



# THE CHINTHE



## 656 Squadron Association Newsletter

Spring 2002

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### YOUR ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

General Secretary:

John Bennett  
Holywell House  
Patterdown  
Chippenham  
Wilts SN15 2NP

Tel: 01249 – 652922

Email: [656-sqn-assn@btinternet.com](mailto:656-sqn-assn@btinternet.com)

Membership Secretary: John Bennett. (as above)

## Secretary's report

Greetings from Wiltshire! Another year has gone by and we go from strength to strength. The website still finds ex 656'ers and I usually get them to join us! We enrolled 28 new members in the year. At last I feel happier that there is now a volunteer committee to put the Association on a firm footing. Details are on page 7, with the AGM agenda on page 6.

The reunion at Dishforth went off well with a very good turn-out, the Squadron putting themselves out to entertain us. Unfortunately the weather turned against us and it was held within the hangar, also the fly-in by some of the Auster and microlites did not happen. We did however get a visit from the International Auster Club who managed to get in with their aircraft. They met and had an interesting time with our 'wrinklies' learning of the use of the Auster in anger! They have issued an invitation for anyone so interested to join their Club, and I think two or three people have already. Call me if you would like more details. They gave 656 a good write up in their glossy club magazine, and long may we be associated with them.

October saw the change of OC's when Alex Tucker departed to fly a mahogany bomber at the MoD His replacement is Maj. Neil Dalton, to whom we extend a welcome and best wishes.

Please take a careful look at the flyer with the newsletter regarding subscriptions. Some recent members have not submitted their Bank standing orders, whilst others have not upped the subs. This is leaving us quite a lot short, and I rely on each members integrity and honesty to now check their bank statements and do whatever is necessary to correct this. Please do not put it off 'til next week' as we all know, this turns into months and is then finally forgotten. On the subject of standing orders, on your next visit to the bank ask them to check what reference they are using. It is not funny trying to allocate payment to members when our bank statement gives the issuers reference as 'Flexi-Plus Account' or '0457124' or 'Mr Smith' It takes a day just to put recognisable references into our records without trying to track down silly references. Not your fault I know, but please help by putting pressure on our bank. I would like to see all references as 'Members number/name' it will be so much better.

**John Bennett**

## Squadron Commanders apologies

Unfortunately due to squadron commitments there has not been an opportunity to complete and submit my report. An extra newsletter is planned to be published in the summer, which will bring members up to date with our work, and also detail the arrangements for the presentation in 2003. Current proposals are that it should be held at Middle Wallop to enable the maximum attendance by Association members, as the greater majority dwell within 75 miles.

### Contributions to the Newsletter.

Fancied trying your hand at being a journalist? Writing your memoirs? Or just plain writing an article? Maybe something that happened to you in your service, comical anecdotes or experience. Please send me your contribution to include in the newsletter.

By publishing them in our newsletters they will add to the rich tapestry of our Squadrons history. My thanks to those members who have already sent items which will eventually be published. (one due in this newsletter but owing to a PC crash, and moving things about to redecorate the study, I've mislaid it. (it will resurface!))

## Please remember to

**notify the General Secretary of any change of address, or phone numbers.** The members using **Email**, remember, when you change your ISP you lose your old address. The ability to send you these newsletters by Email saves quite a cost to the Association in postage, stationery and labour! Not to mention full colour pages!

I know we don't like to talk about it, but please, leave clear instructions for your next of kin to contact membership records, so firstly, if possible, we can get a representative to attend the funeral, and then to also avoid sending distressing correspondence. As Membership is open to any relatives of persons connected to 656, they may wish to continue with the Association in their own rights.

# 656 SQUADRON ANNIVERSARY

As you are aware it will be 60 years to the day on December 31st that the Squadron was formed, and to celebrate this we are planning to make a presentation to them. The original plan for a Flag was rejected by the Army Air Corps Regimental Committee, so we then decided upon a magnificent display cabinet, designed by Nobby Clark. Regretfully this design has proved too expensive to go ahead with, as quotations were coming in at over £7,000.

It was therefore decided that we would use only the centre section of the original 3 piece design. However, to give more space three second hand shop display cabinets have been purchased for a mere £100.00 . They require a little 'tarting up' but I am sure the REME's and a chippy can sort them out!

We have found a skilled artisan who is the only manufacturer to quote to Nobby's specification of using Burmese Teak. Examples of his craftsmanship have been seen and approved.

The quotation for its construction is £2935 ex works, which whilst a lot more affordable than the other design, leaves us needing more donations. The current standing of the fund is thus:

Donations from (50) members	943.50
Lottery & reunion profits	791.24
Interest on account	13.05
Total as at 1st Jan 2002	£1747.79

Thank you to the Members who so far have donated sums between £5 and £100. As you see we are still at least £1200 short of the cost, and no extra fund raising has been organised for 2002. However, there are still over 350 members out there whose donations will make a big difference, so if you have not sent anything yet, please play your small part in purchasing this gift. (go on, go on, go on, - you know you want to, as the Irish woman says on TV)

As well as the cabinet we plan to present a suitable original painting, and also to have the band play a march dedicated to 656 sometime during the ceremony.

The format we have proposed for the Celebration is a late afternoon reunion, followed by the AAC Band beating retreat. We will then attack the bar prior to an evening Dinner dance. The date and venue are as yet undecided, but probably March 30th (Easter Saturday) 2003 and the venue may well be in the Wallop area, to gain maximum attendance. We will try to give the maximum warning so that diaries can be kept free to attend.

# **AGM 2002.**

## **Agenda**

Proposed by Ted Maslen-Jones, seconded by John Bennett that the Constitution be re-adopted, and that the proposed Members of the Committee be Agreed. \*

Proposed by Ted Maslen-Jones, Seconded by John Heyes that John Bennett is re-elected as General Secretary for a new term, as defined in the Constitution.

Proposed by John Heyes, seconded by George McKie that reasonable 'out of pocket' expenses, and travel costs at £0.20p per mile be paid to committee members attending a meeting. \*

Proposed by John Bennett, seconded by John Heyes that life membership be set at £60 for members attaining 60 years of age, and £30 for members over 70 years..

\* see page 11

## **PROXY VOTING PROCEDURES**

If you approve and agree the above do nothing.

If you object to anything then you must write to me with your objections.

Should you have any other proposals for the good and benefit of the Association then please send them to be with me no later than 11th May, and they will be brought up at the live AGM.

The AGM will start with the wreath laying at Huish Episcopi church at 12:00 noon. We will then move off to the Langport Arms for the meeting, prior to luncheon at 13:30. The cost of the lunch is now £8.50 per head, and children under 5 years is £4.00. You are welcome to bring along wives, children and friends as guests for the lunch. There is limited B & B / Hotel accommodation nearby for those who have to travel far, and Claire will guide you as to what is available. (Call her direct on 01458-250009).

Please let me know as soon as you can if you will be attending, and how many guests you will have. Enclose the payment for the luncheon making your cheques out to the '656 squadron association'.  
Gen Sec.

## **PROXY VOTE : PROPOSALS DETAILS**

- Constitution**            Minor revisions to cover Committee. See separate insert.
- McKie.** George.        To be Hon. Treasurer.  
George served with REME Noble Field & Kluang 59-61.  
Runs his own business and is treasurer of the Old Grey  
Horse club. (Ex REME in Leicester area)
- Mattocks.** Ken        To be Vice treasurer.  
Served with GPR. Jan-Nov '53 1907 Flt Benta; Nov '53 -  
Oct 54 1913 Flt Korea; Nov'54-July'55-1907 Flt Taiping.  
On leaving went to South Africa and joined KAR.
- Heyes.** John         Committee member. General assistance, visits etc  
Served with REME 60-63.KL, 63-66 Taiping, 67-68  
Kluang. Worked in the oil industry on leaving.
- White.** Gordon       Committee member, co-ordinator for Presentation  
Served with RAF 52-52 at Noble Field.  
Qualified as Electrical engineer worked with ICL
- Haynes.** Maurice     Committee member. Publicity and recruiting  
Served with REME 62-65 Malaya, 68-70. Singapore.  
Set up an insurance brokerage company on leaving.

## **PROPOSED FINANCE**

The committee do not foresee there being any regular face to face meetings. Most business will be conducted by Email or phone, and contact meetings will whenever possible be at Association functions. In event that it is vital the committee meet in person then it is proposed that any reasonable out of pocket expenses, and a payment of £0.20p per mile be paid.

**Life Membership.** Following enquiries we propose that the fee for life memberships be set at £60 for members reaching 60 years, and £30 for members over 70 years.

## The proposed Association tour 2002

After the apparent success of our tour to Malaysia in 2001, I was asked to arrange something for 2002. Pegasus Bridge and the Normandie landings area was suggested and I have run with this idea.

It has been suggested that eight days is a bit short and I can arrange for a longer tour, if there is a common consensus that this is what is required. Naturally, the price would increase accordingly. I feel that we will have had enough of the coach by the time the eight days is up. Please let me know if there is any other place in Normandie that you would particularly like to visit and if you would like to make the tour longer, having more free time to do your own thing.

We have been offered the following: -

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September to Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2002.**

8 Days, 7 Nights.

All accommodation en suite. Minimum 2 Star.

Hotel bookings on a bed and breakfast basis.

Tour guide included.

Executive coach travel throughout.

Pick up points, Liverpool, Birkenhead, Chester, Telford, Birmingham, Oxford Services, Fleet Services (M3), Portsmouth Ferry Terminal.

### **The Tour.**

Pegasus Bridge  
Ranville Airborne Cemetery  
Ouistreham and Sword Beach  
Montgomery Memorial  
Juno Beach and Courseulles  
Gold Beach and Arromanches  
Omaha Beach  
Ste Mere Eglise  
Utah Beach  
Bayeux Tapestry

I have arranged the tour in such a way that there will not be a totally mind numbing concentration on things military. There will be free time to wander around the towns of Honfleur, Caen and Bayeux

### **The Price.**

Based on 40 plus travelling.	£289.00 per person
Based on less than 40 travelling.	£309.00 per person
Single Supplement.	£140.00
Optional insurance.	£ 16.00 per person.



A twenty pounds per person deposit is required and the cheques should be made out to **'Galina International'** and be posted to me at the address below, to arrive no later than 15<sup>th</sup> May.

**J. Heyes Esq.,  
Ty Ni, Corwen Road,  
Pontybodkin,  
Mold, CH7 4TG**

If you are interested, please give me a ring on **01352 770100** or email me at: - **etonpark@aol.com** and I will send you more information.



Photos received from Terry Hulme-Atthis (Ex RN)

WZ 673 returns to the workshops after recovery from Thailand. (see Chinthe Autumn 2001 edition)

Note the adaptor for the tail wheel, fitting it to the machine gun mountings.



656 Squadron Workshops  
Kuala Lumpur  
1960

4 Mark 9 Austers in various stages of servicing.

### Deaths

Regretfully we announce the deaths of the following members, and offer condolences to their friends and relatives.

59	Calder H.C. Maj.	REME	Died 10-Oct-01
148	Rolley J.C DFM	GPR	Died 22-Nov-01
101	Nottage R.S. Lt.Col.		Died 1997 ??
419	Babb E	R.A.	Died 24 -Jan-02
4	Boys RHC Capt	RA	Died 13-Feb-02

### Diary Dates

A.G.M. & Burma Luncheon:

Langport                                      12:00 hrs                                      9th June 2002

Reunion—Dishforth                                      TBA

Dinner    TBA

Falklands Anniversary—Colchester                                      24 May 2002

#### NEW MEMBERS SINCE LAST NEWSLETTER

551	McArdle J.A.	RA	1907 Taiping 54-56
552	Reeves J.D.	REME	67-69 S'pore/Brunei
553	Fraser-Pidgeon F.StG		1960 Malaya
554	Rundle G.M.	AAC	2001—(2i/c)
555	Grogan D.R.	RAF	52-53 1903 Korea

## BRING and BUY!

Do YOU have items you no longer use or want?? Would they be of interest to other members? If the answer is Yes then why not bring them along to the AGM and raise money for the Flag Fund! I will be bringing a large collection of books, mainly aeronautical stuff, all priced at £5.00 each.

### History and Archives

How many times have you heard that someone regreted when an elderly relation passed away their memorabilia and artefacts were disposed of, as they were meaningless to others? It happens all too often as 'house clearance' men dispose of un-saleable items into the rubbish, or relatives have no care after the initial sorrow phase passes, and dispose of them.

PLEASE do not let this happen to anything you own connected with 656 Squadron. Get your relatives to be aware of it, put it in your will, do what you may but please, ensure that anything, no matter how minor it may seem, is sent to the Secretary of the Association. Photo's, letters, diaries all contain an historic aspect of the Squadron.

Even better, why not send them now so you can guarantee they are preserved. We can then decide if and where items should be best kept or copied

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### **SPECIAL OFFER**

*To 656 Squadron Association Members only:*  
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Print only £80 each. Framed £140 each



656 Squadron, Auster in N. Malaya 1962  
by David Shepherd oae



Falklands Casavac by David Shepherd oae

If you would like a copy of these fine pictures, or to find out what other paintings are in stock, please call Dave Whiteley direct. (David is a member of the Association)

This is a paid advert. To promote your business in the newsletter, call John Bennett