

656 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

NEWS LETTER JUNE 1992.

Dear Member,

It's difficult to realise that almost 6 years have elapsed since I first learned that although it was no longer an RAF unit, 656 Squadron was still in existence, stationed at Netheravon as part of the Army Air Corps. This unexpected news prompted me to write and make contact with them, in response to which I received an invitation to attend the Families Day on June 14th 1986.

Motivated by this, I decided to make endeavors to locate old comrades who had served with the original Squadron during the Burma campaign 43—45, by inserting notices in several ex-service journals and Regimental magazines. The response was far greater than I could have hoped for, not only did I locate many from those early days, but many from later periods in the Squadrons' active service in the Far East.

It has been a most rewarding exercise, receiving your letters and phone calls and meeting so many of you at the various functions has been ample reward for the efforts involved. I express my grateful thanks to those who made such generous donations during those early days to help with stationery, photocopying, postage etc. It was much appreciated then, and still is.

Contacts continued to grow in number and it became obvious that we had the foundations for a Squadron Association, which due entirely to the endeavors of Major (now Lt Col) A.J. Simkins the Squadron CO at that time, was duly authorized and formed in April 1989. Since that time our numbers have continued to grow and membership now stands at 240, with a few more still in the pipeline.

Continuance of the Association is now assured, since at the meeting held at Middle Wallop on Sunday 10th May 1992, it was proposed and passed that the Chairmanship of the Association should be vested with the Commanding Officer of the Squadron during his term of office.

I thought it would also be an advantage to have a younger person to carry out the duties of secretary and decided not to let my name go forward for nomination. However, I have undertaken the duties of Treasurer.

The new Secretary is:	Major D.R.O. Walker (Derek)
	7. Longstock Close, Millway Gardens, Andover, Rants. SPIO 3U1 Tel: 0264-324315
Elected Officers are	President. Brig. D.V.Coyle.
OBE. DFC.	
	Vice-Presidents Major F. J.
McMath. DFC.	
	Lt Col.A.J.
Simkins.	
	Chairman Major G. H.
Coward.	
	Secretary Major
D.L.O.Walker.	
	Treasurer Mr. C. Clark.

It is not thought necessary to form a Committee at the present time.

I thank you all for your support during the past years, with special thanks to those

who have donated photographs and other material for inclusion in the Association Album. If there are any of you who have material, which you would like to be included, please send it to me, it will be thankfully received. I plan to continue searching for ex-members of the Squadron from all era's, and hopefully find the time to research the Squadrons History. I'm sure it will prove to be a most interesting and rewarding task.

On Friday 19th June, your Chairman, Secretary and myself had a meeting to discuss the Jubilee Celebrations and the Presentation Fund. The Chairman is writing under separate heading to update you with the latest news regarding both.

“GET-TOGETHER” MIDDLE WALLOP 9/10 MAY 1992

Once again this proved to be another wonderful occasion, even tho' the weather up until about 2pm on the Saturday was very disheartening, with low cloud and rain preventing the scheduled Air Display from taking place. However an excellent rearranged program took place during the afternoon. Celebrations continued during the evening at the Plough Inn Gratley.

Sunday blessed us with glorious sunshine and a large crowd turned up to witness the outstanding Air Displays by both fixed and rotary wing aircraft, and to enjoy the static displays; Fun of the Fair, and arena events. I was very pleased that about 55 turned up at the Museum Cinema, prior to the Meeting to hear the tape recording of Reg Bailey's experiences in the “7 Div Adam Box”, and likewise pleased that about 20 remained for the Meeting which followed. Full report of the latter will be circulated in due course.

We are indebted to Major Tim Morley and his staff for the assistance and co-operation extended to us during the weekend, in particular for the allocation of space and provision of table and chairs in the Marquee, likewise for publicity over the PA system which resulted in several new members joining, it was very much appreciated.

Those In attendance during the 2 days were:— B.Appleton. Flt Lt K.G.Angel. P.Andrews. G.W.Butier. L.Beresford. “Lex”Barker. Major J.A.T.Brown. R.G.Cottam, Capt M.J.S.Cabbage.CBE. C.Clark. T.A.M.Carrol. J.Connor. Major R.C.Calder. R.Drummer. P.G.Dobson. J.Dandy. S.Darroch. R.Danton. G.A.Davies. C.R.Ecott. I.E.Fox. A.E.W.Flint. Capt L.J.Grciom. C.F.Gillan. P.L.Rardy. G.Rickson. Lt Col D.K.Joyce. D.E.Kemp. A.Lowe. Lt Col K.Litt. Capt.E.W.Maslen-Jones.MC. A.G.J Maycroft. J. B. Mason. Major A. Markham. APC. I. R. McIntyre. G. I. IcKle. Major P. T. A. Musters. DFC. R.G.Pett. G.D.Powley. Capt J.Pooley. Major LD.Pullen. J.R.Parkinson, L.J.Price. W.R.J.Ridge. L.L.Rogers. J.J.G.Smith. J.I.LStewart. G.J.Twohey. Major J.P.Tighe. Major H. O. Walker. White.

We were pleased that many wives were also in attendance.

In conclusion may I remind you of the Squadrons “Families Day” at the Airfield Camp Netheravon on Saturday 11th July: 11am to around 4-30pm. I look forward to meeting many of you then.

H. C. (Hobby) Clark. Association Treasurer.