



EASTWARD

The newsletter of the
RAF Butterworth & Penang Association



Christmas 2015



Issue 43

Colin and Jenny Bates cleaning the FEAF Memorial at the NMA this Summer.



The RAF Butterworth & Penang Association was formed on the 30th August 1996 at the Casuarina Hotel, Batu Ferringhi, Penang Island.

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Chairman's Corner



What a wonderful surprise it was when I opened a letter recently and found a large anonymous donation to be shared between the FEAF Memorial Appeal and our 20th Anniversary Reunion next May. Although this donation takes us to our target for the setting up of a Trust Fund to ensure that the Memorial is maintained for posterity, we could still use any contributions to ensure that the grand total of £12,000, shared between all three Associations is achieved. Any donations sent to the Chairman, payable to 'The FEAF Grove Account', would still be very welcome. Whilst on the subject of the FEAF Memorial, you will see on the front cover of this issue a picture of **Colin** and **Jenny Bates** with buckets and cleaning materials at the Memorial. They both spent a day there earlier in the year cleaning the slate tiles ready for the Summer visitors. On your behalf I pass on my thanks for a job "Well done". THANK YOU BOTH.

I know a number of you miss being able to be active members of the RAF Butterworth & Penang Association; it must be frustrating to have to stay at home knowing that your old colleagues gather annually to exchange stories and memories of those 'Happy Days' in the Orient. For me, as a comparative youngster, I delight in welcoming new members to their first reunion and linking them with bunk mates from 50 years previously! It seems to happen every year and it adds to the pleasure of being your Chairman. Equally, I know that as we all grow older the future of the Association is finite and that one day it will no longer be viable for us to stand alone as an Association. That's why this year we put together a contingent of some 28 members from the RAF Seletar, RAF Changi and our own Association at the Cenotaph Parade in London, marching together for the very first time under the banner of *Units of the Far East Air Force* - an historic occasion. I was so proud to lead our group comprising Roger Hughes-Jones, David Bloomfield and his colleague, Alan Beattie, John Rutland and Mike Ward, who all managed to travel from as far afield as Yorkshire and Gloucester. With another 20 members from RAF Changi and RAF Seletar, plus a transferee from the NMBVA, we made a good gathering which hopefully will be repeated for as long as we can walk together.

The Association Reunion and AGM in May is an important landmark for the RAF Butterworth & Penang Association as we reach the 20th Anniversary of our forming in August 1996 - "Yes! I remember it well". I hope that as many of you as possible will at least drop in for the Dinner even if you can't stay for the whole duration. Len Wood has worked hard to ensure the success of the reunion and there still might be a few surprises added to the package now we have a little extra money available. So, please, don't leave it to the last minute to book for the reunion, we need to have ideas of numbers before the next newsletter comes out in the Spring, so put the dates in your diary, fill in the form(s) and send, with your deposit, to Len.

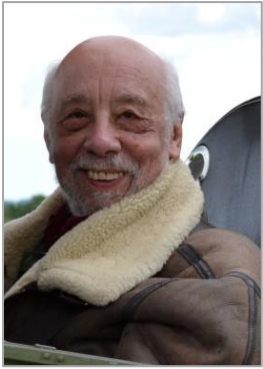
Finally, as Christmas and the Winter approach, it is important that you look after yourselves, seek help if required, don't feel lonely, look after each other and ensure that you and everyone you love have an enjoyable Christmas and that you arrive safely, and in good health, after whatever the winter has in store.

With our very best wishes.

Tony and Anne Parrini.

The 20th Anniversary of the RAFBPA is to be celebrated at the 2016 Reunion, to be held at the Ullesthorpe Court Hotel and Golf Club (Lutterworth), Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th May 2016

From the Editor



Before saying anything about this edition of *Eastward* I would like to apologise to those of you who received the print version of Issue 42 in the summer. Unfortunately, the 'wrong' version was printed resulting in poor quality reproduction of pictures of the 2015 reunion. Let me explain. A selection of pictures taken by Bob Margolis, including a group photo of those attending the reunion, was prepared for the different versions of the newsletter, i.e. colour for the e-mail version and the same pictures, adjusted for quality black and white reproduction, for the printed version. Both versions were, as usual, forwarded to the printers on a labelled disc. Unfortunately, the wrong version was printed resulting in the lacklustre photographic reproduction as they were printed from colour copies and not the prepared version. For some reason the group photograph was also lost. Needless to say, steps have been taken to prevent this happening again. Meanwhile, a separate copy of the reunion group photograph is enclosed with this edition in the hope that this may make up for the earlier omission.

The intrepid airman: normally seen as a quiet retiring person (!), the picture above shows me in the cockpit of a DH Tiger Moth ready for a flight over the high ground of Derbyshire, and Derwent and Ladybower reservoirs on a Dambusters Training Flight Plan flight on August 3rd. It was skillfully organised by Margaret for my 70th and after long delays due to weather conditions I eventually took off. It was wonderful. During the hour I was airborne I told the instructor the story of Dambuster 'Tony' Burcher and his role in Operation Chastise. Tony Burcher was based at RAF Butterworth, as Signals Officer, in the mid-1950s and his story is to be found in Issues 32 and 33 (2012) of '*Eastward*'.

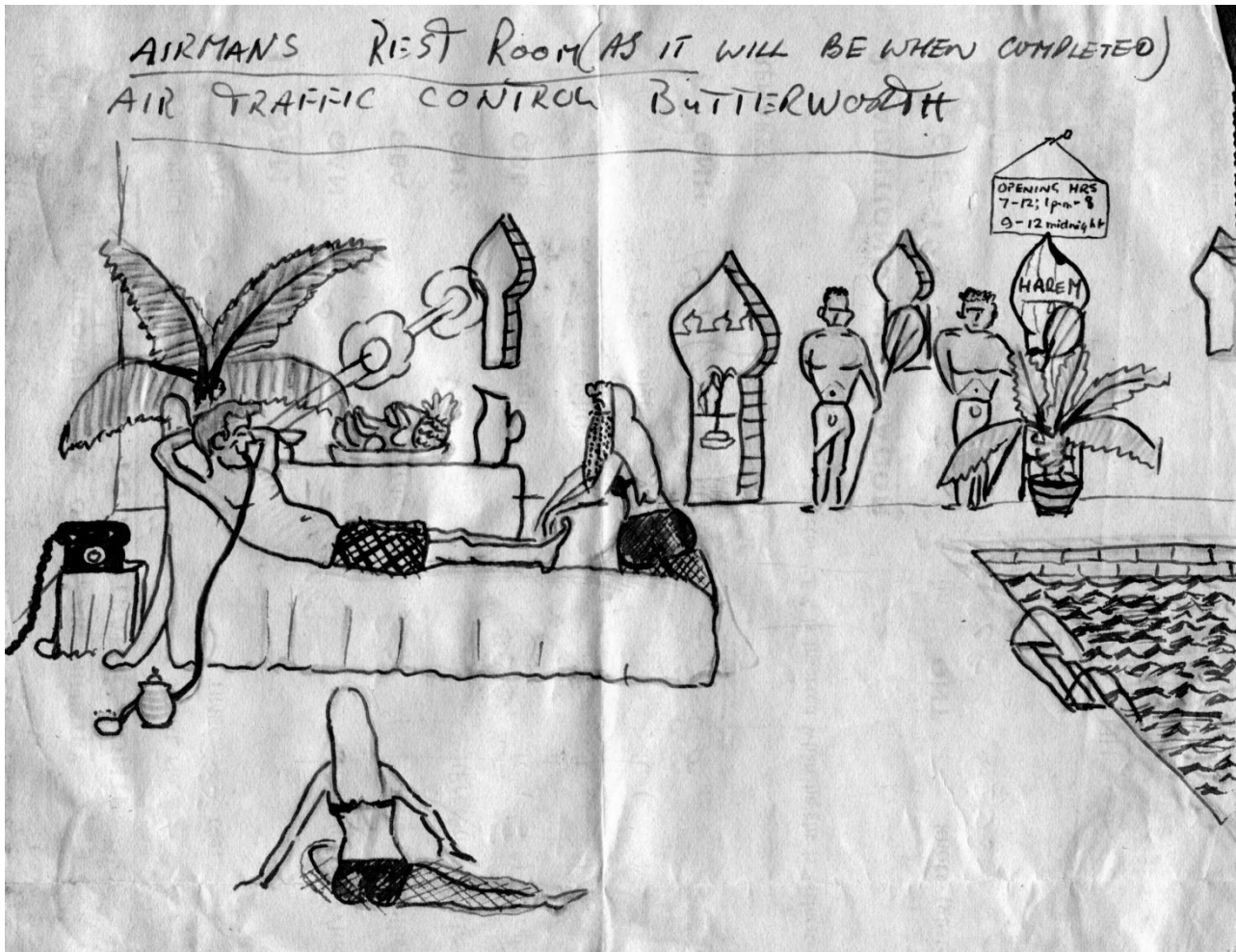
Did I imagine it, when on landing, I overheard Margaret saying to the instructor that she had paid him to not bring me back?

Coincidentally, my flight was the last *dams* run of the day and a few hours later *Les Munro*, the last surviving pilot from the dams raid died in New Zealand.

A call from Brian Lloyd (RAF Changi Association) one evening was to ask if a copy of our newsletter be placed in the library of the Union Jack Club in London, if the club agreed to the request? An excellent idea from the visiting Changi member, Brian Morgan, and much appreciated...our thanks to Brian (Morgan) and Brian (Lloyd).

At the 2015 reunion, held at Stratford, I was introduced to a resident of Stratford who was visiting the Falcon. This was John Holtom who flew with 358 RAF Special Duties Squadron Liberators to distant places in SE Asia (including Penang) from his base in India. The long distance flights continued immediate post-war and John has kindly written about his service with the RAF, both in training and with SEAC. From reading of his experiences, an internet search for further information about SEAC SD Liberators revealed two pdf articles that can be downloaded by those with access to the internet: *SEAC Liberator bombers in (the) Far East* (by J.E.H. Fail) and *Escape from Siam* (by H. V. Smith). The first covers the training of Liberator crews in Canada, the Ferry Unit flight to India and a host of information on SEAC Liberator bomber squadrons. The second article is about a 358 Squadron Liberator crew shot down over Siam and the evasion and escape of two of the crew from Siam whilst the rest of the survivors went to a Thai internment camp until the Japanese surrender. It's a remarkable story.....Perhaps we might also think of the Special Duties Squadrons of SEAC when on the RAFBPA visit to the NMA in May 2016 for Malaya was also a destination for their services!

"Dream on" - by John Gibson ATC Butterworth



General RAFBPA News and Stories

The Association extends a warm welcome to the following new member:

Tony Flynn. Sergeant Clk Sec Q-Sec-S, RAF Western Hill, 1969 - 1971

Members Correspondence and stories

Memories from **Eric Sharpe** (1953-56). 'Looking through my logbook when confirming dates I found that I too flew (1.7.1955) with Sgt Pilot Doudy, as mentioned by Trevor Coy (Issue 40, Christmas 2014). Now again the memories of Trevor Coy (Issue 41) have jingled my own grey cells where in just one line he mentions a refrigerated drinks dispenser! This had been installed in 33 Squadron time in the aircrew locker room with access to it for everyone, either via internal doors for the pilots or a set of steps at the window opening for airmen.

For those of a later Butterworth age I will divert to set the scene for the next set of *Memories*. The main west to east runway was from the sea to inland, crossing at right angles the public road. Another, older runway, ran north to south. It was, I believe, the original pre-war runway. 33 Squadron, the resident squadron at the time, had permanent buildings sited at the intersection in the north-west quadrant, with the old runway being used for aircraft dispersal.

Further north was the dispersal for the Far East Training Squadron (FETS) with marquees and tents on the

east side for accommodation. Even further north was a section reserved for visiting units deployed for air to ground gunnery and bombing on the Song Song ranges.'

Eric adds that this 1952/53 picture below (from Sam Mold) shows the 33 Squadron dispersal buildings very clearly....'the first two on the right on the fronting path were A and B Flight airmen's crew rooms. The right



hand one was used by the night guards. The building behind was the aircrew offices. The other three were various stores and the armoury. The little one in the middle was, I think, the toilet block, you can make out the water tank!'

'Night station duties for airmen included that of Aircraft Dispersal and Bomb Dump armed guards. Each area had six guards and a Corporal Guard Commander...all those reading this will understand the terms "Two hours on, four off, or if voted for, four on and eight off" The latter was popular for the lads would get eight hours eyes closed time. However this being the case, the corporal always drew the shortest straw for his was the 12 hours straight shift. Every long service regular, at the back end of life, and looking back, knows that they had 'thumbs up' and 'thumbs down' marks in their career pattern that were not always apparent at the time....this is one of my 'thumbs down' time!

After parading at the Armoury with our rifles and drawing a bandoleer of 50 rounds each, I marched the dispersal guard down to the 33 Squadron dispersal buildings at around 1730 hours. Outside the crew room I lined them up at the port arms and ordered them to take two clips of five rounds from their bandoleer and load their rifles with them. Then, to remove the magazines and place them in tunic pockets. ease springs and close the bolts applying the safety catches. Following that, into the crew room to bag a chair for the night and make out the duty roster, sending out the first team of two at 1800, one to the 33 kites and one up the line to FETS. The aircraft under armed guard were DH Hornets!

Some time later a bod came back from a foray to the aircrew building with a 'monk' on, "Some b.....d has locked the window shutters"! So I checked, doing a circuit of the building and yes, all the doors and windows were locked. It was normal practice for the Duty Squadron Officer to lock up everywhere, including the corridor door to the locker room, but to leave the window shutter open for the night crew. The buildings, though locked, were totally insecure, and I have a feeling nothing has changed in this respect even today! To encourage the circulation of air there were no soffits and high roof rafters to leave a fair gap over the top of the walls....a gap wide enough for a small wiry airman to wriggle through! So, using my 'Junior Power' for decision making, I ordered the two tallest guards to boost the smallest up where he wriggled, slid

and dropped down inside and then unbolted the shutter. Four happy airmen and one JNCO clutching a paid for cold drink returned to the crew room.....

When the second shift had been out for an hour or so, I loaded my rifle, uncocked with the safty off. Rightly or wrongly, this was how I decided to do things. I don't remember any individual orders for an armed guard to challenge other than to shout "Halt or I fire" three times. Then it was upto you if you did, or not! Airmen would practice how fast they could make that triple challenge....the yellow or green card issued to all service men likely to be armed came much later, and it carried a hoard of bureaucratic 'buts' that caused confusion...permanently if the guards luck ran out!

Anyway, after a little chat with the 33 guard, I wandered up the line to FETS, finding the guard sitting on one of the kites main wheels. Enquiring into his state of mind and health etc, he replied "I ain't arf firsty corp!". Now FETS was my outfit so I told him to follow me. One of the marquees was the stores and flight sergeants office, in which there was a good old unglazed pot...a water chatty complete with mug for normal day time quenching of thirst. Of course you can't lock a tent! All that was necessary was to *braille* the door flaps open. Not being staked at the bottom with a peg I was able to lift the bottom flap about 18 inches for the lad to slide under then he held it up for me. We each had a mug of water from the chatty and then left the way we entered.....

It was a dark night and we had a small diversion that might have had some bearing on the night's outcome. Crossing the dispersal we heard a noise, I whispered to the lad to lay off to my left and I hissed for him to load, challange but not to fire unless I did. The resulting 'click, clack, thump' as the guard did as ordered was a very evocative sound, followed immediately by a very swift triple challenge. This in turn was followed by a quavery voice "Don't shoot, RAF Police". He was ordered to place his 1250 on the deck and stand back whilst we went through the procedure and then unloaded safe. A very chastened RAF policeman left with the advice to not creep about with armed guards around again.

You can't win though as the rest of my yarn tells...After 0630 hrs we handed in our ammunition and went our ways. I was in the mess eating breakfast when two 'snoops' arrested me and marched me to the Guard Room for interrogation and being charged with:

1. Breaking and entering the 33 (Squadron) pilots crew room
2. Ditto the FETS Stores

I never did find out how this all came about so quickly. On the second charge it appeared that before closing the store the flight sergeant swept the dust in front of the flap and also his desk, and on opening up in the morning there were shoe and boot prints as evidence, the latter with hob nail marks,,the guard obviously not an aircraft tradesman. This big incident report must have rattled up the chain of command? When asked I gave the story truthfully but still landed up, with my cap off, in front of the Flight Commander, who in his 'commissioned' opinion found it too heinous a crime to act upon at his level of rank and passed me up the ladder to the Squadron Commander who smiled and dismissed the charge. As to the first charge, somehow it rated the attention of the Station Commander. So once again, it was the 'caps off' routine. It was the full nine yards of jargon, from the Squadron Duty Officer , a complete novice just posted in, not being aware of the standing night time practice regarding the welfare of the guards. His report included, in his opinion, the outside door had been 'jemmied' with a bayonet! When asked about this by the Station Commander, I am afraid I smiled, and when he unfroze enough to ask if I thought it was a joke I replied 'Yes' and that breaking into a building with a bayonet was not my style and told him nothing was stolen and no damage had been done, also how we had gained access and that the drinks had been paid for. The result was a reprimand and "March him out Warrant Officer".

The SWO, Mr Paris, was a friend of mine.

I am of the opinion that thumbs up and down times, especially the down ones, are never erased from ones files. At another station later on, and having to see another Station Commander in order to get his approval to receive £300 for wearing a blue suit for many more years, he asked "What on earth induced you to break in and enter a pilots locker room? I do not think he believed me when I told him what happened, but he gave me the benefit of doubt and let me have the bounty.....

David Bloomfield writes of an usual incident regarding a Vulcan that landed at Butterworth. David made several detachments to Butterworth from Seletar. In one he was attached to 110 Squadron, and during one weekend was called out to attend to a Vulcan bomber that had holes in the underside, to be repaired as a matter of urgency! He, and others on the job, were not told of the cause of the holes, and also were to remain quiet about them...and has done since 1961/62. It was thought the aircraft may have got too close to the Vietnam border, it was believed to be fitted with cameras!

A bit of a mystery this one. Robert Fleming, in his 2012 lecture at the National Army Museum stated that Britain's supposed non-involvement in the Vietnam War was something of a foreign policy oddity and mentions possible covert operations over Vietnam by the RAF. Vulcans, according to my source, states that they were able to carry (in the bomb aimers compartment) the F95 aerial camera, initially designed for taking high speed, low altitude oblique reconnaissance photographs!

Ken Harkess (MT Section, Butterworth) phoned to say he contacted Val West (Canada) soon after Val's letter appeared in a previous '*Eastward*', and has kept in contact with him since then, both finding they have much in common from their time at Butterworth. Ken writes: 'I did get in touch with Val following his request in '*Eastward*', giving him my dates at Butterworth. Val replied at once giving his dates and it transpired he was at Butterworth for a few months prior to my posting back to Changi.

However I gave him details which he requested regarding my duties as MT driver. These are as follows:

- 1 Duty driver for two months at Fort Auchry Leave Centre.
- 2 Detached to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission* having been given a Jeep to run a Flight Lieutenant and Sergeant pilot trying to trace RAF casualties and try to determine their names through dog tags, etc. - a six week trip through villages (kampongs) making enquiries.
- 3 Attached for some two months to the Jap POW camp - running parties of them into the forest to obtain wood for their cooking fires. Also running the CO and MO (Japs) into Georgetown to visit any Jap working parties on the island, a sort of "Any complaints visits". (In a later telephone call to Ken, he mentioned that on the journeys the CO remained an aloof figure, always sitting in the back of the Jeep with his sword, which for some reason he had been allowed to keep. The MO was a more friendlier person, talkative and mentioning he had taken part of his pre-war medical training in Edinburgh. On several occasions when driving through Georgetown, a RAF Police Jeep would pull alongside his vehicle.....). Val seemed very interested and since then we have kept in touch with e-mail on a variety of subjects ranging from the weather in Canada to details of the Canadian Rugby Team in the next World Cup. He is living in Ontario with his family and may try a run further west to where I did my flying training, to see if the E.F.T.S is still there? (In the telephone call Ken said he was 'recruited' by a RAF Sergeant in Edinburgh with a view to aircrew training. A spell at Carlisle on Tiger Moths then saw him travel to Canada on the Empress of Australia. The end of the Japanese War saw an excess of aircrew and Ken was compelled to remuster - he chose being a driver).

Thanks to the Association I feel I have known Val for many years.'

* Formerly the Imperial War Graves Commission, the name was changed to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 1960.

Don Donovan (RAFBPA Shop) holds the following RAFBPA merchandise:

Penang shields (6)	Butterworth shields (2)	RAFBPA ties (33)	Wreath centres (25)	Mugs (13)
Coasters (18)	Car stickers, small (37)	Car stickers, large (54)		

If you wish to purchase any of these items please contact Don, contact details on page 2

Proof reading the newsletter. Once again I am indebted to **Laurie Bean** for proof reading this issue. Not



an easy task as I know from previous experience and I am grateful to Laurie for taking this on.....*Dave Croft*. Further to Bron Worsnip's article *With the Javelins in the Far East* (page 20) and mention of the the Javelin Box 4 formation, Laurie adds; 'On receiving the proof copy, I checked my Terendak photos and attached is a photo of the 60 Sqn Box 4 formation over Terendak Camp at dusk. As you can see, all have reheat plugged in. These four aircraft were part of the original seven that had performed a couple of flypasts over Terendak to mark the 50th Anniversary of the RAF and the closure of the UPS1 detachment that I was on at the time. The photo was taken in very low light from the

control tower of the AAC Flight at Terendak, using a hand-held camera..

The pictures below are of the 50th Anniversary flypast over RAF Singapore, showing the Box 4 formation of 60 Squadron Javelins and other aircraft of FEAF, including RAAF Mirages from Butterworth (upper right). Taken by WO Vic Martin and via Pete Biggadyke.



Reminder. The 2016 RAFBPA Reunion will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Association at the Casuarina Hotel in Penang on 23/24th May. The reunion will be held at the Ullesthorpe Court Hotel and Golf Club, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, May 23/24. Full details are included with this issue of '*Eastward*'.



2015

It is with sadness that the Association has learnt of the deaths of **Colin Williams**, Signals, sometime in the 1950s (January 2015), **Mike Welply**, 94 Sqn RAF Regiment (Malaya), 1960-1962 (February 2015), **Peter 'Dinky' Toy**, Accounts, 1953-1955 (5th May), **Mervyn Hinton**, Central Registry, SHQ, 1952-1953 (3rd September), **Alan Large**, RAFSU, 1967-1969 (15th September) and **Norman Harvey**, Station Armoury, 1956-1959 (24th September).

Norman Harvey



From **Doug Owens**: I first met Norman Harvey when I was posted to RAF Butterworth in 1956. Norm was in the Station Armoury, I was employed in the Bomb Dump. Often we were together as Duty Armourers. It was as Duty Armourers that I really got to know Norm, who had a great sense of humour.

I lost track of Norm when I left Butterworth in 1958, and I never saw him again until I received a phone call from Don Brereton in 2009 where we arranged a meeting at Cosford. Since then Don, Norm, Syd Rogers and myself often met and had many happy days out with our families. Norm will be sadly missed by myself and my family.

From **Don Brereton**: When Norman and I met up eight years ago, although we knew we had been at Butterworth at the same time, neither of us knew how our paths had crossed? Whilst on the island of Bidan my eight o'clock radio call to the Armoury was answered by, it turned out to be, Norman! This was an important call as we were then out of radio contact for twelve hours so it was a pleasure to meet him after fifty years. Since our first meeting we have met up twice a year at Stafford and the annual parade at RAF Cosford...so I am a bit biased when I say he was one of the nicest people you could wish to meet and it was a pleasure knowing him.

From **Syd Rogers**: He was a great lad to work with and it was a pleasure to get back in touch again and talk over old times. Sadly that has been cut short, but Norman will never be forgotten.

From **Dave Croft**: I was pleased to receive the above from Norman's 'Gang of Four', also the photograph (left) from Doug Owens. I met Norman and Lill at a RAFBPA reunion where he generously donated, through the Association, a set of aircraft photographs taken at Butterworth to the RAeS National Aerospace Library. Norman habitually called me 'Group Captain' from the one occasion I greeted him whilst he was seated with "Please remain seated". He often reminded me of this occasion



It was also very obvious from the start that Norman and Lill were a very devoted couple and as Lill told me they went everywhere together. Norman also had a deep interest in the *Dam Busters* (along with Lill) and a kind gesture by a member at the 2015 Reunion draw saw him being the new (and proud) owner of Dam Busters memorabilia.

Although only knowing Norman for a short time, it was an honour to have been his friend.



Welcome to the Liberators

by John B. Holtom RAFVR

Air Bomber 1943 -1947

No. 358 Squadron SEAC

358 Squadron was formed in India (Kolar) in November 1944 with Consolidated Liberators. After crew training, the squadron moved to Digri in January 1945 and flew its only bombing mission that month. It then became a Special Duties Squadron, dropping agents and supplies (and leaflets) into enemy occupied South East Asia. After the Japanese surrender, supplies were dropped to POW camps in Malaya, Sumatra and Java. The squadron disbanded in November 1945.

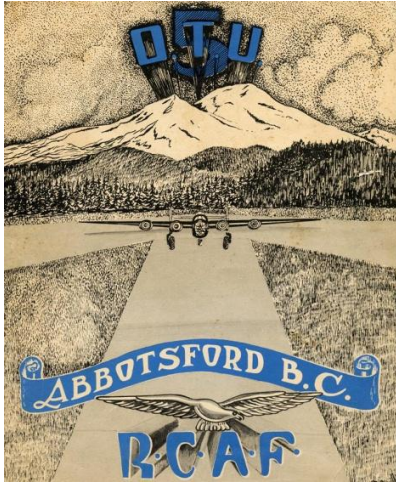
John's story begins from a meeting at the Falcon Hotel during the 2015 RAFBPA Reunion. He writes: 'These memories of my experiences in the RAF are the result of a chance meeting in Stratford-upon-Avon, where I live. I happened to drop in to the Falcon Hotel, where members of your Butterworth and Penang Association were being photographed and I spoke to several who were serving in the RAF at the same time as I was. Dave Croft asked me if I would write of my experiences for your newsletter?'

'During the war I asked my mother if I could join the Merchant Navy, As so many ships were being sunk, she said "No", but I was allowed to join the RAF.

When I was a boarder at Warwick School and the Air Crew Selection Board were touring the country for potential aircrew I was given a form stating that, subject to an aircrew medical, I would be accepted. On the 28th August 1943, I went to London to be kitted out. We were marched to Regent's Park Zoo for meals and to Lord's Cricket Ground for injections and dental inspections. James Heriot, who wrote 'Vets Might Fly' was there about the same time, but unfortunately he was found to be colour blind and was turned down! Initial training and square bashing followed when we went to St Andrews. I started playing golf there, which was free to servicemen. On Fridays I hired clubs at the daily rate of 1/6d, but as it was the weekend I didn't have to return them until Monday, a cheap deal for a weekend's golf.

Then, on 31st December, to Carlisle for initial flying training on Tiger Moths. On completion we were selected as pilot, navigator, gunner or air bomber, the latter being for me. Manchester was next (10th April 1944) where we were asked if anyone had boxed and I stupidly said I had done so at school. I was put in the ring with an experienced boxer and spent the whole time trying to keep out of his reach, They also asked if anyone played a musical instrument and someone admitted to playing the clarinet, as a result that person spent the rest of the war with the RAF band!

On the 20th April 1944, we sailed to Canada from Liverpool, on the Empress of Scotland, renamed from the Empress of Japan. We had a rough crossing and those not seasick had to clean up after those who were. Fortunately, I have never been seasick. My first posting in Canada was to No.5 Bombing and Gunnery School in Dafoe, Saskatchewan. We flew 40 flights in Ansons with training in bombing and gunnery, followed by No.5 Navigation School in Winnipeg, Manitoba for navigation training. There we did 13 flights in Ansons and then, after completion, we were presented with our air bomber wings. They asked for two volunteers to go to Vancouver for operational training and as my friend, Gordon Holland, had an aunt there



we both volunteered and were accepted. After the war Gordon emigrated to Canada and we still keep in touch.

In October 1944 we started training on B25 Mitchells at No. 5 Operational Training Unit, Boundary Bay. We did 21 bomb training flights, mostly over Vancouver Island...our skipper, Denny Kearns, stayed with us until the end of the war. This was followed by 5 OTU RCAF Abbotsford, Vancouver in January 1945 with conversion to B24 Liberators. We were crewed up with two pilots, navigator, air bomber, two wireless operators and five gunners and flew 17 bomb training flights. One morning our ball gunners kit was collected, which included the missing ensign from the parade ground mast! We learned he had taken a fully loaded petrol bowser

to Vancouver and had gone off the road and killed.

On another occasion, while on parade in Abbotsford one Sunday, we were told to scatter. Then we were virtually shot up at a very low level by a Mitchell B25....apparently the pilot had previously done the same thing at Boundary Bay! Two fighter aircraft were sent up to control him over Vancouver, then he went to 2,000 feet, waved to the pilots and dived at full throttle into the Pacific Ocean. He was a Canadian Officer who had already been demoted for taking a Lysander without permission and looping it.¹

On the 19 March 1945 we flew a Liberator with full crew to India via Montreal and Goose Bay, where the eight foot banks of snow bulldozed to the side of the runways made take off and landing hazardous. We also had to tie down our Aussie wireless operators for take off because they were so drunk!

The next stops were at the Azores, Morocco and Algiers. We had been issued with Colt 45s and SW38s in Canada and one night when we were in a large tent in Algiers someone said "Put out the lights!". One of the Aussie wireless operators took the order literally and shot them out with his Colt.

Then on to Libya, Palestine, Iraq, Bahrain, Arabia and finally via Jiwani to Karachi.

Our first posting in India was to Kolar in West Bengal, on the 2nd May 1945. This was for acclimatisation flying, completing eight flights for bombing and gunnery practice. This was followed by starting with 358 Squadron, Jessore, on the 3rd June, the operational crew consisting of two pilots, navigator, air bomber, wireless operator, dispatcher and two gunners. I would man the front turret, the wireless operator the side guns and the gunners the rear and upper turrets. The ball turret was replaced with a slide to drop parachutists.

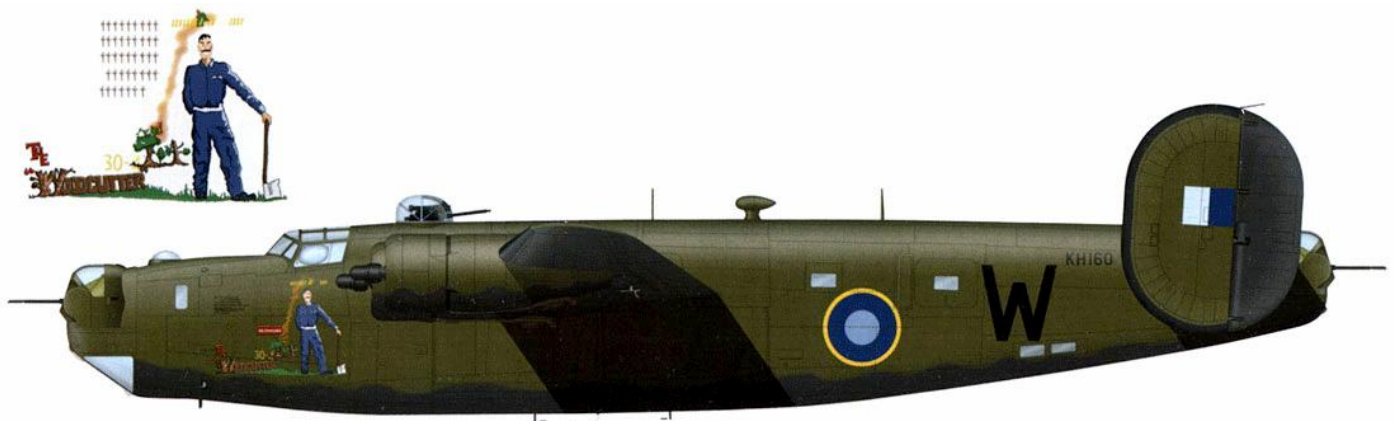
'From ACSEA (amended) 'RCAF Abbotsford - when a Sgt pilot (attempted) to steal a liberator (from Boundary Bay) which he could not get off the ground alone so he stole a Mitchell and successfully got it flying. He flew low over Vancouver flashing his lights off and on and turned back and flew at naught feet over the CO's parade, the CO remarked later that it was the finest bit of flying he'd ever seen and ordered that the Kittyhawks flight should scramble two Kittyhawks to shoot down the Mitchell if it looked as if it was going to cause any danger. The Sgt pilot turned the Mitchell out to sea and flew until his fuel ran out and the

aircraft crashed into the Pacific. This Sgt pilot has been commissioned and court martialled and demoted at an earlier date to Sgt and then posted to Boundary Bay'..

357 Squadron was also based at Jessore. They flew Dakotas on supply drops to the Army. We did the same, but with much heavier loads and much longer distances over SEAC (twice I flew on operations of over 16½ hours). Our containers, with parachutes, were carried in the bomb bays and released by the bomb gear. Often we dropped SOE parachutists, but before the containers!

Our first operation was on the 14 June and before carrying on to our dropping zone we circled the Shwedagon Pagoda in Rangoon, dropping leaflets telling the Japanese to surrender. On the 28 July operation, after dropping our containers, we under estimated the height of the hills and hit the topmost trees with our bomb bays still open. They were filled with branches and we also lost eight feet of our starboard wing and port rudder. Our skipper, Danny Kearns, managed to get back to base at Jessore where he ordered the crew to bale out. He landed the aircraft safely at 180 knots. For this, those who took to their parachutes became members of the Caterpillar Club.

The ground crew repaired the Liberator and as it carried the letter 'W', they painted a life sized picture on the aircraft of our skipper as a woodcutter, complete with an axe and tree branches!



On the 14 August, when returning from our drop, and on three engines, we heard on our wireless that Hirohito had accepted the Allies' terms for surrender and that the war was over. Formal surrender was on the 2nd September 1945 and we carried on flying until the 15th October. I had completed over 200 hours operational flying time on Liberators. Our pilot, Denny Kearns, returned to Britain in October. On the 10 November I commenced flying with F'O Johns as first pilot. He had completed two tours in Europe.

In December I started flying as a navigator on 159 Squadron, based at Salbani. We did five flights over the hump from Tuliul in North Burma to Kunming in China, carrying petrol in bomb bay tanks for the resident US Army Air Forces (USAAF) base. The Chinese Communists had surrounded the city, waiting for the Americans to move out. Squadron Leader Terence O'Brien was the officer i/c 357 Squadron Dakotas and in his book, *The Moonlight War*, he said that the Americans sent a Dakota to French Indo China to pick up the wounded. They picked up four American officers but refused to take 29 French wounded.

On another occasion we lost three Liberators. It was put down to the monsoon conditions where the visibility is so bad you are flying blind....but in his book O'Brien says that U.S. records show that, as they were over Indo China, they were shot down by the USAAF, acting on official policy².

From January 1946 to the 21st March, 45 rice-dropping flights were undertaken. These flights were from Pegu in Burma, dropping rice at very low level to the Burmese. The rice was carried in double sacks, in

slings in the bomb bays and dropped before those stacked high on the (very narrow) catwalk. These were pushed out by hand while the bomb bays were still open...very frightening as there was little to hang on to. The rice was loaded onto the aircraft by Japanese Surrendered Personnel.

Our one, and only, trip to Malaya was to Penang on the 18th January. We were delivering fruit juice at the nearest airfield suitable for landing the heavily laden Liberators on as the Singapore runways were not fit to take Liberators. On the 29th April, we did three flights mapping the ground using Photo Mosaic techniques - taking a series of aerial shots which are pieced together to provide accurate information for future land surveys and management.

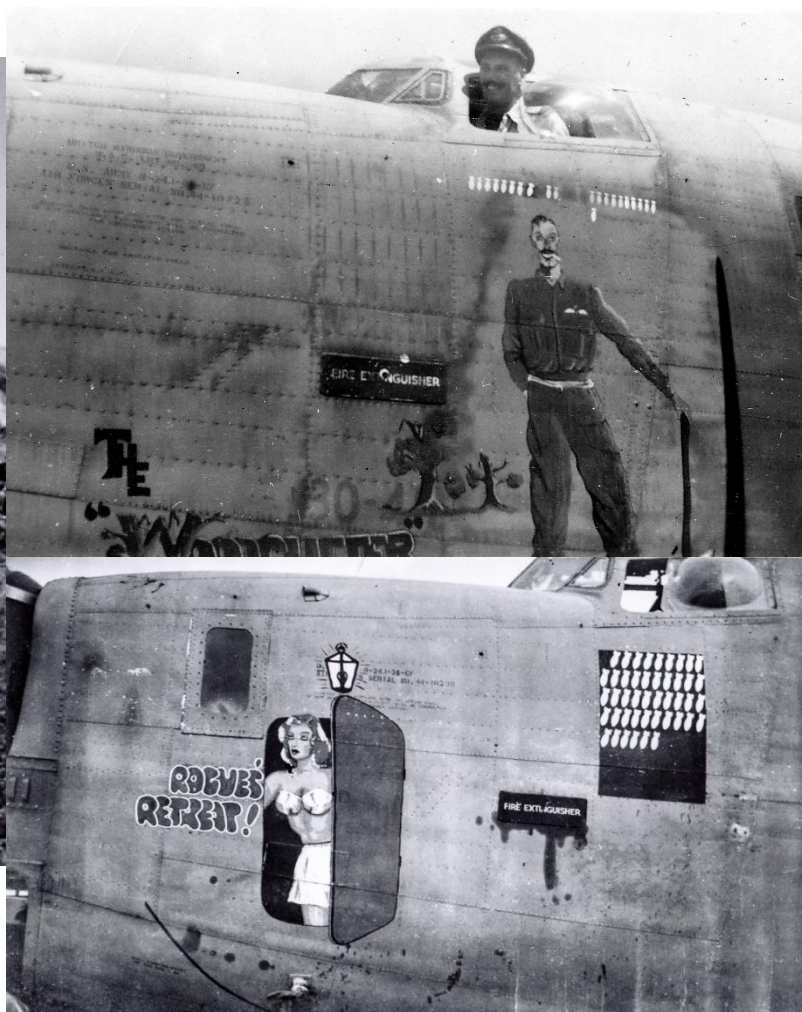
At the end of my flying time I was flight controller in Baroda, north of Bombay. The Gaekwad of Baroda had his own Lancaster, Dakota and Anson! While there I stopped taking the daily dose of anti-malaria Mepachrine we were issued as I did not want to arrive home with yellow skin - I paid for that decision by getting malaria.

I left Bombay on MV Britannic and arrived home in March 1947 to deep snow, and demob!!

²From ACSE (amended): 'Roundels and tail markings were SEAC colours of dark blue and light blue, these symbols being used for a definite purpose....to avoid any possible confusion with Japanese markings by allied fighters and fighter bombers....six RAF Liberators dropping supplies to insurgents in French Indo China were jumped and shot down by US Navy Wildcats from a carrier off the coast of Indo China (friendly fire!). This incident (the first was the loss of five Spitfires due to 'friendly fire') was hushed up by the Supreme Commander and his staff as it could have had a bad effect upon the morale of the RAF Liberator crews on SEAC.....'



Above right: The 'Skipper' and his newly named aircraft, 'The Woodcutter', Right and overleaf: A number of the squadron aircraft also showed tasteful nose art.





The narrow catwalk mentioned on page 15 is clearly shown on an early mark Liberator (left) of 159 Squadron.

ORB's. Further to John Holtom's account, RAF Forms 540 and 541 give additional details of daily squadron events in relation to his time with 358 Squadron: F540 for the 'Summaries of events' and F541 for general observations of individual aircraft, crew etc on each sortie. We start with Administration Orders for the 1st June 1945 relating to the *'Suppressive treatment of Malaria instituted with effect from today. Each man is to take two tablets of Mepachrine for the first seven days and one tablet per day as laid down in ACSEA Admin Order No. 51/45. Administrative action was taken to hold section parades at which every person was witnessed to consume his dose.'*

The 358 Squadron ORBs for the flights John has included in his account are as follows:

14 June 1945, Liberator KG877 'O'. *DNCO (Did not complete operation). Weather on this trip was typical monsoon over the Bay of Bengal. Cloud base 800' and down to 300' in showers Long line of cu and cb, all down Araken coast. A/c turned inland at Bawani Bay and tried to penetrate at 4000'. This was impossible so came out and tried again at 16000'. Again extreme Cb turbulence and rain prevented progress. The crew tried further south with the same with the same results. Returned to base.*

F540. 28 July 1945. Liberator HB/VI (SD) KH160 (Capt F/O D. C. L. Kearns) returned from operations with [several] feet of the starboard wing missing and with extensive damage to the port fin. It appears that the aircraft had hit a tree when climbing out of the dropping zone which was situated in a 'cuff' in the hills. Maps show a valley leading out which could not be checked due to cloud. After dropping the load the capt flew for this valley but to his consternation was confronted with a fairly high tree-covered saddle. In climbing over this, the aircraft struck a tree and despite the damage successfully reached base. Five of the crew were ordered to bale out over base and the captain made a good landing.

Operational Summary for July 1945: After successfully completing operation 'Harbage Aubergine 7' on the 28th, F/O Kearns collided with trees on surrounding hills while climbing away from the D.Z.. The outer section of the starboard wing was ripped off, but F/O Kearns maintained control and brought the A/c back to base where he made a successful landing after five members if the crew had bailed out over the aerodrome.

F541. Liberator KH160. The A/c took off at 0745 as briefed. The weather on the way out was good. Cu and Sc over Chins and Shans. Identified D.Z. Reception as briefed. The D.Z is place on the side of a steep hill and is 3500 ASL. On North side of D.Z. is hill 5500 DSL and on South side is a long ridge 4700 ASL. There is a valley leading up to dropping zone, on a heading of about 080°M at end of valley. About ¼ mile from D.Z. is a sheer hill 7000' ASL. We circled D.Z. and decided on a run of 084°. Made run at 4300' indicated. As we dropped cans and packages on D.Z. I opened up 2500 RPM and Turbo 10. making a turn to right. The engines did not respond for a second or two after I opened up. My speed was then 130 mph. Turned right over ridge but could see we would not clear it so pulled a/c over top at 90 mph. As we cleared top of the hill we clipped off a few feet of our starboard wing. Got a/c under control and flew back to base. Due to lack of control at any speed less than 155 mph, I flew over aerodrome and ordered 5 of my crew out by chute. All landed safely. We landed a/c OK. Capt, 2P and Nav in it.

F451. 14 August 1945. Liberator EW171. A/C took off at time ordered. Weather en route as briefed. At about 1015 hrs I noticed an oil leak in No. 1 engine. I carried on and by 1130 hours oil pressure started to drop. At 1210 I reached the point on the Mekong and turned on to the D.R. run to the D.Z. Height 8000'. As I turned the oil pressure on No.1 engine dropped to 60 lbs, so I feathered No.1. I carried on the run through 9/10 Cu cloud but due to the load aboard I couldn't hold height. The hills here are 6000', so after about 12 mins, being unable to see the D.Z., I jettisoned the load. I then set course for Meiktila, bringing 5 Joes* back with me. Landed at Meiktila at 1705 and it was found that the oil pipe on the D.S. Unit had snapped due to faulty casting. Spares were flown in and I returned to base in A/C EW171 on 17.8.45. *'Joes'....OSS agents parachuted behind enemy lines

F540: 15 August. Information received of the Japanese surrender, and all personnel other than those on essential duty, 'stood down' during the afternoon and also the whole of the 16th August.

16 August. Squadron 'stood down' except for personnel required for the days operational tasks.

19 August. All ranks, except those on essential duty, attended a Church Parade in commendation of the VJ day. The parade formed up and marched into one of the hangars. The Station Padre took the service.

23 August. The airmen held their 'VJ' dinner in their dining room during the evening in 2 sittings. Officers of the Squadron attended and everyone had an enjoyable time. The cooks put up a fine show and laid out a very appetising meal.

Operational Summary September 1945. Hostilities having ceased, the Squadron's main work for this month was devoted to assisting POWs. Camps were located and personnel with medical, clothing and food supplies were dropped in their vicinity, often with a waving, cheering crowd of POWs at the reception end.

A Royal Visit to Butterworth and other stories by Charlie Tagg (1952-1954)

At the 2015 reunion Charlie passed over his album of Butterworth photographs (1952-54) and later sent the stories behind some of the photographs.

The Thai Air Force: The Grumman Bearcats (below left) were all ex US Marines aircraft, some had the full American serial number, others had just the last four numbers. They were on a goodwill flight to Singapore, and all the pilots were Thai princes. The DC3 came in early with the ground crews, and there was a Harvard which I didn't get a photograph of, but it had two pilots and an engineer jammed in behind the second pilot. He was only small but it still couldn't have been comfortable.



The Thai pilots were very impressed with our Hornets!

The photo of me in front of the DH Beaver was one belonging to the Federation Air Service (based KL) , which was yellow with a red line down the side. The rest of the fleet were all camouflaged. In the pictures of the squadron booze up (below right) you can see I had a moustache in those days.



The Avro Anson with the Hong Kong civil registration* was flown in very early one morning. The crew were an elderly man and his wife. I don't know the full story but they had been impounded in Burma.

Apparently, they had some jerry cans of fuel on board the aircraft when in Burma so they refuelled it in the dark by torch light. Then they took off in the dark. I don't know if they had to stop anywhere else on their

way to Butterworth? They stayed for a few days before leaving for Singapore and I never heard anymore about them. A few years ago I heard that a member of Air-Britain, of which I am a member, was writing a book on the Avro Anson, so I sent a copy of the photo (below left) to him. He wrote back thanking me and said that hadn't heard of that particular aircraft before, and the picture is now in the book.



** The story behind Anson VR- HDU has been researched and is both serious and amusing and will be included in the Easter 2016 issue of 'Eastward'*



No. 33 Squadron, July 1953

All pictures, except Anson VR-HDU picture on right, by Charlie Tagg

The Annual RAFBPA Reunion is being held May23rd/May 24th 2016 at the Ullesthorpe Court Hotel and Gold Club, Lutterworth, Leicestershire

With the Javelins in the Far East by Bron Worsnip (60 Squadron Javelins)

Part 3 of Bron's service describes his detachments to Hong Kong and the Philippines, an inherent early problem with the Javelin and the disbandment of 60 Squadron.

'The detachment to Hong Kong was a consequence of Chairman Mao's regime in China, the *Little Red Book* was in the news a great deal. As far as the ground crew were aware our Javelins were there to 'Show the Flag.'

It was an interesting detachment for us and we did the tourist role, visiting Kowloon on the main land and Hong Kong Island. One outing we enjoyed was visiting the civil part of the airport. There was a bar on a balcony that overlooked the arrival and departure area where we could watch everything going on. There were aircrews coming in and leaving, dressed in very smart uniforms, and the hostesses in their little hats. There was a feeling of romance and excitement that is not apparent at our modern large airports. As well as our squadron the only other sign of the situation with China was a group of Gurkha's on the station. We passed them one morning on the way to breakfast, they were at ease waiting for transport. All had their own chicken, carried in a small wooden crate; this I think was to be their next meal.

My most interesting 'outing' was a visit to Clark Field, an American Air Force Base in the Philippines. I accompanied two NCOs to fix one of our aircraft that suffered hydraulic problems when staging through Clark Field to Hong Kong. On our detachments to Hong Kong we staged through South Vietnam or the Philippines.

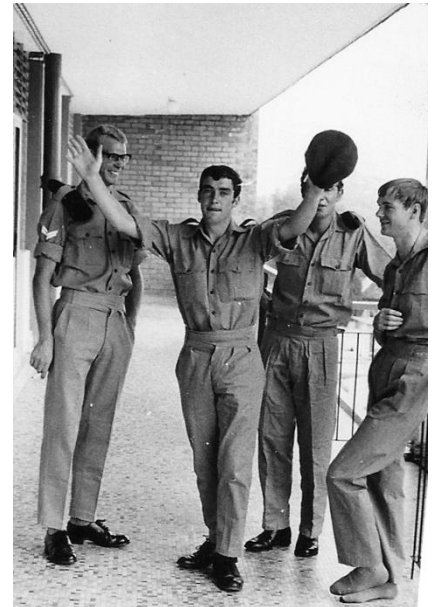
Our stay was complicated as we had a typhoon the day after we arrived. The airfield was completely cleared, the aircraft being put into hangars or flying off to a safe base. We spent the period of the typhoon in a hangar with hundreds of American airmen.

It is my understanding that Clark Field was a main staging post for aircraft and equipment to and from America and South Vietnam. The airfield was full of all types, examples I remember being the North American Super Sabre, Republic Thunderchief, Convair Delta Dart, Fairchild Provider, Douglas Globemaster and Lockheed Hercules. In the hangar where the Americans put our Javelin, there was also a Boeing B-47 bomber.

My strongest memory is seeing the long line of American casualty evacuation aircraft, Boeing 707s and Douglas DC 9s, from Vietnam queuing round the airfield waiting to disembark their patients. Each aircraft stopped at a long covered mobile tunnel that went from the aircraft to what must have been an admissions hospital.

The Americans assisted us with the repair of our hydraulic problem by making a flexible hydraulic pipe as a temporary repair to get the aircraft back to Tengah. We flew into Clark Field on a Blackburn Beverley and returned home on a Lockheed Hercules. I understood that this aircraft was on a training flight as the Hercules was being introduced into RAF service at this time.

The only fatal accident on a unit I was part of during my service happened on 60 Squadron Javelin XH788 on the 11th October 1967. I was one of the firing party at the grave so I also attended the funeral service. The groundcrew understood that the fatalities were caused by an inherent problem in the Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire engines of the Gloster Javelin, that of 'centre line closure'. However in researching my story I have found this was not the case! The report by an eye witness, who was the 'pair', with XH788 explained that the aircraft broke its main spar when the pilot attempted a roll at low level with a full fuel



load having just flown past the eye witness at high speed. The official explanation given was 'the cause was due to structural failure caused by overstressing the airframe in a high-g manoeuvre.'

In the book *Jet Jockies*, the author, Peter Caygill, has a chapter by Wing Commander 'Dusty' Miller, who was Commanding Officer of 60 Squadron while I served on it. Wg Cdr Miller talks about his role as a Javelin pilot and describes his experience of suffering 'centre-line closure'. "CLC was the Javelins Achilles heel in a way. A lot of aircraft were lost in the early days and the cause remained undiscovered for some time. All that was known was that the aircraft blew up over the North Sea and it turned out that when the aircraft were flying in cu-nimbus large quantities of super cooled water droplets were ingested into the engine(s) which caused the casing to shrink and touch the compressor blades. These then broke up and passed down the engine, wrecking not only the compressor but also the turbine, and very often bits spectacularly flew off. In this respect the Javelin was at a disadvantage because it had two engines close together with hydraulic pumps and gearboxes in between. In such a situation you could easily lose the aeroplane, if not the crew. The eventual modification was a typical bodge. It was almost literally sticking very tough carborundum paper round the casing of the compressor so that when the blades touched they rubbed themselves down. The engine kept going and at the end of the day you had a slightly less powerful engine! I did experience this in the Far East one evening flying from Butterworth to Tengah. Visibility was clear but we had to cross the Inter Tropical Front which went up to about 60,000 ft. We couldn't get over the top so went through at about 53,000 ft, and while we were going through both engines suddenly hiccupped and then sort of coughed (if a jet engine can cough), picked up and carried on. When we landed and looked at the jet pipes there was white metal in both. An investigation showed both engines had suffered centre-line closure, but the mod had worked and the aircraft went on flying."

No. 60 Squadron disbanded at Tengah on the 30th April 1968 with a parade and flypast. Mike Miller describes how he devised this spectacular event. 'Because of the infinitely variable control on the airbrakes on the Javelin it was perfectly possible to fly in formation in reheat. The reheat was either in or out, you had no control over the power but you could control the speed of the aircraft with the airbrakes. The trick was for the leader to select half airbrake then the box formation would formate using airbrakes rather than throttle.

The disbandment parade was held at sunset and we did a flypast in diamond nine formation. After the inspection we came back with a box four in complete darkness with nice long flames coming out of the back, something that I don't think has been done before. We only practised it once because it was the end of time for the aeroplane. We found that when the aircraft broke to go round the circuit downwind the pilots of the formatting Javelins had destroyed their night vision and couldn't see each other. To get round this we mounted a Canberra downward identification lights between the engines on the back panel of the Javelin fuselage....when we looked at them after the flypast, the lights on all four aircraft were on the point of meltdown. In addition to the flypasts of the Diamond Nine and Box Four, before it became dark, Flt Lt Holman carried out a singleton low level flypast executing a Victory Roll.'

Even before the parade and flypasts we were witnessing the breakup of some of the aircraft by local contractors where we had sweated to keep them serviceable and 'flying'.

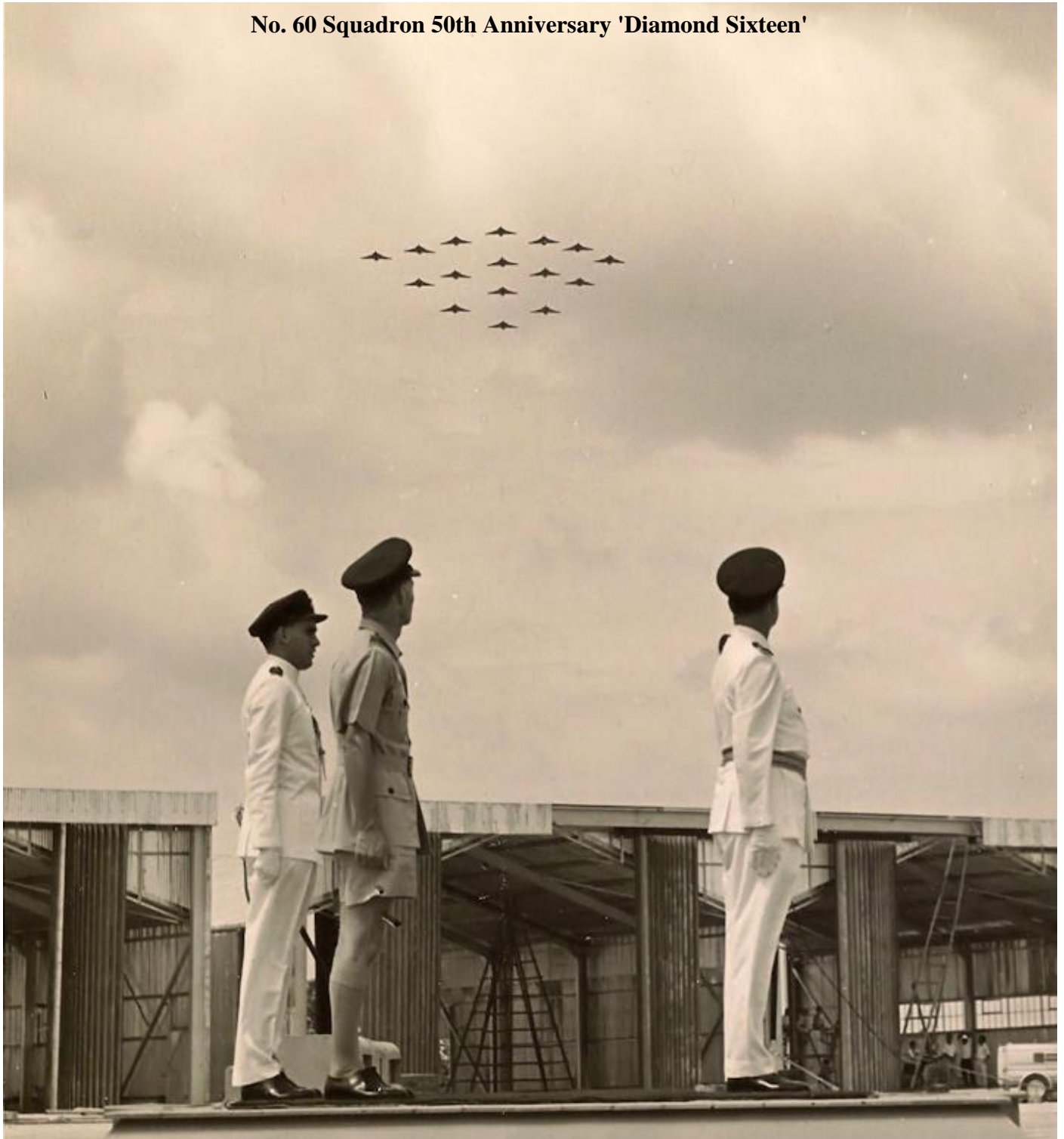
On the 30th April 1966. No. 60 Squadron had celebrated its 50th Anniversary at RAF Tengah. I had just arrived at Butterworth and was not aware of the anniversary. I understand the squadron carried out an unrehearsed 'Diamond Sixteen' aircraft flypast around Singapore Island.

Our sister Javelin Squadron at Tengah, No. 64, disbanded on the 30th May 1967. 'They decided to have a mass formation 'good bye' flypast and the ground crew were given the opportunity to take the nav's seat as part of the flypast. A reward for a job well done!"

"Whilst the aircraft were forming up after take-off XH896 struck the tail plane of XH707 which disintegrated and the aircraft spun and crashed, almost vertically, into the Johore jungle. Neither pilot or passenger ejected and both were killed on impact. XH896 also suffered terminal damage but both pilot and airman managed to eject safely. This aircraft crashed into the jungle within half a mile of XH707."*

* This account was taken from the internet and was written by a SNCO from 45 Squadron, also based at RAF Tengah, who led the team of airmen to secure and guard the crash sites of both aircraft.

No. 60 Squadron 50th Anniversary 'Diamond Sixteen'



WE'RE AT WAR! REMEMBER?

Part 2 : Jungle Dare-Devils (Reveille, July 4, 1957). This is the second dispatch covering the Emergency, sent from Singapore in 1957, by Dennis Holman that appeared in the Reveille newspaper. The newspaper copies (Parts 1 to 3) are by courtesy of RAFBPA member **Don Brereton**.

SILENT KILLERS BRING TERROR TO TERRORISTS

The prisoner was an aborigine boy of about seventeen, squatting on his hunkers, with some cooked rice on a piece of banana before him. But he couldn't eat. There was terror in his eyes.

Nearby a Malay clerk was writing on a pad. He reached for a parang - a jungle knife - to sharpen his pencil, and the boy screamed. He still believed what the Communists had told the people, that the Government troops cut off aborigines' heads.

For five years the extended family group to which he belonged had been the serfs of some Communists terrorists in the deep jungle. The serfs fed them with rice and tapioca which they grew in their jungle clearings. The terrorists thought they were safe in their remote hideout. For these aborigines acted as their sentries, and aborigines are born with a sixth sense-an uncanny jungle 'radar' sense that warns them instinctively of danger,

Yet a British patrol penetrated the 'radar' screen, shot one terrorist, wounded another who escaped, and captured three aborigines, including the boy.

The British patrol was composed of paratroopers from 22 Special Air Service Regiment, a unit fashioned six years ago to operate in the deep jungle. Today these 'Deep Jungle Dare-Devils' are the greatest exponents of jungle fighting in the world.

Don't mistake me. I'm not trying to say our soldiers who beat the Japs in the Burma jungles were playing at boy scouts. But the Malayan terrorists are guerrillas who fight only on their own terms, hitting and running. To retaliate we have to hunt them to the death in some of the worst jungle conditions in the world.

Jungle craft

I visited the squadron to which that paratroop patrol belonged. The squadron commander, Major John Slim, son of the famous Field-Marshal, led me up a steep hillside to his headquarters. It was a basha on stilts, overlooking a chattering stream he had named the Puteh. He explained his men's jungle technique. "The secret is moving slowly" he said. These men depend largely on surprise. They slip through the aborigine 'radar' screen by approaching an enemy position from the most unlikely side. But this often involves crawling inch by inch through acres of bamboo and thick secondary jungle. Sometimes it means climbing vertical rock faces. And it has to be done without making a sound for the listening antenna of the 'radar' screen are hypersensitive. Usually the men operate with aborigine guides who can follow almost imperceptible tracks. Yet in Major Slim's squadron there's Corporal 'Whispering Leaf' Hague, an Englishman who has learnt jungle craft from the aborigines, He is regarded by them as a first class tracker.

The masters today of this leech infested green hell are boys who were reared in British towns and villages. Their strength is their spirit. Mere discipline could not have made it into a relentless killing machine so terrifying to the terrorists. For young paratroopers endure 16 to 20 week tours in the jungle, with only their poncho capes for shelter against the torrential rain, supplied with only the barest necessities by air drop.. They will go days without food if the arrival of an aircraft is likely to give away their position to the enemy. They will risk their necks jumping onto jungle tree tops, if by doing so they can gain a tactical advantage. I met Major John Cooper, one of the pioneers of this tree jumping technique. He broke his arm in a tree jumping operation.

Controlled jump

He explained: " *We drifted into tree jumping. On one of our early ops only four percent of the men who jumped landed on the dropping zone. The rest were hung up in trees, unable to get down. Something had to be done.*"

An early type of get-down equipment consisted of a hollow belt under the armpits through which a line was passed, like a pyjama string. After getting hung up in a tree, the paratrooper tied the end of the line to a branch, released himself from his parachute, then slid down to the ground with the line running through the belt.

The latest tree jumping kit is a 240ft. roll of webbing, the end of which is threaded to the waist of a canvas seat. In it a paratrooper can make a controlled descent from the top of any jungle giant.

The Special Air Service is the weapon which General Templar created as part of his overall plan for the deep jungle phase of the Malayan campaign. The other part was to be an all out effort to win over, by kindness and propoganda, the hostile aborigines who were supporting the enemy.

It was a combined military and sociological operation. My friend and host, the anthropologist, Richard Noone, was put in charge of the aborigine campaign. Noone recruited 30 Malay field assistants, whom he taught to handle aborigines and sent to the police forts General Templar was establishing in the jungle. A jungle fort gave protection to the surrounding aborigine groups. An Indian dresser at the fort dispensary and a flying doctor took care of their medical needs. But it was the field assistant's job to win the friendship of the aborigines.. It was slow work at first, but gradually the hostile aborigines were won over.



Propaganda party

The Communist terrorists reacted with their own brand of propoganda. Once, to explain away the number of British troops in a jungle operation, they said the British Army had been defeated in the open and were hiding in the jungle. Noone replied by arranging for all the friendly aborigine headmen of the area to be brought out to Kuala Lumpur in RAF helicopters. They were shown battalions of troops and police on parade as well as armoured fighting vehicles, and aircraft.

They were given a demonstration of fire power in which the artillery blew up a section of jungle on the side of a hill. Then after a party, with plenty of good food and lemon squash, they were flown back into the jungle where they told their people about the wonders they had seen. Noone knew that the relatives in the neighbouring hostile groups would soon hear the truth about the Communist lie. Thus aborigines are being made to realize that we are the better bet, that we keep our promises, that we rule by law, not terror. Terror was the Communists' weapon. With it they kept their aborigine serfs in bondage. **ONE ENTIRE ABORIGINE GROUP OF ABOUT 40 PEOPLE WAS MASSACRED BY TERRORISTS BECAUSE ONE HAD INFORMED AGAINST THEM.** So the enemy had to be beaten in the deep jungle. They had to be driven out of the hereditary areas of the hostile aborigines before the serfs could be freed. This has been the role of the Special Air Service.

Operating with aborigine guides, they hunt and shoot terrorists in ones and twos. They take field assistants to palaver with headmen, bearing gifts of tobacco, sarongs and trinkets. For many years many aborigines had lived in fear, believing the stories they were told. They were bitter when they realized they had been duped. To get even some ex-hostile aborigines have led our patrols against the very men who battered on them. One headman, *Panoi*,¹ sent his son, *Uda*, to guide a New Zealand paratroop patrol to the killing of *Ah Ming*, a terrorist propaganda organizer.

Some aborigine groups have gained enough confidence to take on the terrorists themselves. Two terrorist food collectors were blowpiped with poison darts when they demanded wild rice from a once docile group in Perak.

They dropped dead in their tracks. Post-mortem examinations, the first ever carried out on humans who had died from Ipoh poison², showed that the muscles of the heart had instantly become paralysed. Another three terrorists were blowpiped in Pahang. Four others were killed with parangs in Johore.

Paid to kill

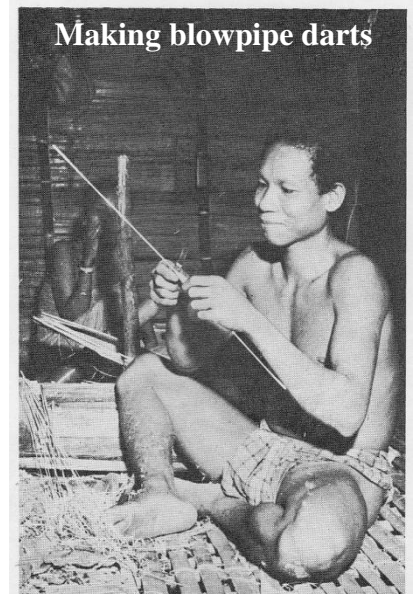
In Kelantan a party of aborigines went out and ambushed one of their own kind, an aborigine traitor, and killed him with shotguns. All the aborigines concerned were rewarded for these kills.

Judge for yourself the combined efforts of the Special Air Service and Noone's Department of Aborigines. *Of the hostile aborigines they had to cope with 3½ years ago, less than 200 remained with the terrorists.*

AND THESE ABORIGINES ARE COMING OVER TO THE GOVERNMENT AT THE RATE OF ABOUT 20 A MONTH.

To date our forces in Malaya, with the Malayan Police, have eliminated nearly 9,500 Communist terrorists, including 6,350 killed. Wounded bring their total casualties up to well over 12,000. And the elimination rate is about 40 a month. **But 2,000 still remain, like wild animals at bay.**

They're choked with hate, they're desperate, and they're very dangerous - as I was to discover for myself in the tense moments of an ambush.



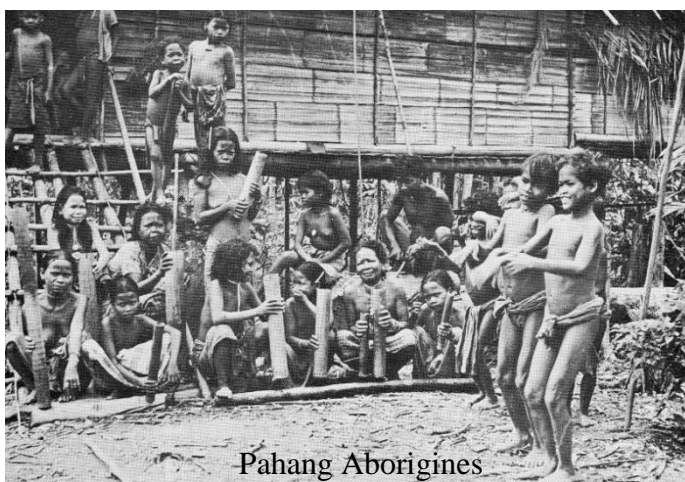
Making blowpipe darts

NEXT WEEK

AMBUSH IN THE JUNGLE

¹ This particular episode is covered in detail in the books; *The Jungle Beat - Fighting Terrorists in Malaya 1952 - 1961* by Roy Follows, and *Noone of the Ulu* by Dennis Holman. Both books are available from internet book sellers

² Ipoh poison. Obtained from the latex of the Ipoh or Upas tree (*Antiaris toxicaria*). occasionally combined with latex of the *strychnine* plant (*Strychnos nux-vomica*) to give a more potent 'kick' to the dart.



Pahang Aborigines

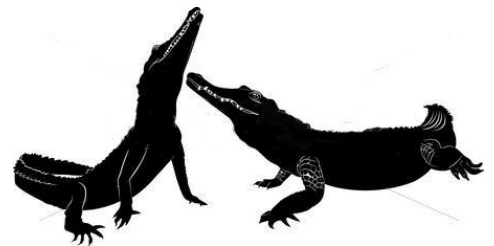


Australians, Buffaloes and Crocodiles

On January 1942, RAAF Sergeant (407578) Grant Harrison of 453 Squadron flew his Brewster Buffalo aircraft (W8202) from RAF Sembawang on a joint 21/453 Squadron operation to destroy enemy aircraft recently arrived at Kuantan. Unfortunately the target was covered by cloud down to ground level and the attack was called off. On the return flight, passing Mersing at low level, and running into severe turbulence, Buffalo AN171, flown by Pilot Officer (586) R. H. Wallace flew too close from behind and slightly above W8202, removing the canopy and bending the airscrew of W8202. Sgt Harrison, being too low to bale out safely crash landed his aircraft among trees some 600 yards from the Mersing river.

P/O Wallace, with a struggle, ditched AN171 in the sea close to Tengora. He reached the shore and after two days of facing the jungle reached a river where he built himself a raft and drifted downstream, to be eventually rescued by an Australian Army patrol based at Jemaluang. From Jemaluang P/O Wallace was returned to Singapore in a MAAF Moth specially detailed to 'recover' him, a week after ditching his aircraft.

In the meantime, Sgt Harrison set out for the coast where on the second night he spent the hours of darkness in a fishing hut situated in a mangrove swamp. Three crocodiles appeared on the rising tide and kept him company throughout the night. Following their departure he again set out for the coast where after six days he was found by an Australian Army patrol (from Jemaluang). *In passing, it would have made a really good adventure story if both pilots had described their days between coming down and rescue in detail, but maybe it is part of the Australian nature not to make a fuss over this type of thing?*



In 1962, W8202, was found in a good state of preservation in dense swamp jungle near to the Mersing river. As expected there was damage with the tail having being twisted on impact with the ground, and the port wing was buried in the swamp. Systems hydraulic pressure had been maintained and there was a full oxygen cylinder....there was also 400 rounds of ammunition in the aircraft! A recovery party from 390 MU removed the guns and ammunition and took them to Seletar, leaving the aircraft where found. Perhaps W8202 is still waiting for 'rescue' from the jungle?

Laurie Bean adds to the story: 'The exact fate of W8202 (after the 390 MU visit) is not really known. The story goes that it was bulldozed into the site of a development (in the 90s). However a local scrapdealer could also be a possibility as the metal would have been worth salvaging. It was a shame that the aircraft was not recovered for restoration.

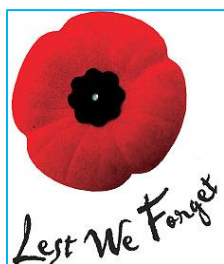


1941

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 8th NOVEMBER 2015

CENOTAPH PARADE IN WHITEHALL

A report on the day from **Tony Parrini**, Chairman RAFBPA



'What a most remarkable and moving experience it was for all of us. Arriving at Horse Guards Parade before 9 am, there was already a buzz as ex-servicemen and women arrived from all directions, some on foot, some by taxi, others in wheelchairs being assisted by their carers - but all of us with one thing in common - "We had served our Country and were remembering those who had served with us but didn't come home to live their lives as we have."

What a privilege it was to carry the Association wreath to the Cenotaph and to know it lies there alongside hundreds of others in memory of our lost colleagues.

If you haven't taken part in the parade - Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph - put it on your 'bucket list' and do it at least once, you'll not regret it! It will be a memory I'll carry with me for a long time to come and something I definitely want to repeat.



Tony Parrini



Roger Hughes-Jones



Roger Hughes-Jones and Vietnam Veteran



Tony Parrini presenting his VJ70 badge to the senior King's African Rifles Veteran





Remembrance Day Parade photographs by Tony Parrini and Roger Hughes-Jones

Royal Air Force Station,

Butterworth, Malaya.



The Commanding Officer, Officers,

Warrant Officers and Senior N. C. O.'s

wish you all

A Merry Christmas

and

A Happy New Year.

1952