

RAFHAA AUGUST 2020 NEWSLETTER



Issue 81 of the Haltonian was delivered through UK letter boxes in the first week of August. Response to the magazine has reflected your delight in the continuation of the magazine and your Association. Members were also pleased with the AGM documentation, the ease of voting on-line and the professionally produced personality briefs on the Council nominees.

However, there was confusion about the relationship now existing between RAFHAA and RAFHAT. Your Council has decided that an honest, propaganda free, statement should be issued to clear up any misunderstandings. This follows below.

There is now no connection – financial, operational or on any other level – between RAFHAT and RAFHAA. Originally RAFHAT grew out of the Association and had broadly the same individuals as trustees and officers. RAFHAT was created in parallel with a limited Company (Trenchard Engineering Apprentice Legacy Ltd – hereafter TEAL) set up by Duncan Grant and Denis O’Brien which undertook consultancy and planning work for the direction they wished to take things in, which were largely driven by the then proposed closure date for RAF Halton of 2020. Amongst the membership of the Association there were several individuals who were uncomfortable with the use of RAFHAA funds for both TEAL and RAFHAT. TEAL cost about £56,000 and large sums of the order of £200,000 were transferred from RAFHAA to RAFHAT. RAFHAT

differs from RAFHAA in that it is a charity without members whereas RAFHAA is one with members which meant that the members of RAFHAA had no control over those funds once they moved to RAFHAT.

The next point of disagreement came after the announcement that RAFHAA would be closed in August 2020 and as a result an action group sprang up from amongst RAFHAA members to gain control and reverse that decision.

The situation now is that RAFHAT has returned around £225,000 to RAFHAA and that an amicable position has been reached between the two charities. The individuals forming the new Council of RAFHAA are all designate up to the AGM when those individuals and their ideas will be put to the vote of the members. Details of the AGM arrangements are set out in The Haltonian Issue 81 and have been created in the manner approved by the Charities Commission in these difficult times for meetings. All postal votes are being opened and counted by a Magistrate.

Our virtual AGM will take place on 19th September and we will place a video of the meeting covering the motion results and a Chairman's statement on our website www.oldhaltonians.co.uk The Minutes will also be posted to the same site. At the time of writing the voting response has been very good and reflects a huge increase in membership participation on previous AGMs. To those of you who have not yet voted, may I remind you to return your postal votes or use the on-line link that permits your participation. Voting closes on 11th September. Sadly, there is a cabal of members who are dedicated to closing the Association at all costs, even by attempting to submit illegal false votes in the names of other people. Our security arrangements are well on top of this and we know who the culprits are.

VOTING LINK: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/M6QH9C>

On 12th August I had to write to you about a breach of our data base and an unsolicited letter sent out to members on an outdated data base. Again, we know who the culprits are and an investigation has been conducted and a report sent to the Information Commissioners Office and the Charity

Commission. Many of you have written to say how saddened you are that ex-brats are fighting openly over matters that should have been decided democratically at AGMs or at an EGM called specially to discuss the disputed matters. For the record, many members tried hard to persuade the previous Chairman to do this, but he refused. Now, in a new spirit of openness, your new Council is having to contend with outrageous underhand acts of individual and joint attacks by a handful of misguided and wholly unethical members. Sad though it is, I am afraid that some members may soon disqualify themselves for membership.

Membership currently stands at over 2300 with new recent applications and membership renewals, and over 100 lifers converting to Heritage Life Membership. Some members declined to set up standing orders but generously donated sums to see them through to their last postings. Thus, the current membership is enduring, and long may that be the case. In the future, your Council wants to spread our membership wings. But for now, we could usefully develop our base by reaching out to ex brats who enjoy entry association events but who are not members of the RAFHAA. So, may I pass a message to the many [entry association organisers. Could you please contact your membership and let them know about](#) the reinvigorated HAA and encourage them to join by contacting Colin Ferrier at membership@rafhaa.co.uk As soon as Covid 19 restrictions are lifted, we will be organising HAA reunions and we are considering a variety of locations to ease the travel burden to the Chilterns.

Haltonian Issue 81 also included details on participating in our new 500 Club Lottery. Please would entry association organisers also contact your membership and let them know about lottery ticket availability. A high 70% goes to prizes and 30% of all receipts will go to promoting our heritage. The lottery will have no overhead costs! The closing date for initial applications is 15th September 2020. You may now apply for up to three tickets each member and Phil Sprinks is on 24/7 alert for your ticket requests. The email address is 500club@rafhaa.co.uk

Your Council is actively investigating how best to maintain The Halton Grove at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA). There are a few repairs needed and Council is considering asking for sponsorship from individual entries. For example, one of the wooden benches needs refurbishing. We plan on providing a list of repairs needed in the next Haltonian and asking for entry sponsorship. In return, we will permit a small plaque attached to the repaired item showing the entry number of the sponsorship. In the old days, wherever you travelled, particularly in the capital, entry stickers could be found adorning places of attraction: 'While you sit drinking whiskey and beer just know the 90th Entry was here'. Sponsoring the Grove would be a much more sophisticated opportunity to leave your mark! On a similar subject, your Council hopes to encourage every entry to embed a paver commemorating their entry on the apprentice wheel. Where entries are no longer with us, the Council will consider arranging suitable pavers. And there is also a question of pavers for our Knights and Heroes. Watch out for an article promoting The Halton Grove at the NMA in the next issue of The Haltonian.

Group Captain Daniel Startup RAF has assumed command of RAF Halton. A former Chinook pilot, he is sure to understand the quality and value of ex apprentices! We wish him all success in his coming tour as CO of our former alma mata

Our Patron, Sir Michael Armitage reached the grand old age of 90 late in August. Your Chairman sent birthday greetings noting that two members of the Council originated from the 90th and are especially pleased with his achievement!

Your Council is hopeful that the annual remembrance service in St George's Church followed by a Tribute dedication to fallen colleagues will take place as normal on 10th November, subject to Covid 19 restrictions. Please keep an eye on the News page of our website, www.oldhaltonians.co.uk

Increased numbers of trainees arriving at RAF Halton while Covid 19 distancing rules apply have resulted in the need for the station to recover Building 412 from our Association. We shall be vacating the building that has been our HQ

for many years on 5th September. Our General Secretary, Les Shardlow, has kindly agreed for us to use his home address for all future mail. The telephone number has also been transferred. Our contact details are now: 11 Ayleswater, Watermead, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 0FB, tel + 44 (0)1296 696896.

I should like to mention two upcoming retirements. Barry Smith (50th), has served on the RAFHAA Council in several capacities for many years. Barry was an ex instructor at RAF Halton and has been part of the furniture in the Association for as long as anyone can remember. Barry is now standing down, and we thank him for his enormous contribution to our Association and wish him well in the future. I am pleased to announce that Barry has been invited to become an Honorary Vice President of our Association. We are also saying goodbye to our Treasurer, Tony Whittaker. Tony was not an ex apprentice but his father, a Dambuster, was. Tony has undertaken the difficult role of Treasurer over a period of considerable strain for the Association. His solid and meticulous work has been a feature of consistency over the past five years and we should all be grateful for his significant contribution to our Association.

I am sure you would all like to know about an upcoming opportunity to purchase an ex Apprentice military medal. PLEASE NOTE. THIS IS ADVANCED INFORMATION. WE ARE NOT TAKING ORDERS YET BUT WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR OF YOUR INTEREST. The Admin Apprentices Association has sponsored the creation of an "Apprentice Commemorative Medal". Your new Council is pleased to support this initiative and will arrange availability for RAFHAA membership. I attach a copy of the design that will be in both standard and miniature sizes. Price will be around £40.00 for RAFHAA members. Any ex RAF apprentice or the family of a deceased apprentice may purchase and wear the medal.

Finally, a new book titled "Halton Boys" is shortly to be published to mark our 100th Anniversary year. Written by Sean Feast with a forward by Lord Trenchard an appreciation by Sir Michael Armitage and an Introduction by Min Larkin, Halton Boys tells the tales of Pilots and Ground Crew proud to be called 'Trenchard Brats' and will be available at a reduced price to HAA members of £20 + £3pp. Anybody attending the Duxford air show on 18th September are welcome to visit the Marquee where Sean and Min will be signing copies.

Contact Tess at Grub Street on 02079243966 to place orders.

Sean Feast has worked as a journalist and PR Professional for more than 35 years and is a director of Gravity International, an award-winning international communications agency. Sean is a well-respected aviation historian whose past titles include Churchill's Navigator, The Pathfinder Companion, An Alien Sky and two biographies of former Brats - The Last of the 39-ers (Alfie Fripp 22nd) and A Pathfinder's War (Ted Stocker DSO DFC 37th).

All your Council are looking forward to the virtual AGM when we hope to become your fully endorsed elected representatives.

Best wishes,

Frank Denton-Powell

Chairman RAFHAA (designate)

90th Entry

BOYS BACK IN BUSINESS!

HALTON BOYS
SEAN FEAST

Halton Boys to be launched with signing at OX 18-20 September at Aviation Bookshop marquee.

£25

£25

ALSO COMING OCTOBER...

Available at all good bookshops and online

CONTACT TESS AT GRUB STREET FOR SIGNED COPIES: 02079243966.



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