



RAFHAA NEWSLETTER MAY 2021

It is my sad duty to advise members of the last posting of Honorary Vice-President Barry Smith, 50th entry. Barry served as a sparky instructor at Halton and was well respected by the many ex-brats he trained. He was a founder member of our Association and gave loyal support to the many Councils on which he served besides being an energetic supporter of RAFA. I presented him with an engraved tankard on his retirement last September when his cool persona, anecdotes and dry humour reflected the man he was. Barry's funeral took place on 11th May 2021 where our General Secretary Les Shardlow (103rd) was our Standard Bearer and two RAFA Standards were also paraded. A Guard of Honour of six RAF Halton Officers and SNCOS lined the entrance to the crematorium. Our Vice-Patron, Sir Dusty Miller was in attendance. RIP Barry.





HAA Standard as paraded at Barry's Funeral

The April Newsletter generated the largest number of comments ever recorded for a Newsletter. Mostly, members warmed to being kept informed on the progress being made by the Association, and the Route Lining table created a lot of interest. Ron Priest (207th) kindly offered to update the table with your many observations and I am pleased to attach a revised list to this Newsletter. In addition, below I reproduce a note from our Deputy Chairman Chas Challinger (100th) about his memories of Sir Winston Churchill's funeral.

“When Sir Winston Churchill died in January 1965 the RAF, with admirable savvy, gathered up all the recently graduated and posted airmen who in theory at least would still have shiny boots and decent uniforms. For us in the 100th this meant our first reunion took place in under a month after our passing out parade, firstly at Basingbourn for all those from Bomber Command and then Woolwich Barracks where we caught up the rest. I don't think the billets they put us in at Woolwich has been used since the Napoleonic wars and the grub was dreadful. Being a good south east London boy, I gave my brother a call and a small bunch of us were picked up and taken to my mother's house where we kipped on the floor and ate her out of house and home. I commandeered my brother's car and we commuted daily to Woolwich – in those days about a 15-minute drive from home.

We practiced the whole route lining gig around the streets of Woolwich in the

snow, coming off parade as half white and half blue depending which side of the road you had been standing on and the direction of the wind. The big day started at 05:00 for us being transported to Southwark Bridge to form up, be inspected and then marched to Cannon Street, which was our designated slot which we occupied from about 09:00. This meant we were just beyond St Pauls and as consequence were in position for ages while the front element of the parade was halted in front of us and then they got 'fell out' for tea and a wad in the side streets while we had to stand there for the duration of the service and then the passing of the rest of the parade. I think we creaked our way back to Southwark Bridge after about 5 hours".

I am sure you will all be delighted to know that the RAF Halton Station Commander Group Captain Dan Startup has kindly agreed to a RAFHAA reunion on Saturday 20th August 2022. Your Council has already set up a sub-committee to commence planning and we will keep you informed via this Newsletter and our website www.oldhaltonians.co.uk . Entry to the event will be restricted to members of the Association with one guest/carer (guest must be 16 or over years of age) so please do make sure your membership is current. If qualifying non-members wish to attend, they can sign up for membership on-line at the website above. We will keep you informed of plans as they develop but we hope to arrange a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight fly past besides the other regular reunion events. No doubt, many entry branches will want to arrange their own reunions to coincide with the HAA event and early booking of local hotels is recommended. We hope everyone is as excited about this news as we are.

30th October 2022 marks the 25th anniversary of the unveiling of the Tribute by Her Majesty The Queen in 1997. Group Captain Startup has also agreed to your Council holding a special remembrance service in St George's Church on 6th November 2022. The service will be a combined annual Remembrance Day/ 25th Anniversary of Tribute event that we hope will feature pipe bands and buglers. Up to 400 members and their families may attend and we will open a list on-line shortly. This is another worthy occasion for you to meet up with your

old pals.

The Royal British Legion has advised that the Cenotaph ceremony is going ahead this year on 14th November and we have been invited to apply for tickets. Covid has severely restricted entry reunions over the past 18 months and this event is an opportunity for groups to get together in London to pay their respects to fallen comrades. Please contact our General Secretary Les Shardlow (103rd) secretary@rafhaa.co.uk before the end of **this month (May)** if you would like to attend.

As an advance notification, next year being the 100th Anniversary of Trenchard's Apprentice scheme based from RAF Halton, we are considering asking the Royal British Legion to increase our ticket availability to make our presence really felt! If you fancy marching down Whitehall, then please let Les Shardlow know, and we will begin to prepare for a larger contingent than usual.

Last month I reported that Council had selected Focus Consulting to prepare an Association Business Plan to demonstrate sustainability of our project to create a museum in St George's Church when RAF Halton closes. Recently, in meetings with various stakeholders, our decision to produce this plan has been widely endorsed and supported as a sensible way forward. More importantly, MOD Defence Infrastructure Organisation has told us that under present plans, St George's Church is a retained building and will not be demolished. Of course, there is a lot of water to flow under the bridge yet, but this is a heart-warming piece of news. Our stained-glass windows now look to be safe. Your Council is also working on other schemes in relation to our heritage and further information will follow in later Newsletters.

While decisions on the future of St George's Church and our heritage plans cannot be pre-empted, your Council believe that it is unwise and unrealistic to delay work that is dependent on these important decisions. That is why we are moving forward with outline plans to create a significant new heritage memorial. Council have considered options that include a statue of an

Apprentice in No 1 uniform shouldering a rifle, and a statue of an Apprentice leading Lewis (the goat mascot). After much discussion, we have now asked for designs that incorporate training, aircraft engineering, and aircraft themes reflecting the 100 years of our existence. Present thoughts are that we create a montage of images that can be positioned on St George's Church walls or erected on a base that forms a seat. Nothing has been decided, we remain in discussion. Similarly, we are keen to select an appropriate name for the memorial and currently under consideration are the names "Trenchard's Vision", "The Apprentice Testament", "Halton Apprentice Bronze" or "Trenchard's Legacy". Please do let me have your views.

On 21st May 21, Council will hold a meeting to review members' comments following publication of the draft Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) constitution as an enclosure in Issue 82 of the Haltonian. Once we are agreed on the final version, it will be published on our website at www.oldhaltonians.co.uk and if members would like to receive a copy by post, then they should apply to our General Secretary, Les Shardlow (103rd), secretary@rafhaa.co.uk. A proposal to adopt the final version of the CIO Constitution will be voted on at our AGM on 25th September 2021.

Phil Sprinks (90th) sent in some history lessons.

There is an old Hotel/Pub in Marble Arch, London, which used to have gallows adjacent to it. Prisoners were taken to the gallows (after a fair trial of course) to be hanged. The horse-drawn dray, carting the prisoner, was accompanied by an armed guard, who would stop the dray outside the pub and ask the prisoner if he would like "ONE LAST DRINK". If he said YES, it was referred to as ONE FOR THE ROAD. If he declined, that Prisoner was ON THE WAGON.

Here are some facts about England in the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and they still smelled pretty good by June. However, since they were starting to smell, brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the

privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water!"

Houses had thatched roofs, thick straw piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom, where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence. Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf. The family got the middle, and guests got the top, or "The Upper Crust".

Alan Mudge (86th) liked the Lightning print image used at the end of last month's Newsletter. His note said:

A fine ending to the newsletter. I served on 19(F) Sqn and its Lightning 2As at RAF Guetersloh from July 1975 until it disbanded in December 1976. I probably had the ejection seat, guns and missiles in and out or on and off on that particular aircraft on a number of occasions. That print hangs on the wall of my den and the die cast Corgi model is in my display cabinet, also in RAFG tone down green.

The print shows the aircraft with the cat and the motto "often licked but never beaten" when the boss was Pete van Gucci. His successor Bob Barcilon took over the same aircraft and the logo became a large Pink Panther.

Former ex-apprentices in the squadron armoury were boss armourer Brian Standen, Gordon Pratt, Ny Gutteridge, Bill Barker and me. Happy Days.

Note from Secretary: I put that picture of the Lightning in as I was also on 19 Sqn 1969/71 at RAF Gutersloh.

The results of the 500 Club draw for May are below.

1st prize of £602 goes to Derek (Min) Larkin, 63rd with lucky number 220

2nd prize of £301 goes to Bill Goble, 90th with lucky number 247

3rd prize of £151 goes to Keith Rann, 100th with lucky number 167

The Heritage Fund is the recipient of £451.

Congratulations to the lucky winners. Players are increasing month on month and we are indebted to Phil Sprinks for running and promoting the draw in his inimitable style! The odds of winning a nice little cash prize are very good, much better than most other draws in the marketplace. And the benefit to our Heritage fund cannot be underestimated. New players, please contact Phil by email at 500club@rafhaa.co.uk

The Summer edition of the Haltonian is taking shape and is likely to be a bumper issue. Besides all the information relating to voting in and virtually attending our live AGM on 25th September, our Editor Barry Hathaway (100th) is making our "Members" the theme for this issue. The issue should arrive through your letter boxes by mid-July.

Colin Ferrier (93rd), our Membership Secretary, joined the new Council at the time of our renaissance in April last year. He has been instrumental in completely overhauling our data base and has overseen a raft of changes to our membership terms and conditions. Colin now feels that it is time for him to step down and I have reluctantly accepted his resignation from the Council. Colin has done a splendid job on Council applying a level head to whatever problem transpired. He has served the Association in true ex-Halton spirit. As things happen, when one door shuts, another one opens! Mike Colcomb (152nd) has volunteered to take over Colin's role and will be nominated as Membership Secretary at the 2021 AGM. At 50 years, if elected, Mike wins the immediate accolade of reducing the average age of the Council by an astonishing margin! Well done to Mike for volunteering and we hope that there are others of you out there who will join our fight to see a lasting Heritage for

the Halton brat.

I am delighted that this Newsletter contains great news about the opportunities in 2022 for our members to meet. Nothing keeps one's feet more firmly on the ground than the banter of your old roommates. I can't wait!

Best wishes,

Frank Denton-Powell (90th)

Chairman RAFHAA

An updated version of last month's Route Lining chart. This is building up to be a unique piece of our history therefore if there are any additions please let me know and I will pass the information on to Ron Priest of the 207th Entry who is the compiler.

Secretary note: I remember doing Route Lining in the 103rd apart from Churchill's funeral, any Ton Threes out there remember when it was?

Year	Entry	Location	Event	Occasion
July 1961	96	London	National event	Unveiling of Lord Trenchard's statue
1963	various	London	Royal Premier	Royal Premier of The Great Escape. Halton trumpeters played the Royal Fanfare for Princess Margaret
July 1964	99	London	State Visit	King Paul I and Queen Frederika of Greece
Jan 1965	102, 103, 104, 105 plus ex 100	London	State Funeral	Winston Churchill Funeral 104 escorted the gun carriage
Jan 1966	Halton Brass Band Various Entries	London	State Funeral	Sir Winston Churchill
July	104, 105	London	State Visit	President Eduardo Frei

1965				Montalve of Chile
May 1966	205	London	State Visit	PPresident Franz Joseph of Austria
July 1966	107, 202	London	State Visit	King Hussein I Jordan
Nov 1966	205	London	State Visit	President Ayub Kahn of Pakistan
May 1967	107, 111, 206, 207	London	State Visit	King Faisal of Saudi Arabia
1967	207, 208	Royal Albert Hall	Pop Concert	Halton Brass band accompanied the Bee Gee's in concert
Aug 1967	207	Halton	Halton Parent's Day	Continuity Drill Display for Sir Douglas Bader
Nov 1967	205	London	State Visit	President Cevdet Sunay of Turkey
April 1968	211, 310	Abingdon	National Event	RAF 50 th Anniversary
July 1969	210, 213	London	State Visit	Pres. Urho Kekkonen Finland
Oct 1971	218, 219, 223	London	State Visit	Emperor Hirohito Japan
Dec 1971	218	London	State Visit	King Mohammed Zahir Shah Afghanistan
June 1972	224	London	State Visit	Grand Duke Jean Luxembourg
June 1972	223	Windsor	Funeral	Duke of Windsor (Edward VIII)
April 1972	219	Windsor	State Visit	Queen Juliana Netherlands
Nov 1973	120, 121, 122, 231	London	Royal Wedding	RW Princess Anne Wedding
April 1973	231	London	State Visit	Pres. Luis Echeverria Mexico
June 1973	121, 224	London	State Visit	Pres. Yakubu Gowan Nigeria
June 1973	231	London	State Visit	Pres. Luis Echeverria Mexico

Dec 1973	123	London	State Visit	Pres. Mbutu of Zaire
Apr 1974	123	London	State Visit	Queen of Denmark
June 1974	123	Windsor	Funeral	Duke of Gloucester
July 1974	123	London	State Visit	Yang di-Pertuan Agong Abdul Halim of Kedah Malaysia
July 1975	122, 125	Edinburgh	State Visit	King Carl XVI Sweden
July 1975	123	London	State Visit	King of Denmark
Nov 1975	123	London	State Visit	President of Tanzania
May 1976	123	London	State Visit	President of Brazil
July 1976	123	London	State Visit	President of France
May 1977	129	London	Royal Jubilee	Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee
Nov 1977	128	London	Remembrance Service	Reveille at Cenotaph Parade
April 1978	130	Westminster Abbey	Church Service	RAF 60 th Anniversary
June 1978	131	London	State Visit	President of Romania
Nov 1978	128	London	Remembrance Service	Reveille at Cenotaph Parade
Nov 1978	131	London	State Visit	President of Portugal
1978	128	London	Royal Event	HRH Queen Mother outside Albert Hall
1978 & 79	130	London	Capital Event	Lord Mayors Parade
June 1979	131	London	State Visit	President of Kenya
Sept 1979	130	London	State Funeral	Lord Mountbatten's Funeral
Nov 1979	131	London	State Visit	President of Indonesia

Nov 1980	131	London	State Visit	King of Nepal
Mar 1981	131	London	State Visit	President of Nigeria
29 July 1981	132, 133, 135, 136, 137	London	Royal Wedding	Charles and Dianne wedding
March 1982	??	London	State Visit	Sultan Quaboos Bin Said al Said of Oman
1984	140	Aromanche	WW2 Event	HM Queen Elizabeth II 40 th anniversary of D Day Landings
July 1986	144	London	Royal Wedding	Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson Wedding
Oct 1990	153	London	National Event	50 th anniversary of Battle of Britain
April 1991	??	Windsor Castle	State Visit	President Lech Walensa Poland
2000	A Mech E course	London	State Visit	Queen Margrethe II Denmark



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