



Qualitas Non Quantitas

95th Entry
Halton Apprentices

Newsletter

Number 11

January 2008



50th Anniversary of Attestation



As advised in the previous Newsletter, the Planning Team have incorporated a social event in Australia in 2010, to mark the 50th anniversary of our attestation into the Royal Air Force or the Royal Rhodesian Air Force, respectively. This decision has not been taken lightly.

After considerable detailed discussion we came to the conclusion that this venture is a colossal undertaking, will not appeal to everyone and would be near impossible to arrange/organise a Group Tour.

Consequently, inside this newsletter you will find a pseudo invitation which solicits your company to an “**Audacious Social Event**” on:

Thursday 22 April 2010

in

Sydney, New South Wales

Australia

Obviously, you will be required to make your own travel arrangements to be there.

Much more information inside

BUT FIRST, A REPORT FROM THE 2007 STRATFORD REUNION

After our 40th reunion it was decided to have a 'get together' every 5 years, however, our latest gathering took place at the Falcon Hotel in the very picturesque town of Stratford upon Avon in April 2007.

This was some 44 years after we graduated. "An odd time" I hear you say! Well, 45 would have been the chosen time but we wanted it as far away as possible from the 50th anniversary of attestation which is going to be held in Sydney, Australia, 2010. Some time off, but lots of time to save those pennies.

This year's dinner was held on Saturday, the 14th April and was attended by around 40 members and partners/wives. There was the usual "meet and greet" on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon to catch up with the latest gossip and "what are you doing now?"

The hotel took very good care of us, providing an excellent dinner and an exclusive bar for our use before and after the meal – more chin wagging. Alf was at his joking best with his after dinner speech. Fortunately John Cormack remembered to bring the archives and memorabilia. We have since added this to our 'must bring' list.

Breakfast was surprisingly well attended on Sunday morning with much exchange of addresses and telephone numbers. Most of us then departed, leaving the really hardy ones who stayed on until Monday morning, perhaps for time to recover.

This was a very successful gathering despite the numerous changes of management at the hotel during the planning stage. For the first time for us, the hotel handled the bookings. There is nothing worse as an organiser than not knowing who will be attending. We have learned; and in future, for this type of event in the UK, all bookings will be handled by the Planning Team.

Anyway, problems resolved, and not to the detriment of the weekend. Our 95th Entry Plaque is now proudly displayed on the stairs of the main building for all to see.

John Othen

HOW THE AUSTRALIA DATE WAS DERIVED

The date has been derived by considering several factors such as Dates of Attestation & Graduation, Sydney Climate, Weekend v Weekday, Easter weekend and various other associated factors (i.e. ANZAC Day celebrations) etc, etc, etc.

After much discussion we eventually agreed on Thursday 22nd April - mid week so as to avoid a direct clash with the Australian ANZAC Day celebrations (see below) but recognising that some of the Entry may wish to join in and be represented so therefore opted to be close enough to "stop over and do both" if you wish.

ESSENTIAL RSVP

If you are considering making the journey to Australia for this event, it is quite possible that you may be making it a family holiday with adult off-spring and/or grandchildren, or travelling with or meeting relatives & friends in the area.

Either way, please be assured that your family and friends, young or old, would be more than welcome to join in. Children are welcome anywhere where food is served so they will be able to attend, and will be welcome, at any of the functions we are planning.

I'm sure you will all appreciate the importance of "numbers" for planning and organisation purposes. Therefore, this pseudo invitation requires an "**Essential RSVP**"; by **30 April 2008** at the absolute latest please, to enable organisers to know "potential" attendance figures.

Would you please therefore respond just to let us know you intend to support this venture if possible, without commitment. A page is included at the back for this purpose if you wish to use it.

AUDACIOUS SOCIAL EVENT:

Why audacious? The Thesaurus on my PC gives these alternatives for audacious: daring; bold; brave; overconfident; cheeky; impudent; risky; foolhardy; all of which seem to fit the bill, hence my specific use of the adjective.

Why Social Event? Well, with it being an "audacious" undertaking, which will not appeal to many Entry members, it seems preferable to call it a "Social Event" rather than use the "Re-union" tag. Whereas re-union seems to be adequate, it does infer a majority turn-out, rather than just a few, therefore, I prefer to use the term "Social Event". I know it's open to everyone, including families, friends etc, but ... (It might be semantics, but it makes me feel better, so there).

Naturally, it is open to everyone (and this includes the family & Friends) and a large attendance would be terrific – the more the merrier, hence the need for an "Essential RSVP" – please do reply by the stated date.

DRESS CODE

Chaps; as a guide and considering baggage limitations, it is felt that Blazer, slacks & a tie would be the acceptable minimum dress for the function. Ladies, of course, would take their cue from that and dress accordingly (as they always do).

CHEAP SYDNEY ACCOMMODATION - Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL)

Tony Dapre, our man in Sydney, advises that it may be possible to book accommodation rooms in the RSL Hyde Park Inn at advantageous rates but it will be necessary to join the Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) to take advantage.

The RSL started out as "The Returned Soldiers & Sailors League" in 1915 and has continued to provide for ex-servicemen & women since. Subsequently, all members of allied forces have been accepted in and it is now known as the Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL). The easiest way to describe its facilities is to liken to the Working Men's Clubs or RAFA with incorporated services for ex-servicemen/women re welfare, pensions etc. Their Sydney Club premises are known as the Hyde Park Inn.

Rooms are clean, neat (some have a small balcony), very good bathroom facilities and are reasonably sized. They vary with the number of beds, some are doubles, some have an additional single bed, some have two additional single beds and a few have three additional single beds.

The current prices are \$121 for single or double/twin; \$137.50 for a three bed and \$16.50 per extra person thereafter (exchange rate approx: £1.00 = \$2 Aus). Rates include free parking, light continental breakfast and laundry facilities. The rooms also have self-catering facilities and there is a general store quite close so anyone who wishes to do their own thing re meals can do so. All rooms look out over Hyde Park so it is nicely placed, especially at the price. This does represent very good value.

In order for Tony to arrange your membership, he requires proof of your service (copy of service record) at least 3 months prior to arrival. For accommodation, he is able to make a block booking but he has to put names to rooms and proof of RSL membership will be required as you arrive. Obviously, the onus is on yourselves to advise The Planning Team Co-ordinators, in slow time, if you wish to book accommodation, number of people, size of room, number of days stay etc, etc, etc. Also bear in mind that a monetary deposit may be required.

Joining RSL is something that we, The Planning Team, can co-ordinate. If you are interested, will you please forward your proof of service, electronically or by post (it will be scanned and then returned to you), then we can forward to Tony who will arrange membership accordingly.

UK & AUSTRALIA CO-ORDINATORS

The volunteer Co-ordinators for this Audacious Social Event in 2010 are:

UK:

Roger & Pam Miller
116 Langley Grove
Sandridge,
St. Albans
Hertfordshire. AL4 9DY

Australia:

Tony & Denise Dapre
11, Yanco Close,
Frenchs Forest
2086 New South Wales,
Australia

All enquiries should be addressed to one or the other in the first instance.

SUGGESTED ITINERARY FOR THE “AUDACIOUS SOCIAL EVENT”

Australia is a very long way to travel for a meal, so we have set out a draft proposed schedule to give some structure to the lead up to the re-union dinner and allow for the fact that not all will arrive at the same time. The event will be planned along similar lines to the following draft.

Wednesday 21st April 2010:

Say 14.00hrs onwards: Meet & greet at a suitable informal venue. Need location with beer, snacks, sweet-sherry, beer, sitting space, beer etc, probably somewhere close to accommodation.

Thursday 22nd April 2010:

Morning: Free time to recover from jet-lag/hangover, go shopping; late breakfast; whatever.....

Afternoon: Meet after lunch for a boat trip or other sight seeing tour? (Optional for those with extended hangovers)

Evening: Plan to meet one hour prior to start of meal & festivities etc. Enjoy super meal in outstanding Company.

Friday 23rd April 2010:

Morning: Survivors use free time to recover from anything.

Afternoon/Evening:

- a) More sight-seeing ???
- b) Attend something at Opera House (just because we can) ???
- c) Perhaps a Barbie on a beach ???

ANZAC DAY

ANZAC Day - the 25th April - is the anniversary of the Gallipoli landings in the 1st World War by the Australian & New Zealand Army Corps. It has become probably Australia's most important national occasion on which to commemorate the lives of Australians & New Zealanders killed in all military operations in which they have been involved. This is a Public Holiday in Australia.

Australians recognise 25th April as an occasion of national commemoration and services are held at dawn, the time of the original landings, across the nation. Later in the day, ex-service men & women meet and join in marches through the major cities and many smaller centres. Originally restricted to military veterans, in later times families and young people have been encouraged to take part in the dawn services and, reflecting this change, the services have become more elaborate incorporating hymns, readings, pipers and rifle volleys.

Each year the commemorations follow a pattern that is familiar to each generation of Australians. A typical ANZAC Day service contains the following features: introduction, hymn, prayer, an address, laying of wreathes, recitation, The Last Post, a period of silence, The Rouse or Reveille and the National Anthem.

We have been advised that we will be welcome to join in either the RAF contingent or as 95th Entry with our own banner.

The Hyde Park Inn is ideally suited for anyone wishing to march on Anzac Day. The whole of the inner city is closed to traffic and the meeting point for the RAF contingent is about 2 minutes walk from the hotel. The RAF is not great in number these days (only about 25 last year) and we can either join them or form up as ourselves. Medals are worn if you feel. The march starts at 9.00 am but the RAF contingent who are near the back, don't set off until 11.00 and sometimes even later. It takes about an hour to complete the march after which, having built up a thirst, the rest of the day is spent recovering appropriately.

Incidentally, any ex-service people can travel completely free all day on buses, trains and ferries so medals are seen as a bit of a ticket to a free ride.

As the 25th April falls on a Sunday in 2010, Monday 26th is reserved for all the "Public Holiday" activities.

Bob Horsham

The Haltonian Magazine (the magazine of the RAFHAAA) issued in July 2007 carried the sad news that our **RL (Bob) Horsham** had passed-on on 20th March 2002. His name is added to our "In Memoriam" listing and he will be remembered.

Glyn Bolderson

The 20th July 2007 issue of RAF News carried the announcement that Glyn Bolderson passed away peacefully on 24th June 2007. He leaves a much loved wife Mary, Brothers, family & friends in both Melton Mowbray & South Wales. His name is also added to our "In Memoriam" listing and he will be remembered.

David & Penny Gerrard Found

On a cheerier note, I can happily announce that David Gerrard, who was lost, found us by way of the Entry Website, which proves its value. He contacted me by email on Saturday 22nd September, the very day that I enjoyed a cracking day at the RAFHAAA Triennial in company of Dave Kennett, Robbie Johnson, Roy Scott, Roger Miller and John Cormack, rounded off by a superb evening.

David's interesting story is printed herein, as a supplement to the bound copy issued at our first re-union in April 1993. Meanwhile, I am sure that some of you may wish to re-establish contact with David and his Wife, Penny, and their contact details are:

David & Penny Gerrard. High Hopes, Speldhurst, Kent. TN3 0PB

Tel/Fax: 01892 862789 Email: dgerrard@fsmail.net

A warm welcome back to the "family", David & Penny.

The New 95th Entry Web Site

Having mentioned the Website, here is a bit more. I have purchased our own domain name and rent a 50 MB site for our web site, brief explanation on the new site. Our site is now

<http://www.95thhalton.com/>.

On a related topic, PLEASE send me your latest email address (even if you think I have it). I will send jokes periodically to all the entry emails I have, and will get a rejection should the email account be closed. This is probably the only time we get a warning that someone may have moved on.

Dusty Miller (quernrigger@yahoo.co.uk).

RAFHAAA

Triennial Halton Apprentice re-unions occur every three years (I'll bet you didn't know that!). The most previous one was held on 22nd September 2007.

If you joined the RAF Halton Aircraft Apprentices Association (RAFHAAA) you will automatically receive information hot off the press, so to speak.

Full details of the RAFHAAA, with joining information, can be obtained from:

The Secretary, RAFHAAA, RAF Halton, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 5PG

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In Memoriam

Friends who have passed on. In our thoughts and prayers.

Michael McColl Young	Roland Bath	Keith Burdass
Clive Wilson	Rod Pritchard	Jerry Padgen
Colin Pollard	Bob Jupp	Mike Thatcher
Mike Frankling	RL (Bob) Horsham	Glyn Bolderson

On behalf of the Planning Team, Qualitas non Quantitas

Alf Banyard
105 Stone Hill drive
Blackburn. Lancs.
BB1 5TS
Tel: 01254 – 692697
alfpatban@ukonline.co.uk

John & Gayle Othen
42 Kingsmead
Lechlade
Gloucestershire GL7 3BW
Tel: 01367 253717
Jogothan@aol.com

Tony & Denise Dapre
11, Yanco Close,
Frenchs Forest
2086 NSW, Australia
denaton@optusnet.com.au

Roger & Pam Miller
116 Langley Grove
Sandridge, St. Albans
Hertfordshire AL4 9DY
Tel: 07780 617548
quernrigger@yahoo.co.uk

Jeff & Marilyn Bullock
Pippin Lodge
Burnhouse Road, Wooler
Northumberland NE71 6EE
Tel: 01668 282467
j.n.bullock@talk21.com

Jan & Chris Michelak
3 Tivoli Esplanade, Cumo,
Sydney, NSW 2226
Australia
Tel: 0061 0295 283075
jmichelak1@optusnet.com.au

Post Script

Please be aware that this might be the last “General” newsletter this side of the Australian venture. Obviously, all who register their interest will receive updates of data as and when, but I don’t see the point in copying to everyone else, and will save postage costs; in fact email will be used wherever possible, so please make sure we have the right contact details for yourself.

Meanwhile, please give some thought of where YOU would like the 50th Graduation Re-Union to take place, in UK, in 2013, and please advise one of the Planning Team so that every option can be considered.

To: Roger & Pam Miller
116 Langley Grove
Sandridge,
St. Albans
Hertfordshire. AL4 9DY

or: Tony & Denise Dapre
11, Yanco Close,
Frenchs Forest
2086 NSW,
Australia

95th Entry - Australia - 2010

Name No in Party

For Planning purposes, I (we) mean to attend the

AUDACIOUS SOCIAL EVENT

in SYDNEY, New South Wales

AUSTRALIA

on

Thursday 22 APRIL 2010

subject to unforeseen circumstances

Potted History for David Gerrard

Dear Alf,

Two days ago, I was trying to locate a colleague who I flew with some years back and, remembering he was an ex A/A, went to Google to search for him. Not only did I locate him, I saw that the 95th had a web page.

So, after some thought, I decided to send in my details in case you would like to know what happened to me since 1963.

Perhaps it's best to start after I left the RAF, got married and emigrated to Australia to work for QANTAS in Sydney. That was in 1966. We remained there until one of those events happened that change your life.

I was sat in the new (at that time) terminal at Sydney Airport looking at the Boeing 707's, when one of the QANTAS Captains came and sat by me. I was saying to him how I would really like to fly one of those passenger jets. He gave this some thought and suggested I write to the bigger airlines to see if I could get on one of their courses. I went straight from the terminal, back to the office, and composed a letter to a number of airlines. To my amazement I got a positive reply from Pan American Airways.

So, in 1970, having sold all our possessions, I went to their Flight Training School in San Francisco and my wife came home to England. For two years I lived like a hermit and worked like a slave, however, I enjoyed it so much that it certainly was not a chore. My final Flight Check came in January 1972 in a Boeing 707, N401PA, Clipper Dauntless. Took off from San Francisco and after the tests landed safely back at base. I had my licence.

Of course, my experience on jets was bordering on zero compared to most crew members, so eventually I got my first job with an "airline" in South Africa. It had two Boeing 707's, had no procedures or checking system and was barn storming in a large jet. On reflection, I am most grateful they gave me a job so I could gain vital experience in the form of flying hours and also extremely grateful that I lived through the year I worked there.

During that year, each and every month I wrote to British Airways updating my flying hours experience, then in 1974 I got an interview and started on 15 May. It is a strange quirk in life that up to then things had been hard and beset by obstacles. Suddenly everything in life became marvellous and anything I did in BA went right. A classic case of being always in the right place at the right time and doing the right thing.

I flew on long-haul and in 1984 was promoted to the Check and Training Staff and made an Authorized Examiner for the CAA. In 1993 I was asked if I would train the crews of Japan Airlines. I agreed. Please note that if you didn't "agree", that was the last thing you got asked to do in BA.

That went on for six very hard months but it had far reaching implications for me, for when I came to the compulsory retirement age of fifty five in 1998, I was asked to stay on for one more year to do nothing but the Caribbean routes checking the airports for the Boeing 777. That was not a hardship.

So in May 1999, I finally retired and for one year my wife and I went round the world and generally lived it up. Almost one year to the day after I retired, I got a telephone call asking me to come back and train foreign crews on the Flight Simulators. They did not say "... and your first assignment will be Russians". So, for a further five years, at my leisure, I trained crews, or tried to train them, from all parts of the world. It was excellent experience as it also taught me who NOT to fly with.

One year ago I called it a day and my manuals etc now all reside in boxes between the joists in our garage. Part way through this missive I made mention that when I joined BA everything in life seemed to suddenly change for the better. The history would not be complete without a final tale. In the early eighties, my wife, son and I always went to Florida for three weeks in April. There we met an American family who became great friends. The husband was a big investment guru, a subject I knew little about. He advised me to invest in a company and I took his advice. By 1990 I sold the investment and it was a sum I could barely comprehend. Now I am retired we go away two and three times a year, all over the world, trying to get rid of it.

So, I can look back on my time and state I had the most fantastic job, which was not work, but an unbridled pleasure. I also had more than my share of good luck for which I am humble and grateful. Though I did not enjoy my time at Halton, had I not gone there the rest of my life would have been a vastly different story.

It only remains for me to hope you remember my name and place me in the list of “members found” that is if anyone had wished to find me.

Best regards,
David Gerrard. (686363)
22 September 2007