

## 40th Anniversary of the 223rd Entry's Graduation

The bank holiday weekend of 25–27 May 2013 brought glorious weather to the UK, when members and their wives and partners of 223 Entry RAF Halton held their 40th anniversary of passing out. We were a small entry with 46 in total surviving the 2 years of training. The chosen venue was the De Vere hotel in Walsall. Arriving on the Friday evening or Saturday morning, we made our way to the hotel bar for refreshments. The usual banter and similar stories were exchanged; even after 40 years nothing had changed! A good turnout with members arriving from Germany and Luxembourg. Saturday evening we sat down for an evening meal. Bob Rodham welcomed everyone and Ian Hovey opened with a tribute of memories appertaining to our entry. Reading aloud as only Ian can do, they would have read true of any apprentice. Dave Squires then followed with an update on the work being undertaken at the National Memorial Arboretum. Dave has certainly put a lot of effort into this project. After the meal we undertook a raffle, where all prizes had been donated by members of the entry. As usual someone seemed to win all the prizes! Don Tanner then auctioned memorable aviation items as only Don can! All profits made were donated to the RAF Benevolent Fund. Sunday we were able to visit the National Memorial Arboretum and/or RAF Cosford Museum. The weather stayed warm and everyone seemed to have a good day out. Some got lost but there again they did rely on the Sat Nav. (Nothing wrong with old fashioned road maps). Sunday evening we once again enjoyed an

evening meal together. Yvonne Rodham had prepared a pub quiz which as usual had everyone saying “I told you so” or “I knew that”. I never knew what Gynophobia meant and I still do not understand the metric units of measure. Pints



and inches were everyone's answer. Monday morning after breakfast we gathered to say our goodbyes and face the bank holiday traffic home. We all found the weekend very enjoyable and relaxing. On behalf of myself and all the members of 223 Entry we would like to thank Bob and Yvonne Rodham for all their hard work in not only organising this weekend but all the work they have put in over the years.

Dave Gingell 223rd