

No.160 Squadron, Royal Air Force

AD LIB

(**"The Chota Coggage" for survivors**)

No.3

Winter 1997

The 1997 reunion was a great success. A total of 53 sat down to dinner - 40 members (of whom 9 were first timers, 3 honorary members and 10 ladies and guests. Our Organiser, Ted Daines, said that it had been a good year, with the squadron crest being sponsored for the R.A.F. Heraldry Trust; two issues of 'AD LIB' being produced; the membership list overhauled; 23 new members located and a number of bods coming forward to help him.

There was a heated debate between two members at the reunion about the way maintenance was handled at Minneriya One held that all maintenance, including engine changes, was done on the flights. The other said that this was not the case and that major maintenance was done by specialist groups. There was some doubt as to whether there were Station Workshops at Minneriya. Which sections transferred into .7160 Servicing Echelon and which stayed with 160 Squadron? What are your recollections? How was maintenance organised? Please let us know. Write soon - don't leave it to the other fellow I Letters to Bill Cooper, 37 Oakdene, Lansdown Road, Cheltenham, Glos., OL51 6PX.

WILL THOSE KIND SOULS SENDING COPIES OF REUNION PHOTOGRAPHS TO COLLEAGUES PLEASE ENSURE THESE ARE ACCOMPANIED BY A NAME AND ADDRESS TO WHICH AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT CAN BE SENT! I (Strange, isn't it not until we get these photographs do we realise that we are 'knocking on a bit' I

The 1998 reunion will be held at the Falcon Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon over the weekend of 4th, 5th & 6th September. (Organiser, H. H. "Ted" Daines, 45 Randolph Road, NORWICH, Norfolk, NR1 2RU (01-603-660514)).

160 colleagues looking for more nostalgic information about Libs will be interested to know that a handy size 70 page booklet entitled "PILOT'S and FLIGHT ENGINEER'S NOTES" from the Air Ministry was reprinted some years ago and, on making enquiries, it is still obtainable at a price thought to be about 2.95 from Air Data Publications, Southside, Manchester Airport, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LL. Tel: 0161499 0024 (Los Crawley)

'Hank' Illingworth's first flight in a 160 Liberator was at Ratmalana. He thinks it was "F", on circuits and bumps with W/C Brady checking out co-pilots for captaincy. Those concerned were Pilot Officers Pinnell and White-Gage. Hank later accompanied W/C Stacey on his first flight with a 160 Liberator. The co-pilot on that occasion was the same P/O White-Gage. ('Hank' Illingworth)

Phil Redman reports that there was a dummy airstrip between Digri and Salbani. He recalls that he did a tour of duty there with another 160 Squadron bod. They patrolled with only a hurricane lamp for company. Digri, at that time, was the base for 99 Squadron (Wellingtons). Salbani was the base for 159 Squadron (Liberators). It was also playing host to 160 Squadron.(Phil Redman)

A group of airmen stationed at Fayid (Egypt) were having a day off. They hitch-hiked to Ismailia, and had a pleasant day sight-seeing, taking lunch at the YMCA. This no doubt including egg and chips. They decided to take the train back to Fayid. Settling down for the journey, they became aware of Arabs on the roof and hanging on the sides of their coach. They thought that perhaps the rumour that it was free outside was true. Rattling along, and nearing the Canal Zone, the train stopped. After a while it went all the way back again. It transpired that the guard had been left behind. The airmen's tale of why they were late was not believed - that is until enquiries were made the next day. The contributor of this account says that he believed, until it came to light, that episodes of pure farce were confined to the services! (Ted Daines)

R I P

We have recently learned from Ron Crawford that his co-pilot, ex-Flying Officer C. Dunn, passed away in Bermuda during 1996.

A Bristol solicitor has advised us that Kenneth Baxter passed away on 30th June 1997

The numerous ex ACSEA Liberator types in Canada call themselves the BURMA BOMBERS. In order to get their exploits into print before it was too late for personal recollections, they commissioned a book to be researched by an academic. The work, called "BURMA LIBERATORS" was authored by the late John R. W. Gwynne-Timothy, and was published by Next Level Press, Toronto, Ontario (ISBN 1-895578-00-0 & 1-895578-02-7) in 1991. It runs to 1,154 pages in two volumes and traces the origins of Western influence in the Far East; the events leading up to the First and Second World Wars; the creation of the Royal Canadian Air Force, and the activities of each of the Liberator squadrons in the Burma campaign. The missions of 160 Squadron are covered on pages 883-902, giving details of each aircraft employed, with its code letter and name of the captain. Tribute is also paid in the book to the ground crews who enabled the aircraft to keep going under primitive conditions. (Bill Cooper)

Copies of the squadron crest, in full colour, with or without dedication (£3 inc. p & p), will again be available when the member who arranges such things is settled at his new base.

Design, typesetting and envelopes for AD LIB presently cost us nothing. Production of the first three issues attracted sponsorships which are £5 for printing and £10 for postage. Further sponsorships are earnestly solicited by your organiser. (address above) Additional copies of AD LIB may be obtained by sending him two 26p stamps for *each copy*, to cover photocopying and postage.

Contributions to 'AD LIB' are solicited - especially from those at the 1997 reunion who recounted some of the humorous incidents which had occurred on the squadron. (Send to Ted Dames)

Designed and typeset In Cheltenham by ADASTRAPRINT - free, gratis and for nothing!