Dr Danny 102 entry - academic distinction.

While the majority of his entry are enjoying or contemplating retirement, Dr. Dhanapala Jayakody has no such intention, having recently obtained his PhD in an Aeronautical discipline from Cranfield University. After winning an International Scholarship Award at the age of 61, he was sponsored by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, UK Civil Aviation Authority and International Air Cargo Association (TIACA) to research ways of reducing the risks of operating older aircraft. His PhD thesis, entitled 'Bayesian Model for Strategic Level Risk Assessment in Continuing Airworthiness of Air Transport' was one result of this work. He is currently seeking employment to utilise his wealth of knowledge and experience in Aerospace. So what keeps him going? Danny attributes it to “...my love affair with aeroplanes and all the sciences to do with aircraft ...

Danny joined the 102 Entry on a Commonwealth Scholarship from Ceylon as an U/T Engine Fitter. I recall that my arrival at Halton from a small UK rural community was a great cultural shock for me. The military environment of the sixties was far from “politically correct”, so Danny, as the only non white face in the entry, had far greater cultural differences to assimilate. It quickly became apparent that Danny was academically gifted. I, and others, benefited from his help in Maths, Science and English homework. That, coupled with his infectious smile, gradually broke down the social barriers in the entry.

Workshop sessions, particularly the Basic Fitting exercises, showed a different characteristic: a dogged determination. Blood was repeatedly drawn as the hammer hit hand more than the chisel! That perseverance, and the patient coaching of George Edwards, our civilian instructor and father figure, got him through the final test.

Danny and I joined the Halton Branch of the Royal Aeronautical Society together. He entered their lecturette competition and went on to compete in, and win, the national prize. Rolls Royce was so impressed with his paper on rocket propulsion that they invited him to visit Spadeadam and witness a static firing of a Blue Streak missile. His decision to accept only if I accompanied him, because I helped him prepare his slides, was influential in my subsequent civilian career. So we had three fascinating days away from Halton at RR expense. Danny passed out “highest in educational subjects” in the entry, and, despite it not being his first language, gained the English prize.

After a slow start post -Halton, he went to Lynham as a J/T and his academic and engineering ability were recognised at RAF College, Cranwell where he gained his BSc. His life can be characterised by continued learning and the application of knowledge. Funded by the RAF, he obtained an MSc, in Aircraft Design at Cranfield. All this was put to good use in a succession of RAF Engineering and MOD and Industrial management posts. There are not many who can combine the practical with
high academic ability in engineering and the 102nd entry are justly proud of his exceptional achievements.

Peter Allen
AND LIVES WERE CHANGED

Reading the letter from my old partner in crime Dave "Spud" Alsop in Issue 49 p56, I am inspired to relate my experiences since leaving Halton. After passing out I went to that jewel of the South-west known as St Athan. This is what happens if you express no preference for posting. Ah well! However it turned out to be a pivotal time for me and a few others I knew. Spud and I joined the Theatre Club, not through an interest in the theatre but more because they had the best all night parties in their own clubhouse on East Camp. There I met my future wife, Spud being instrumental in that. I had a car, he did not and a foursome outing developed into something more than a casual date for me. Our section then moved to Sealand and there I was fortunate to escape a screened posting and went to the Harrier Flight Simulator at Wittering. This lasted until 1976 when I "got out" due to there being "no requirement for your trade group and rank (Sgt AFE)." During my final year at Wittering, I had applied, with my family, for an immigration visa to the USA and we left England on 14th November 1976. Our first home was in Florida and then in 1983 we moved to our present home in Arizona.

Since arriving in the USA I have been employed in the electronics industry as an engineer, the last ten years being as a Field Service Engineer for a semiconductor equipment manufacturer. I got to travel at least in the northern hemisphere and was finally able to see many of the places I had only heard of whilst in the Service. After the events of September 2001, the electronics industry went into recession and I was made redundant - that's what happens when you are too old and earning too much money! Fortunately I had already embarked on a new career direction although it is more of a calling than a career. I started attending Summer School at a Seminary in 1995 and became a pastor in the Methodist Church. This was a part time vocation for six years but became full-time in 2002 and I am now doing what I feel is the best work of my life. Halton prepared me in many ways for the technical world but also in some ways for my present life. I was a kid from a small coal-mining town in the Midlands with not much to look forward to until I was able to get into the Apprentice programme and become a 'Brat'.

I have many fond memories of Halton and, having forgotten the tough times, only the good ones remain. Thanks to "Daddy" Pickins, Sqn Ldr Hines, Barney, Mr Five Pint Brazing Lamp, and many others, LIVES WERE CHANGED and kids became young men, skilled and confident.

Iain Gilthero, 102nd
This article was prompted in March of this year when Thomas, my fifth child and youngest son, announced he was going to attempt the Ten Tors this year. I explained that I had done this in 1963 and was able to show him my Bronze Medal suitably inscribed "A/A Paul Hemi". I found the web does not have records for events pre-1998 so thought I had best record them from memory before it was too late.

The Ten Tors Expedition was conceived by the Junior Leaders Regiment in 1959 - only the Army could think of such a fiendish device to try out their young men who, like us, were all immortal at that age, well we were, weren't we? Then everyone did 55 miles, like it or not but in 1960 it was opened up to teams from schools and youth organisations as well as Service cadets. Now, an organisation can apply to enter up to three teams in any combination of 35, 45, and 55 mile routes. We were entered in the 35 Mile or Bronze Event, probably because of our inexperience. Teams completing the Expedition were awarded a certificate with each member getting a Ten Tors Medal, Gold Silver or Bronze according to the distance covered. I've never seen our Certificate which is probably in some long forgotten RAF Halton file. I cannot recall how I ended up in the 102nd entry team but as well as us from B Fit there was also one from A Fit.

We began our training in early April and like most brats were fairly fit anyway. For endurance training we ran up and down a steep hill at the rear of 3 Wing several nights a week - anything to get away from bull night. To build up our stamina we carried weighted backpacks. This fitness was underpinned by an excellent daily diet of Weetabix, cooked breakfasts, lunches, and high teas with the occasional fresh fruit thrown in to combat the scurvy and the occasional egg samie in the NAAFI if we felt hungry in the evening. As a result, I still cycle, recently clocking up 9000 miles since 1999 at the age of 54. We also needed map and compass skills, taught in the forests of the Chiltern Hills.

This was essential since arrival at a Tor in the wrong sequence meant a painful backtrack. Horror, but easily done.

From the picture it can be seen that we had a variety of clothing but we actually walked in dark green tracksuits with RAF HALTON on the back. These, much more suitable than the issued combat clothing which could hold twice its own weight in water, were purchased by a PTI, Fit Sgt Hall-Jones, and cost each of us an incredible 30/-, repayable on weekly easy terms. Most extraordinary was that we wore our ammunition boots and were not of course immune to blisters even after the soaking in surgical spirit. The journey to the start at Okehampton was undertaken in true RAF coach luxury, a 32 seat Bedford with upright bench seats, excruciatingly uncomfortable! There were many stops for teas and wees. We were even glad to see the 14 Army ridge tents which were to accommodate us, for within was a camp bed!

The event started at 0700 on the Saturday and in order to qualify for an award the teams had to cross the finish line by 1700 on Sunday. I believe it is the same to this day. In 1963 it was a mass start, sent off by scarlet coated trumpeters standing at the top of Hay Tor. It was not competitive but you could be forgiven for thinking it was so! Each team had to navigate around a course given to them on the Friday before the start and had to check in at Army Check points manned by young Army Boy Signallers listening to the endless hiss of static, each trying to impress the walkers with
their apparent knowledge of Morse code - no 'Rubber ducky - this is breaker one,' in those days. No good to follow the team in front as we were all on different routes, criss crossing all over the place. We spent the night on the Moor and had to gather at our designated area by 2000 hrs and crack off again at 0600 next day. We had opted for bivouac bags instead of the very heavy Storm Force 10 tents on issue. After a compo meal which no doubt contained Irish Stew and Treacle pudding we spent a restless, cold and stary night to awake covered in dew to enjoy a breakfast of Oatmeal block and water before setting off again as the sun rose. Teams became very tired by the Sunday and if they arrived at a check point with no chance of finishing the course in time they were returned to Camp by road. For us, the lesser of two evils was to carry on!

Finally as we breastfed the final tor we received much encouragement and could see the welcoming committee ahead, a large Vee of people channeling us into the final checkpoint. We formed up in two ranks with a blank file and marched in good order to receive our acclamation, medal and hot meal courtesy of the Army Mobile Catering. I recall we later went to Torquay for the night but with our blistered feet - no dancing. I do remember cleaning my buttons before going out that night when the Army Apprentices told us about Staybright buttons, something we didn't see at Halton for at least another 2 years! The experience gave me a lifelong taste for expedition work, something I now teach to young men of the 1st Malvern Company Boys Brigade.

Paul Hern, 102nd

"BISH's" COMMANDMENTS

I was interested to read Air Marshal Sir John Fitzpatrick's comments about the spiritual welfare of Halton Apprentices in the last issue, p31, and in particular his reference to Rev Leonard Ashton who was one of the outstanding padres at Halton. He was fondly referred to as "Bish" by the entries of the late 1940's and early 1950's. After Passing Out, my RAF career was short lived and I started my civvy career with Vickers Armstrong testing Valiant electrical components, followed with a spell testing transformers at Hackbridge & Hewetic at Walton on Thames. After marrying Vivienne, I moved to Billerica and worked as a draughtsman designing HT Switchboards for Crompton Parkinson. Next to the Air Ministry Director General of Works, later MPBW, and finally to NE Thames Regional Health Authority as Project Manager, directing and controlling hospital building projects. Surprising what we ex-brats get up to.

During this time I trained as a lay preacher (Reader) in the Church of England and now have the privilege of being Hon Padre to 2393 (Billerica) Squadron ATC. I attended a course at the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Centre at Amport House where I met another Padre who, when he heard that "Bish" had been my Padre at Halton, sent me the Commandments listed below which "Bish" gave to his people in the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf. Yes, he was a quite remarkable padre!

1. Thou shalt not worry, for by doing so thou shalt suffer the same disaster many times.
2. Thou shalt not try to dominate or possess others, for it is the right of every man to govern his own actions.
3. Thou shalt not desire fame, for the burdens of greatness are an affliction to the spirit.
4. Thou shalt not desire great wealth, for there is no peace in the lives of the rich.
5. Thou shalt relax, for great tension is an abomination unto the flesh.
6. Thou shalt have a sense of humour, or thy years will seem much longer and painful in the land.
7. Thou shalt love the beautiful and serve the good, for this is according to the will of heaven.
8. Thou shalt harm no other person, by word, or thought, or deed, regardless of cause, for to do so is to perpetuate the sorrows of the race.
9. Thou shalt not be angry at any person for any reason, for anger injures most the one who is angry.
10. Thou shalt never blame another for thy misfortunes, for each man's destiny is in his own keeping.

Brian Gennings, 60th
Yellow tumbling leaves from autumn chestnuts warmly welcome me to Halton. I must be approaching Main Point — right turn into Chestnut Avenue. I quietly slip into the carpark, avoiding the queues and traffic marshalls. Survival, instincts of an A/A quickly flood back despite the cultured niceties of later officer training. I knew where I had left my heart: here at the old school where I was nurtured from youth to maturity — I have returned.

A walk to the airfield through the village. Joined by an older brat from Maidstone, who left the RAF even before I had joined. There's a bus from East Dereham — a party from CSDE? I remember my long tour there. Queues in Hangar 4 — instructions by number almost. Programme thrust into hand — a quick check to see what's on. Here is 102 up on the wall. There must be someone I know. Of course, a little circle of familiar faces. "Hello, Danny!" "Who the hell...?"

Of course, Andy. "Where's your bloody silver trumpet?" Small talk and chit chat. Glancing beyond the circle there's Jim, my ex Engine Chiefy in 39 Sqn — great bloke. Altogether about six 102's — better than last time. Reflect! We must be getting old.

God! What a queue for beer and lunch. Air Display starts just as the rain begins — like '83! Wish I had my brolly, never mind it will soon be over. Quick getaway to Schools. A long line of plodding, weary ex-brats — some in jovial groups, others loners. Probably their personalities not much changed since Halton days. Schools not changed much — good old Ruston-Hornsby! Time is getting tight to see workshops. Still raining! A quick dash round, that big Beverley prop still there.

Alas the parade has moved on. Missed it again! Can hear the sound of the pipes. Take the back route to 1(A) Wing past the hills now immersed in mist and rain. Wooden huts of the Halton Society have gone. Reach the square to see a drill display in the pouring rain. Good lads! The pipes play a lament and the ensign is lowered. Off to Block 13 for a quick look. I walk out, pensive, trying to reconcile the changes. The notice board stops me dead in my tracks! A typewritten list of room jobs with detailed Job Specs — Good Lord, what has happened to Apprentices!

Rain still pouring down, and getting late. Covering my head with my copy of the programme, I merge into the gathering darkness. Will I return next time? Probably I will. Danny Jayakody 102nd

My thanks to Danny for sending in his views so promptly. Unfortunately in order to get it into this Issue I have had to prune it drastically. Sorry Danny but it is six months to the next Issue and by then we will all have forgotten! Editor.

*Our Art Department hold in excess of 175,000 individual crests on file

EUROPE'S LEADING SPECIALISTS OF Company, Sport, Social, School and Old Boys

HAVE YOU GOT A CLUB TIE?

MADDOWS & DICK LTD.
Sandeman House, 13 High Street, Royal Mile, Edinburgh, EH1 1SR
Telephone: 031 - 556 8012 (4 lines)

Established 34 years

Jacquard woven ties in the finest terylene. Woven striped ties, regimental or club colours, any colour combination, Silkscreen printed ties of superb quality and definition with or without stripes with full colour motif. If you haven't a design our Art Dept. will oblige free of charge and submit sample ties etc., without any obligation.

Blazer Badges in silver/gold wire or silk. Ladies' headquarters and scarves. Pure wool jumpers with embroidered motif in full colour.

567278 "Just a boy"
102 ENTRY — 30th ANNIVERSARY OF FORMATION

Members of the 102nd will be amazed to note that the triennial reunion planned for September 1992 also marks the 30th anniversary of the entry’s formation.

I well recall standing before the Attesting Officer in a room above 3A Wing Naafi on the 19th September 1962, (my 17th birthday was on the 20th) and repeating the Loyal Oath. In fact we said it twice because the officer felt that we did not say it properly the first time. I can’t recall his name but he was wont to ride around the Wing on a standard issue bicycle wearing regulation clips for his trousers and large brown gloves. As a result he was always referred to as 'Bear Paws'. But I digress . . . .

As it is an auspicious occasion for us perhaps we should organise something special after the reunion event. Ideas and suggestions to me:
Paul Hern, 'Stable End', 9 Wilton Road, Malvern, Worcs WR14 3RG
At the recent triennial meeting at Halton, about 15 members of 102 Entry got together on the 30th anniversary of their joining the RAF. It is hoped to increase the numbers in future. Any members who wish to be involved should contact Dave Swaffer at the following address: Scouriebeag, Somerford Keynes, Glos GL7 6DT.
EX-102 ENTRY ELECTRICIAN BECOMES A WORLD CHAMPION

As some of you may know the Aeromodeller magazine is now edited by me, John Stroud, an ex-69th Entry Inst Fitt Gen. Through the work I meet quite a few ex-apps and one of them is Peter Halman of the 102nd Entry. In 1994 the World Control Line Championships were held in Shanghai and we did rather well with two of the four events won by a member of the British team. Peter won the speed event using a 2.5cc Irvine engine and achieved 302.7 kph against 50 other flyers from 20 nations. We also won the Team Gold for this event. Our other success was in Control Line Combat where Mervyn Jones won the Individual Gold and our team won the Silver. A splendid showing against some very strong opposition.

For International competitions we field very competitive teams and alongside these are thousands who fly sports models every weekend. For some time now flying vintage models of all types, which we all made in our youth, has been extremely popular. If the whir of a rubber motor or the howl of an engine brings on a severe attack of nostalgia, why not join us at one of the many meetings and get back into balsa bashing? If you cannot find a copy of the magazine for a calendar of events then send me a SAE and I will oblige. Aeromodeller, Nexus Special Interests Ltd., Nexus House, Boundary Way, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 7ST.

Peter Halman, ex-102nd, with the model he used to become World Control Line Speed Champion in 1994. The motor is 2.5cc, fitted with a tuned exhaust pipe and reaches about 40,000 rpm in the air. The model only has one wing, inboard, and the tailplane is all outboard. A strange device designed for a single purpose.
One of those who did take part is Spike Quinton, 102nd, who faxed us the following:

"Your picture brought back many memories, albeit hazy in parts. It was common in those days for Halton Apprentices to provide route lining for visiting dignitaries, the Lord Mayor's Show and similar events. I was one of the lucky ones not considered suitable for these extra opportunities for bulling, drilling and the chance to get even shorter haircuts because, at 5ft 4ins, I was too short. However Sir Winston's death struck something inside me and I felt that I had to volunteer for the route lining party on this occasion. After some debate, my request was granted.

Time was short and we were billeted, along with guards, cortège party and other route liners at, I believe, Wellington Barracks near Woolwich. Accommodation was cramped - bunk beds with barely two feet of floor space between them. I cannot recall the messing arrangements, perhaps because the queue was so long! The rehearsal parade ground was vast, and all of the route was set out in rows and we went through the whole routine in the bitterly cold weather, not moving for some four hours or more. At least it prepared me for what was to come so that, on The Day, I wore two pairs of pyjamas under my uniform and greatcoat to combat the anticipated cold.

We took up our positions at about 9.00am; I was located at Eastcheap, opposite our Queen's Colour which was marched on almost immediately. Then the long wait began with the bitterly cold wind whistling down Eastcheap. I remember that my nose began to run but I was unable to wipe it as we were never given a "Stand Easy". Suddenly a hand appeared with a handkerchief and wiped it for me. A little later a large policeman came and stood to windward of me and said, "That should be better for you, son." The cortège eventually passed us at about 1.00pm and, even from the position of 'Rest on your arms reversed', I was aware of the tears being shed in the huge crowd. Many people were wearing their wartime uniforms and saluting the coffin. I found it far more emotional than I had expected and in years to come I was proud that something had stirred me to volunteer to play a tiny part in saying farewell to one of history's great men."
THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED TO ME

I'd like to highlight a few golden years of my RAF career for the benefit of any who wondered "What happened to old so and so."

Firstly I was proud to be a member of the last of the Instrument Fitters (General) and to be of the entry with the most appropriate logo ... "102 Better than you!" I blew Reveille badly in 1 Wing and despite the shouts of derision and buckets of water, I was happy to have achieved what I was sent out there to do. I also had the last laugh in the form of extra 96hr passes!

Secondly, as CO Elect Eng Sqn at Waddington in the early 80's I can lay claim to be the last ever Elect Eng Specialist Officer in the V Force. One of the last things our Electricians were asked to do was to root out a conventional Bombing Panel which I later realised was used to shake up a few Argentineans.

Thirdly as CO 276 Signals Unit in the 70's I can say that I was once head of a 'Spy Outfit' in the Middle East.

Lastly, I ended up at the RAF College, Cranwell, as Chief Instructor on all things 'Locking'. In other words, ME and the other Staff taught Ground Comms, Nav Aids and Air Defence to Baby Engineering Officers. I'd love to hear if anyone from No 1 RS ever infiltrated the aircraft world.

These claims are not boasts, only postings, and the serious point I am making is that if the RAF hadn't pulled me out of a Council slum and given me a chance at Halton, then God knows what would have happened to Dave 'Spud' Alsop of the "Ton Twos". I am now a househusband whose only claim to fame is a Third Prize in Lemon Curd in the village show! I live near the HQ at Innsworth, a place in chaos as they are doing the opposite of common sense and moving back to the London area. It is also the place where there are many more Gp Capts and above than there are Station Commanders at the sharp end Stations. Ton Twos - I think we retired at the right time! Regards to all who shared a Hubbly Bubbly with me at the PMUB Club and something stronger at The Rosie.

Dave Alsop, 102nd