two months it felt rather pleasant. I don't suppose I would recognize Chiangmai today!

Charles James (22nd/24th)

FILING CABINET BARS – MY FAULT?!

Prior to 1957 our metal filing cabinets did not have locking bars on them. Looking back, I think I may have played a part in getting them introduced. In 1955/56 I was the Sgt in charge of the Orderly Room at RAF Kidlington which housed HQ 42 Group and a couple of Bomb Disposal Units. The station was closing down. I was asked by Maintenance Command P3 if, after the job was done at Kidlington, I wanted to move on and close down another unit. I declined the invitation. In early '56 a notice appeared in SROs asking for a volunteer to work as personal clerk to the STSO, Air Cdre C E Hartley, at Transport Command and I volunteered for the job. In April/May 1956 I took up my duties at Upavon. I got on very well with the Air Cdre, who was

the husband of the novelist Jane Hartley. Occupying the office next door to the Air Cdre was Wg Cdr J H Woffindin who worked very closely with the Air Cdre. One afternoon the Wg Cdr was off and the Air Cdre called me in and asked me if the Wg Cdr had left his keys with me. I told him he hadn't. He appeared annoyed. I asked him if I could help. He said the Wg Cdr had a file locked in his cabinet that he wished to work on but unfortunately it would have to wait till tomorrow morning. I started to leave his office but turned round and said "If it's really important I can get that file for you". He suddenly looked very interested. He said "Are you telling me, Sergeant, you can open the Wg Cdr's filing cabinet without a key?". I replied in the affirmative. He said "This I must see!". I had plenty of experience of moving office furniture about and I recently had to re-arrange the furniture in the Wg Cdr's office. If the old metal filing cabinets were moved about a lot the screws holding the top on would come loose. This was the case with the Wg Cdr's filing cabinet. The Air Cdre witnessed me loosening the screws holding the top by jerking it about. The top came loose and I put my hand inside and operated the locking bar. With the cabinet open I invited the Air Cdre to take his file, which he did. I then relocked the cabinet and put it back where it should be. From then on the Wg Cdr regarded me with suspicion! I suspect the Air Cdre alerted the Air Ministry about the vulnerability of our filing cabinets and locking bars were introduced. My tenure as his clerk was short lived. I left my office on the first Saturday in August not knowing that I would not return to that job again. Suez had reared its ugly head and I would not return to Upavon until after the Christmas break, when I would find Chris Graham(ex-Ruislip) firmly installed in my chair and I would take up my duties as personal clerk to SASO, Air Cdre R.A.C Carter (an ex-Halton apprentice).

Ken Roost (1st)

TRAVELLERS' TALES

WHERE'S THIS?



AND THIS?



ANSWERS TO THE EDITOR BY 14TH MARCH

Answers and successful replies in next Newsletter

ROYAL AIR FORCE ADMINISTRATIVE APPRENTICE ASSOCIATION

"MULTUM A PARVO"

Web Address: www.rafadappassn.org

CONTACT DETAILS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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*** Subject to confirmation by the 2014 AGM

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