

Dear Association Member,

The introduction to the Association News letter always seems to contain the words 'it has been a particularly busy period for 656 Squadron'. This occasion is no different, the Squadron is once again stretched to fulfill our commitments to Northern Ireland, Canada, Belize, and Cyprus - to name but a few. When combined with support to the rest of the Army and maintaining our own training regime to meet the high standards we set ourselves, 656 Squadron has indeed been very busy since October! This and two months in Kenya with 30% of the Squadron, account for the late issue of the News Letter, SORRY. The advantage is that there is more to report. The Squadron continues to consolidate after its move from Netheravon last year, most recently making significant advances in night operations, which are generating interest Corps wide. Our affiliation with 6 Airborne Brigade continues as we prepare for a major exercise in the North of England and in Scotland. This exercise will rigorously test all our achievements to date. On the sports front 656 Squadron competed in boxing, volleyball, rugby and football, even with depleted manpower the results were creditable. Socially, the Squadron maintains its ethos of work hard play hard and has the hangovers to prove it!

TREASURERS REPORT

Dear member,

As well as being a very busy year, 1994 has once again been a most interesting one, during which I have been privileged to meet many members of the Association; who had previously been but a voice at the other end of a telephone line or the writer of, in most cases, an interesting and informative letter. My records indicate that I sent replies to 135. Over and above this, just over 300 updated membership registers in booklet form were produced on the PC and sent out, (a much bigger task than I had anticipated and very time consuming, but far cheaper than local photocopying). I trust every member received their copy. Many copies of 'Reg Baileys Experiences' in the '7 Div Adm In Box were also distributed. An extract from the Memoirs of Capt Rex Boys relating to the same period; is now on the PC, anyone wishing a copy, of either or both, please let me know. Both make interesting reading and extracts from the former, have appeared in the AAC Journal and other books.

24 new members joined during the year, but regrettably a number have resigned for various reasons, others have either moved or changed banks and omitted to renew their SO, and some serving members have been posted to other units and we have lost contact. With such a low subscription fee as ours these have of necessity been removed from the mailing list, it is also with regret and sadness that I have to report the death during the year of R.E.Limbert, J.H. Stewart, T.A Lamb along with that of Capt J.Pooley (reported in the Oct newsletter) Letters of condolence were sent to their families.

The Association finances are in a very healthy condition, mainly due to the Squadron standing the cost of producing the Newsletters, for which I am sure we are all most grateful. Although the accounts have yet to be audited, the balance at bank on 31-12-94 was £428.37.

The Guidon Presentation Parade at Middle Wallop on May 10th was a most impressive occasion and a credit to all who took part. I still await delivery of the official Video tape which will be available to any member. Please let me know if you wish to loan it so that a follow on list may be compiled. The same applies to the 'Home produced' Video of the Squadrons Golden Jubilee Parade. You will only be

expected to pay the follow on postage in each case. As well as members of the Squadron who took part at the Guidon presentation, Jack Hallam, Dennis Kemp and myself were also present.

As usual the IAS on Sat/Sun 14/15 May was very well attended and the static and flying displays were to the high standard we have come to expect. We express our grateful thanks once again to Major Tim Morley for his kind assistance and provision of table and chairs in a most prominent position, within the marquee. We must however consider providing some 'High Profile' means of indicating our presence for future occasions. (Our two banners have been 'lost stolen or strayed' in recent years). The Secretary's report and Minutes of the AGM were circulated with the Oct News Letter. Those present over the weekend who signed the register; were :- P.Andrews. R.Aungiers. L.Addington. L.Barker. T.Burns. J.Butcher. G.Butcher. A.Brown. R.Cotton. J.Connor. L.C.Clark. R.Corfield. P.Dobson. R.Drunimer. J.C.Dandy. T.J.Dawies. G.Davies. W.Dick. V.Finch. A.Flint. J.Fox. H.Groom. I.Hickey. J.Eallam. G.Eickson. D.Jiunt. C.Eyslop. M.Haynes. Maj G.Key. D.Kemp. K.Marshall. A.Markham. D.Miller. D.Mallam. G.McKie. C.McLeod. K.Nash. D.Nicol. P.Narth. D.Powley. R.Pett. L.Rogers. B.Rigby. J.H.Stewart. Cal J.Seilers. Maj Gen Stewart Ccx. Lt Cal A.J.J.Simkins. J.Vetcb. V.Weaver. D.R.O.Walker. P.Willson. and other indistinguishable signatures. Many wives were also present, I regret not meeting you all!!

Prior to attending the Freedom of Boroughbridge Parade and the Squadrons Families Day, a few days holiday in the Lakes enabled me to call on 'Biff' Batey at Little Broughton. it was our first meeting and our conversation and his hospitality was much enjoyed. He sends his greetings and best wishes to all his old comrades. Since then his near neighbor Tom Tunstall has become a member. During my journey to Yorkshire, a detour to Trirndon Village in Co Durham enabled me to call on Hugh McGonnell (also in the 7 Div Box Siege) for a short chat. He was reasonably well and regrets his circumstances do not allow him to become a member, however, I do keep him posted and he sends regards and best Wishes especially to former comrades. From there I traveled to Pickering and called on Hubert Holliday (ex equipment section) who although being confined to a wheelchair looked well and pleased I'd made the effort to call. Likewise he Wishes to be remembered to former old comrades.

The weather was fine and warm and we thoroughly enjoyed the Parade at Boroughbridge by members of 9 Regt including 656 on Sat 2nd July, also the Families Day on the Sunday. We thank the Squadron for their kind invitation, their hospitality and efforts in providing our own enclosure including tentage with bar and food, as well as video equipment and tables etc for our convenience. Many new acquaintances were made and a large contribution of photographs received for inclusion in the Association Albums. My thanks to you all. Those present during the weekend were;- P.Andrews. B.Appleton. V.Allison. R.Bailey. Capt I.Banks. T.Burns. D.Beard. P.Beard. K Beveridge. J.Benn. G.L.Baldwin. A.E.Carter. H.C.Clark. J.Dandy. A Davison. G.Dempster. P.Dobson, N.Frost. P.J.Furze. J.Hallam. D.Hunt. D.Kemp. Maj G.Key. J. Lever. A.Lowe. MJ Gen S.Lytle. I.Larnont. A.Maycroft. C.Mcleod. D.IEiiler. J.MacKay. J.Y.Reading. J.C.Rolley. R.A.Slack, li.Southall. N.Stubbings. Maj D.R.O.Walker. C.R.13.White. Many wives also spent a very pleasant weekend with us. News from several sources Indicates that the Dishforth 'OPEN DAY' on 8th Dec was a great success, eventho only a few Association members were In attendance. I trust more will respond to the next invitation.

forthcoming events.

The Wallop Challenge is fixed for Sunday 10th Sept, and more details will be circulated later. Date of the 'Family Day' will of course depend on the Squadrons commitments as will those of other 'OPEN DAYS' I look forward to meeting many of you once again at some of these events

Before closing, I would like to express my appreciation to John Reading for arranging 'the announcements on CEEFAX and TELETXT which have resulted in many of

the new members joining, to Tony Lowe for arranging the tour around British Aerospace Factory at Warton, and finally to Maj Key, Capt Banks and the hard working Clerk for their unstinted efforts and continued support. Yours sincerely,
Nobby Clark.

656 SQUADRON RETURN TO THE FAR EAST

656 Squadron took part in Exercise SUMAN WARRIOR 3 Oct - 28 Oct. The exercise took place in Singapore and was part of the Five Nations Defence Agreement (S=Singapore, J=United Kingdom, A=Malaysia, A=Australia, N=New Zealand hence S.U.M.A.N). The exercise was particularly successful; it helped us to gain valuable experience in the kind of multinational operation that is becoming the norm. For many it was the first visit to the Far East. It was strange to see so many place names for real after hearing about them from Association members, places such as Seremban and Ipoh. Being so close to 656 Squadron history, made our remembrance service held at Changi Cemetery all the more poignant. Wreaths were laid by and on behalf of the Squadron and the Association.

BURMA LUNCH.

Members who served in Burma are celebrating the 50th anniversary of their departure from Rangoon to India. The celebration will take the form of a lunch to be held at Langport on 18th June 95.

YJ DAY COMMORATIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

Celebrations to mark VJ Day are taking place in Edinburgh on 12th Aug 95 (veterans parade), Cardiff on 20th Aug 95 (veterans parade), Hyde Park on Aug 19th (Drumhead service). There will also be Remembrance Services in Edinburgh and Cardiff on 20th Aug 95 followed by Beating Retreat Parades in Edinburgh, Cardiff and central London. 656 have asked for the honour of providing the aircraft and crew to conduct a fly-by of Tower Bridge in London on 19th Aug 95. We will inform you if our bid is successful.

PRELUDE TO ACTION AND ITS OUTCOME.

“Prelude to action and its outcome”, is an extract from the memoirs of Rex Boys on his experiences during and in the run up to the 7 Div Admin Box Siege while he was OC ‘C’ Flight. I thoroughly recommend it.

REGIMENTAL OPEN DAY 656 ASSOCIATION DAY

656 Squadron will be hosting the Open Day on 22nd July 95. In conjunction we will be holding a 656 Squadron Association Day. As usual there will be a bar, historic exhibits, 656 Squadron Shop, food and most important of all, a friendly atmosphere for past and present members of 656 Squadron to meet. If you wish to join us on the 22nd July 95 then please fill out and return the proforma at Annex B. (not included with this transcript). The day will commence at 1000 hrs and should be complete by 1700. There will also be a social gathering in the evening either in a local pub or ‘the NAAFI.

Last year many members successfully combined the visit to 656 Squadron with trips to see local attractions. To this end Annex A Is a sketch map of the local area and list of accommodation. (not Included).

SUMMARY.

It now only remains I or me to bid you good luck, health and happiness. We hope that you will all keep In touch with the Squadron and the Association.

Signed: - N A BANKS. Captain for O/C.