

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT-2015 AGM

Vice Patron (s) President, colleagues. We have enjoyed - if that is the correct word- a busy year. First, in this report a few words of thanks are due. Without the support of the Station Commander and staff, including contract staff, it would be extremely difficult to run your Association. I would be grateful if you could pass on our thanks Adrian. In turn, our Patron and Vice Patrons have continued to take an active part in keeping your Chairman on the straight and narrow! Finally, and last but not least, your Council is due a special vote of thanks, not only for putting up with me, but more importantly for all the hard and often unseen work they undertake on your behalf. Needless to say Min Larkin falls outside this plethora of appreciation. Some will say he was always a special case! It would be inappropriate to offer an in depth comment at an AGM for the years of commitment Min and his wife Barbara have given to the Association. He has graciously decided to step down from "public life". Fortunately he will remain as Station and Association archivist to support us on our Legacy work-of which more later. Later this year we will offer our thanks to Min in a more intimate surrounding. I am sure you will agree that he should join the select band of Honorary Vice Presidents, We are indeed moving into a new era.

Following last year's AGM your Council endorsed the following three-year Objectives. Our activities this last twelve months (save for the Triennial activities) have been dictated to by these Objectives:

- Financial Management
- Constitution Review
- Legacy Activities SLIDE REQUIRED FOR THESE 4
- Triennial 2016 Planning and Execution

Your Association was represented at three major events in London: It started in April with the Annual Service at St Clements Danes commemorating the foundation of our Service. In September, the Westminster Abbey Battle of Britain Service at Westminster Abbey where The Prince of Wales represented the Queen, saw a number of Council members in attendance. In November, under the able leadership of Mike Evans, we led the Federation of Boy Entrants and Apprentices at the National Armistice Parade in Whitehall. In turn we were represented by myself and Ron Priest at the National Memorial Arboretum Service in the presence of the Earl of Wessex on Armistice Day itself

Our own Remembrance Service commemorated the sacrifice of our Great Escapers. We were graced with the presence of Air Commodore Charles Clark who supported the Escapers while he was incarcerated in Stalag Luft 111.

Perhaps of most significance regarding Ceremonial and Remembrance over the review period was the Association presence at Cosford in May when The Princess Royal presented a replacement Colour to No 1 S of TT. Over 100 members and guests were themselves “on parade” including three former Colour Bearers. I am pleased to report that the 300 + trainees on the parade square demonstrated the highest level of drill and ceremonial, belying the fact

that unlike those of a certain age, drill training is an exception in the Cosford training regime. Earlier this month I represented the Association at the laying up of the Old Colour

We said farewell to Gp Capt Simon Harper in the summer and welcomed our new President. I leave it to you to consider the implications of the appointment of Gp Capt Burns. Two of the last three Station Commanders have been Scots, while your Chairman is a Scot! We hope you enjoy your time with the Association Adrian. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of March the Association Offices moved from the Airfield to new and enhanced facilities at Building 412 near to but not in the Maitland Guardroom and practically in a direct line of sight from SHQ.

Let me turn now to two ongoing activities that have taken up much of my own and Council's time. We were fortunate in gaining the support of a new Treasurer with light blue in his blood. With support from Fred Crooks, Tony Whittaker has settled in. The essential record keeping work has, as they say, been taken back in house. We now have a system that even I can understand! This allows Tony to more effectively manage the budget and monitor investment activity.

Elsewhere, we have not been so fortunate. The Membership Secretary appointment is vacant following Tony King's step back due to ill health. In turn, we urgently seek an Editor for the Haltonian. So far we have been unsuccessful. Without one we will be unable to communicate to the standard we have come to enjoy. Come on then! Hands up to see me after the meeting

on this matter. I am becoming increasingly concerned at the difficulty in gaining volunteers. The hard working bunch of Council Members need support if the Association is to sustain its vibrant heritage.

Finally, members will of course (!) remember that last year I advised that work on commemorating our Legacy would start. I can now offer a significant update to the Legacy Issues addressed during the report period. There are 4 strands. So that we can consider the whole package in an uninterrupted entirety I, Ron Priest and Peter Cunningham will take questions at the end of the complete narrative.

### **SLIDE-LEGACY ACTIVITIES**

- The Halton Grove (RP)
- The Apprentice Award for No 1 S of TT (DG)
- Driving Forward our Centennial Legacy Commemorations (DG)
- The International Bomber Command Centre (DG)

The first two activities are ones you can touch and feel. Ron, can you please update us on what has been happening at the Halton Grove?

### **Halton Grove**

*General Secretary to insert RP narrative for the record*

### **HG SLIDE(S)**

### **APPRENTICE AWARD**

David Payne of the 216<sup>th</sup> ably supported by Eric Sharpe of the 60<sup>th</sup> has completed this fine set of work.

## **SLIDE**

### **One Photo showing main and personal**

Given Cosford's work associated with the Queen's Colour activities in the first half of 2014 our initiative slowed. It is now back on track for the first Award to be made this year.

Now let me run through where we are on two very important but presently more intangible initiatives. Avid readers of last year's minutes will recall that I intimated we would be embarking on strengthening our Legacy. Much work has been taken forward since then and the pages of the Haltonian have attempted to keep you abreast of developments.

### **2020 LEGACY**

The days of finding an ex Apprentice volunteer with the right skill set and time to take complex Legacy work forward are behind us. Accordingly, during the summer of 2014 we engaged professional help to undertake a Scoping Study to identify our shortfalls in broadcasting our Legacy and recommend a subsequent rectification pathway. Your Council endorsed the pathway in October last year. It is focused on reaching its goal in 2020 - the centennial of the founding of the RAF Apprentice Scheme. Following further consultation, including reference to the Charities Commission, as well as our Patron and Vice Patrons, we have set up a special Company Limited by Guarantee to take the initiative forward. With the agreement of Lord Trenchard, it is called Trenchard's Engineering Apprentice Legacy 2020 - or TEAL2020 in shorthand. Peter West and Denis O'Brian join me as fellow Directors. Thanks to a notable Legacy from a former Apprentice we have been able to ring fence

start up funding and operations throughout 2015 thus also protecting Association core funding and activities. Again, we have engaged professional help with complementary special skills not readily identifiable from our volunteer community. The integrated team has embarked on the following Council – endorsed initiative:

#### SLIDE

- Engage with funding authorities with the aim of being self funding
- Initiate Education and Training design
- Support a Bursary / Scholarship Initiative
- Recommend Exhibition design reflecting the 21<sup>st</sup> Century environment
- Recommend the way ahead for Web activities unique to TEAL2020.

This is an ambitious but essential project if our Legacy is to be sustained. Of course none of us can forecast twenty years ahead! Even so, by working up bursary / scholarship initiatives we can engage the youth of to-day. We can ensure there is definitive longevity in this aspect of the project. I have already engaged with RAFA and the Air Cadets in this area and earlier this month in partnership with RAFA visited a blue chip Engineering Academy and associated engineering company to help determine the best way forward.

A bursary or scholarship scheme is being investigated with some very promising opportunities emerging. The fundamental idea of ensuring that young people can continue to be supported into engineering through Trenchard's vision is strong. Clever investment and management will be needed if the scheme is to continue in perpetuity.

Engaging with schools and the national curriculum has been challenging, however the Scout movement has proven to be a promising avenue. Next steps will involve more in depth discussions with the Scouts, and further work involving the Air Cadets.

The exhibition design and manufacture work will lead to determining the best long - term home in a nationally recognised location. The TEAL 2020 team has identified two candidate locations. So, much is ongoing and much remains to be done. However, by the end of this year I am confident we will have a bursary / scholarship strategy in place and recommended educational solutions, particularly with the Air Cadets and RAFA. With the support of the Trenchard Museum and archive team we will have taken significant steps forward in developing the exhibition design.

A new website to complement the existing one will be launched later this year. It will tell the apprentice story in an exciting and accessible fashion. With strong SEO (search engine optimisation) capability and a clean, easily navigable site, we hope to attract and drive web traffic to learn more about Trenchard's Brats online. The new site will also be an impressive first port of call to any external agency wishing to engage with the project.

We plan to have Audio visual resources available as downloadable podcasts and streamable material which can be used by learners and interested parties.

Broadcast media coverage (radio & TV) will be positioned for the Centenary.

## International Bomber Command Centre (IBCC)



Let me conclude by running through the final element of our Legacy narrative which has only really surfaced in the last six months. Following a request for Legacy suggestions in the Autumn Haltonian the Lincoln Branch brought to our attention the ongoing work for the IBCC in Lincoln. Peter Cunningham, aided by his Branch colleagues including Jim Brackley who is also here today, has grasped the nettle to ensure that our Legacy, particularly the sacrifices, in Bomber Command, is recognised at the Centre.

You will have seen the information leaflets to-day. Like the NMA this Memorial is destined to become a major attraction commemorating great sacrifices; in this case of Bomber Command personnel during WW11. Lincolnshire has historic poignancy:

- Home to the HQ's of 1 and 5 groups
- 30% of all Bomber Command stations located in the county
- Suffered the highest losses of any county
- Site of an Avro factory
- Known as "Bomber County"

Peter and I met with the Executive Director last month. She is enthused by our heritage and the sacrifices made by our predecessors in Bomber Command.

Our existing Trenchard Museum archives and website detail associated with the Bomber Command story will help inform the archive element of the Centre. We have a unique opportunity to get our foot in the door and influence the final design. Peter and Bill Taylor have offered to provide educational support, we have agreement in principle to have a small area (known as a pod) dedicated to deliver our Bomber Command story in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century manner should we decide it is appropriate. An attention getting the centre piece agreed by the Project Director Nikki Barr will have a focused paver package depicting our contribution to the Bomber Command story line in The Ribbon of Remembrance.

This will provide a central and personal focal point for visitors to the Centre and ensure that those who served or supported the Command's operations are remembered and honoured.

Created out of Yorkstone Scoutmoor stones, this highly durable stone will be available in a variety of sizes. The colours will vary from each stone; from blue grey to buff brown so no two stones are the same.

There is a price to implement all this - probably in the region of £5000. Due to its immediacy and more focused topic the work will be ring fenced from TEAL 2020. The Council have agreed in principle to drive forward with this package, starting with the archive and paver work. Peter has kindly agreed to lead the team. Let me offer a flavour of the vision

SLIDES

## Any questions?



### **IBCC DETAIL FOR Qs**

#### **Why Lincolnshire?**

- Home to the HQ's of 1 and 5 groups
- 30% of all Bomber Command stations located in the county
  - Suffered the highest losses of any county
    - Site of an Avro factory
    - Known as "Bomber County"

### **The Site**

- 9.7 acres on top of Lincoln's second hill
  - Direct view from inside the Memorial to the Cathedral
- Green space bordering three sides, providing a tranquil setting for contemplation
  - 125 year lease at agricultural rates

### **The Memorial**

- Crafted out of hardwearing, low maintenance Corten Steel which is formed using recycled steel, giving a great "Green" rating
  - 31.09m high – the same height as a Lancaster wingspan
  - 5m wide at the base – the same width as a Lancaster wing
- Created out of 6 individual pieces which will be internally ribbed and riveted on the exterior faces to resemble plane construction of the era.
  - Formed out of two shards creating a void into which visitors can enter
- Surrounded by curved Corten walls alphabetically listing the losses from the area with surname and Initials only Phase 1 covers those losses from 1 and 5 group
  - Phase 2 of the walls will cover the losses from the rest of the country

### **The Chadwick Centre**

- Named after Roy Chadwick, designer of the Lancaster
  - The Centre will house the exhibition and digital archive
- Visitor facilities in the Centre will include multi-media suite, reference library, contemplative space, restaurant and a shop
- It will also incorporate a purpose built Education Centre which will be staffed by a full-time team of educationalists who's remit will include liaising with schools and creating an on-line teaching resource for national and international use
- It has been designed to be low maintenance and economic to run with high level insulation and using green technologies

### **The Gardens**

- The whole Park will be landscaped and the design includes the planting of over 100 new trees
  - It will feature two Peace Gardens.
- The International Peace Garden will feature 5 sculptures, one for each continent, which will be designed by artists from around the world selected via an international competition being run in conjunction with the British Council
  - The sculptures will reference the 60 nations who served in the Command
- They will be set in an area of planting including trees from each of the continents.
- The Lincolnshire Peace Garden will include the Memorial Avenue with a Lincolnshire boulder for each of the 27 stations that operated during WW2 each carrying the insignia of the station.
  - This avenue connects the Chadwick Centre to the Memorial.
- Surrounding the Avenue 27 native trees will be geo located in the gardens to represent their location in the County
  - Each will be planted in soil taken from the relevant station and will have an interpretation board outlining its history and the Squadrons that were based there.

### **The Ribbon of Remembrance**

- This will provide a central and personal focal point for visitors to the Centre and ensure that those who served or supported the Command's operations are remembered and honoured, whether lost during the war or since.
- Created out of Yorkstone Scoutmoor stones, this highly durable stone is cut to 65mm depth and is available in a variety of sizes. The colours vary from each stone; from blue grey to buff brown so no two stones are the same.
  - Stones are available to order through the Trust's web site and are available for individuals, Squadron Associations or nations