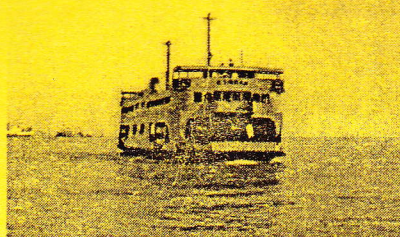


RAF Butterworth/Penang Association



Chairman: Tony Parrini

Treasurer: John Gallop

Secretary: Pete Mather

(Formed: 30th August 1996 at the Casuarina Hotel, Batu Ferringhi, Penang Island)

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2000

Aims of the Association

The Association aims to establish and maintain contact with personnel and their dependants who served at Butterworth or Penang, by means of Annual Reunions in the UK and the circulation of a membership list. The Association may also arrange holidays in Malaysia from time to time.

Chairman's Corner

Firstly, on behalf of the committee, may I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

As discussed at our AGM in October, I have now received confirmation from the National Memorial Arboretum Appeal (NMAA) that we can have a tree planting and plaque ceremony on the 13th October 2001. In order to give justice to both RAF Butterworth and RAF Penang Units, it would be preferable to have a double crested plaque or 2 trees and 2 plaques side by side. To this end the Association is prepared to pay £150 for the first tree and one crested plaque. However, if members are prepared to pledge a small contribution (max £10) then I will develop/enhance the arrangements with the NMAA to fit the total funds available. A pledge form is attached at the back of the news letter. We don't need any cash at this time, just your pledge to contribute a maximum of £10 towards the project.

Once again, the Reunion at Solihull was well attended; it is always nice to meet the new faces and swing the lamp with the old ones. It seems everyone is well satisfied with the Committee's efforts. My thanks goes to our Secretary Pete Mather for all the administration and to John Gallop our Treasurer who, once again got us out of the hotel without having to pay any Barrack Damages.

Tony Parrini
Chairman

Notices

No 33 Squadron Silk Ties

No 33 Sqn Silk Ties (Silver Grey with Dark Blue Stripe bordered with Red) are available from:

Mr D Durling
Summerfield Coach House
Kirkby Lonsdale
Cumbria
LA6 2HR

Cost: Ties are £5.00 each plus £1.00 p&p. Send your name and address with a cheque to Mr D Durling, direct to the address above.

Association Archivist

All members are reminded that Dave Croft is the Association Archivist. So rather than let those old photographs etc pass away and get lost with the passage of time, contact Dave who will photocopy/scan them and return them safely. This way we will build a true and accurate record of former times.

Dave's address is:

West Lodge Cottage
3 Boynton
Bridlington
YO16 4XJ

Situations Vacant

Although we have a volunteer to take over from our Treasurer, John Gallop from next October, if there are any other members with some book-keeping experience who would like to put their names in the frame, please contact John on 01228-535967 or e-mail john@gallop.freemove.co.uk

Badged Goods



Sweatshirts - £16.25
Acrylic Jersey - £20.70
Wool Jerseys - £28.25
Polo Shirts - £15.25
Gold wire badge - £18.00
Royal thread badges - £3.75
(Penang or Butterworth crest embroidered on left breast)
Colours available for each would be Royal, Navy, Maroon, Bottle Green, Red, Light Blue, Black, Light Grey and Yellow

Members can order direct from:

Terrane Promotions
Terrane House
Whisby Way Ind. Estate
Lincoln, LN6 3LQ
01522-697000

e-mail: sales@terrane.co.uk
Website: www.terrane.co.uk

All prices include VAT & postage

Veterans Advice Unit

Members are reminded that the MOD Advice Unit is there to assist all former members of the Armed Forces, be they veterans of the World Wars, Korea, National Service, Northern Ireland, the Falklands or Gulf Campaigns, Bosnia, peace-time regulars or volunteer reservists, and their dependants:

Telephone: 08456 02 03 02

† Condolences †

It is with deep sadness that we have to report the death of one of our members:

Kenneth (Bunny) Mayes of Bedford

Subscriptions

You are reminded that this will be the last newsletter to be sent to those people who have not renewed their membership for 2000 — 2001. If you have overlooked the request, sent in November from the treasurer, for your £5.00, please send it NOW to John Gallop.

Many thanks

2001 UK Reunion

The 2001 UK Reunion will be held over the weekend of 13th/14th October 2001 at the Jarvis International Hotel at Solihull at a cost of £69 per head. In addition to the traditional format, we plan to start the weekend at the National Memorial Arboretum near Lichfield, to dedicate a tree and plaque to all who served at Butterworth or Penang. Please note the date in your diary NOW. More news on this elsewhere and later.

Recruiting New Members

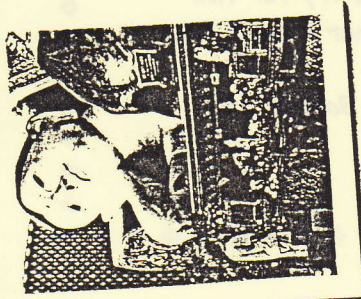
Example letter to the Editor of your local paper

Those members who attended the AGM in October and paid their subscriptions direct to John Gallop will not have seen the 'example' letter circulated to those members who did not attend. Therefore, published below for your information is a copy of the letter which you are encouraged to send to the editor of your local paper:

"While serving in the Royal Air Force, I spent some time in Malaysia and have now joined the RAF Butterworth/Penang Association. In doing so I have been able to renew friendships from those long hot days in the Far East. There may be other ex-service/civilian personnel in this area who also served at RAF/RAAF Butterworth, or on Penang Island at 1125 MCU Glugor, No 1 ADC RAF Western Hill, or with other RAF units based on Penang Island, up to the final withdrawal in October 1971. If so, I will be delighted if they get in touch with me so that I may introduce them to the Association, or alternatively they may write direct to the Association Secretary, Peter Mather, 25 Budham Way, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 7PE."

For those who are not members of the Royal British Legion, and for other Association members who may have missed it, reproduced within this newsletter is a copy of "Another Day in paradise." The article includes information about Malaysia's Silver Hair Programme. Hopefully you will find the piece both interesting and useful.

TRAVEL



Another day in paradise

home when I left. The Malaysian government had decided to put up the cost of a litre by 10 sen (about one-and-a-half pence) to a princely RM1.20 (about 20 pence).

The cost of goods and services is almost universally cheaper in Malaysia than it is at home. For perishable goods, like food and cigarettes, the price is about the same in Malaysian Ringgits as it would be in pounds. With almost six Ringgits to the pound, this adds up to some serious savings.

Alcohol is comparatively expensive, however. Malaysia is an Islamic country, so no alcohol is domestically produced – a bit of a shame for those, like me, who like to bring home a bottle of the local brew whenever they go abroad. But, unlike some other Islamic countries, alcohol is widely available, and it is still cheaper than it is at home.

Electrical goods are perhaps the best buys and, fortunately, Malaysia operates the same 240v electrical supply and three-point plug system that we use in the UK.

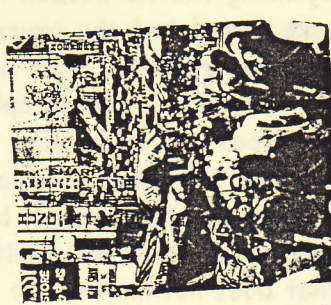
The Wat Chayamanghalaram temple on Penang (top); Petronas Towers (opposite page); China Town market in Kuala Lumpur (right); Batu Ferringhi beach at sunset (below)

On Penang (top); Petronas Towers (opposite page); China Town market in Kuala Lumpur (right); Batu Ferringhi beach at sunset (below)



One of the best places to shop is the Suria KLCC centre at the base of the famous Petronas Towers – the tallest twin towers in the world. Familiar British stores, like Marks & Spencer and Laura Ashley, all have branches here. With prices in most stores well below what one would pay in the UK, and an impressive range of brands on sale, it is the perfect place to pick up a bargain.

Afterwards, the Skywalk platform that links the twin towers at the 44th floor, offers some of the best views of the city.



TRAVEL

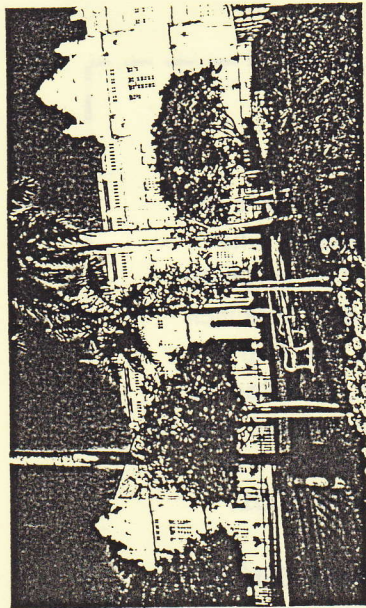
After just a few days in Kuala Lumpur I could see that this 'developing nation' is rapidly becoming a hi-tech, modern country. The Malaysian government has set a target of 2020 by when it hopes to have achieved 'developed nation' status and, on the evidence of what I saw, this shouldn't be a problem. They are investing heavily to improve the country's infrastructure – new roads, buildings and even entire towns are being created: Cyberjaya, just a short drive from the capital, is a purpose-built hi-tech city, designed to be the Malaysian equivalent of America's Silicone Valley. Petronas, also close to the capital, is being built to house all the offices of government.

Before leaving Kuala Lumpur I made a point of visiting the China Town district. This area is much more how I imagined the city, with hawkers selling exotic and delicious foods by the roadside, and stalls stocking everything from electrical goods to clothes and 'genuine' Rolex watches. It is, admittedly, the less glamorous side of the city, but it is great fun and an experience not to be missed. Unlike the UK, where you risk a dose of food poisoning if you try something from a roadside food vendor, the food sold by the hawkers in China Town is excellent – as was everything I ate while I was there.

The influence of Malaysia's three main ethnic groups – Malay, Chinese and Indian – is obvious as soon as one sits down to eat. Perhaps the best way to appreciate the full variety of flavours is to go to a restaurant with a buffet menu. Buffets are very popular in Malaysia, but they are very different from the cold cuts and salad we are used to at home. A Malaysian buffet includes curries, stir-fried dishes, several kinds of rice, barbecued meats and fish, as well as hot sauces like satay (made from peanuts and chillies). But don't worry, those who prefer less spicy food will still find plenty to eat.

From Kuala Lumpur I flew to Penang, a small island close to the boarder with Thailand and a popular beach resort. It is only about an hour by plane from the capital, or a four-hour drive, and is attached to the mainland by the 13.5km Penang Bridge – the longest in Asia. Penang is popular with Malaysian holidaymakers, as well as Australians and Europeans, but I found it much less crowded and more relaxing than similar European resorts I have visited.

The island boasts an excellent range of water sports, as well as first-class hotels and restaurants, but has lots to offer those who prefer to do more on their holidays than go to the beach. There are numerous historical places of interest – notably Fort Cornwallis in Georgetown, which was built on the site where Francis Light landed on the island in 1786. Other highlights include beautiful temples and the must-see butterfly farm, which is home to more than 3,000 colourful



The old City Hall in Georgetown (above); Clive and Rose Butler on their balcony in Batu Ferringhi

stayed on in Hong Kong. They decided to leave after the handover in 1997 because 'it wasn't the same after the Chinese took over'. After being accepted for the Silver Hair Programme the Butlers moved to Penang. 'When we were in Hong Kong, we used to always come to Penang for our holidays,' they tell me. One of the best things about Malaysia compared to some European retirement resorts, according to Clive, is that English is very widely spoken. 'I had friends who moved to Spain but had to learn another language,' he says.

Another advantage is its excellent reputation for health care. Clive told me: 'People come to Penang from Indonesia and the Philippines to use its medical facilities. Treatment is very reasonably priced and they have all the modern equipment.' Like so much else in Malaysia, this is thanks, in part, to the British. 'Most of the doctors trained in the UK,' he adds.

Malaysia does not have a National Health Service, so medical insurance is essential, but free annual health checks are included in the Silver Hair Programme.

Property prices are extremely low throughout Malaysia and the couple eventually plan to buy their own apartment. For the time being, they are renting a three-bedroom apartment in Batu Ferringhi, overlooking the beach, for just £300 a month, including cleaning. The spare bedrooms are put to regular use by the couple's three grown-up children, who all live in the UK. They cannot stay in Malaysia permanently but, as tourists, they do not need a visa so they can visit as often as they like.

When I asked him why he chose Penang in particular to live out his retirement, Clive told me: 'It's like being on holiday permanently. You can totally relax here and just forget about the world. Sitting beneath the coconut trees in the warm evening air, eating satay and remembering the rain I left behind in London, I could see his point. O



INFORMATION

If you are interested in Malaysia's Silver Hair Programme, you can find out full application details by contacting:

Candy Yap

Country Heights Life Services

7th Floor, Mines Waterfront Business Park

The Mines Resort City

4300 Seri Kembangan

Selangor

Malaysia

Tel: 00 603 8941 5836/8943 8811

Fax: 00603 8941 5834

E-mail: shp@countryheights.com.my

Reunion Trip to Malaysia 2001

The planned trip to Malaysia in 2001 has had to be cancelled due to the ill health of Bernard Crayfourde, the volunteer organiser. Those members who expressed an interest in the trip, have already been contacted. The majority prepared for a delay in making the trip. It is therefore proposed to relaunch plans for a Reunion Trip in 2002. Any member willing to organise the trip on behalf of the association, whether or not he or she actually goes, is asked to contact the Chairman as soon as possible. Members interested in a 2002 trip to Malaysia are invited to write to complete the return form enclosed with the newsletter and send it to the Chairman, before the end of February 2001.

It is anticipated that an itinerary will be circulated to members next Spring.

Members Letter

In a previous newsletter, Association member Duncan Gray requested information about the Butterworth Control Tower. Following the response he received, he has written :-

"I am just a new member to the association but of course far from new when it come to the Butterworth period, 1949-50 give or take the odd week or so. I must confess that my motives for joining the association were selfish in so far as I was after information regarding the old wooden tower that we once used there, my intention being to make a model of the tower and locate it inside a bottle, that being my hobby. I am happy to say that I have had several letters from members who have been either able to lend me photographs of the tower or put me in touch with other ex-Butterworth types who could help. It came as a great surprise to me when one member sent a stat of the tower in which there was no balcony and the steps to the upper level went from the front to the back instead of the way I remembered it all. I am still not quite clear as to who built the tower in the first place, but as far as the model goes that does not matter but to me that would be interesting.

As far as the model goes I have tried several scales to suit the bottle and to date have come up with 1/10" or 1:120 that way I can get the aerals in at more or less the correct length. Of course size of the building has to be more or less guessed at, but is a 'calculated guess' so should look well. My main problem to date has been the coconut palms. I have many books on model making and of course the use of the E>A>S>I>B archives but not a word on palms and of course not many ships in bottle need to have such in the bottle. Anyway that problem is over and next, when I have time will be the building and its application. Actually I should have said buildings as I am being rather ambitious and am going to try for two models, one showing it during the Japanese occupation and the other when I was there, and at that point there is little more to report".

(Duncan is also a member of the European Association of Ships in Bottles and President and Sub Editor to Bottleship)

Members on the Net

<u>Status</u>	<u>Initials</u>	<u>Surname</u>	<u>Known As</u>	<u>e-mail address</u>
Mr	C	Bates	Colin	colin-jen.bates@virgin.net
Mr	I	Carey	Ivan	IvnCry@aol.com
Mr	D	Croft	David	dmcroft320@aol.com
Mr	J G	Dunn	John	jdunn@gaerwen83.freemove.co.uk
Mr	J M	Gallop	John	john@gallop.freemove.co.uk
Mr	S J	Greenwood	Sam	sgreenw@home.com
Mr	F R	Hartley	Frank	home@suthmere.fsnet.co.uk
Mr	W J	Hill-Paul	Walter	le-clerc@holbeton.fsnet.co.uk
Mr	J	Holland	Jim	Jimlyndeb@tesco.net
Mr	A K	Lake	Tony	Tony.Lake@icl.com
Mr	L R	Le Clercq	Leon	leelec@lineone.net
Mr	P W	Mather	Pete	peter.mather1@which.net
Mr	J R	Mealing	John	rita.mealing@btinternet.com
Mr	G R	Morris	Geoff	geoff.morris@virgin.net
Mr	K	Moss	Ken	KM.Moss@nationwideisp.net
Mr	G	Myatt	Geoffrey	pafuseruk@lineone.net
Mr	R	Parker	Robert	robertp@onet.co.uk
Mr	A L	Parrini	Tony	rafrcro@cumbria-tyndale.fsbusiness.co.uk
Mr	F W	Potter	Gil	Silverfox@cantley48.freemove.co.uk
Mr	P E J	Saddleton	Peter	peter@oakwell-house.freemove.co.uk
Mr	E	Sharp	Eric	ESharp585@aol.com
Mr	G	Shores	Gordon	g.shores@ukonline.co.uk
Mr	D	Taylor	David	dtaylor@deltatango95.freemove.co.uk
Mr	J E McK	Thompson	Eddie	james.thompson@skynet.be
Mr	C	Truman	Taff	taff1120@aol.com
Mr	A R	Tyrrell	Tony	tyfam@reach.net
Mr	A	Wade	Andrew	andy.wade@yatesmeter.co.uk
Mr	P S	Wilkie	Peter	peter.s.wilkie@btinternet.com
Mr	R G	Williams	Ray	ray.williams@tregada.freemove.co.uk

Please advise the Secretary of any changes

The BPA Team

<u>Chairman:</u>	Tony Parrini	Hamethwaite, Rockcliffe, Carlisle, CA6 4AA rafrcro@cumbria-tyndale.fsbusiness.co.uk 01228-674553
<u>Secretary:</u>	Pete Mather	25 Budham Way, Bracknell, RG12 7PE peter.mather1@which.net 01344-429238
<u>Treasurer:</u>	John Gallop	101 Lowry Hill Rd, Carlisle, CA3 0ER john@gallop.freemove.co.uk 01228-535967
<u>Archivist:</u>	Dave Croft	West Lodge Cottage, 3 Boynton, Bridlington, YO16 4XY dmcroft320@aol.com 01262-677520