

223 Entry Reunion in Bristol 27th - 29th May

This year's event was held in Mercure Bristol Holland House Hotel which proved to be the most difficult place in the World to find and park at. The only ones with the wise decision to come by train were Davey & Irene Jones thus avoiding the parking issue and the stress it entailed.

Lovely to see so many from different areas of the UK and Keith & Steffie driving over from Germany, even Taff Wilson made it from Stalig Swansea.

Everyone met in the bar in the afternoon with some even leaving it till the very last minute before changing for the evening buffet. After the lovely food we were straight into John Kerr's Gettysburg Address. Could easily have won the award for the longest after dinner speech in history and certainly the most educated, as loads of latin phrases quoted with even a legal disclaimer flung in. Where was the wig and gown?? He also praised (mocked) Keith Godden for his book, mispronouncing German words to add confusion to the mix. Especially as we all had a few by then.

John also decided to reminisce on previous speeches and the one to get the most flak, nevermind, was Don Tanner's. John was so impressed by Don's efforts, that he even awarded him a certificate of merit.

The traditional raffle raised £180 with John & Jane kindly doubling it in celebration of their 25th wedding anniversary with all proceeds going to the Stroke Association.

Prizes varied from bottles of wine and a paddling pool to a historic document 'One year in the West' by the celebrated Pulitzer prize winning author Keith Godden. This was the biggest fix I've ever come across as I ended up with this 'renowned publication'. One to treasure and pass on to the grandchildren.

After this we all retired to the bar and the usual culprits stayed late into the early hours reminiscing as only forces personnel can do.

On the Sunday everyone decided to see some of the sights of Bristol. Attractions visited included SS Great Britain, a boat trip with Semen Bob Rodham standing in for the Captain, the Clifton Bridge and even shopping with a glass or two of Prosecco to keep the spirits up or could that have been 'a hair of the dog' remedy?

After an afternoon siesta it was back to the bar for pre-meal drinks (again!), and then on to the evening meal and Yvonne's traditional quiz. The quiz did lead to a slight domestic altercation between John & Jane over Sheffield United's nickname. Trust no plates or blades were thrown on their return to Wales. This had no effect on the result as the specially designed chocolate bars were awarded to the most intelligent team in the room, me included of course, despite another team's underhand behaviour.

As usual everyone retired to the bar and then were surprised to see that Don Tanner was carrying a handbag, although he insisted it was a manbag - Tart! The rest of the evening enjoyed by all. After forty years of talking to Brummie and Gordon Strachan, I still cannot understand a word they say, but who cares as its just great to see them.

Laudaverunt to Bob & Yvonne for arranging this bi-annual reunion with such thought and committment.

Best Wishes to all and see you in 2019 or before if you can find where I live.

030 Ken Ryan