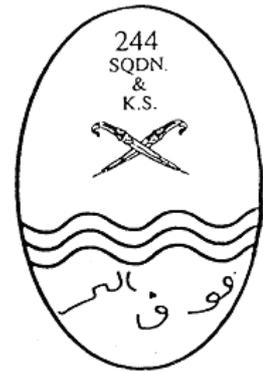




# 244 SQUADRON & KINDRED SPIRITS ASSOCIATION



## Newsletter No. 1

### First Reunion of 244 Squadron (and kindred spirits)

Held at The Scarisbrick Hotel, Southport  
On Saturday, Sunday 28/29 September 1991

#### NOMINAL ROLL

A. Alder p	H. Elston	S. Hall	J. Lightfoot p	A. Smith
C. Ambler	D. Enser	G. Hughes p	J. Langdale p	K. Stewart
G. Anderson	K. Evans	D. Hulstrom	P. Lyons p	J. Smith
A. Arthur	W. Gocilciard p	G. Hammond	K. Milam	W. Stockman p
F. Bowditch p	J. Green p	K. Igglesden p	J. McKnight p	E. Thompson
K. Bovingdon p	G. Gibson p	J. Jones	J. McCormack p	J. Trimble
L. Buss	S. Crimson	D. James p	R. Norcott p	H. Tucker p
R. Birtles	J. Grant p	K. Joel .	F. Newall	J. Tierney p
L. Batty p	C. Grant	P. Kearsey	P. Patmore-Went p	F. Walsh p
T. Booth p	N. Gould p	E. Kerrigan	W. Quick p	D. Walters
J. Benyon	T. Hazell	D. Kay p	E. Rose p	J. Wilson
L. Duley p	J. Haggata	L. Land	L. Roberts p	P. Williams
J. Daynes	J. Hepworth	T. Latto	M. Rowan p	J. Williams p
T. Demet p	T. Holliday p	A. Lawson	D. Roberts	N. Wortley
N. Didswell	J. Heslop p	G. Leach p	S. Smith	K. Whittaker
A. Hartley p	E. Leicester p	F. Shephard p	P. Watson p	

p = present

*"Gentlemen of 244 now abed, will curse the day they were not here.*

*We few, we happy few, we band of brothers." Apologies to Shakespeare. Henry V. Act IV.*

Saturday 28th September 2.30pm.

Don and Jim arrived in the Barker Suite, Scarisbrick Hotel, to set up the exhibits. They were assisted by Phil Watson (Australia) and Frank Shephard, who had both arrived early. They had plenty to do as there was over 72 square feet of hardboard, on which all types of photos and documents were affixed (even a ghodli chit!). This is certainly the largest collection of 244 memorabilia ever assembled (for which we thank our members).

From 5pm onwards our members arrived. They were greeted by the sound of Arabic music (Radio Bagdad etc) -a nostalgic sound! The bar opened at 6pm, and by this time the sound of conversation rose above our background music. Members were meeting old mates, in some cases for the first time for 50 years.

Welcoming speeches were made by Don James and Jim Heslop. Much interest was been shown in our displays, and, between these and the talking over of old times, it could be seen that things were going well, and no encouragement was needed. An excellent buffet was served, and the local press photographer arrived for a group picture.

Later in the evening, an aircraft recognition competition was held, and Peter Patmore-Went (Canada) won the bottle of whisky. Also, the free raffle provided members (and their wives) with bottles of spirits, wines and chocolates. Ale was now flowing, and a sing-song commenced. This was rather desultory, as I feel the lads were still rather inhibited. Talk and chatter went on until after midnight, when members dispersed happily to their beds. 62 people attended the buffet.

Sunday 29th September.

A meeting of members took place in the afternoon. It was decided that:-

1. An association should be formed. This will be "The 244 squadron and Kindred Spirits Association, An annual subscription of £5 would be charged (£150 already raised).
2. Owing to work involved, our next reunion would be in two years time (*But see footnote below*).
3. Design for squadron badge to be put up for acceptance.
4. It was agreed that, rather than dismantle the memorabilia exhibits, members would donate (temporarily) their treasured items, but these could be returned on request.
5. Election of Officers: Joint Chairmen:- Don James and Jim Heslop. Hon. Sec:- Jim Heslop. Hon Treasurer:- Don James. Committee:- Jim McKnight (Blackburn) Bert Hartley (Bolton). Newsletter Editor:- Tom Hazell (Bristol) in absentia.

Sunday 29th (Evening)

58 members and their ladies sat down to a much praised meal. The loyal toast was given by Don James. The toast "244 squadron and Kindred Spirits" was given by Jim Heslop, who also proposed the toast "Absent Friends" -mentioning not only those who could not attend, but including the lads who died out there. A vote of thanks to the Reunion organisers was proposed by Peter Lyons.

After dinner a sing-song commenced, and, was soon in full swing. Gerry Leach (Maidstone), Peter Lyons (Stourbridge), and Jim Heslop led off with "Sweet Somersetshire", followed by the squadron anthem "Shaibah Blues". There was little inhibition this evening, everyone joining in. Volunteers came to the floor. Eddie Leicester (Stoke) gave us "She's my little Gyppo Bint". Dave Kay (Thetford) sang us a RAF melody in a sweet tenor voice. Don James cracked his party piece jokes. An anecdote was given by Bill Williams (Melksham) and Frank Walsh (Bristol) sang an old Australian song in honour of our visitor from "Oz".

Many old ditties were sung (specially cleaned up for the ladies). Peter Lyons had now promoted himself to "Gruppenfuhrer" (chomping around with SS forage cap at 'fore and aft!'). Frank Shephard (Wallington) was now Frank Mustapha, clad in genuine Arab headress!

At midnight the soiree ended with "Now is the hour", followed by "Auld Lang Syne". The first reunion had come to a close, and enjoyed by all present.

Important Footnote

The 1993 will be held at the same venue on 1st and 2nd October. As regards 1992 (next year), we are open to ideas as we have to book our venue now, please reply immediately (by phone if possible).

Also if you have not yet joined our Association, please forward your £5 subscription now.

All the best - Jim Heslop (Hon. Sec.)