

LIFTOFF

Newsletter No. 14

Summer 2006

*The Newsletter of Helicopter Operations (Malaya Emergency) Association.
(Casualty Evacuation Flight, 110, 155, 194 Squadrons RAF)*

(Original items in this or subsequent newsletters remain the sole possession of the association and cannot be used by a third party without the express permission of the President or the Hon. Sec. All rights reserved)



www.heliopsasn.co.uk

President: Cy Turner

Hon. Sec.: Brian Lloyd

brianlloyd@redwood32.freemove.co.uk

32, Redwood, Burnham, Bucks. SL1 8JN

Newsletter Editor: David Taylor

dtaylor@deltatango95.freemove.co.uk

Casevac Flight before it became 194: At 2005 reunion



From Left to Right: Dave Mitchell, Frank Bishton, Pat Hanrahan, Alec Watson, Ken Crowhurst, Larry Earland, and at the front Jonny Quirk and Les Pimblett

Editorial

Welcome to the 2006 edition of Lift Off, my first after being smooth-talked by Hon Sec Brian, prior to last year's reunion. Well, thinking back, it wasn't really smooth-talk, more a designation. That's a thing with Brian, it's only after he's departed that you end up wondering, "How did that happen?"

"All that's needed, is for someone to collate and edit the material we receive, and maybe a little infill." That was the reply received when I enquired of Brian as to what was required in putting this newsletter together. "After which you pass it on to Tony, who organises the page layout, printing and distribution." OK!

Fine. Simple enough. Not a problem, thought I. By which time Brian had departed, stage left. And although I don't actually recall saying, yes, that seemed to be it!

It was only later that other thoughts sprang to mind - well, seeped through rather than sprang, I suppose: the fact that I was to follow in the footsteps of Tom Browning, who has been doing such a good job for the past eight years. Plus the fact that fourteen years of stories from a slowly eroding membership base must have drained the reservoir somewhat, so maybe that infill would amount to more than just "a little"!



Tom Browning

Where to begin then....

Well, there is one little story I've never before revealed.... but don't get too excited.

It doesn't just *seem* a long time ago, it really *was*. (Almost half a century in fact!) I recall being seated in a vehicle, a Land Rover, I seem to think. Would have to have been, wouldn't it? Back then when we had a well established manufacturing base and Japan did not. So, a Land Rover; which would imply being "squeezed in" rather than seated. We were being driven out to the aircraft, crewmen and pilots. It was one of those early morning starts - the jungle a mournful blue rather than brilliant green, misty cloud amongst the tree-tops, everything covered in dew - somewhere up country - could it have been Grik? Not only was I quite young and decidedly innocent (relatively speaking!), I was also a fairly recent addition to 155 then, somewhat in awe of the stick and rudder (read, tail rotor) guys, hung on to their every word. Anyway, a technical discussion was in progress between two or three right-hand seat types - no names, no pack drill, but I expect at least one of them will be present at this year's Bromsgrove affair. The subject of this discussion apparently centred around the relative merits of various brands of toothpaste, would you believe? (Isn't it strange the things you *can* remember these days!) It seemed someone had been delving into that poor man's Medical Journal, the Reader's Digest (now it would be Saga Magazine), the conclusion being, the greater the salt content, the better the cleaning properties of said toothpaste. (And how would that go down with today's Health & Safety Gestapo!)

I remember thinking at the time, boy, they know some stuff, these pilots! Told you I was a bit naive at the back then! Well, over the years, a certain amount of worldly wisdom replacing naivety, I came to realise that, probably toothpaste apart, they actually did. They were also, along with everyone else on the squadron - from the CO down - the best bunch of people I ever worked with during my time in the RAF. Seriously. One reason I look forward to our annual reunion so much.

I also recall that this was the period - as a 23 year-old lad from the sticks - during which our Sqn SNCO at Butterworth, Chiefy Henderson (ex 617 Sqn Dambuster, I believe) taught me to drive. And I never so much as put a scratch on that Standard Vanguard we'd been allocated for transportation - it was quite a way from the domestic site to "Squadron

Headquarters” - that little shed and piece of grass on the other side of the “V” Bomber pan - if you recall. Most of the aircrew had by this time bought themselves a little Honda 50 moped... but that is the possible source of another story, or two! Perhaps?

Something else I am looking at, and would love some input from our members, is a possible article on “Malayan Forts & Other Nostalgic Places,” ie clearings etc. I’m particularly interested in how the various forts and clearings became so named. For instance, we hear that Fort Brooke was named after a police Lt who was killed by the CTs, but who was the “Paddy” after whom the eponymous Ladang was named? And like that. Don’t be shy, slip me a note with your ideas at the October reunion. Ps. I also accept Travellers Cheques, Bearer Bonds etc. These are not required to have any connection whatsoever with Malaya, or even helicopters!

PARIS HOTEL
 No. 2, Irving Road Penang.
 Telephone No. 4892

This Hotel is Properly Situated and Transportation
 Can be Conveniently Arranged With Rooms
 Accessible to Fresh Air and Provided
 With all Modern Furnitures,
 Electric Fans and Water Taps Etc.

Anyone remember this place in
 Georgetown, Penang



"B" Flight 194 Squadron around 1956/7
 Back row from left to right
 Tony Layland-Jones. Brian Savage.
 Jock Wilson
 Centre Bud Abbot. Ron Garnett. Ron
 Borthwick. (deceased). Jock Hutchison.
 Jock Brown. Art Claxton.
 Bottom Eric Clark. Jack Myres. David
 Croker. Ray Ellis

Chin Peng gives deadline (The cheeky b*%\$#)

30 April, 2006

GEORGE TOWN: Former Communist Party of Malaya leader Chin Peng has given the Malaysian Government one month to respond to his application to return to this country. If it fails to do so, the former CPM secretary-general said he would take his case to the International Court of Justice and European Court of Justice. Chin Peng said he would contemplate the action should the Government fail to respond by May 28.

Chin Peng added that he was not happy with the Government dragging its feet over the hearing of his application to be allowed to visit his family in Sitiawan, Perak. He has been in exile in Thailand since 1989 following the peace agreement between the Government and CPM.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM - ALREWAS

The dedication ceremony of the Far East Air Force Grove Memorial took place on Saturday May 13th, a day that, although heavily overcast and slightly chilly, managed to remain dry, whereas the rest of the country as I travelled down through it appeared to be grey and very wet. Due to the numbers scheduled to attend, it had been decided that the Service be held in a specially erected marquee rather than the small, on-site Chapel.

The event was well attended, but, due to the weather, probably not as large a crowd as

originally expected, although turnout from the Seletar and Butterworth Associations was particularly good.

Music was provided by the Band of the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell, the actual unveiling being performed by AVM Peter D Markey OBE (RAF Ret) - ex Seletar - ably assisted by two cadets from 1206 (Mercian) Squadron ATC, representing tomorrow's Air Force. Cadets of the same Squadron stoically lined the route as we oldies more or less sauntered along after the band. This



made for a very smart, tight formation, followed by a kind of loose one. Very loose in fact, although those directly behind the band appeared to be giving it some "welly" - in step, arms swinging.

After the unveiling a Puma helicopter from 33 Squadron appeared out of the gloom to perform a flypast overhead - well, close enough, I suppose, given the circumstances! Although, in the old days, before turbine engines, computer control, etc, when the pilot actually *flew* the aircraft

The address during the service was given by Wg Cdr Rod Harris FRSH (RAF Ret). This was well informed, entertaining and humorous, therefore very well received by an audience which appeared to be reliving moments of their lives.

And after the show came the bunfight, everyone seemingly fighting off the onset of frostbite! After which we slowly departed to all points.

The Arboretum Address, given by Wg Cdr Rod Harris. RAF (Rtd)

Honoured Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen.

Most of you here today may often wonder where all the years have gone in your life. As you get older, like me, remembering what you did last week is sometimes a problem.

But some 40 to 55 years ago, most of you *will* remember having been billeted at RAF Lytham St Annes or Hednesford transit camp waiting for your overseas draft to be called. All of you full of expectation and excitement wondering what life was going to like on a Far East Base.

If you were fortunate, you were put on a flight to Singapore involving a number of stops on route, and arriving within a week (although I did know of a flight that took 21 days to complete the journey, having gone u/s at RAF Negombo, Ceylon).

For the less fortunate, there was a 28 day sea voyage on one of HIS or HER Majesty's troopships: Empire Windrush, Fowey, Orwell, Dunera, Devonshire, Pride, Halladale, Dilwara and Lancashire. (Whatever happened to those vessels?)

No doubt you had little or no experience, and the thought of sailing through the Bay of Biscay during a Force 8 or more was something you were not looking forward to. Remember those boat drills? Scrambling up metal stairways, and slinging your hammock, feeling like death warmed up. I remember the first night on leaving Liverpool, sailing through the Irish Sea was

enough to deter many from eating breakfast.

By the time your troopship had entered the Mediterranean, your digestive system had settled down a lot, and life began to improve. Soaking up the warm conditions and changing into KD helped. Remember those long shorts?

Dropping anchor at Gibraltar, and Malta, to set down service personnel. Then on to Port Said, entrance to the Suez Canal. Here was a very different world. Seeing an armada of ships at anchor waiting to convoy through. The colourful scene of Arab boatmen surrounding your vessel trying extract cash from you for their leather wares and imitation artefacts.

The journey through the Canal was an experience to remember; you could almost reach out and touch the banks on either side. Sailing through the Red Sea, where you had the opportunity for rifle practice, balloons fixed to a raft being hauled at the ship's stern. In calmer waters you began to enjoy your voyage, a very tranquil scene with an abundance of sea life. Shoals of dolphins swimming alongside and beautiful blue coloured flying fish skimming the waves.

And so on to Aden. A further stop at Colombo, and then Penang, where servicemen disembarked for Butterworth and various destinations in Malaya. Some time later, your ship, which had been your home for a month, finally arrived in Singapore. The Orient greeted you with an abundance of noise, and some very unusual smells. When travelling by road to your destination you would have noticed a multitude of different nationalities abounding on the streets and tracks. You had now entered a new world, and a completely different way of life.

On arrival at Base you were greeted by the term 'Moon Men' and 'Get some in' being shouted by the residents from the balconies of the three storey barrack blocks. Laying in bed at night you heard the incessant night chorus of insects, wondered how long that would go on for. Well, the strange thing is, after a few weeks you never heard them at all. But there *were* bed-bugs and mosquitoes.

Adjusting to the hot, humid climate took time, and in the monsoon season, you had never *seen* or *felt* rain like it. And it always seemed to rain at three in the afternoon, waking you up from your siesta.

Yet you were here, your new home for up to two and half years. No more bed stacks, bed space cleaning or polishing your shoes. You had a bearer to do it for you. No more sewing, for "Sew Sew" came round offering to mend for you, at very little cost.

Social life abounded: Malcolm Club, NAAFI, George Club, Yacht club, swimming pool cafe and much more. You had every opportunity to involve yourself in all sporting activities, which included so-called *friendly* matches against teams from other Bases.

Visiting downtown Singapore at weekends was something to be looked forward to. Such dubious and colourful entertainment was on offer at the New, Great and Happy Worlds. Change Alley, where a multitude of items could be bought and exchanged. And of course there was always Bugis Street!

Many of you must have spent a pleasant evening at the Shackle Club or UJ Club. Also the Britannia Club, located in Beach Road, opposite the famous Raffles Hotel, where it was a never to be forgotten experience to be duty SNCO, especially on a Saturday night.

Some of you based in Singapore may have spent time at the RAF Leave Centre, at Tanjong Bungah, Penang. A 24 hour train journey from Singapore to Butterworth connecting with the ferry to Georgetown. Travelling in uniform with your rifle, a bandolier of ammo and your personal belongings was not easy. But there was much to do and see on the beautiful island of Penang. Georgetown's evening entertainment centred around the one and only City Lights night club!

There is no doubt about it, you worked hard and played hard. Remember the extra duties performing night guard in places most inhospitable. Many of you were based in the Far East

during the Malayan Emergency, in the Fifties. Later, the Borneo and Brunei crisis of 1962.

Yet this was the finest overseas posting you could have ever wished for, and you were there at the Government's expense, along with many thousands of other British service personnel who enjoyed the experience.

Alas, nothing lasts forever, and the British Government closed all Far East Bases in the 1970's.

In recent years many groups of like minded people have come together to form RAF Associations to keep the memory of our Far East Bases alive. That is very evident here today, with ex-service members from many associations being represented.

Our Far East Grove was created four years ago at this wonderful National Memorial Arboretum. With the unveiling of our monument today, there will be a permanent reminder that our RAF Bases existed in the far extremities of the British Empire. Most of you here, and those no longer with us, were part of it.

Honoured Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen, it has been a privilege to address you.

Thank you.

2005 Reunion Report

The 2005 Reunion, the fourteenth, was once again held at our usual venue, now known as the Bromsgrove Hotel. (Previously the Hanover International, and previous to previously, the Pine Lodge! Ed)

Forty eight members and guests were in attendance by 19.30 hrs on Saturday October 22nd, and, once seated, Chairman, Tom Bennett, commenced proceedings by extending a warm welcome to everyone, especially Syd Bevan (194 Squadron), travelling from Queensland, Australia, Gary Lumb, son of Pat (or "Ginger"), and Dominic and Helen Byard, son and daughter in law of Bert Byard, (all ex 194). Also present was long standing member, but first time attendee, Dave Croker (also 194).

Memories were recalled, photographs displayed, and there were innovations from Dave Taylor and Tony Tamblyn: PowerPoint presentations on their laptop computers.

The Hon Sec read out the names of those who had tendered their apologies, most of which sent a donation, which is much appreciated.

The Committee, comprising Alan Restall (Treasurer) Alec Watson, Tony Tamblyn, Tom Browning, and the Hon Sec were thanked with acclaim for their efforts throughout the year, and on the night. President, Cy Turner proposed a toast to Absent Friends. The Chairman then closed the formal proceedings with the announcement that he was retiring from the post due to numerous other commitments. Other changes: David Taylor takes over as newsletter editor from Tom Browning - retiring after at least eight years at the helm. (Shouldn't that be cyclic? Ed)

Discussion then continued until, slowly, everyone began to trickle away to bed.

Most met up again at breakfast, some seeming quite reluctant to disperse, but by 11.00 it was all over for another year. All departed in the sincere hope that, "We will meet again."

Thanks to the support and generosity of members in giving prizes and purchasing raffle tickets; £149 was raised, £100 of which will be sent to The Gurkha Trust.

The 2006 Reunion will take place at the same venue (no matter what name it carries at that time), on Saturday 28th October 2006.



John "Taff" Walker

Secretary's Report

As you can see from the Newsletter, the Association continues, with a slight reduction in number of names on our mailing/membership list. We are indebted to Dave Taylor and Tony Tambllyn for the production of this Newsletter, and to those members who have submitted items.

Alan Restall continues for the time being as Treasurer but he would like a replacement. It's not a stressful task, little to do, just a few cheques at time of reunion as the Hon Sec does the Reunion payments banking.

The President Cyril Turner and member Alec Watson continue with support behind the scenes in order to ensure we continue until Anno Domini catches up with us.

On your behalf I take this opportunity of recording your thanks to Tom Browning and

Tom Bennett for their past work and support.

The unveiling of the FEAF memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire, took place on Saturday 13th May 2006, as reported elsewhere. One hundred and seventy people from FEAF attended the service in the Chapel and at the Grove site, including some members from Heliops Association. The NMA is well worth a visit if you are in the area. Entry is free of charge and there is ample car parking - but try and choose a nice day.

The trees we planted in 2000 are in good shape - see page 3 of 2005 "Lift-off. All of you will be proud to be associated with this impressive project which will be retained in the Country's care and keeping for ever more. Thanks to those members who sent me donations towards the cost. The whole site is now administered by the Royal British Legion.



Tom Bennett

Income & Expenditure Account for the year to December 2005

2004		2005	2004			2005
1077.43	Balance b/f	996.31	68.50	Newsletters		71.00
2880.50	Income from Reunion	3428.00	100.00	Donation to Gurkha Trust		100.00
190.00	Donations	270.00	3124.65	Hotel		3574.25
				Donation to FEAF Grove		150.00
1.29	Interest	0.80	55.00	Gratuities		35.00
138.00	Raffle	149.00		Brian Lloyd Expenses		
160.00	Reserve of 2004 not used	52.00	27.34	Postage & Emails	58.35	
			35.94	Copying/Printing/Stationery	63.78	
			39.48	Raffle Expenses	0.00	122.13
			996.31	Balance c/f		843.73
4447.22		4896.11	4447.22			4896.11

The reserve of £52.00 made last year has now been cancelled and the sum added to the brought forward balance

Membership Report

Since our last Newsletter in August 2005 we regret to report we have said goodbye to Glynn Jones, of 155, and Jane Collins - widow of Eric, who was also 155. Both were good supporters of the Association, Mrs Collins and her daughter even attending the reunion on one occasion following Eric's Death. Glynn passed away in a hospice. The Association was represented at both funerals.

Just before Christmas we also lost Des Hodges, ex 194. Also from 194 (and Casevac) was Dave Williamson, who passed on in March. The following obituary, taken from the Dundee Courier, was sent in by Alec Watson. Howard "Jock" Neild represented us at the funeral.

MR DAVID WILLIAMSON, for many years a figure in Fife business circles, who was awarded a Mention-in-Despatches during the Malaya Emergency, has died at the age of 73.

Called up for RAF service, Mr Williamson served as a senior aircraftsman in Malaya during the Communist insurgency of 1948-60. The conflict was Britain's own little Vietnam, a jungle war where air mobility was key in the eventual defeat of the insurgents.

Mr Williamson helped maintain the RAF's helicopters with such dedication that he won his Mention-in-Despatches, a mark of exceptional service.

On the plus side we welcome yet another "Nobby" - Eric Clarke, 194, Eng/Fitt, 1955/57.

I am making slow progress with the conversion of our previous video onto DVD, with added voice-over. To date no major production cost to us, and I will advise you when ready for you to purchase at low cost, for you to put into your family archives. Copies will be lodged with Hendon, IWM, and Air historical Branch as it is a unique piece of RAF history which is not recorded elsewhere.

Hope to meet many of you at the 2006 reunion, for which your invitation is enclosed with this Newsletter.

Brian Lloyd, Hon Sec.

George "Kiwi" Francis died 10th July 2006 194 Squadron September 1953 to April 1956

Memories - Ken Crowhurst

Nov. 1952 - 2 Vampires collided over the jungle - one pilot bailed out and was picked up and taken in one of the helicopters to search for the other pilot. Also flying around were a Dakota, fitted up with loud-speakers (primarily for talking to Chinese Communists in the jungle to try to persuade them to surrender), and an Auster. Our pilot could only radio the Auster who then passed on messages to the Dakota. As he was having communication problems, the helicopter pilot asked his Vampire pilot passenger to fire off a Verey cartridge to attract attention, which he promptly did - straight up - through one of the main rotor blades! Fortunately it was one of the old composite blades (metal spar/plywood/canvas) and not one of the new metal ones, and it made a hole right through the fabric part of the blade!

(Just goes to show how fickle can be the memory at times, for surely this could only happen once! But in the version that featured in Lift-Off No.8, Summer 2000, the Auster is dispensed with, and the Dakota is transformed into a Valetta. The Chopper was a Dragonfly, piloted by "Jacko" Jacques, who related the tale back then, so you'd think he would know! Ed.)

*

The Safety Equipment airman who dropped a CO2 cylinder on the aircraft dispersal area at Changi - we watched it fizz around on the PSP like a firework, just missing one of the Dragonflies and an Auster, before coming to rest against the Dope Store. The escaping gas

cut his hand and he left a trail of blood spots through our hangar on his way to get some first aid.

The Group Captain and the Wing Commander who were doing circuits and bumps in a Harvard at Changi and made a wheels-up landing in the middle of the runway - each apparently thought that the other had lowered the undercarriage (and neither thought to check!) - 15 minutes before the BOAC Comet was due to land. Quite a panic to find a Coles crane to lift it off - the only one on the dispersal had a Valetta engine hanging from it!

*

Taking part in "Ali Baba & the 40 Thieves" in the Astra cinema at Changi - put on by the Changi Players in Dec 1952. Other CasEvac members in the cast were Reg Taylor (Sgt. Bandit) and Laurence Earland. (Both current members)

May 1953 I was sent to Changi to help dismantle non-flying WF315 in preparation for transporting it to Sembawang by road. I seem to remember I spent a lot of the journey standing or squatting on the servicing platform by the rotor head, lifting tree branches over the main rotor driveshaft and making sure that it did not foul any of the overhead electricity wires across the roads.



When at Sembawang, an S-55 from 848 Sqn was sent to retrieve a wing from a Brigand which had crashed into the jungle, so the wing failure could be investigated at RAE Farnborough (apparently Brigand wings had a nasty habit of folding up when pulling out of diving attacks). The wing was winched up and the S-55 returned to Sembawang, where the crew asked for instructions as to where it should be deposited. But it had gone - fallen off on the way! I believe they did manage to recover it.

*

In Aug 1953 a large grass fire at KL got out of hand and was heading for the bomb dump. An SOS was sent out to all available personnel to beat it out - a hot job on a hot day with plenty of sparks and smoke, but we succeeded.

*

Visitors to, or passing through KL while I was there: Richard Nixon, US Vice President in 1953 - his MATS Constellation was ringed by armed guards as soon as it had rolled to a standstill - Duncan Sandys, Minister of Supply (who inspected us on parade, Aug 1953); band leader, Xavier Cugat, along with Abbe Lane, his wife and the singer, plus the band, Dec 1953.

*

Operation 'Cyclone' (Sep/Oct. 1953), operating Dragonflies fitted with crop-spraying gear from Kluang/Labis airstrips to kill off crops of tapioca being grown in jungle clearings by CTs. In the evenings we were entertained at Kluang by Gurkhas, who put on a stage show to celebrate their New Year, and fed us curried goat's meat.

*

Just after Christmas 1953, Ken & I received our orders to clear from KL, and we caught the night train to Singapore on New Year's Eve, seeing the New Year in 'somewhere in Malaya'. We took off from Changi in a Hastings on 2nd Jan 1954 and landed on 6th Jan on a snow-covered runway at RAF Lyneham. The next day we went by train back to No 5PDC to be demobbed, and by the following evening we were back home - civilians once again!

I returned to Singapore three years ago, knowing it would all be different 42 years on; it certainly was! I took a trip down Memory Lane, to Changi, but the Village has totally changed. The old shop buildings have gone and have been replaced by more substantial structures, but it was pleasing to see George Photo is still trading, now run by George Jr. The shop has a collection of photos on display: the Village as it was in our day.

Just before we flew out from Changi, I asked our taxi driver to take us to the Main Gate of the Air Base, as it is now known. We asked if we could have a look at the Changi Murals in Block 151, and were escorted along the road by a young soldier to see them. They have created a small chapel decorated with the murals painted by Bombardier Stanley Warren, who was a patient in the prison hospital at Changi during the Japanese occupation. I took some photos of them in 1952, when they were on view in the airmens' accommodation, in need of some restoration, but they have since been restored and repainted by the artist and have been incorporated into a proper little chapel. CasEvac Flight were billeted on the middle floor of Block 140 and it was pleasing to see that the block still looked the same, but now sports a two-tone pastel colour scheme. (Hey! That was back in '95, Ken; the only block that now remains *is* 151. Ed)

*

*

Gurkha Welfare Fund

Dear Mr Lloyd

Hello again, and thank you for your kind donation of £100 made on behalf of the Helicopter Operations (Malayan Emergency) Association. Support like this is greatly appreciated.

We intend to apply this donation to Individual aid, where it will be spent on providing welfare

pensions, hardship grants and medical care.

Rifleman Tekbahadur Gurung is just one of those who relies on a welfare pension. Tekbadadur enlisted in 1963, and, after his six-month recruit training, he joined his unit at Gallipoli Barracks, Hong Kong. He also served in Brunei and Kluang (Malaysia) and saw active service during the Borneo Confrontation, earning him the General Service Medal with Clasp Borneo.

Tekbahadur Gurung is single. He is entirely dependent on the welfare pension from GWT as he owns nothing. He is presently living in someone else's house.

Because of the continued generosity of good friends like the Helicopter Operations Association, the Gurkha Welfare Trust can pay a regular monthly pension equivalent to approximately £20 to some 10,000 ex-servicemen and their dependants.

Thank you again - it is good to know that these ex-servicemen and their dependants have such caring, loyal and generous friends.

Susan Ranger (Mrs)

22 Squadron "A" Flight

On Tuesday 23rd of May 2006 five ex Casevac Flt and 194 Sqn members were invited to 22 Sqn SAR at RMB Chivenor, and what an eye-opener it was. A very slick and sophisticated set up.

The CO, Squadron Leader Dunlop made us most welcome and explained the techniques used in modern day Search and Rescue.

After a tour of the hangar, workshops, Sea King helicopter, Ops room and a video presentation, Reg Taylor presented the Squadron with 194 Sqn's Loving Cup and Squadron badge, along with a bottle of port. (Taylor's, one presumes. Ed.) The cup had previously been used at George Wilkes' hotel during our early reunions, but now - much appreciated - it holds pride of place in the 22 Sqn Trophy Cabinet.

Those attending: John (Reg) Taylor, Johnny Quirk, Ken Crowhurst, George Dodds and Alec Watson.



Presentation of Loving Cup & Squadron Badge to 22 Squadron



Sqn Postcard



RAF Kuala Lumpur

On Thursday 21st January 1954, prior to a strike by Hornets from RAF Butterworth, Flt Lt Jack R Maulden flew as an observer to Sgt pilot J Perry, in Auster VF604 of 1903 AOP Flt of 656 Sqn. They were to conduct a weather recce of the area for a follow-up crop-spraying operation.

Unfortunately, the aircraft crashed, and when a subsequent four day search failed to find any sign of wreckage, most of us thought the casualties were lost forever.

However, a search on the Internet by Arthur Findlay reveals that the wreckage was eventually found, and that Jack Maulden is buried in Cheras Road Cemetery, Kuala Lumpur, Row 23, Grave No.1188. This is cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

I am in contact with the Air Historical Branch at Bently Priory to see if they can find out when the wreckage was discovered, the exact location, and when the funeral took place (unless any of our members can help).

Jack Maulden was a very popular pilot, well liked and respected by all members of 194 Sqn, who were all saddened by his loss. RIP 55510 Flt Lt Jack Maulden. Aged 31

Why isn't his name on the memorial at RAF Odiham?



Alec Watson

For original story on the above sortie refer to Lift-Off No.10, Summer 2002.

The following poem was composed by ex-155 Sqn (Spitfires) member Albert W Bennett, and he was invited to read it during last year's Service of Remembrance at St. George's Chapel, Biggin Hill. Tenuous though the link may be to our Association, I hope you will agree it deserves a place in Lift-Off.

REMEMBRANCE

**Sixty years on, but where have they gone?
As memories come to us now that still linger on
We give thanks for all those years of peace
And pray that in time all wars will cease
May we never forget our debt to them
And today, may each of us in our own way
Look to the future with Faith and Hope, and say
Now and forever we shall always remember them**

**And then, as with the passing of the years
We try to hide the sorrow, and the tears
And with our faces changing and growing lined
We will always try to keep in mind
Those who did not return, like me and you
Or lived to see their dreams come true
The pains we suffer may be a sign of age
But, having lived our span of this world's stage
If God should give us that extra time to play
Let us give Him our thanks for each and every day**

Pingat Jasa Malaysia

Seems the government were forced to make a U turn on acceptance of the PJM, under pressure from various ex service associations, especially the National Malay & Borneo Veterans Association. Originally, the offer of issue of this medal to HM Forces was rejected; ironic that this government seemed to begrudge us a “gong” issued by another country, especially in light of recent honours lists, when one Test Match appearance warrants an MBE; and what about the likes of *Sir Mick Jagger!* Anyway, it has now been accepted, even though - possibly so as not to be seen conceding too much to the masses - we are not cleared to wear it on “official” parades. (What are they going to do, put us on a charge?)



Anyone requiring an application, please let me know. But please be aware: the PJM is issued by Malaysia, which only came into being in September 1957. The conditions therefore state that you must have served on the posted strength of a unit in the prescribed area for at least Ninety days between **August 31st 1957** and **August 12th 1966** for Malaysia, and **August 31st 1957** and **August 9th 1965** for Singapore. Seems quite unfair to me, as the worst of the Emergency took place between 1948 and probably 1956, but there you are. He who pays the piper gets to name the tune.

* *

Something free from the government? Well, no, not exactly, especially if you still pay tax. But simply by phoning Freephone 0800 169 2277 (once again, not entirely free; after all, isn't it our money they are spending?), or writing to Graham Taylor, Veterans Badge Office, Room 6108, Tomlinson House, Norcross, Blackpool FY5 3WP, you will receive details of how to apply for the very attractive, recently issued (by the MOD) Veterans badge, which honours UK Service veterans. It is now available to anyone who served in HM Forces prior to Dec 31st 1959. (Originally only available to those who served during the first and second World Wars.)

It really is a quality item. Unfortunately, I only had mine a month before I lost it, or hopefully, just misplaced it - the way you do! (Believe it or not, I just received a “free” replacement!)



*

From the **New Straits Times** Thursday 20th July 2006

40 British war veterans honoured for services 20 July 2006

LONDON: *Roy Follows stood out from the rest of the war veterans. Unlike his teary-eyed peers, he was cheerful as he recounted his adventure in the hutan (jungle) at the height of the communist insurgency in the then Malaya.*

The fact that he was wearing an old Malaysian police tie also made him peculiar.

Follows was only 22 when he left Newcastle and ended up in the jungles of Johor, near Yong Peng.

He had volunteered and served as a lieutenant and platoon commander for the Number 10 Jungle Company in 1954. "We would be in the jungle for about a month at a time, looking for orang jahat (bad guys)," he said, referring to the patrols in search of communists. "The communists were quite frightening. They waited to kill us and we waited to kill them," he said.

Follows, who is now 77, is one of thousands of servicemen from Commonwealth nations who had helped Malaya deal with communism in the 1950s and the Confrontation with

Indonesia in the 1960s.

For his sacrifices, he was one of 40 British war veterans honoured yesterday by the Malaysian Government for their services.

They were the first group of British war veterans to receive the Pingat Jasa Malaysia.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak presented the medals at the Malaysian High Commission.

Roy Follows is the Author of **'The Jungle Beat** Fighting Terrorism in Malaya' ISBN 0953057577
Published by TravellersEye Ltd.

Roy was for about ten months 1954/55 the Commander of Fort Brooke. The Jungle Beat includes a whole chapter about Fort Brooke. (David, a good place to continue your research on Forts)

When your turn comes to receive the PJM, provided you have applied, it is only issued by the Malayan High Commission in London, and it is your responsibility to go there and collect it personally, at your own expense. This for a medal you are not entitled to wear at any official ceremony! Our government might have been forced into an about turn re the acceptance of it, they certainly aren't about to admit total defeat.

Recollections of a Westland Rep

Keith Pardoe, as some of you older folks may recall, was a Westland Rep assigned to assist with the introduction of the Westland built version of the S55 to RAF service in the Far East during 1954. You will recall that by this time the Navy already had a couple of year's experience flying the Sikorsky built version with our old friends at 848 Sqn.

The RAF's Whirlwinds were transported from the UK aboard the aircraft carrier, HMS Glory, and, upon arrival at Sembawang Naval Base, Keith, an RAF officer, and a party of airmen were dispatched from Seletar to take possession.

Although Keith and the officer rolled up at the gates in an RAF Staff car, this apparently did not overly impress the

navy. They were faced with the usual barrage of questions as to

who they were and what was their business, but in this case it seemed these were questions which required to be answered in the presence of a fairly senior naval officer. However, upon arrival of such, they were quickly cleared and given to go-ahead, which is when the RAF officer stuck his head out of



the car to politely enquire as to where HMS Glory was parked.

Once the "fairly senior naval officer" had managed to control his blood pressure, he apprised his RAF equivalent of the fact that ships actually berthed, they didn't park!

Reminds me of the RAF lads, seconded to a navy base - always referred to as a "ship", appropriately named HMS whatever - who, upon arriving at the guardroom ready for a night on the town, were informed that they would have to





await the "liberty boat". They immediately formed up in single file, backs to the gate and, along with appropriate arm movements, proceeded to reverse through it. When the guard enquired as to what they thought they were doing, the reply was "We can't wait. We're rowing ashore."

Back to the newly arrived helicopters, aboard the recently berthed HMS Glory. They were now winched over the side onto lighters, two aircraft per vessel - apparently a very unstable load in a choppy sea - for the journey to the Seletar jetty. Here they

were offloaded by use of the jetty's venerable crane, to be towed by tractor over to West Camp. Which is where another problem was encountered. The towing arms supplied by Westland were self-manufactured, to a price dictated by MOD policy - i.e. cheap! Hence they were found to be somewhat wanting; in fact almost useless. Keith therefore found himself heading back to Sembawang, cap in hand, requesting the loan of one of their Sikorsky-built originals, which was up to the job.



Seletar Hangar

Photos courtesey Keith Pardoe

Letter from one of our "Customers"

Dear Brian,

As I was flicking idly through the teletext recently, I came across your details. I was immediately intrigued as I believe it was your flight which evacuated me in 1952 from Fort Brook, Malaya.

I was then a Cpl. in 22 SAS Regt (Malayan Scouts), suffering from BT Malaria; I had been Cpl. for about 110 consecutive days.

My boss tried to reduce my temperature, which was around 104 degrees, by submersion in the river. Though this was quite pleasant, as I recall, it failed. A helicopter was then summoned to evacuate me to BMH Kinrara. On the way, we visited Grik, to pick up another casualty, then proceeded to KL.

This was my first experience of flying in a Helicopter and I was mightily impressed. I must say I had much more experience in preparing LZs for your guys in preparation for your visits.

After thirty seven years service, I retired, and now work three days a week as a volunteer with SSAFA Forces Help. You have to put a little bit back don't you?

I will always be grateful for my casevac, which probably saved my life. It certainly beats walking.

I hope all is well with you and yours.

Dean G Pursell

Following publication of Jim McCorkle's *An Interrupted Family Outing* in the last edition, the story was subsequently taken up by the NZ Malaya Vets Association in their magazine, *Selamat*, where it was introduced as the: "*story of the nerve-wracking casevac flight of 1 NZ Regt soldier Pte Frank Burdett, who was seriously injured in a tiger attack in 1959. Jim McCorkle, who piloted the rescue chopper, contributed the copy which is reproduced with kind permission of LIFT OFF, newsletter of Helicopter Operations (Malaya Emergency) Association.(Casualty Evacuation Flight, 110, 155, 194 Squadrons RAF). Jim defied the odds on this flight taking a gamble that he would not normally take because a Kiwi soldier lay injured In the jungle, his chances of life hinging on a swift transfer to hospital. You know what they say about pilots. "There's old pilots and bold pilots but there's no old and bold pilots." Jim wasn't bold but he did bet his life, Frank's and that of Doctor Iain Ross on his technical knowledge and flying skills. Frank's casevac was unusual foremost because a tiger caused his injuries, but also for the calculated risks Jim took, and his choice of flying clothing.*"

The article ends with this *much abridged version of Frank's story.*

Drifting off to sleep one night in a basha Frank noticed a strong musty smell and, while wondering what it was, he suddenly felt repeated blows over his head and upper body. At first he thought he was dreaming about being beaten up but also felt the sensation of being dragged along backwards. As everything was pitch black he couldn't see, couldn't understand what was happening, and a tiger was the last thing on his mind!

Cpl. Joe Donnelly, Frank's basha mate, heard Frank's shouts for help and fired a burst skywards from his Stirling SMG which roused the rest of the camp and Scared the tiger off. Patrol medic Colin Campbell dressed Frank's wounds and gave him morphine, reporting to patrol Commander Lt. Pat Power that further, urgent medical attention was needed, Frank was the radio operator and began calling for help at 0600 using Morse Code, After about five hours Frank eventually made contact with a NZ patrol that was in contact with Maxwell Hill, near Taiping and the message, sent requesting his casevac.

The chopper arrived at 1345 and the pilot said "The good news is that we're taking off in about five minutes ... The bad news is that I have first to divert to Fort Chabai to refuel. So we'll take a little longer getting to Taiping."

All went well and Frank arrived on the chopper pad at BMH Kamunting, Taiping, at 1450 where he was hospitalised for 20-odd days but returned to normal duties after a further two weeks' convalescence.

He said in 2003, "After the tiger's attack, the most persistent and troubling question that pestered me was: Why me? I finally concluded, what did it really matter! For whatever the odds are of surviving a man-eating tiger attack, surely, once was enough. I still have occasions when it all comes back and I really don't believe that time heals) The scars on the outside have healed reasonably well; those on the inside are a different matter. There was no Post Traumatic Stress Disorder counselling in those days. You were told to just get on with living."

Frank e-mailed Selamat in May this year with the following: "The chopper that Jim McCorkle gingerly flew to casevac me out was XG522. Here is what later happened to it, Sycamore XG522 crashed just after take-off at VE394686 on April 4, 1961. Having almost completed a 180 degree hover turn at about 4-6 feet above the ground, the chopper lost height and the port wheel struck and dislodged a retaining log on the edge of the [landing] platform. Moving to the left, XG522 hit the ground and rolled over on its right side.

"The pilot, Fit Lt. Doug Eldridge and Cpl. B Dalzeil, 2NZ Regt, were unhurt, Pte W Campbell, also from 2 NZ Regt, received slight injuries.

XG 522, however, was a write-off and was moved a short distance from where it originally crashed,

"To me its loss was somehow like losing a faithful dog that had to be put down."