



Newsletter March 2009

ANNUAL REUNION 16/05/09

Venue: **RAF Club, 128 Piccadilly**
Date: **Saturday 16th May 2009**
Dinner: **1800 for 1930 with Ladies.** Dress: **Lounge Suit and Squadron Tie: Miniatures.** Cost: **£31.00 per person.**

Vegetarians: Please make your own arrangements with the club. Please make your cheques payable to:

‘No 43 (F) Squadron Association’ & send them to:

Bob Iles, 35 Hillside Road, Aldershot, GU11 3LX.

The joint Hon. Sec. must receive notification of Attendance by **2nd May 2009 latest.**

~~~~~

**Absent Friends:** Wg Cdr **J L Dell** OBE: On Squadron 1951/52 died March 2008. **Ted Esdaille:** late ‘30’s died January 2009. **Harry Lea** 1941/43, died August 2008. **Alan Morton:** 1941/42, died March 2008. **Les Seal** (ex C/O): 1945/46, died November 2008. **Gloria Finis**

~~~~~



Alan Morton,

Alan devoted much of his time, especially after the death of his wife Marion - to whom he was devoted - in furthering the interests of our Association. It was he, drawing upon his skills as a qualified graphic designer, who produced the splendid menus that graced the tables at our annual

reunions for many years. He has also, very generously, left the Association a legacy that will enable it to face the future assured in the knowledge that there are no immediate short-term monetary problems to face, for which we are all deeply indebted to him.

~~~~~



**Jimmy Dell**

The death of J L ‘Jimmy’ Dell OBE cannot be allowed to pass without further mention. He test flew many aircraft including Meteors, Venoms and Hunters and also the American F-100 series of fighters including the F-100 Super Sabre, the 104 Starfighter, the 105 Thunderchief, and the 106 Delta Dart. He also flew the French Mystere and Mirage types. Around 1960 he joined the English Electric Company where he was involved in the Lightning development programme. He became their Chief Test Pilot in 1965 when he was then involved with the TSR 2, the exciting, ahead of its time aircraft that was so wilfully scrapped by government order in 1965. In Jimmy’s words, ‘It was faster than a Lightning, a world beater.’ He was awarded the OBE in 1966 and eventually retired in 1989. Truly a Fighting Cock to be proud of.

~~~~~

Terry Telling, widow of Len has written: On 23rd October last, together with some others of the Association, I attended the funeral of Mrs Hilda Wooley. She was the widow of Frank one of the Association's founding members. Now, of that era, only Vic Vickers

and I survive. In its early days it was very casual. On a certain Saturday each month those members who wished to meet up would gather at the ‘Horseshoe Dive’ in Tottenham Court Road where they’d be sure to meet other members to enjoy the odd pint. Nowadays the Association has become more formal, but I still have many happy memories of those old days...Husband Len and me arriving on a small motorbike (our first mode of transport), and later having to be pushed by other rather ‘merry bods’ to start us on our way home (pre breathalyser of course!). I also recall Harry (?), an amateur conjurer, pulling sausages from my blouse, and ‘Spud’ Earthy reciting a rather doubtful ditty - not really fit for female ears - but I was an ex WAAF - so I suppose he thought it OK. Vic Vickers, Jimmy & Betty Beedle, Frank & Hilda Wooley, Larry & Hilda Till, and Bill & Judy Creed were frequent visitors to our home and we to theirs. Happy days long gone but as all who read this should know, that from simple beginnings something rather special grew and survives still, some 63 year on...**Gloria Finis** *Thank you Terry for that interesting memory...See you in May!*

~~~~~

**Arthur Fishlock,** our oldest member, celebrated his 105 birthday last June and to help commemorate the occasion Air Cdre Ian McBride (committee chairman) together with Neil MacIndoe (Joint Hon. Sec) went along to his place of residence and presented him with two lapel badges, one the 43(F) Sqn crest and the other the HM Forces Veterans badge.





### **Tornado 9 Ship Over Leuchars**

**Apr 08** saw the merger between 56 (R) Sqn, which was the Tornado F3 OCU and 43 (F) Sqn. Wg Cdr Hazell became Officer Commanding 43 (F) Sqn.

**Continuous** Quick Reaction Alert was maintained at RAF Leuchars. It was another busy year with multiple interceptions of Russian Long Range Aviation Bears and Blackjack aircraft.

**Many personnel** (air and ground crew) supported Ops Telic and Herrick out in Iraq and Afghanistan in multiple roles. Increasingly many personnel were employed in roles out in theatre detached from their primary role.

**The Sqn** continued to support flying operations and Quick Reaction Alert in the Falkland Islands. Due to the integration of Typhoon in the UK, RAF Leuchars engineering and aircrew were wholly providing support to this F3 commitment.

**May 08** saw the Sqn deploy to Kuopio in Finland for ADEX (Air defence Exercise) 08. 43 (F) Squadron provided 6 aircraft, 8 crews and about 100 ground crew with 4-crew support from the 'Tremblers' (111 Sqn). This provided the opportunity to train and liase with the respective Air Forces from Germany, France and Finland. The detachment was eventful for many reasons; more spectacularly was the Nose-Wheel up landing skilfully carried out by Flt Lt Alex Taylor and the accidental fuel tank jettison from Flt Lt Paul Kelly.

**In June** 43 (F) Sqn combined with 111 (F) Sqn to perform a diamond 9 fly past of Buckingham Palace as

part of the Queen's birthday celebration. The formation was repeated for the opening of the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in July. The Sqn also performed a fly past over Westminster Abbey in Sep.

**In the latter half** of the year there were 2 Tactical Leadership Programme detached courses based out of Florennes. Aug saw 2 ac and 2 crews supported by 111 Sqn groundcrew and Oct had 2 ac and 2 crews with 43 Sqn engineering support also covering 2 ac and crews from 111 Sqn. The Objective of the course is to develop and expose aircrew to NATO Composite Air Operations trg alongside others: Spanish, French, German, Italian, Greek, US, Belgian, Dutch Air Forces. Crews fly in 20 ac formations in German, French, Belgium, Dutch and UK airspace.

**A number** of Overseas training flights saw the Sqn visit destinations all around Europe including Ostrava in the Czech Republic in support of NATO Day, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Gibraltar. These overnight or weekend stopovers were completed again with groundcrew support for when the inevitable snag occurred with an airframe.

**This year** 3 aircraft and crews also provided the F3 element of the RAF Role demo – an award winning display, which displayed (on the odd occasion when they weren't weathered out!) around the UK may – sep 08.

**Training** detachments of 6 ac and air and ground crews deployed for 2-week training exercises to Kinloss in Jul and Nov for Combined Qualified weapons Instructor (CQWI) and Tactical leadership training (TLT) respectively. Course and are both UK Air warfare Centre run exercises practicing employing large formations of offensive Air power. The first is designed to take the Squadron's experienced aircrew and develop not only their tactical

but technical knowledge of Tornado F3 operations, whereas the latter provides a platform to expose aircrew from across the air force to multi ac type packages and formations.

**December** saw the closure of the OCU element of 43 (F) Sqn. 106 Course Flt Lts Richard Leask and Alex Vaughan were the last 2 pilots to be converted onto the F3 and have since been posted to the Sqn proper to continue their careers.

**The Sqn** marched through the town of Stirling as part of celebrating the Freedom of Stirling. The parade was well received by all and was topped of by Flt Lt Roy MacIntyre led a 4 ship flypast over his home town for his last flight in the Tornado F3. The evening events consisted of dinner in the Great Hall within the castle.

**Red Flag** exercise in Nellis Las Vegas currently ongoing Feb – Mar 09. Leuchars wing deployed with 111 Sqn - 8 crews (split 50/50) and some engineering support (split 75/25).

**The officers** had a dining-in In December, the first since the merger which saw about half the Squadron being dined in or out! An all ranks Christmas dinner was held at Ferny Castle during December. Numerous other more minor social functions were also held throughout the year...*Our thanks to the Sqn 'XO' Sqn Ldr M R 'Ruth' Rendall & Fg Off C 'Fish' Fisher for providing this news update.*

**Bob Iles:** 01252 333386  
[robortiles99@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:robortiles99@tiscali.co.uk)

**Neil MacIndoe:** 01252 792793  
[n43macindoe@btinternet.com](mailto:n43macindoe@btinternet.com)

**& Don't forget the Assoc. website**  
[www.43sqdn-association.com](http://www.43sqdn-association.com)

~~~~~

In closing if you would prefer to have your former rank used when we correspond please let us know.

Kind regards, Neil & Bob