



The 'Never Again' News

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

No 7 – July 2011

THE REUNION, 5th – 6th NOVEMBER 2011

Plans for the reunion are progressing well and Pete Schneider is doing an excellent job as our local contact in the Halton area. One aspect of the weekend that I hadn't anticipated, but is nonetheless welcome, is that the 120 Entry are also planning to celebrate their 40th anniversary at the same time. I don't remember much about them as they disappeared onto a different wing from the beginning and our paths didn't cross all that much thereafter, although I did bump into a couple of them about 10 years later at Odiham. The intention is that we will join with them for the events on the Sunday, but as it looks like we are staying in the same hotel for the Saturday night I'm sure we'll see them in the bar before then!

So far almost all that I've contacted have said they would like to attend the reunion (some wives will also be coming and more are most welcome). We are going to stay in the Holiday Inn at Weston Turville as it is only about three miles from Halton. They have initially reserved us 25 rooms and given us rates for the Saturday of £89 for a single room and £99 for a double (or twin if some of you want to share) and this includes breakfast and the Saturday evening meal (details of menu choices will be notified later), which will be served in a private function room. They are also offering a rate of £65 for a single and £75 for a double / twin room B & B per night if you want to extend your stay and include the Friday or Sunday nights.

THIS BIT IS IMPORTANT!

PLEASE BOOK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to avoid disappointment. To make a booking you can go to the hotel's website at www.holidayinn.com/hotels/us/en/aylesbury/aylbk/hoteldetail and insert the reference J1R in the box for group bookings. If the website doesn't show the prices quoted above, or if you have any other problems, you can phone the hotel's reservation desk on 01296 734024 instead. If

you are still having difficulties ask to speak to Jo Byron, Reservations & Conference Sales Manager, or phone her direct on 01296 734002. In both the latter instances please mention that you are booking as part of the 'RAF Reunion on 5th November' being organized by me – they know me by my real name, Derek Bird.

Once you have made your booking would you please let me know so that I can easily keep track of numbers and double check later with the hotel to ensure that everything tallies.

There will obviously be other costs involved but I hope to keep them down below £20 per head. For this sum we will aim to cover the cost of coach hire for us and the 120 Entry on the Sunday (Pete Schneider is investigating this for us) as this will not only make life a lot easier for the team looking after us at Halton, but it also means that anyone who is feeling a 'little fragile' in the morning doesn't have to risk driving while possibly still over the limit. It will also cover Sunday lunch in one of the Halton messes and donations to St George's Church and the Golden Oldies ex-apprentices pipe band who will be performing at various stages of the day.

MORE FOR THE LIST

Since the last edition contact has been made with several more of the entry, namely Merv Roberts, Chris Birch, Colin Murray, Dave Baines, John Lawson, Graham Wilson and Dave Moore. I have also re-established contact with Glyn Casey who has had a change of career and no longer works at Linton-on-Ouse. I have sent messages to another 10 that I've found on Forces Reunited but am still awaiting replies from them.

So that makes 27 now – please try to chase up any others that you know of who don't appear on the list.

Dave Baines	Chris Birch	Dickie Bird	Tony Borrett
Glyn Casey	Dave Cottrell	Martin Crown	Chris Desborough
George Fairbairn	Paul Farrall	Pete Firth	Gordon Graham
Owl Hurst	Tony Killick	Pete Knowles	John Lawson
Pat Minister	Iain Montgomerie	Dave Moore	Colin Murray
Mick Ogle	Merv Roberts	Dave Rouget	Pete Schneider
Ian Whaplington	Bob Wilson	Graham Wilson	

STAINED GLASS WINDOW

I have been in contact with a stained glass artist who has a studio at Leighton Buzzard to discuss the design, which she is now looking to put into reality. The intention is to have it completed and installed in time for dedication at the reunion. Unfortunately, as with everything else, the costs have risen in recent years (the previous artist used by several entries has retired and as her husband was an ex-Halton apprentice she had charged very favourable rates) and the completed window is likely to be in the region of £1,300 for its construction and painting plus a design fee and fitting on top of that, pushing the total to the wrong side of £1,600. I am still willing to underwrite the cost of this and will just ask for your generous support in donations towards the cost of the entry window - cheques or bundles of cash in plain brown envelopes are equally acceptable!

HALTON GROVE

Many of you will be aware of the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) at Alrewas, Staffordshire. It is the centre of remembrance in the UK for many organizations both civilian and military and is also the site of the Armed Forces Memorial commemorating all servicemen and women who have died on duty since the beginning of 1948; the names of two members of our entry, Dave Chitty and Steve Fryer, are carved on it.

Some years ago the Halton Grove was established at the NMA to commemorate all of the apprentices who have passed through Halton. In recent months a major re-vamp of the site has been underway and now surrounding a 15-metre diameter representation of the apprentice wheel is a path made up of several rings of small (approx 8" x 8") pavers. There are enough pavers on the inner ring to allow one to be engraved for every entry and so that our entry is not conspicuous by its absence I have purchased one. It will simply have our entry number, the dates we were at Halton and our motto engraved on it. The idea is have the refurbishment of the grove and all the entry pavers in place for the 90th anniversary of the apprentice scheme in 2012.

FOR ANY NEWCOMERS

For those of you receiving this as your first 'Never Again' News let me know if you would like copies of the previous editions and I will email them out to you. Also there is much of interest on the Halton Apprentices Association website at www.oldhaltonians.co.uk if you haven't found that already. Also, if you have any photos from our time at Halton you'd like to share please send them to me (a reasonable resolution scan attached to an email is fine) and I'll happily put them in future editions

CAPTION COMPETITION – THE WINNER

I am pleased to announce that the winner of the Caption Contest in the last edition is Pete Firth. His entry (chosen from a list of one!) was: -

Pete Schneider: I'm holding a large calibre weapon.

Pat Minister: So am I!



PULLING THE BIRDS!



Here's a photo from Mick Ogle that's believed to have been taken on the first trip down to London after we were 'allowed out'. From Left to Right we have: Richard Tribe, Nigel Morse, Ken Scott, Pat Minister, Mick Ogle, Gordon Graham and Merv Roberts.

AND FINALLY

Please make every effort to be at the reunion, it promises to be a great couple of days renewing old friendships and having a good old chinwag to find out what we've all been up to since we last saw each other, which in many cases is the 38 years since we passed out. There are still about 50 from the entry who I've not managed to contact and any help you can give would be very much appreciated. For example if you are an aficionado of Facebook and the like (Forces Reunited is the limit of my foray into the world of 'social networking') perhaps you would be willing to search for me – I have a list of names I can forward.

All the best and I hope to see you all in November.

Dickie Bird