THE KRIEGIE

NEWS-SHEET OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCES EX-P.O.W. ASSOCIATION

Volavimus
Vecidimus
Vivimus

Editor: CAL YOUNGER

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SOUTHAMPTON REUNION 1987.

First Days

Many years ago, Lindsay Hassett, then the Australian Test Cricket Captain, took his Club side into the dressing room at South Melbourne and demonstrated how, if he thought of every move a bowler could make and made sure he had a counter for it, a batsman should never be out. Hassett then went to the crease as opening batsman and off the first ball ran himself out.

It was a bit like that at Southampton. For two years the Committee had planned the reunion. Countless visits were made to Southampton and there was a final meeting of absolutely everybody who was remotely concerned with the Reunion.

Every contingency was covered. Nothing could go wrong. But, of course, it did, and, at the end of the first full day, a weary Committee met to see where the gaps were and to decide how they could be plugged. The success of the Reunion hinged on the smooth operation of the transport and the problem stemmed from the last-minute departure from her job of the very bright young woman with whom the transport arrangements had been worked out. Much of the information was in her head.

The Committee were asking too much of themselves and their hearts lightened as countless Reunion participants went out of their way to reassure them. They knew what the movement of over 700 people entailed, that loading and unloading coaches some of which were going to one destination, some to another, was time-taking, especially when groups of friends wanted to stick together. In the end it was a huge success. Dave Wardill who, with his wife, had flown from Australia just to attend the reunion summed it up: "What we have are wonderful memories of the New Forest, Abingdon, the cruise on the Solent, the service at Winchester Cathedral, the bus rides, the queues — we met such friendly people in them we came to enjoy them. We can top all of these with a replay of the tape". As Bob Alldrick wrote from Canada afterwards, "As the years go by and we continue to lose some of our P.O.W. friends, these get-togethers are the more precious".

For the Committee and their indispensable wives the Reunion began on Saturday, 5th September in the the Round Room, our H.Q. for the duration of the Reunion. Registration desks had to be set up, including Doug and Mary Endsor's supervisory desk, where they installed their complex but ingenious accounting system. They had a tab on everyone, knew how much each person had paid, overpaid or underpaid, who was staying in the University Halls and who had chosen the more expensive luxury of the Moat House Hotel.

An assembly line was set up to fill the "goodies" bags; name labels, which had been prepared over several days beforehand, were set out. Information and welcome signs had to be placed (Dave Bernard had prepared direction signs and personally posted them in strategic positions in the surrounding streets to help kriegies arriving by car), exhibition stands were mounted. There was constant liaison with the administrative staff of Glen Eyre Hall and particularly with the University's Conference Co-ordinator, John Hiett, a tower of strength from beginning to end.

The weather was unkind. The programmes had not arrived . . . Plane-loads of Canadians arrived on Sunday at Gatwick, where John Banfield met them and supervised the loading of the weary travellers and their baggage, and at Heathrow, where Pete Skinner performed similar duties. Both were grateful for the volunteers who helped them.

At Southampton, teams of ATC boys and girls braved relentless rain for most of the day, escorting visitors to their billets in Glen Eyre and Chamberlain Halls and humping their luggage. Des Dunphy and Graham Hall did sterling work with car trailers.

In the Round Room, as full coaches drew in, life for the registration team became chaotic as arriving kriegies spotted friends they hadn't seen for years, but somehow everyone was registered, received their name tabs and their goodies, had their enquiries answered and were directed to Glen Eyre Hall admin. to collect their room keys. The programmes were still missing . . .

Beating Retreat

More Canadians arrived on Monday. The Australian and New Zealand groups checked in, so did representatitves from Zimbabwe and South Africa, and a steady flow of U.K. Kriegies passed through the Round Room. T.V. South arrived. They wanted spontaneous coverage of the many first-time-since-the-war reunions which were taking place. Suddenly, there were none. Everyone seemed to have been in close touch throughout the years. However, the TV men got their pictures, including some of the always moving Beating Retreat which took place on the sodden lawn in front of the Dining Hall of Glen Eyre Hall.

Sodden the lawn may have been, but the sun was shining. Earlier in the day it seemed as if the ceremony might have to be cancelled, but around midday the rain stopped and worried us no more until the last evening of the Reunion. Hughie, the rainmaker was kind to us.

So the Band of her Majesty's Royal Marines, Commandos, directed by Bandmaster Colin Brocklebank, marched and played, executing their complex manoeuvres to perfection, stirring hearts and bringing tears to eyes, just as at Oxford five years earlier. Air Commodare Charles Clarke took the salute and the Marines marched away, their music wafting back to us on a fitful breeze. The Reunion has been declared "open".

Open Evening at M and S

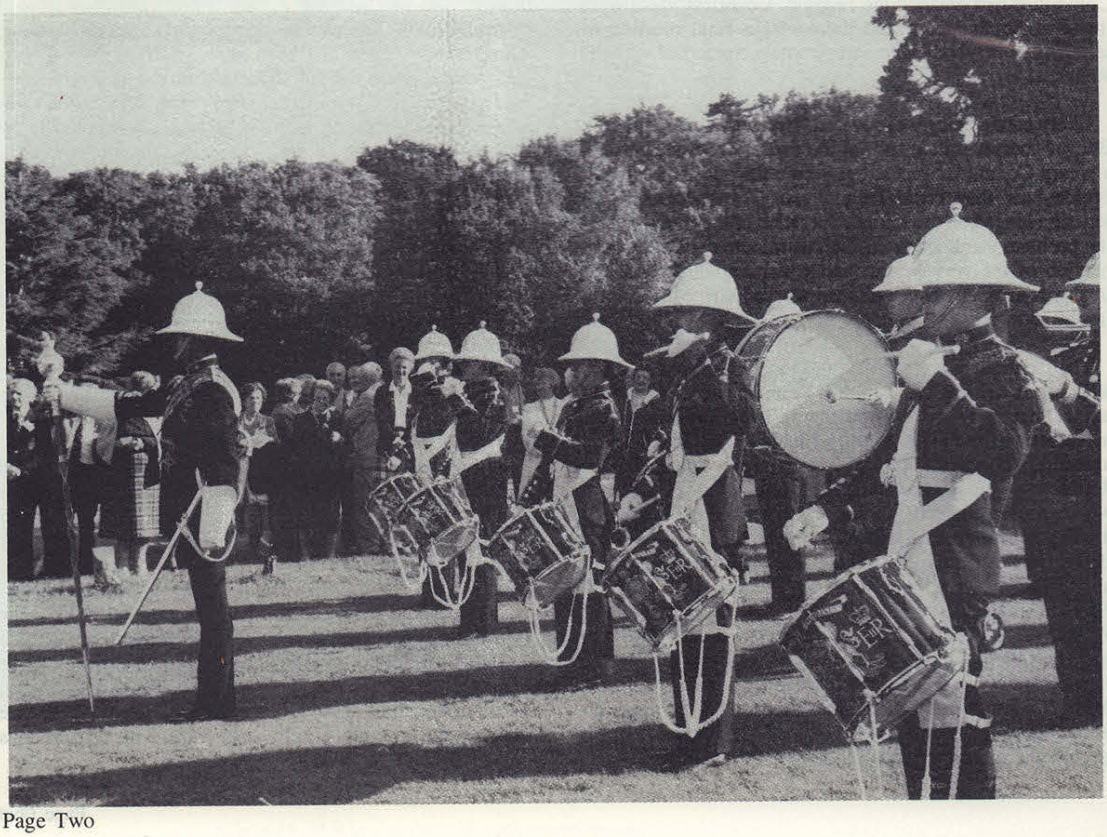
In the evening Marks and Spencer's Southampton branch had a special Open Evening, a typical gesture from one of the most generous companies in the country. Live music and refreshments were laid on and, although the shop was open for business, this was a secondary consideration. The staff were bent on giving the kriegie guests a memorable evening and they succeeded.

First Excursions

As coach after coach arrived at the gates of Glen Eyre Hall on Tuesday, the queues formed with excitement pervading them. The coaches had to park on the busy Glen Eyre Road and dawdling groups of kriegies and wives, immersed in their chatter, sometimes were scattered by impatient drivers.

Four separate parties had been organised and the first to go was taken to the docks to board M.V. *Leisure Trip* for a leisurely voyage to Portsmouth. The skipper, Captain W. Hogg, knew every inch of the way and provided a commentary full of knowledge and humour, Towards the end of the trip packed lunches were issued. Prepared in the University kitchens, the lunches got full marks for presentation and content, the latter almost over-generous.

The second party had also arrived in Portsmouth, travelling by coach, and having "done" the *Victory* and the *Mary Rose*, dallied in the museum and perhaps done a little shopping,



Batch and Betty Batcheldor, Phil Potts, Dee Younger, Eileen and Charles Clarke at Beaulieu

now went aboard the boat. Their packed lunches were transferred from the coaches and they made the return journey by sea. When the first party had completed their sight-seeing, they boarded the coaches for the return by road.

Beaulieu, with its Abbey and its motor museum, was the destination of the other two parties, one of which went direct to Beaulieu, the other by way of a tour through the New Forest. Those on the longer journey were booked for the second luncheon sitting. It was a very splendid lunch and there is more than a suspicion that some other visitors, tumbling to the nature of the affair, hastily concocted a kriegie cover story and had their lunch free. The two parties reversed the journey procedure for the homeward run.

Civic Reception

The day was not yet done. In the evening the Mayor of Southampton, Councillor Mrs. I.T. White, gave a Civic Reception for the entire gathering at the Hall of Aviation in Southampton. The A.T.C. formed a guard of honour for her. One of our own members, Gurney Smeed, is the Director of this excellent museum which is dedicated to R.J. Mitchell, creator of the Spitfire. On Tuesday, too, after many irate telephone calls, the Programmes arrived.

Abingdon Turns it On.

Visits to R.A.F. stations have always been popular with ex-kriegies, partly because they bring back treasured memories, perhaps just stir an ember of youth; partly because the new R.A.F., with the technological advances of forty years, is so fascinating; but, more than anything, such a wonderful rapport develops between us and our hosts, who are not only ineffably hospitable but admire our achievements in war, see us as men who helped build the service of which they are so proud and are grateful to us for coming.

On Wednesday, 9th September, we went to Abingdon, where many of our members had served and where, five years earlier, we had received such a wonderful welcome. Probably, for the majority, Abingdon was the Reunion's apogee. We had a tight schedule for we had to be back for the concert in the evening. Vic Gammon, busy all day in the Ferneham Hall at Fareham, was biting his nails whenever his hands were free. He need not have worried; the day at Abingdon went with metronomic precision, due in no small measure to the behind-the-scene work of Wing Commander Helen Beith-Jones, who had gone out of her way to attend a pre-reunion briefing at Southampton.

At 10.30 hours, in one of the great hangars, the near 700 ex kriegies and wives were welcomed by the Station Commander, Group Captain C.G. Terry, OBE. B.Sc.(Eng) C.Eng. ACGI, MRAeS. The letters after Group Captain

Terry's name are in themselves an indication of the qualities required of a senior officer in the modern day RAF. Air Commodore Clarke replied and introduced Wing Commander Dave Bernard, MBE, C.Eng. MIERE, MBIM, whose own alphabetical adornments say a great deal.

Dave presented his own painting of a Whitley flying over Abingdon. Like everything that Dave does, the painting was expertly accomplished. A similar painting he gave to his wife Elaine, who generously raffled it at Southampton, earning no less than £200 for the Association. To the delight of us all, Dixie Deans was able to spend the day with us at Abingdon.

After the hangar briefing, the kriegies went out into the sunshine to view the static aircraft display, only to be roped in (literally) and photographed in the formation you see on the back of this issue of *The Kriegie*. If the group looks good humoured, this might be attributable to the S.W.O. who, at the psychological moment, bellowed, "SMILE".

Small organised parties were shown round the Engineering Facilities where the major servicing and modification of Jaguar, Hawk and Buccaneer aircraft are carried out. But many old kriegies could not be dragged away from the static display, not so much because of the formidable array of modern aircraft as for the nostalgic associations with the machines of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

Lunch was taken in all three messes. The menu was the same and so was the hospitality. At Abingdon in 1982 we all lunched in the Officers' Mess and were waited on by volunteers of all ranks. We were treated as very special but we had little opportunity to mix with station personnel. The advantage of dividing the party was that our hosts, of all ranks, sat at table with us. Instead of being special but apart, we were special but taking part.

The incomparable Red Arrows initiated the afternoon flying display which served as a rehearsal for the Battle of Britain "At Home" on the following Saturday. They were followed by the aerobatic display by the amazing Z1 aircraft and a demonstration attack by Jaguars on a fortress straight from *Beau Geste*. A strong wind did not deter the Falcons RAF parachute Display Team who landed with the national flags of the countries represented at the Reunion and formally handed them to delegates from each country, a gesture which won many hearts.

Next came a Hercules flypast, then the Harrier performed the now familiar but always watchable antics, concluding with a courteous bow to the audience, and finally came the familiar Lancaster, Hurricane and Spitfire of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. Imaginations gripped. Former Lancaster crews went through searchlights and flak and youthful fighter pilots were back in their cockpits. Only for minutes; soon we were all back to earth, boarding coaches for the run back to Southampton.

It had been a wonderful day and during the afternoon we expressed our appreciation by presenting one of our shields to each of the three Messes and the Association's silver Eagle to the Red Arrows led by Squadron Leader Richard Thomas. The Red Arrows have given us their breathtaking performance on many occasions and it was felt that a gesture of this kind was well-earned. The Falcons were less familiar to us but they won our admiration and on the following Saturday Dave Bernard who, with Neville Northover and Des Dunphy, had rushed back to Abingdon to set up our kriegie compound, (especially asked for by Abingdon), took the opportunity to present an Association shield to the parachute team.

Watching flying display at Abingdon

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight

Music all the Way

A quick change, a quick snack, then we were on the way to the concert, staged at the Ferneham Hall in Fareham because it was the only large-enough hall available. ATC cadets, this time from Havant and Gosport, formed a guard of honour for the arriving gugests.

Vic Gammon must have been relieved to see the coaches arrive on time for, if the concert were to start — and therefore finish — late, he had problems. Vic and Sylvia, with unflagging assistance from Neville Northover, had spent the day getting the hall and the show ready. Of the show itself one could almost say, "He's done it again," and leave it at that. With shows at the Mermaid, the Old Vic, the Albert Hall, Oxford Town Hall, the Fairfield Hall and the Barbican behind him, Vic has built up a fund of experience which is evident in the smooth presentation, the clockwork precision of his productions.

Nigel Brooks and his singers are regular members of Vic's team and Nigel Brooks co-produced "Music all the Way". With the Laine Theatre Arts Dancers in support, and Peter Antony as Master of Ceremonies taking us on 'A good-humoured journey through time and space", as Vic described it, the Nigel Brooks Singers really did give us music all the way, and Vic himself made a rare appearance on stage — to vociferous cheers. Vic, who also organised the Reunion Souvenir Programme can be proud of his contribution to the Reunion. Advertising contracted by Sloane Publicity Ltd ensured a handsome financial margin. In the past, generous users of advertising space in our programmes have enabled us to augment our charitable fund by some thousands of pounds and to share our good fortune with the Red Cross, the RAF Benevolent Fund, the Star and Garter, Ex-Forces Mental Health Association and other charities helping ex-service men.

Fun on land, sea and dance floor

Thursday's programme mirrored Tuesday's. Those who had visited Beaulieu and the New Forest how headed for the *Mary Rose* and the *Victory,* while those who had done the Portsmouth trip went to Beaulieu. Some, it is thought, enjoyed Tuesday's boat trip so much that they repeated it, but perhaps they merely boarded the wrong coach. Certainly the boat engendered a companionable atmosphere inevitably missing on the buses. People could move around, talk to each other, buy a drink or two and at the same time enjoy the motion of the boat, the activities of various other craft on the water and the interest and humour of Captain Hogg's commentary. In the evening everyone enjoyed a dinner-dance on the main campus. Graham Hall, who had flogged tickets for his carefully planned raffle all week, was able to announce the names of the winners of handsome cash prizes. The Association benefitted by £400. Betty Batchelder. Elaine Bernard and John O'Reilly set up shop and did a brisk trade in Association ties, scarves, badges, etc; they also sold some of Ley Kenyon's Great Escape prints for which there would seem to be an endless demand.

Friday, September 11th. Batch fills a Cathedral

And so to the last day of what had developed into a very joyous reunion. On this day Batch came into his own. Give Batch a cathedral and 700 people to fill it and the result is invariably a most moving occasion. It is not just a matter of smooth organisation. Batch's honesty of purpose, integrity and faith suffuse the service, touching the hearts of even those whose religious connections are tenuous.

The service at Winchester Cathedral, "an Act of Thanksgiving for our deliverance during the War and our continued well-being", is described by Batch:

"Again it was on to the buses and a very respectably dressed group of some 700 Kriegies and friends set off for Winchester. We arrived an hour before the scheduled start of the Service. Although this meant that the assembled congregation had to suffer the rehearsals of readings, at least they had an opportunity to wander around the Cathedral and enjoy some of the magnificent architecture.

"The Service, conducted by Canon Roger Job, Precentor and Sacrist, commenced with the singing of the hymm "Praise my Soul the King of Heaven"; lessons were read by Charles Clarke and Don Morrison and the choir sang "How lovely are thy dwellings" by Brahms. A particularly appropriate sermon was preached by the Reverend W.E.C. Payton. "Weg", now retired, is a former Chaplain-in-Chief. In his younger days he played County cricket. His theme was thanksgiving and service, particularly to those less fortunate than ourselves.

"The final act, by the congregation, was the singing of two verses of the National Anthem. The verses chosen were the standard first verse and the little used one which was selected for words apposite to the occasion:

Not on this land alone —
But be God's mercies known
From shore to shore.
Lord, make the nations see
That men should brothers be
And form one family,
The wide world o'er.

"The Service concluded with an organ voluntary, the first movement of Mendelssohn's Sonata No.3.

" A collection was taken which reached the magnificent sum of nearly £722. In view of this, the Cathedral authorities decided to waive charges except for the printing of the Service books."

(We have a tangible memento of the occasion; we arranged for a local photographer to take pictures during the Service and one of these has been used to produce a very attractive Christmas card. Anyone wanting supplies for next Christmas should contact Batch — the cards cost £1.50 for a pack of ten).

The Finale

We emerged from the cathedral into the sunlight and cameras were busy in the churchyard where ancient epitaphs intrigued visitors.

Unhappily clouds began to gather and Spitfire enthusiasts were disappointed when poor visibility compelled the cancellation of an exhibition by Nick Grace in his own Spit.

Most people, however, were content to put their feet up after a splendid lunch on the main campus and prepare themselves for the grand finale at Bournemouth. As the procession of coaches set off, the rains came. The cloakroom of the Conference Centre in Bournemouth was neither designed nor staffed to take 700 or so coats and almost as many umbrellas at one time. There was a very slow-moving queue, but a good humoured one. After all, despite an unpromising start, the weather had been friendly for the greater part of the Reunion.

Once their belongings were safely deposited, kriegies and their wives made their way to the Tregonwell Hall for a civic reception. Our hostess was the Mayor of Bournemouth, Councillor Mrs. Barbara Silberry. It is a strange sign of the times, perhaps, that the Worshipful Mayors of both Southampton and Bournemouth are women.

Following the reception, our hostess became our guest, taking her place at the top table in Windsor hall where the finale dinner was to take place. One remembered that in 1977 the Duke of Edinburgh had been our guest of honour and in 1982 Sir Arthur Harris had joined us, proud to be among his "boys". This time there were no guests of quite such eminence, which may have diminished the glamour of the occasion but somehow created a warm, relaxed atmosphere which was enhanced by the gentle music of the Royal Marines' Salon Orchestra, excellent food served by friendly waitresses, the presence of our President, Dixie Deans, and some splendid, often humorous speeches from Charles Clarke, Don Morrision (Canada), Dave Wardill (Australia), "Woody" Woodroofe (New Zealand) and Major General Jones from the United States.

Video Record

At the end of the evening Graham Nye from Southampton Studios, Southampton put down his camera. Throughout the Reunion he had been making a solo video recording, editing "by eye" as he went. His was a marathon effort. When the rest of us went to bed or celebrated in our "barracks", Graham raced up to London to process the video. It was available to U.K. kriegies who had ordered it next morning. Our transatlantic visitors had to wait a couple of weeks while the tape was adapted to their system.

There has been criticism of the video from some purchasers and this is understandable because the quality is poor at times compared with videos made without pressure, in the studio, with a full crew and editing facilities. Graham had to cope with both sound and vision, often in very difficult circumstances, with speeches in a hangar at Abingdon, the huge buzz of hundreds of people talking at Southampton's Hall of Aviation and with an inadequate sound system at Bournemouth Conference Centre.

A further problem he faced was that of not knowing what to expect. He got into the swing of things as the Reunion progressed and his coverage of the Red Arrows display alone is worth the price of the video cassette. To be briefed is one thing, but to select material over five days of kriegie activities is quite another. Graham caught the spirit of the Reunion and gradually became almost a participant. There was little financial profit in the exercise for him, but we hope he enjoyed himself.

In Appreciation

Now that we can look back to those September days, we know that all the months of work were well worthwhile. The Committee as a whole can take credit, but the burden fell more heavily on some. From the very beginning Charles Clarke was like a master of jigsaw, unerringly fitting every tiny piece into place. He wrote hundreds of letters (not forgetting a personal thank you to every one who had helped in any way). He used his influence and his personality to arrange things as no-one else could have done. He it was who persuaded Marks and Spencers to open its doors to us and Bournemouth to give us a civic reception. Those are only examples. With Dixie unable to take a major role, he "fronted" the whole thing, making all the speeches and the presentations, always with the right words in the right place. When there was a problem, or something went wrong, the cry was, "Ask Charles", and he responded positively and patiently.

The efforts of Vic and Batch have already been acknowledged.

For sheer hard slog it would be difficult to look beyond Doug and Mary Endsor. They dealt with a constant flow of money in a variety of currencies, in all about £120,000. There were cancellations and refunds, deposits to be paid, questions to be answered — often received by way of telephone calls in the middle of the night. They kept meticulous records. In short, for many months they worked virtually full time. During and since the Reunion they have paid out a near-equivalent amount.

With sage and cautious Bill Bloxham, Doug worked out the budget. As the programme was refined and changed, the budget had to be revised but the overall figure kept intact. Committee members estimated costs for the various items for which they were responsible. Original quotations went by the board. Again revisions were needed. Red pencil in one hand, calculator in the other, Bill was ubiquitously present, always watchful. Sometimes donations in kind gave a little latitude and a little extra expenditure somewhere else was countenanced. At the end of the Reunion negotiations continued. How, for example, were we to deal with Beaulieu's bill which included lunches for interlopers. In the end the Reunion produced a comfortable surplus. Doug, Mary and Bill deserve our congratulations and our gratitude.

Dave Bernard's contribution was bewilderingly diverse. Dave first knew of the Association five years ago, when he heard on local radio that there was an international kriegie reunion at Oxford and that Dixie Deans was there. He lost no time in getting himself to Oxford, joined the Association and soon, because of his willingness and enthusiasm, was elected to the Committee. Dave just cannot do enough for the Association. Moreover, much of what he does is done quietly, almost on the sly, as for example, his preparation and posting of direction signs for kriegie drivers arriving in Southampton.

At Calgary the white stetson was the symbol of the reunion, an easy means of identification. For Southampton a medal bearing our logo was chosen to fulfil the same purpose. It was to be worn, by kriegies and wives, on a golden ribbon round the neck. Dave prepared a mould and cast a "mock-up" of the medal. He then organised its reproduction. The 800 yards of ribbon needed he obtained as a gift from the manufacturer and Elaine, his wife, made up the 700 plus individual ribbons, a task which took 130 hours. The ribbons, incidentally, were much used for the variety of souvenir badges and pins handed out by kriegies from other countries. Some carried a remarkable collection. Dave also painted our logo on a grand scale as part of the decorations behind the top table at the finale dinner, did the two Whitley paintings already mentioned, obtained the flags for the Falcons to deliver and helped in many other ways.

As Secretary, John O'Reilly is always busy. The Reunion probably doubled his work. He, too, received many queries by letter and 'phone. There were extra meetings to record (John's Minutes are invariably meticulous) and a scramble for membership. He also masterminded the new Directory which Phil Potts had printed, with some copies available for Southampton. Phil also devised and had printed the cards of "tear-off" tickets for each event and his energy and willingness were much valued. In his quiet way John Banfield and, slightly less calmly, Peter Skinner, were willing horses, concentrating mainly on transport but undertaking other duties as well.

Bristol members, Neville Northover and Des Dunphy arranged an exhibition of kriegie photographs at Glen Eyre Hall and left the Reunion early to set up the kriegie stand at Abingdon for the station's "At Home". Graham Hall made several reccos of Southampton over the six months or so before the reunion, sniffing out snags and reporting comprehensively to the Committee. At the Reunion he buzzed around or bussed around, looking for trouble that he could try so sort out. When he had a spare moment he sold his raffle tickets.

It is impossible to mention everyone on the Committee or the volunteers from the membership who contributed to the success of the reunion. John Smith, another member of the Committee, Doug Smallbone who was (not for the first time) co-opted, Oggie Ogden, Len Clarke, John Knott and Jim Burt-Smith were some. Bob Hart did duty at Gatwick and persuaded his former employers, Allied Lyons, to provide "miniatures" for the goodie bags and we are grateful to him and to them, also to Courage who sent a consignment of cans of beer. Courage, thanks to Bernard Warren, are always generous to us.

We are extremely grateful to the Committee wives who helped with registration, going almost lunchless on two days. Mary Endsor, Betty Batchelder, Eileen Clarke, Nita Bloxham and Dee Younger did sterling work at the tables, Vera Hall handed out scarves to all the ladies and Elaine Bernard, with Dave, issued the goodies bags, ran her raffle and helped on the sales stand. Sylvia Gammon put in a hard day at the theatre and with other wives was always on hand to help. Sadly, Elizabeth O'Reilly was still recovering from a protracted illness and could not attend but in the long run up to the Reunion she, like all the other Committee wives, gave her husband her whole hearted support.

We are grateful to Bob Hart for pictures except the group picture — a Beaulieu official photograph.

RECCO REPORT

We lost a number of old friends in 1987. One was Air Commodore HETTY HYDE, CBE, who died in September aged 76. His distinguished career in the R.A.F. began with a short service commission in 1929. After serving in India and the Middle East he took part in the gunnery trials of the Spitfire and Hurricane. But it was from the unpopular Manchester that he baled out over Kiel, with his crew, in April 1941. His several attempts to escape failed and he finished the war, like most of us, behind the wire. After the war he soon returned to Germany, this time to help plan the Berlin airlift. In 1951 he was station master at Binbrook and in 1956 became Commandant of the Central Flying School. Later he helped create the Malayan Air Force. He retired, as Commandant of the R.A.F. Staff College, in 1962 and then spent ten years in the charity world. Hetty belonged to a great generation of RAF pilots. His was a blithe spirit and he is much missed.

The Red Arrows we regard almost as our own and we were very sad when a new member of the team, Flight Lieutenant NEIL MACLACHLAN was killed in a crash. His replacement really does belong to us. He is none other than our youngest member, Squadron Leader JEFF GLOVER, who had a short spell as a prisoner during the Falklands conflict.

Another famous ace, BOB STANFORD TUCK who won the DSO and three DFC's, died in May 1987 at the age of 70. He was shot down over France in January 1942 at which time he was credited with 29 kills, eight probables and six damaged. Like Bader, Tuck never joined the Association and the loss, we feel, was his as well as ours.

Tuck was a sharp shooter from boyhood, a prize-winning rifle and pistol shot, but his feat of putting a cannon shell straight down the barrel of a 20m flak gun as he crash-landed his Spitfire may have owed something to luck. He was entertained by the great Galland and his pilots, and Galland became a life-long friend.

Tuck escaped shortly before the end of the War and had one more taste of battle, fighting with the Russians on the Eastern front. Tuck's story was told by Larry Forrester in *Fly for your Life* pubished in 1956. Recently Forrester, too died.

Most of us manage to predecease our wives, but not all. MOYA BUTT, wife of Maurice, died on 9th June 1987. She was 68. Moya never put herself forward but she contributed to the community much more than any of us knew. A State Registered Nurse, she trained at the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital where, during the famous raid, she was literally blown upstairs. She founded and ran a day nursery, enabling mothers to work in the factories.

Moya was first Director and later President of the Staines and Feltham Division of the British Red Cross Society and was awarded the Red Cross Badge of Honour. She was an active governor of an approved school for girls and initiated weekly therapy classes for housebound people. She also served on Community Health Councils in Surrey and Norfolk. In short, she devoted herself to the welfare of others, not least to her husband and family.

Maurice, we are delighted to say, continues to be involved in the Association's affairs. A long serving member of the Committee, Chairman for several years, during which he masterminded the 1977 Reunion, he now represents the East Anglia branch which he founded.

On 27 March, Palm Sunday, Margaret Northover, Neville's wife, died. She had suffered a long illness but always supported him in his many Association activities. News has also reached us of the recent death of Russell Annan's wife, Don. We offer our sympathy to our bereaved friends.

Sadly missing from the Canadian party at Southampton was WALLY McCABE who died in May 1987, His widow, Dorothy, and daughter Lori McSweeny bravely came. Several of our own widows. Iris Simmons, Nicky Hedges, Sheila Boyle and Betty Stalewska also took part. We take it as a compliment to the Association that they continue to take part in our activities.

A colourful member of the Australian group at Southampton was FRANK KRUTA who was accompanied by his wife Olga. Frank, having escaped from Czechoslovakia, flew fighters throughout the war — four marks of Hurricane then a Mark 9 Spitfire. He was one of the 22 Czech pilots sent to Russia for special training in 1944 and subsequently was shot down and crash-landed in Czechoslovakia while supporting a local uprising. Frank was a kriegie for a short time, then at the end of the war returned to Czechoslovakia. He and Olga were building up a successful export business when the communists took over. They escaped to Germany and in 1949 emigrated to Australia. Until he retired in 1982 Frank ran his own drycleaning business in Geraldton, Western Australia. The Krutas also found time to bring up four children.

JOHN BANFIELD persuaded his old skipper BARRY CHASTER, a retired town planner from Vancouver, to come with the Canadian party to Southampton. Barry, who had transferred from fighters, ended up on Lancs. When he was shot down he fell in with the Dutch Resistance and was spirited to Gibraltar. After the Reunion Barry planned to return to the Continent and look up the people of the underground line who helped him on his way.

SLIM CHALMERS is one of those doughty Canadian characters that everyone seems to know. Slim, a W/AG, flew with 39 Squadron on Beaufort torpedo bombers. In March 1943 the crew were setting up a tanker at Sphanx, about 200 miles south of Tunis, when they were hit by a nightfighter and ended up in the drink. Slim was picked up by the Italians and turned over to the Germans. Slim, an electrical engineer, retired in 1977 after 32 years of providing Ontario's electricity. He enjoys reunions and even attended Ron Damman's get-together in Queensland in 1986. Slim and his wife Frances have four sons and six grandchildren.

At Abingdon, Canadian ALEX ("Dusty" naturally) MILLER broke his spectacles. He was rushed to one of the hangars where they were repaired on the spot.

After nearly thirty years in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe FRED THAKE has returned to this country. In Bristol, where he now lives, he joined the RAFA and at the RAFA Club met BERNARD WARREN and learned of the RAF Ex-POW Association. Fred was a long-time kriegie, having been knocked out in a Mark IV Blenheim over the Dunkirk area

in mid-June 1940. He was on 59 Squadron Army Co-op duties. After six months in hospital he turned up at Stalag Luft 1, Barth. From there he did the "Dixie" round of camps. Postwar Fred took part in the Berlin Airlift. His skipper, CHUM KEYTER (SAAF), himself an ex-kriegie, lives in Rhodesia.

Reading the list of those members who had died since the last KRIEGIE went to the printer, I realise how long ago that was and guilt assails me. In the interim I may have mislaid some names, in which case I humbly apologise. Beginning in the second half of 1986, PETER ALLWOOD from Belper in Derbyshire died in July and P.J. CONNOLLY in August. There were two deaths in September, PHIL STEELE, an early member and ANTHONY STALEWSKI who entertained a large number of kriegies at his lovely home after the Oxford Reunion in 1982. In November L.W. BELL died, December's toll was PETER TEBBUTT, FRED COSPER, who had been housebound for some years but never lost his interest in the Association, and HUGH (SAILOR) BROWN, who collapsed in church on 28th December and died later in Kings Lynn hospital. There was a respite until May 1987 when one of our few FEPOW members, STEPHEN WALKEN died, In June the Committee was devastated by the death of ALEC FUCE. Headmaster, sports administrator, notably in the football arena, Alec had worked unremittingly for young people. As a Committee man he was both humorous and wise. C.H. CHAMBERLAIN and M. SHAW died in July, BILL BELLEW, who will be remembered as a camp barber, died in September and FRANCIS PARTRIDGE a little later. On 20th October occurred the death of Dr HILARY JARVIS, for 27 years Brighton's police surgeon. Hilary's autobiography *Doctor in Chains*, published in 1970, was much admired. November's casualty list included PETER COLESON, F. (JACK) HESSELDEN and L.F. BRAND. JIM SHAW AND GEORGE BARROWMAN died in December. Jim, who had been in ill health for many years, was determined to get to Southampton and did so. His daughter Elaine arranged his attendance as a present — a gesture which must give her great satisfaction now. To date this year we have lost LESLIE DAVENPORT and ARTHUR AVERY. Arthur was for many years a member of the Committee. In Germany he was well known as a sports organiser. For some time his health had been poor but his death whilst on holiday in the Canaries was unexpected. We have also learned that C.W. OLIVER died in the Spring of 1986 and D.R. BIGG in May 1987.

We pay tribute to all of these lost members and offer what consolation we can to those who are left.

As the Y.M.C.A. representative in Germany during the war HENRY SÖDERBERG probably saw more kriegie camps than any other man. He made numerous friends, of all nationalities, and has kept in touch with many of them. In the days when he was in charge of the foreign division of Scandinavian Airlines he was a frequent and welcome visitor at Kriegie reunions round the world and, indeed, still manages the occasional get-together. He has also entertained many kriegies in Sweden. Last Summer Henry attended the 42nd Reunion of Stalag Luft III Former P.O.W's in Seattle, which attrached over 450 ex-kriegies and their families. Another participant was the ubiquitous Hermann Glemnitz.

Since he retired a couple of years ago, Henry has done a tremendous amount of research on aviation history and, in January of this year, had the honour of personally handing his book on the Swedenborg aeroplane of 1714 to His Majesty the King in the House of Nobility in Stockholm. Swedenborg was born 300 years ago. The book has been published in New York.

On April 3rd Henry began a lecture tour of Australia speaking to Scandinavian Clubs and Swedenborg Societies on the topic, "From Swedenborg to S.A.S. — the Scandinavians in the history of Aviation".

JOAN VERNON, Dick's wife, is a talented painter and has presented a pair of paintings, done in Majorca, to raise funds for the Charitable Fund — not her first generous gesture of this kind. We have yet to decide how best to use the pictures which are far too good to be included as prizes in the Lord's dinner raffle. A special raffle, or perhaps an auction, is probably the answer, but the occasion must be the right one. We are very grateful to Joan. For Dick the big Reunion was a homecoming. His father was a doctor in Southampton.

The Association continued its sponsorship of two taxis for the annual outing of disabled people arranged by London's big-hearted cabbies. The 1987 trip to Worthing took place on the 23rd June. Our member RON BRYANT was as usual one of the drivers.

Copies of ROY CHILD'S "A Wartime Log", a facsimile of Roy's logbook, sold out. He returned a number of cheques but, unfortunately, did not keep addresses. Roy had another short run printed and still has a few hardback copies at £7.95 His address is Tyn-y-ffridd, Meifod, Powys SY22 6HJ.

JOHN O'REILLY and FRANK HUNT have both had spells in hospital. Both were seriously ill but happily are now OK. We hear, too, that DAN LONDON has had a painfully trapped nerve in his arm. He, too, is well again. To everyone's pleasure Dan and Joyce led the Australian group to Southampton. JACK GARRETT writes to assure us he is in good health after a very rough patch in 1985. The recent Kiwi reunion was a great success and attracted Bob and Nora Alldrick from Canada and Aussies, RON DAMMAN, 'JUDY' GARLAND and JIM (JUM) FALKINER.

FUN DAY AFLOAT

There is no danger. The TMSV *Lochiel* stays firmly at its moorings in the heart of Bristol. Those members who have enjoyed a day on this elegant floating pub, or made it their base for sight-seeing in Bristol, will remember it as one of the most attractive events in the Kriegie calendar.

The Bristol and West branch have booked the *Lochiel* for Saturday, 8th October and offer members, their families and friends a typical welcome. It is a great place for a reunion and we hope there will be a good turn-out.

If you would like to stay the night, the Oakdene Hotel, 45 Oakfield Road, Clifton, BS8 2BA, is offering special rates; a single room £13, twin-bedded room £22, or £25 with private bathroom. The proprietors are Brian and Pauline Johnson-Jones, whose telephone number is 0272 735900.

Further details will be sent to members a little nearer the time. If there is a demand the Association will organise a coach from London with several pick-up points.

The Kriegie Round

Remembrance Sunday

Twenty-five members turned up for the annual Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph on Sunday 8th November 1987. It was a very smart turn-out with many of the group wearing the Association beret. John Hands led the group, with Dave Bernard steering John's wheelchair. You may have seen them on TV. Our wreath, ordered from the Royal British Legion, was one of the Legion's standard poppy wreaths with our logo as a centrepiece. A similar wreath is now used for funerals of Association members and is available for any appropriate occasion, e.g. for local Remembrance Day Parades.

On the evening of Remembrance Sunday the BBC screened an excellent Australian film about Bomber Command. The participants were mostly Australian, although the "star" was an English woman, Jan Birch. A WAAF officer, Joan lost first a fiancé and then a husband, and her account of these traumatic happenings in her life was deeply moving. The film did not give the happy ending. Jan went to Australia after the war to meet her late husband's parents and met in the street Frank Birch who had served in the same squadron. They were soon married. One or two ex-kriegies were featured in the film, which also contained some little-seen documentary material. A salient interview was with Arthur Doubleday D.S.O., D.F.C., formerly Director of Civil Aviation in New South Wales, who argued convincingly that the Bomber Command offensive, so much under attack from latter-day historians, was absolutely right.

Dinner at Lords

Perhaps because the Southampton Reunion had taken place so recently, numbers for the Lord's dinner on Saturday, 14th November were down from about 130 to just under 90. Nevertheless, it was yet another splendid occasion, the success of which was due to the indefatigable Batch. Among our guests were Roy Schama and his fiancée. Roy has for some years, and at no cost, audited the Association's Charitable Fund and Larry Slattery Memorial Fund accounts. The Association's own auditor, Bill Bloxham, is a Trustee of both charitable funds and cannot therefore audit the accounts. Another guest was Cadet Flight Sergeant W.E. Legon, winner of the 1987 Kriegie Trophy for the most outstanding A.T.C. cadet of the year. The winner, a very impressive young man indeed, belongs to 414 (Epping Squadron), East Essex Wing. His, we think mistaken, ambition is an Army commission. But he is young and may yet see the light.

New Faces at the Annual Reunion

Eighty-eight members turned up to the 1988 A.G.M. and Annual Reunion at the R.A.F. Club on Saturday 5th March. Among them were twenty new members. Infusions of new blood cannot be expected for much longer but for the moment we are more than covering our inevitable losses. There must be still many old kriegies out there who have not joined, or perhaps do not even know of the Association's existence. If you happen to meet any, do put them in the picture. Remember there are active branches in the East Midlands, Bristol & West, Wales and North West and East Anglia. A new London branch is on the launching pad.

Such a high proportion of new members at the A.G.M. suggests a falling off of old members. It is certainly true that many who could be counted on to appear year after year in the 60's and 70's have not been seen for a long time. Many more seem to come every two or three years. There could be many reasons for that, ill health or straitened circumstances among them.

Over the years the activities of the Association have greatly increased and with the growth of branches there are far more opportunities to meet. What is gratifying for the Committee is that members come for the business part of the evening and not just for the later socialising. Unhappily, Dixie Deans was unable to be present and our Vice President and Chairman, Charles Clarke, chaired the meeting. He was able to report an active and successful year to which, were he less modest, he might have said he had contributed more than anyone. Doug Endsor stated, and Bill Bloxham confirmed, that the Association's finances were in a healthy state and that a reunion surplus, arising largely from the generosity of our friends at Southampton, had enabled both our charitable funds to be given a boost.

Cal Younger reported on grants made from the funds during the year. A relatively small total had been paid from the Charitable Fund but this year a number of cases had been dealt with, Emphasising the confidentiality of the work, he urged members not to hesitate to inform him or any of the Association's officers if they needed help or knew someone who did. The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Dee Younger and her Women's Liaison Group for their much valued concern for widows.

The Association's officers, John O'Reilly (Secretary), Doug Endsor (Treasurer) and Batch Batchelder (Social Secretary) were re-elected.

Bill Bloxham, having agreeed to continue as Auditor, was re-appointed. The Committee was re-elected *en bloc* except for Cyril Aynsley and John Smith, neither of whom, because of indifferent health, offered himself for re-election. Both were thanked for their contributions to the good of the Association over many years.

As a gesture of gratitude the Meeting voted that the Committee arrange a dinner for themselves and their wives. (The dinner took place on Friday 8th April in the Officers' Mess, RAF station, Uxbridge, where the familiar ambience and the friendly reception and service ensured a very enjoyable evening).

After the A.G.M. members sat down to an excellent dinner. Breaking with Reunion tradition, Batch organised a raffle, the reason being that the ever generous Eric Hookings had given as prizes three splendid travel bags. As a result the Association netted nearly £100.

The Annual Reunion dates back to the 1950s. In those days the venue was always a pub, first the Codgers just off Fleet Street, then Mooneys in the city, the Devereaux near St Clement Danes and The Ship at Holborn. Later we moved to the R.A.F. Reserves Club and, finally, to the R.A.F Club. We can look back on many exciting, many happy occasions, the international reunions of 1977, 1982 and 1987, visits to Canada; dinners at Lord's, the hospitality of Bristol and Nottingham, days at R.A.F. stations; the Duke of Edinburgh and Princess Alexandra have attended respectively a dinner and the Old Vic concert; we have marched on Remembrance Day to the Cenotaph. And yet, somehow, the Annual Reunion remains special.

A HELPING HAND

Peter Skinner recalls a day at an air show.

On Sunday June 1st 1986 the weather at Hurn Aiport was sufficient to attract 100,000 persons to attend the T.V.S. Air Show. Among the many displays was the R.A.F's ex-P.O.W. Association and its German Sentry Box, photographic memorabilia, and its hospitality area. In the main, the whole is due to an ex-kriegie's selfless determination and hard work, Neville Northover. Nev, a leading light of the Bristol Branch, had arrived the previous Friday and set up show, having driven the Association's elderly display van up from Bristol. Having got the factuals on paper, I'd now ask the reader to indulge some of my recollections of that Sunday's events and my excuse for being there.

At a National Committee meeting of some months previous, Neville had asked for some volunteers, mumble, mumble; I swear that he asked, "Who wants a beer?" and I prompty said,"Me". The upshot being that I received an entry visa and a parking ticket for the Exhibitors' Car Park for Sunday June 1st. Naturally I telephoned to confirm that I'd be there, "around midday Nev", causing a sharp intake of breath and the following advice: "Don't be bloody silly; the roads will be chokka at that time of day — get here early." Having put the phone down with reverence — I was sure the command had come from loftier heights — I timorously suggest to the wife that the journey would be easier if we left early. "That's good thinking dear: how early?". "Well dear, it's a 3-hour journey and Neville says to be there by 9 am." "So we get up at 5 am — not bad considering we are having Saturday night out and you've promised me a meal en route home". Well, the Concert at the Star & Garter Home was much appreciated, and the meal en route was a quick dash into a local fish and chip shop. Quite delicious at around midnight with thoughts of rising in less than five hours and packing the hospitality hamper and not to forget, this, that, or the wife!!

On time, and on course, the first two hours were driven in the most discouraging weather, but with the cloud lifting we were turning finals for 08.50 arrival at Hurn reception. One minor snag — I'd forgotten the entry visa. But we kriegies know a thing about the art of "spiel" and with the assistance of the Reception area staff and a knowledgeable Cadet we reported to HIM.

He then introduced us to Jan Debreiz and Ivan Kays. Whilst unpacking and then parking the car, the wife and Jan, being Polish , started a conversation as only exiled Poles can. At about the same time, the second Committee member who'd thought that Neville had offered a beer arrived. Resplendent in green gumboots and his ever welcome smile, Dave Bernard BUT without his wife. No Elaine!! However, she had sent her culinary contribution. Oh give us a 'Keesh Elaine', and those lovely legs, deep fried and suitably sauced. Many thanks love, from all who ate them.

Now Neville, having got two volunteers 'from up there', lost no time in getting us knotted. We had to hang the banner on two of the posts holding the back fence of the enclosure, one of which needed the attention of a 5lb hammer. Said hammer was wielded by Jan, who being excited by the sound of his mother tongue, got his advice slightly misunderstood, and presumed that Dave's old, old joke i.e. "When I nod my head, hit it," was meant. Fortunately the padding on Dave's jacket was thick and so was Dave's opinion of Jan. The ever-falling banner and its resultant queries re slip knots, was finally fastened by Dave to the encouraging remarks of "knot a bad job". In the meantime 601 Squadron's walking, talking encyclopaedia, Benny, was greeting my wife with his only Polish phrase, "Di Booozy", which has nothing to do with an alcohlic beverage at all, but is a request for a kiss. In this case he got a hard boiled egg and ham sandwich (the latter was in keeping), plus a cup of coffee.

A tour of the other stands and the static display resulted in old acquaintances not being forgot, and new acquaintances being urged to sample Kriegie hospitality. Various youngsters and not many less elders were startled by our 'Postern', yes, you're right Neville, those Bristolian Deutsch commands were completely misunderstood by us all. Though not all missed the "contribution box". The usual question asked is, "Where did he get that uniform?" and the usual answer is, "He wore it in the good old days". Well that's my version. Among many visiting aviators were three Frenchmen who were surprised at the knowledge shown by Brian Atkins's daughter, of their respective towns, customs and local dishes. Another visitor was the Sergeant Major of the Army Air Corps, resplendent in shirtsleeve order. He was a bit miffed when a young lad told him he had an unusual watch. "Watch, Watch"! That's my badge of rank young man." However, a wee dram and some brandied strawberries brought about a smile and some mutual admiration re our respective aircrew and ex-aircrew experiences. Though the reason or non reason as to why the A was omitted from the Army's air/gunner badge eludes my power of recall.

All good things come to an end, but in this case they have to be packed and put away. Needless to say, this chore had to have the direction of Neville, who by now had assumed the authority of an Oberst Leutnant. I was commanded to "pull up those poles". I presume this task was allotted because of my affinity to the Poles. Clearing what little rubbish there was (no not me), then the collapsing of the 'Goon Box' and the display stands. The puns were as thick as ever, with Dave and Benny not forgetting to let Nev know that they were getting bored holding a board, or if Nev really wanted a hand they knew where it should be. You just had to hand it to them.

Finally, and with warm handshakes and warmer words of thanks all round, we each made our separate ways home, except that for my return I had another passenger, Benny, but that's another chapter.

Can You Help?

Squadron Leader Norman MacLeod of 14 Burnside, Kinloss, Forres, Morayshire IV36 0XL is researching RAF operations in France during 1939/40 and "wishes to contact as many eye-witnesses as possible". If you would like to help write direct to Squadron Leader MacLeod.

Would any RAF ex-P.O.W's who were in Romania in 1944 please contact Dudley (Pop) Egles (ex 614 Squadron) His address is 17 Pinewood Gardens, Aldwick, Bognor Regis, West Susses PO21 2XB and telephone number (0243) 863755

SECRETARY HAS NEW ADDRESS

Secretary John O'Reilly has many times bemoaned the many changes of address he has had to record.

Now he has added to his problems. His new address

is:- 14 Beaulieu Avenue
SYDENHAM,
London SE26 6PP

His telephone number, which please use with discretion, is 01 778 4603.

K.L.B. CLUB

By Ian Robb

What on earth is the KLB Club, I hear you all asking — well, the initials do not stand for Kriegie anything — although they are not so far removed. KLB stands for Konzentrationslager Buchenwald, and its relevance to Kriegies comes from the fact that 169 allied Airmen were incarcerated there from 22nd August to 25th October 1944.

They came to this perilous situation because they had been picked up all over France whilst in the hands of the gallant helpers of the Resistance, and after local interrogation at the point of capture, were then sent to Fresnes prison in Paris for a period of punishment, before being released to the Luftwaffe for onward transit to P.O.W Camps.

On the 14th August 1944, with the imminent arrival of the advancing allied forces, Fresnes Prison was evacuated, and some 2000 such prisoners, including a party of 169 Allied aircrew, were packed into the last train to leave Paris, 80 persons to each cattle truck. After a harrowing eight days journey, during which two prisoners were shot whilst attempting to escape, the train reached the infamous Buchenwald Concentration Camp at Weimar, in Thuringia.

The Camp, hidden in a vast forest clearing, consisted of a large number of low hutments enclosed within a high electrified fence; the fence had guarded watchtowers at regular intervals and was closely patrolled by the S.S. and vicious guard dogs. More than 25,000 prisoners, from all countries in Europe, underfed and maltreated, with their shaven heads and tattered striped garments, presented a nightmare scene to the RAF evaders, made worse by the sickly stench from the belching Crematorium chimney which was continuously in use.

Fortunately, the aircrew were segregated from the inmates of the Main Camp, and after having their heads shaven and dressed in prison uniform without footwear, were held in the adjoining Quarantine Area. The Little Camp, as it was known, had an evil reputation because of its proximity to the Medical Experimental Block. Two large tents and several former stables acted as an infectious diseases centre, the only accommodation for some two thousand prisoners. The inmates underwent daily medical examination and categorisation by S.S. doctors and allocation to the various working commandos operating in the adjacent Gustloff munitions factory, or in the much-feared camp quarry, or on heavy domestic tasks within the camp area.

Designated by the Gestapo as *Terrorfliegers*, the aircrews existed on the meagre daily bowl of nettle soup and a portion of black bread. It was realised from the outset that survival depended upon morale and discipline and so the Royal Air Force organised itself into Flights under its own Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader Lamason RNZAF and, by their bearing and fortitude, quickly earned the respect of the other prisoners, and eventually that of some of the Germans Authorities. This formation was put to good effect during a bombing attack on the Gustloff factory and S.S. encampment, which caused many fatal casualties to both guards and prisoners, when the RAF were used by S.S. for rescue and salvage, an operation which found many articles which subsequently proved of great value to the Camp Underground Organisation. Contact was also made with the small party of SOE officers who were soon to be brutally butchered in the Main Camp, and also with Wing Commander Yeo-Thomas GC who eventually made his dramatic escape from the Camp.

Eventually, through the assistance of the Camp Underground Organisation, the Luftwaffe were able to obtain the release of the RAF and USAAF prisoners who were transferred to Stalagluft III. After a few weeks, with the approach of the Russian armies, the Germans began the evacuation of Sagan. The prisoners were turned out on the road to make a three-week forced march back into Germany.

The breakdown of the group was as follows:

	Total	Located	Deceased	Not Located
Canada	27	15	6	6
Jamaica	1	0	0	1
United States	81	37	16	28
Australia	9	8	1	0
New Zealand	2	2	0	0
Britain	49	9	1	39
	169	71	24	74

A letter to the Daily Telegraph on 19 April 1986, from Squadron Leader Booker, resulted in information being received from Canada that the KLB Club, the formation of which was discussed in Buchenwald, was in existence, that Colin Burgess from Australia was writing a book about the whole episode, and that efforts were still being made to trace survivors.

The table above shows that in terms of locating ex-KLB personnel, the U.K lags well behind. Ian Robb has therefore volunteered to undertake the task of searching out the U.K personnel involved, but only has the following 1944 addresses to go on. He is therefore seeking the assistance of other Kriegies who reside in or near the locations listed below to do whatever they can to trace the whereabouts of the missing Kriegies, assuming they are still around.

Any information would be greatly appreciated by Ian Robb, 'Arlington', Back Lane, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks. telephone Chalfont St Giles (02407) 2245.

All the survivors should of course, be members of the ex-POW Association, which is another good reason for endeavouring to trace them.

T.H. Blackham Dunoon, Argyllshire, Scotland
R.J. Taylor Earlsfield Chingfort Ave. Farnborough.
P.D. Taylor 31 Chamberlain St, Wells Somerset
E. Jackson Holme-Lea, Leeds Rd. Ilkley, Yorks.
S.A. Spierenburg 65 Jesmond Park, West Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
C.W. Nuttall 88 Pitville Ave, Liverpool 18
F. Salt 18 Winchester Rd. Bedford
M.E.S. Mutter N & P Bank, Swindon
W. Kay 23 Vermont St, Bolton, Lancs.
S. Baxter Cawood Villa, Barnes Rd. Castleford, Yorks.
D.C. Percy Argoed-Fawa Farm, Argoed, Mon.
J.D. Ward 8 Nelson Terrace, Preston, Lancs.
W.A. Waldrum 97 Deanwood Cres. Bilborough Notts.
J.J. Fernandez 67 Ashourne Rd. Liverpool 17.
J.W. Angus Lilac Cottage, Collace, Perth, Scotland
W. Marshall Rosedean Rosetti Ave. Rose Hill, Burnley, Lancs.
L.D. Barnham 48 Woodfield Drive, East Barnet, Herts.
L. Williams 3 Cressy Rd. Cardiff, Glam.
D.K. Measures 5 Buff Parade, Banstead, Surrey
G. Bennett 21 Bassett Rd. Radford, Coventry
R. Brydent 8 Mount View, Dreghorn, Ayshire,
G.F. Watmough Algernon Rd. Lewisham S.E.13
A.J. MacPherson Westminster Bank, Walthamstow E.
L. Wesley 23 Hurst Rd. Smethwick, Warwicks.
A.J. Chinn 52 Hyde Rd. Wyken, Coventry
R. Harper Gorsley Lane, Warrington, Lancs.
W.S. Sharrate 60 Carrington Rd. Chorley, Lancs.
T. Gould Allenby Castle Ave. Caerphilly, Glam,
J.N. Osselton Dudley, Wraysbury, Staines, Middx.
R.R. Hughes Millhouse Cresford, Wrexham.
L.J. Lucas The Bungalow, Chartham Downs, Canterbury.
F. Vinecombe 52 Mt. Gold Rd. Plymouth, Devon
F. Peterson Bridge St York.
D.F. Jordin The Hollies, 2 Latchford, Warrington, Lancs.
A. Rowe 36 Warley Rd. King Cross, Halifax, Yorks.
E.K. Phelps Five Bells Hotel, Shirenewton, Chepstow, Mon.
J.D. Reid 10 Cadogan St Kingsley Rd. Liverpool 8
P. Dowdeswell Stoneleigh Sands End, Whitby, Yorks.
J. Clark 48 Avenue Rd. Coalville, Leicester

SOME INCOHERENT THOUGHTS OF A ONE TIME W.OP/AG.

About midday on Wednesday June 3rd, last year, bidden by a peremeptory telephone call, I stood in the control tower at Biggin Hill. There was some sunshine; an occasional small aircraft or chopper arrived or departed. Then suddenly a Blenheim streaked (at 180 m.p.h. or so — streaked?) along the runway at a mere twenty feet or so, and forty seven years dropped from me. The kite climbed away, did half a circuit and landed; at no time did I take my eyes from it.

Later I was invited to climb into the turret for a short trip; there seemed to be at least half an expectation that at my present time of life I could hardly be expected to accept — little did they know! At least, it was suggested that I should reverse my previous exit in 1940 and enter by the camera hatch. I practised this for the benefit of a couple of photographers, then came out from under and climbed up in my usual way. It is true the first foot-hole is higher from the ground than it used to be and the first handle even higher and the effort of pulling myself up greater; but there was evident awe that I could still — automatically — cross my right foot in front of the left for the last stage of the journey (remember?) and drop through the hatch. No ladder alas; this 'Blenheim' is in reality a disguised Bolingbroke tho' from the outside the only visible sign is a small porthole on the starboard side level with the step to the well. Inside the front end there are many distressing differences — to fit a kite for its training role — or even in the rear all is not what it was and what it jolly well ought to be.

Then I squeezed myself on to that familiar seat. The operation is more difficult now; there are two huge ammo bins for the twin Brownings and space allocated for knees and thighs is minimal. There is no radio; operating then was difficult enough — now, with the added clobber, it would be impossible.

The engines started with the old familiar clatter; the starboard motor seemed to eject rather more smoke than it should. The rudder swung over and we were taxiing — just as in 1938. Then we lined up on the runway (new-fangled luxury!), accelerated and were off. Once again I could swing the turret, raise my seat, look down the wing at Kent a couple of thousand feet below. And as the kite banked this way and that to impress the reporter in the front, I thought. No need to tell you what, or rather whom, I thought about — so many, so young, and all wasted.

And then we landed again, to let the reporter off. The programme now called for some air-to-air photography with an accompanying Beechcraft (''U.S. Navy'' large on the side) but, alas, the pilot found that the brakes were overheating; he had punished them, rather, both taxiing and landing in an 18-knot crosswind: (unheard of in my day) — so he had to park the kite on a secluded bit of grass for a couple of hours. I went home.

It was obviously a day of strong impression, of nostalgia, of tempered joy. One odd moment; as we were approaching to land I heard the pilot comment — his voice loaded with wonder — ''Fancy going to war in something like this''.

Fancy indeed — but we did. I can only hope that no other generation of young men is ever to do as much again. Surely there can never be another war?

Roger Peacock

The Blenheim, reassembled by Graham Warner at Duxford and pictured in our last issue, came to grief on a golf course soon after Roger's epic flight. (Editor)

Address:

Cal Younger (Editor, The Kriegie)
24 West Lodge Avenue, London W3 9SF

Vic Gammon (Editor, The Newsletter)
'Grangewood', 19 Colonel's Way,
Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, KENT TN4 0SZ

Doug Endsor (Treasurer)
5 Abercorn Gardens, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 0PB

H E Batchelder, (Social Secretary)
'Batchmoor', 7 The Glebe, Lavendon,
Olney, Bucks. MK46 4HY.

The back page photograph is by courtesy of RAF Abingdon.