

Reunion of ETPS No 1 Rotary and 22 Fixed Wing Course, 13th, 14th August 2008.

22 FW and 1 RW Course, ETPS, had a successful reunion meet up, on 13th and 14th August 2008. The main plan was to have the Course with wives/girlfriends, lunch in the Officers' Mess at Boscombe Down followed by some form of "Technical Tour". Then, John Davis, one of the Course members who lives close to Boscombe, offered to arrange an add-on evening the night before, with Supper & Skittles at the Silver Plough at Pitton. We got a welcoming "yes" from our request to use the Boscombe Mess from the PMC and we obtained a block booking price for rooms in the excellent Holiday Inn on the A 303, just outside Boscombe.

The Technical Tour into the Boscombe camp itself was very sticky to arrange since security in the present day Qinetiq organisation is formidable. However we were offered help by Clive Rustin, (members@etpsa.org.uk) whose tireless efforts eventually burned through the red tape.

We eventually had 32 people turn up, with ex-students from as far away as California and Bangalore (and as close as Wilton!) For the main reunion day we hired a 30-seater bus from the New Road Service Station, Codford, (£300 for the day), and had everyone meet at the Holiday Inn and use the bus throughout the day to keep some semblance of order. Mr Mark Skinner, the Officers' Mess Manager at Boscombe, put on a superb buffet lunch in the Lower ante Room of the Mess (£366 including wines). After a long, noisy lunch we crawled into the bus and drove the half mile or so to in the Camp, where we had a look around the Boscombe Environmental Test Hangar and an enjoyable update on the School and chat with staff and a current Boscombe TP in the ETPS lecture theatre. Then, bus back to the hotel before bussing off again in the evening to the Mallet Arms at Newton Toney (15 minutes) for a sandwich supper and more war stories.

The total cost was £27 a head. We were offered "some financial help" by the ETPS Association, but I had to settle on a "ticket" cost early in the planning and so I kept that possibility in mind in case of overrun. In the end the budget proved almost exactly right and we didn't ask for any help.

The whole event was enjoyed by us all and if anyone wants to organise a similar Course reunion, I will be happy to give any further info requested, and do talk to Clive Rustin.

Dave Eagles
1.10.08

Photos below – spot the differences!

