

NEWS LETTER No.3.

Phone,
BARNET 6141

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LONDON, N.14.

February, 1953.

As usual I will start off with details of the arrangements for the Annual Reunion, our seventh, and one which promises to be of more than average interest. Here they are:-

DATE : Saturday 21st March, 1953. X
TIME : 5.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m.
PLACE : The Lotus Restaurant, Norris St., Haymarket, S.W.1
(Third turning on right down Haymarket)
(from Piccadilly)
COST : 11/6d per head: Drinks extra.

For catering purposes an early and accurate estimate of the numbers who will attend is essential. Applications for tickets should reach me not later than Wednesday, 11th March. Members living in the London Area who can offer a spare bed for the night are asked to let me know. Provincial members should give early advice of their requirements.

It is quite certain that our numbers will be boosted by the attendance of several recent members of the Squadron, headed by Major David Oldman, D.F.C., and so, I repeat, please let me have your applications as early as possible.

To those of you who may be undecided, I would like just to pass on two extracts from letters received last year:-

1. C. R. Taylor (Norfolk)...."I shall be there this year if I have to walk."
2. J. R. Stevens(Staffs)"I feel sure that the fellows who could be present but fail to turn up don't know what they are missing."

Finally, please remember that 1953 subscriptions are due and send along the humble 1/- as soon as possible.

X Rugger fans may like to note that this is the date for England v Scotland at Twickenham.

Sixth Annual Reunion Dinner

We had another grand evening, voted by several members to be our most enjoyable to date, but it was clear that our experiment of holding the Reunion later in the year than usual was not a success. Most of our serving members, regular supporters, were scattered around the countryside on various duties, there was interference from "Z" training, and a surprising number of chaps were away on early holidays, so, with the usual incidence of family illness and the absence of one or two expectant fathers, it all added up to our lowest attendance by a considerable margin.

Here is a list of those present:-

Andrews Bainborough S. Batt Bromwich Butcher Clark Gollan

W. R. Morris, Munro, J.W.Nash, Rees, Seaman, Stannard, Stevens, Streeter, C. R. Taylor, Tidy, Tinsley, Twohey, Venables, Weaver, White, Wilson, C. Williams(Gnr) and D. Wright.

Among these we were particularly pleased to welcome "Jacky" White on his first visit and our first "O/R" visitors from the post-war Squadron, D. Streeter and C. Williams.

The Tenth Anniversary

On January 1st, 1943, 656(Air O.P.) Squadron came into existence at R.A.F. Station Westley, near Bury St. Edmunds. Two days later Major D.W. Coyle began the inevitable struggle for personnel, for aircraft, for equipment, and the mammoth task of training a bunch of somewhat bewildered soldiers and airmen into a happy and efficient unit. The results of his efforts are reflected in the splendid wartime record of the Squadron, the continued fine record of his and our post-war successors, and the very fact that we have an Association of chaps who are proud to have served at some time or other with 656.

At a recent meeting in London between Major Coyle, Major Oldman, Rex Boys and myself, we felt that, like ourselves, you would wish to make some gesture to mark the Squadron's tenth birthday, an important milestone in the life of the unit. What we have in mind is to make a presentation to the Squadron, something appropriate to the whole unit and not just to any one section, such as Officers' or Sergeants' mess.

One proposal which is being investigated actively is to present a plaque, in plaster or bronze (the price of silver is prohibitive), with the Squadron Crest in high relief, and, if in plaster, painted and gilded, and then mounted in a cabinet with doors. Under the plaque would be small plates on which the record of the Squadron could be engraved suitably. It might too be possible to incorporate a Squadron Roll of Honour. In this connection I have the names of our wartime casualties, Capt. A.T.Cheshire, Gnr. Cherrington, L/Bd Gibbons, L.A.C. John and L.A.C. Macanley, but only two of the post-war list, Capt. J. Churches and Staff/Sgt. Gay, and would appreciate any information to help complete a Roll of Honour.

Thanks to Major Oldman we think we have found the skilled folk able and willing to make such a plaque. Now it is up to you. If you agree that it is a good idea, please let me know what you will be willing to contribute. If all our members were to give say 5/- we should have something like the estimated required amount but if you can only manage less or would like to give more, do what you can. We want as many as possible to be associated with the gift.

It will be helpful if you can send your contribution with your Association subscription and/or payment for your reunion ticket. If all this seems 'a bit much' all at once please let me know what you will contribute, say within one month of the Reunion. The important point is that so that the work may be put in hand I must have an accurate estimate of the amount likely to be available, with as little delay as possible.

News from Malaya

The Squadron have instituted Quarterly Newsletters and as I have available those covering the first nine months of 1952 I shall have to select and prune to within the available space.

1952 - Jan. - March

January Heavy rains and large buildups. Aircraft grounded for days at a time. Flying over the quarter steady but not sensational. Sharp decline in serviceability in March.

Operations Mostly strictly in support of ground troops, casualty evacuation, supply dropping, etc. Systematic searchings for bandit camps (1902 Flt. found ten in a month) and road patrols, resulting in considerable drop in incidents of bus burning.

Training Affected by drop in serviceability but two Flights out on mobile schemes. Flying training confined to familiarisation for new pilots and some night flying. All new pilots sent on a jungle patrol before flying in earnest.

Accidents The worst was when Staff Sgt. Gay lost his life on 13th March. Sgt. Webb had engine failure and successful forced landing on railway. Major Oldham, Sgdn. Commdr, had propellor disintegrate over new strip, landed in tin tailing swamp, upside down. Very muddy officer.

Communications Several aircraft fitted VHF Ekco CE.1140 set. Great success, good communications over large area - over 40 miles at 2-3000 ft. Austers successfully used with Brigands for target indication. Full authority at last obtained for trailing aerial modification.

Flight Moves 1902 to Beuta, 1907 to Sembawang, 1911 to Seremban 1914 to Taiping, S.H.Q. remain at Kuala Lumpur.

Distinguished Visitors and Passengers Gen. Sir Otto Lund, inspecting St. John Amb. Bde. Mr. Malcolm Macdonald, Commissioner General. Admiral Sir G. Russell, C in C. Far East Stn., Gen. Sir Gerald Temple, High Commissioner, and Major Head (A.G.6)

Serviceability Main problem propellers, used up at a vast rate. Hope for metal props.

Honours and Awards

Major Oldman, D.F.C., Sgt. Hutchings, D.F.M.,

Sgt. Bowles, mentioned in despatches.

Arrivals included our old friend 'Warby', for the third time, and the new Adjutant, F/Lt. J. Niven, D.F.C., whose 2260.45 flying hours make the record of the Sgdn's original Adjutant (109.20 passenger hours) look a bit sick.

Hours Flown Jan-March

Flts.	1902	1907	1911	1914	SHQ	Total
	687.05	477.55	499.20	535.50	313.50	2514

Partial break-down of hours flown

Operational: 251.40, Communications: 1002.05, Visual Recce: 770.10, General 336.40.

Sorties 3311, including:- Visual Recce: 898, Casualty evacuation: 47, Supply drop: 85, Communications: 1337

April-June

Most successful for Security Forces in Malaya with welcome rise in morale of civil population, more information to Police and Military and consequently more operational flying.

Soon after this 1911 Flight also moved, this time to their present location at Benta in order to be nearer 48 Brigade at Kuala Lipis.

In June '51 we changed to the Calendar servicing system which to date has compared favourably with the old system. Aircraft are now inspected every 13 weeks irrespective of the hours flown during that period. You will appreciate that apart from encouraging higher totals than before, the problem of planning inspections is very much simplified.

In August '51 the M.S.S. moved to Kuala Lumpur airfield where they are more conveniently placed for the rapid and successful servicing of the Squadron aircraft.

There has been little opportunity for training but in October this year S.H.Q. and 1914 Flight both went out on mobile schemes lasting for three or four days; these were of considerable training value in addition to providing a pleasant change from the normal routine. Night Flying is now a regular attraction in the monthly training programmes. Apart from circuits and bumps, short cross country flights have been carried out by all flights and have built up confidence in the pilot's ability to navigate at night. It occasionally proves to be of practical value for pilots caught out late, enabling them to avoid an unscheduled night stop.

Prior to February '51 the only shooting we got - apart from an occasional mortar shoot - was on the rare occasions when we were called upon to observe for the Royal Navy. It goes without saying that these were always highly popular sorties by virtue of the inevitable liaison visits necessary to the ships concerned, but it was with great rejoicing that we welcomed the arrival of 54 Bty from Hong Kong and were able to do some real shooting for a change. 54 Battery have now been replaced by 93 Battery, but as almost all shoots require Air O.P. for accurate observation we have all had an opportunity to polish up our shooting.

Operational flying during the last few months has been concentrated on finding and photographing bandit food clearings and camps. Some Flights have had considerable success in this quest and several of their discoveries have been targets for airstrikes. Experiments are also being carried out for using Squadron Austers, fitted with VHF wireless, as pathfinders for marking targets that the faster strike aircraft have difficulty in finding.

Sport flourishes in S.H.Q. and the Flights but owing to being so widely dispersed there has been little opportunity of raising Squadron teams for any of the principal games although in 1950 the Squadron produced a rugby side that played three matches.

The Beau Brummels of 1907 Flight, aided and abetted by the Royal Navy, set the pace for our social activities. Being the only remaining all-bachelor flight it goes without saying that it is a fast pace only curtailed towards the end of each month by a shortage of hard cash.

The Highlights of our social activities have been the marriages of Hugh Drummond in Singapore, John Campbell at Taiping in March '51 and Derek Vaudrey at Kuala Lumpur in November '51. The latter finished in true Air O.P. style with the bride and groom going away on their honeymoon in 3 Austers owing to floods having blocked the road route to Port Dickson.

Lastly we are delighted to record the award of the D.F.C. to John Molyneux Berry and Bob Warner, the M.B.E. to Dick Wilkinson, and we feel equal pleasure at the award of the B.E.M. to Corporal Wrench (late of 1914 Flight) and Sgt Williams (late of M.S.S.); also Mention in Dispatches to Bruce Venour, Pat Cuppage, Joe Sellers; Cpl Mason and Bdr Page, Chief Clerk at S.H.Q. were also awarded a G.O.C's Certificate and Cpl Hart received a certificate of good service."

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Break-down of hours flown

Operation: 244.40, Communications: 982.50, Visual Recce: 1033.55,
General 350.15

Sorties 3235, including:- Visual Recce 1034, Casualty Evac. 32,
Supply Drop 61, Air O.P. 36, Communications 1246.

July - Sept.

The general trend of the last 12 months continued with greater use of Sqdn. Aircraft in recce role and direct support of operations.

A large number of reinforcement pilots arrived and some older members of the Sqdn. departed for home and other theatres.

Sqdn flew a total of 3476 hours and a number of records were broken. Sqdn monthly record now 1320 and Flt record held by 1914 with 373 hours. Capt. Farwell achieved a personal record in August of 93 hours.

Operations 1902 Flt in Pehang continued to supply a wealth of accurate information about Communist Terrorist clearings and camps, including 7 camps upon which immediate air strikes were mounted, 5 of them being "marked" by the Auster. Observed shooting was carried out with a troop of 93 Bty. 1907 Flt., were kept busy in Johore State and had some shooting with 93 Bty., and R.N. frigates. September the Flt came under the operational control of 17 Gurkha Div. In Aug-Sept. 1911 Flt joined in a very comprehensive operation involving 3 battalions, part of 22 S.A.S. Regt., and all available Police Forces. Capt. Bath did a number of 25 pounder shoots. 1914 Flt were employed during July and August making detailed recces North and East of Ipah, leading to two operations. One reported camp proved to be the largest C.T. Armoury yet found. Patrols used aerial photos and maps marked to date by the Flt. In other areas of Perak 6 C.T. camps were reported. 2 Bn Malay Regt. credited the Flt with a bandit killed in an ambush on a track reported from the air. 15 hours Air O.P. were flown, one pilot completing 10 shoots in a morning, an unusual number in Malaya. Training Most flight and section training had to be done whilst "On operations". On the East Coast a section had to change an engine more than 150 miles from base and 40 miles from the nearest communication centre (Kuantan). The new engine was flown in by Valetta to Kuantan the day after the failure, was carried 40 miles by the co-operation of the 12th Lancers, installed and the old one returned to Kuantan the next day.

1907 Flt took part in an exercise to test the seaward defences of Singapore.

1911 Flt had a section at Port Swettenham in preparation for their move to Port Dickson. Temporarily housed in a tented camp with H.Q. Malaya Regt between airstrip and sea. The married officers and N.C.O's seemed to have found splendid summer village in which to live.

One section of 1914 Flt on detach was, after 3 days, hurriedly withdrawn and despatched to the N.E. Coast. The section was airlifted complete with stores from Taiping and apparently the look on the face of the Valetta pilot was wonderful to behold. The Sellers/Banks aerial complete with poles was almost the last straw.

Operation "Copley" was extremely popular. Kota Bahru is the nearest thing one can find in Malaya to the popular conception of a South Pacific scene. It has a silver beach ("The Beach of Passionate Love"), a tropical moon, waving palm trees - and dancing girls. The keenness of the bachelor pilots to be sent on any task to K.B. is quite astonishing and only exceeded by the enthusiasm displayed by soldiers and airmen.

A large number of hours were devoted to continuation training of newly-joined pilots. All Flights did night flying training. 1914 Flt did well in the Malaya Rifle meeting, 17th of 40 teams in the open I.M.G. Championships (including all the

July - Sept. (Continued)

Technical The crop spraying machine was returned to the M.U. for reconversion, after trials had proved that maximum liquid output per acre was much too small a volume for the task.

Overall aircraft serviceability was 72.2%, thanks to the efforts of the M.S.S. On two occasions a minor inspection was completed in less than 48 hours, a Sqdn record.

Visitors The Sqdn received visits from most of the local "brass-hats", and also from officers from the School of Land/Air Warfare in Australia and Chief Scientific Advisers from the U.K.

Personnel Movements included "Warby", Lt.W.T.A. Nicholls and Sgt. J.W. Rolley to Korea. To wartime members of the Sqdn it seems strange to read of marriages and births in Malaya, and the arrival of wives from the U.K. Welcome news was that replacement signallers were due to arrive several weeks before the large batch of National Servicemen were due to depart.

Accidents Only one to report, a forced landing due to engine failure. Aircraft badly damaged but no one hurt.

Sport Rugger and hockey season in full swing.

Honours and Awards

British Empire Metal - Bdr. Merrigan
Mention in Despatches- Capt. R.W. Hewett, R.A.
Cpl. Cronin, R.E.M.E.

Hours Flown

1902	1907	1911	1914	S.H.Q.	Total
815.05	794.50	687.55	829.45	354.15	3476.50

Breakdown of hours flown

Communications 1372.25, Recces 1433.50, Air O.P/
Casualty Evacuation, etc., 268.35, Training 397.

Sorties

4424, including Communications 1705, Recces 1378,
Air O.P/Cas. Evac. 352 and Training 989.

That concludes the summary of the three Newsletters received but members will be interested to learn that latest news is that since the start of the Present Emergency the Squadron have completed their 50,000th sortie and have flown almost 5,000,000 miles.

News from Abroad

Tony Stanley-Adams has been in Natal as a Production Manager with the South African Rubber Co. He has now been transferred to the Sales Staff and has moved to Rhodesia to open a new branch.

Johnney Hill is still with the British Embassy in Beirut and has high hopes of being home on leave to coincide with the 1954 Reunion. He expresses particular interest in the good news concerning Rex Boys, his original Section Commander, and Jacky White, with whom he shared billets on many occasions before they became fellow members of the Sergeants' Mess.

"Duck" Mehta pays us a wonderful tribute from his native Bombay. He writes "I almost got homesick reading all the names again and the news." After commanding a Para.Fd. Regt. for 18 months he went to Army H.Q. as G.S.O.... in the Military Training Directorate and is now in Command of a L.A.A. Regt. in an Armd. Div. His only excitement since the war has been a trip with the Indian Prime Minister to Indonesia in June/July 1950, an unencumbered tour of "Observation" to Singapore, Saigon and Bangkok, and a further trip to Jakarta, Sourabaya and Bali. Just imagine "Duck" let loose in Bali..... He adds "your countrymen treated me wonderfully well and gave me a hell of a good time." He hints that one of these days he may "like a bad penny" turn up in Old England which he liked so much in spite of the terrible winter of 1947. If he does we can assure him of an uproarious welcome.

Harry Michie, also from Bombay, was chased around India, Burma and Pakistan by his copy of Newsletter No.2. He was especially interested in news of his colleagues of Malaya and Java days in 1945/6. Since demob he has served the National Bank of India in Calcutta and East Africa. After six months home leave he joined the inspection staff and has travelled widely in India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon, "living on a suitcase" but enjoying the life. Whilst in Nairóbi he managed a certain amount of flying, but at £3 an hour.

A surprise letter from "Warby", addressed from Squadron H.Q. at Kuala Lumpur tells of his rejoining 656 for the third time. He wrote from 1902 Flight in the wilds of Pahang and was due to join 1903 Flight in Korea later. He was being kept busy (150 hours in three months) and looked forward to being with us in 1954 "probably plus winged bath chair."

News in Brief

A period of acute depression ended with the re-discovery of P.J.McLinden (Black Mac) who had moved from his Glasgow address without trace. After a certain amount of correspondence and a visit to the Motor Show, his transfer from rubber to oil, "John Bull" to "Castrol", was discovered. Mac is now based on Inverness and covers the North of Scotland, including the Orkneys and Shetlands, so our chances of seeing him are even more remote. He has met Ian Horne in Elgin and Wally Boyd, whose address I would like. The latter is now in the Ministry of Transport (Roads Dept.), and both were described as in very good shape.

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Harry Nock, who was in town on our last Reunion date but was on duty connected with the Chelsea Flower Show, sent a cutting from the "Farmer and Stock-Breeder" dated 23/9/52. He says "I had to look twice myself to see if I was seeing things", but true enough it was a full-page advert for so-and-so's Calf Meal featuring Frank McMath, a letter with the familiar signature and a recognizable photo of "White Mac" set against a background of pedigree Jersey Calves. I have had no direct news from Mac but we hope he can make the long journey from South Devon to be with us on the 21st.

Splendid news is that Rex Boys is again in circulation. Rex will be remembered as "C" Flight Commander in the early Arakan days and our only wartime flying casualty. He has made a wonderful recovery from his very severe injuries and although still not fully mobile gets about remarkably well and looks extremely fit. The irony is that the last Newsletter chased him around Africa, whereas he was in London and could have attended the Reunion. However, he is now with the British-South Africa Co. in Old Jewry and we shall extend a very warm welcome when we meet him at this years "do".

It is always pleasant to read of visits made between members of the Association. Jim Stewart tells of an unexpected call by J.R. Stevens and his brother who were touring Scotland by motor-cycle. Jim extends a welcome to any of his old colleagues who may visit the fair city of Perth and from personal experience I can recommend a call at 133 High Street.

R. Johnson ("C" Flt.) from Newcastle-under-Lyme tells of busy times in the pottery trade, with emphasis on exports, and is another to sigh for the introduction of some of the old Squadron spirit into industry.

David Houlding has now left his temporary post at Eastbourne College and is back at Oxford until June. In July he is to leave for South Africa to take up a teaching post at Hilton College, Natal. Meanwhile, he has been granted a S/R Commission and whilst attached to 661 Sqdn. managed to enjoy a fortnights flying under Bob Hutt and Basil Austin, at Netheravon and a four day tactical exercise which ranged as far as Lulworth Cove.

Many of you, and certainly all the wartime members of the Squadron, will be interested in news of Denis Coyle, our original Squadron Commander. Denis has left the War Office and is in the throes of a prolonged course at the R.A.F. Staff College, Bracknell. We wish him well at this important stage of his Army career and we offer too our sympathy in the loss of his father last October after a long and painful illness.

Stewart Batt became the proud father of a second son just before our last Reunion. Congratulations, Mr. and Mrs. Batt. Stewart is the proprietor of a grocery business at Hersham, doing very nicely, thank you, and has become a keen member of the local Golf Club.

J.G. Tidy informs me that he hears occasionally from Ern. Revely, a former "D" Flt colleague. Revely is now happily re-married, with two youngsters, and as we have not seen him since 1947 we look forward to a further visit.

P. Andrews, after a long wait was granted a building licence and was eagerly awaiting the erection of a house in

Our congratulations too to Jim and Mrs. Landers on a masterpiece of timing; their second son arrived on the very last day of the Income Tax Year, April 5th, and no doubt a suitable snook was cocked at the Tax Collector.

John Stevens gave news of Ken ("Fanny") Shaw who was prevented by his father's illness from attending the last Reunion but who hopes to be with us this year. "Fanny" in female garb was one of the highlights of the Squadron's leisure moments and we still wonder whether Jack Pomphret was really deceived by this wonderful apparition in the wilds of Burma.

Harry Groom was last reported as in the throes of examinations,. Now fully qualified as an Auctioneer and Estate Agent he was moved to Emsworth, Hants, where he manages a newly-opened branch for a Portsmouth firm. He spent a happy "Z" fortnight with Bob Hutt's Squadron, a busy time with Algy Ellicott as instructor and 42 hours as his personal score.

Pete Dobson reports Ron Cottam to be a proud father and that he himself wields a trombone with a dance band in the Midlands. Furthermore he plays classical music with a group from the City of Birmingham Orchestra. All of which indicates considerable progress since Pete vied with the bullfrogs in making the nights of Squadron H.Q. hideous...

My apologies to Tug Wilson, whom I reported as still in the Army, in fact, he became a civilian in August, 1951 and, lucky enough to find a job straight away, is happy in his new life. He still keeps a sharp lookout in the Portsmouth area for W/O McCarthy, but no luck so far.

My humble apologies too to Harry Tinsley, to whom by error I referred as "Harold" in the last Newsletter. Unforgivable, sir. Harry is no longer an "innocent bachelor", but lives in married bliss in Boston, Lincs., from whence he sallied forth in company with Peter Kingston to attend our last Reunion. Peter has returned to Spalding from the Manchester area, where he has worked since the war.

A brief note from Ian Walton reports a certain amount of flying, thanks to Bob Hutt, and a big change of occupation from helicopters to an office job on radar with the Ministry of Supply.

S.O. Taylor, another to join the married ranks, has seen both Maurice Fox and Reg. Bailey. The latter is not only the father of a small daughter but after three years with a self-help building association, had the satisfaction of moving into a bungalow he had helped to build.

From Bagillt, Flintshire, G.O. Thomas tells of marriage, a daughter and a job as foreman in the local textile factory. He sends regards to all his friends and particularly Harry Nock and P. Andrews.

A. G. Maycroft wrote to regret his inability to come last year "to meet with the old crowd, to shoot the usual lines and to crack the old, old jokes", and told of his appearance as a singer in the local production of "Dick Whittington."

Ian Shield was kept away by devotion to cricket with the Hampshire team...

Ken Bescoby was an absentee by reason of the very serious illness in hospital of his father. We trust there was soon better news and hope that Ken will be able to take his usual place with us this year.

Through the good services of Harry Nock we linked up again after a break of one year with Teddy Maslen-Jones. Teddy's search for a farm ended near Farnham, Surrey, where we wish him every success.

In a long letter from Carlisle, T. W. Topliss recalls happy days with the Squadron and especially "A" Flight. He expresses admiration with the way in which our successors in Malaya have coped with much the same old snags. His suggestion of the pre-Coronation Saturday for our Reunion has obvious attractions for our long-distance folks but the advantages are considered to be outweighed by the problems of accommodation (wives would not be left behind) and the probable absence of many of our serving members.

Derrick Beard had the misfortune to lose his father in October, 1951, and subsequently has had a struggle to run the family french-polishing business single-handed. He has now an assistant and we wish him success in his efforts. Derrick gives news of Alf Howard (formerly Horowitz) who emigrated to Canada soon after our second reunion. Happily married Alf has a good job which entails a twice-yearly trip to New York.

From the Pickering area of Yorkshire, H.L. Holliday tells of a change of occupation from farming to forestry and a change of address, three whole miles nearer London.

Frequently I am asked for news of Trevor Jones, whose first visit we still await. As the Northern Air O.P. Association reunion clashes with our own date maybe we shall wait a little longer but we still hope. Trevor runs 1965 T.A. Flight up at Oustan and with the Otterburn ranges within easy reach has seen several of his old colleagues, including Bill Walker and Ian Lamont. Trevor announces the arrival of "one more daughter" in December, 1951.

Bill Walker tells of his "Z" training with 666 (Scottish) Sqdn, of his meeting with Trevor and Ian and of shoehorn-aided struggles with his S.D.

Mike Webb gave news (in May 1952) of himself and of a number of our more recent members. Mike was I.G. of the Home Counties Inf. Div. and still managed quite a lot of flying with Bob Hutt's Sqdn. Russell Matthews was back in Air O.P. with the 6th Armd. Div. Flt in Germany. Mike Pritchard, now married, was in 5 R.H.A. Bob Warner passed through Woolwich on his way back to flying with the M.E.F. Squadron. John Chanter was a Bty Captain in 18 Med Regt at Larkhill and Keith Buchanan in a H.A.A. Regt. in Essex.

Last year I gave news of "Peachey" Foster and reported him as recovered from an accident at work. Unfortunately my news was out of date, as a letter from Mrs. Foster informed me that Cyril was suspected to have contracted the dread Parkinsons' Disease. Mrs. Foster was trying to obtain an opinion from a second specialist but although with the full agreement of those present at the last reunion we offered to help in any way possible, we have received

To complete this section I would like to thank those who have supplied information on which I have based the foregoing paragraphs, but where are the scribes of 'B' Flight? Why this modesty from the boys of the Imphal Box? I would like too, more news of chaps from the post-war Squadron so as to achieve a better balance between old members and our newcomers.

"ADMIN" NOTES

Links with the Squadron.

Last year I sent out a special invitation to 214 ex-members of the Squadron. Unfortunately the addresses supplied by the Squadron were in many cases out of date, and the net result was 21 new members, as follows:-

H.J.J.Conway, W.H.Heath, D. Henney, J.L.Johns,
E.W.Kipps, L.Morris, D.Pearson, L.Patterson,
D.E.Petch, J.M.Price, D.W.Streeter, J. Taylor,
C.Williams, W.C.Woodhouse, S.Wassermann,
J.Cooper, G.H.Ross, H.G.Simpson, F.R.Williams,
D.J.Wilkes and H.Timmins.

To these new members I would say, if you know the addresses of any others of your contemporaries, please pass on an invitation to join our Association, and ask them to contact me.

Let me quote from a letter from one of your number, W.C. Woodhouse:- "To say that your letter was a surprise would be an understatement - I was astounded. I had never heard of a Squadron Association either during my service or since and as my former duties were mainly clerical at Sqdn H.Q., I knew most things..."

Thanks to the late Squadron Commander this unhappy position has changed. From a recent letter again I quote:- "While I was there Major Oldman gave the Association much publicity and it was his hope that all Sqdn personnel would contact you on their arrival in England." The writer, I. Aylmer, was the first to make direct contact and I look forward to hearing from others in due course.

Major Oldman, now back in this country, is making grand efforts on our behalf and Major Wheeler, the new Squadron Commander, is keeping up the good work in Malaya.

General

Paid membership for 1952 totals 96, and as this figure includes 21 new members this means that quite a number have not paid up. To those concerned I would say, if you appreciate news of the Squadron and of your old colleagues, please play fair and keep up to date with the very nominal subscriptions. Remember that with paper costs at their present level and with postage a considerable item, it is quite an expensive business to produce a News-Letter on even a modest scale.

During the year donations have been received from several members towards our expenses, ranging from a cheque for £5. 5s. from Harry Michie in India, £1. each from Johnny Hill and "Nobby" Clark, to smaller but helpful sums from Jim Stewart,