



Service History of
681798 AA PHILIPSON. J
 7th May 1956 to 26th November 1985



1956-1959	RAF Halton	Technical Training Command	Apprentice Training (Airframe Fitter)
1959-1961	RAF Akrotiri	Near East Air Force	No. 103 Maintenance Unit. Airframe Repair Flight
1961-1964	RAF Dishforth & RAF Church Fenton	Maintenance Command	No. 60 Maintenance Unit. Airframe Repair Flight
1964-1967	RAF Bruggen	RAF Germany	ASF – Canberra PR7 2 nd Line Servicing & No. 80 Squadron Canberra PR7 1 st Line Servicing
1967-1970	RAF Odiham	Transport Command / Air Support Command, No. 38 Group	No. 230 Squadron - Whirlwind HAR 10 No. 72 Squadron - Wessex HC2 No.18 Squadron - Wessex HC2
1970	Cyprus - Nicosia Airport	UN Contingent	Wessex HC2
1970-1973	RAF Wildenrath & RAF Gutersloh	RAF Germany	No. 18 Squadron - Wessex HC2
1977-1985	RAF Odiham	RAF Strike Command	No. 72 Squadron – Wessex HC2 No 230 Squadron – Puma HC1 No. 33 Squadron – Puma HC1 HQ Engineering Wing (Engineering Operations) No. 7 Squadron – Chinook HC1

RANK ON COMPLETION OF SERVICE

Flight Sergeant



AWARDS



General Service Medal (Northern Ireland)
United Nations Medal (Cyprus)
Long Service & Good Conduct Medal

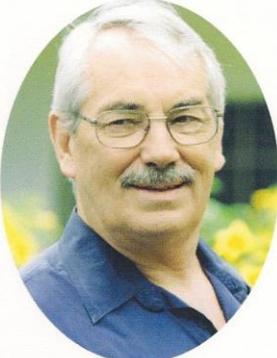


TRIBUTE, CIVILIAN CAREER AND ADDITIONAL STORIES

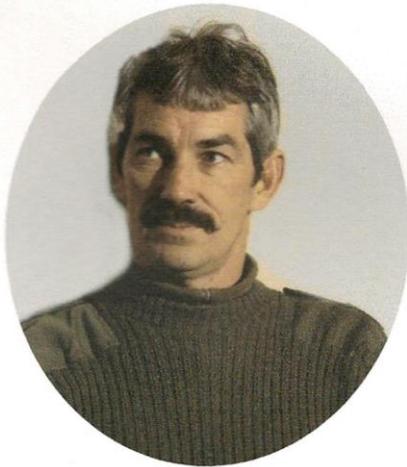
A Service of
Thanksgiving and Celebration
for the Life of

Jon Philipson

At Rest
Tuesday 31st March 2009
Aged 69



Funeral Service at Yeovil Crematorium
Wednesday 8th April 2009 at 3.30 pm



ORDER OF SERVICE

Conducted by
Mr. Bill Chapman

Pre-service Organ Music
"Nimrod" from Elgar's 'Enigma Variations'

Welcome

Poem
"This Heritage"

They are not lost,
Who leave us this great heritage,
Of remembered joy.
They still live in our hearts
In the happiness we knew,
In the dreams we shared.
They still breathe,
In the lingering fragrance, windblown
From their favourite flowers,
They still smile in moonlight's silver,
And laugh in the sunlight's sparkling gold.
They still speak in the echoes of words,
We've heard them say again and again.
They still move
In the rhythm of waving grasses,
In the dance of tossing branches.
They are not gone,
Their memory is warm in our hearts,
Comfort in our sorrow.
They are not apart from us,
But a part of us.
For love is lasting.
And those we love shall be with us always.

Hymn

I vow to thee my country
all earthly things above,
entire and whole and perfect,
the service of my love:
the love that asks no question,
the love that stands the test,
that lays upon the altar
the dearest and the best;
the love that never falters,
the love that pays the price,
the love that makes undaunted
the final sacrifice.

And there's another country,
I've heard of long ago,
most dear to them that love her,
most great to them that know;
we may not count her armies,
we may not see her King;
her fortress is a faithful heart,
her pride is suffering;
and soul by soul and silently
her shining bounds increase,
and her ways are ways of gentleness
and all her paths are peace.

A tribute to Jon
by John Burt

Hymn

Morning has broken
like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken
like the first bird.
Praise for the singing!
Praise for the morning!
Praise for them springing
fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall,
sunlit from heaven,
like the first dew-fall
on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness
of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness
where his feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight!
Mine is the morning
born of the one light
Eden saw play!
Praise with elation,
praise every morning,
God's re-creation
Of the new day.

A period of quiet reflection



Poem

"High Flight"

during which the organist will play the RAF March

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds-and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of-wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hovering there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air
Up, up the long delirious, burning blue,
I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew-
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

Pilot Officer J.G. Magee, Jnr, No 412 Squadron - Royal Canadian Air Force

Blessing

Concluding Organ Music

"Canon in D" - Johann Pachelbel





Following this service,
all are warmly invited to join
the family for refreshments
and to celebrate Jon's life at

The Nuffield

RNAS Yeovilton BA22 8HJ

Turning opposite Fleet Air Arm Museum

Donations are invited for
St. Margaret's Hospice (Yeovil)

These may be placed in the retiring
collection or sent to:

**David Rivett,
30 Lyde Road, Yeovil BA21 5AT**



Angela would like to thank the staff in the
Accident and Emergency Department
and at Ward 9a Yeovil District Hospital
for their kindness, care and consideration during Jon's last days.

A TRIBUTE TO JON

(By John Burt at Jon's Cremation Service)

I only have a few minutes to give you a brief insight into the man I knew as a good mate for 53 years. Jon was a man's man and saved his affection for his nearest and dearest. He was very loyal and a fit, strong and determined character who only said what he had to say. He had a wicked sense of humour but generally showed little outward emotion although when he was getting impatient he'd tap his feet. When he disagreed with you or things hadn't gone according to plan you could guarantee he'd give you a steely glare.

It was in the spring of 1956 that we first met. We arrived at RAF Halton as cocky 15/16 year old country boys eager to embark on our Aircraft Apprenticeships and become Trenchard Brats of the 83rd Entry. Put into 3 Wing Initial Training Flight we shared our first trauma together when we had our first service haircuts. Our mops of thick hair were quickly reduced to mere tufty tops and that had a lasting effect. It was also the start of a friendship that has lasted all these years and with us today is Ivor, another friend and member of the 83rd Entry.

After we graduated as Junior Technicians, Jon went to Cyprus and I stayed in the UK. Our paths next crossed in the mid '60s in Germany and again in the late '60s when we were both posted to RAF Odiham on helicopters. We served together on 72 Squadron until Jon went back to Germany with 18 Squadron.

In 1975 I left the RAF but Jon soldiered on for another 10 years and continued on active support helicopter operations until he finally retired at 45 with 30 years' service under his belt. During that time Jon did tours of duty in many places such as Northern Ireland, Belize, Mazirah and the Falklands, with the UN in Cyprus and the Ace Mobile Force in Norway, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Holland, Portugal and Turkey. In the early days, Jon and I were together on some of these detachments and they are times that hold good memories for me.

When he retired from the RAF Jon went to work at the MOD and having worked on "choppers" for about 20 years there wasn't much he didn't know about them. Our paths crossed again in the early '90's when we started attending the annual 83rd Entry Reunions.

The reunions have always included partners so they have become close family affairs. Apart from a short break of a couple of years or so, Jon and I have regularly attended them accompanied by Angela and Janet, so we all became good friends.

The things we enjoyed together were our regular Sunday lunches with the ladies. Jon and I always liked good food and would tuck in to anything the dieticians tell you is bad for your health. Suet puddings and full English breakfasts were a real treat but I never did find out why he didn't like carrots!

We both like cars and last year we enjoyed a day at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. At the time Jon had been having chemo treatment but surprised us with the speed he walked up the hill climb course. Keeping up with him was a no-brainer for me so I stopped at a vantage point to take photos of exotic cars while Jon and the girls carried on up to the rally course. I was unaware that Jon had done a fair bit of semi-professional rally driving when he was based in Germany.

Formula 1 was another interest we shared and after each race we would talk on the phone about what had happened. Jon supported McLaren and me, Ferrari. Last season when McLaren and Ferrari were competing for top spot we had lots to talk about.

This season has started badly for both our teams and I have really missed his mickey taking because Ferrari has failed to score any points so far.

Earlier I mentioned the lasting effects of our first service haircuts. As youngsters we spent a lot of time grooming our hair to 'pull' the girls. Jon had jet black hair in those days and sported a DA at the back and a sizeable quiff at the front which was the fashion of the time. I'm folliclely challenged in my advancing years and Jon delighted in reminding me that he didn't have that problem. Despite some aggressive treatment which caused his mop of thick grey hair to thin, it soon grew back into a mass of tight curls.

If the circumstances had been different today as I got up to speak, Jon would have positioned himself strategically by an exit so he could make a quick getaway to the bar. No doubt he would also be muttering up his sleeve "get on with it Burt – we're wasting good drinking time". Jon always enjoyed a pint of Best Bitter.

Before I close, Angela has asked me to thank you all for coming to say farewell to Jon as he leaves on his final Journey. I would also like to add that Jon never indulged in self pity and with his positive attitude he would want us all to celebrate his life, rather than mourn his passing. He was a great believer in getting on with life.

Good bye my old friend.

A FEW MORE THOUGHTS

Our Backgrounds

Jon and I came from similar farming backgrounds and as youngsters, before we joined the RAF, we both spent our time in the countryside. Jon came from near Salisbury in Wiltshire and I came from near Winchester in Hampshire. Just a few miles apart and we never lost that affinity.

After Halton

On leaving Halton, Jon started his career as an aircraft fitter / engineer on fixed wing aircraft then he was posted onto helicopters and stayed with rotary wing for the rest of his RAF career. He was big on helicopter field operations which is typical action man stuff so it suited Jon's personality.

The demands of first-line field operations can be pretty tough when you are working in all sorts of climates with minimum living and technical facilities. This scenario requires the right sort of people to succeed in meeting the objectives of the operational tasking.

Jon was a highly competent, principled and disciplined aircraft fitter / engineer and only the best effort was good enough. He was also a good mentor to others. This was borne out at Jon's funeral where I met some chaps who said they would always remember what Jon did for them during their early careers on the squadrons.

Cars

Something that always got Jon's undivided attention was cars. The more stylish and exotic, the better. In the early days Jon owned a little MG and over the years he had a number of Lotus road cars such as a couple each of Europa and Elise, plus his rally cars.



Jon with his MG Midget c1961



With rally car in Germany c1967

However, in later years Jon was quite content to drive around in his small, very economical Japanese 'compact car' or Angela's Vauxhall Tigra 2+2.

The TomTom Saga

Talking about cars, that brings me on to navigation, map reading and TomTom's. Me, I've always been a devoted map reader and always 'pooh poohed' those who use SatNav in cars. Anyway, after one of our meetings for the Halton Triennial Display we decided to do a run to The Peacock Inn at Henton for lunch. Between us we had four cars and two SatNavs (Jon and Mike Tuckman) and it took so long for the guys to get the things programmed (no one knew the postcode!) so I said follow me, I know the way having looked at the map and formulated a cross-country route. We arrived safely without going off-route I might add. At the 2008 Entry Reunion when we were also based at The Peacock Inn, Janet, Angela, Jon and I decided we would visit Blenheim Palace on the Saturday. As usual, I looked at the map and came up with a route but Jon insisted on installing his TomTom in my car to demonstrate the technology. I have to admit it worked a treat – most impressive, particularly when we diverted into Thame to visit the Chocolaterie for a 'feast' on the way back to Henton. By the way, Angela, Jon and I are chocoholics.

Anyway I never gave TomToms another thought until I received my Christmas present from Janet. Apparently the TomTom conspiracy had been going on for months. I have to say that nowadays I do use TomTom regularly and it always reminds me of Jon and the fun times we had together. But I also take a map with me just in case.

Was it a Hare or a Rabbit

A little story that has been told a few times by Ivor happened whilst we were at Halton sometime around the winter of 1957 – 8. It goes back to the beginnings of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme when the organisers needed to check-out the cross country navigation exercise they had planned as part of the scheme. As usual the 83rd Entry was earmarked as the "guinea pigs" just as we were for other "grand ideas" like the first trial of fluoride toothpaste. Clearly, we were a captive audience!

For a start, I'm unable to be precise with the location that the "cross-country march" took place – we were never able to come to an agreement on that! Jon reckoned it was on Salisbury Plain, Ivor seems to think it was Dartmoor and I'm convinced it was somewhere in the Chilterns. Suffice it to say we all agreed that we were loaded into 3-ton lorries each equipped with just a poncho, small kit and water bottle and trundled off a fair distance (a lot of miles) until we were dropped off in the middle of nowhere in groups of about 6 to 8 with an "Rock Ape" corporal or some such in charge. We then had to navigate several miles across country to a farm where we would overnight (in open Dutch barns in the freezing cold) and get some indescribable food from a field kitchen.

On the way to the rendezvous point, the group with Ivor and Jon came across a rabbit (Ivor's observation) / hare (Jon's observation). Anyway, Ivor's lasting memory is that Jon grabbed his water bottle, threw it at the unsuspecting animal and stunned it, following-up with the coup de gras. Needless to say everyone who witnessed the event was truly impressed by Jon's backwoodmanship. The hare was carried to the rendezvous point, duly prepared and eaten that night.

The 83rd 'A' Team

From early 2007 Jon was a key member of the 83rd 'A' Team.

Along with Ivor John, Mike Tuckman and me we put together the Rotorcraft Display for the 9th RAF Halton Aircraft Apprentices Triennial in the September, to commemorate the Centenary of the First Helicopter Flight by Pierre Cornu, in 1907. It was a lot of hard work but we all rose to the challenges and Jon was just like a kid in a sweetshop because he was in charge of the helicopter movements.

A lasting vision of Jon

Just to complete my missive I want to leave you with a vision of the strong minded man that always met life's challenges head on. Even whilst undergoing his very aggressive chemo treatment and radio therapy, Jon still insisted and found time for a pint of best bitter.

After undergoing treatment that would 'knock-out' most folks, he was still able to find the will and energy to walk up the hill from the hospital to the pub and back again. This regular feat of endurance surprised a lot of people, but not me.

This was the Jon I knew.

FINAL RESTING PLACE

On Saturday evening just before the 2009 Reunion Dinner, I called Angela to pass on everyone's best wishes and she told me that earlier that day she had interred Jon's ashes under a tree in the "Life for a Life Memorial Forest" at Sutton Bingham near Yeovil. It is a beautiful spot overlooking a reservoir and on 22nd March, Jon's last birthday, Jon and Angela had taken a trip there to enjoy the view. It was one of his favourite spots but Jon was too weak to walk so they just sat in the car for a while.

A four years old Scots Pine (about 6 feet tall when planted) and a plaque now stand at the spot in Jon's memory. They say that after 500 years the tree will have negated Jon's lifetime carbon footprint.