



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2014

Compiled by ALAN GARNER & LARRY CROSS



Dear Members

Well here we are again, not too surprising really as we have a lot going on in 2015. May 20th Birthday Dinner and we need to let you all know of the arrangements being made.

Our new secretary, Kerris Denley has got tasks well in hand and in good time to present the itinerary for the Arboretum Event on Saturday 9th. May 2015.

The National Memorial Arboretum is the UK's Centre of Remembrance set in 150 acres of trees and gardens located at Alrewas, near Lichfield, Staffordshire. The address is Croxall Road, Alrewas, Burton-on-Trent, DE13 7BD. It is free entry and opens at 0900 hrs. Members wishing to attend, together with their guests, can arrive during the morning and take the opportunity to tour the extensive site. There is the facility of a land train tour for any with mobility problems.

The Old Dux Association party will meet in the Rose Room at 1330 hrs where I have booked tables for lunch. Lunch will be two courses from a choice on the day, together with coffee or tea, at a total cost of £16.00 each. The NMA have assigned the Old Dux Association a beech tree recently planted near the RAF Wood. At 15.00 hrs we will gather at the tree for its dedication and unveiling of the plaque that will have been produced by NMA to Old Dux approved design. The dedication will be officiated over and performed by Old Dux members.

13.30 hrs : Meet in Rose Room

15.00 hrs : Old Dux Association Beech Tree for dedication. The NMA require the number attending from us asap. Kerris.

A Returns Slip is printed on the last page.

Annual Dinner May 16th 2015

Those who attended last year will confirm that as well as a superb meal, we had a very enjoyable evening together. So do please get the word around and to those who would not usually come, please try to make a special effort.

Sir Richard Johns will unveil the commemorative plaque presented to the Red Lion to celebrate the historic association between RAF Duxford and The Red Lion from 1917 to 1961. The plaque will also mark the occasion of the Old Dux Association's Twentieth Anniversary Dinner.

Just to remind you all that the cost of the dinner is £28.50 p.p. room prices will be £64 for a double and £54 for a single inc Continental Breakfast (includes hot items) which I have found to be more than adequate.. Room bookings are now being taken Tel No.01223- 497070 there will also be a link on the web site. So book early, at this time of the year this venue is getting busier with weddings - and don't forget to mention The Old Dux Association. Ed.

Remembrance Day Service at Duxford

It was a lovely day at Duxford and the crowds turned out to pay their respects and enjoy a free day. The IWM had set out 600 seats in the Air Space auditorium, (including 20 for us) and these were rapidly filled. About another 6-700 stood around the seats, and there was another couple of hundred on the balcony and in the actual museum space. We had about a dozen of our members turn up including Les and Anne, Kerris and Colin who travelled all the way up from Somerset and then all the way back after the service! Also there, were Les Millgate and yours truly as well as Helen Milne and family. There were other members who's names will only be exposed when we get the photographs back.

It was a good service, well organised and very moving. Anne and Les made a very good job of laying our wreath, although Anne was clearly nervous. We have been promoted up the list of wreath layers, coming second only after The IWM, although we were announced as the Old Dux Society, we will get that sorted out for the future.



Les and I did a duo for the BBC local radio, which went out live to Cambridge, and will go to Suffolk on Monday and Norfolk on Tuesday. Les as usual was very good, and they have asked him to do a separate interview some time later. We managed to get a few plugs in for the Old Dux.



Front: Les Gange, Sue Arnold, Kerris Denley, Mike Davies, Anne Gange, Stan Dell, Lucy (organizer IWM).
Rear: Colin Denley, Ann Lilley, Chuck Lilley, Maureen Davies & Les Millgate.

The Wethersfield Experience

For a founding member of the Coffin Dodgers Guild surviving in a body rejected out of hand by the Medical Research Council as 'quite unsuitable', life holds few remaining pleasures. This view was forcibly endorsed during the summer when I was ceremoniously drummed out of the village mixed Morris dancers, and my bells confiscated for inappropriate use of the stick. There is however, one activity still available to provide some level of entertainment, and that opportunity occurs when we pay our weekly visit to the supermarket and the good lady wife places me in charge of the shopping trolley.

Once inside the building it is first necessary to observe the general direction of flow being taken by the shoppers before switching off the hearing aids and heading at maximum velocity in the opposite direction! Shouted protests and comments about my parentage pass unheard, as I mentally award myself points for each successful collision, with an added bonus for any ensuing spillage. Last week following a particularly high-scoring passage through Home Baking and Kitchenware, I had retired to the Fruit and Veg' aisle to adjust the truss and regain my breath, when I noticed the slow approach of a large red mobility scooter. Driven by a large shapeless woman clad in a heavy tweed two-piece with matching deerstalker and moustache, the scooter edged by me, the faint hum of its electric motor hardly changing pitch as the heavily ribbed tyre climbed effortlessly over my ill-positioned foot. My intended Anglo Saxon rebuke for this cruel assault on a defenceless pensioner was however silenced, as my good eye caught the reflected glint from the small, but very distinctive badge of the CND movement, and within just minutes the failing brain, ravaged by years of abuse from Woodbines and NAAFI tea, slid jerkily into operating mode. I was reminded of an event that occurred during my time at Duxford in the 1950's and which may well be remembered by other Old Dux members.

This was of course during the Cold War period when political tensions between the Western powers and the Soviets were running high and the risk of nuclear war was becoming of great concern. To counter any possible attack the Western alliance deployed its own missiles and delivery systems on sites across Europe and Britain in a show of its determination, and whilst this tactic undoubtedly achieved a period of relative albeit uneasy peace, certain factions objected to the reliance on nuclear weaponry. The CND movement, fronted by an elite committee of cloistered academics, attracted significant numbers of hirsute folk singers, university drop-outs, and unfrocked clergy, supported by legions of naïve suburban housewives. When their calls for a change of government policy were inevitably ignored, a more active means of protest was instigated, and mass demonstrations began at selected sites intended to disrupt their day to day operation. The ranks of protesters were immediately joined by the many professional agitators dedicated to confronting the 'establishment at every opportunity other than Benefits Day!

One of the selected sites was RAF Wethersfield in Essex, so the powers that be authorised the formation of a passive defence force made up of personnel from the surrounding RAF bases in the Eastern region. At Duxford, I joined a collection of other erks outside ASF hangar on a dull autumn morning, chosen it seems by blood group and inside leg measurement, to be instructed on our intended role. No physical contact was to be allowed with the protesters much to the disappointment of several 64 Squadron 'heavies' who were clearly looking forward to infringing several Marquis of Queensbury rules. On the day of the suspected CND invasion, we the 'chosen ones' still bleary-eyed having been woken at 5am, trudged across to the mess for an early breakfast and to collect our day rations, two industrial grade corned beef sandwiches wrapped in greaseproof paper. Boarding our coach we left Duxford in subdued mood travelling along dark and deserted country roads, the silence broken only by the tortured belchings resonating from someone in the rear seats struggling to digest a hurried breakfast. Gradually, the skies lightened and the passing scenery began to take on shape and form as we approached our destination, to join other coachloads of uninspired occupants.

The entrance barrier was manned by a carbine-toting Audi Murphy who eyed us impassively as our officers held a hurried meeting to agree dispersal and tactics. Finally, the barrier was lifted and the convoy made its way onto the perimeter track, each coach stopping at its allocated place at the boundary fence. Duxford had an isolated stretch of flimsy fence hardly designed to hold back massed ranks of placard waving Lefties, and we were quickly formed up into a 'thin blue line' and right dressed. Behind us paced our NCO's no doubt under strict instructions to maintain discipline and prevent any coming together with our protagonists, whilst the officers guarded our rear. We stood in this formation all of the morning and any initial enthusiasm soon waned, despite several staggered comfort breaks, culminating in a creeping chorus of "Why are we waiting" coming from our left. Responding to the disapproving looks of the officers our NCO's leapt into action and quickly halted this frivolous outbreak of joviality, although extra comfort breaks were allowed and from somewhere a rugby ball was produced.

By the middle of the afternoon just when we were all feeling that the nonsense should end and allow us to go home, a distant shout of "Here they come" was heard from further along our line and the atmosphere was changed immediately. Our 'thin blue line' was quickly reformed, shoulders were squared, and feet firmly braced as narrowed steely eyes scanned the forward ground. "Steady lads" came the reassuring voices of our NCO's behind us as we prepared ourselves for the impending confrontation, determined to thwart any attempt to

breech our position. Big Jock Howard from the MT Section quietly removed his spectacles and denture plate, intent on inflicting maximum hurt to those who had ruined his day off. "CND my arse" he was heard to mutter. In the distance we saw a solitary figure walking in our direction along a grassy path carrying a stout-looking stick, and the question was, could this be an advance scout probing the perimeter defences for weak points? The figure continued his approach from the direction of Finchingfield village in the far distance, but we could see no massed ranks of demonstrators following his lead and were unsure of his tactics. However, the man suddenly stopped and immediately began to shout loudly, which initially confused everyone until the purpose of his presence became obvious. This was the local farmhand calling in the cows for afternoon milking, and the tension in the line was quickly replaced by loud raucous laughter and the relieved breaking of wind.

Eventually, when it became clear that no demonstration was going to happen, the message came to stand down and we gratefully boarded our coach for the return journey home. Audi Murphy still manned the barrier as we passed through, his expression remaining frozen as a wag from the rear of our coach shouted "You could have brought us a mug of tea mate". We drove back to Duxford and the topic of conversation during the journey was the wasted day we had all spent together on a deserted airfield sustained only by our British humour and corned beef sandwiches. Luckily we arrived home in time for a hot meal followed by some well-earned blanket pressing.

On reflection all these years later it does seem that protesting at the time of The Wethersfield Experience was a much more good natured pastime, when compared with the vicious demonstrations that we now see regularly on the television. Even had CND invaded Wethersfield as suggested, the event would have involved nothing worse I am sure than a few torn shirts, lots of baying insults, and maybe the odd bloodied nose. But it has to be recognised that although not one solitary protester turned up during our massed presence at Wethersfield, CND achieved huge publicity and caused major inconvenience to the 'establishment'. Shortly after this memorable excursion into the wilds of rural Essex, I was posted overseas for a wonderful 3 years at RAF Luqa before the locals got rather bolshie and kicked the British out!

1928762 SAC Venables MTRS Well done Bill, a great item. Anyone else out there remember this ? Ed.

A Prawn Story

Far away in the tropical waters of the Coral Sea, two prawns were swimming around. One called Justin and the other called Christian. They were best friends.

The prawns were constantly being threatened and harassed by sharks that inhabited the area. Finally, one day Justin said to Christian, "I'm fed up with being a prawn; I wish I was a shark, and then I wouldn't have any worries about being eaten."

A large mysterious **Cod** appeared and said, "Your wish is granted." Lo and behold, Justin turned into a shark. Horrified, Christian immediately swam away, afraid of being eaten by his old friend. Time passed (as it does) and Justin found life as a shark boring and lonely. His old mates simply swam away whenever he came close. Justin began to realise that his new menacing appearance was the cause of his sad plight.

While swimming alone one day he saw the mysterious **Cod** again and he thought perhaps the mysterious fish could change him back into a prawn. He approached the **Cod** and begged to be changed back. Lo and behold, he found himself turned back into a prawn.

With tears of joy in his tiny little eyes, Justin swam back to his old friends and bought them all a cocktail. Looking around the gathering at the reef he realised he couldn't see his old pal. "Where's Christian?" he asked. "He's at home still distraught came the reply, that his best friend changed over to the enemy and became a shark." Eager to put things right again and end the mutual pain and torture, he set off to Christian's abode. As he opened the coral gate, memories came flooding back. He banged on the door and shouted, "It's me it's me Justin, your old friend, come out and see me." Christian replied, "No way man, you'll eat me. You're now a shark, the enemy, and I'll not be tricked into becoming your dinner."

Justin cried back "No, no, I'm not. That was the old me I've changed.".....

(You're going to love this.....). "I've found **Cod**. I'm a Prawn again Christian." A.G

The Unveiling of the Old Dux Plaque

Will take place on Saturday 9th. May. Please try and support this memorable occasion, guests would be very welcome. There is every chance the weather should be good in May, there are lots to see, and lovely day out could be enjoyed amongst friends.

If you have never had the opportunity to visit the National Arboretum, now's the chance.

Lunch is optional but it is a chance to sit and chat together before the unveiling ceremony.

The Rose Room is situated in the Pavilion Tea Rooms by the Polar Bear Memorial – near the Visitor Centre, the Pavilion Tea Rooms is the perfect place for cold lunches, a wide range of snacks and a variety of hot and cold beverages. You can also find delicious 'homemade' cakes and dessert specials.

Alzheimer's Test

Good example of a Brain Study: If you can read this OUT LOUD, you have a strong mind. And even better than that: Alzheimer's is a long, long way down the road before it ever gets anywhere near you. So do your best, give it a shot.

7H15 M3554G3 53RV35 7O PR0V3 H0W 0UR M1ND5 C4N
D0 4M4Z1NG 7H1NG5! 1MPR3551V3 7H1NG5! 1N 7H3 B3G1NN1NG
17 WA5 H4RD BU7 N0W, 0N 7H15 LIN3 Y0UR M1ND 1S R34D1NG 17
4U70M471C4LLY W17H 0U7 3V3N 7H1NK1NG 4B0U7 17, B3 PROUD!
ONLY C3R741N P30PL3 C4N R3AD 7H15.

To my 'selected' strange-minded friends: (You know which sqdn you are !) Only great minds can read this. This is weird, but interesting!

If you can read this, you have a strange mind too. So, can you read this? Only 55 people out of 100 can. I don't believe that I could accurately understand what I was reading. The phonemic power of the human mind, according to research at Cambridge University, shows it doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter be in the right place. The rest can be a total mess and you can still read it without a problem. This is because the human mind does not read every letter by itself, but the word as a whole. Amazing huh? Yeah and I always thought spelling was important!).

Doctor, "Hello Mr Spooner, haven't seen you for a while.".....Spooner " Yeah!..... I've been ill."

Smithers

In the great days of the British Empire, a new commanding officer was sent to a jungle outpost to relieve the retiring colonel. After welcoming his replacement and showing the usual courtesies (gin and tonic, cucumber sandwiches etc) that protocol decrees, the retiring colonel said,

"You must meet my Adjutant, Captain Smithers, he's my right-hand man, he's really the strength of this office. His talent is simply boundless."

Smithers was summoned and introduced to the new C.O., who was surprised to meet a humpbacked, one eyed, toothless, hairless, scabbed and

pockmarked, specimen of humanity, a particularly unattractive man less than three feet tall. "Smithers, old man, tell your new C.O. about yourself."

"Well, sir, I graduated with honours from Sandhurst, joined the regiment and won the Military Cross and Bar after three expeditions behind enemy lines. I've represented Great Britain in equestrian events, and won a Silver Medal in the middleweight division of the Olympics. I have researched the history of....."

Here the colonel interrupted, "Yes, yes, never mind that Smithers, he can find all that out in your file. Tell him about the day you told the witch doctor to eff off !



Hello wing commander – how was the air show

Swin

Hot air Balloon

Man in a hot air balloon is lost over Ireland. He looks down, sees a farmer in the fields, and shouts down to him "Where am I?" The Irish farmer shouts back. "You can't fool me; you're in that basket up there so you are."

Trivia

I had a Trivia competition in the bag until the very last question....., which I got wrong. The question was 'Where do women have the curliest hair?' Apparently, the correct answer was Fiji.

Two Course Lunch £16.00 p.p. Please return this slip together with your cheque to :

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