



RAF Butterworth/Penang Association



Chairman: Tony Parrini Treasurer: Len Wood Secretary: Pete Mather
(formed: 30th August 1996 at the Casuarina Hotel, Batu Ferringhi, Penang Island)

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2006

Aims of the Association

The Association aims to establish and maintain contact with personnel and their dependants who served at Butterworth or Penang by means of annual reunions in the UK and the circulation of a membership list. The Association may also arrange holidays in Malaysia from time to time.

Chairman's Corner

In this issue of the newsletter I have decided the space allocated for my comments to be kept to a minimum and introduce later in this issue, through their profiles, the Association Officials who are involved in the day to day running of the Association. This is intended to introduce the 'A-team' to new members of the Association and to those longer standing members who have not attended Association functions where the 'team' have been present.

For logistical reasons we did not have a reunion in 2005, planning to incorporate the 2006 Reunion weekend with the **Dedication of the Far East Air Force Memorial** at the National Arboretum (NMA) in May 2006. The 10th Anniversary Reunion weekend starts off in earnest with the Dedication at 2 pm (1400) on Saturday 13th May and promises to be an exciting and yet also emotional experience. There are still some arrangements awaiting completion but a highlight of the afternoon will be the attendance of the Band of the Royal Air Force College based at RAF Cranwell.

Following the Dedication ceremony and a chance to meet our VIPs and members of the RAF Changi, RAF Seletar and other Associations, our members meet at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel in Solihull for the **Reunion and AGM over the rest of the weekend (13th to 14th May)**.

The Pingat Jasa Malaysia (Malaysia Merit Medal) – the Malaysian Government has introduced a commemorative medal for British Citizens who have served in Malaya or Malaysia between 31 August 1957 and 12 August 1966. There has been some confusion over eligibility of the award for British citizens but perseverance by the NMBVA has resulted in acceptance by HM Government. We owe thanks to George Gault, our webmaster, for acting as intermediary and for forwarding details of eligibility and application forms to us.

Please note that completed forms should be submitted via an association, in the case of the RAF Butterworth/Penang Association to A. L. Parrini (full address given on the PJM application notes).

For those of you going to the Dedication and Reunion, have a good weekend. For those still thinking about it...don't, stop thinking and complete the application forms already sent to you. For those who have to stay at home through poor health and other good reasons – WE WILL MISS YOU and toast "Absent Friends" during the Reunion Dinner.

Tony Parrini

Issue 12



Eastward

Association Officials

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33 Squadron 1967

John Thorne

The RAF Butterworth and Penang Association Annual Reunion 13th – 14th May 2006



Please note the weekend starts at the Arboretum for the Dedication of the Far East Air Force Memorial at 2pm, Saturday 13th May 2006.

In attendance will be the Band of the Royal Air Force College based at RAF Cranwell.



Details and Booking Forms for the Dedication of the FEAF Memorial have already been sent out to all members. Although there is normally no admission charge for visiting the National Memorial Arboretum, there is on the day a cost of £5 (pre-booked) per person to attend the Service and Dedication. (The cost is less if refreshments are not required).

Please note bookings for the Dedication need to be received by Saturday 29th April 2006 at the latest. Bookings for the Dedication are to be forwarded to Don Donovan.

The cost of the Reunion weekend will be £82.00 per head for Dinner, Bed, Breakfast, facilities, morning coffee and buffet lunch on Sunday. Also bookings for the Reunion need to be received by Saturday 29th April 2006. Bookings for the Reunion (at the hotel) are to be forwarded to Pete Mather.



TONY PARRINI

Chairman, RAF Butterworth and Penang Association

Tony Parrini is our Founder Chairman and is probably the youngest member of the Association! (Any fully paid up member of the Association, born after the 11th September 1946, is welcome to assume this mantle).

Commissioned in 1966 before his 20th Birthday he completed 40 years, if you include training time, in the service of HM QE2 on 29th December 2005!

As a Supplier, in addition to Butterworth and Penang (1968 to 1971), he served in Majunga in Madagascar (Mar to Nov 68), then Leconfield, Cranwell, Brampton, Cottesmore, then in 1982 on promotion to Squadron Leader, he was posted to No 14 MU Carlisle. With no roots elsewhere, he and the family decided that Cumbria was to be their home. After 3 tours and 8 years at Carlisle, he took early retirement in 1990 and became the RAF Regional Community Relations Officer for Cumbria and Tynedale. His job involves handling complaints, claims and enquiries resulting from Military Low Flying in the region. He is expected to finally throw in the towel, in exchange for a second pension in September 2006 (Age 60 – it's a hard life for a Civil Servant)!!!

Tony married Anne at Peterborough in July 1969 and returned with her to Penang for a 2½ year honeymoon at Jalan Haji Rafeaie in Tanjong Bungah Hillside. With an Amah (Suki) to do the housework and a Kaboon to do the gardening, they returned to UK with Mark (Aged about 10 months) and another sprog (Andrew) on the way!

Tony went to Butterworth as OC Tech Supply Flight. When No 33 Sqn went into Care and Maintenance, he took over the role as their Supply Officer and arranged all the shipping space for the Bloodhound Missiles, Launchers and Radar Systems to be returned to the UK after the Malaysian Government decided they didn't want to purchase them. He was then handed the role as OC Supply Flight for No1 ADC Western Hill which in its final year or so, came under the umbrella of RAF Penang. Once again, he was responsible for the shipping documentation of the loads coming off Western Hill when the unit closed down.

Somehow, he found the time to be Honorary Secretary of the Hash House Harriers (an experience that is worth a book in its own right!). He was famously labelled an "SCB" (Short Cutting Bastard), as frequently he had knowledge of the route before each run!

He has been a member of the Rotary Club of Carlisle South since January 1991, becoming the Club President for 2001/2002; prior to his year in office, he worked closely with 2 adjacent Rotary Clubs with the aim of financing a Children's Refuge in Kosovo in conjunction with Hope and Homes for Children. The target was reached during his year as President and £25000 was handed over to Hope and Homes for Children to finance the rental of a house in Pritzen in the south of Kosovo. The house is aptly named "Hadrian House". The publicity linked with this project was recognised by the award of the District 1190 Public Relations Trophy.

In July 2003 he was appointed as Assistant Governor to oversee 9 Clubs in the North of Cumbria.

He is an “ecumaniac” – being involved in the Churches Together movement for many years. He coordinated the Emergency Plan for the Clergy in Cumbria and having served 3 years as Chairman of Churches Together in Carlisle, he is now one of their Life Vice Presidents and is responsible for organising the larger ecumenical events in Carlisle. He’s Chairman of the Carlisle Branch of RAFA, but is most proud of his role as National Chairman of the RAF Butterworth and Penang Association.

Anne has recently retired (nearly) as the Practice Manager of a GP Practice in Longtown, but will be glad to see the back of the NHS! Following her long career in nursing (another book full), she is deeply involved with the local Eden Valley Hospice and can be found as a voluntary day care assistant, receptionist or working in the Hospice Charity Shop.

As retirement looms, there’s no predicting what they might get up to next.

One thing is for certain.....The grass won’t grow under their feet!



Don Lovering

Peter W. Mather - Secretary



Born 25 Oct 43 in Willersley Castle, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire son of the then WO T. W. Mather RAF. Joined the RAF as a boy 19 Feb 59 RAF Hereford and retired as a WO from the RAF Staff College Bracknell in 1996. Served in Penang, RAF Western Hill from 1968-71.

After a few months garden leave I joined Aviation Defence International (ADI) and worked in the British Airways Compass Centre on the Bath Road, Heathrow from 1997-99. The Compass Centre is where all BA Flight Crew/Cabin Crew pre-flight prior to being screened, finally boarding BA coaches that take them directly to their respective aircraft. In the later part of 1999 I was poached by an ex-Army WO to help set up a new payroll computer system in Bldg 820, Terminal 3. During this period the original company of ADI was taken over by Securicor subsequently merging with Group 4 to become Group4Securicor. The operation in T3 is primarily connected with aircraft searching, passenger screening and aircraft guarding. Apart from the early morning starts (mainly to avoid the rush hour traffic) I still enjoy my job - Heathrow has much of a similar buzz as many RAF stations of the past. In sum, I have enjoyed life very much since retiring. However, I do miss those special Sergeants Mess occasions and the BPA fills that void to some degree.

Married to Pat, daughter Michelle, son Carl, daughter-in-law Bratislava and Grandson Marko.



Dave Croft

Association Archivist and Newsletter Editor



I joined the RAF as an Aircraft Apprentice in 1961 and after the mandatory three years of training was posted to a remote radar station in the north of Scotland (probably where I could do least harm!). A posting to Newton in 1965 for a course on the Bloodhound Missile system was followed by North Coates (Grimsby, horribly cold and windswept) and West Raynham (41 Squadron) and periodic visits to Aberporth on the Welsh coast to fire the missiles (these were wonderful trips).

At long last, early in 1967, an overseas posting came up, to 65 Squadron based at RAF Seletar, Singapore where I was still employed on the Bloodhound system.

What a difference an overseas posting was when compared to one at home. People of all ranks were much friendlier, even the SWO stopped shouting at me long enough to inform me of my promotion, then told me to get a haircut!

Singapore was a superb posting but not for long. My expertise (sic!) was needed on 33 Squadron based at Butterworth so early one morning I boarded a RNZAF Bristol Freighter at Changi (horrible rattling old crate, I was used to something more luxurious) bound for the RAAF base in northern Malaysia.

Butterworth was also a superb posting and much use was made of the surrounding beaches, woodlands and hills, apart from collecting cobras and other snakes from the squadron site and taking them to the Venom Research Unit at the General Hospital, the British Museum (Natural History) also received several boxes of butterflies and rain forest insects collected over this period.

But this was also a short posting and early in 1969 I was taken off the Bloodhound system and posted to a radar station in the UK, RAF Patrington, near Hull. Who had I upset to be posted to that place? My last five years in the RAF was at Patrington and things only started to look up when I was again promoted and then met Margaret, a Radiographer, at the Sergeants Mess. We were married in 1974 just before I left the RAF to start a short lived career at British Aerospace working on the Buccaneer and Phantom conversion projects.

I say short lived because I was persuaded by a S/Ldr friend to go into teaching which I did and stayed at the same school for some 26 years before retiring on April 1st 2005.

I became a member of the RAF Butterworth and Penang Association a few years ago and was pleased to meet up with several friends from my 33 Squadron Butterworth days, also Tony Parrini who, when overseeing the packing up of the radars etc in 69, happily rolled up his sleeves (figuratively speaking) and 'mucked in' with the rest of the lads.

They were halcyon days, whatever that is supposed to mean!



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Brian Lloyd.....Brian has requested that any member who recognises the name of LAC Lankett (Butterworth) contact him. Although LAC Lankett has passed away his wife Joan would be pleased to hear from members who knew him and Brian is the contact person. He can be contacted via the RAF Changi Association (Brian is also a member of the RAF Butterworth and Penang Association!), quoting "John Barnes Changi Member M1720".

From John Lear.....'It is suggested in the current edition of Butterworth/Penang (*Winter 2005*) that we get busy and write some memories of our time spent in that area. 'I dwelt on my recollections some time ago, as you will know. I have long been of the opinion that little appears to be written about time spent particularly at KL and I am sure, like myself, many of the guys who spent time at Butterworth, could have had a short flirtation there!

Would it be acceptable to offer these memories? I sure have a few.'

(John's offer has been taken up and other members experiences away from Butterworth and Penang will be welcome).

From John Knott who writes with the intention of provoking more of our members to contribute to the newsletter....' I read with great interest your "Message from the Editor" in the Winter 2005 edition. Whilst agreeing that readers' contributions are necessary there is a tendency with ex-servicemen to relate "how good (or bad) it all was then". We all know those wonderful reminiscences where fiction is difficult to separate from non-fiction.

Let's have a change! "How good (or bad) is it now?". What have we done since leaving the service?

I'm sure that many of us would be delighted to know how former comrades have fared in the struggles of civilian life?'

(John has started the ball rolling with his contribution to why he lives in Hungary and on a similar theme with the reunion imminent it was thought a good idea to ask the Associations 'A-team' to write a little about themselves, the idea being an introduction to the names on the 'Eastward' page of the newsletter for new members.)

From George Gault the Association webmaster....George has written about the building that appears on the photograph of page 4 of the Spring 2005 newsletter which has been the previous subject of discussion with members. This has prompted an interesting 'trawl' through both members and other photographs of the Butterworth runway and a similar building was to be seen at the same site well into the 1960's.

Also from George is the following letter: "Not RAF related. One of my correspondents wrote to me today and asked about this. If anyone can supply further information on this topic I would be much obliged – as they say!"

From George's correspondent:

'I have come across two lone graves on the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) Base Butterworth in Seberang Prai (formerly Province Wellesley), Penang. This is the former RAF and RAAF base on the Malaysian mainland opposite Penang Island. There are no memorial inscriptions on the graves but they are side by side on a small plot surrounded by a wrought iron railing on which a modern sign has been placed "Memorial of John Hoggan and Wife". The plot is between two rows of barracks and is well maintained. '

' The graves obviously pre-date the air force base which has been on the site since before the Second World War. Locally no one seems to have any information about these graves or their origins. By my estimation the two graves, one large and one smaller, are mid 19th century. As the area is believed to have been planted with sugar estates in the 19th century it is possible that John Hoggan was a sugar planter and was buried on the estate along with his wife.'

'The surname is Scots in origin and a search on the LDS IGI reveals several persons of that surname in India during the 19th century! However the only person with that name connected with Penang that I have

found in the LDS IGI is George Hoggan Smith, born 1829, Penang, West Bengal (with the notation: no source information available)

' I have no connection with this family but would be interested if anyone has information that would lead to the identification of John Hoggan and his wife.'

George comments that he spent two years at Butterworth and does not recall these graves at all.

However they do exist and have been brought to members attention on at least one occasion previously by Tony Parrini. In the Summer 1999 newsletter Tony recalls that on his visit to Butterworth he visited the tomb of John Hoggan and wife located among the Airman's Barrack Blocks on the base. Tony also asked for further information on the burial site in the 1999 issue!

A letter in response to the forthcoming FEAF Memorial Dedication has been received from member Dennis Pateman via Don Donovan. Dennis writes 'Thank you for sending the details for the Dedication together with the newsletter. I would have liked to attend *but am unable to do so this time*. I did manage one visit when I first joined the Association and thoroughly enjoyed it.

One thing I can't quite understand is why the Dedication only goes back to 1949 and not '46 when I was at Penang. After a sea journey in an old rust bucket, where I was laid low with sea sickness all the way from Rangoon, Penang seemed only once removed from Heaven where there was a roof over ones head and the sea nearby. What a change from our journey down the Arakan and arriving at Akyab at the start of the monsoon. Digging round our tents to lift the level inside trying to keep dry with up to ten inches (*of water*) some days. Trying to service DC 3's on the supply airlift with water getting under the felt runway giving a surface similar to waves of the sea.

Worst of all was hearing the returning planes coming back short of fuel, with the cloud base at zero. Going round until it was either a choice of fire or water! We still hear DC 3's coming into Luton Airport, I easily recognise the sound – and the memories!

At Penang we were servicing planes getting the railway prisoners out – I'm afraid the hair still stands up at the back of my neck on seeing Japanese. The day after the Japs signed we were stood to because of the Chinese threat – what a peace!'

Dennis E. Pateman JP

Thank you Dennis for your story. I think others will understand your feelings about the Dedication only going back to 1949. It was a difficult decision to make but it seemed to be only logical that 1949 was 'the start date' as on 1st June 1949 Air Command Far East (ACFE) became Headquarters Far East Air Force (FEAF). Although the Dedication is to FEAF it doesn't mean those who served in ACFE at the end of the war and up to 1949 are forgotten by the 'new boys'. The privations you had to put up whilst the service and stations returned to an even keel will not forgotten.....Ed.)



Sojourn in Europe

by
John C. Knott

"How come you've got a Hungarian address?" I am being continually confronted with this question with varying degrees of curiosity or personal interest. Suspiciously, at national frontiers where a British passport and an address in Hungary somehow do not seem to fit together. The answer is simple, I just love Europe - all of it.

Having completed twenty-two years of R.A.F. service I was discharged at R.A.F. Abingdon on 23rd January 1968. Together with my German-born wife, Martha, we moved to Dusseldorf in Germany. There I took up employment with the then British European Airways at Dusseldorf airport. Studied the German language until I became fluent. After eighteen months with B.E.A. I changed to the chemical concern Bayer, Leverkusen. (The Aspirin people, perhaps better known for their football team.) My soccer not being up to their standard I was employed in their industrial chemical sales division where I remained doing a job in which I was greatly interested for the next twenty years

Then, taking advantage of an early pensioning scheme I said "Good-bye!" to Bayer, went back to school, got a language teaching diploma and spent the next ten years as a free-lance English language teacher in Germany, Turkey and Hungary. Towards the end of this period my wife and I packed our suitcases and went off to Pakistan to teach English. We spent three months in Quetta and nine months in Karachi teaching in private schools. We both enjoyed Pakistan tremendously, everybody was kind and helpful but we found that a year was long enough.

On returning to Germany I decided that it was time to stop working and to have a really full-time retirement. We bought a house in Hungary, moved in and made ourselves comfortable in our new home. Apart from short holidays in the neighbouring countries and occasional trips to the U.K. we were quite content in Hungary. Regrettably my dear Martha became very ill and passed away in October 2004.

I was now alone and choose to remain here in Hungary. To pass the time usefully I commenced to write, but soon realised that I needed guidance. A writers' course by distance learning was the solution. Now I am already half-way through such a course.

During my R.A.F. service I was stationed in Holland and in Germany. During those three years I learned to appreciate the continental life-style. During my subsequent years of employment in Germany I visited almost every European country, either on business or with my wife on holiday. I know this continent of ours very well and I love every part of it, including Ireland, last visit was in July 2005, and of course good old London where I spent last Christmas with my niece who owns a pub in Hackney.

There! You now have the answer to the Hungarian address question.



Gerry Pearson

RAF Kuala Lumpur by John Lear



Signals Section accommodation KL 1951

I wrote an article for the Summer/Autumn edition of our newsletter and described my journey to Butterworth, via Changi and Kuala Lumpur. I have since discussed with colleagues the time I spent at Kuala Lumpur and I feel that whilst Changi and Butterworth are promoted through their Magazine/Newsletters, dear old Kuala Lumpur seems to miss out somewhat. Allow me to give you an insight to the goings on at R.A.F. Kuala Lumpur January to June 1951.

It was rather an eye-opener to arrive at Kuala Lumpur after Changi. After all, the accommodation at Changi comprised two-storey brick buildings...dear old Kuala Lumpur had single-storey wooden buildings with thatched roofs. I seem to remember that they were called 'Wooden Bashers'. Also Changi had a wonderful swimming pool, where I spent as much free time as I could. Alas, no swimming pool at KL. There was much security at KL, British soldiers and Gurkhas and a very active dog handlers section with quite a number of Alsatians. Not the kind you could pat and stroke! I remember one of the handlers came from my home town of Watford, but I have long since lost contact.

Once I was settled in and incorporated into the shift system I began to look at the free time. I was not at that time much of a beer drinker, preferring pineapple juice, but this did not stop me from sharing the taxi which always collected the clients at the main gate by the guardhouse and did the 10 minute drive to town. I remember a particular coffee bar called Yantos where we often gathered prior to going to the pictures. Some of my mates drank bottles of beer and I remember the brewery called 'Fraser Neave' and I think I've seen that on bottles since that time in the UK.

The picture theatre was of course air-conditioned and I recall when going into the auditorium prior to the commencement of the performance, it was like going into a refrigerator!

As for camp itself the primary sport was soccer and we had a very good pitch down by the airstrip. There was, I recall, a league table in existence and it was difficult to get into the established teams. The top team was Transport section, closely followed by Signals. Also there were teams from Admin and Catering and one or two others that I can't recall. Anyway, those of us from a variety of sections who couldn't get in their own

teams decided to form a team of our own and enter the leagues. Thus came into being the 'Nutters XI' – and they were good! We started to demolish the reputations of the other teams to such an extent that we were approached by our sections and asked to play in the section teams. From memory nobody took up the offer! We became fiercely dedicated to the 'Nutters'. We did not, however, manage to beat the Transport team.

I remember playing Centre Half (at 6 feet tall) when their Centre Forward, named Paddy Scully (about 5 feet 8 inches tall), leapt high above me to head a goal. I remember too that their Outside Right's last three numbers were 303 and he was called bullet! If anybody reading this remembers.....I would love to hear from you.

Another episode I will never forget was that of the snake. All the bedside lockers were made of strips of wood with gaps between each. This was because of the humidity and the need for ventilation, As I approached my bed space one afternoon I was shouted at: "Don't go near, there is a snake in your locker!" Sure enough, an evil little head was poking through a gap and moving slowly from left to right, surveying the hut. I remember thinking "If you want my locker that much, you can have it," We threw things and made a noise and the snake took off at a great rate of knots up the length of the hut. It made a whipping sound against the wood planks of the floor as it went. One of the other occupants crashed the butt of his rifle on the creature's back and when it stopped moving it was thrown onto the grass outside the hut. The next day I picked it up and looked at it. Green and brown and about three feet long, I never learnt what species it was,

I mentioned earlier about the security at KL, being as it was very adjacent to the jungle, and I remember an incident one evening as I walked back to my hut from the shop/NAAFI building.

A very loud voice shouted "Halt, who goes there?" As there didn't seem to be anyone else around I guessed the question was directed at me. I managed to come up with something like "Airman on duty, sir."

The voice replied "Advance, Airman, and be recognised." I did so and after about eight or nine paces, the voice said something like "Thank you, Airman, and good night," And I never saw the owner of that voice!! Quite an experience for a 19-year old!

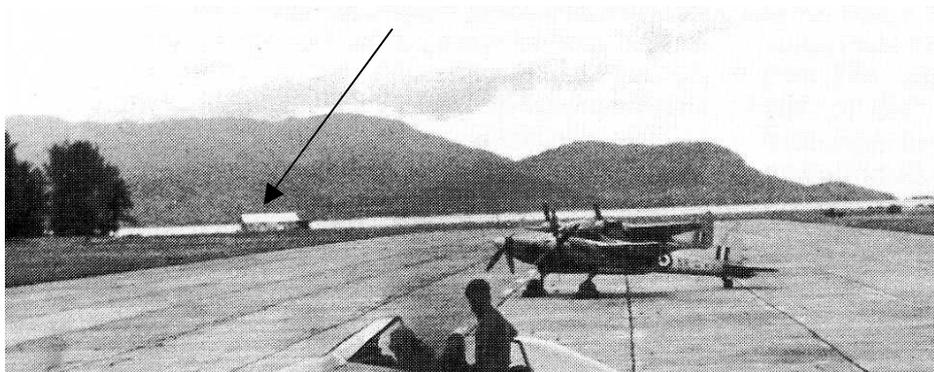


RAF Police KL 1954

Pete Wiggins

And the quest goes on.....

A letter was received from George Gault, our association Webmaster, in respect of a previous query regarding the building shown to the left of the runway on the picture below (amended from the one shown in the Spring 2005 issue). The question asked “ What is the building?” and the answer given by Les Downey was that it was used as a transit reception centre when flights were started from the UK in 1946.



But what about later years? The above photograph would appear to have been taken at Butterworth after the construction of the new east/west runway in 1953



Sam Mold

The new east/west runway 1952-53

Yet this photograph*, taken when the runway had been completed, appears to show the building set back from the edge of the runway when compared to the upper photograph. Is it the same building?

And in this aerial photograph* taken during the 'Confrontation' era of the early '60's there is a building in a similar position. Is it our mystery building?



Taff Truman

* Please note that should you wish to follow this quest in detail both aerial photographs are better seen using the pictures on the CD's 'Royal Air Force Butterworth and Penang Association - A Photographic History'. Also further detail is shown on the .jpeg file 'Butterworth aerial' from the volume one history CD, but this can be confusing unless you flip the picture horizontally....the picture in its present form on the CD is wrong!

And now for George's e-mail.....

'I was checking through the Association site and noticed the query re: "What is the building in the left background?"

I was going to have a crack at identifying it but, what is throwing me is the sea to the rear and I assume Penang Island rising up in the background. If we were looking at the main runway, what I first thought it was, an ORP. There was one building just like the one in the picture both at the north and south of the main runway. The night standby crew on the Jav's and us Rocks were accommodated in these.

I get the impression that what we see in this picture ran at right angles off the main runway and the only place that comes to mind was where the Regiment had their Beach Gun Position. This looked out over to Penang. I don't recall any building like the one in the picture in that location. The area was also used by the Army Air Corp and was on the right of the main North/South Highway just before the entrance to the swimming Pool'.

Any one come to our rescue?

JAPIC (FE) 1952-53 by Geof Myatt (*continued from the last issue*)

Geof was a member of the member of the Intelligence Corps posted to JAPIC (FE), a Joint Army/RAF Photographic Intelligence Unit with its HQ based at RAF Seletar. From Seletar he was posted to the JAPIC Unit at Butterworth where these photographs were taken.



Geof either at Butterworth or Taiping Girls School (if at the Girls School he had a good reason for being there.....so tell us what the reason is Geof)



The Army contingent of JAPIC (FE) at Butterworth



These photographs were taken in the Print Library at the Photographic Block. In the left photograph those identified are Geof, Sapper Sharriff Bin Mohamed Abdullah (Malay Regiment) and LAC Wint.



In the foreground of this photograph are prints of a PR sortie ready to be plotted.



October 1952 with the only set of prints never to be plotted despite spending many hours trying to locate the area shown on the prints.

The Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal

RECENT HEADLINES (end of 2005)

“Jungle Wars veterans denied right to wear medal on Remembrance Day”.

“Medal Fatigue”.

The Chairman has received a number of enquiries from Members concerning the Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal. He has made enquiries with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on the members' behalf to ensure that we receive correct advice as to the application for the medals and the wearing of them. As soon as he has positive information, he will advise all members concerned via the next Newsletter. However, if any member feels that they qualify on the grounds of their service in Malaya (*or Malaysia from 31 August 1957 to 12 August 1966 or Singapore from 31 August 1957 to 9 August 1965*), please contact the Chairman and he will arrange to get the information to you as soon as it is received. *Note: this information has now been updated, further information in this newsletter...Ed.*

Meanwhile, herewith an explanation of the situation from the Veterans Agency website.

The Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal

There have been a number of reports in the media about the Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal which has been instituted by the Malaysian Government and is being offered to Commonwealth veterans who took part in operations in Malaysia between 1957 and 1966.

As a result, the Ministry of Defence has received a number of letters from veterans who would like to receive this medal and who are disappointed to hear that permission has not be granted for them to receive it from the Malaysians, despite the fact that Commonwealth troops who served alongside them had been given permission to both accept and wear the medal.

This is not a matter for the Ministry of Defence. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) are responsible for administering the policy relating to the acceptance and wear of foreign awards by British citizens, not this Department. We contacted the FCO and received the confirmation that they had received a formal request from the Malaysian Government seeking permission to offer this medal to British veterans. We are aware that in recent years the Australian and New Zealand Governments have agreed to allow their veterans to both receive and wear certain campaign medals awarded by other foreign governments. However, both countries withdrew from the Imperial Honours System some years ago. Any approval which The Queen may have given, as Queen of Australia and New Zealand, for Australian and New Zealand citizens to wear particular medals, would have been on the advice of Her appropriate Commonwealth Ministers. The FCO advised that these matters are now the sole responsibility of the countries concerned and have no bearing on any decisions that the British Government might make under similar circumstances.

As the matter rests with the FCO you should write to that department if you require more information.

PINGAT JASA MALAYSIA



OBVERSE

REVERSE



Written Ministerial Statement
31 January 2006

Pingat Jasa Malaysia

The Minister for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs (Mr Ian Pearson): The Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM) is a commemorative medal which the Government of Malaysia would like to award to eligible British citizens, for their service in Malaya or Malaysia between 31 August 1957 and 12 August 1966.

The Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals (the official committee which advises Her Majesty The Queen on matters of honours policy) has recommended that an exception to two of the long-established Rules governing the accepting and wearing of foreign (including Commonwealth) awards be made, to enable the Malaysian Government to present the PJM. Her Majesty The Queen has been graciously pleased to approve this recommendation.

This exception to the Rules means that all of the many thousands of eligible former members of the Armed Forces/Veterans, and others, may receive the PJM. This will be in addition to the British General Service Medal (with appropriate Malaya/Borneo clasp) that many veterans will have been eligible to receive for their service in Malaya/Borneo.

Permission to wear the PJM will not, however, formally be given. It is long standing Government policy that non-British medals will not be approved for events or service:

- that took place more than 5 years before initial consideration, or in connection with events that took place in the distant past (e.g. commemorative medals);
- if the recipient has received a British award for the same service.

However, Her Majesty's Government welcomes, and believes it is important to recognise, the generous gesture by the King and Government of Malaysia, and their wish to acknowledge the service given by veterans and others in the years immediately after Malaysian independence. The exception recommended reflects this and our strong and important relationship with Malaysia.

The Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals reviewed the 5-year and double medalling rules, and considered that, while there were sound reasons why they should be retained, there will be occasions when specific circumstances require exceptions to the rules to be recommended. When such exceptions are contemplated, the Committee will consider each request on a case by case basis, taking into account any special circumstances at the time. The fact that a similar request has been approved in the past will not mean that permission will be granted in future cases.

Applications for the PJM, and its subsequent distribution will essentially be a matter for the Malaysian authorities, in collaboration with the relevant British Government Departments. Large numbers may be involved. It will take some time for the applications to be processed and for the medal to be distributed. The Malaysian High Commission and the relevant British Government agencies will work together to determine eligible applicants. Veterans' organisations and Service and Regimental Associations will also be involved.

Application for the Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM)

Instructions for completion

About the Pingat Jasa Malaysia

The *Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM)* is a special medal of service to eligible United Kingdom Service personnel who served from Independence until the end of Confrontation in the security of Malaysia, during the period 31 August 1957 and 12 August 1966 inclusive.

Categories of eligibility

Category 1

(a) Those members of the United Kingdom Force who were on the posted strength of a unit or formation and served in the prescribed operational area of Malaysia and Singapore, in direct support of operations in Malaysia for **90 DAYS** or more, in the aggregate, as follows:

- (1) Malaysia during the period 31 August 1957 and 12 August 1966 inclusive; or
- (2) Singapore during the period 31 August 1957 and 9 August 1965 inclusive.

Category 2

Verification of service

Although the *PJM* is a foreign award from the Government of Malaysia, all applications for the *PJM* will need to undergo a verification process by the Ministry of Defence. This process can be greatly assisted by applicants providing as much information about their service as possible, including service numbers, dates served in the prescribed area, etc. This will allow applications be finalised much faster.

Instructions on how to complete this form

- Please use BLOCK letters only.
- Please complete the entire form and provide details of ALL service in the prescribed area.

PLEASE NOTE THAT MOD will NOT HANDLE INDIVIDUAL APPLICATIONS; THEY MUST COME THROUGH A RECOGNISED ASSOCIATION.

PLEASE FORWARD APPLICATIONS FROM ROYAL AIR FORCE BUTTERWORTH AND PENANG ASSOCIATION MEMBERS AND ANY Ex RAF PERSONNEL WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF OTHER ASSOCIATIONS TO:

PJM AWARD APPLICATIONS
C/o A L PARRINI
RCRO (Cumbria and Tynedale)
Inglewood Road
Penrith
Cumbria CA11 8QN

PINGAT JASA MALAYSIA



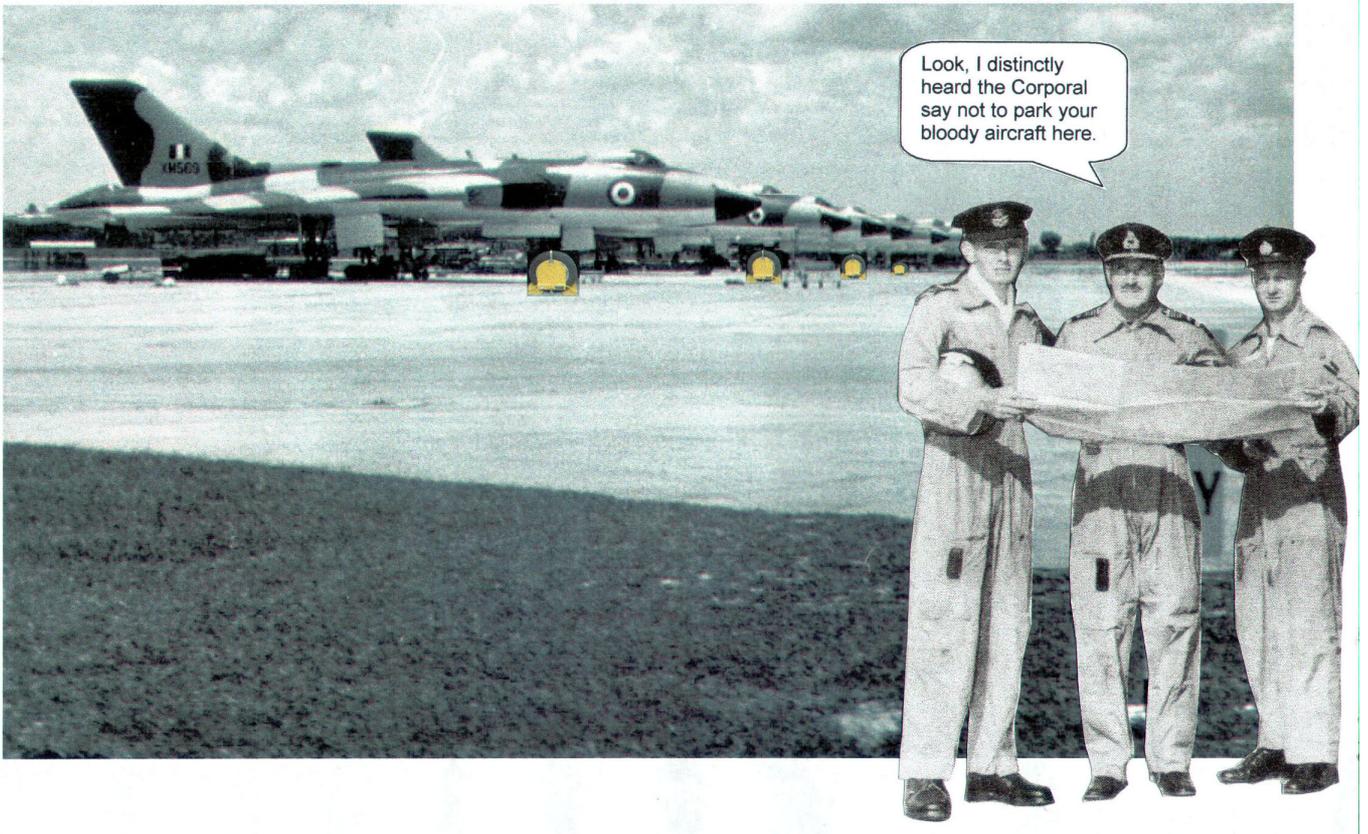
OBVERSE



REVERSE

Malaysia Merit Medal

The ribbon is in the colours of the Malaysian flag comprising vertical stripes in the following order: 4.5mm yellow, 7mm blue, 12mm red, 7mm blue, 4.5mm yellow.



“Expertis credite”

