

THE 83rd ENTRY
RAF HALTON APPRENTICES
50th ANNIVERSARY REUNION



1956 – 2006



This souvenir booklet has been produced to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the 83rd Entry joining No. 1 School of Technical Training at RAF Halton, to train as Aircraft Apprentices.

On the 7th May 1956
members of the Entry took their attestation
and swore allegiance to the Throne.
A special day to remember.



83rd ENTRY 50th ANNIVERSARY REUNION ITINERARY

(All times are approximate except the Reunion Dinner and Church Service)

Friday, April 28th 2006

PM onwards Arrive at the Holiday Inn in Aston Clinton, check-in for your stay and then meet and greet old friends

19.00 onwards Dinner in the Junction Restaurant (optional and informal)

Saturday, April 29th 2006

08.00 – 09.00 Breakfast in the Junction Restaurant

AM / PM Free day to go visiting local sites of interest or maybe have a game of Golf

18.00 Gather in the Hub Bar & Lounge for Pre-Dinner drinks

18.50 Assemble for Pipe-in to Dinner by the Entry Piper
(Johnny Walker)

19.00 Reunion Dinner in The Broughton Suite
(Jacket and tie for gentlemen)

After Dinner The Traditional Group Photographs

Dinner Guests:

RAFHAAA President: Gp Capt. John Harrison ADC MA MPhil
and Mrs. Pauline Harrison

Sunday, April 30th 2006

- 08.00 – 09.00 Breakfast in The Junction Restaurant
- 10.00 latest Check-out and depart hotel for RAF Halton
- 10.30 Arrive at the Officers Mess, Halton House (enter through the Porte Cochere and assemble in The Salon)
- 11.30 Assemble at St. George's Church and march-in accompanied by Entry Piper (Johnny Walker)
- 12.00 50th Anniversary Service in St. George's Church
- 12.40 View the Entry Windows
- 12.45 Assemble at the RAF Halton Apprentices Tribute for a commemorative photo
- 13.00 Depart the Tribute
- 13.15 Luncheon at the New Henderson Mess
- 14.15 A visit to the Trenchard Museum
- As required Farewells and Depart RAF Halton

NOTE: Our 50th Anniversary Reunion weekend coincides with a parade to mark the 50th Anniversary of RAF Halton receiving the Freedom of Aylesbury. The parade takes place on Sunday afternoon.

**MARSHALL OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE,
THE VISCOUNT TRENCHARD
GCB OM GCVO DSO**

(1873 – 1956)



Father of the Royal Air Force and founder of No. 1 School of Technical Training at RAF Halton (1922 to 1993) immortalised by the stained glass window in St. George's Church at RAF Halton. The image in the window is based on an original portrait of Viscount Trenchard displayed in the Officers Mess at RAF Cranwell.

This is the man that made it all possible and gave us our destiny.

Hugh Trenchard was born on 3 February 1873, the second son of Henry Montague Trenchard, solicitor, and his wife, Georgina.

Trenchard entered the Army in September 1893, as second lieutenant in the 2nd battalion, Royal Scots Fusiliers, first serving in India, then on the outbreak of the Second Boer War in October 1899, being sent to South Africa. Promoted to captain in February 1900, he was severely wounded, and invalided home to England in December, but insisted on returning to South Africa in May 1901. While on leave at the end of the war Trenchard was made assistant commandant of the South Nigeria regiment in October 1903, first as major, then as lieutenant-colonel. In 1908 he was appointed to command his regiment, but was again invalided home in 1910. On recovering, he rejoined the Royal Scots, dropped in rank to major and served in Ulster until 1912.

In 1912, looking for a new challenge, Trenchard decided to learn to fly. After only two weeks tuition, he qualified as a pilot on 31 July. The Royal Flying Corps having been formed in May of that year, Trenchard was sent to the RFC's Central Flying School at Upavon in Wiltshire. In spite of having only just qualified, he was appointed to the staff as assistant commandant.

On the outbreak of war in August 1914 Trenchard took command of Farnborough, Hampshire. A few months later in November, he was on the western front as an operational commander. From 1915, Trenchard pressed hard for more powerful aircraft and particularly for more aggression among pilots. In August 1915 Trenchard succeeded Sir David Henderson as head of the Royal Flying Corps in France and was promoted to brigadier-general. Reluctantly, Trenchard became Chief of the Air Staff in January 1918, but resigned a few months later in April as a result of a campaign led by the Air Minister, 1st Lord Rothermere, against his hero General Sir Douglas Haig. Trenchard then returned to France later that month as head of a small force of bombers.

Trenchard was created a baronet in October 1919 and resumed his post as Chief of the Air Staff in May 1920. He was knighted again (GCB) in January 1924 and became the first Marshal of the RAF in 1927. He retired on 31 December 1929 and was made a baron next day. Although Winston Churchill offered him command of Britain's home forces and also a role in military intelligence during the Second World War, Trenchard refused both posts, but was tireless in promoting his belief in the bomber as the mainstay of air power.

In July 1920 Trenchard had married Katherine Isabel Salvin (d. 1959), having two sons. He died on 10 February 1956, aged 83.

THE 83rd ENTRY

(7th May 1956 – 25th March 1959)

In the Spring of 1956, 215 young lads made their way to the No. 1 School of Technical Training at RAF Halton from cities, towns and villages in the United Kingdom and far away places such as New Zealand, Rhodesia and several other countries around the world.

The 83rd was truly an entry of Commonwealth dimensions and on 7th May 1956 they embarked on their new life as “Trenchard Brats” (RAF Aircraft Apprentices).

Over the period of three years at Halton, 95 of those young lads were to falter in their studies. For many different reasons some were re-coursed to later entries, to skilled trades or were discharged. 24 members of previous entries joined the 83rd to complete their aircraft apprentice training.

The entry graduated on 25 March 1959 and 144 young men ventured forth into a new world to start full time careers as airmen. There were junior technicians and corporals (accelerated promotion) in engines, airframes, electrical, instruments and armament. Some went forward as pilot and technical officer cadets and others went direct to aircrew training as flight engineers, navigators, etc.

The future saw some members of the 83rd complete full service careers of 22 years or more. However, others elected to leave the RAF after they had completed their initial 12 year engagement or less. Many have since carved out successful second careers in civilian life. Sadly, some of our colleagues have passed on, long before their time. They will never be forgotten.

The common bond for those young men who graduated in 1959 is they are ex. “Brats” of the 83rd Entry. They each served their country and wore their colours with great pride.

TRENCHARD BRATS

The term “Brat” springs from the fact that in 1920, Marshal of the RAF, Viscount Trenchard (affectionately known as “Boom”), who is looked upon as the founding father of the Royal Air Force, conceived the idea of setting up training schools to provide a cadre of well trained and rounded individuals to be the backbone of aircraft servicing and maintenance in the RAF. These young men, many of whom were aged fifteen and a half when they joined, were still in some cases under normal recruiting age when they finished their training and entered RAF service proper. Their knowledge put the noses of some of the old hands out of joint and they became known as Trenchard`s Brats. The name has stuck and they now happily call themselves such.

OUR ENTRY REUNIONS

33 years after graduation, in April 1992, 22 members of our Entry and their ladies reunited at the Southlands Hotel in Sheringham, Norfolk for our first Reunion. This very successful event brought together members from various places in the UK and overseas including New Zealand and the USA. It was to be the first of twelve annual pilgrimages to Sheringham during the period 1992 to 2004.

Only once did we change the venue when, in 1996, our annual Reunion and Dinner coincided with the Halton Triennial and we stayed at the Rose & Crown Hotel in Tring.

In 2005 following the closure of Southlands Hotel we moved our Reunion to the Corus Hotel at Honiley in Warwick.

In 2006, a year that marks the 50th Anniversary of starting our apprenticeships at RAF Halton, it was appropriate for us to return to the seat of our learning all those years ago. On this occasion our Reunion Dinner was held at The Holiday Inn in Aston Clinton, prior to returning to RAF Halton and coming together for a commemoration service in St. George`s Church.

THE 83rd ENTRY STAINED GLASS WINDOW

In 1997, the Padre of St. George's Church and the RAFHAA invited Apprentice Entries to have a stained glass window installed in the Church to commemorate their time at RAF Halton. At the 1998 Annual 83rd Entry Reunion in Sheringham, Norfolk, members agreed to have a window installed.

Julie Cuthbert, an artist and stained glass window maker was commissioned to do the work. Julie is one of just a few people who, in recent years, have been formally trained in the original art and craft of traditional stained glass window manufacture.

The window artwork was prepared by Julie and agreed by members in early 2000. Features of the window are the entry badge originally designed by A J (Tony) Gassner of the Royal Rhodesian Air Force. Cap badges also show our proud links with the Royal New Zealand and Royal Rhodesian Air Forces, as well as the Royal Air Force. The bagpipes remind us of a significant feature of our daily life at Halton, marching to schools and workshops to the stirring sound of the pipes and drums.

When making the window, Julie used traditional stained glass techniques that are well over 900 years old. Various pieces of special 'mouth blown' coloured antique glass were used to make the window. The detailed cap badges and bagpipes were first painted onto the glass using special glass paints before firing. Similarly, the red dragon has been acid etched onto the red glass and subsequently fired. These processes have produced the cameo effect and vibrant colours.

Bernard Seaton installed the window in its chosen place in Bay 99, in St. George's Church at the end of December 2000.

We believe the window is a long lasting and fitting memorial to every one of those "Trenchard Brats" who were members of the 83rd Entry.

**THE ENTRY WINDOW IN
St. GEORGE'S CHURCH AT RAF HALTON**



**Dedicated in the presence of
83rd Entry members, families and friends
Friday, 30th March 2001**

IN MEMORIUM

To our friends and comrades whose departure from this life we are sadly aware.

681800	N F (Mark) Whittingham	3 Wing	1962
681803	F G (George) Harvey	3 Wing	6 April 1992
681828	P R (Pete) Chillingworth	3Wing	
681840	A (Albert) Male	3 Wing	14 October 1989
681841	J K (Johnny) Hayward	3 Wing	
681842	K (Ken) Little	3 Wing	3 November 2001
681863	L C (Les) Shields	2 Wing	14 January 1997
681865	H A J (John) Bradbrook	2Wing	
681891	R A (Arthur) Rutter	2 Wing	15 December 2004
78266 (NZ)	R B (Kiwi) Thompson	1 Wing	

We will always remember them.

ORDER of SERVICE

**A SERVICE IN
ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH
ROYAL AIR FORCE HALTON**

TO COMMEMORATE THE 50th ANNIVERSARY

OF

**MEMBERS OF THE 83rd ENTRY
COMMENCING THEIR RAF HALTON
AIRCRAFT APPRENTICESHIPS
ON 7th MAY 1956**

Service led by

The Reverend (Wing Commander) Adrian Gatrill BTh FRSA RAF

Director RAF, Armed Forces Chaplaincy Centre

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Chaplain: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen.**

Chaplain: The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

Chaplain: We join together today to thank God for our time together as the 83rd Entry at RAF Halton. Our time here is commemorated in our window, dedicated in this church which acknowledges our contribution of service to the Royal Air Force. We now reflect on those years, the people we shared them with, the time spent in fellowship together.

Maker of us all, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image.

May we discern your hand in all your works and serve you with reverence and thanksgiving; through Jesus Christ our Lord who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things now and forever.

All: **Amen.**

HYMN

(Tune: Duke Street)

J S B Monsell (1811-75)

All: Fight the good fight with all thy might;
Christ is thy strength, and Christ thy right;
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race through God's good grace,
Lift up thine eyes, and seek his face;
Life with its way before us lies;
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

Cast care aside, lean on thy guide;
His boundless mercy will provide;
Trust and thy trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

Faint not nor fear, his arms are near;
He changeth not, and thou art dear;
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee.

A READING

Isaiah 40.28-31

**Patrick
O'Shea**

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary, his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

AN ADDRESS

**Jim
Waddington**

Recollections from our time at RAF Halton.

PRAYERS

Chaplain: Lord God, who remembers all and sees all, we give thanks for being together this day. We rejoice in the good times and reflect on the sad times that we have shared. We look forward to the future in hope and joy and peace in the knowledge that you travel with us always: through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Chaplain: We pray today for all members of the 83rd Entry; for their fellowship, wisdom and guidance through the years. We are thankful for the opportunities that have been given to us, for the gifts bestowed upon us. As we look again to the stars we celebrate our time together and acknowledge the bonds of friendship that unite us now and always.

All: **Amen.**

Chaplain: Dear Lord as we join with one another on this occasion we think of those who are no more; friends and colleagues we deeply miss; fellow comrades who no longer march with us. Help us to be true to their memory, true to their legacy and true to their tradition of service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE RAF HALTON APPRENTICE PRAYER

All: Teach us, good Lord, to be thankful for the good times which we have had, the skills which we have learned, the friendships which we have shared and the companionship which we have enjoyed. May all who have shared the apprenticeship of the "wheel" be mindful of the needs of one another, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Chaplain: A prayer for The Royal Air Force, past and present, and for those whom we remember today.

Almighty God who has promised that they who wait on you shall renew their strength, and mount up with wings as eagles, we commend to your Fatherly protection all who serve in the Royal Air Force; uplift and support them in their high endeavour, that they may be a safeguard to our Country. Help them fulfil their several duties with honour, quietness and integrity, and grant that they may prove to be worthy successors of those who by their valour and sacrifice, have nobly served their day and generation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

HYMN

(Tune: Nun Danket)

M Rinkart (1586-1649). Tr Catherine Winkworth (1827-78)

All: Now thank we all our God,
With heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom his world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
Through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in his grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given,
The Son, and him who reigns
With them in highest heaven,
The one eternal God,
Whom earth and heaven adore,
For thus it was, is now,
And shall be evermore.

THE ENDING

Chaplain: Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no man evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Gp Capt. Min Larkin CBE (Rtd.)
Rev (Wg Cdr.) Adrian Gatrill

Mrs. Margaret Pay
Mr. Francis Hanford
Ivor John (Entry Secretary)
John Walker
Patrick O'Shea
Jim Waddington
John & Janet Burt

RAFHAAA Deputy Chairman
Director RAF,
Armed Forces Chaplaincy Centre
RAF Halton Chaplaincy
RAF Halton Apprentices Museum
Reunion Coordination and Arrangements
Piper at Reunion Dinner and Church
Reading in St. George's Church
Entry Address in St. George's Church
Reunion Arrangements

Blue Fish Business Promotions Ltd.
Henderson Groves Mess
Steve Attwood
The Holiday Inn, Aston Clinton
Toye, Kenning & Spencer
Binfield Print & Design Ltd
John Burt Associates Limited

Commemorative Plaques
Sunday Lunch
Programme Image Enhancement
Reunion Accommodation and Dinner
RAF Ribbon Supplier
Programme Printing
Programme & Plaque Design

