

43(F) Squadron Association

NEWSLETTER 2023



Message From The President: Sir Simon Bryant KCB CBE

Dear Fellow Fighting Cocks,

I am pleased to announce that we will return north of the border in April for our 2024 reunion in a re-run of our extremely successful 2022 weekend at Leuchars. I expect those of you that went to the last gathering will be keen to repeat the experience and I encourage as many of you as possible to make the trip to Leuchars to swell the numbers even further. April is of course the month in which the Squadron was formed all those years ago and the Committee are working hard to make the whole weekend a really worthwhile foray to celebrate another anniversary. As you will see from the programme below this will be far more than “just” a Saturday evening dinner, albeit that will no doubt be a very splendid affair amongst the glittering silver of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards in the refurbished officers’ mess dining room. As ever there will be much to discuss as we catch up with old friends from previous years and the

Committee would welcome your thoughts on whether we should seek to make the future reunion programme a biennial one, alternating between Leuchars and London and whether any of the elements of the reunion programme should be amended. Turning to the Committee itself you will wish to be aware that after many years of unstinting work, Bill Preece has decided to stand down as Secretary & Treasurer; his contribution has been enormous and I am sure you join me in thanking Bill for his time and effort. Bill is being replaced by Jim Campbell as Secretary and Roy MacIntyre as Treasurer and we wish them well in their endeavours. I am also pleased to welcome Colin McShane and Jules Bourn to the Committee and wish them and their fellow members good luck as they put in the hard work that goes into making the reunion successful. In the interim my very best wishes to all and I much look forward to seeing many of you in April.

Annual Reunion Dinner

This years' dinner will take place on **27 April 2024** in the Officers Mess, Leuchars Station.

18:30 for a 19:30 dinner.

The cost will be £65:00 per head including pre-dinner drinks, wine and Port with the meal.

There will be transport from and to Dundee with selected pick-up points en-route. Seating allocation will be on a 'First Come, First Served' basis. Timings will be notified nearer the time.

Menu Details

Assorted Pre-Dinner Drinks

Smoked Salmon Roulade

Grilled Fillet of Angus Beef

Foret Noire

Coffee & Petit Fours

Please Note: If you need a vegetarian option, contact Sam Jones at time of booking.

Booking & Payment:

The cost is **£65** per person. Dress: Lounge suits and Squadron ties or equivalent.

Please register by making a bank transfer to:-

Sort Code: 83-18-33

Account No: 15053992

Account Name: Jones SP; with your surname & initials as the reference. (Sam has created this account specifically for this dinner with the Chairman, Derek Johnston, as a second account holder for oversight and transparency.)

Then email Sam, with your name and those of your guests, so that we have a list of those attending for access to the camp **when photo ID will be required.**

The **closing date** for payment and booking is **29 Mar 2024** but please book as soon as you can so we get an early idea of numbers. Questions or correspondence about the dinner including any dietary requirements to Sam at samjones43@googlemail.com

There is a variety of accommodation available in Fife and over the bridge in Dundee. We plan to run a coach from Dundee and return, with pick-ups/drop-offs on the main road through to Leuchars. Register for a place on the coach by contacting campbelljim01@gmail.com by **29 Mar 2024**

Leuchars may be able to provide a limited amount of accommodation, particularly to those still serving. You can try them at the following numbers:

Officers Mess – 01334 857395 (dawn.byrne102@mod.gov.uk)

Sergeants Mess – 01334 857408 (Baiba.Domini101@mod.gov.uk)

Transit Accommodation – 01334 857181(James.Bain660@mod.gov.uk)

Annual Reunion Weekend

Saturday 27 Apr 2024

Golf match.

To register contact Sir Simon Bryant at, simonbryant791@me.com

Montrose Aviation Museum Visit.

A tour of the Montrose aviation museum and in particular a chance to view the 43 Sqn exhibits; a Hunter in 43(F) Sqn markings, a selection of the Association's paintings and the Sqn's kills board from the First World War. There will also be a chance to visit Squadron Prints in Carnoustie on the way and see their 43 Sqn museum. To register contact Gill Howie at, gill.squadronprints@mac.com

Leuchars Airfield Visit.

A walk down memory lane with a tour round the airfield. To register contact Matt Paterson at, matthew-paterson@hotmail.com

Pub Lunch.

We plan to nominate a suitable watering hole to gather on Saturday. Sadly 'Ma Belles' is no longer with us but alternatives are available. Look out for further details on the website or Facebook.

Sunday 28 Apr 2024

Act of Remembrance.

An informal act of remembrance at Leuchars cemetery war memorial followed by the chance to lay flowers at the graves of former 43 Squadron personnel. All welcome. Time: 1100

Further details will be notified as they become available. Please keep an eye open on the Association Website

Last Function

Another splendid evening held in the RAF Club Piccadilly. Although numbers were quite heavily affected by train strikes over the weekend, those who were able to make it had a great evening. Reduced attendance allowed people to strike up longer conversations with old friends and colleagues. Most pleasingly, we saw some faces from out-with the usual cohorts joining us.

The Presidents address focused on the importance of youth, particularly to the Royal Air Force. He was extremely impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm of the youngsters who attend Air Cadets, much to the delight of Steve Richards and Alan Shaw who are Cadet instructors of many years standing. No 43 Squadron ATC is still going strong and regularly represented at the Association doo by these stalwarts.

Unfortunately, the guest speaker had to withdraw at the last minute, so the Chairman had the wonderful idea of getting a nominee from each table to say a few words on their foremost memory of their time on the Squadron. The stories were varied and hilarious, providing excellent entertainment.

Post meal we retired to the bar where The Mixologists, Tina Campbell and Steve Smith were awaiting us with copious amounts of 'Fighting Cocks'.

"Is there a Fighting Cock in the house?" was heard numerous times; always followed by a resounding "You bet your sweet a**e there is" and a rather loud smacking of lips as the liquid gold was downed in one.

As the evening wound down, everyone present could reflect on another very successful night with all looking forward to the next function.



Reunion Planning 2025

We have noticed a reduction in numbers during the last 2 London based dinners albeit both held in difficult circumstances, the first during the emergence from COVID and the second during a rail strike. We expect to return to the RAF Club, London, on 17 May 25 but would like to hear from you, our members, if a London reunion and dinner is still something you look forward to and want to attend.

Remembrance Day 2022

Following a return to normality after COVID there was a full turn-out at the Church of the Holy Rude in Stirling for the annual Remembrance Service last November. A wreath was laid by Stephanie Johnston at the Squadron memorial in the church. This event is now well established in the calendar and all are welcome to come along. Volunteers to lay the wreath are always wanted.



1019 Squadron (City of Stirling) Air Cadets – Falleninich Memorial Parade 2023

A big thank you to 1019 Squadron AC for conducting their annual memorial parade to commemorate the founding of the Squadron in Apr 1916. 1019 Squadron have taken on this role with great enthusiasm planning to make the event bigger and better each year. To enrich their partnership with the Association, our Chairman visited them at their HQ and gave a talk on 43 Squadron and the work of the Association. He also donated an F3 & F4 signed print and the latest edition of the Squadron's history to add to the 43 Squadron display that the cadets are creating. Look out on Facebook and the web site for next years date, usually in Apr, all are welcome.



Deaths:

It is with great sadness we notify you of the passing of the following Fighting Cocks:

Mark Garrett. Engine Technician on F3

Passed away Sept 22

Barry Maynar. F4 QWI Nav and F3 Flight Sim Instructor

Passed Away October 22

Bill Reay. Flt Sgt on F3

Passed away October 22

Milton Hey.

Passed Away October 22

Tony Austin. Armourer

Passed away Nov 22

Tom Fenton

Passed Away Nov 22

Neil Matson Flt Sgt F3

Passed away Dec 22

Sqn Ldr Roy Webster Meteor/ Hunter Pilot

Passed Away Jun 23

Wg Cdr David Scott EXO 43(F) 2004-2006

Passed Away Sept 23

All Change

Due to extensive work and family commitments, Bill Preece has decided to retire from the Association Committee. We would like to place on record our grateful thanks to Bill for the time, effort and commitment he gave to the role of Secretary over many years.

In light of Bill's decision, the committee now consists of:

Derek Johnston: Chairman **Email:** dh.johnston60@gmail.com

Roy McIntyre: Treasurer **Email:** roy@macintyreclan.co.uk

Jim Campbell: Secretary **Email:** campbelljim01@gmail.com

Sam Jones: Events **Email:** samjones43@googlemail.com

Aaron Wood:

Jules Bourn:

Colin McShane:

As with any organization, we can only continue to produce an informative newsletter if we have the content. To this end, if you have any stories or events which relate to the Squadron, please forward them to the secretary for possible inclusion.

Web Site

The Committee still plans on updating and improving the web site, a task that is slowly ongoing. If there is anything you would like to see on the site, then please let us know.

Informal Reunions

The annual **Tornado F3** reunion will take place on Friday **17 May 24** in London, venue tbc.

The annual **Phantom** reunion will take place on **Friday 10 November 23** at the Horse & Guardsman (formerly the Lord Moon on the Mall), Whitehall, London.

In the beginning

The AIM of the Association is to consolidate the spirit of good fellowship and to continue to take pride in the Squadron's past and present achievements.

43(F) Squadron (Fighting Cocks) Association was founded in 1945 , immediately after the end of the war. Some of the ground crew had been together for nearly four years.

They decided that the spirit and comradeship that had built up between all the personnel - Officers - Non Commissioned Officers - Airmen - Ground Crew and Aircrew should not be lost.

The Association was formed at Klagenfurt in Austria where the Squadron was based from May 11th 1945 until 24th September 1946. The founder members of the Association were Flight Sergeant Jimmy Beedle, Sergeant Frank Wooley, Sergeant "Pip" Reading , Sergeant "Vic" Vickers, Flight Sergeant Len Telling.

The Memory of 43(F) and the Association can only keep going with your support. If you have any ideas, events, memories (suitable for publication) please let one of the committee members know so that we can carry on the legacy left to us

Gloria Finis