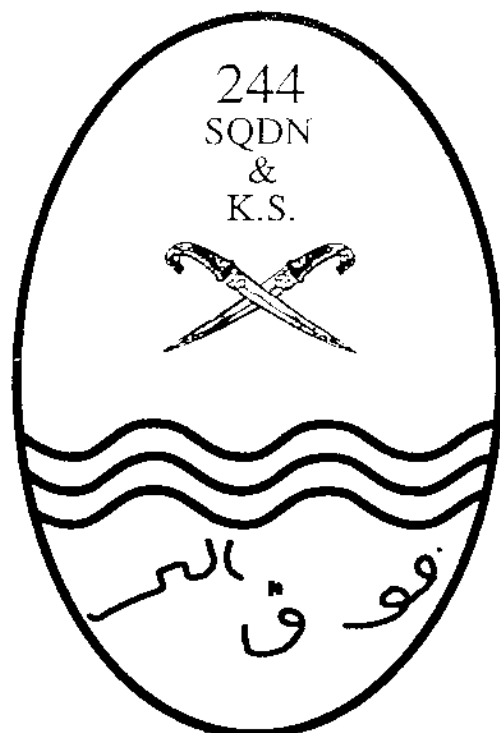


244 SQUADRON & KINDRED SPIRITS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter No. 8



Present at the 1993 Reunion

A. Alder (rigger) - R. Aindow (A. E. Op.) - L. Batty (Armourer) - R. R. Bolton (M/T+crane) - K. Bovington (F/Arm) - T. Booth (F2E) - J. J. Bradley (Wop) - A. Brook (F2E) - H. Dawson (pilot) - T. Demet (clerk) - L. Duley (W/mech) - J. Edwards (Painter) - J. Earnshaw (Wop/AG) - J. Faulkner (M/T mech) - W. Goddard (Stn W/officer) - R. Godden (F2E) - N. Gould (F/Arm) - C.H. Grant (pilot) - J. Green (arm) G. Hammond (pilot) - A. Hartley (F2A) - J. Heslop (Wop/Ag) - G. Hughes - J. Hill (M/T driver) - K. Igglesden (Wop/Ag) - L. Jackson (F2A) - D. James (Wop/Ag) - E. E. Kerrigan (Arm/officer) - G. Leach (pilot) - E. Leicester (Metal wkr) - J. Lightfoot (G.D) - P. Lyons (pilot) - J. McCormack (Nav) - R. McDonald (M/T driver) - L. Martin (F2E) - R. Norcott (carpenter) - G. Newman (pilot) - E. Pattenden (Nav) - W. Quick (F2E) - L. Roberts (Clerk) - W. Savage (Wop/Ag) - A. Sharing (W/op) - F. Sheppard (F2A) - J. Showell (Wop/Ag) - J. Swann (F2A) - A. Summerbell (F2A) - D. Temple (F2E) - P. Watson (Wop/Ag) - J. Williams (F2E) - H. Woodward (police) - W. Westwood (F2E) - .

What Happened! (by Jim)

Friday 1st October 1430 hrs Don and Jim arrived at the Scarisbrick and commenced setting up our exhibits in the Isherwood Suite. We were assisted by Alec Alder (Weston-S-Mare); Jim Bradley (N. Ireland), and Frank Sheppard (Wallington), who had all arrived on Thursday. Our nostalgia boards now cover 90 sq. feet of photos and memorabilia, and show scenes (and documents) from all those airfields from which 244 flew. In addition, our squadron crest decorated the walls of the Suite (courtesy of Alec Alder!).

From 1730 hrs. onwards, our members (and guests) were arriving, and were met with a glass (or two) of welcoming sherry. Short speeches were made by Don and Jim including a special welcome to Phil Watson from Australia. It wasn't long before the hub-bub of conversation overtook our Radio Bagdad music.. Obviously the same friendly atmosphere as in '91 was occurring. Groups of members could be seen launched into reminiscences of nigh 50 years ago.

At 1930 hrs. the local press photographer arrived for a group picture. This was followed by a buffet of the usual Scarisbrick high standard. During the evening an aircraft recognition contest was held. In the Final, I was glad to see Norman Gould (Fit/Armourer) of Hayes, put two pilots and an armourer to flight! Norman won a bottle of Scotch! Also, the Masirah Treasure Hunt ended with Bill Westwood (Tooting) receiving a Squadron plaque. Many prizes were won in the Raffle (First out of the hat was Jim, for a bottle of Gin, cries of fix!!).

As we had hoped, our exhibits provided much interest amongst members, and helped their recall of those days long ago. Talk and chat went on all evening, which ended on a quiet note, when videos were screened. (Sharjah Fort and history of the Blenheim).

Saturday 2nd October. The Bi-ennial General Meeting was held at 1045 hrs. (See Report).

1800 hrs. After initial get-together, 84 members (and guests) sat down to a dinner which matched (some say surpassed) that of our previous '99 function. The Scarisbrick did us proud. The room had been decorated in Air Force blue (with balloons etc.), and the service was swift. Wine flowed freely - courtesy of our Association! Background organ music was laid on.

After the meal came the Toasts. The Loyal Toast was given by Don, followed by 'Absent Friends', given by Jim, who also remembered those who did not come home.

The "Sing-Song" now commenced. As is becoming traditional, we (Gerry Leach (Maidstone), Peter Lyons (Stourbridge) and self) led off with 'Sweet Somersetshire', followed by our own anthem, 'Shaibah Blues'. I could see most lads joining in the chorus. Things were slightly marred by a 'duff' microphone, but we did our best! Eddy Leicester (Stoke) gave us 'My Little Gyppo Bint'. Translations were asked for my rendition of 'Blaydon Races' (all five verses). Similar requests were made after Bob Bolton (Stakeford) gave us some Tyneside verses. Len Roberts (Ystrad Rhondda) went into a Welsh cabaret act. Bob Aindow (Southport) obliged with a song. Interspersed with all this, our singing duo Gerry and Peter kept the singing going. At intervals during these chorals, the floor was cleared for dancing, and many couples took the floor. All this went on until nearly midnight, when, after 'Now is the hour', the Reunion ended with 'Auld Lang Syne'.

These meetings show old friendships renewed, and new friendships forged. Which gives Don and I great satisfaction. See you in October 1995!.

Biennial General Meeting

The following decisions were made (proposed and seconded in all cases).

1. Election of Officers. Joint Chairmen - Jim Heslop and Don James.
Committee:- Bert Hartley (Bolton) and John Edwards (Cumbria) - Jim McKnight having resigned.
Hon Secretary - Jim Heslop; Hon Treasurer:- Don James
2. Annual Subscription will remain at £5. The Subscription year will run from 1st January to 31st December.

3. Newsletters will now appear three times per year (commencing 1994).
4. Membership Cards will be issued on payment of subscription.
5. Lapel Badges. This matter still in train.
6. Next Reunion. It was agreed that we should hold our next 'do' here in Southport, October, 1995.

Both Secretary and Treasurer gave brief reports.

There being no other business, the meeting ended by Bill Williams proposing a vote of thanks to Don and Jim. This was seconded by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report. First of all, thank you all for attending the Reunion. I hope you all had an excellent weekend. For those who did not make the trip, you will see above, that the subscription year now runs from January 1st (and not 1st October). So all you paid-up members have an extra three months this year. As you can see, the Sub stays at £5. Already 55 members have paid for '94. Thanks a lot - this all helps!

You will see from balance sheet, we had a small profit of £38.66. Many thanks to all who made a donation, and also stamps and SAE's. Just one small point however, seven of the RAF ensigns were taken off the tables (presumably as souvenirs). These cost our Association money. If the members who took them could forward £3 each (anonymously if you like), I would be most grateful. Also, Jim collected £5 from each member who ordered a group photo (they are on their way to you). The actual cost was £5.50. In the fullness of time, send Jim or I a few 2nd class stamps to make up.