



CRANWELLIAN ASSOCIATION

Peter Symes RIP



We are sad to announce that Peter Symes (76 Entry B Sqn) passed away on the 10th April 2024.

Typically Peter, the following example of planning ahead and organising is from him and is in his own words!

“I had three careers in aviation administration; the first was for about 19 ½ years in RAF, the second, with an inclusive tour Airline in the then Thomson Holiday organization and the final in the heritage component of The Shuttleworth Trust.

Service at 11 locations entailing: after our first MQ at Maastricht, 6 others in the next 8 years.

My RAF-cum-RAF College interests being maintained through coordinating regular reunions with the survivors of my No76 Entry at Cranwell since and an interest in the Cranwellian Association of alumni particularly since its reconfiguration in 2014.

Detailed Life/RAF summary

Origins – From a Somerset family, my Maternal Grandfather killed in action on Mayday 1917 – “emigrated” to Cornwall when 6 months old

Education – Redruth County Grammar School – “protégé” of the Headmaster, a Royal Naval Air Service pilot in WW1. Academically educated by a host of WW2 veterans notably my Classics master who was instrumental in my GCE A levels in Latin, Greek and Ancient History

Royal Air Force – ATC Cadet on School Squadron, Flight Cadet at RAF College Cranwell Lincolnshire, Jan ’57 – Dec ‘59

Postings to:

- Marham, Norfolk – V Bomber/Tanker Base
- RAF Detachment Hickam Air Force Base Honolulu – Transport Command link to Christmas Island
- Wattisham, Suffolk – Fighter Station

ADCT

- Commander in Chief Flying Training Command, nr Reading
- RAF Support Unit Allied Forces Central
- Europe at Fountainbleau, nr Paris – relocated to Brunssum nr Maastricht in the Netherlands
- Married Pam 6 January 1968, RAF Machrihanish, Mull of Kintyre, Scotland – Annerley born – after casualty evacuation flight to Glasgow
- Linton-on-Ouse Yorkshire, Flying Training Station
- HQ Strike Command Buckinghamshire
- RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire – Vulcan Bomber Base – Timothy born
- HQ RAF Support Command, Brampton
- Britannia Airways, Luton (10 years)
- The Shuttleworth Collection (10 years)”

Sir Michael Graydon writes:

“Peter was a popular member of 76, a good rugby player and passionate Cornishman.

His work in organising us as an Entry was relentless. It was he who led the charge to celebrate Jack Holt, the SNCO who terrorised us in our first year but became a much respected friend and legend. Jack’s legacy over a number of Entries is immortalised with the annual award of the Jack Holt pace stick to the SNCO engaged in Initial Officer training

and considered by the College to have done most to induce in the cadets the qualities needed in an officer in the Royal Air Force. Jack Holt's name is enshrined in the College wall at C Sqn facing out to the parade square. Peter was also much involved in driving forward the Trenchard Statue appeal amongst our entry.

He was a Cranwellian through and through and never failed to make his views known if he felt that standards were slipping."

Duncan Herd writes:

"(I always remember him as) a fine young man and always good company. He was always a good and trusted friend to us all, both while we were Cadets together and after our graduation."