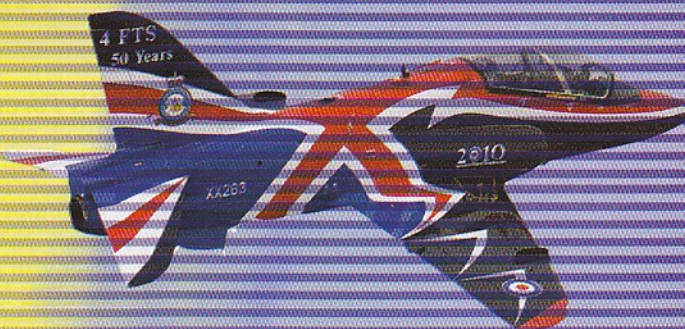


NAVAL EIGHT 2008 NEWS 2011

The Annual Newsletter of Naval Eight/208 Squadron Association



208 Finds New Horizons



French Alpha Jets over the Welsh countryside

Last June, 208 Squadron hosted four Alpha Jets and their crews from the French Air Force at Tours. Members of our Squadron were able to experience flying in an alternative to the Hawk (there was no contest!!). The French seemed to greatly enjoy their stay and made enthusiastic use of our low flying system. The visit was rounded off with a combined dining in night in the Officers' Mess which was quite an event and one which it would be a pleasure to repeat when our low flying system has recovered! We plan a return visit to France in May this year with a tactical weapons detachment to Cazaux followed immediately by a week in Tours for the Advanced Flying Training element.

NAVAL EIGHT/208 REUNION 2012

The Naval Eight/208 Reunion for 2012 will be held once again at the Royal Air Force Club,
128 Piccadilly, London W1V 0PY
on Saturday 27th October 2012

As usual, dress will be lounge suits and members may bring guests



NAVAL EIGHT 208 Squadron Association Committee:

President:

Air Marshal Sir Robert Wright
KBE AFC FRAeS RAF

Life Vice-Presidents:

Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael
Stear KCB CBE FRAeS DL
Air Commodore BC Laite
RJ White MIMgt, SE Jefford BSc

Vice-Presidents:

Dr DG Styles MBA PhD FBIM
FInstSMM FIMI
Wg Cdr E Moriarty RAF (OC 208
Squadron)

Chairman:

DJ Trembaczowski-Ryder BSc
Esq

Secretary:

MW Brown MRAeS Esq

Treasurer:

PSmith MBA Esq

Membership Secretary:

BC Laite Esq

Committee:

Gp Capt N Meadows MA BSc
MRAeS RAF
SE Jefford BSc,
JD Penrose BSc DLC,
Air Cdre GR Pitchfork MBE,
P Smith Esq
D R Gill Esq,
TM Webb AFC MRAeS

Newsletter Editor:

Dr DG Styles MBA PhD FBIM
FInstSMM FIMI

Deputy Editor:

Gp Capt N Meadows MA BSc
MRAeS RAF

Webmaster:

TM Webb AFC MRAeS

Origination by Evenword Publishing
Print by M & B Print, 9 Great Central
Road, Loughborough LE11 1RW
email: mandbprint@fsbusiness.co.uk

N8/208 Rumblings

The President's Foreword:

2011 marks the 95th anniversary of the formation of Naval Eight and to commemorate the event 208 Squadron are holding an open day at RAF Valley on Friday, 10th June 2011, with a theme of "The Changing Face of 208 Sqn". The open day will include a flying display, BBQ and evening dinner in the Officers' Mess – it promises to be an eventful anniversary so I hope you can make it to Anglesey. The Squadron will be sending out a flyer with more details. This is a timely reminder of the pressures that the Royal Air Force is facing, many famous squadrons have become victims of the drastic cuts affecting the UK Armed Forces and the Royal Air Force in particular; I will keep a watchful "flying" eye on how these changes may impact on 208 Squadron and its future.

At last year's Association Reunion Dinner Air Commodore Graham Pitchfork, the first fast-jet navigator Squadron Commander in the Royal Air Force, introduced the Buccaneer era on 208 Squadron with an amusing and fascinating account of the early pioneering days with the "banana jet"; his speech is reproduced later in the Newsletter. This year we move forward in time with a second chapter of the halcyon days of the Buccaneer. Air Commodore Ben Laite is our guest speaker and he will cover the middle period, and focus on the first operational deployment of the Buccaneer on Operation Pulsator. The next Reunion Dinner will be held at the RAF Club on Saturday 29th October 2011.

The Association Website (www.naval8-208-association.com) continues to grow under the guidance of Tim Webb, although more contributions are required for some aircraft chapters; I am sure you will enjoy browsing the pages and if you get inspired to write a short anecdote Tim would be delighted to incorporate your contribution.

Finally, but by no means least, this is the last Newsletter to be edited by Dr David Styles. After over 35 years of unstinting work David is handing over the reins to Wing Commander Malcolm Ward. David has done a superb job with the Newsletter over the years and I am extremely grateful for all his hard work and dedication to the Association without which we would have been so much the poorer. The Newsletter is a vital lifeline for the Association and provides the glue that brings us together. David will not be handing over all his Association duties as he remains the Association historian and he is a life vice-president. On your behalf I wish David every success for his future and the potentially exciting endeavours he has lined up. A heartfelt "thank you" to David from all of us.



Ed Lines:

A few things have happened to yours truly this year, not least a number of trips across the pond, presenting a series of lectures leading up to the publication of my latest book, entitled: "Two Flights to Victory", which is due to appear in September. The reception I've had has been tremendous and it is almost certain that I shall be settled in the United States pretty soon after you read this. In the last couple of years, I have received a number of honours from US organisations, including the Cambridge "Who's Who" Professional of the Year Award for my "contribution to vocational education", as well as an International Automotive Media Award for a vocational training manual I wrote. I have also been honoured by being appointed Aviation Historian to the California State Military Museum in Sacramento. So, whilst I have been totally immersed in the Newsletter for many years, this, my thirty-fifth edition, must be my last. I have had the privilege of bringing the Newsletter through several stages of development, from a multi-page A4 stapled presentation to a real folding-newspaper style, ultimately to colour. It has been a wonderful journey over thirty five years, in which I have maintained contact with many old friends and made many new ones along the way. It's time now to hand over to Malcolm Ward, to whom I shall give as much support as I can to help him settle in, even from across the pond. May I close by thanking everybody who has contributed to the Newsletter over the years and those who have wished me well in its progress.



Chairman's Chunter:

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the new OC 208 Squadron, Wg Cdr Eugene Moriarty, who joined last summer and who attended his first Association Reunion in October 2010 – welcome aboard Eugene.

The general financial situation of the Association is steady with a general balance of income against expenditure. However, we must plan for the day when we are not able to negotiate such a cheap deal for the printing of the Newsletter, which we currently enjoy thanks to David Styles. The Committee is exploring a number of

different options, but at the moment we rely upon the generous donations from members – so please keep the money rolling in!

The Association website (www.naval8-208-association.com) goes from strength-to-strength thanks to the efforts of Tim Webb – do take a quick look when you get the chance as there are lots of pictures and stories to read. Tim will be delighted to include any new photos and written pieces, so dig out your scrap books and log books for those forgotten gems so that we can all enjoy them!

There have been a couple of Association Committee changes since the last Newsletter and I would like to welcome Dave Gill to the Committee as the new Groundcrew Member. Dave is very active with the 208 Sqn (Cyprus) Chapter and organises regular reunions in Cyprus for the Hunter fraternity and he does a great job in maintaining contact with ex-208 members. Dave would like all ex-groundcrew to contact him so that he can build up a list of groundcrew members – his details can be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

As reported by the President, David Styles has decided to step down as the Editor of the Newsletter after this edition; I echo the sentiment expressed by the President in thanking David for his dedication and hard work over many years, which I know all Association members share with me. David is exploring an exciting new venture in the USA – we wish him the very best of luck. Malcolm Ward continues to be the Buccaneer Chapter representative, but would like to hand over this role – volunteers required!



Naval Eight / 208 People:

New Member:

S Coates

Buccaneer

Please see this interesting email from our newest member, Simon Coates, who applied to join via the Association Web site link - well done, Tim! I replied to his enquiry asking him for a few more details and this was his reply:-

I was posted to 208 Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth in March 1988 as a Corporal A Tech E (later Eng Tech AE). As well as my on-aircraft trade-based work on both Buccaneer and Hunter aircraft, I was also Flight Line and HAS Ops trained. During my six-year tour with 208 Squadron, I was detailed for many detachments: mostly in Western Europe, but also in Canada and Cyprus. I was also one of the first 208 Squadron technicians sent to Bahrain during the First Gulf War with the first six Buccaneers: P-I-R-A-T-E. I continued to serve on the Squadron until the Buccaneers were withdrawn from service in April 1994.

Highlight - I never managed to get a backseat in a Buccaneer, but I did get a trip in a Hunter: Mark Royce flew me down to RAF Finningley to recover a Buccaneer that had diverted in with an Emergency State 2. Did it really only take 40 minutes to get there!

Low point - Disbandment. These six years were the among the happiest of my working life; it was a sad day when it all ended.

The latter half of my RAF career was spent on Tornado. I retired from the RAF after 22 years service in January 2005.

I am now employed at RAF Marham by BAE Systems as a Technical Support Engineer in the Tornado depth maintenance facility.

Contact Has Been Re-established With:

J Menzies

Buccaneer

Lost Contact:

G B Alford
Tom Sheppard
C J Leach

Hunter
Hunter
Buccaneer

Current Membership Details:

Full Members	400
Honorary Members	4
Associate Members	1
Total Members	405
Members not in contact	66
Total Members in contact	339

Committee / Chapter News:

Meteor:

The Meteor Chapter met at the 'Coach and Horses', 1 Great Marlborough Street, Soho on Wednesday, 4th May 2011.

With regret and sadness the Meteor Chapter has been informed that "Bushy" Holroyd has been killed in a motor accident. "Bushy" was a veteran of the Burma campaign who had a great affection for 208 and was particularly proud to have been on parade when the Colour was presented in 1955. One of his favourite stories was that no inspecting officer recognised that his cap badge was RFC and not RAF - it had been his uncle's and he wore it with great pride. "Bushy" was not tall, but was impressive with his luxuriant moustache. "Bushy" settled in Germany (in Bavaria) where he enjoyed a very successful career in the state police force. He leaves a gap but also a stack of happy memories. His flask of schnapps will be sorely missed at the Meteor Chapter May gatherings.

208 (Cyprus) Association:

Dave Gill's Cyprus group goes from strength to strength each year. That period of 208 Squadron was, of course, the first Hunter-equipped era, between 1958 and 1959, under the command of Squadron Leader John Granville-White.

This year's Cyprus Association was held very recently, as you read this Newsletter, on 4th June at the "Stirrup Cup" on Woodland Avenue in Barton Seagrave, near Kettering in Northamptonshire. One new discovery last year was Charlie Smith, who turned up to the 2010 reunion.

Sadly, there are two deaths to report - Geoff Smith and Peter Clements. Still no news from members Dave is trying to trace - Neil Diamond, Basil Smith, Don Dewhurst, Ron Anstead and Jim Burford are still on the missing list.

As has been announced elsewhere in this issue, Dave Gill has volunteered to be the Groundcrew Representative to Naval Eight/208 Association.



208 Hunters on the Squadron dispersal at Nicosia in 1958.

2010 Guest of Honour - Graham Pitchfork

Buccaneer Chapter 1974 – 1981

(Graham Pitchfork – Flight Commander 1974-76 & CO 1979-81)

Three years after disbanding at Muharraq, 208 Squadron reformed on 1st July 1974 at Honington as the RAF's fourth Buccaneer squadron. It was a quiet start with just four officers, twenty groundcrew and no aircraft. On 6 September, the Boss, Wing Commander Pete Rogers, and I picked up the first aircraft (XT 275) from Sydenham and which, within minutes of landing, immediately disappeared into Engineering Wing for the next three weeks. Finally, on 1st October we flew the squadron's first sortie when we took part in Exercise Blue Moon over Denmark.

During the enforced inactivity, thought was given to the markings to be displayed on the aircraft and we decided to resurrect the 1930's 'Flying Eye' and the fighter flash from the Hunter days. The 'Flying Eye', which was to be painted on the fin, was also selected to be the badge awarded to aircrew on reaching operational status and to be worn on the right breast of the flying suit.

The squadron was given a unique role and was one of only two RAF squadrons permanently assigned to the Northern Region of NATO. Hence, a great deal of training, and nearly all our squadron detachments, was to Norway with a few forays into Denmark.

The squadron inherited some outstanding air and ground crews from the Germany squadrons who, not only had to get over the culture shock of no LOA, cheap petrol and booze and a holiday gateway to Europe, but to the Strike Command version of Taceval. This was a somewhat more casual affair than those of RAFG and the concept of actually going into an air raid shelter dressed in NBC kit, was a novelty we decided not to dispense with.

An annual event for the Honington Buccaneer Wing (12 and 208 Squadrons, 237 OCU and 809 Squadron FAA) was the Gilroy Trophy weapons competition. On our first showing, the ten participating crews soundly thrashed the others – a feat that was to be repeated the following year.



An exhausting two-week detachment to Aalborg in Denmark, when we also endeavoured to do a spot of flying, was soon followed by the squadron's first visit to Goose Bay under the command of the new Boss, Phil Pinney. This provided an outstanding opportunity to fly long distances at very low level over terrain similar to that of the Kola Peninsula, one of the

Gilroy Trophy Winners 1976 - The Sword is being held in the hand on Sqn Ldr Graham Pitchfork.



208 flies again

208 Squadron which recently re-formed as part of the RAF's Buccaneer Force based at Honington, have flown the first operational sortie as part of a NATO exercise code named Blue Moon.

Piloted by the CO of the squadron Wg Cdr Peter Rogers and navigated by Sqn Ldr Graham Pitchfork, a Buccaneer Mk 2A in the



Wg Cdr Peter Rogers

Sqn Ldr Graham Pitchfork

squadron's markings flew from Honington to make attacks on selected targets in Denmark.

The squadron was first formed in 1916 as the Naval 8 Squadron of the Royal Naval Air Service.

One of its early squadron commanders was Major Chris Draper who, in 1954, when in his seventies, flew his light aircraft under London Bridge to show that there was still spirit in the older generation.



Couldn't fit this picture into the previous page because it was too big, so you have the Gilroy Trophy pic first. But this is a very significant image, because it shows Squadron Leader Graham Pitchfork standing alongside Squadron Boss of the day, Wing Commander Peter Rogers, in front of their Buccaneer after its first flight.

squadron's most likely war zones. Goose Bay also provided the ideal training ground to perfect operating at 100 feet prior to participating in 1977 in the USAF's Exercise Red Flag at Nellis AFB, near Las Vegas.

Red Flag was a unique exercise designed to provide tactical squadrons with the most realistic operational scenarios against modern SAM and fighter air defence systems. Flown over the vast Nevada Desert, the aim was for each crew to fly eight 'combat' missions in an increasingly demanding threat environment. 208 Squadron had the great distinction of being the first non-US squadron to be invited to participate. Depending on the results, a decision would be taken for future participation by other RAF and NATO squadrons. The legacy of 208's brilliant performance, which attracted extremely flattering comments from the USAF's top generals, has been over 30 years of participation by squadrons from almost all NATO air forces. (When I was working in Saudi Arabia, a lot of my time was spent in contact with the US Military Training Mission and I befriended a USAF major who flew F-5s as an Aggressor in Red Flag when 208 was there. He commented that "these odd-looking Buccaneers" of 208 flew so

low that the Aggressors couldn't see the shadows underneath the aircraft, making it harder to get a visual fix!! - Ed)

A regular feature of the squadron's annual training programme was the visit to Decimomannu in Sardinia for the Armament Practice Camp. Flying short intensive sorties to the weapons range at Capa Frasca was interspersed by some very serious fun. Local, and very smart, holiday resorts, hotels, bars and golf courses benefitted from the generosity, social skills and bonhomie of 208 Squadron personnel. A feature of Deci was the adornment of barrack block walls and dispersal blast pens with 'artwork'. 208 was blessed with some outstanding artists and future detachments were soon reminded of the squadron's presence. After one unforgettable party near the Carbonara beach, the infamous 'More Wine' party, which resulted in the local priest asking us to lower the volume of our celebrations as he conducted Sunday mass, our artist left an appropriate reminder of how we felt the following morning? (there are pictures of Red Flag and the "Deci Wall" in colour inside the back cover and in the centre spread - Ed)

During my time as the CO, the squadron was blessed with some outstanding flight commanders and our immensely talented line-book artist, Corporal Law, captured the mood during the annual 'Wheel of the Year' beauty contest. It was a close-run contest between Robwina (OC A), Jessie (OC B), Bobbie (Trg Off), Rosy (Nav Ldr) and Terri (Wpns Ldr) with the statuesque and moustachioed Robwina a narrow winner.

After an intensive work-up period at Lossiemouth, it was back it was back to Red Flag in February 1980. Sadly, a day

It wasn't long before we set out again across the Atlantic, with Victor tankers in support. We headed for Cold Lake, 100 mile north of Edmonton in Canada, to take part in 'Maple Flag', an exercise similar to Red Flag but not quite so sophisticated. This was another opportunity for the squadron to excel and attract widespread praise from the Canadian and US top brass - and a mild 'well done' from Strike Command - and we all found it tremendously fulfilling.

During 1981, 208 was chosen to be the first RAF squadron to

WHEEL of the YEAR 1980



ROBWINA

FOR NATURAL CARMEN, GOOD LOOKS, HUMILITY AND SWEET LOVABILITY, ROBWINA IS GOING TO TAKE SOME BEATING (CONFIDENTIALLY, WITH A WHIP OR RIDING CROP FOR PREFERENCE).

RATING: 5/1.



JESSIE

A REAL FIT GIRL THIS - KEEPS IN TRIM PLAYING WITH THE BOYS - AND SHE IS A REALLY VIBRANT MOVER.

RATING: 8/1



BOBBIE

A PROPER BUNDLE OF 'JOY' THIS ONE, BOBBIE LIKES A LAUGH A MINUTE. COULD TUCKLE YOUR FANCY PERHAPS.

RATING: 8/1



ROSY

BIG GIRL THIS - STATUESQUE BLONDE - HAS EVERYTHING A MAN WANTS - MUSCLES. HATEY CHEST.....

RATING: 200/1



TERRI

'COME PLAY WITH ME' STABLET. ENERGETIC, PNEUMATIC, WILLING, AVAILABLE, SAFE - A BIG FAVOURITE WITH THE RAILWAYMEN.

RATING: 6/1

VOTING FORM: I VOTE FOR LOVELY NO: PLEASE STATE IN THREE WORDS OR LESS, WHAT YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO DO, OR HAVE DONE TO YOUR CHOICE

before 208 was due to take over the aircraft of the RAFG detachment, a Buccaneer had a fatigue failure in the starboard wing and we lost two of our Germany chums in the resulting crash. Our time in Las Vegas was both sad and frustrating as we waited for a decision on the future of the Buccaneer. In the event, the aircraft was to be grounded for four months but it was a couple of weeks before this decision was made. In the meantime, we enjoyed the delights of Vegas and explored wide tracts of the western USA including the ski slopes where the Brits lack of sartorial elegance - we wore flying suits and cloth caps - raised the eyebrows of the local beauties. Needless to say, no-one scored on that mission.

On our return to UK, 208 became a Hunter squadron once again with two F6As 'borrowed' from Brawdy and four T 7s acquired from various sources, including the OCU much to their annoyance. We had some great flying and everyone was able to keep their hand in. It was particularly gratifying for me since I became the only navigator ever to command a Hunter squadron! Many of the squadron's navs were able to display their not inconsiderable pilot skills. Who said being a pilot was difficult! Finally, on 31 July the Buccaneer was back.

be equipped with the Paveway laser guided bomb. We carried out a lot of trials on Garvie Island and at West Freugh dropping 1,000lb bombs before sending four aircraft and crews back to Cold Lake for Trial Tropical. With a couple of crews from the Germany squadrons helping with the Pavspike marking, over 80 LGBs were dropped during the four-week detachment culminating in a spectacular drop of four, tossed from 2.5 miles, all of which hit the small target.

In the meantime, four crews spent a week at Lossiemouth taking part in the Tactical Bombing Competition. En-route, the flight commander, who shall remain nameless (he is the Association's President!), managed to drop the CO's bag, which contained all his kit and the officer's confidential reports, from his aircraft's bomb-bay on Cowden range. He missed the target! With a suitably modest claim on the insurance company, it was rumoured that I was the best dressed CO in the RAF and all the ground equipment which had gone 'missing' over the previous few months was replaced.

The USAF's F-16s and F-111s and RAFG Jaguars also participated and we were all opposed by Lightnings, Phantoms



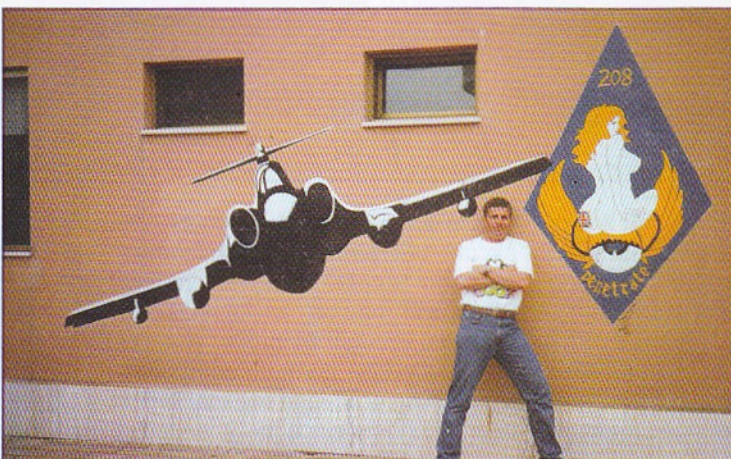
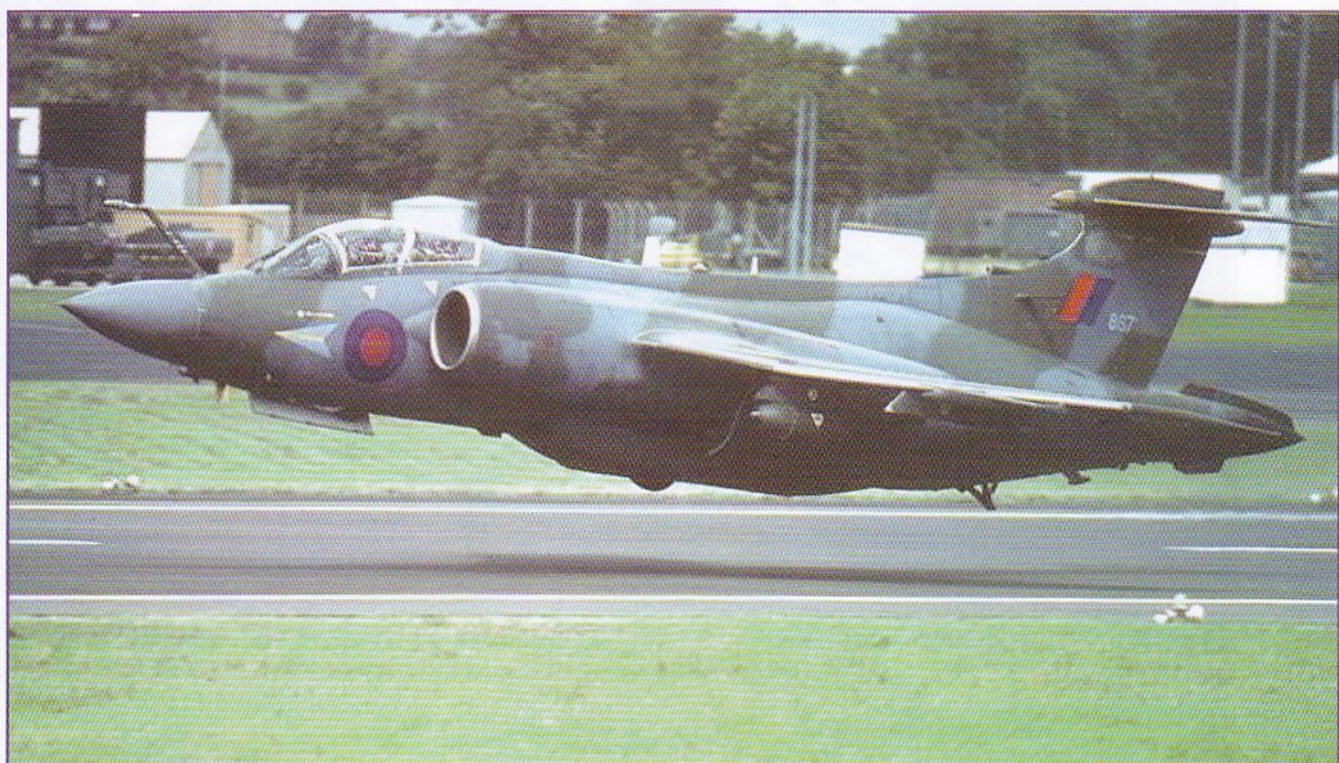
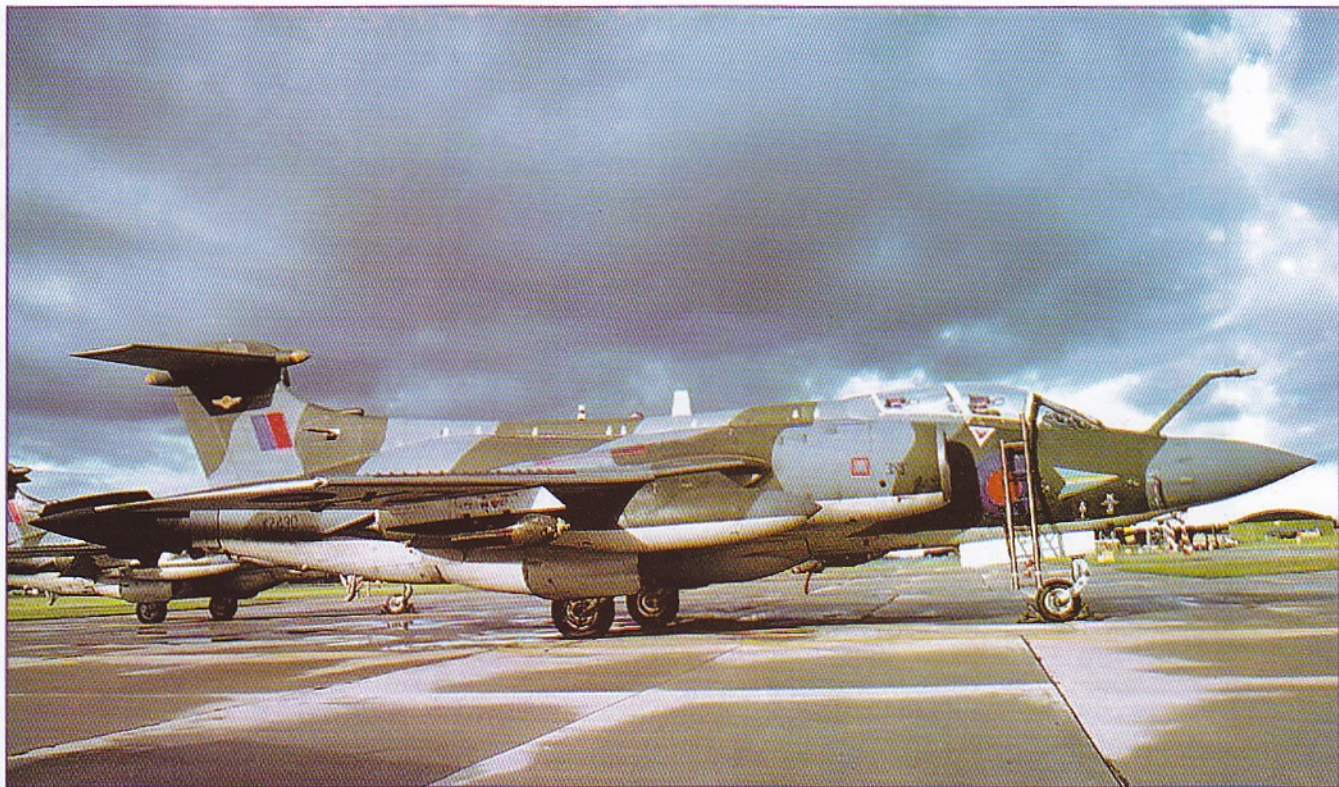
208 SQUADRON - HUNTER F6 - JULY 1980

and Rapier SAMs. All who took part were agreed that it was probably the most stimulating flying of our careers, not least the QWI whose nav forgot to switch on the wing tanks resulting in a double flame out as they pulled off the target at Otterburn.

Sadly for me, all good things had to come to an end and after 2.5 years in command, and almost 5 years on 208 Squadron, it was time to depart. The flight commander arranged for an 8-

ship to overnight at Lossiemouth. I ensured my bag was on my aircraft but was slightly concerned since my pilot was the 'Cowden Bomber'! On the return flight we 'visited' all the Buccaneer haunts, which included Leuchars, Spadeadam, Cowden, Brough, Binbrook, Wainfleet and Coningsby. As we approached the northern entry point on the Norfolk coast, the cloud came down and my final flypast of Honington, which had been my home since 1969, ended with a GCA, a cloud break

Cont'd on Page 10.....



At the top we see a Buccaneer on the Honington hardstanding in 1977. In those days, the grey/green camouflage covered only the upper surfaces of the aircraft, with the undersides finished in Light Aircraft Grey.

Immediately above, we see Stu Ager in one of his spectacular take-offs, again from Honington. You could well expect that if he lowered his landing gear from this position, the main legs would be torn off!

And to the left, the lady who took so much "stick" on the Squadron shoulder patch. Being "politically incorrect", she had to be removed, but not before she had adorned the Squadron's "Deci Wall" - the wall on the building occupied by 208 when on detachment to Decimomannou.

To the right: David Styles picture of a Bucc flying east out of Honington to the North Sea.





TAXYING out for action ... 208 Squadron's Buccaneers



THE NOSE of a Buccaneer and an F4 Phantom in front of a line-up of F16s and A7 Corsairs.

Fantastic! Buccaneers take the honours

NORMALLY an operational pilot would not expect to discuss tactics with the enemy — still less in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere over a pint in the bar.

But the apres-battle discussion between friend and foe is a very important part of the 'war' fought in Canada during May. In reality, of course, it was an exercise, named Maple Flag, planned to produce conditions as close as possible to actual combat.

More than 100 aircraft from Canada, America and Britain were taking part in the seventh Maple Flag over the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range, which spans 100 miles by 40 miles of wild forests and lakes of northern Alberta and Saskatchewan. The Canadian Armed Forces base at Cold Lake, Alberta, hosted the aircraft and 800 personnel.

Buccaneers of 208 Squadron, Honington, were taking part together with United States Air Force F4s, F15s, F16s and A7s and Canadian Armed Forces F101s, F104s and F5s, in various combinations as friends and foes.

Providing full-time opposition were the 57th Fighter Weapons

fighters simulating Russian weapons and using Russian tactics the freedom to operate down to 250 feet over an area four times as large as the British Isles.

In all, 1039 sorties were flown by Maple Flag aircraft during the first two weeks (the first time that the 1,000 sortie in two weeks had been passed). A planned 2,080 sorties were planned for the whole month. The Buccaneers, which took part in only the first two weeks of flying completed 115 of their 118 assigned sorties.

Some units, squadrons and individual aircraft, like the Buccaneers, were rotated during the exercise. At any one time approximately 70 fighters



ARRESTING moment for 208 Squadron commander Graham Pitchfork during a visit by members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Isles the ability to fly low over



at 200 feet and a cup of tea served on a silver salver by the Adjutant — the C-in-C had just banned alcoholic farewells!

After the usual round of farewells and parties, the most exhilarating period of my 36 years RAF service came to an end on 4 December 1981 when I handed over to Ben Laite. As I

did on that dark day almost 30 years ago, so I do again and pass the baton to Ben who will resume the deeds of the Buccaneer Chapter at the next Reunion Dinner and edition of the Newsletter.



Letter From the Squadron

After a brief but busy 5 months as OC 208 Sqn it is a privilege to write my first letter to the Association as the Squadron Boss. Obviously much of my time on the Squadron so far has been dominated by the fall out of the Strategic Defence Service Review which has been a painful period of adjustment. The Navy responded swiftly to the loss of the Harrier by reducing the number of student pilots within weeks of the SDSR announcements. It wasn't until the 1st March that the RAF student numbers were reduced with 10 in-training students being removed from RAF Valley, 3 of which were on course on 208 Sqn. Despite the obvious sadness at the loss of students, those that remain are now continuing with their courses with renewed determination. It seems likely that the next students to arrive from RAF Linton-on-Ouse will progress to the impressive new Hawk TMk2 and as such the recent Hawk TMk1 students will be the last to train on the old aircraft.

Since the last letter to the Association the Sqn has continued to deliver enthusiastic young pilots to the front line OCUs via a stint on our sister Hawk Squadron at Valley. The previous 12 months have seen the Squadron graduate 4 courses totalling 22 pilots and in the process flying some 5500 hrs over 5300 sorties. To achieve so much during 2010 was in itself quite a challenge with many flying days lost through the vagaries of the Welsh weather not to mention volcanoes in Iceland and cracks found on the ejection seats fitted to our Hawk TMk1s. Of course when the sky was full of ash or the jets were grounded for seat inspections the weather was glorious!

Obviously with the reduction in the size of the RAF and the introduction of the Hawk TMk2, the future of the Hawk TMk1 at Valley is finite and you will probably notice that arrivals and

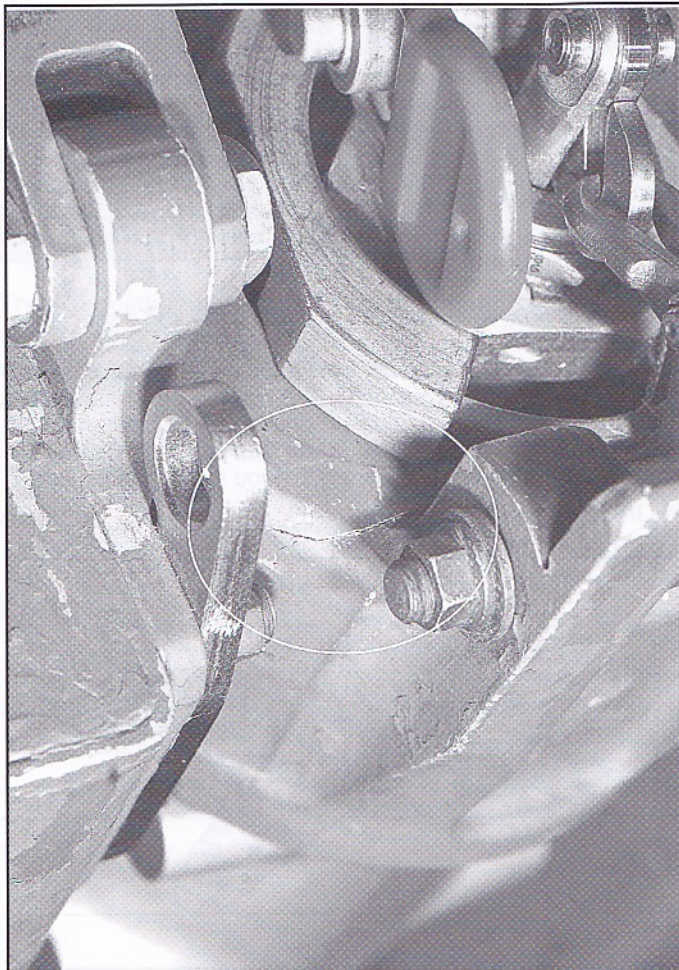


Wing Commander Eugene Moriarty- new OC208

departures from the Squadron show that 208 is slowly starting to reduce in size. This gradual reduction will be stemmed a little in April when both TMk1 Sqn at Valley combine under the 208 Squadron banner and for a short while the Squadron will train ab initio pilots all the way to the OCU entry standard. Two of the previously departed members of staff, Flight Lieutenant James Milmine and Flight Lieutenant Pete Smith left the Squadron last summer to move over the road to 19 Sqn and as such will soon be returning to 208 Squadron where they started, such is the merry-go-round of service life!

Of course the Squadron also saw the departure of Wing Commander Jamie Hunter last summer and I am pleased to say that he has now safely returned from his time in Afghanistan to move onto pastures new. For a brief period the Squadron was commanded by Squadron Leader Al Dow and he too has now moved on to a post at Abbey Wood working on the Typhoon, although unfortunately not to fly it. Flight Lieutenant Tim Davies has also now left the Squadron on promotion to Squadron Leader and after completing a 6 month out of area deployment in Afghanistan he will be returning to be a Flight Commander on 19 Squadron flying the Hawk TMk2.

The story behind this ejector seat is that a sharp-eyed engineer spotted the crack circled here in July 2010. If this large stress crack across the upper arch of the seat not been seen, and if the seat had been used in an emergency, the result could well have been fatal for the occupant. As it was, all Hawks were grounded between 27th July 2010 and 6th August, while all the seats in all the aircraft were inspected and returned to serviceability. Certainly, the person who spotted it deserves a huge pat on the back! Squadron motto? Vigilant!





Flt Lt Bradley Capt Zenati Flt Lt Caryer Flt Lt Thompson
 Capt Benighmour Maj Djenna Capt Zerouki

A picture of the Algerian QFI trainees recently passed through 208 Squadron, together with their Royal Air Force instructors.

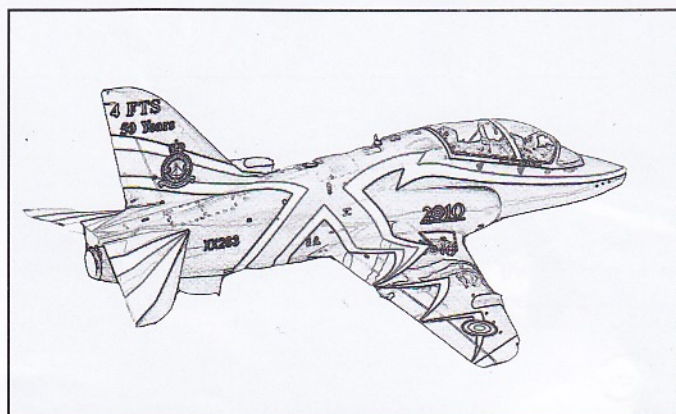
As you can see the list of arrivals is a little shorter than usual with Flight Lieutenant Mark Thompson recently passing his B2 check to be the last QFI (Qualified Flying Instructor) to join the Squadron, although not the last QFI that the Squadron will train. We currently have 10 Algerian pilots undergoing QFI training under an International Defence Training contract to supply RAF trained fast jet flying instructors to the Algerian Air Force.

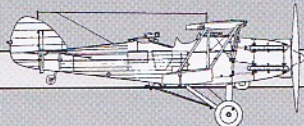
So what of the future for 208 Sqn? Obviously this is a worrying time for many units in the military and it looks likely that the last students to be trained by 208 Squadron in its current guise are already with us. Beyond the end of 2011 the future looks fairly uncertain. It is possible that the end of the Hawk TMk1 flying at RAF Valley in 2012 will see the end of a role for 208 Sqn. There is a slim chance that a space may be found for 208 Sqn within the new Hawk TMk2 training system but the formulation of such a construct is far from clear at present.

Despite the ample supplies of doom and gloom currently available you will be glad to know that the Squadron continues to make the best of the situation with no shortage of flying and plenty of social events to raise everyone's spirits. The go ahead has been given for another year of the Hawk Display with Flight Lieutenant Jules Fleming now well into her work up for the 2011 season. The Squadron recently sent 4 aircraft to Gibraltar for an Overseas Training Flight (OTF) and another 4 to Berlin for an OTF and force development training. Flight Lieutenant Geoff Sheppard has recently returned from an arduous trip to Nairobi advising the Kenyan Air Force and of course Flight Lieutenant Roger Cruickshank still manages to make the RAF look like a part time job by spending most of the winter skiing (for the RAF I am assured)! Last June the Squadron hosted 4 Alpha Jets and their crews from FAF Tours with members of the Squadron able to experience flying in an

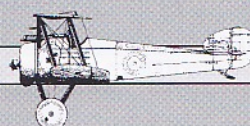
alternative to the Hawk (there was no contest) (picture of the French Alpha Jets on the front cover - Ed). The French seemed to greatly enjoy their stay and made enthusiastic use of our low flying system. The visit was rounded off with a combined dining in night in the Officers' Mess which was quite an event and one which it would be a pleasure to repeat when our low flying system has recovered! We plan a return visit to France in May this year with a tactical weapons detachment to Cazaux followed immediately by a week in Tours for the Advanced Flying Training element.

Planning is now well underway for the Squadron Association Day and 95th Anniversary celebration at RAF Valley on the 10th June, with the possibility of some commemorative Welsh Whisky to aid the celebrations. The day is sure to be a 208 Squadron event not to be missed and I hope to meet many of you there on the day! That is all for this year and I sincerely hope to be writing another update for you in 12 months time.





In Memoriam



Since the last Newsletter and Reunion, we regret to have to report the passing of the following Association members:-

Tony Harper
G C W Jones
Tim Cohu
Geoff Smith

Hunter
Spitfire
Hunter
Hunter

Colin Musselwhite
Bushy Holroyd
Sam Small

Hunter
Meteor
Meteor

The Naval Eight 208 Reunion 2011

The Annual Reunion Dinner will take place on Saturday 29th October 2011 at the Royal Air Force Club, 128 Piccadilly, London W1V 0PY. Dress is lounge suits and Members may bring a guest or guests. It is important that the name of your guest(s) is on the booking slip and that you indicate your period of service with the Squadron for the seating plan. Seating will be based on the Chapters. Timing is 6.30 pm for 7.30 pm and the cost per head this year is £45.00 per head.

Tickets will not be issued - but contact the Secretary (details below) for any last minute changes.

The menu for the Dinner is:

Tian of Smoked Samon and Haddock
Topside of Lamb with Garlic, Oregano and Red Wine Sauce
Parmentiere Potatoes, Glazed Carrots and Mange Tout
Bread and Butter Pudding
with creme Anglaises
Coffee and Petits Fours

To reserve your place, please complete the tear-off slip on Page 12

Keeping in Touch

The Association is always trying to update its records of former members of 208 Squadron, as many people leave the Squadron without making contact with the Association as they move on. For this reason, if you know of anyone who served with the Squadron and is not in touch with the Association, please let us know. It would help if you take a moment to enter details below. We'll do the rest:-

I BELIEVE THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL SERVED WITH No 208 SQUADRON IN: _____

AT RAF: _____ THE SQUADRON WAS FLYING: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES' NAMES AND ADDRESSES

CHAIRMAN
HURRICANE/SPITFIRE
METEOR
HUNTER
BUCCANEER
HON SEC
HAWK
GROUND CREW
HISTORIAN/EDITOR
MEMBERSHIP SEC

DJ Trembacowski-Ryder,
 SE Jefford BSc,
 JD Penrose BSc DLC,
 TM Webb AFC
 Wg Cdr M M Ward MDA BSc MCMI RAF.
 MW Brown,
 Flt Lt T Sawle. c/o No 208 Squadron, RAF Valley,
 D Gill,
 Dr DG Styles MBA PhD FBIM FlntSMM FIMI,
 Air Cdre BC Laite,
 (Information on potential new members and existing members seeking contacts should be addressed to the Membership Secretary)

2010 NAVAL EIGHT/208 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION REUNION DINNER RESPONSES FROM MEMBERS

The following Members and their Guests were present at the 2010 Reunion Dinner:

MRS J ABELL	MRS H HYMANS	WG CDR E MORIARTY	P SMITH	MRS L WARD
S J AGER	I JOHNSTON	F J NICOLL	MRS A SMITH	T M WEBB
MRS J AGER	MRS J JOHNSTON	J PARKER	SIR MICHAEL STEAR	K M WHILEY
M G BRADLEY	B C LAITE	J PASCOE-WATSON	LADY STEAR	D J WILBY
MRS P BRADLEY	MRS H LAITE	J D PENROSE	DR DG STYLES	MRS P WILBY
M W BROWN	FG OFF W MACDONALD	MRS F PENROSE	J SWAIN	SIR ROBERT WRIGHT
MRS H BROWN	B J MAHAFFEY	G R PITCHFORK	MRS S SWAIN	LADY WRIGHT
FLT LT S ECCLES	MRS J MAHAFFEY	N RIVETT	MISS L TANTON	
J FORD	MISS C MCGINN	MRS R RIVETT	FLT LT P TAYLOR	
G GOODMAN	E D MEE	FLT LT T SAWLE	FG OFF O THOMPSON	
N M HUCKINS	MRS J MEE	MRS S SAWLE	D J TREMBACZOWSKI- RYDER	
MRS S HUCKINS	FLT LT J MILMINE	E SHARP		
R HYMANS	MRS C MORIARTY	MRS C SHARP	WG CDR M WARD	

The following Members sent their greetings to the 2010 Reunion, as they were unable to attend:

P W ARMSTRONG	R HILLS	A H SMITH
H W BARBER	S E JEFFORD	K SMITH
L F BOYCE	D JOHNS	T A SMITH
G K BRADSHAW	M McGROGAN	E A THOMSON
W G BROOKS	L PHIPPS	K TROW
R CALVERT	R PIERSON	R TURNER
R CARR	W F PLUMPTON	P VICARY
N CHAMPNESS	J PRATT	J WHITE
JA CLARK	B C ROBINSON	R J WHITE
CM DRAPER	I ROSS	
E ERSKINE-LEGGET	D SIMMONS	
J FRADGLEY	S SMALL	
G GREEN	AG SMITH	

Naval Eight/208 Squadron Association- Reunion Booking Slip - 2011

From (Name)..... Chapter/Period with 208.....

Full Address..... 2012 same? or.....

I will/will not be attending the 2011 Reunion Dinner on Saturday 29th October and require.....places at £45.00 per head.

I enclose my cheque/postal order* for Reunion Dinner (£45.00 each) £.....

Total for Reunion Dinners £.....

Name(s) of Guest(s).....

I also wish to make a donation to the Squadron Association Funds £.....

Total cheque/postal order/money order value £.....

*Please delete as necessary.

Please make cheques payable to: 208 Squadron Association

www.naval8-208-association.com

More Pictures From Our Guest of Honour



Above: 208 Squadron Buccaneers arrive over the Nevada Desert for Exercise "Red Flag", operating out of Nellis Air Force Base.

Left: an emblem demonstrating the condition of No. 208 after a series of exercises and Armament Practice Camps.

Right: Another shot of that low and fast take-off out of Honington, shortly before departure for Lossiemouth.





The 2010 Reunion

On the left: A general picture of the Reunion gathering, seen from the President's table.

To the right: Air Marshal Sir Rob Wright presents the Bromet Trophy to Flight Lieutenant Steve Eccles.



Below: New Squadron Boss, Wing Commander Eugene Moriarty at his first Naval Eight/208 Reunion Dinner



This Newsletter was printed by us. It is your advertisement for our print quality, If we can help you, contact Malcolm or Brendan at:-

**MB
PRINT**

9 Great Central Road
Loughborough
Leicestershire LE11 1RW

T: 01509 233342

F: 01509 211172

E: mandb@print.fsbusiness.co.uk