Scorpion News

No 84 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION, RAF

PRESIDENT ARTHUR GILL
CHAIRMAN MIKE CHAPPLE
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN MIKE FAULKNER
SECRETARY & TREASURER BRENDA COTTRELL
REUNION ORGANISER DEREK WHITTAKER
GENERAL NEWS EDITOR TREVOR WRIGHT
ARCHIVIST CHAZ SCOWEN

ASSOCIATION CORRESPONDENCE should be addressed as below

Mike Chapple
Springwood
Felcourt Road
Felcourt
East Grinstead
West Sussex
RH19 2LD
01342 870643

Mike Faulkner
“Lon Deg”
Llanythenled
Anglesey
LL65 3DD
01407 740523

Arthur Gill
The Granary
The Cricketers Croft
Little Dewchurch
Herefordshire
HR2 6PN
01432 840986

Brendan Cottrell
67 Hillhouse Road
Downend
Bristol
BS16 5RT
0117 9871058

Derek Whittaker
32 Delaware Avenue
Albrighton
West Midlands
WV7 3BW
01902 441153

Chaz Scowen
33 Blenheim Road
Conningsby
Lincs
01526 343614

Trevor Wright
8 Surfleet Road
Surfleet
Spalding
Lincs
PE11 4AG
01775 680427

ARTHUR GILL gill@power2go.co.uk
MIKE CHAPPLE mwpcchapple@btinternet.com
MIKE FAULKNER michael.faulkner1@tesco.net
BRENDA COTTRELL brendancottrell@blueyonder.co.uk
DEREK WHITTAKER derekwhittaker@blueyonder.co.uk
TREVOR WRIGHT scorpion84@btinternet.com
CHAZ SCOWEN cscowen@btinternet.com

Views in this publication are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the Association or its officers
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Important News Flash</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biopic of new editor</td>
<td>6&amp;7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop Press Hot News</td>
<td>8&amp;9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffins Fire Fighting in Israel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akrotiri Update</td>
<td>10-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 AGM Derby Minutes</td>
<td>13-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Reunion Update</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 54 Annual Reunion</td>
<td>17-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update on XP-345</td>
<td>21&amp;22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From YHPG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obituaries</td>
<td>23-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apartment to rent near Larnaca</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN

You cannot imagine how pleased I am to be writing the foreword to this edition of Scorpion News. My last written message was in the form of a Newsletter when we had just lost the services of our illustrious news editor, but I am so pleased that we now have another willing volunteer, Trevor Wright, who introduces himself later. A very warm welcome Trevor.

This edition contains the usual cross-section of varied and interesting articles, and as always I am so grateful to the contributors, particularly from the new OC 84 Squadron Sqn Ldr Strookman. It is obvious that the Squadron continues to flourish, and has been very much in the international news recently as described later. Welcome aboard, Sir, and I can assure you that your contributions to the Association and its publications are eagerly read by members both at home and abroad. It is inevitable that there are obituaries in this edition, but in a strange way I find them fascinating reading because it reminds us of the Squadron’s long and varied history, so ably documented by our President. I tend to assume that you are all content with the format and content of Scorpion News because, despite repeated requests from me, we do not receive any suggestions or contributory articles. Please correct me if I am wrong.

The AGM last September was a great success, despite slightly reduced numbers and a somewhat indifferent service from the hotel. From the feedback received your Committee has decided to change the AGM venue for 2011, as described later by our reunion organiser Derek Whittaker. However I will make the point again that it is you, the members, who determine the success of our Association events and I am so grateful to you and your families, both young and not so young, who make this Association tick and thrive.

I will end with another plea, that you keep your Committee informed of your personal details, whether it is a new address, phone number or e-mail address. We are trying new methods to keep in touch with you all, and I ask that you respond accordingly with quick responses and corrections.

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and that the New Year began well for you. I promise you that your Committee is working hard behind the scenes on your behalf, particularly in determining a new AGM weekend venue and a possible visit to Cyprus and the Squadron in the next 12 to 18 months. Please keep in touch.
A NEWS FLASH

Very Important please read

This is from personal experience:

I travel all around the UK and Europe in the course of my work, and like many people tend to take advantage of any special credit card deals current at the time.

My Warning To You All Is Be Very Careful

Last month I received a credit card statement showing £79.00 owing. Nothing wrong in that I hear you say. The credit card had been paid off and closed nearly 2 years ago! Needless to say I phoned up and was slightly irate with the company concerned. I asked how it was possible to receive a bill for an account which I no longer had a card for. Also why had I got late payment charges and a threat of Credit Reference Damage.

They explained to me that a hotel had charged my old for a booking, this happened because the booking service had submitted the wrong (out of date) card details. The hotel then forced the payment through to secure payment. How can that be done I hear you ask?

Once this was all sorted out the credit card company phoned me and explained the procedure. Even though I had a letter dated 2 years before stating that the account was closed with a zero balance, it remains on file as dormant. Any vendor can force through payments on an old account up to £1,000.00. this is to allow any standing orders etc such as AA Membership and TV licence to be paid if the account holder forgets to change the standing orders.

I asked how long can a dormant / closed account be accessed for, are you ready for this?

Answer

6 Years

So lesson to us all is be careful
Quick Biopic On New Editor

A Lincolnshire yellow belly born near Boston in 1953. Joined the RAF in 1969 as Airframe Craft Apprentice where I met and married Jill in 1971. As we hadn't told anyone we were getting married we thought it would be a good idea to get as far away as possible from any family flack, I get posted to the Nimrod Major Servicing Unit and Jill got posted to the dental centre as a DSA. We then got posted to Thorney Island on Helicopter Base Servicing before moving up to Finningly when Thorney closed. After spending a couple of years in Yorkshire during which time our daughter died of a cot death, we were lucky and got a posting to 84 Squadron ‘B’ Flight, Nicosia in May 1977. Jill was expecting again at this point but unfortunately we lost another little girl at Christmas 77, she is now resident in Dhekelia Military Cemetery.

On returning to the UK we were posted to Lyneham, I had asked for Chinooks, still I suppose they got the colour and size right. We only stayed at Lyneham for about a year before being posted back to Kinloss, this time as Sgt rigger on the line. During this time I was involved in the “Falklands War” as the only one who knew about “In-flight refuelling and sidewinder missiles”. (if they only knew) Returning from the South Atlantic I found that I had been selected to train as an NDT Technician, so off to Swanton Morley for a while. Returned to Kinloss where the NDT team looked after all aircraft based in Scotland and detached wherever in the World. I spent another few weeks at Akrotiri in 82/3 during the evacuation of the Lebanon. The all went quiet until 85 when I was elected to visit Australia on exchange for 3 months where I worked on Chinooks, F-111’s and Iroquois, also bought a car so we could visit Surfers Paradise every couple of days. (Busy or what).

On returning to the UK I found that I had been posted to CSDE at Swanton Morley where I was to spend the next 6 years or so. Initially developing inspection techniques for Tornado, Phantom F4J-UK and Engines before being elevated to upstairs where I wrote specifications for equipment and patented a couple of new NDT methods.

I eventually left the RAF as a Chief Technician in 93 after some 24 years when sadly Swanton Morley closed.
On leaving the RAF I worked for a couple of small companies as sales and quality manager before ending up back in the aviation field. I now work as an Aerospace Chemical Sales Engineer and MOD Liaison for what used to be Ardrox and is now owned by Chemetall a German company based in Frankfurt. This involves travelling throughout the UK and Europe training both Airline Staff and Contractors so I generally strap a car to my rear end on a Monday and take it off on a Friday. That’s why I volunteered to edit the SN, as I spend so much time in hotels I thought I would put the time to good use and stay out of the bars?

I consider myself to be very lucky as my hobby is also tied up with my job. Being an ex-rigger people from all over the World call me and ask what to do with aircraft restoration projects. I have been involved with several projects ranging from Bleriots Monoplane Engine to several Spitfires etc even the restoration of Donald Cambells boat Bluebird. It is a good thing that I have a very understanding wife to support me.

In my spare time I am Vice Chairman and Poppy Organiser for the local Royal British Legion, member of our village committee. I still help Father Christmas when he is busy. Jill and I now live in Surfleet near Spalding and have one daughter, three grandchildren and oh three dogs. We have our own apartment near Larnaca in Cyprus where we spend quite a bit of time, more of this later. See Page 26.
STOP PRESS:
Early December 2010
84 Sqn DEPLOY TO ISRAEL TO HELP COMBAT MASSIVE FOREST FIRES

Two 84 Sqn Griffin helicopters were involved in fire-fighting operations in Israel, which lasted for 4 days. During this time, the Sqn flew over 31 hrs, dropping some 222 buckets of water. A huge and rapid-response to assist a neighbouring country; efforts that have received considerable acclaim at every level. A good job very well done!

Looks like this one was in a hurry to get somewhere?
Not a site to be seen every day with the Israeli flag.

The squadrons fame has spread far and wide, Jill and I were on holiday in Malta and this was quite a big news event
More pictures of the Fire Fighting Trip to Israel From OC 84 Sqd.
As I put pen to paper for my first article for ‘Scorpion News’, I cannot believe that I have been ‘in the chair’ for over 6 months where does the time go? And a very interesting and, to my mind fruitful 6 months it has been.

I arrived in April and was given a superb handover (as you might expect) from my predecessor: ‘Peebs’. Having taken command on 30 April and suitably briefed on the vagaries of HQ BFC, the Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs), Cypriot politics etc I promptly disappeared back to the UK to do my Griffin conversion course (!), leaving 84 Sqn in the very capable hands of my 2IC: Flt Lt Adam Shipley. Returning to the Island on 8 June, this time accompanied by my family Sally, Jacob (9) and Abigail (6) the next month was occupied not only with the theatre conversion (mentored by the Sqn QHI, Flt Lt Martin Othen) but also settling the family into life at RAF Akrotiri.

So one month in: Conversion complete…”check”; family getting settled…”check”; Sqn functioning well…”check’. What’s next? STA-NEVAL!!

The SAR StanEval Team arrived on 14 September and stayed with us for 10 days. On the whole I was very pleased with the outcome: the overall assessment was good, with some areas notably Flying Supervision of excellence. Naturally, there were some aspects that need work and I welcome the Team’s guidance in helping to hone 84 Sqn even yet further. However, one major observation has impacted on Sqn manning and, hence, operational effectiveness: winchman Immediate Emergency Care (IEC) skills. Whilst this has ‘upset the apple cart’ somewhat especially for the winchmen concerned I am convinced that this is a system failure (not an individual one) and have, consequently, ‘gone into bat’ with Manning at 2* level! to ensure said system is fixed.

With the dramas of StanEval behind us, 84 Sqn has settled into what classes as ‘normal’ day-to-day running. Training continues apace, which is interspersed with the occasional SAROP and fire-fighting sortie. In the latter regard, the Sqn was very busy over a 2-day period (14 – 15 Sep).
Scorpion News

where both standby crews were involved in fighting numerous fires in the Vouni and Pakhna areas.
The Sqn flew over 14 hours dropping 49 bucket-loads on the Monday alone.

Outwith the improvements suggested by the StanEval Team, other Sqn enhancements are on my radar. I’ve already mentioned rearcrew manning; however, I’m very keen that rearcrew conversion training is robust, ensuring prospective Sqn winchops/navs and winchmen are fully equipped for the rigours of operating the Griffin before they arrive on Island. Also, the Sqn has not been able to operate the Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR) system recently for various reasons and I am looking to regain this capability in the very near future.

At present, 84 Sqn is lucky to have a couple of holding officers and two holding sergeants on the books. As I look from my office window, they are busy putting the finishing touches to a re-vamped garden area! (Well, you wouldn’t want them to be bored!) Joking apart, I look for those holding with 84 Sqn to do some odd jobs for me primarily to improve ‘quality of life’ on the Sqn but I insist that they get airborne at every opportunity and also take advantage of and enjoy to the fullest all that Cyprus, and RAF Akrotiri, has to offer.

So, the Sqn is looking good and I have plans to move it forward at a ‘tactical’ level: within the Sqn. Strategically, I also have some ideas and the key message for 2011 is liaison, liaison with SBA assets, Republic of Cyprus (RoC) authorities, and the Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) recently moved from Episkopi to RAF Akrotiri. Only ideas at the moment, but I hope to implement change early in the New Year.

Flourishing to my mind is not too strong a word to use for 84 Sqn at the moment. I think many of you will be surprised at how small the Sqn is now: the establishment is for 13 aircrew, 5 support staff and 6 civilian engineers far less than in the past. That said, 84 Sqn achieves the task very effectively and exemplifies the key tenets of today’s Royal Air Force. It certainly is ‘Agile, Adaptable and Capable’.
Enough of my ravings hopefully many of you will get to see 84 Sqn for yourselves soon. I am very enthusiastic about the proposed 84 Sqn Association visit to Cyprus rest assured, the small team that is 84 Sqn will endeavour to make the visit one to remember.

‘Hoot & Roar!’

Richard D Strookman
Sqn Ldr
OC 84 Sqn

New Hooters

WELCOME

STEVE EATON joined us in November last. Having completed his technical training Steve’s first posting was with 19 squadron at Chivenor. He then worked at Cottesmore before completing a fitters course at Cosford. He moved back to Cottesmore to work with the Harrier maintenance flight. He then served with 84 Squadron from July 2001 to April 2003 as a Junior Tech. Eng Tech A. He had a posting to Benson on the Puma maintenance flight before ending his service with EWAD at Waddington.

Mr R Kittle
18 Bullimore Grove
Kenilworth
Warwickshire
CV8 2QF
rayandjankittle@btinternet.com

CALLING ALL FORMER VALETTA/VARSITY PILOTS/CREW/ENGINEERS

I am embarking on a new research project and am particularly keen to make contact with former crew who flew/were involved with these two aircraft types during their service careers. I would appreciate it if individuals would contact me in the first instance when I would provide full details of the project. I can be contacted at the above addresses.

“Thank You”
THE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Saturday, 25th September, 2010 at the Hallmark Hotel, Derby

The Chairman, Mike Chapple opened the meeting at 4.30 pm and extended a warm welcome to all members present. He extended a special welcome to two members attending the reunion for the first time. Neil Turner and George Muir were then invited to give a brief summary of their service with the squadron. They did so and were warmly greeted by all members present.


Minutes. The minutes of the 2009 AGM were accepted as a true record of the proceedings.

Matters Arising. No matters were raised by the assembled members.

Secretary/Treasurer’s Report. Brendan Cottrell opened his report by presenting the Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31st March, 2010. He was pleased to report that our Association funds are in a healthy state, We have a total of £2,954.41 which is £422 up on last year’s figures. This is because we have had no items of major expenditure during the last year. That happy state of affairs has enabled us to meet the cost of the coach for this year’s outing to Chatsworth where the entry fees were rather high. Our membership numbers remain buoyant as we continue to have a low but steady trickle of new members each year.
He finished his report by recording his thanks to Keith Edwards for auditing the accounts once again this year.

Reunion Secretary’s Report. Derek Whittaker commenced his report by outlining the timings for the reunion banquet. Derek went on to report that on a recent visit to Cyprus he had met the new Boss, Sqn.Ldr Richard Strookman on the 12th September. He had been assured that the new boss was going to be an enthusiastic supporter of the Association and that only his commitments (primarily training at Shawbury) had prevented him producing his piece for the previous S.N.. Derek had also been assured that association members would be made very welcome if they wished to visit the Squadron in Cyprus.

He then went on to tell the AGM that from a practical point of view a proposed visit to Cyprus in Spring 2011 would be too difficult. He therefore wished to know whether a visit in October 2011 or Spring 2012 would be preferable. He pointed out that the hotel previously used by us (Mediterranean Beach, Limassol) had become prohibitively expensive and that he would research other hotels there. He thought that we should consider Paphos as a venue. That suggestion prompted general discussion amongst members present and it was agreed that we should produce a piece for the next edition of Scorpion News canvassing members opinions on preferred dates and resorts. Guy Hallam offered to approach the airline for which he worked in order to see if a good deal could be worked out on flight charges. His offer was gratefully accepted. Derek finished his report by asking the members present if we should continue to hold our reunions at the Hallmark, Derby or look elsewhere. Over the last couple of years there had been a considerable amount of negative feedback on the service provided by the hotel and because of this he had, prior to the AGM, done some research and paid a visit to the Holiday Inn, Telford. He had dined there prior to the hotel knowing that we may wish to move the reunion there. The food and services were excellent. He had paid a second formal visit and was shown typical bedrooms, function rooms and other facilities including a fitness suite and a large swimming pool. The Holiday Inn had quoted £55 pp per night for dinner, B&B. That is comparable to the rates that we currently enjoy at Hallmark. There were plenty of local options for outings including the excellent RAF Museum at Cosford.
There followed another lively discussion on changing our reunion venue and a show of hands very strongly supported the change recommended by the committee. Derek finished his report by requesting that as many members as possible should contact the committee if they had any reservations or observations regarding the proposed change of venue.

**News Editor’s Report.** There was no report to present. The Chairman, Mike Chapple announced with regret that Terry Butcher had been obliged to relinquish his position as editor because of domestic and work difficulties but that he hoped at some time in the future, when circumstances permitted, to make some contribution to the Association again. Mike then announced that he had accepted on the association’s behalf an offer from Trevor Wright to take on the task of Editor of Scorpion News and asked the meeting to endorse his action. Everyone present supported his action and welcomed the appointment of Trevor. Work commitments had prevented Trevor from attending this reunion but he would certainly do so in future. Keith Edwards proposed a vote of thanks to Terry Butcher for his contribution to the Association over the last few years. The proposal was endorsed by all present.

**Election Of Committee.** The Chairman informed the meeting that the present committee members were willing to serve in their various capacities for a further year. There were no counter proposals from the floor and the present committee was approved to serve for another year.

**Any Other Business.** Jack Partington and some other members had today taken the opportunity to visit the National Arboretum at Alrewas and were pleased to report that trees there that were dedicated to the squadron were in a healthy state and greatly enhanced by the new permanent metal plaques that had been installed there in 2007.

Our President, Arthur Gill proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and all the committee members for their considerable work on behalf of the Association during the last year. The proposal was endorsed with acclaim by all present.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 17.10pm.
84 Squadron Association Reunion 2011

The Association reunion for 2011 will be held at Grays Hotel, Telford, TF3 4NA, over the weekend of 23rd and 24th September. The hotel is approximately 100 metres from junction 5 of the M54 motorway and 300 metres from Telford Central railway station. We have taken a decision to move from Derby. The committee and those people who gave us their views were overwhelmingly in favour of a move. Grays Hotel is the former Lloyds Bank training centre and is quite modern with all the usual 3 star amenities plus a pool and gym. There are no twin rooms. It is on the edge of Telford Shopping Centre for the ladies and includes a Wetherspoons pub for the gentlemen. For those on t’ internet more details can be found at www.southwaterevents.com

I am still negotiating the final price but it will be similar to last year’s (£58-00p D,B&B per person, per night).

It is hoped but not yet confirmed that the Saturday coach trip will be to the RAF Museum at Cosford, a mere 10 miles away. On our last visit to this museum all those taking part returned enthusing about the visit. Since then a £14 million pound ‘Cold War’ exhibition has been created including a massive new hangar. The hangar encloses a wide range of aircraft from that era, many of which are mounted as if in flight. The Lightning is suspended from the ceiling in a vertical climb! The Whirlwind appears to be out-climbing it!!

Important: please fill in the included booking form and return before the end of January 2011.

The reason for this is that we do not have a ‘track record’ with this hotel group and therefore they cannot be confident we will turn up in the numbers I have intimated to them. I am worried that should another large group, wedding may want the hotel and in today’s financial climate they would understandably release the rooms to a definite booking. Also please note that no deposit is required.

If you wish to avoid postage costs please send me an email with your booking. I shall be sending an email to all those people who have contacted me in this way in the past.

Derek Whittaker
The 54th Annual Reunion

by Arthur Gill:

I find it hard to understand that, with rain falling all around us to the North, South, East and West, Derby should be bathed in sunshine. We have to thank the good Lord once again for giving us sunshine and blue skies throughout our weekend. Maybe 84 Squadron is one of His favourites?

Our numbers were down this year to 85, compared with 92 last year. But it was good to meet old friends again and new members. We are grateful to all those who travelled long distances to be with us once again - especially Peter Bolton (Beverley pilot) and Diane, who had flown over from Canada to be with us. Sadly, Robin Berkshire had to be rushed to hospital with severe pains in his stomach and missed dining with us. Thankfully he recovered well and returned home safely. (Our thanks go to Brendan and Derek for all the help they gave Robin, in so many ways over the weekend).

It was great to see again so many old friends and meet our new members - Neil Turner and George Muir who were attending for the first time. But we were sad that George and Audrey Hickson from Canada could not be with us this year; and I was hoping that Nicola Smith (the RAF’s first female squadron commander) could have joined us, for the first time. We were especially sad that Reg Wargent and Tricia could not to be with us, due to their son, Jonathan’s very serious motorcycle accident. (Those who were unable to be with us and sent their regrets and their good wishes for a successful weekend, are listed in the AGM report).

We awoke to bright sunshine in a cloudless sky on Saturday. After breakfast, a party left by coach to visit Chatsworth, the 17th century mansion of the Cavendish family. The south front was built in 1687 by William Talman on the River Derwent for the first Duke of Devonshire. It was a perfect day to see the gardens and water features in the great park and many will remember that ‘Pride and Prejudice’ was filmed here. Other members visited the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in the National Forest, created by Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC in memory of all
those who lost their lives in the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force, the Prisoners of War of the Japanese, and all the many other services - including the Fire Service and Police. Members looked at the trees planted in memory of those members of 84 Squadron who died in WW1 in France, Belgium and Germany, and in WW2 in Greece, the Western Desert, the Far East and in Burma, and during the years in between in Iraq. Others members visited Matlock and ascended almost a mile in the cable railway to the top of the Heights of Abraham to visit the museum and to admire the lovely Derbyshire scenery in brilliant sunshine.

On our return, the members attended the Annual General Meeting under the chairmanship of Michael Chapple at 1600 hours. (See separate report). After which we had time to see Chaz Scowen’s memorabilia room in which we found both old and new mementoes, photographs and scorpions from bygone days on the Squadron.

At 1900 hours, 84 members, wives and sweethearts and members of their families assembled in the Garden Room (maybe for the last time) where they were greeted and encouraged to buy raffle tickets by our dedicated ‘Raffle Ladies’. At 2000 hours, dinner was served. After Michael Faulkner had said Grace, we sat down to a good dinner of onion soup, roast sirloin of beef and all the trimmings, followed by summer fruit and cream in brandy baskets, and coffee. After dinner, Brendan Cottrell proposed the loyal toast to ‘Her Majesty The Queen’; followed by toasts to ‘No 84 Squadron’ and ‘Absent Friends’.

After a short break to stretch our legs, the Chairman welcomed all the guests, including the new members. As there were no voluntary speakers, the Chairman gave a very amusing talk about his early days of flying in Scotland, including flying his helicopter under the railway bridge over the River Forth! After Mike Chapple’s witty talk, which had many of us crying with laughter, he asked Jane Lisle and her daughter Robyn, and assisted by Derek, to run the raffle. Thanks to the Raffle Ladies and our generous members and our guests, the raffle raised £430. Added to this, another £107 was raised by Jane’s two ‘mystery gifts’ and other items donated for the auction, including two unique china mugs embellished with the Squadron crest. Plus another £50.50 by the sale of souvenirs and other merchandise. Thank you one and all for your generosity towards
the Association funds.

I thought I was late to bed at 02.30; but, next morning, I discovered that the ‘late birds’ did not retire until 04.30! What did they talk about all night?

Our grateful thanks go to Mike, our Chairman and to our committee members, especially Derek, for yet another excellent weekend. We do appreciate all that you do for us throughout the year to keep our Association buoyant and to keep us together. The only sad note is that the weekend always passes too quickly and, as the Chairman said, there is never enough time to meet and chat to everyone present. (Which is a good reason why we should go to Cyprus for a week or two, at the invitation of the present Squadron Commander - Squadron Leader Richard Strookman).

Finally, may I appeal to all those members who were unable to be with us in 2010, to make a really special effort to join us this year - at whichever venue the Committee decides to hold our next annual reunion, and meet both old friends and new. To those members who were not well enough to be with us at our last reunion, we send you our very best wishes.

To all our members, wherever you are, thank you for your friendship and loyal support. May God bless you and your families and keep you safe.

Association Memorabilia for Sale

The following items are still available from the Secretary. Prices include VAT, postage and packing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scorpion Ties (Navy Blue or Maroon)</td>
<td>£7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloth Blazer Badges (Black or Navy Background)</td>
<td>£6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Rings (With Squadron Badge)</td>
<td>£2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enamel Lapel Badges</td>
<td>£3.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confucious say,

If you are in a bookshop and you cannot find the book you are looking for, you are obviously in the ….

Answer on next page
A fat girl served me food in McDonalds at lunch time, she said sorry about the wait! I said “don't worry fatty your bound to lose it eventually”

Snow in the forecast!
The TV weather gal said she was expecting 8” tonight. I thought to myself, “Fat Chance with a face like that”
Yorkshire Helicopter Preservation Group – Update on Whirlwind XP345

It is now over a year since we had the immense pleasure of rolling out our restored Westland Whirlwind, MK-10, XP345, resplendent in her 84 Squadron markings. Many of the Association Members were present at the ceremonial at Doncaster which made the day so special for us. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all once again for the support that you have shown us during the project and hopefully in the future.

Since September 2009, we have continued to work on ‘345’ and completed much of the work which was not achieved by roll-out. One of the main tasks was repairs to the cabin floor which is now fully completed. Some of the other smaller tasks we had managed to hide from most prying eyes, but not all, and they have been finished off. For anyone who had noticed, the stencilling has now been finished and XP345 is now in the Museum hangar and has been widely acclaimed as a fitting representative of the vast amount of service in the support helicopter role carried out by the Whirlwinds and their crews both air and ground throughout the world. As the only one in any UK museum in this scheme it is especially important and it is also very fitting that XP345 is in the colours of 84 as the final operators of the type.

We have had a great response following the publication in internationally renowned aviation magazine, Flypast, of a five page article on the restoration project and the aircraft’s history. Several ex – 84 chaps have been in contact from around the world and we have had one or two visit the Museum to see the helicopter and meet up with others. At YHPG we feel that this is a very important part of ‘what we do’ and we have been delighted to point them in the direction of 84 Squadron Association where appropriate.

Also during the summer, your own Trevor Wright was able to make good use of our Whirlwind ‘simulator’ at an event to support the Royal British Legion in his area.
Unfortunately there was a problem with the chain drive mechanism due to failure of a bracing strut, but being an ex 84 rigger on Whirlwinds he was taken back in time to crawl about in the workings at regular intervals to keep it working. I can promise you now Trevor that the problem has been permanently fixed.

The Yorkshire Helicopter Preservation Group wishes all the members of 84 Squadron and the Association the very best for 2011 and look forward to seeing some of you at the Museum soon.

Alan Beattie
Y.H.P.G.

For all those people who have never been to the museum, it is well worth a day out. Otherwise visit:

http://www.helicopter-preservation-yhpg.org.uk/

XP-345 In Her New Home
OBITUARIES

Warrant Officer Douglas Charles ARGENT
RAFVR-Navigator-1940-46

We were extremely sorry to hear from Douglas' wife, Betty that Douglas had died on the 30th October 2010 aged 89. Sadly, he had been suffering acute pain from rheumatoid arthritis for some years.

Douglas joined 84 Squadron, as a navigator on short-nosed Bristol 'Blenheims' Mk 1s, at Mosel in North Iraq in 1941, when we were fighting the German forces. From there we moved to Egypt and into the Western Desert, under the command of Wg Cdr. Clayton Boyce.

Unfortunately, the Squadron was withdrawn from the desert on the 3rd January 1942 when we were doing so well; quickly re-equipped with new or reconditioned 'Blenheim' Mk 4s, and left for the Far East 11 days later, after Singapore had fallen to the Japanese. The first flight, led by Flt Lt John Wyllie, with Douglas Argent as his navigator, left Heliopolis on 14th January 1942 and flew via Iraq, Arabia, India, Burma, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to Sumatra, a 40 hour flight.

Operations started from Palembang immediately and within five weeks we had lost 24 'Blenheims' and numerous aircrews as the Japanese overran us. The CO, Wing Commander John Jeudwine picked a crew of eleven and sailed in an open ship's lifeboat to Australia in 44 days, to try to obtain help for those left behind on the beaches. The main party of ground crew arrived at Oosthaven in Southern Sumatra by ship from Egypt. A few reached Java where they were later joined by members of the main ground party. A few escaped by ship to Australia and 132 reached India in April. The remainder of the 605 members of 84 Squadron were either killed or taken prisoner by the Japanese, including Douglas who survived nearly four years in captivity - starved, ill-treated and beaten, with only a handful of rice each to feed them every day. Despite that, Douglas formed a concert party to try to maintain some semblance of morale during those dreadful days.
After Douglas and the other prisoners were released in 1946, he became an actor and stage director. In 1958, he joined the BBC and worked his way up to becoming a producer and director - producing some of the greatest comedies we have ever seen - such as 'Fawlty Towers', 'Steptoe and Son' and 'The Liver Birds' in which his future wife, the actress Elizabeth Benson played parts. Douglas' films included 'The Colditz Story', 'The Battle of the River Plate' and 'The Adventures of Sir Lancelot' in which he played parts. As he approached the mandatory retirement age of 60 with the BBC, Douglas joined ITV as a freelance director, directing such episodes as 'The Lady is a Tramp' and the 'EastEnders'.

Douglas and Betty were the most modest and unpretentious couple I have ever met. They seldom spoke of their great achievements in the theatre and with the BBC and ITV, of which we will probably never fully appreciate. A lovely couple who had one son, Nicholas. We grieve with them over their sad loss.

A.M.G.
I was very sad to hear that one of my navigators on Vultee ‘Vengeance’ dive-bombers had died on the 19th November 2010 aged 88, after a very long illness. Thankfully, he died peacefully in his sleep.

Denys, a young, fresh-faced flight-sergeant joined the Squadron in December 1943, straight from training in England. We were then training with General Wintgate’s Long Range Penetration Groups (the 3rd Indian Division) at Maharajpur in Gwalior, Central India. (See page 74 in ‘Scorpions Sting’ - the story of 84 Squadron). Denys quickly settled into the ways of this unique squadron and flew on numerous operations against the Japanese after we moved into Burma in early 1944.

After the Second World War ended, Denys returned to England where he became a chartered accountant and a partner with Merrett & Street and Binder Hamlyn, well-known accountants in the City of London.

Denys met Patricia, a qualified nurse who, for many years, devotedly dedicated herself to nursing Denys in his latter years in their home near Farnham, Hampshire. Patricia had three children - Jacqueline, Suzanne and Christopher, to whom we sent our sincere condolences in their sad loss.

A.M.G.
Larnaca Superb Luxury 2 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom, Apartment with Communal Pool
Discount Offered to Association Members

Luxury Two Bedroom, Two Bathroom, Second Floor Apartment in Oroklini near Larnaca. Spacious Sitting Room, Fully Fitted Kitchen, Master Bedroom with En-Suite, Twin Bedroom, Main Bathroom, Full Air Conditioning / Heating, Large Balcony, Communal Pool. Sleeps 4 Adults 1 Child on Fold Up plus Baby (Travel Cot) or 2 Adults and 3 Children & 1 Baby (Travel Cot) Quiet location and conveniently situated only 20 minutes drive from Larnaca Airport, 10 minutes drive from Larnaca Town and about two thirds of a mile from the beach. Shops and Restaurants are located nearby both in the Village and on the Sea Front. The Apartment is furnished to a high standard and there is allocated undercover car parking. Open plan living room / kitchen / dining area, patio doors leading on to large balcony. Access by lift or stairs. Balcony overlooks pool, sea and mountains. Plenty of places in the Village with free Wi Fi. Also car available with Apartment

About 1 hour 15 minutes from Akrotiri.

For more details contact Jill or Trevor:

Tel No: 01775-680427
Email: jill_wright8@btinternet.com