



The 'Never Again' News

An occasional newsletter for members of 225 Entry, RAF Halton, Nov 1971 – Oct 1973

No 1 – July 2009

Welcome to the first edition of the 'Never Again' newsletter, the aim of which is to keep everyone that I have contacted informed of how the efforts to trace all of our entry are getting on, and also to act as a forum for any other news about members of 225 Entry. By doing it in this format I can send it out as an attachment direct to your email addresses and, hopefully, cut down on the amount of emails I have to send individually, while also ensuring that everyone gets the latest information. Your inputs for future editions would be very much appreciated.

SAD NEWS

Firstly, I must pass on some very sad news from Owl Hurst who has discovered that Kelvin Bullen died on 4 June 2009. Although the details are not known it would appear from an obituary in a Huntingdon newspaper that Kelvin had succumbed to cancer. Both Owl and Gordon Graham had worked alongside Kelvin in the years after we passed out and both have commented on what a good guy he was. Kelvin was a keen sportsman playing volleyball at a high standard and had represented the RAF.

MORE SAD NEWS

While on the theme of sad news perhaps now is the time to get it out of the way and hope that in future editions I'll not have too much more of it to report. In the various emails I've sent out over recent months I have mentioned many of those who have died along the way, but it's possible that some of you may not have received details of them all. So, the following 225 Entry members are also known to have died since we left Halton: -

Martin 'Wally' Walford	Ground Elect	Car accident, 3 March 1974
Dave Chitty	Airframes	Chinook crash, Falklands, 27 Feb 1987
Steve 'Scouse' Fryer	Airframes	Drowned in sailing accident, 7 March 2001
Paul Henry	Airframes	Knocked down by car, date unknown (post RAF).
'Willie' Killen	Airframes	Car accident, date unknown (post RAF).

If you have any further details on the circumstances, dates etc. I would very much appreciate them.

BETTER NEWS

My efforts to trace entry members are slowly gathering pace, although the RAF is now unable to help by forwarding letters to last known addresses, as they would have done in the past. To compile as complete as list as possible I ask that if you do have any contact details please can you pass them on as soon as possible. Even if you've not been in touch with someone for many years, but have an old address, that would at least enable me to send a letter in the hope that they've not moved or that it might be forwarded to them.

THE HAAA

Several of us are already members of the Halton Aircraft Apprentices Association but those of you who are not might consider joining. Details can be obtained at www.oldhaltonians.co.uk and current membership rates range from £8 per annum to £80 for life membership. As well as regular newsletters an attraction of joining is that they organise a major reunion every three years (the next is planned for September 2010). As this is a high-profile event all the facilities at Halton are put behind it and there are displays and events over the course of the day. Also this provides a regular opportunity for everyone to meet up, put on the rose-tinted spectacles, and have a blether about the 'good old days'. While I would like to see if it's possible to organize a initial reunion at the time of the 40th Anniversary of our arrival at Halton, it might make sense to thereafter fall into line with the HAAA Triennial reunions, perhaps arranging to meet and stay in a hotel somewhere not too far from Halton for a meal and a beer the night before. Your thoughts on this would be welcome.

WEBPAGE

I have arranged with Rob Rodham (223 Entry webmaster) for a simple webpage to be established and linked to the HAAA website so that any of the guys who happen to be surfing the net looking for information about Halton can find it. At this stage I have no plans (and certainly don't have the computer skills!) to construct a 'proper' website for the entry but should one of you fancy the challenge then I'm sure that everyone would appreciate your efforts.

A standard to aspire too is that of Rob Rodham's 223 Entry site with its comprehensive coverage of entry members, their subsequent careers, photographs etc. If you want to see what he's done, go to the HAAA site and follow the links to 'Entries' and then click on the '223 Entry' button.

OTHER LINKS WITH 223

Rob Rodham contacted me after a letter I had written was published in the HAAA newsletter and, apart from his generous offer to help with a webpage, he also reminded me that some members of his entry had been backflighted to us. He therefore forwarded my details to Bob 'Taff' Wilson who has since contacted me. To my eternal shame I had to admit to Bob that I didn't remember him, but hopefully some of you will. He was a Ground Leckie and after leaving 223 he was with us for about a year before the powers that be decided that he was 'too thick to remain' – his words not mine! However in later life he has become a Wing Commander in the RAFVR(T) in charge of ATC cadets down in West Wales, so his unsteady start to a career in RAF uniform worked out pretty well in the end.

One from 223 that I do remember was 'Mid' Myers, however, another ex-223 name that appears on the HAAA list does not register with me at all, despite him being a fellow rigger, and that is Steve Blemings, apparently a Geordie - do any of you remember him?

AND FINALLY

While it is very early days in my quest to re-establish contact with as many of our entry as possible, I hope that with your help the list can be expanded significantly over the coming months. As it stands I have so far contacted 8, have the addresses (hopefully current ones) for another 2 and promises of contact details for at least another 5 – making a total of 15, which is the best part of a fifth of the entry already. For the next edition I will try to remember to list everyone that I've made contact with.

All the best

Dickie Bird