

Reunion Report, Ilfracombe, 04-08 May, 2021.

Thursday:

We (Dave & Rose Stinson) arrived at 1520 to be greeted in the hotel car park by Lloyd & Anne Rosentall, who informed us that Jim Edge (his first Reunion!) had already arrived earlier. We were all soon followed by Ian Waterhouse and his companion, from his school days, Pauline Dickenson, not forgetting Mike and Sue Hutchins, who now reside in France.

That evening, we ate and drank together in the hotel, where many tales from our Cosford days were recalled. Especially memorable was when Mike & Sue Hutchins explained life in France, with its many advantages, especially with seeing a doctor quickly and getting urgent tests asap..

It seemed strange all of us retiring to bed at 2300 hrs, especially when on reunions in the past it would be sometimes after 0200 hrs!

Friday:

Soon after breakfast, most of us (Ian and Pauline decided on a shopping trip!) headed for the nearby Ilfracombe Museum; although small, the exhibits turned out to be very interesting, especially the railway presentations, and also to be greeted with the sound of Morse Code as we entered the building - a treat for us old Tels, Jim and myself!

After the Museum, as planned, most of us decided to visit the Hele Working Corn mill, which dates back to 1525, then making use of the Tea Shop to consume Devon teas. This was followed by a visit, as planned, to the Chambercombe Manor, which dates back to the 11 Century. We were given an outstanding guided tour, which recalled vividly the past residents and present day ghosts. We all agreed, without the guided tour, it would just have been an old musty house, containing old furniture. The Manor, we learnt, is up for sale with an uncertain future, a great pity we all decided.

For the evening meal, we all dined at the busy Weatherspoons, what with the cost of living impacting us all, then headed back to the hotel for a nightcap with lights out at 2305.

Saturday:

After breakfast in the hotel, we all retired to our rooms to watch part of the Coronation ceremony. After this, and without Mike & Sue Hutchins, we headed for Westwood Ho, where we sat in the tea room of the Visitor Centre, enjoying the company and conversation, although not before some of us ventured close to the beach.

The evening meal saw the men formally dressed, with the ladies in their finest. This has always been our Reunion tradition on the Saturday night. Ian kindly said grace and we were blessed to have as a guest the son of Mike & Sue Hutchins, Chris, who is a CofE Reverend, and is awaiting to be accepted as a Royal Navy Chaplin – we all wished him good luck on that.

After the meal, we took a night cap and had much banter, with plenty of laughter too – mainly thanks to Mike.

Sunday:

After a late breakfast, most of the party headed for a visit to the harbour aquarium, which turned out to be most interesting, with tanks containing UK coastal fish and creatures. This was followed by coffee in their small tea room.

Sadly, Mike & Sue Hutchins, who had already booked out of the Hotel, departed to stay at their son's house in nearby Biddeford, with Lloyd and Anne Rosentall deciding on a boat trip, whilst we (Dave & Rose) went on a visit to the outstanding Woolacombe beach.

The evening meals once more saw us in Wetherspoons, with a final nightcap back at the Hotel.

Monday:

Breakfast Parade was 0830 as we all decided on a swift getaway, bearing in mind the Bank Holiday traffic and the rainy conditions. Farewells were said, with the hope of meeting again at next year's Reunion, which will be held in Chester. Jim Edge, who lives close to Chester, promised to be there after what he thought was a wonderful experience for his first ever reunion.

Dave & Steve
40th