



BOURNEMOUTH REUNION REPORT 2007

We arrived at 1215 hrs, shortly to be followed by the Pottage's, who had stopped overnight on the way down - something we had done ourselves. It was not too long before others arrived with tales of navigational errors; although a few, like the Lyvers, had travelled down with their own female Navigator, who had the rank of Satnav! Terry Winnett reported a nightmare of a journey down on the A350 - although others, who had travelled along this ancient way, had obviously picked a better time.

Sadly, Dave & Margaret Ibberson (34th) could not make it, their absence on parade charge was dismissed after hearing their defence from Barry & Joan Mayne. Boyd Lichfield, who was supposed to be our right-marker, because of his artistic talents, failed to muster. Steve Lister, Chairman of the Board, had txted me to say he had arrived, but my phone was still in the car when he prodded me in the ribs at the bar!

Eric May arrived with his party (including our honorary 40th Boy Entrant, Andrew Briers) after travelling down by train from the North. It would be some time after this that Don & Janette Maciver arrived, having travelled from Stornoway, with their final leg by train from Southampton airport.

The hotel kindly allocated rooms to those who arrived before the 1400 hrs booking in time, which enabled many to get a nice stroll along the cliff prom.

The evenings entertainment, in the adjacent room to the main bar, proved once again that the old Boys Bands had more talent than many of today's turns could ever dream of. It was not too long before we all gathered around cobbled together tables in the main bar and exchanged stories old and new. I overheard snippets of tales about button sticks, webbing belts and the housewives - which we boys were given to start our sowing, or was it sewing! The ladies, as usual, got on wonderfully well. Without them, such reunions would quickly falter and wither. It was good to see Ian Duckham bring along his sister Doreen to keep him in check! They are soon off on a round the world 3 month cruise - all right for some!

Saturday

On Saturday, most of the group, 21 I believe, decided on the boat trip to Poole harbour, which left from Bournemouth Pier just after 1000 hrs. The walk from the hotel to the pier took some 25 minutes and the morning was rather misty, which extended well out to sea. It was not until we were 20 minutes into the boat journey that the mist began to clear. The crossing to Poole was calm and when we reached the mouth to Poole harbour we saw plenty of yachts heading out to sea, which was quite a sight with their sail full. It was here that we also passed the chain car ferry that runs from Sandbanks to Shell bay, saving over 25 miles on a return journey between Poole and Swanage.

Next stop, before getting disembarking at Poole harbour front, was Brownsea island. On 1 August 1907, twenty boys from diverse backgrounds spent a week on Brownsea Island in an experimental camp led by Robert Baden-Powell. The camp was packed full of adventure, challenge, teamwork, and opportunities to learn about citizenship and leadership. The camp on Brownsea Island confirmed Baden-Powell's views about the value of Scouting. The following year he wrote "Scouting for Boys" which led to the formation of the Scout Movement. Today, Brownsea Island is owned and managed by the National Trust. Scouts (and Guides) still come from around the world to camp here and visit the birthplace of Scouting.

On arriving at Poole harbour front we scattered into little groups, some into nearby pubs, whilst others into the town. The return ferry collected us just after 1500 hrs, apart from the Menzies, who travelled back to Bournemouth by bus. Those who did not visit Poole visited

other nearby attractions to Bournemouth, including the themed gardens. Whilst the Winnetts and Lowes took in Bournemouth Centre.

Saturday night was formal, as with our tradition. The ladies in their lovely party frocks and the men in No 1s. Bob Killey had kindly sewn together (that housewife still has its uses!) the RAF ensign with the Boy Entrant colours. This was attached to the dining room back wall. We managed, mostly, to sit together for what was a lovely meal once again. At the meal we had 4 extra guests; two of these Sheila & Nickie had been with us on the Cyprus tour, so it was good to see them once again. In addition, Brian Peacock and his partner Jan made a guest appearance. Good to see Brian making a wonderful recovery from a recent Op. After the evening meal, Terry Winnett convinced the dining staff to clear the tables for us to remain as a group, drinking and swapping stories old and new. It would be late by the time the few remaining couples staggered to the bar. During the evening, a wedding reception was taking place in the hotel along with a celeb sighting on the hotel premises a few times from early afternoon. I wondered who this Jodie Marsh was, but was soon given a full description (warts and all!) by the few lads hanging over the balcony outside the bar trying to get a closer look, whilst Jodie was at the poolside with cameramen!

Sunday

At Sunday morning breakfast parade a collection was kindly organised by Terry Winnett for the dining staff (mostly Polish), who had been outstanding in everyway - along with the food. It was soon after this that those who were leaving, which was most of the squad, said their sad farewells. The 40th at Monday dinner parade would only consist of the Menzies, Macivers, Maynes and the Stinsons. A small flight now!

Overall, everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves (helped by glorious weather) and the thread, of rekindling friendships, making new ones and keeping the memory of the 40th alive from the first reunion held in 2001, continues unabated. Next year's tour to Gibraltar has now been confirmed as 1 week by popular request. Hopefully, details of this will be more forthcoming in July. Watch this space, as they say.

Once again, a big thanks from Steve Lister, Chairman of the Board, myself and the researchers to those who make the whole thing possible and worthwhile, you.