



NEWSLETTER



March 2015

www.olddux.org

Compiled by Alan Garner

Message from your chairman

This Is Our Big One

The mainframe is sagging, the engines are knackered and take off time is much longer than it used to be...! We feel that it is time to make some decisions. Your committee has decided that we should treat our 20th Anniversary as The Big One, while we still can.

Don't switch off, we know that for some of you it will be difficult, but do look at what we have made available to ensure your comfort and privacy.

The venue is the Red Lion at Whittlesford, right next to the station, which is just a short walk across the car park to the Holiday Inn Express. Ground floor rooms are available and the rest are accessible by a lift. All rooms are either double or twin beds and you have the privacy of your own en suite toilet and shower room. We have secured an excellent deal for our members, £64 for a double room and £54 for a single occupancy. (So mention 'OldDux' when booking). This includes tea and coffee facilities in your room, a self service continental style breakfast with scrambled egg, sausages and plenty of toast, fruit juices, cereals etc. The hotel does not take the money until you sign out, so, you can book by debit/credit card now. The dinner on Saturday is informal, but we do ask the men to wear collar and tie. The cost of the three course meal which also includes wine, tea and coffee is £28.50, and last year the food could not be faulted. Special dietary requirements are catered for to a high standard.

Prior to the dinner the Old Dux Association are presenting a plaque to the Red Lion which will be unveiled by our President, Sir Richard Johns, who was himself a 64 squadron pilot at Duxford. (See page 5).

In addition to all the above, on Sunday, you have free access to the airfield, although we request £3 per head at the meeting which forms a donation to the museum as a thank you for the generous concessions they make to us. If you do not have transport just let us know, we can usually arrange for a member to give you a lift up to the airfield. At the heart you still have RAF Duxford, but additionally you have the Airspace Building (all British aircraft) the American Museum (all USA aircraft) and the Land Warfare museum. There is a lot to see, but if you need transport there is a free mini bus service on the airfield, and several cafe style eateries. We hold the AGM, which is a very relaxed affair, in the Airspace building at 2pm and disperse around 3.30pm to 4pm.

This is an enjoyable weekend; first timers are always impressed and usually return. It is good to meet old friends.....and if sadly, they are not present, we are all "old comrades with our Duxford experiences" to talk about, and no one is a stranger.

So please give us and yourself a treat and join us.

You will find all the information you require on the booking form at the back of this Newsletter, however, if you have any doubts or want to check out anything to do with the dinner, please contact Stan Dell on 01494 863428 or janstandell1@btinternet.com

Book early to avoid disappointment; but remember there are other places to stay in the area if the Holiday Inn & the Red Lion are full. Bob.

Another great idea

For those who can't get to our 20th anniversary dinner, why not send a birthday card and possibly your photo. We will then have them displayed at the annual dinner so that everyone can be there in spirit to make it an even better memorable occasion. Please send your cards and photos if you wish to either Bob or Kerris.

Mrs K Denley, 17 Solent Pines, Whitby Rd. Milford-on-Sea, Lymington, SQ41 0UX.

Mr M C Hope, Elm Tree House, 3 Elm Grove Road, Kidwelly, Carmarthen, SA17 4UA.

AGM meeting

For anyone who is planning to visit the museum on the Sunday 17th May for the AGM meeting, would you please let me have your vehicle registration number and the names of those with you for me to advise the IWM.

For the benefit of anyone visiting for the first time, report to the guardroom and you will be advised where to park. By doing this you and your party will be admitted free of charge.

For entrance onto the airfield for the Sunday AGM, I shall need this information no later than Saturday 2nd May 2015. Contact me, Bob Hope on 01554 890520 or Email: sl542@hotmail.co.uk (that is sl542....not s1).

Message from your treasurer

Help; please pay your subs on time

Your subscriptions are due on the 1st May, but you can send a cheque post dated to May 1st, like forty three kind members did last year, and not one was cashed before May 1st. Regrettably, on the debit side, it took £23 of Old Dux funds in postage, endless phone calls and the job wasn't finished until the last week in July. So come on chaps, stump up and make life a bit easier, there is a lot more to do this year. PLEASE, send a cheque for £5 dated May 1st, made payable to Old Dux Association (or if you prefer, as some do, send a well concealed fiver) to: **STAN DELL, 3 JOHN HAMPDEN WAY, PRESTWOOD, BUCKS. HP16 9DY. DO IT NOW, PLEASE.**

Gone but not forgotten

One of our founder members dear Ann Brinkley passed away in her sleep on 3rd Feb 2015, Ann will be dearly missed by many who had the privilege of knowing her. For those able to attend, the funeral will take place at 1100 hrs on the 10th March 2015 at Cambridge Crematorium, Huntingdon Road (A14), CB3 0JJ.

All our condolences, Old Dux Association.

Volunteers to Assist on Jim Garlinge's Recruitment Table at the Air Shows

The air show dates for this year are as follows:

VE day show, 23rd and 24th May. Flying Legends, 11th and 12th July. Battle of Britain, 19th and 20th September.

It is always good to have volunteers to assist at these events. It is not onerous and we finish in time to see most of the show. Start at 9.45am and finish at 3pm. A free ticket and designated parking are provided.

Bring your own lunch or eat in one of the several on site restaurants. If you can help, please contact Stan Dell, who is assisting Jim, on 01494 863428 or janstandell1@btinternet.com.

It is worth noting, that if you require another ticket, they are best obtained on line as soon as you have confirmation of a date to help us, as they are much less expensive.

How's our girl getting on?

Many of you will know Sarah Russell, our youngest member, who worked at Duxford on the Historic Duxford project. When her contract expired she left to take up the position of Curator at the Royston Museum. We have heard that she has taken up a new position of Director of the Norris Museum in St. Ives in Huntingdon. It is a big job with a £1.3 million extension happening soon and a major reorganisation to follow. Those of us who are familiar with her work will know that she is very capable of managing this. She has also been made an Associate of the Museums Association. We wish her well, and look forward to buying lots of raffle tickets from her at The Dinner. Well done Sarah. Stan Dell.

Biggin Hill offer to secure future of RAF chapel as MOD plans to end financial support

Biggin Hill Airport has said it is able to make up the shortfall of £50,000 per year to cover the running costs of the St George's Chapel of Remembrance on the site of the former RAF station at Biggin Hill, in Kent. Sir Winston Churchill gave his backing to the shrine, saying it should be a permanent feature to remember "the few" who gave their lives during the Second World War battle.

The MoD recently said [the chapel was not the "most appropriate" use of its budget](#) and said it would seek alternative ways of keeping the chapel open.

Will Curtis, managing director of Biggin Hill Airport, said the chapel was of "significant national importance.

Visitors are always most welcome. The duty curator can be reached on 01959 570353.

For those with sat-nav the postcode is TN16 3EJ otherwise for a map showing the Chapel's location Ctrl+click [here](#).

If you would like to help assure the future of the chapel, details concerning membership of the Friends of St George's Chapel can also be obtained from the same number.



By the Way

Dear Friends All,

No doubt you will have noticed a new name appeared with mine on the last couple of issues, a quiet way to let you know that after almost ten years as editor of our unique Newsletter, I have decided to hand over to a younger man, Alan Garner, someone you will all get to know as time goes by. (Photo)

Alan has all the qualities required to make a great editor plus a sense of humour and an appetite to make the newsletter really go (with your help). Some months ago, with mixed feelings, I made my wishes known to the committee that I would like to hand over the editing of the newsletter. Following some discussion with regard to who might want to take it on, Alan was approached and to my delight agreed so to do.

Alan served 2½ yrs as a Radar Mech at RAF Seletar, Singapore before being posted to RAF Duxford on 65Sqn in 1960 to serve out his last year of service. He thought Seletar was the best posting in the RAF, but now he claims to have known two of the best.

I shall remain on the committee to continue to edit the web site and indeed find more time to perhaps introduce some new ideas and features.....long overdue.

Many thanks for all your support over the years and trust you will continue to support Alan in the same way.



Kindest regards, Larry.

P.S. Alan's email: alan.garner01@tiscali.co.uk

Lady in White, Perla Gibson

I witnessed this remarkable Lady in April 1957 on my way to the Far East. It was beautiful weather as we arrived into Durban harbour. I remember it was a Sunday with nobody about as our troopship 'Empire Orwell' slowly drifted starboard towards the quayside. As we looked out over a large area of deserted railway lines, we saw driving across these many railway lines, a beautiful black Rolls Royce with all its wheels bouncing up and down and yet the body just gliding toward us. None of us knew what was about to happen. The uniformed chauffeur had opened the rear door and a lovely lady emerged carrying a megaphone. As she moved towards the ship, she lifted the megaphone to her lips, you could have heard a pin drop, and then she began to sing. That's when the hairs lifted on the back of our necks as we were transported back in time. It was only 12 years since the end of WWII. - If you remember her tell us your story.



Perla Gibson, Lady in White



Statue of Perla Siedle Gibson, Lady in White

A war time national South African treasure - the famous 'Lady in White', Perla Gibson singing to a troopship in Durban harbour during the Second World War. Perla Siedle Gibson was a South African soprano and artist who became internationally celebrated during the Second World War as the Lady in White, when she sang troopships in and out of Durban harbour. Perla was born in Durban in 1888, the daughter of Otto Siedle, a prominent local shipping agent, businessman and musician of German extraction. In the early twentieth century, she studied music and art in Europe and the US and gave recitals in London and New York. Her youngest brother was Jack Siedle, the South African Test cricketer.

During World War II Durban was an extremely busy way station for convoys of ships en route to the fronts in North Africa and the Far East. Gibson became famous among thousands of Allied troops when she serenaded them as their ships passed in and out. One account of the origin for Gibson's custom was that it arose when she was seeing off a young Irish seaman her family had entertained the day before. As his ship was departing he was said to have called across the water asking her to sing something Irish, and Gibson responded with a rendition of 'When Irish Eyes are Smiling'. She decided to sing to every ship connected with the war, which entered or left the harbour. Over the years following, she went on to sing to more than 5,000 ships and a total of about a quarter of a million Allied servicemen. Clad in white with a red hat, she would stand on a spot at the mouth of Durban Bay where ships entering and leaving the harbour pass quite close, and sing patriotic and sentimental songs through a megaphone salvaged from a torpedoed ship, which grateful British soldiers had given her. Soldiers' talk led to the fame of the Lady in White further spreading around the world. A British army newspaper called Parade, dated 3 March 1945, described Gibson as a highlight of troops' visits to Durban: As the crowded ships passed into the harbour, men lining the landward rails saw a woman, dressed in white, singing powerfully through a megaphone such songs as 'There'll Always be an England' and 'Land of Hope and Glory'. A well-known local figure, she would drive down from her home on the Berea as soon as she could see that the ships were moving in. Gibson was married to Air Sergeant Jack Gibson, who served in Italy, and had two sons and a daughter in the military. She had sung goodbye to all their ships as they left for the war. She even sang on the day she received news that her son Roy had been killed in the fighting in Italy. She died in 1971, shortly before her 83rd birthday. The year after, a bronze plaque donated by men of the Royal Navy was erected to her memory on Durban's North Pier on the spot where she used to sing. In 1995, Queen Elizabeth II unveiled a statue of Perla Gibson near the Ocean Terminal in Durban harbour.

Information source – Wikipedia Ed.

Seletar Contact

On the subject of Seletar, I recently added my details to the Forces Reunited web site and the very next day received a message from my old Scottish pal Donnie Craggs who I last saw 56 years ago, he now resides in Australia. I knew Donnie as an electrical J/T in Singapore; he went on to become a Master Engineer - W/O with 24 years' service.

Go to www.forcesreunited.org.uk and do the same, you may well get a wonderful surprise too.

Ed.

An Obituary printed in the London Times.....Quite Brilliant!!

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair;
- And maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his failing condition. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further, when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live, as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death,

- by his parents, Truth and Trust,
- by his wife, Discretion,
- by his daughter, Responsibility,
- by his son, Reason,
- by his best friend, Reliability.

He is survived by his five stepbrothers;

- I Know My Rights,
- I Want It Now,
- Someone Else Is To Blame,
- I'm A Victim,
- Pay me for Doing Nothing.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. However, we all remember him don't we?

Poet's corner: JFK used to carry the following Spanish poem by Domingo Ortega in his wallet...

Translated, it reads:

"Bullfight critics, ranked in rows
Crowd the enormous Plaza full

But only one is there who knows ---
And he's the man who fights the bull"

The meaning of any poetry is, of course, subjective. But here's an interesting take on this one....
The critics will always be there. Their job, 97% (approx) of the time, is to doubt you. And they'll do so until you die. No matter how fast or far you run, they'll be there. And even if you run into a cave and live out the rest of your days as a hermit, they'll find you in the only place you cannot run from.... inside your head.
No matter what you're doing... no matter where you are... you must have conviction in your chosen path, together with the audacity to take risks.

The moment you start to think that someone out there knows better than you yourself of what you're doing ...

That's when you mess up and get a nice big bull's horn up your backside. Ed is calling all poets, send them in.

Lest we forget

An elderly British gentleman of 83 arrived in Paris by plane. At the French immigration desk, the man took a few minutes to locate his passport in his carry-on bag. "You have been to France before, Monsieur?" the Immigration officer asked, sarcastically. The elderly gentleman admitted he had been to France previously. The officer said "Then you should know well enough to have your passport ready." The British gentleman says, "I am sorry, the last time I was here, I didn't have to show it." "Impossible, the British always have to show their passports on arrival in France!" said the officer. The elderly gentleman gave the Immigration Officer a long hard look. Then he quietly revealed; "Well, the last time I came was on Juno Beach on D-Day 1944, and I couldn't find any Frenchmen to show it to."

Bins

A refuse collector in Brisbane, Australia, is driving along a street picking up the wheelie bins to emptying into his compactor. He goes to one house where the bin hasn't been left out, so in the spirit of kindness, after having a quick look around for the bin; he goes to the front door and knocks. There's no answer. Being kindly and conscientious he knocks again but much harder. Eventually a Japanese man comes to the door. "Harro!" he says. "Giddy, mate! Where's ya bin?" asks the collector. "I bin on toiret," explains the Japanese chap a bit perplexed. Realising the fellow had misunderstood him the bin man smiles and tries again. "No! No! Mate, where's your dust bin?" "I dust been to toiret, I toll you!" says the Japanese man still perplexed. "Listen," says the collector with added emphasis, "You're misunderstanding me. Where's your 'wheelie' bin?" "OK, OK." he replies, with a sheepish grin on his face he whispers in the collector's ear.... "I wheelie bin having sex wiffa wife's sista!"

Ancient Israel

In ancient Israel, it came to pass that a trader by the name of Abraham Com did take unto himself a young wife by the name of Dot. And Dot Com was a comely woman, broad of shoulder and long of leg. Indeed, she was often called Amazon Dot Com.

And she said unto Abraham, her husband, "Why dost thou travel so far from town to town with thy goods when thou canst trade without ever leaving thy tent?"

And Abraham did look at her as though she were several saddle bags short of a camel load, but simply said, "How, dear?"

And Dot replied, "I will place drums in all the towns and drums in between to send messages saying what you have for sale, and they will reply telling you who hath the best price. And the sale can be made on the drums and delivery made by Uriah's Pony Stable (UPS)."

Abraham thought long and decided he would let Dot have her way with the drums. And the drums rang out and were an immediate success. Abraham sold all the goods he had at the top price, without ever having to move from his tent. To prevent neighbouring countries from overhearing what the drums were saying, Dot devised a system that only she and the drummers knew. It was known as Must Send Drum Over Sound (MSDOS), and she also developed a language to transmit ideas and pictures - Hebrew To The People (HTTP).

And the young men did take to Dot Com's trading as doth the greedy horsefly take to camel dung. They were called Nomadic Ecclesiastical Rich Dominican Sybarites, or NERDS.

And lo, the land was so feverish with joy at the new riches and the deafening sound of drums, that no one noticed that the real riches were going to that enterprising drum dealer, Brother William of Gates, who bought up every drum maker in the land. And indeed did insist on drums to be made that would work only with Brother Gates' drumheads and drumsticks.

And Dot did say, "Oh, Abraham, what we have started is being taken over by others." And Abraham looked out over the Bay of Ezekiel, or eBay as it came to be known. And he said, "We need a name that reflects what we are."

And Dot replied, "Young Ambitious Hebrew Owner Operators." "YAHOO," said Abraham. And because it was Dot's idea, he named it YAHOO Dot Com.

Abraham's son, Isaac, being the young Gregarious Energetic Educated Kid (GEEK) that he was, soon started using Dot's drums to locate things around the countryside. It soon became known as God's Own Official Guide to Locating Everything (GOOGLE).

That is how it all began. And that's the truth.



Our Memorial Plaque to be presented to The Red Lion



News Flash from the English coastal area

The Royal Navy intercepted three boatloads of people off the coast of Kent today. This placed the Navy in an awkward position, as the boats were not heading to, but away from Kent towards France. Another surprise finding was that they were loaded with British people who were all seniors of pension age. Their claim was that they were trying to get to Calais so as to be able to return to the UK as illegal immigrants and therefore be entitled to far more benefits than they were receiving as legitimate UK pensioners. The Navy, it is believed, gave them food, water, and wished them bon voyage to assist them on their journey. We are booking the next boat out; let me know if you want to come.



**Reminder from your secretary
The Unveiling of the Old Dux Plaque**

This will take place on Saturday 9th May at The National Memorial Arboretum (NMA), please try and support this memorable occasion, guests would be very welcome.

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. It is free entry and opens at 0900 hrs.

The address is: **Croxall Road, Alrewas, Burton-on-Trent, DE13 7BD.**

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 the dedication and unveiling of the plaque that will have been produced by the NMA to Old Dux approved design. The dedication will be officiated over and performed by Old Dux members.

There is every chance the weather should be good in May, there are lots to see, and a lovely day out to be enjoyed amongst friends. If you've never had the pleasure of visiting the National Arboretum, now would be a great opportunity. Lunch is optional but it is a chance to sit and chat together before the unveiling ceremony.

13.30 hrs: Meet in Rose Room

15.00 hrs: Old Dux Association Beech Tree for dedication.

The NMA require the number of us planning to attend ASAP, so please think seriously about coming.

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.

Kerris.

Please use or copy this slip and return A.S.A.P if you are planning to attend. If you also require the two course lunch please add your cheque for £16.00 per person. Payable to: 'Old Dux Association'.

Please send to:

Mrs K Denley
17, Solent Pines,
Whitby Rd.
Milford-on-Sea,
Lymington, SQ41 0UX Tel. No: 01590 645495

Name/s Tel. No.

Name/s Tel. No. 6



OLD DUX ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER BOOKING FORM

To be held at The Red Lion, Whittlesford
Saturday 16th May 2015 6.30pm for 7.30pm

From..... Telephone No.....E-mail

The price of the dinner is £28.50p per person including wine

As there is a choice of two dishes from each course, you are requested to make a selection from the following:-

- Starter** A : Chicken Liver Parfait, dressed rocket, fig chutney or
 B : Scottish Smoked Salmon, capers, lemon, shredded shallots
- Main** C : Corn fed chicken breast, potatoes and seasonal vegetables or
 D : Oven baked herb and lemon crusted cod fillet, sauté potatoes and seasonal vegetables
- Dessert:** E : Tangy lemon tart, caramelised orange and handmade vanilla ice cream or
 F : Bread and butter pudding, apricot jam glaze and homemade egg custard

Please show your selection as example

EXAMPLE:	A.	C.	F.
NAME 1
NAME 2
NAME 3
NAME 4
etc...			

- * Please indicate any essential dietary requirements
- * With whom would you wish to share a table
- * If you are attending the AGM on Sunday 17th May at 13.00 hrs.

We require your Car Registration Number and names of
passengers

Please return this form **NO LATER THAN MONDAY 20th APRIL together with full remittance**
But to assist us, much earlier would be helpful! To :-

The Treasurer
Old Dux Association
Stan Dell
3, John Hampden Way
Prestwood
Great Missenden
Bucks. HP16 9DY

Telephone Number:- 01494 863428
E-mail:- janstandell1@btinternet.com

It is regretted that cancellations after the 11th May cannot be refunded.