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Dundee 2022

The 2020 Reunion was scheduled for Dundee, but we know what happened to that year. The 2021 venue had already been arranged, so the plan for Dundee was shifted to 2022. My son Russ is also a member of the BAS Club, so he came along with me (and did the driving – thank you, Russ!).

The Queens Hotel is an impressive building, near the centre of the city, so it was good to have a fair-sized car park alongside. (There had been worries that it might be full, with a rail strike on, but there were plenty of spaces.) We arrived around 5 pm, on Friday 24th June. Nearby, all along the pavements, we saw groups of well-dressed young people, some in academic dress, strolling along. It turned out that this would be prom night.

About a hundred people had booked for the reunion, and about half that number were also down for the Friday dinner at Taza, an Indian restaurant a quarter of a mile away. The staff seemed to struggle with a party of that size, but it was a decent meal and good fun overall. As we walked back to the hotel, there seemed to be merry prom night revellers everywhere, spilling out from nightspots on to the streets.



Discovery in her own special dock. Discovery Centre on the right, V&A Dundee on the left.

On Saturday there was an organised walk along the River Tay but Russ and I headed for Discovery Point, with Scott's ship and a related museum. The museum was a bit disorganised with the workmen in, but plenty of interesting stuff. Outside was the ship itself, and a fascinating tour through it. (Do you remember; on the 1902-4 expedition they built a hut but found it so cold that they preferred to continue living in the ship?)

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Scott's cabin, in the Discovery. More room there than I had in my bunkroom.

A minute's walk away was the V&A Dundee, a vast open space inside a modernist building. We had read about an exhibition on the local industry of developing computer games but were told that that was not one of the permanent features, and was now gone. A pity!

Another local industry concerns children's comic books, and these were celebrated with statues scattered through the city centre.



Desperate Dan in the shopping area. I can't quite match him for chest and chin.

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Nothing dramatic arose from the AGM, later that afternoon. I put my oar in, telling them about someone in Canada who had contacted me and wants to buy polar clothing brought back by Fids. He's creating an archive of such items, and hoping to publish it as a book. I said I would put more details on my website. In a week or two, I said optimistically – and it's now nearly a month later. If you want to learn more, check the website – in a month or two, perhaps? Alternatively, you could try his website, <https://saundersmilitaria.com/wanted>.

Flyers were being circulated for two Fid books about to come out – one by Fergus O'Gorman, and the other by John Dudeney. That raises the embarrassing question – what about mine? Answer, when the busy summer is over, this winter I'm determined to get things going, somehow!

This was followed by a Buck's Fizz reception – paid for, we were told, by a Fid who wanted to remain anonymous. If it was you, dear reader, thank you!



The early end, year-wise, of the Halley (Bay) tables. Facing us is Dave Petrie with the tie. To the left of him (our left) is his guest Pat Craig, and then Shelagh Westwood.

For the dinner, the tables were filled according to base – there were two tables for the Halley (Bay) contingent of 28 including guests. For those of our period, there were Dave Petrie and James Westwood from 1963,4, those two being the earliest ones present. From 1964,5 there was me – and no one at all from 1966. Later than that, two small clusters, in the late sixties and early seventies. Beyond 1975 there was only one – and he was from 1993.

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The other side of the same Halley (Bay) table. In the centre, Russ Jukes with tie and to the right of him (our right) is James Westwood. I ought to know some of the others, but – alas – I can't remember. I blame it on senility.

For the starter, I chose the Arbroath Smokie – not only a local delicacy (less than twenty miles up the road) but bringing memories of Munro Sievwright, our comrade in 64 and 65 who came from there. I had expected it to arrive as a chunk of yellowfish but it turned out to be a pâté served in a glass tumbler. On second thoughts, that was probably better suited to a meal of this sort. Whatever, it was definitely a good choice.



James (right) and I prepare to tackle our smokies. Russ, left, awaits his soup.

In some years there's a book sale raising funds for the Club Benevolent fund, but not this year. However, someone put out some old BAS Reports. I bought one, although nowadays most

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can simply be downloaded from somewhere on the BAS website as PDFs. There were also some bottles auctioned off. One was some Falkland Islands gin (not sure how that got here, and came to be surplus). Another was a leftover from a Signy Island reunion, where they had a special batch of beer labelled up for their event.



One of the winning bidders was on our table.

Breakfast the next morning is always a good time for a few words with people in a more relaxed situation than after the dinner, and perhaps a few less-formal photos.



Breakfast chat with James Westwood.

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Still gossiping during breakfast, now with Dave Petrie.

Then the drive back to Yorkshire. I've already booked for next year, in the Forest of Dean. See you there, maybe?

Lewis Jukes

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