

AIR MAIL

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APRIL-JUNE 2017

 **ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association**

The charity that supports the RAF family



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

Registered Charity 226686 (England & Wales), SC037673 (Scotland).

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COVER PICTURE

The Red Arrows pictured
over Lincoln during training
for the 2017 season

Photo: © MoD/Crown

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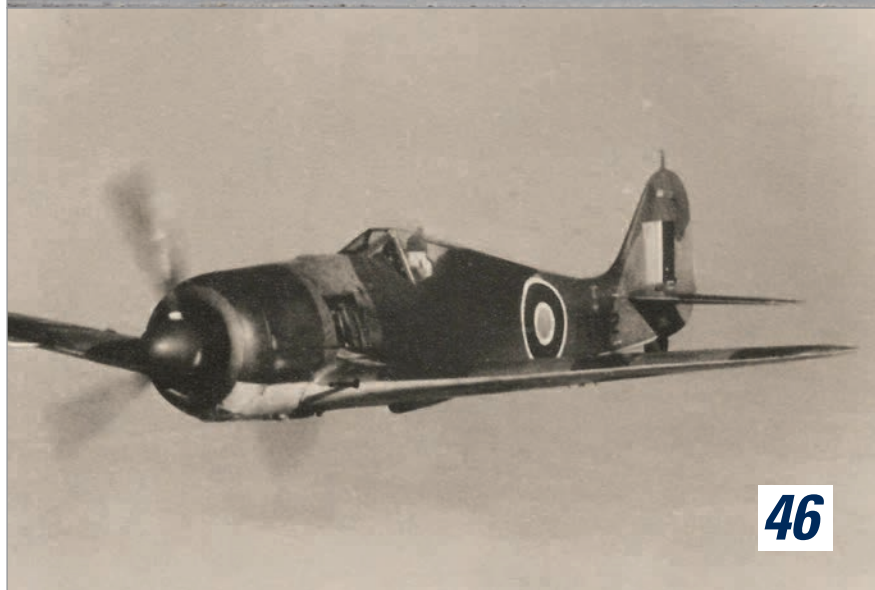
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Message from the Secretary General

Write this as preparations for Annual Conference continue apace. If you haven't yet booked your place, there is still time. Please see the article on page 18 for details of how to register. The focus of this year's conference will again be on the future of the Association. A thorough review of the standard regulations for branches, areas and branch clubs has been carried out and we look forward to debating the changes needed to bring all these up to date, and ensure they are fit for the future.

Every branch secretary has been sent a copy of the updated Royal Charter, Rules and Byelaws. These are also available for all to view in the members' area of the Association's website. Good governance is vital to the successful running of any organisation, but it is especially important in the charity sector at the moment, as public trust cannot be relied upon as it once was. Without the trust of those who donate time and money we will not be able to sustain the Association.

Our operating plan has also been distributed and uploaded. This gives details on what Council has tasked employees to deliver in 2017.

Looking back for a moment, I am pleased to be able to tell you that 2016 was another year of growth for the Association. Our income was £12.4 million – the first time it has been over £10 million in a decade. Our assets were also in a very healthy state, standing at over £30 million.

Our welfare provision ended the year in a very strong position. By the end of 2015 all our welfare volunteers had undertaken accredited training and in recent months all members of the area welfare teams have attained a Diploma in Welfare. These qualifications give us the confidence that we have the people and structures in place to provide a consistent quality service to those who need us. This has been overseen by Head of Welfare, Sophie Witkowski, whose experience as a social worker and manager of social work teams gives us the professional supervision and guidance we need.

The hard work by all members of the welfare team, be they employees or volunteers, has led to improved experiences by our beneficiaries. It has also resulted in the Association being recognised as leaders in the military charity sector, with other organisations regularly approaching us for advice.

I would like to end by thanking our President, Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller, for his unstinting support to the Association over the last six years. He has also been a great help to me in my first three years as Secretary General. His guidance and wise counsel have been invaluable, while I was settling in and ever since. I know he will be missed by many in the Association.

Nick Bunting
Secretary General



Exhilarating entertainment at the Duxford Air Festival

The Duxford Air Festival at the Imperial War Museum (IWM) Duxford (Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 May) offers an awe-inspiring feast of flying for all the family with children up to the age of 15 going free when an adult buys a ticket for the show.

In addition to aerobatic displays, feats of aerial ingenuity, roaring jets and amazing bygone aircraft filling the skies, visitors can experience the award-winning exhibitions at IWM Duxford as entrance to the whole museum – including AirSpace, the newly redeveloped American Air Museum and the Battle of Britain exhibition – is included in the price of the air show ticket.

Tickets for the Duxford Air Festival must be booked in advance as they will not be available on the gate on the day of the air show.

More information can be found on www.iwm.org.uk/duxford



London gate guardians flew to Cosford

As part of the preparations for next year's RAF Centenary, the RAF Museum at London is transforming. The museum's Mk II Hurricane and Mk IX Spitfire gate guardians have been dismantled and prepared for transportation to the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre in Cosford for renovation work.

Both gate guardians will be returned to the museum's London site in time for commemorations and celebrations of the centenary of the foundation of the Royal Air Force on 1 April 2018. They will be positioned so that they welcome members of the public as they enter through the museum's new entrance on Grahame Park Way.

One of the finest developments of the Rolls Royce Merlin engine series, the Mk IX was originally intended as a match for the German Focke Wulf 190. In comparison the Hawker Hurricane Mk II with its greater armament and simple, sturdy construction made it an effective ground attack fighter during the mid-war years.



bomber to crash in the forecourt of Victoria Station. His Hurricane was badly damaged, crashing near the grounds of Buckingham Palace. Holmes bailed out injured but survived eventually becoming a journalist in Liverpool after the Second World War. The adoption of this new colour scheme is indicative of the museum's aim to tell more stories about its aircraft and the people who flew and maintained them to aid a greater understanding of the RAF among its visitors.

The museum's London site will remain open from 1000hrs daily during the works for the RAF Museum's Centenary 2018 Transformation Programme. For full details on how to reach the museum and opening times visit www.rafmuseum.org/london

Happy 100th birthday Bill

Congratulations to Haywards Heath Branch member Bill Lucas, who turned 100 years old in January.

Bill trained as a pilot in the RAF in early 1940. He completed 14 missions flying Wellingtons, before converting to flying Stirlings, completing a further 26 operations.

When he retired from the RAF, he had flown 81 missions and left with the rank of Squadron Leader. During his time in the service, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and received a Mention in Despatches.

Bill also found success as an Olympic runner, participating in the 1948 Olympics in the 5,000 metre race.

As you can see from the pictures, it looks like he had a wonderful birthday.



Above: Bill chats with current 15 Squadron pilot and navigator, Joe Rigg and Mark Swinton

Governance and marketing will help charities face future challenges

"The fallout from the shock and uncertainty that characterised 2016 for many looks set to impact the UK economy over the next five years and beyond, with widespread regulatory and political changes demanding increased resources and improved governance structures," says Secretary General Nick Bunting.

"The challenge isn't only to weather the short term storm, however, but instead to buckle down and prepare for the longer term. Charities have always had to deal with a changing legal and regulatory environment, and operating in a sector that has its foundations in trust and public perception presents a host of unique challenges."

This is the start of an article about the Association on the Charities Management website – the magazine for charity managers and trustees. You can read the full article by visiting www.charitiesmanagement.com/Magazine-No112/page-2.php

Its markings are currently those of No 121 (Eagle) Squadron, based at Kirton-in-Lindsey, Lincolnshire during the summer of 1941. These markings will be changed to that of the Mk I Hawker Hurricane flown by Sergeant Ray Holmes of No 504 Squadron from RAF Hendon on 15 September 1940.

In an act of selfless bravery Sergeant Holmes prevented a Dornier Do17 Bomber from destroying Buckingham Palace by ramming it with the wing of his aircraft, forcing the

Frequently asked Wills questions

Our Wills partner, Beneficial Trust & Will Company, has answered some of your questions on managing your estate. More questions and answers will appear in future issues of Air Mail or visit the Association's website if you'd like to see the full list.

I don't have much to leave behind, do I still need a Will?

If you have personal possessions of any kind then you have something to leave behind. Making a Will ensures your affairs are much easier to wind up by your loved ones when the time comes.

What is a lasting power of attorney?

While a Will determines what happens to your belongings when you pass away, you may need some help and support to manage your affairs while you are still alive. This may be on a

temporary or permanent basis. Dealing with money and paperwork can be difficult if you become unable to do so due to ill health or other reasons. Before that happens, appointing a person you trust to act as your attorney will ensure they can take care of your affairs should you need them to.

I wish to exclude someone from my Will – is that possible?

In theory you can include or exclude whomsoever you wish from your Will. However, the Dependents Act 1975 allows for certain individuals to contest a Will if they feel inadequate provision has been made for them. Any exclusions should clearly be stated in your Will and supported by a separate handwritten letter from you explaining the reasons for the exclusion.

For more information on Wills and estate planning, please contact our Legacy and Remembrance Manager, Vinny Manak. You can email vinny.manak@rafa.org.uk or call 0800 018 2361.

Have you renewed your membership?

Please note that if you haven't renewed your yearly or four-yearly membership by the time this Air Mail reaches you, it will be your last Air Mail until you renew.

Renewing is easy – you can renew via your branch, call us on 0800 018 2361 or visit www.rafa.org.uk/renew

Why not sign up to Direct Debit and you'll never have to remember to renew your membership again? Your membership allows us to continue to be there for members of the RAF family who need us.

Thunderbirds are go!

Plans to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the US Air Force at this summer's Royal International Air Tattoo were given a huge boost following the announcement that one of the world's most popular display teams will make a rare trip across the Atlantic to take part.

The Thunderbirds's performance at the Air Tattoo, which takes place from 14 to 16 July, will be the team's only UK appearance this year and will be part of the airshow's official tribute to mark the US Air Force's 70th anniversary. As well as seeing a range of operational and historic US Air Force aircraft in the air and on the ground, Air Tattoo visitors will have the opportunity to learn about the key role the air arm plays in a range of international coalitions and partnerships.

Flying six F-16 Fighting Falcons, elite pilots from the US Air Force will perform a mix of formation flying and solo routines that highlight the maximum capabilities of the USAF's frontline, multi-role fighter jet. The team, which is based at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, has only appeared at the Air Tattoo once before – in 2007.

Air Tattoo Chief Executive Andy Armstrong said the announcement of the Thunderbirds's participation demonstrated the incredibly strong bond that exists with the US Air Force. He said: "The history – and success – of the Air Tattoo is inextricably linked to the US Air Force, on whose base the event



takes place each year. I am pleased that we'll have the opportunity in the summer to mark their 70th anniversary."

Special reduced-price Air Tattoo earlybird tickets are available until 3 May (or until they are sold out), priced from £34. Under-16s go free. For details call 01285 713456 or visit www.airtattoo.com

Lottery win may end up as dogs' dinners!

Jeremy Hill of Louth, Lincolnshire is celebrating winning £6,750 with the RAF Association's Wings Lotto.

The retired aircraft maintenance engineer said: "I signed up for it many years ago. I haven't won anything before. Thank goodness I didn't cancel!"

"There was a phone message one day. Jo from the Association said, 'You've won some money'. I said, 'That's good'. When she said how much it was I said, 'Are you sure you said six THOUSAND?'"

"It's a very strange feeling, but very pleasant. We hadn't ever thought what we'd do if we won a substantial amount, so we'd not planned exotic holidays or anything. I'm sure we'll find

something for it – buy some more food for our dogs perhaps! We've got eight: a collie and the other seven are English Setters. They are from all over Europe - rescued from around the Mediterranean after they have been abandoned by hunters who no longer have a use for them."



Mr Hill retired at 55 after 37 years in the RAF. Mainly based in Lincolnshire, he was one of the first apprentice entries that went from single trade to multi trade. "I was trained for the TSR-2 and eventually ended up on the Lightning. I did a lot of detachments, but we were not given postings: though I spent a year unaccompanied in Goose Bay in Labrador, North Canada."

Jeremy's Wings Lotto advice to everyone else is, "Give it a whirl, you might win."

Even if you don't win, your pound still goes to help serving and former serving RAF personnel who really need it. Money raised helps us to continue our welfare work. The lotto can be played by Association members and by non-members. For more information, including full terms and conditions, visit www.rafa.org.uk/wings-lotto

Being sociable at Dowding House



MBNA RAF Association credit card to be withdrawn

Credit card company MBNA is ceasing its charity credit card scheme later this year, for all charities, not just the RAF Association. If you hold an RAF Association credit card with MBNA you may have already received a letter telling you this.

Thank you to everyone who has held one and contributed funds to the Association. If you would like to donate directly to us you can visit www.rafa.org.uk/donate or call 0800 018 2361 to set up a regular donation.

Tenants of Dowding House celebrated Burns Night in style with a wonderful supper of haggis, neeps and tatties.

This is just one of the many events organised by the Dowding House Tenants Social Club. They arrange monthly social events, monthly coffee mornings and trips out.

Situated in the small friendly town of Moffat, Dowding House has a number of vacancies for members of the RAF family. If you'd like more information on Dowding, please call 0800 018 2361.

A warm welcome (and efficiencies) at new HQ

Eight months after the Association's headquarters moved to Atlas House, the organisational and financial benefits of the move are starting to show.

Since last August, the Association is delighted to have welcomed a large number of guests, including branch, Area Council and Council meetings, as well as numerous volunteer training courses. And the Association hopes to welcome many more staff and members in future.

Visitors from RAF stations and other organisations have commented on the modern, open plan office, which embodies the ethos of the Association throughout: from the RAF colour scheme to the many RAF Association photos and graphics which adorn almost every wall. See the pictures with this article for the detail of the history of the Association, morse code motifs throughout the building, and the proud display of the Royal Charter, standard and other important historical objects in the main Council room. The meeting rooms are named after the three founders Pearce, Goodhand and Bartlett.

Nick Bunting, Secretary General of the Association explained: "If we had stayed at the old Loughborough Road building the cost of the remedial maintenance it needed would have exceeded the building's value. We could have made it safe, but it would still have been an inefficient and unpleasant working place.

"The purchase, refurbishment and move were all achieved within the £2.2 million budget set by Council. Taking into account the sale of Loughborough Road and VAT recovery on the purchase of Atlas House, the net cost came down to £1.38 million. The refurbished building has recently been valued at £2.5 million, adding to our reserves and so the Association is better off financially now than it was before the purchase."

Further financial benefits are expected from the estimated £250,000 per year saving on operating costs, including lower ongoing maintenance costs, heating costs and the ability to host meetings and training sessions on site, rather than hiring external facilities. Nick Bunting continues: "Add to this the increased productivity that comes with a more efficient working environment and the move has proved a great success for the Association".



Atlas House reception



RAF Association timeline



Bartlett meeting room



Pearce meeting room



Volante Suite

RAF Referees round up

The RAF FA Referees had a very successful season last year. With 101 referees registered for the season. They coordinated two successful seminars, with around 35-40 attendees wanting to learn more about ways they can develop in the game.

The referee-mentoring scheme has also had a successful second year, with all junior referees appointed a mentor, as well as those advancing through the promotion scheme at levels five and six.

In regards to promotions, it was a particularly good year, as 12 referees moved up to the next level successfully. The support of the RAF Association was as important as ever to the referees, as they purchased new tracksuits for all active referees, helping to enhance their sense of professionalism and the corporate image they are trying to reflect.

Finally, congratulations are in order for Sergeant Sunby, who won the coveted Referee of the Year award, after a year that included being called upon to referee the inter services Army versus Navy game, being promoted to level three for the upcoming football season and also receiving a service promotion to the rank of Sergeant. Certainly, a year to be proud of and we look forward to bringing you more news from the RAF Referees throughout the year.



Oliver aims for Europe

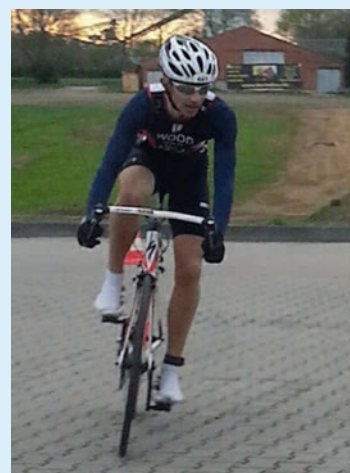
The RAF Association supports people in achieving their goals, whatever they may be. Wing Commander Steve Wood, Officer Commanding Base Support Wing at RAF Leeming got in touch with us when his son needed support to achieve his dreams.

Aged 18, Oliver wants to become a top triathlete, and has worked incredibly hard, being selected to represent Team GB in the 2016 Sprint Distance Duathlon European Championships in Kalkar, Germany. It was at this time that they approached the Association to see if we could help Oliver:

"In 2014 I competed in my first adult sprint triathlon, finishing in sixth place. By 2015, I was entering some high profile races and in 2016, I qualified for the European Duathlon Championships in Kalkar, Germany.

"In April 2016, I travelled with my family to Kalkar. I felt proud to wear the GB kit, represent my country and be part of the age group team. The course was open and windy, but the spectators cheering us all on made it more enjoyable and I finished eighth in my age category.

"I loved the experience of competing and am looking forward to competing in the 2017 championships in Soria, Spain. I would like to thank the Association, who were a key contributor in supporting me, as I try to compete at such a high level."



En Garde! Becci takes on Europe

Becci Curwen is not just a student and a cadet, she is also a top British Cadet Fencer. With the support of her parents, her school and the Royal Air Forces Association Becci is on track to reach her goal of becoming a top Olympic fencer. The Association is proud to share how Becci got on in her latest competition.

Becci competed in a World Cup event in Pisa, Italy. Competition was particularly fierce, as teams from America, Australia and Venezuela had made the journey over to fight at the highest level.

Becci fenced very well and took points from each opponent in all of her fights. She made it through the poule, and into the knockout stages. Unfortunately, Becci lost in the round of 128, as she came up against the eventual winner of the competition. Despite this, Becci still managed to take four points off the champion, no mean feat.

Support from the Association has meant Becci was able to go to the competition in Pisa making it a positive end to the year's international circuit. Next up for Becci are the regional qualifiers for the British National Championships, where she will be trying her hand at Sabre and Epee instead of her usual foil sword. Not only that but she has GCSEs to prepare for and cadet meetings to attend. Well done Becci! We look forward to following your successes in 2017.



RAF Triathletes

RAF Association supporters Flight Lieutenant Ben Terry and Flight Lieutenant Lynsey Carveth started their season early this year, competing in the Ironman 70.3 Dubai race. Travelling with fellow RAF Triathletes; Flight Lieutenant James Ford and Corporal Andy Nash, they headed for Dubai a few days ahead of schedule to acclimatise to the heat and familiarise themselves with the race route.



It was their first race of the year and for Lynsey, her first attempt at the challenging middle distance discipline. Consisting of a 1,900m open water swim, 90km bike ride and half marathon run, the race was based from the picturesque Jumeriah beach with an unforgettable swim start.

Both made positive starts during the swim and exited transition one and the start of the bike leg in good positions. The bike route featured a strong-head wind followed by a very fast return to transition, with the wind working in the favour of the athletes. Lynsey had the misfortune of a puncture on the return route, however, successfully rectified the issue and was able to return to transition for the start of the run. Ben continued to work hard in the challenging heat and crossed the line in 10th in Age Group and Lynsey crossed the line of her first Half Iron distance race in 17th in Age Group. Both Flight Lieutenant Ford and Corporal Nash achieved their race goals, proving to be a successful trip for the group of travelling athletes and an excellent early start to the triathlon season.



RAF Volleyball Association

The RAF Hawks (RAF Ladies Volleyball) have experienced a major turnaround of proficient players in recent years, encouraging the need to develop and recruit new players to the sport. The Hawks participate in the Woman's Division 3 Central competition of the National Volleyball League (NVL), with fixtures scheduled for most Sundays throughout the volleyball season.

Participation in the 16/17 NVL season has enabled the RAF Hawks to build on the foundations of a relatively inexperienced squad. The experience and skill of key players has assisted the head coach when developing newer members, quickly allowing the team to become competitive against stronger teams in their division. Although there have been no wins so far this season, the drive and determination of the team has to be commended; their unwavering fighting spirit has resulted in some extremely close contests, surprising the majority of their competitors.

The regular training sessions and matches allows the team to improve their skills and build on team cohesion. The big competitions the team are preparing for are the Crown Services tournament and most importantly the Inter-Services competition. The British Army, as the current Inter-Services winners will undoubtedly be the hardest opposition for the RAF side. However, with continued confidence the RAF Hawks have high expectations to bring home the Inter-Services trophy in 2017.



Gift from The Patron's Fund

The RAF Association has received a gift of £2,500 from The Patron's Fund. The money was raised from generous donations and from the profits from The Patron's Lunch event on The Mall in June 2016.

The event was a major part of Her Majesty The Queen's 90th birthday celebrations.

The Mall in St James's Park was transformed for its largest ever street party to celebrate The Queen's patronage of more than 600 charities and organisations. 10,000 guests attended. They enjoyed hamper-style lunches at tables all along The Mall and were entertained by a spectacular parade that was designed to encapsulate memories from the decades of Her Majesty The Queen's reign.

The RAF Association was represented at the lunch and took part in the parade. Guests included Association members and volunteers who had made a recent, significant contribution to the charity.

Across the UK, countless other organisations, including; businesses, schools and community groups also held Patron's Lunches in their local communities to raise funds. Speaking on behalf of the board of trustees of



The Patron's Fund, Sir Stuart Etherington, said: "We are delighted to be able to support so many organisations for which Her Majesty The Queen acts as a Patron. Yours is among a group of incredible and diverse organisations, which make a real difference to communities and causes around the UK and the Commonwealth".

The RAF Association is one of 300 organisations that have been awarded gifts from the fund.

RAF Association helps RAF widows keep in touch

The Royal Air Forces Association has donated three laptops to the RAF Widows Association, which will allow the organisation to keep in better touch with members, while ensuring their personal data is kept securely.

Rory O'Connor, Director of Welfare and Policy at the Association, said: "The RAF Association is here to help members of the RAF family in a variety of ways – sometimes it's financial, sometimes emotional and sometimes that help is practical. By providing three new laptops and a training session on how to make the best use of them, we will help the RAF Widows Association keep those who have lost loved ones in touch with what the charity is doing for them.

"The training also encompassed best practice in data protection, to ensure that all personal data continues to be stored securely and appropriately."

Jane Lloyd, Chair of the RAF Widows Association, said: "We understand how important it is for any information we keep to be appropriate and secure, so to have dedicated laptops for the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary roles will be invaluable for us.

"The laptops will be used for contacting our members, we have around 280, also for communication with the RAF Association, RAF Community Support and other partner organisations. These will also be useful for when we are organising our events and keeping them updated on activities other organisations are organising, for example Remembrance weekend or visits to war memorials."



Above: L to R Jenny Gammon (RAF Association), Jane Lloyd and Penelope Nicholls (RAF Widows Association), and Sean Corcoran (RAF Association).

Look out! Cyclists about

If you are on a Lincolnshire station on Wednesday 19 April, keep your eyes peeled for up to 20 cyclists whizzing by in Association t-shirts.

Sergeant Richie Atha, Senior Aircraftman Stuart Coutts, members of the RAF Scampton cycle club and others will be

biking 80 miles in a day around all the camps in the Lincoln area. They will be raising money from sponsorship and from stalls at each of the camps to support the Association's work.

Look out for them on the day, and read more news of how it went in future editions of Air Mail.

Santa comes early to the Falkland Islands

Santa came early to the Falkland Islands to spread some festive cheer, as RAF Mount Pleasant personnel took part in a two-mile Santa run to raise funds for the RAF Association. The Santas got together for the warm up, taken by one of Santa's little helpers and came to life as Elvis's 'Burning Love' blared out while they strutted their stuff.



Joining the Santas on the start line was a little girl called Lydia, who came with her mum and baby sister to run the race. The event had an extra twist, as one of Santa's helpers set off with a 30-second head start, so the others could try to catch him. The whistle blew and they were off.

Santa's little helper was caught and overtaken by several of the other runners and they all came over the finish line a little wetter than they started. The festive fundraisers were proud to have taken part in supporting the Storybook Wings project and a grand total of £738.36 was raised.

RAF Leeming lathers up for the Association

Fundraisers from the Mechanical Transport section at RAF Leeming braved the cold to raise money for the RAF Association. The group carried out a charity car wash, raising a grand total of £280, as well as raising the profile of the RAF Association on Station. A great job to all involved!



RAF Brize Norton hosts Christmas Fayre for the Association

The start of December 2016 saw the inaugural RAF Association Brize Norton Christmas Fayre, organised by the Station RAFALO team.

It was held in the Station gymnasium and Main Briefing Facility, where over 40 stallholders took position for the day, each donating an item from their stall to be entered into a Christmas raffle. Station personnel and their families were encouraged to come along and support the day, enjoying donated cakes and other refreshments.

The inaugural fayre raised over £1,500 and following the success, planning has already begun for the next one!



Royal Air Force Centenary – RAF100 update

On 1 April 2018 the RAF will mark the centenary of its formation as the world's first independent air force.

RAF100 activities and events will be taking place across the UK from Autumn 2017 throughout 2018 with the theme of Celebration, Commemoration and Inspiration. The focus will be on enhancing the awareness, understanding and reputation of the RAF and its charities, feeling proud of the RAF's achievements and inspired about its future. The RAF will also target future generations through activities focusing on the subjects of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

The RAF100 website has recently been updated and you can subscribe to a newsletter giving more information on what is happening. You can also submit details of events you are organising that are open for members of the public to attend, for the RAF to consider publicising. Visit www.raf.mod.uk/raf100/whats-on

Do let us know if your branch or area is planning any centenary events by emailing RAF100@rafa.org.uk

We will be providing updates in area newsletters and Air Mail as they become available.



An Extraordinary Edition for an extraordinary service

The RAF Centenary Anthology, a handmade, limited edition of 1,500 books has been launched. This includes 250 signed exemplary copies.

The anthology, produced by specialist publishers Extraordinary Editions, will commemorate 100 years of the Royal Air Force, while celebrating the spirit and values of the people who have contributed to the RAF story. A donation from all sales will be made to the RAF100 Appeal supporting the RAF Association, RAF Charitable Trust, RAF Benevolent Fund and RAF Museum.

The anthology will consist of at least 650 pages of documents, orders, operational reports, maps, air diagrams, diaries, letters and ephemera, recording RAF life over its first 100 years.

The Signed Exemplary Edition will be limited to just 250 copies published in five different versions, each representing an iconic aircraft and signed by three pilots or crew from that aircraft: the Spitfire, the Lancaster, the Vulcan, the Harrier and the Tornado. In addition they will contain extra material about each specific aircraft.

The anthology is available at a special subscriber rate to members of the RAF and RAF charities. Members can secure a copy by completing a subscriber form and sending a deposit. Once sufficient subscriptions have been received the book will go into production, with delivery planned for early 2018. All subscribers will have their name listed in the book. Any unsubscribed copies will be made available to the public from June 2017 at full price, when the subscriber offer will close.

In early 2018 Extraordinary Editions will write to each subscriber requesting their final payment, checking delivery details and confirming delivery costs. The Centenary Edition is available to subscribers at £750 (recommended retail price [RRP] £950) and the Signed Exemplary Edition is available to subscribers at £1,450 (RRP £1,950).

For more information or to register your interest please email mm@extraordinaryeditions.com or telephone 0207 267 4547.



An example of a double page spread showing General Smuts' memorandum

The RAF Association helps contact houses at RAF Valley

The Secretary General of the Royal Air Forces Association, Nick Bunting, and Director of Welfare and Policy, Rory O'Connor visited RAF Valley recently to meet the station's welfare team and visit newly refurbished contact houses, which benefitted from a grant from the Association.

RAF Valley operates two contact houses, which provide service personnel and families with fully equipped and furnished homes for welfare purposes. The houses are for family contact where children and a parent live apart, for families of service members visiting relatives serving at Valley, and for emergency compassionate and welfare reasons. The Association provided the grant to replace furniture in both houses and give them a bit of an update.



RAF Valley Station Commander, Group Captain Nick Tucker-Lowe accompanied the Association guests and said of the grant: "We are extremely grateful to the RAF Association. At RAF Valley, our personnel work extremely hard to train world-class aircrew to protect the United Kingdom and its interests. To do this, we need to look after our people, and the contact houses provide a vital part of this support network. The RAF is a family, of which the Association is a big part."

RAF Benson helps Association Headquarters

A team from RAF Benson visited the new RAF Association headquarters in Leicester to help maximise the efficiency of their warehouse floor space. The group arrived, having drawn up plans for the shelving and racking, ready to get to work. With the help of headquarters employees, a stock take was held and shelving set up in each of the rooms.

Chris Osborne, Fundraising Events Manager for the Association said: "Having the team from RAF Benson allowed us to use their specialist knowledge and expertise to set up the much needed warehouse facilities here at the new headquarters." A huge thanks to those from RAF Benson who came up to help.

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The Red Arrows welcome the new pilots for 2017

Three new pilots have joined the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team for the Red Arrows' 2017 season.

The aircrew bring with them years of frontline, operational fast-jet flying and instructional experience. Flight Lieutenant Toby Keeley, Flight Lieutenant Dan Lowes and Flight Lieutenant Chris Lyndon-Smith have begun training with the Red Arrows.

Flight Lieutenant Keeley, 34, who was raised in Eastbourne, said becoming part of the Red Arrows team is an opportunity he has been working towards since an early age.

He said: "Joining the Red Arrows has been a childhood ambition ever since I first watched them display at my home airshow. I am immensely proud to be selected for the team and am very much looking forward to earning the coveted red flying suit following the months of training to come."

To apply to join the Red Arrows, Royal Air Force pilots need to have at least 1,500 fast-jet flying hours, to have completed a frontline tour and be assessed as above average in their flying

role. Once they have finished their three-year tour with the team, the pilots return to frontline, instructional or staff duties.

As the public face of the Royal Air Force, the Red Arrows assist with recruiting into the service, contribute to defence diplomacy and support wider national interests by representing the United Kingdom and its industry.

The new recruits will succeed those pilots who finished their tours with the Red Arrows at the end of the 2016 season – Flight Lieutenant Steve Morris, Flight Lieutenant Stew Campbell and Flight Lieutenant Joe Hourston.

The RAF Association is honoured to be one of a small number of charities supported by the Red Arrows and we look forward to another successful display season, which is expected to start in May.

Visit www.raf.mod.uk/reds for more information on the Red Arrows like the team on Facebook or follow @rafredarrows on Twitter.



Flight Lieutenant Toby Keeley



Flight Lieutenant Dan Lowes



Flight Lieutenant Chris Lyndon-Smith

Destination Dronfield

On 10 December 2016, the cadets and staff of 1890 (Dronfield) Squadron ATC embarked on a gruelling challenge to raise money for the Royal Air Forces Association. They rode the distance between RAF Montrose, the first operational military air station in Great Britain, and their squadron headquarters in Dronfield, on exercise bikes. They undertook the 341.5-mile challenge with a time limit of ten hours.

Cadets assembled at 0900hrs at their local Sainsbury's supermarket, as Flying Officer Gains and Cadet Hardy took their places to start off the huge challenge. With the distance displays on the bikes covered up, nobody knew how far they had gone or if they were on target until the challenge was completed.

As well as cycling, the cadets helped customers pack their shopping bags. When 1900hrs came around the cadets were exhausted, but knew they had cycled as hard as they could. With no more time left, the big reveal showed they had ridden an impressive 377.9 miles.



Cadet Sergeant Ed Pledge organised the event, and is proud of what his squadron achieved in a relatively short space of time. He would like to thank the Sainsbury's customers, who were so generous, and all staff and cadets who participated. At the time of going to print, the squadron had raised a fantastic £1,034.59.

Research shows clear public concern over UK veterans' care

New research from the RAF Association shows a growing concern from the public about loneliness and isolation among armed forces veterans.

Over half of the UK Armed Forces veteran population are aged 75 or over and relationship/isolation issues affect approximately 170,000 RAF veterans. With 85,000 of these veterans specifically experiencing loneliness.

The Association found that less than a quarter (23 per cent) of those surveyed were aware of the issue of loneliness among our armed forces veterans, while over 40 per cent of respondents to the survey have definitely seen, read or heard something about loneliness and isolation among older people in the past three months.

To combat these concerns, the Association introduced a befriending service to provide much-needed support and companionship to the thousands of RAF veterans experiencing social isolation across the UK.



Rory O'Connor, Director of Welfare and Policy at the Royal Air Forces Association, said: "Our befriending service is an important initiative which provides invaluable welfare support for the 1.5 million strong RAF family. If you or someone you may know could benefit from befriending, we'd encourage you to get in touch with us as no veteran should ever feel lonely or isolated."

Those who could benefit from this scheme can call 0800 018 2361 or visit www.rafa.org.uk/befriending

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This voucher entitles RAF Association Members to a **£150 discount** off the price of a Pre-paid Funeral Plan from Co-op Funeralcare.

*Terms & Conditions: 1. If you purchase one of our Set Plans online, we already offer an online discount therefore, if you use this offer online the total discount given will be limited to £150 for being an RAF Association member by quoting promotional code RAFA16. If you purchase one of our Set Plans over the phone, a Set Plan or a Tailor-made Plan in one of our funeral homes, you will receive £150 discount for being an RAF Association member by quoting promotional code RAFA16. 2. Only one discount of £150 will be made towards the full price of a Pre-paid Funeral Plan ("Discount"). 3. The Discount is only valid for Pre-paid Funeral Plans purchased on or after 20 February 2017, and up to and including 31 December 2017. The Discount does not apply if the Funeral Plan is to be paid for by fixed monthly payments. 4. This Discount is redeemable only by the purchaser of a Funeral Plan. The Funeral Plan purchaser can purchase a Pre-paid Funeral Plan either for themselves or another. 5. This voucher may not be exchanged for cash. This voucher will be void if reproduced or photocopied. 6. If you are purchasing a Pre-paid Funeral Plan at a Promoter Funeral Home, please present this voucher at the time of purchase. The Funeral Home shall retain the voucher. 7. The Promoter reserves the right to withdraw, modify or terminate this offer in whole or in part in the event that makes it necessary to do so. 8. This Discount is not to be used in conjunction with any other offer, membership offer, discount or promotion being run by the Promoter. 9. The promotional code for this voucher is RAFA16. For full Pre-paid Funeral Plan T&C's see www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk/terms-and-conditions. Co-op Funeralcare is a trading name of Funeral Services Limited, a registered society registered in England and Wales with registration number 30808R and registered office 1 Angel Square, Manchester, M60 0AG. VAT registered 403 3146 04. Part of Co-operative Group Limited.

RAF Marham cheque presentation



Over the last 12 months, RAF Association Marham Branch have organised or supported several fundraising events, including a boxing event, cycling around Norfolk, running 100 miles in 24 hours, Marham village fun day, RAF Marham Families and Friends Day, quiz nights and gate collections.

RAF Marham personnel and the local community can be justly proud of their efforts in helping to raise £6,204.91 for last year's Wings Appeal.

Picture left, members of the RAF Association's Marham Branch hand over a cheque to Steve Webb, Eastern Area Branch Support Officer. Photo: © MoD/Crown

RAF Brize Norton 47 Squadron take on Tough Mudder

A group of dedicated 47 Squadron personnel took part in a 'Tough Mudder' challenge. Looking for a worthy cause to donate to, they chose to donate over £900 of their fundraising efforts to the RAF Association.

Thanks to the success of their fundraising efforts, plans are afoot for an even bigger event later in the year.



RAF Coningsby Memorial Miles

A team from RAF Coningsby Air Operations have decided to spend 2017 running for a very good cause.

Between 2002 and 2015, 635 UK Armed Forces personnel lost their lives in military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. To honour those that made the ultimate sacrifice, the team will be running one mile for each person on the day they passed away.

The team are fundraising for a number of Service charities, including the RAF Association. To keep up with their fundraising, visit www.memorialmilesrun.com or donate to www.uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/Memorialmilesrun

Wokingham Branch visits RAF Northolt



Personnel from RAF Northolt hosted a visit for the RAF Association Wokingham Branch.

Branch members visited Queen's Colour Squadron (QCS) with RAFALO Flight Lieutenant Ed Soane, where they toured the building and learned much about the roles of the QCS.

Corporal Smith provided lunch in the Sword and Wheel 'facility', where branch members took the opportunity to speak with serving personnel. After lunch came their final visit of the day, the dog section. Branch members were able to watch the police dogs practising their tactics, before they left the station having had a thoroughly enjoyable day.

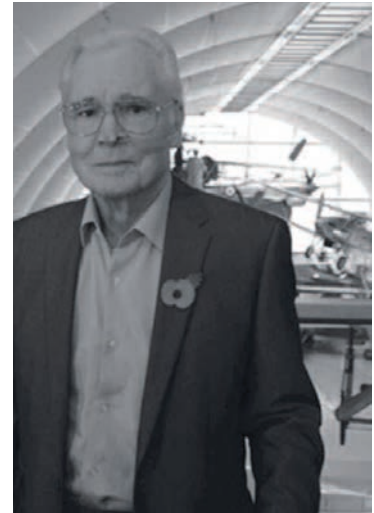
Ricky Valance wants to raise £1 million for two RAF charities – £1 for every record sold in 1960

Ricky Valance has dedicated his last recording before retirement to the Royal Air Force where he started his working life. He served overseas in the 1950s. Ricky's performance of 'Welcome Home' is dedicated to the men and women of all nations who have served and are serving with the RAF.

He hopes to raise £1 million which will be split between the RAF Association and the RAF Museum.

You can buy the single on iTunes or watch the video on YouTube (search for Ricky Valance – Welcome Home), where you can also find a link to his fundraising page.

RICKY VALANCE
ACTIVE SERVICE 1954-1957
ONE MAN'S TRIBUTE



The Association's shop has gone quackers!

They're here – this year's RAF Association ducks. You can order yours now, along with lots of other Association and RAF gifts at www.rafa.org.uk/shop

You can either buy them for yourself or a fellow duck fan, or order some for your branch's Wings Appeal – follow the appropriate link on the shop's homepage.



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Have you signed up for Annual Conference 2017?



Here is the outline Conference programme, which was correct at time of press. All rooms, suites and other areas are in Yarnfield Conference Centre, ST15 0NL.

If you would like to attend, but have not yet signed up, you can still register your place at www.rafa.org.uk/annualconference. If you do not have an email account or prefer to book over the phone, please contact our reception team on 0116 268 8750 and they will happily take your booking details.

Friday 12 May

Time	Event	Location
1400hrs	Check-in for delegates opens	Reception
1400hrs	Marketplace opens	Atrium
1730-2030hrs	Dinner*	Wings Café

1900-2300hrs

1900hrs	Informal 'Meet and Greet' evening	Atrium/bar
1900hrs	Registration for Conference opens	Atrium

2000-2100hrs

2000hrs	The President's National Presidential Certificate (NPC) recipients' drinks reception	Balcony, first floor
2200hrs	Marketplace and registration closes	Atrium

Saturday 13 May

Time	Event	Location
0630-0900hrs	Breakfast*	Wings Café
0830hrs	Registration/marketplace opens	Atrium
0845hrs	Call for delegates and guests to be seated	Knighton Suite
0900hrs	Parade of Area Standards	
0905hrs	Welcome by Annual Conference Committee	
0910hrs	Opening ceremony	

* Provided to residents staying at Yarnfield

Time	Event	Location
0920hrs	2016 and the Future Presentation by the Secretary General	Knighton Suite
0945hrs	Address by the Chief of the Air Staff	
1000-1030hrs	Day trips to Trentham Gardens; Stafford town centre and National Trust Shugborough Estate	
1015hrs	Presentation of Flying Scholarships and NPCs	
1030hrs	Presentation of the Annual Conference Committee's Report by the Chairman of the Annual Conference Committee	
1035hrs	Annual Report for 2016 by the Chairman of Council	
1100hrs	Financial and Auditor's Report for 2016 by the Honorary Treasurer	
1130hrs	Questions for the Chairman and Hon Treasurer of Council and Secretary General	
1230-1330hrs	Lunch* NPC photos with Sir Dusty	Wings Café TBC
1245-1330hrs	Voting handset desk open	Atrium
1330hrs	Conference business as per the resolutions listed	Knighton Suite
1730hrs	Conference closes (return handsets)	
1730-2000hrs	Dinner*	Wings Café
1800-2000hrs	Bar opens for evening drinks	Bar, ground floor
1930-2145hrs	First Floor Bar opens	Meeting Room 3, first floor
2000-2200hrs	<i>Gala Awards Evening – Guests to be seated by 1955hrs</i>	
2000hrs	Trophy presentations Music by the Central Band of the RAF	Knighton Suite
2200-2330hrs	Live music to be provided	Bar, ground floor
Sunday 14 May		
Time	Event	Location
0700-0900hrs	Breakfast	Wings Café*
0900hrs	Parade assembles	Outside Atrium (if wet, in Knighton Suite)
0930hrs	Service	Conference Centre grounds
1000-1030hrs	Refreshments served	Balcony first floor
1000-1030hrs	Registration desk open to hand out voting handsets	Atrium
1030hrs	Presentation of parade trophies	Knighton Suite
1045hrs	Continuation of Conference business Vote of thanks	
1230-1300hrs	Closing ceremony	
1300hrs	Collection of packed lunches for delegates and guests*	Wings Café
1400hrs	Coach to Stone and Stafford Train Station	Outside Atrium

* Provided to residents staying at Yarnfield

Corporal Kinzie Pitman and Military Working Dog Dara

Continuing our series of features on canine members of the RAF family, this issue we meet Dara and her handler Corporal Kinzie Pitman. He writes...

I am Corporal Kinzie Pitman and I have been in the RAF for approximately two years. I joined the RAF Police to become a dog handler and upon successful completion of my basic and police training, I was posted to RAF Marham in Norfolk. I've since completed my Basic Dog Course and returned to RAF Marham where I have been teamed with Military Working Dog (MWD) Dara.

Dara is a two year old German Shepherd who is employed as a patrol asset. I am lucky enough to be her first handler since she left the Defence Animal Centre in 2015. We are learning together, which is proving to be quite the challenge while being very rewarding.

As a patrol dog team, we protect RAF Marham's mission critical assets. We conduct night-time patrols on a varied shift pattern providing security and policing assistance as required. I also provide animal welfare checks to ensure that the best care is given to all of the MWDs at RAF Marham.

I have long wanted to be selected to compete in the RAF Police UK Dog Trials – a national competition designed to raise standards and put to test all that Dara and I have worked towards.



Above and left: Corporal Kinzie Pitman and Military Working Dog Dara. Photos: © MoD/Crown



To compete in the trials you have to first perform in the annual Technical Evaluations (Techival) which are judged by the Provost Marshal Dog Inspectors. You are not just tested on your dog handling abilities over the week, but overall standards. The dog's standards and your kit are assessed too and must meet the high standards required. While on parade you are questioned about your dog's background and medical history, which are also taken into account when counting up the scores at the end of the week.

In preparation for the Techival, Dara and I were given a great insight into what was expected when we competed in our first Station Trials, gaining second place. Several weeks later and after a lot of hard work, Techival was finally here. There was definitely an air of anxiety around the section, but also excitement. Despite the nerves, we managed to put in a very strong performance and scored an 'excellent' rating. With this performance, Dara and I got first position in Techival and were also awarded best Criminal Workout and a place in the RAF Police UK Dog Trials.

Unfortunately due to a paw injury we had to withdraw from the trials. I have recently received a date for my first tour to the Falkland Islands, where I'll carry out Patrol Dog Handling duties. This means I will not be able to try again in 2017 with Dara. However, I am confident she will have another shot at competing when she is teamed with a new handler and will go on to do very well.

LIBOR funding for Bentley Priory Museum – one year on



At the beginning of 2016, Bentley Priory Museum in Stanmore, north west London, was awarded £1 million in Armed Forces Covenant (LIBOR) funding. This was to complete its Battle of Britain Museum project, focusing on enhancing learning and access at the museum.

Founding members of the museum's governing trust included Battle of Britain veterans who were committed to ensuring that younger generations learnt about RAF Bentley Priory's pivotal role during the Battle of Britain, and improving the learning experience of school students and families is therefore a critical priority for the museum.

The funding has enabled the museum to embark on an exciting three-year project to share the inspirational stories of the period with the widest possible audience and thus ensure that future generations are aware of its significance in the nation's history.

A year into the project and the funding has already successfully enabled the museum to welcome more school visits, through reduced admission prices. There are also more interactive resources for students when they visit, including an enhanced handling collection of RAF and WAAF uniforms and aircrew artefacts. The school sessions focus on the leadership, courage and technology during the battle that ensured Britain's darkest hour became her finest hour, and include a cross-curricular session on 'plotting the Battle of Britain' which highlights the importance of RAF Bentley Priory's unique Filter Room.

The project has also helped the museum to significantly improve access. Two recorded audio-described tours for visitors who are partially sighted or blind are now available, one created for adults and one for children – read by Horrible Histories star, Ben Willbond. The museum also has braille and large print guides available to support exploration around the galleries. Portable hearing equipment for group tours is also available, a much-needed resource for the museum as one in six people in Britain experience hearing loss.

With two years of the project remaining, the museum's focus is firmly on continuing to enhance the visitor experience and increase visitor numbers. Plans include the introduction of a 'Pilot School', ration inspired hands-on cooking activities and a Dowding System themed play area.

As well as reduced rates for school visits, the museum also offers discounted admission for serving personnel and veterans.

Bentley Priory Museum is open on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, from 1000 to 1600hrs (or until 1700hrs from March to September).

You can find out more by calling 0208 950 5526, emailing Enquiries@bentleypriorymuseum.org.uk or by visiting www.bentleypriorymuseum.org.uk

New features added to the National Memorial to the Few, Capel-le-Ferne

While it has become a major attraction for visitors from all over the country, the clifftop memorial to the heroes of the Battle of Britain still has a simplicity that inspires quiet reflection.

The National Memorial to the Few began life as a simple statue high on the White Cliffs between Dover and Folkestone, beneath the very skies in which much of the battle was fought between 10 July and 31 October 1940.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Trust has added a number of new features to the site at Capel-le-Ferne in Kent, including an interactive visitor experience, but the memorial itself remains a place of pilgrimage for many.



Additions such as a replica Spitfire and Hurricane and the Christopher Foxley-Norris Memorial Wall have broadened the appeal of the site, and in March 2015 the Trust opened The Wing.

This modern building, designed in the shape of a Spitfire wing, houses an interactive 'experience' which brings to life what was arguably the most important battle fought by this country in the whole of the last century.

The Scramble Experience has made the site as exciting for children and families as it is poignant for older visitors and visiting RAF Association members and branches.

While former and serving RAF personnel find the central statue and the Christopher Foxley-Norris Memorial Wall a moving place of reflection, visitors young and old love the hands-on exhibits and interactive graphics in the walk-through Scramble Experience.

As well as the interactive exhibits, the experience offers a huge amount of information, with touch screen displays that invite visitors to view film clips, biographies, images and more.

The memorial, a stone carving of an airman, was unveiled by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother in 1993 and still enjoys pride of place at the centre of this peaceful site at Capel-le-Ferne in Kent. The names of the aircrew who took part in the battle are listed – without rank or decoration – on the Christopher Foxley-Norris Memorial Wall, a black granite tribute to the fewer than-3,000 men who served so valiantly.



Built to reflect the wingplan of a Spitfire – including that immediately recognisable upward sweep – the building houses the Experience in one wing and a teaching area, the Geoffrey Page Centre, in the other.

The Wing also houses a well-stocked souvenir shop and a first floor café with outstanding views across the Channel to France. There is a lift from the ground floor to the café.

The site is free to visit, although there is a small charge for parking. The Scramble Experience is the only paid attraction and costs £6 for adults and £4 for children aged between five and 16. There are concessions and group rates available.

The Wing, the café and the car park are open daily from 1000 to 1700hrs from 1 March to the end of September and from 1000 till 1600hrs through the winter, with a short closure over Christmas (see website for details).

Every part of the memorial is fully accessible and the site itself, including all the outside features, is open to visitors on foot at any time, 365 days of the year.

For more information call 01303 249292 or visit www.battleofbritainmemorial.org



Laptop provides job prospect for John

John* has been through a lot since joining the Royal Air Force in 2007, but now, thanks to help from the RAF Association and a number of other organisations, he is getting his life back on track.

John was assaulted in 2009, which left him with a serious neck injury, resulting in a C5 disc fusion. He also suffered a mild traumatic brain injury, which led to nerve damage in his right shoulder and arm, which has compromised his ability to grip normally with his right hand. The brain injury also means he sometimes finds it difficult to process conversations. He understands what is being said, but has problems responding coherently – this obviously has had an impact on how he interacts with people.

Rehabilitation was slow and painful, and it took several years for a correct diagnosis of John's injuries to be made. The psychological effect of everything John has experienced has taken its toll, but despite him making good progress over the last couple of years it was not enough for him to remain in the RAF. He will be medically discharged in November this year.

John was supported by Bob Jones at Career Transition Partnership at RAF High Wycombe and this changed things for him. He says Bob put him on track with the recovery pathway at Tedworth House. As John is feeling in a much more positive position, he plans to complete the degree he started before he sustained his injuries and then a one-year masters supplement in public health. These qualifications will allow John to apply for jobs in the primary care sector. Bob applied to the RAF



Photo: © iStock 512473794

Association on John's behalf for funding for a laptop, which will allow him to complete his studies.

John said: "I'm confident I will be employed even with my disability and I have used this experience to ensure others never fall between the cracks. Everyone deserves the time to be listened to and we should all strive to make the world a far less insular and more accountable place.

"The funding from the RAF Association was about more than just a laptop, it was a little flag of humanity and hope."

**not his real name*

Noah is all smiles when he hears Daddy's voice



Noah's Daddy is an Avionics Engineer serving on II (AC) Squadron, stationed at RAF Lossiemouth. He has recently deployed overseas as part of Operation Azotize, part of NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission in Estonia.

Being a new father, Noah's Daddy was already aware of Storybook Wings, but the reminder during his Pre-Deployment Brief was the spur he needed. He set off to the 'HIVE' information centre at Lossiemouth not yet knowing which story he would record for six-month-old Noah.

Noah's Mummy said: "It was very fitting that when he returned from the HIVE he said he'd recorded Five Minutes' Peace. This was a much loved childhood favourite of mine and it is a book that I had bought for Noah too". Noah's Daddy found the recording simple and it only took about 20 minutes.

"Noah listens to the recording at all times of the day but mainly at bedtime. It is amazing to see his reaction when he hears his Daddy's voice. When I turn it on, it is only a matter of seconds before Noah realises who is reading to him and he smiles and giggles to the very end of the recording. Noah is naturally a happy boy at bedtime, but personally I feel hearing his Daddy's voice just settles him off to sleep that bit easier".

"The first time Noah heard his story, his wee eyes lit up and he smiled from ear to ear. I have no doubt the recording will be invaluable in the years to come! Thank you!"

Hotel news, coming up in 2017

Flowerdown House

23 April – St George's Day, watch the parade at 1430hrs, with a performance from the RAF Association Concert Band.

17 to 18 June – Weston-super-Mare Air Festival and Armed Forces Weekend. See the air display on the Beach Lawns from Flowerdown House. Veterans staying at Flowerdown will lead the parade and VIP guests will visit Flowerdown House.

20 July – black tie dinner, with guest speaker, Chairman of the RAF Association, John Cliffe CB OBE. Uniformed cadets will wait on tables as guests enjoy a three-course meal.

17 August – summer garden party. Put on your party clothes and dancing shoes for a day of entertainment, food and drink.



Rothbury House

29 May – Tea on the Terrace: the main fundraising event of the year, with stalls, lots of live music and a 'Can't Cook, Won't Cook' display with RAF chefs.

31 October – Hallowe'en, with ghoulish costumes, ghastly good food and scary entertainment!

9 December – Rothbury House Christmas Fayre. Lots of Christmas stalls, home baking and an enormous prize raffle. Santa will of course be showing up.



Richard Peck House

8 to 9 July – St Anne's Carnival. With floats, bands and dressing up, guests will be taken to enjoy the celebrations, alongside the local RAF Association branch.

13 July – summer garden party. With a marquee, entertainment and a buffet lunch, all guests and VIPs will be thoroughly entertained, hopefully in the wonderful sunshine!

19 to 20 August – 1940s Wartime Festival weekend, guests will dress up in their finest wartime uniforms and clothes. With vintage cars and aircraft, a bar and 1940s entertainment, it's a wonderful weekend.

5 to 12 December – Turkey and Tinsel week. Come and join the Christmas celebrations early, with a Christmas dinner, presents and the refreshing sea air.

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Squadron Leader Dean Gibson

Each issue we speak to a member of Council, so you can get to know our trustees better. This time we spoke to Squadron Leader Dean Gibson, an elected member of Council.

Tell us a bit about your RAF career

August 2017 will see me commemorate 31 years' service. As a fighter controller, I have enjoyed tours at RAFs Buchan (honest), Boulmer, Waddington and Bentley Priory. My favourite tour being Officer Commanding 303 Signals Unit, Falkland Islands; my wife Ali and son Ben were with me and we had a real adventure. I would recommend a tour on the Islands to anyone, especially those with children as they will love the wildlife. On leaving, I was posted to Joint Force Command Brunssum, the Netherlands, which included regular visits to Afghanistan. Returning to Britain in August 2012 I served on 56 (R) Squadron, the Firebirds, including a detachment in the Middle East, until July 2016. I am now serving my final tour, at the Training Development Wing at RAF Halton. After over 30 years it is time to spread one's wings, we all have to leave sometime.

What does it mean to be an elected member? What does your role on Council entail?

Being elected to Council was the crowning moment of what is rapidly approaching 18 years of unbroken service to the Association. I am particularly grateful to our fantastic members, for putting their faith in me, and Mr Paddy O'Hanlon from Alnwick Branch, who put me forward to be an RAF Association Liaison Officer in July 1999. For me, the role of a trustee is to protect, through engagement with the membership, the ethos and core values of the Association to ensure current, and future members, have an association which meets their needs and the needs of their family. Being a Councillor, you are a Trustee of the Association, someone who has to be prepared to make unpopular decisions, based on sound research and business principles, to assure the Association's future. One cannot let one's heart rule one's head. If you do, the business or charity will soon cease to exist, meaning it is no longer around to support the needs of the current and future generations.

What would you like to achieve in your time as an elected member for Council?

I would like to establish and maintain credibility as a councillor who can be relied upon to do the right thing for



the benefit of the Association. Looking longer term, as an officer who has seen the RAF pass through many 'rationalisations', I would like to see the Association lead a process of rationalisation of RAF brigaded associations and charities. The aim being to have one over-arching charity, with many 'arms', which looks after the needs of the three ages of RAF personnel - those who have served, those currently serving and those about to serve, i.e. the ATC, University Air Squadrons, etc, as I firmly believe – together we are stronger! More members, speaking with one voice, are far more powerful, than a disparate group, speaking with many voices. By 'needs', I am not just thinking of the welfare needs, but also the force multiplying effects the Association can, and does, provide to today's and will do to tomorrow's RAF personnel and their families.

What do you like doing in your free time?

What little spare time I have is taken up with running, slowly these days, cycling both mountain and road, as well as walking. When not trying to keep 'fit to fight' I spend as much time as I can spare supporting the wonderful members of the Harrow and District RAF Association Branch and Club.

There is 'NO ORDINARY JOB' in the RAF



The Royal Air Force offers more than 50 different job roles and apprenticeships for young people from the age of 16. With everything from chef and catering to technical and engineering opportunities – the options available are diverse no matter how a young person performed in their GCSEs or A-levels.

But the RAF is more than just a career choice – it is a lifestyle, with limitless boundaries to explore the world, all while being paid a competitive wage to work alongside colleagues who quickly become friends. Read on to find out more about someone who is now travelling the world thanks to the RAF.

When Ellie decided that A-levels weren't for her at the age of 17, she began to look at other options. 18 months later she is now working as an Aircraft Mechanic with the RAF Aerobatic Team – the Red Arrows.

Ellie said: "I left education at the age of 17 after finishing my first year of A-levels and deciding education was just no longer for me. Two years later and I find myself working with the Red Arrows!

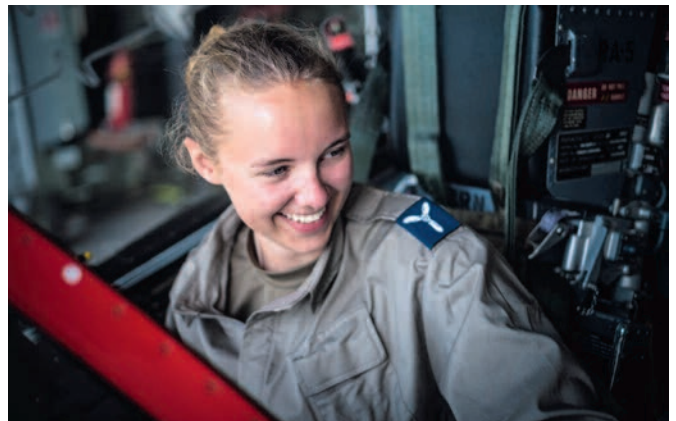
"After applying to join the RAF I completed a ten week basic training course at RAF Halton, which taught me standard military skills and set me up for the next stage of my career. Before I got my first proper posting with the RAF I also completed a six month trade training course which taught me the technical side of the job.

"I was posted straight to the Red Arrows at the end of my training, which was a complete shock but a posting that I was very happy with. I currently travel all over the world with the team and am mainly involved in the servicing of the aircraft; working alongside the engineers. I also work closely with Team Leader, Red 1 – Squadron Leader Dave Montenegro.

"My family are extremely proud that I decided to join the RAF and my dad loves that I am part of the Red Arrows, so is forever talking about it and posting things on social media! It feels great to know that my parents are proud of me so early in my career.

"In the future I want to continue to travel with the RAF - both overseas and around the UK. I am only 19, so still have my whole career ahead of me. If I could choose my next posting it would be to a squadron to work on fast-jets such as Lossiemouth in Scotland, where they have both the Tornado and Typhoon. But for now I am more than happy travelling the world with the Red Arrows!"

To find out more about RAF careers visit www.raf.mod.uk/recruitment



Items for Operation Shader

When the RAFALO team at RAF Coningsby approached us for some support, we were only too happy to help.

11 Squadron were due to deploy on an operational tour as part of Operation Shader. To make the tour a little more homely, they requested items including under-counter fridges, George Foreman grills for the bacon butties after a 12-hour shift, microwaves to reheat meals or cook a snack and some kettles so they could make cups of tea in the blocks after work.

Sergeant Ross said: "I was overwhelmed with the speedy response from the Association and the support we received. I was able to purchase all the items I asked for. In addition, some lovely Association teapots, mugs and water bottles were donated.



"The items have been well received in theatre and will continue to be well received by the next squadron to deploy. The support shown by the Association will ensure that the thousands of personnel who deploy to Operation Shader will have some little home comforts. They may not seem much on paper, but they mean a great deal to those out here."

The RAF Association is here to support all of the RAF family, serving, ex-serving and their dependants.

RAF Reserves

The Royal Auxiliary Air Force (RAuxAF) owes its origin to Lord Trenchard's vision of an elite corps of civilians to form a part-time volunteer air force and serve their country in their spare time on flying squadrons. Auxiliaries have been supporting the RAF and military operations since 1924. During the Battle of Britain, five RAuxAF day-fighter squadrons were among the ten top scoring squadrons (out of about 60 squadrons that took part). An extraordinary performance from squadrons only made up from part-time 'gentlemen amateurs' in comparison with the regular crews of the RAF.

Today's RAuxAF is encompassed within the RAF Reserves and continues to exist to support the RAF on operations and other tasks, at home and abroad and at all scales of effort. The size of the Reserves has dramatically increased and expanded into areas of the UK where there was previously no RAF presence. Every reservist has a clearly defined role and task within the UK's military forces and form an integral part of the 'RAF Whole Force'. The RAF currently employs over 2,500 reserve personnel on 27 squadrons in 20 locations. RAF Reserves new recruits undertake a 15 day Basic Recruit Training Course and can participate in joint graduations at RAF Halton alongside regular recruits on completion of the basic recruit training. Reservists then progress to supervised trade training undertaken at specialist trade schools, with some elements delivered locally at squadrons. The current focus is on the retention of trained reservists and making best use of the experience reservists are gaining, both through training and deployments within the Whole Force. RAF Reserves squadrons have delivered outstanding support to operations since 2003 and support the delivery of assured capability across all RAF tasks at home and abroad. At any one time ten to 15 per cent of combat ready reservists are mobilised for deployed operations. Five thousand man-days of routine support are provided throughout the RAF through routine utility in support of a variety of tasks and ceremonial events alongside the regulars.

As the Whole Force matures and the Service develops better ways of integrating the manpower pool in support of RAF outputs, both at home and overseas, it is now befitting that reservist personnel are indistinguishable from their regular counterparts in all aspects of their service activity. As a result, authority was recently granted to remove the requirement for identifying auxiliary insignia 'A' badges on all orders of service dress.

For more information visit www.raf.mod.uk/recruitment

Photo: © MOD Crown Copyright 2017



Flight Lieutenant Tony Tyrer

Our team of RAF Association Liaison Officers (RAFALOs) raises thousands of pounds for the Association every year. They provide a link between serving personnel and our wider branch network. Here we speak to Tony, Northern Area RAFALO.

Tell us a bit about your RAF career

I joined the RAF in 1996 in the trade of aerial erector and, after Basic and Trade Training, completed tours of RAF Henlow and Sealand. I was on installation and servicing teams travelling worldwide, working on various communications systems. I then found myself at the Armed Forces Careers Office (AFCO), Liverpool, conducting recruitment duties, visiting schools, colleges and motivational and leadership camps with 16-18 year olds. After that, I served on No 1 Expeditionary Radar and Airfield Squadron at RAF Leeming and undertook an instructional tour at RAF Digby, teaching the Aerial Erector Basic Training Course and conducting Climbing Aptitude Tests. I commissioned in August 2009 into Air Traffic Control and after phase 2 training was posted to RAF Linton-on-Ouse as an Air Traffic Control Officer. I am now at RAF Leeming doing a similar role.

How long have you been a RAFALO?

My first experience of the RAF Association was during my time at AFCO Liverpool, where I was part of a team that took part in the Great North Run in 2005. Our team won the Association's Sir Charles Wheeler Trophy, for the highest net collection per head of personnel in the same year. Ever since then I have helped out RAF Association station teams and in 2012 took on the station RAFALO role at RAF Linton-on-Ouse, culminating in the station being awarded the Sir Charles Wheeler Trophy in 2015.

Why did you decide to become a RAFALO?

It was down to the current South East Area RAFALO, Squadron Leader Ady Morris, who was my Officer Commanding at AFCO Liverpool. It was the first time anybody had really explained the work the Association does and pointed out how we could get involved. There are a lot of fantastic organisations affiliated to the military, but it made sense to get involved with the one that gives so much back to serving and ex-RAF personnel.

What sort of events have you been involved with?

As mentioned, I was part of a team that completed the Great North Run in 2005. My team at Linton and I conducted a 24-hour charity cycle challenge at a local supermarket and a similar event at the York Designer Outlet. We have also organised quiz nights, race nights and gate collections.

Why did you want to become an Area RAFALO?

I worked closely with the previous incumbent, Warrant Officer Dougie Lee and when he left the service he mentioned the



Above: Tony, far left pictured at the Great North Run, below: Tony resting during the 24 hour Cycle Challenge at RAF Linton on Ouse



position to me. I was due a posting from Linton and having already held a station RAFALO position, the Area RAFALO seemed like a great opportunity to continue working for the Association while maintaining the excellent working relationship I have established with the Northern Area.

What do you enjoy most about being a RAFALO?

The feeling that your efforts are genuinely helping the Association, which is assisting both serving or ex-serving personnel and their families who are in need.

If you were running a Brew for the Few, what would your first choice of cake be?

I am partial to a nice wedge of lemon drizzle, but to be honest I could eat most cakes quite happily!

Tea or coffee?

Tea, without a shadow of a doubt.



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Pull up a sandbag with Derek Boxell



This issue we spoke to Derek Boxell, a newly matched befriender.

Derek joined the RAF in 1974 as an airman and served for nearly 38 years, working through the ranks and was commissioned in 1990. He worked in the Air Traffic Control Specialisation and left in 2011 as a squadron leader. He had a varied career having served in or visited Germany, Cyprus, the Falkland Islands, the Gulf, Afghanistan, Gibraltar and Australia.

How did you find out about the volunteering role and what made you want to get involved?

I saw on television that a national charity had identified the issue of loneliness in old aged pensioners and that they wanted to try and resolve this. One day I was reading the Association's website and saw that they were also looking at the same concerns of loneliness in veterans and had launched a service to reduce the isolation and loneliness of the RAF family. I saw the advert for the role of a befriender and I felt that this was the best way that I could assist. Even if all I could do was to go and have a cup of tea with someone, 'pull up a sandbag' and have a chat or exchange service stories with an individual or talk about what is going on now within the services.

Why did you choose to become a befriender?

I chose the Association's befriending service above other charities that are undertaking similar schemes because I felt that I could use my 38 years' experience of being in the RAF to its advantage. I am able to start a conversation straight away with an individual as there is a common bond between me and my befriender, regardless of the difference in the service period.

What is the best thing about your volunteering role with the Association?

I gain a great sense of satisfaction from helping someone. After my visits to the two befriended I have at present, I feel that I have made a positive impact on them. It can be the little things that have the biggest impact.

What impact does your volunteering role have on the people you work with or have worked with?

The befriended I support have different needs and I enjoy the fact that they and I look forward to my visits for different reasons. One gentleman from the WWII era, loves to talk about what he did during the war, but he also likes to talk about the RAF now. Another gentleman who has been to some of the bases that I have served on, loves to hear me talk about those bases and it brings such a smile to his face.

Airshow Events Calendar 2017*



1 May
7 May
14 May
27 May
27 and 28 May

Lechlade Duck Race
Shuttleworth Season Premiere Airshow
Abingdon Air and Country Show
Durham Tees Valley Airshow
IWM Duxford Air Festival

3 and 4 June
11 June
17 and 18 June
24 June

Torbay Airshow
RAF Cosford Air Show
Weston Air Festival
Liverpool Armed Forces Day

1 and 2 July
8 and 9 July
14 to 16 July
21 to 23 July
22 July

Wales National Airshow – Swansea Bay
IWM Duxford Flying Legends Airshow
Royal International Air Tattoo
Sunderland International Airshow
East Fortune Airshow

12 and 13 August
17 to 20 August
19 and 20 August
26 and 27 August
26 and 27 August
31 August to 3 September

Blackpool Airshow
Eastbourne Airshow
Biggin Hill Festival of Flight
Rhyl Airshow
Wings and Wheels Dunsfold
Bournemouth Air Festival

2 and 3 September
9 and 10 September
14 September
15 to 17 September
23 and 24 September

Scottish Airshow – South Ayrshire
Scampton Airshow
Jersey International Air Display
Southport Airshow
Duxford Airshow



*Please note this list is not exhaustive and that these dates and venues were as known at the time of going to press. Readers are advised to check in advance that changes have not been made to venue or dates prior to considering attendance. The RAF Association cannot be held responsible for any changes made nor any subsequent loss due to any changes made by organisers of these events. Please also note that some events may have limited access and may not all be open to the general public without invitation. Please ensure you check with the organisers before travel.

Introducing Shameera Mandhu, our Welfare Project Officer

Interviewed for Air Mail on just her 10th day in the job, Welfare Project Officer Shameera Mandhu already had the bit between her teeth.

"If a mother or father is absent for days, weeks or months at a time, bedtime can be the moment they are most missed. If the parent is deployed on combat duties or stationed away from home during the week, these feelings may be intensified for all family members," she said. "That's why I so wanted to do this job – to make a difference."

Shameera studied youth work at De Montfort University, in between her undergraduate and masters degrees in criminology at Manchester and Leicester universities.

"Through my youth studies I have developed a real passion for working with young children, and saw only too clearly what can happen if links between parents and children are broken. Hearing daddy or mummy's voice is so important. I like that the Storybook Wings can grow up with the children – a different story each time the parent is away."

Shameera will be responsible for volunteers, administrators and technical equipment at 40 RAF stations, and the Association Wings Break hotels at home and abroad. She has already started travelling around the country and is hoping to meet as many volunteers and employees as possible, as soon as possible. Meanwhile she is setting up Skype meetings to get to know everyone. She will be working with the RAF Community Support Team to agree priorities for RAF personnel requesting the Storybook Wings service.

She has lived most of her life in Leicester, but understands being on the other side of the world, away from family. When she was 12 she moved with her father, an aerospace engineer, mother, and younger sister and brother to Brisbane, Australia. The rest of their close family stayed in England.

Ironically, she was never read to by her own parents. "I had to go to mosque every day after school. When I got home, there was homework and mum made us do handwriting skills. At the weekends, she made us do literature reviews and I really enjoyed the Roald Dahl books. But I will definitely read to my children, when I have them. It's so important."



The other part of Shameera's role is to oversee Talking Air Mail – the service for Association members with a sight impairment – so no one misses out on the stories and information in the magazine.

Smiling at the idea of this interview being read out to her new listeners she said, "Hello everyone. It's good to be here. If you are hearing me loud and clear, you'll know all is going well in my new job!"

Two weeks after this interview, Shameera was visiting Richard Peck House, the Association Wings Break hotel in north west England. "We want to set up Storybook Grandparents there, and are looking at having a regular day for our guests who want to record stories for their grandchildren. If that works out, we'll look at expanding it across the country to help keep extended families in touch.

"I am also very keen to get Storybook Wings recording equipment and volunteers set up at bases in Cyprus", she says.

Shameera works 30 hours a week at Atlas House, Leicester with regular visits to RAF Stations including RAF Wittering, where our Storybook Wings office is located.

Dame Vera Lynn celebrates her 100th birthday

As Air Mail goes to print Dame Vera Lynn (best known as the 'Forces Sweetheart' during World War II) will be celebrating her 100th birthday. In recognition of her charitable efforts, Her Majesty The Queen made her a Dame of the British Empire in 1975.

About Dame Vera

Born Vera Margaret Welch on March 20, 1917, singer Dame Vera was one of the most popular entertainers in Britain during World War II.

She started performing at 7 years of age and by the time she was 11 she had given up school for life as an entertainer.

By the early 1930s, Dame Vera had begun to have some success as a vocalist, and she was performing with Joe Loss's orchestra by the mid-1930s. In 1937, she landed a spot singing with the Ambrose Orchestra on the radio program Life from Mayfair, and quickly became one of the country's most popular singers.

Sweetheart of the British Forces

In 1940, Dame Vera got her own radio show, 'Sincerely Yours', which became a favourite of servicemen serving overseas. To her audience, she was the "girl next door" type, reminding those away at war of their loved ones back home. She often sang sentimental ballads on her program, with "We'll Meet Again" and "White Cliffs of Dover" becoming two of her signature songs.

Dame Vera also travelled abroad during the war, performing live shows for servicemen and women. In 1941, she married Harry Lewis, a musician with the Royal Air Force's band. In her time, Dame Vera ranked No. 1 on a poll regarding soldiers' favourite entertainers, beating the likes of Bing Crosby and Judy Garland, and she became known as the "Forces' Sweetheart."

In the 1960s and '70s, Dame Vera continued to perform at live concerts and make records. She also became very active in social causes, especially on behalf of war veterans including supporting the work of the RAF Association.

Latest Album

To coincide with her birthday Dame Vera has released a new album "Vera Lynn 100" featuring her original iconic voice and also making her the oldest record artist to do so.

I am sure you will all join with us to wish Dame Vera a very happy 100th birthday.



Pictured above, Vera Lynn on one of her many overseas trips to entertain the troops. Below, the cover of her new album released to coincide with her 100th birthday.



Your holiday
starts with a
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NEWS FROM THE RAF

RAF crews take part in Red Flag 2017



A Typhoon being prepared for flight. Photo: © MoD/Crown

The world's premier air combat exercise is underway in Nevada, with the Royal Air Force (RAF) playing a major role alongside American and Australian counterparts.

Red Flag, set at Nellis Air Force Base, pits 'Blue' coalition forces against hostile 'Red Force' aggressors, mirroring real-life threats in air-to-air, air-to-ground, space and cyber warfare.

Typhoons, from 6 Squadron, RAF Lossiemouth, are operating in a swing-role capacity, fighting their way into hostile airspace, launching precision strikes on ground targets and fighting their way out again.

The Typhoons have also flown with the US Air Force (USAF) F-35A Lightning II for the first time, as well as with USAF F-22 Raptors – exposure to 5th Generation aircraft that is hugely rewarding for RAF crews ahead of the F-35B's introduction into the RAF's combat inventory in 2018.

Voyager, the RAF's 'petrol station in the sky', is also taking part for the first time to

provide a key air-to-air refuelling capability, while a Sentinel and Rivet Joint aircraft gather intelligence and other mission-critical information.

Group Captain Graham Pemberton, RAF Detachment Commander for the exercise, said: "Red Flag replicates truly challenging, high-end warfare – from realistic aerial combat to emerging cyber and space threats. It's as close as we can get to the real thing.



An RAF Voyager aircraft takes off for another mission. Photo: © MoD/Crown

"Training and testing ourselves against highly capable enemy aggressors is hugely beneficial and readies our personnel – from pilots to those in crucial support roles – for real-world operations.

"It's a privilege for us to work with our US Air Force and Australian counterparts, and to cement our relationships with them at an exercise of this scale."

Wing Commander Billy Cooper, whose 6 Squadron Typhoons are taking part in Red Flag, said: "We flew eight Typhoons here from RAF Lossiemouth to take part with our US and Royal Australian Air Force counterparts.

"One of our UK day jobs is protecting sovereign airspace through Quick Reaction Alert, but in Nevada we've been air-to-air fighting and carrying out strike missions. Red Flag's threat replication is truly unique. We can simulate fighting our way into a target area through a high-threat environment, drop precision munitions on specific targets and then fight our way back out again."

Red Flag's live element takes place over the US Air Force's premier military training area in Nevada; over 15,000 square miles of airspace and 2.9 million acres of land – an impossible scale to achieve in Europe.



An RAF Rivet Joint aircraft taxiing at Nellis AFB for another mission. Photo: © MoD/Crown

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© Richard Paver 2015

HRH The Duchess of Cambridge joins cadets on camp

HRH The Duchess of Cambridge joined young air cadets at RAF Wittering taking part in their first camp recently. As the Honorary Air Commandant of the RAF Air Cadets she attended Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Wing's Skill Development Camp and met several cadets experiencing their first camp.

Cadets and RAF Air Cadet instructors led the Duchess through a range of activities including flying training on a simulator, leadership exercises and more.

The Duchess was also shown the Tutor aircraft which thousands of cadets use each year for air experience flights. Cadet Sergeant Jordan Bertalaso said: "Flying is my favourite air cadet activity and it was an honour to show the Duchess the layout of the Tutor cockpit, particularly as the aircraft is used by cadets for air experience.

"It's incredible to have such a high profile Royal as our Patron, especially as she has strong links to the Royal Air Force with her husband being a former pilot."

At the end of the visit, the Duchess was invited to join the cadets and volunteer staff for a camp photo and was presented with a limited edition RAF Air Cadet 75th anniversary print by Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Dawn McCafferty.

This is the third occasion that HRH the Duchess of Cambridge has met with cadets since HRH The Duke of Edinburgh handed patronage of the national youth organisation to her.

Some senior cadets even take part in the International Air Cadet Exchange Programme which includes countries such as Hong Kong, Canada and Australia.



"HRH the Duchess of Cambridge visits Royal Air Force Wittering, in her capacity as Royal Patron to the Air Cadet Organisation (ACO). Photos: © MoD/Crown



Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore McCafferty said: "It was a delight to see the Duchess again and to witness her engaging with our young cadets and adult volunteers in such a relaxed manner.

"Her personal support of the RAF Air Cadets is very much appreciated and I am sure those lucky enough to meet her today will keep those memories for a lifetime."

RAF Wittering Station Commander, Group Captain Richard Pratley said: "It has been an honour to welcome HRH The Duchess of Cambridge to RAF Wittering to see some of the facilities we offer to cadets to help inspire the next generation.

A400M demonstrated to Royal New Zealand Air Force

A glorious day in Wellington, New Zealand, provided the perfect backdrop for the RAF to show-off the Airbus A400M 'Atlas' to the Royal New Zealand Air Force as part of a prestigious partnership between the two nations.

The A400M, based at RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire is the newest aircraft in the RAF's fleet. It boasts cutting edge technology, combined with sheer brute strength to make it a formidable strategic and tactical air lift platform. Able to deploy globally, it specialises in carrying over-sized loads and can transport a load of 25 tonnes over a range of 2,000 nautical miles.

The A400M combines huge lifting power with agility, with manoeuvrability akin to a fast-jet rather than an Air Transport Aircraft. It is a phenomenally capable aircraft and able to fly at a staggering 170 degrees angle of bank.

70 Squadron demonstrated the aircraft to Air Commodore Darryn Webb, the New Zealand Defence Force Air Component Commander on a short flight around New Zealand's stunning islands.

Photos: © MoD/Crown



Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) intercepts Russian bomber

It has been confirmed that in February Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) RAF Typhoon aircraft were scrambled to intercept Russian Blackjack bombers operating in the UK's area of interest.

The two Tupolev Tu-160 Blackjack aircraft capable of carrying 16 nuclear missiles each were intercepted by RAF Typhoon fighters but they did not enter UK airspace. This is a similar incident to others where our air defences have been tested by Russian forces.

Photo: © MoD/Crown



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Knighton Branch Club hosted the area council meeting which is made up of members from all of Wales, Midlands and South Western England. It was a great honour for the branch to hold it for the first time. Some of the committee had not been to mid Wales before.

The local Chairperson, Lilian Bright, met the councillors. Vice Chairman, Councillor Roger Bright BEM, gave a short speech of welcome.

Pictured at Knighton are the area committee – left to right seated, John Williams, Area Vice Chairman; Air Commodore Andrew Neal, Area President; John Tisbury, Area Chairman; Mike Chappell, Wales Vice President. Standing are Geoff Bridgman, Councillor; Steve Colmoop, co-opted member and Warrant Officer Joe Tomlin, Area Liaison Officer. Not pictured are two members unavailable for the photo-call: Denzil Haynes, Councillor and Tom Phillips, Councillor.



2. Chesham and Amersham Branch celebrated its 70th anniversary by holding a celebration lunch at a local golf club. It was attended by members past and present, along with some of the branch's welfare cases.

After a short welcome and the official dedication of the Association made by Branch President Stan Seal, 60 people sat down to a wonderful festive three course meal. During coffee and mince pies Branch Chairman John Griffin gave a potted history of the branch.

Photo shows Branch President with Bobbie Potter aged 92, a founder member who joined the branch in 1946, about to cut the celebration cake.



3. Queensland Branch. A small number of the branch are shown at the farewell luncheon. Due to the inability to form a committee, with Secretary Geoffrey Hutton passing away and Treasurer resigning, the branch has had to close.

Those who attended were President Air Commodore Donald Solon, Chairman Jack Gamble and his wife, Membership Secretary Stan Pascoe and other loyal members. Those who wanted to remain with the Association have transferred to Sydney Metropolitan Branch.



4. Southampton and Eastleigh Branch members enjoyed two trips in 2016.

Firstly members visited the Royal Naval Air Station museum at Yeovilton – this was interesting in that it is a working airfield. The museum contains examples of almost all aircraft flown by the Royal Naval Air Service as well as one of the first Concorde aircraft G-BSST.

The second visit was to Old Sarum airfield, a civilian airfield that is used to train helicopter pilots and parachutists. Those visiting were joined by members of the Royal Observer Corps Association.

The museum is used to display many aircraft that were tested by the staff at the Boscombe Down experimental test facility.

The visit was followed by a cream tea on the way home.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Cranwell Branch. Following a successful year, members enjoyed a Christmas lunch with guests from the Sleaford Air Training Corps (ATC) to recognise its help during the year. It also gave an opportunity to thank the staff of the Cranwell Warrant Officer and Sergeants' Mess. In addition a thank you certificate was presented to Cadet Flight Sergeant Alex Myers for carrying the branch standard at the Remembrance Service parade in Sleaford.

As last year was the 75th anniversary of the ATC, a torch, akin to the Olympic design, travelled by various means from the North Scottish Islands to Cornwall. There was a major event at Cranwell College which was attended by branch members who were impressed by the displays and parade given by the many cadets. The committee felt that it would be appropriate to mark the anniversary by donating a nationally produced miniature torch to its adopted squadron. This was presented to the ATC Officer Commanding, Flight Lieutenant Dave Peacock.

Photo shows Branch Chairman Tony Crossman, Dave Peacock and Branch Secretary and PR Officer Mike Smith.



6. Thurrock Branch invited the manageress Johanna Perry and her former deputy manager Ed from The Crown (Harvester), Langdon Hills to come along to the January meeting.

Branch Chairman Jim Gooding and Wings Appeal Officer Eddy Coull presented them with an appreciation certificate for raising £485.22 for 2016 Wings Appeal and to thank them for the £368.45 they have already raised for this year's Wings Appeal and allowing the branch to leave collection tins in the bar. Jim also thanked them for donating 23 Christmas meals to the branch. This was much appreciated by the members who attended and enjoyed an excellent meal.

7. North Walsham Branch. On 15 January 2017 branch members, along with the current and previous tenants of Lowlands Farm, Bacton as well as representatives from Mundesley Scouts, laid wreaths and held a minute's silence to honour the crew of a Hudson bomber that crashed on this site in 1942 killing all four on board.

8. Grimsby and Cleethorpes Branch. Alex Elrick Wings Appeal Officer, Phil Massen, Trevor Smith and Donna Flint visited 866 (Immingham) Squadron Air Training Corps. The 'Flying Vikings' were presented with a certificate of thanks for raising £102.00 for the Wings Appeal.

The squadron, led by Squadron Leader Simon Dunn looked after the veterans extremely well and in return Alex, Phil and Trevor gave them a talk about service life and stories from their time in the RAF (the clean ones, anyway!). The cadets asked some interesting questions and were an absolute credit. All watched the last parade of the evening which included presentations and, as a complete surprise, Phil was presented with an RAF bagpiper badge as he used to play for the RAF when he served.

Thanks go to cadets and staff including Sergeant Nige Price, Rob and Katie. An absolute pleasure and honour to visit and it is hoped that this is the beginning of a new relationship between squadron and branch. The three veterans had such a good time reminiscing they forgot to give Donna directions and ended up going the wrong way up the M180 and taking the scenic route home!

Photo shows certificate being presented by Alex Elrick.



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Morecambe and Lancaster Branch. 1 January saw the re-opening of the 'Gingham' Café on Marine Road, Morecambe by Councillor Liz Scott (Armed Forces Champion at Lancaster City Council) and Amy Robinson (Northern Area Director) accompanied by Wing Commander Bob Latin and his wife Jane, the mainstays of the branch. Photo © David Hodgson.

The café has been redecorated to reflect its owner's, Phil Johnson, an ex-RAF Drill Sergeant, RAF interests. The branch will be holding an open house on the last Saturday of each month for ex and serving RAF personnel and their relatives to meet the branch or each other. For directions or a chat about the branch you can call David Hodgson for details on 07446 617608 or email: dh@pobroadband.co.uk.



2. Barry Branch. Having adopted two local Air Training Corps (ATC) squadrons a number of years ago, the branch was privileged to be able to make a significant contribution of £500 towards renewing vital band equipment for 372 (Barry) Squadron ATC which has been particularly supportive to the branch, helping out with the Wings Appeal, parading and assisting at events. As important is the success of the squadron's popular band that is requested to parade for many occasions and has been an integral part of the squadron's appeal for many decades.

Flying Officer Caz Bradley, who trains the band members and received the cheque at the squadron's recent presentation night, said that 'the demand on the band parading more frequently has put a lot of pressure on the ageing instruments and the donation will go some way to replacing them.

Photo (l-r) Branch Secretary Howard Provis, Flying Officer Caz Bradley and Chairman Terry McKeown.



3. County Fermanagh Branch committee members, including Chairman Ray Hall, with Pilot Officer Graham Dodds, celebrated the opening of the new cadet headquarters at St Lucia Barracks, Omagh.

The branch and cadets have an excellent relationship, regularly meeting and running joint events.



4. Poole Branch. In December the branch celebrated the 70th anniversary of its formation with a combined anniversary and Christmas lunch. Guest of honour was National President, Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller KBE.

Following the dedication by Chairman Mike Davis and the grace from the Reverend Lucy Holt, 70 diners enjoyed an excellent three course lunch, with an Italian twist, at the Ocean Beach Hotel, Bournemouth.

Members of Christchurch, Shaftesbury and Weymouth branches, Wool Branch of the Aircrew Association and representatives from the local Air Training Corps squadrons attended. To help the party go with a swing, diners were serenaded by local vintage singer, Miss Annie, with a selection of nostalgic songs.

Following a convivial lunch, Sir Dusty Miller ceremoniously cut the special celebration cake and then addressed the assembled guests with a short speech giving an overview of the Association today. This was followed by the raffle and the distribution of slices of cake to all attendees, before guests began to depart in a happy mood.

Photo shows Sir Dusty and Doug Collett, Branch President.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Lewes Branch. A reception was held in the Council Chamber at Lewes Town Hall when members of the branch were guests. Hosts were the Mayor of Lewes, Graham Mayhew and his Mayoress.



6. North Costa Blanca Branch. At the Los Leones restaurant in Moraira in January, 72 members and guests celebrated the life and works of Robert Burns. Branch Chairman, Wing Commander Bob Hunt MBE welcomed everyone to the dinner and gave a resounding 'Address to the Haggis'. The formal 'graces' were given by Branch Chaplain Father Jim Booker, the toast to the 'Immortal Memory' of Robert Burns was presented in a truly excellent fashion by Branch Vice Chairman Colin McNae and the toasts to the 'lads' and to the 'lassies' were proposed by Canon Raymond Hodson and Eileen Hodson. The piper for the evening was Alan Bleasedale who provided a rousing welcome to the diners and in parading the haggis.



This was an outstanding celebratory evening with a first-class traditional 'Burns' supper provided by the staff. Including income from a raffle arranged by Wings Appeal Organiser Sue McNae, a magnificent sum of over €600 was raised for the Wings Appeal.

7. Corsham and Chippenham Branch. For helping with collections for the Wings Appeal, a presentation of a shield to the group and trophy to the individual cadet who collected the largest amount was awarded to 992 (Malmesbury) Squadron Air Training Corps at the squadron's headquarters.



The presentation of the awards was made by Les James Branch Vice President, with an address from Wings Officer Bert Weir, who informed the group that the overall collection for the area amounted to £1,174.76 of which 992 Squadron had collected £400.23. Cadet Corporal Ethan Dayley was awarded the trophy, collecting £96.91 with Cadet Edward Fletcher coming a very close second collecting £92.66.

8. St. Austell Branch organised a short parade outside St. John's Methodist Church on Remembrance Sunday and joined the congregation for the service. Chairman Derek Warren, laid a wreath on behalf of the branch. Members also provided and decorated a Christmas tree at the church as part of its celebrations. Photo shows: The chairman and other branch members.



Please submit Branch News to BranchNews@rafatrad.co.uk or via Royal Mail. The address can be found on the inside front cover.

Wording should ideally be around 100 words, accompanied by a supporting photograph (min 300 dpi). If printing the photograph please ensure good quality reproduction.

Please give as much information as possible about those shown in a photograph and any copyright information relating to it.

Due to space limitations, submission does not guarantee publication.

Branch News

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1. Downham Market Branch celebrated the 70th anniversary of its first meeting with a lunch at the Castle Hotel, Downham Market in January. The occasion was attended by 35 members and special guests were South East Area President, Air Marshal Sir Roger Austin, Wing Commander Stew Geary representing the Branch President, Group Captain Rich Davies RAF Marham and the Mayor of Downham Market, Councillor Marion Ross.

All enjoyed a first class meal and the opportunity to meet with members who cannot attend the monthly meetings. The next special anniversary in 2022 is eagerly awaited!



2. Bodmin Branch. The story of this Vickers Vimy propeller can be viewed at the Davidstow Moor RAF Memorial Museum, Camelford, Cornwall. It was, until recently, mounted on the wall in the Public Rooms, Bodmin and at one time in the care of the Honey family and may have been used as a coat rack!

Bodmin Town Council asked the branch to become involved in finding it a fitting final resting place, stipulating it remain in Cornwall. Branch Chairman Colin Stevenson liaised with Town Clerk Stephen Facer and, with the council picking up all costs, it is now displayed in its current location.

Davidstow Moor was an important strategic base for aircraft on search and rescue missions for ditched aircrew. It saw its fair share of disasters with over 40 air crashes – planes limping home, overshooting the runway etc and over 100 aircrew lost their lives. Now at peace, the museum stands testimony to all those who served there.



3. York Branch. Maureen Smith took over as Wings Appeal Organiser for the branch in 2015, therefore that year was a very big learning curve. After a couple of weeks one member christened Maureen as "Lady Wings". Suffice to say after a couple of weeks, her husband was asked to be deputy, therefore the next time they went into the club, he was introduced as "Lord Wings", the titles have stuck for them both.

In December the Christmas Draw combined with a fancy dress event took place. The Smiths arrived at the club as, you've guessed it, Lord and Lady Wings (see photo). A super day culminated in what had been a fantastic year. The branch achieved a grand total of £10,749.06. Many thanks go to the fantastic team of volunteers - they have been so supportive and it is hoped they will continue this year, as well as the help received from Rafatrad sourcing items at short notice. Special thanks must also go to Chairman Dick Gray, without whose help the above result would not have been achieved.



4. Costa del Sol Branch. In November, a special presentation of the Legion d'Honneur, in the rank of Chevalier, was made to Flight Lieutenant John Roberts DFM, branch member, on board the french experimental Minesweeper "Thetis" in Malaga port. John was a flight engineer on 161 (Special Duties) Squadron, tasked with dropping agents and supplies over occupied France.

John was piped on board in true naval fashion and greeted by an armed guard of honour and a line up of the ship's officers led by the captain. The French ambassador, French defence attaché from the embassy in Madrid and the UK defence attaché were also in attendance.

Photo shows (l-r): UK defence attaché, French defence attaché, French ambassador, Flight Lieutenant Roberts and the captain of the Thetis.

Branch News

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5. Potter Heigham Branch. In December the branch and Neatishead based brass band Norfolk Wherry Brass combined to perform their 13th annual Christmas Concert. Just under a hundred people were treated to a wide range of Christmas music and carols in the main hall of Stalham High School. A total of £508 was shared equally between the band and Wings Appeal. The band was conducted by its director of music Kevin Mann and the concert compered by Major Janet Bishop (Salvation Army).

Over £9,000 has been raised in total over the 13 concerts to date – the Wings Appeal has profited from half of this sum. The band was formed in 2004 and its first major concert was performed for the 2004 Wings Appeal and has been repeated every December. Two members of the branch are also members of the band.



6. Sud-Ouest Branch. 2017 started in grand style for the branch as one of its elderly honorary members, Jean Billaud, was honoured by receiving the Freedom of the Town of La Rochelle in the Charente Maritime. In January, the Mayor of La Rochelle, along with local dignitaries and family members, gathered to pay homage to Jean as he received his medal as "Citizen of Honour of the Town of La Rochelle". This was the first time this medal and honour had been awarded for 50 years! Jean flew Halifaxes with 346 and 347 Squadrons out of RAF Elvington in WWII and subsequently was the personal pilot for General De Gaulle after the war.

Photo shows (l-r): Beryl Dennett Stannard Branch Chairman, Terry Dennett Secretary, Paul Bogaert Chairman of the French Halifax Association and 95 year-old Jean Billaud on the extreme right all enjoying a well-deserved glass of champagne after the presentation.



7. Gloucester Branch. The Portivo Lounge at Gloucester Quays is the regular meeting place for members of the branch. Signage from the old club building adorns the walls of the cafe giving it an old club feel.

Every year the Portivo hold a month long charity event and this year the branch is delighted that the charity of choice is the branch Wings Appeal.

Photo shows members enjoying a coffee and chat with Lorraine, the branch Wings Appeal Organiser, front and centre.



8. Huyton with Roby and Liverpool Branch. In February, four branch committee members braved the cold weather to stand at the TESCO superstore, Old Swan, Liverpool, for a Wings Appeal Collection. This was arranged by Phil Southern, in liaison with the TESCO Community Officer, Debbie Barratt. The generosity of the store's customers was magnificent, with a total over the two days, of £1,320.97.

Although it is only the start of the year, it can be predicted that this branch will continue to raise over £10,000, which will be the eighth consecutive year, it has achieved the 10K club (branches that raise over £10,000 for annual Wings Appeals).

Photo shows Deryk Stanton (left), and branch Wings Appeal Organiser Phil Southern (right).



Branch News

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1. Mablethorpe/Sutton Branch. Two presentations were made at the branch Annual General Meeting in February.

George Green was presented with a Life Vice President certificate by Branch Chairman Neville Drury. Branch standard bearer Bernie Barker is shown with the pair. George is a life member of the branch, has the Distinguished Flying Medal and flew in Lancasters 56 times during WWII, some of these as Pathfinders.



President Brian Cooke was presented with the chain office by former President Roy Griffiths. Brian has been a long serving member of the branch. Further photos are available at the branch website: www.rafa.org.uk/mablethorpe-sutton

2. South Shields Branch. Northern Area Chairman, Martin Watkins, met branch members at Jarrow Civic Centre by invitation from the Mayor and Mayoress who gave a history of the Council Chambers to those present. Solid oak polished panels made a very impressive backdrop for the occasion as Branch Chairman, Jean Roach, was presented with a National Presidential Certificate for her dedicated work at the branch for 40 years. She has been the Commanding Officer of the local Girls Training Corps for many years and is a retired justice of the peace/magistrate.

Photo shows (l-r) Mayoress Councillor Moira Smith, Jean Roach, Mayor Councillor Alan Smith, Martin Watkins, Barrie Oliver Branch Vice Chairman.



3. Alton Branch. Branch standard bearer Bob Dalton attended the annual memorial service for the RAF Ibsley Historical Group. The event is held on the first Sunday following the date in 1941 (15 February) when RAF Ibsley became an operational WWII airfield.

Some ninety personnel of many nationalities lost their lives while serving or based at Ibsley, on the edge of the New Forest. Their names are now recorded on the RAF Ibsley Commemorative Plaque located on the site of the old airfield's Guardroom/Picket Post.

Pictured from l to r: Bob Dalton RAF Association Alton Branch, Les Bailey Royal British Legion Chandlers Ford, Reverend Terry Roberts, Steven Forward Hampshire Parade Marshall, Mike Cavany Royal British Legion Lyndhurst and Phil Doughty Royal British Legion Ringwood.



For more information, take a look at our website at www.rafa.org.uk/rewards and see how you can claim your rewards

The Red Arrows in focus

Lincoln Cathedral and Lincoln Castle in the background seen from an aircraft belonging to the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, The Red Arrows. The image was taken by Squadron Leader Mike Ling, who was observing from the back seat of a Hawk jet being flown by another pilot, during a training sortie at RAF Scampton, Lincolnshire, in February 2017.

Members of the team, which showcases the excellence of the Royal Air Force and represents the United Kingdom at home and overseas, are carrying out winter training at their home base at RAF Scampton ahead of the 2017 display season. See also page 14 for details of new members of the team for the 2017.



Photo: © MoD/Crown

Butcher Birds over Britain

by Chris Goss



A Focke Wulf Fw 190 fighter belonging to 6./JG 26, on the ground, engine running. This aircraft would be lost in an accident 22 Dec 1941 killing the pilot Photo: © Author

The Focke Wulf Fw 190, known to those who flew or worked on it as the *Würger* (Butcher Bird), arrived in France in late July 1941 but unlike the Messerschmitt Bf 109, it was a rare visitor in the skies over Britain. Chris Goss describes those rare occasions when the Fw 190 was seen in British skies.

FIGHTERS OVER BRITAIN

In July 1941, Erprobungsstaffel 190, the unit responsible for operationally testing the Fw 190, moved from Rechlin in Germany to Le Bourget near Paris. It began converting II Gruppe/Jagdgeschwader 26 (II./JG 26) commanded by Knight's Cross holder Hauptmann (Flight Lieutenant) Walter Adolph to the Fw 190 A, starting with Oberleutnant (Flying Officer) Walter Schneider's 6 Staffel. By the start of September 1941, all of II Gruppe had converted. It is believed that the first combat was early morning of 16 August 1941 when Hauptmann Adolph led a mixed Fw 190/Bf 109 formation and claimed to have shot down four Spitfires. The first Fw 190 to be lost was on 21 August 1941 when Oberfeldwebel (Flight Sergeant) Walter Meyer of 6./JG 26 suffered engine failure and on 29 August 1941, Leutnant (Pilot Officer) Heinz Schenk also from 6 Staffel was shot down and killed by German anti-aircraft fire (Flak).

RAF pilots soon reported encountering radial-engined fighters over

France, thinking that they were ex-French Air Force Curtiss Hawk 75s but as one RAF pilot noted "No Hawk ever had the performance of that brute!". They soon realised that they were up against the Fw 190.

The first combat loss of a Fw 190 occurred at 1050hrs on 18 September 1941. Scrambled to intercept Bristol Blenheims attacking a convoy off Ostend, Walter Adolph led II./JG 26 to intercept. Pilot Officer Cyril Babbage of 41 Squadron records what happened:

"...this enemy aircraft appeared to be similar to the Curtiss 75A but with slimmer fuselage. The enemy passed beneath me and I saw crosses on the fuselage. It then turned south at high speed and I followed it...I got within range just off Ostende and fired a five second burst with cannon and machine guns from dead astern. The enemy aircraft broke up and crashed into the sea..."



A good view of the radial engine cowling. Photo: © Author



Pilots of II./JG 26 Summer 1942. Photo: © Author

The body of Hauptmann Walter Adolph, who had one victory in Spain and 24 in the Second World War, was washed ashore the following month.

More Gruppe from JG 26 now converted to the Fw 190, followed in 1942 by JG 2, and RAF pilots were finding how inferior their Spitfires now were, especially when the Fw 190 was flown by an experienced pilot. However, the Fw 190 still operated over Europe and the Channel and the RAF still knew little about the German fighter. This would all change on 23 June 1942.

Early that evening, six Douglas Bostons of 107 Squadron took off from Exeter to attack a target at Morlaix in Brittany, escort being provided by Spitfires of the Perranporth and Exeter Wings. At Cherbourg-Maupertus, Fw 190s of III./JG 2 were scrambled and followed the RAF back to the Devon coast where they pounced.



Faber's Fw 190 at RAF Pembrey. Photo: © Author

One Fw 190 collided with the Exeter Wing Leader, the former pilot baling out and captured, the latter being killed. A series of dogfights then ensued with the RAF coming off worst.

Oberleutnant Armin Faber of Stab III./JG 2 shot down a Spitfire of 310 Squadron and probably damaged another from 19 Squadron after which he apparently became disorientated and landed his Fw 190 A-3 at RAF Pembrey in South Wales, presenting the RAF with a pristine Fw 190 which would be comprehensively evaluated. As a result, plans to mount a Commando raid to capture a Fw 190 were understandably cancelled!

Despite the secrets of the Fw 190 being revealed at last, very few Fw 190s operating in the pure fighter role would be seen or

even lost over Britain. A few Störangriff (nuisance attacks) were carried out by Fw 190s, attacking targets at low-level and high-speed using gunfire but the first Fw 190 to be lost on such missions did not occur until 21 October 1942 when Feldwebel (Sergeant) Werner Brychy of 4./JG 2 flew into a hillside at Lulworth in Dorset. Then on 31 October 1942, Feldwebel Alfred Hell of 5./JG 2 was shot down by Flak and captured at Sandwich in Kent whilst escorting a fighter-bomber attack on Canterbury. The final Fw 190 operating as a pure fighter to come down on land did so in quite spectacular fashion on 27 November 1942 as an eyewitness recalls:

"Two Fw 190s carried out a low-level cannon attack on Ashford... A locomotive fireman was killed by a cannon shell. The two planes then flew on across Romney Marsh and attacked a train leaving Lydd station. The leading Fw 190 opened fire without an apparent effect. The second plane flew so low that it hit and ripped away the steam dome of the train's boiler and the resulting explosion of high-pressure steam caused the aircraft to crash, disintegrating over a wide area..."

Oberfeldwebel Heinz Bierwith of 5./JG 26 was killed instantly. Such attacks would continue sporadically but far more Fw 190s would be seen over Britain engaged on other types of missions.

FIGHTER BOMBERS OVER BRITAIN

Fitting bombs to fighters started in the Battle of Britain but by 1941, interest in Jagdbomber or Jabo (fighter-bomber) such missions had become secondary and only then against shipping.

However, Oberleutnant Frank Liesendahl of JG 2 convinced the Luftwaffe to form a dedicated Jabostaffel flying the Bf 109 F, the first operational mission apparently being flown on 25 December 1941. Liesendahl experienced success to such an extent that in March 1942, the Jabostaffel became 10.(Jabo)/JG 2 and JG 26 was ordered to form its own 10 Staffel.

In June 1942, both Jabostaffel moved to Le Bourget to convert to the Fw 190. This was worrying for the RAF as the Fw 190 had already proven itself superior in all flight parameters (apart from turning radius) to the Spitfire Mark Vb being 30mph faster and having the highest rate of roll of any fighter of the Second World War. It could also carry a single 500 kg bomb under the fuselage and four 50 kg bombs under the wings, twice the bomb load of a Bf 109F.

The first Fw 190 Jabo attack took place against shipping on 7 July 1942 and from now on, at least one such attack a day was planned, weather and serviceability permitting. Attacks now began with virtual impunity albeit by the end of the month, two Staffel Kapitän had been lost with 10./JG 2 losing Hauptmann Frank Liesendahl attacking a ship off Brixham on 17 July 1942 and 10./JG 26 losing Oberleutnant Hans-Joachim Geburtig off Littlehampton on 30 July 1942. Liesendahl was killed and was awarded the Knight's Cross posthumously while Geburtig was captured.

The first Fw 190 Jabo to crash on land occurred on 26 August 1942. Two aircraft of 10./JG 26 flown by Obergefreiter (Corporal) Richard Wittmann and Oberfeldwebel Werner Kassa attacked industrial targets in Eastbourne but as Kassa banked away after dropping his bomb, he presented a much better target for a machine-gunner on a factory roof. Kassa lost control, continued rolling and hit the ground inverted, killing him instantly.

By the end of 1942, 10./JG 2 had lost three Jabos of which just one had crashed on land while 10./JG 26 had lost seven, with two crashing on land. Both units now began switching from attacking shipping and coastal targets to targets more inland such as Yeovil on 5 August 1942 and Salisbury on 11 August 1942. Another change was a massed vengeance attack against Canterbury on 31 October 1942 with 70 per cent of the bombs



A good view of the bomb rack positions with 50 kg bombs under the wing. Photo © Author

landing on target for just one escort fighter shot down by Flak. To add insult to injury, two RAF fighters were also shot down. This was the precursor for another vengeance attack on eastern London on 20 January 1943 by 28 Jabos. Just one Fw 190 of 10./JG 26 flown by Leutnant Hermann Hoch was lost to Flak on the way home, Hoch being captured.

The British now increased their fighter, balloon and gun defences but still attacks occurred from as far east as Suffolk to Cornwall. A new Jabo unit, Schnellkampfgeschwader 10 (SKG 10), became operational at the start of March 1943 after which it subsumed 10./JG 2 and 10./JG 26. With nearly 120 Jabos available by mid-April 1943, it came as a great surprise that the vast majority were to be used for nocturnal attacks and as a result, daylight attacks soon declined.

The first nocturnal attack on the night of 16 to 17 April 1943 was a farce. Two aircraft were lost during the day with one pilot killed, then three Fw 190s collided taking off for the mission with one pilot killed while two more suffered take-off accidents. Over Britain, four pilots became disorientated with one being killed when his aircraft ran out of fuel, the remaining three landed or tried to land at RAF West Malling in Kent (I./SKG 10 would land two more Fw 190s at RAF Manston later in the year). A final pilot disappeared. The total cost for the night was 10 aircraft destroyed, two damaged, four pilots killed and three captured.

Understandably, there was a break of a month in nocturnal attacks while May 1943 saw 12 daylight attacks over seven days. However, the attack on Eastbourne in the early afternoon of 6 June 1943 saw the last daylight Jabo attack on Britain of the war, the majority of aircraft being moved to the Mediterranean a few days later, just leaving I./SKG 10 to carry out nocturnal attacks which it did until the night of 5 June 1944 after which it operated solely over Normandy following the Allied invasion. Its effectiveness was questionable as its last commander later wrote:

"The night operations of the Fw 190... were not successful. It was a real makeshift solution. The type of aircraft used



Another good view showing the of central bomb rack position of this fighter bomber. Photo © Author

was neither envisaged or suitable for the purpose..."

54 pilots were killed and seven taken prisoner of war between 16 April 1943 and 6 June 1944, the last loss being Feldwebel Otto Heinrich of 3 Staffel who was believed shot down by Flak off Portsmouth on 22 May 1944 and who would receive the Knight's Cross posthumously.

RECCE OVER BRITAIN

Luftwaffe reconnaissance missions were normally carried out by twin-engined aircraft but from as early as July 1941, 1 Staffel (Fern) /Aufklärungsgruppe 123 (1.(F)/123) had in the region of five Bf 109s for reconnaissance missions in addition to the usual Ju 88s. The first loss over the UK was due to engine failure on 7 January 1942 and the first combat loss being 24 April 1942 off Portland. As the year progressed, 3.(F)/123, 4.(F)/123 and 1.(F)/122 began flying limited missions over the UK, but on 19 December 1942, 3.(F)/122 reported the first loss of a Fw 190 A-3 when Feldwebel Paul Gellert was shot down 30 miles south of Shoreham by Sea by a Typhoon of 486 Squadron.

By 1943, both 4 and 5.(F)/123 (formed in November 1942) reported having a few Fw 190s on strength but the only recorded combat loss of a Fw 190 was from 5.(F)/123 on 13 March 1943 when Feldwebel Oskar Sahre was shot down and killed by a Typhoon of 1 Squadron off Beachy Head. However, the major user of the Fw 190 for reconnaissance over the UK was Nahaufklärungsgruppe 13 (NAG 13) which was formed late in 1942. It consisted of 1 and 2 Staffel (3 Staffel did not form until Spring 1944, too late to operate over the UK), and its first combat loss, flying from St Brieuc in Brittany, was not until 30 July 1943 when Oberleutnant Rainer Einhardt and

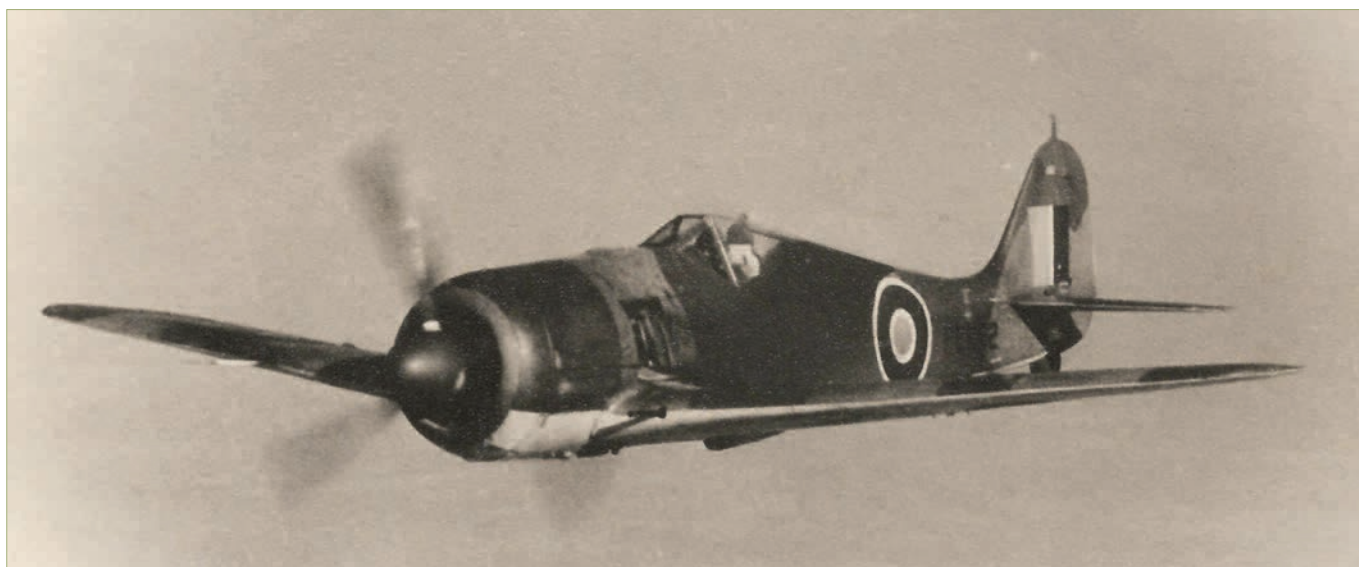
Oberfeldwebel Werner Schröder of 2 Staffel were shot down off Plymouth by Spitfires of 165 Squadron. Just two more were lost before the end of 1943, the last mention of a Fw 190 being on 20 November 1943 when Unteroffizier (Sergeant) Hermann Oettinger of 1 Staffel was wounded off Start Point by Spitfires of 610 Squadron. In 1944, the Bf 109 G-5 and G-6 appears to have replaced the Fw 190, as no more are recorded lost in combat or accidents in operations over the UK.



Faber's Fw 190 A-3 in its new colours. This captured aircraft was comprehensively tested by the RAF. Photo: © Author



A trio of recce Fw 190s of NAG 13 in 1943 preparing for take off. Photo © Author



This Fw 190 A-4, now in RAF colours was one of the ones that landed at RAF West Malling on the night of 16 April 1943. Photo: © Author

CANADA



CANADA - RCAF C295 - Artist's Impression. Photo: © Airbus Defence and Space

The Canadian Government is considering purchasing eighteen Super Hornet fighters to supplement their legacy Hornet fleet, pending their replacement in a new long-term fighter competition. The Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) needs the additional aircraft to meet their obligations to the joint Canada and US North American Air Defense Command and to NATO.

The RCAF is to receive sixteen Airbus C295 turboprop aircraft to renew its fixed-wing search and rescue fleet. They will replace the elderly De Havilland Canada Buffalos and somewhat younger Lockheed Hercules that have been used in this role across Canada for many years. Deliveries are expected to take place between 2019 and 2022.

FRANCE



FRANCE - PC-21. Photo: © Pilatus

The French Air Force has ordered seventeen Pilatus PC-21 turboprop trainer aircraft for basic flight training. They will be used for initial training of military pilots prior to their transferring to the Alpha Jet and, subsequently, converting onto the Dassault Rafale fighter bomber.

GREECE



The Greek Army is to receive at least ten older D-model Chinooks from US Army surplus stocks to boost their current Chinook fleet. The first three were received recently and Greece is considering increasing the eventual number to fifteen.

INDONESIA



The Indonesian Air Force is planning to purchase five Airbus A400M transport aircraft as part of its modernisation efforts. The new multi-role aircraft will boost the country's airlift capabilities.

ITALY



ITALY - Italian Air Force P-72 on Delivery. Photo: © Leonardo SpA

The Italian Air Force has received its first two P-72 maritime patrol aircraft out of four on order to replace its long-serving fleet of Breguet Atlantiques. The remainder are due in service by the end of the year. The P-72 is based on the civilian ATR-72 turboprop airliner and is built by Leonardo. They will be operated from Sigonella air base in Sicily.

KUWAIT



Kuwait is planning to purchase forty Super Hornets to supplement and eventually replace their Air Force's current legacy Hornet fleet that were acquired after the Gulf War. The sale has been agreed by the US government.

MEXICO



A new Boeing 737 airliner has been delivered to the Mexican Air Force and is the second to be acquired for use by their VIP transport squadron. The first one was received in 2015.

NEW ZEALAND



New Zealand has announced plans to replace its aging fleet of Hercules transport and Orion maritime patrol aircraft within the next ten years. In the meantime the current aircraft are receiving upgrades to ensure they can remain in service until the mid-2020s.

NORWAY



Norway plans to order five Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft to replace its current fleet of P-3 Orions and Dassault Falcons. They are expected to be delivered early in the next decade. These are the same type of aircraft being obtained for the Royal Air Force and there are likely to be opportunities for collaboration on support.

POLAND



The Polish Air Force is to receive two Gulfstream G550 business jets to replace the Russian-built Yak-40s that were retired over five years ago. The aircraft will be delivered by mid-2017 for use in transporting VIPs.

QATAR



Qatar is planning to purchase seventy two Boeing F-15 Strike Eagle fighter-bombers. This will represent a significant increase in the size of the country's air arm. This purchase has also been approved by the US government.

UK



UK - Airbus H135 Juno. Photo: © Airbus Helicopters

Airbus Helicopters UK has now received the first examples of the two helicopter types it will supply for the UK's Military Flight Training System requirement - the H-135 Juno light twin and the larger H-145 Jupiter. In all, twenty nine Junos and three Jupiters will be acquired to replace the current fleet of Squirrels and Griffins at RAF Shawbury and RAF Valley. Ascent Flight Training, the contractor that will deliver the UK's helicopter training, should receive their first examples by spring 2017 after they have had some specific UK equipment requirements installed. Qinetiq at Boscombe Down has disposed of the last North American Harvard in UK military service. The aircraft, KF183, was originally delivered to the RAF in 1944 and arrived at Boscombe Down in 1953. It was one of three in use for many years as

photo-chase and Empire Test Pilot School trainer aircraft until one crashed in 1982 and another was sold in 1996. KF183 has been sold to a private company at Duxford, who will very likely keep it flying.

In another move to modernise its aircraft fleet, Qinetiq has also ordered the Pilatus PC-21 turboprop trainer, similar to those being purchased by the French Air Force. Two are being obtained for the Empire Test Pilots' School at Boscombe Down to train UK and other nations' future test pilots.

RAF Typhoons have been in the United States for a series of major international exercises in the first quarter of this year. The first of these, Red Flag, took place in January and February 2017 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada and 6 Squadron were the RAF's representatives. Other forces taking part were the US Air Force and Navy, and the Royal Australian Air Force. The aircraft were then handed over to 2 Squadron in mid-February and remained at Nellis for a different exercise, Green Flag. In March, 1 Squadron took over the aircraft for a tri-lateral exercise with the US and France elsewhere in the United States. These three squadrons are based at RAF Lossiemouth.

USA



Fifty-three years of F-4 Phantom II operations by the United States Air Force came to an end just before Christmas 2016. The event was marked by a flypast by four full scale Aerial Target variants at Holloman AFB, NM and a final flight by the commander of the operating detachment. The F-16 Fighting Falcon is taking over the manned/unmanned aerial target role from the Phantom with the United States Air Force.

The US Navy's latest E-2 Hawkeye carrier-based airborne early warning and control aircraft is to be equipped with an in-flight refuelling ability to greatly extend its range. The first prototype installation is currently being tested and the system, a probe mounted over the cockpit, should be incorporated on the production line in 2018. Existing aircraft will be modified in due course.



UK - An RAF Typhoon takes off at Nellis AFB during its detachment to Exercise Red Flag. Photo: © MoD/Crown

210s over Britain

by Chris Goss



Erprobungsstaffel Me 210 port quarters shot showing the side mounted canon. Photo: © Author

At the end of April 1942, Erprobungsstaffel Me 210, the Messerschmitt 210 test and development unit, was formed at Lechfeld in Germany. It would be commanded by 25 year old Oberleutnant (Flying Officer) Walter Maurer, an experienced Messerschmitt Bf 110 pilot. After officer and pilot training, in 1938 Maurer was posted to 3./Jagdgeschwader 137 (3./JG 137) at Bernberg after which he flew with 1./Jagdgruppe 88 in Spain (where he shot down one aircraft on 13 June 1938). On his return, 3./JG 137 then became 3./JG 231 and on the outbreak of war, it became 3./Jagdgruppe 102 and saw Maurer getting his second kill over Poland on 11 September 1939. His unit then withdrew to Germany and began converting to the Bf 110, the unit then becoming I./Zerstörergeschwader 2 (I./ZG 2) and commanded by Major (Squadron Leader) Johannes Gentzen.

At the start of the French campaign on 10 May 1940, Maurer, now flying with 3./ZG 2, commanded by Oberleutnant Hans Röderer and operating out of Darmstadt-Griesheim, managed to get two more kills before, just 24 hours after the start of the campaign, he and his radio operator Unteroffizier (Sergeant) Stefan Makera were shot down. Hurricanes of 1 Squadron flown by Flight Lieutenant Peter Hanks, Pilot Officer Peter Mould and Flying Officer Leslie Clisby attacked as Maurer was providing an escort mission for Heinkel 111s attacking railway targets at Ste Menehould. He crash-landed at 1515hrs near Vendresse where both of them were taken prisoner. However, at the end of the campaign, he was released from French captivity and rejoined his old Staffel for the Battle of Britain. Due to heavy losses, ZG 2 was then disbanded and in October 1940, he was posted to the Zerstörer Ergänzungsgruppe (Bf 110 training unit) at Vaerlose in Norway and then in June 1941, he was posted to Stab II./ZG 1 and took part in ground attack and escort missions over the Soviet Union during which time he shot down another three aircraft.

In October 1941, he and his radio operator/gunner Feldwebel (Flight Sergeant) Rudolf Jansen were selected to be part of the Me 210 development team

at Rechlin, replacing Knight's Cross holder Oberleutnant Heinz Forgatsch who had been killed in an accident testing a Me 210 A-1 at Rechlin on 23 September 1941. Maurer was then selected to Major Walter Storp at the Luftwaffe Führungsstab (and former commander of Schnellkampfgeschwader 210, the unit that was originally to be equipped with the Me 210 and which had experienced many problems training on the type late 1941 to early 1942).

It is not known how many crews were posted to the unit but it would appear that the majority came from the Zerstörerschule at Wunsdorf and generally did not have combat experience. One such pilot was Feldwebel Hermann Bolten who had finished his training at the start of March 1942 and first flew an Me 210 at Landsberg on 29 April 1942. By 7 July 1942 he had flown a total of 87 flights on the Me 210 before the decision was made for the Me 210 to undertake tactical tests under operational conditions.

On 18 July 1942, the unit flew to Evreux in France but very little flying was carried out. However on 29 July 1942, Erprobungsstaffel Me 210 moved to Soesterberg in the Netherlands and started operations in earnest.



Erprobungsstaffel Me 210 believed to pictured over the Netherlands. Photo: © Author



Photo: © Author

So far the unit had suffered just the one known accident when on 31 May 1942, a Me 210 A-1 suffered 45 per cent damage at Stade as a result of an undercarriage problem. However, on 31 July 1942, Feldwebel Hermann Bolten and his radio operator Feldwebel Wilhelm Lohf were injured when, as a result of engine failure, they had to force-land near Neer-Andel east of Dordrecht in Holland; their injuries meant that they did not rejoin their unit again until October 1942 which was fortunate for them as 10 days later, the first of a series of operational losses occurred.

It was believed that reconnaissance flights were carried out over the North Sea as well as anti-invasion flights over the North Sea and up to the east coast of England, flying at low-level and maintaining strict radio silence. On 3 August 1942, two aircraft, one of which flown by Oberleutnant Maurer and each carrying a bomb, took off from Soesterberg to attack a convoy off the Yorkshire coast. Flying at sea-level, they climbed to 1,200ft into a bank of mist after which they dived to 600ft, released their bombs and headed for home, not knowing if their bombs had been successful. So far, the Me 210 had just experienced Flak but sooner or later it would meet the RAF.

At 1925hrs on 9 August 1942, Rhodesian Pilot Officers Norman Lucas and Ian Munro of 266 Squadron took off from RAF Matlask in Norfolk on a patrol over the North Sea. After about 30 minutes they spotted an aircraft about a mile away approaching from their 2 o'clock and flying at zero feet. Being at 50ft, the aircraft passed beneath both Typhoons but they identified it as German and believed it to be a Ju 88; their combat report reads as follows:

"Pilot Officer Munro (Red 1) turned to port and Pilot Officer Lucas (Red 2) to starboard and chased it...Enemy aircraft opened



Me 210s over North Africa in 1942: © Author

inaccurate green tracer fire and then started to weave to port but this brought him dead ahead of Red 2, he returned to his original course and presumably decided to reply on speed as he used his emergency boost. Red Section was overtaking fast. Red 1 gave a momentary burst and saw strikes low on water. Throttling to plus two boost, range was rapidly closed to 200 yds and a three second burst given. Enemy aircraft was flying straight and level. Red 2 also opened fire from port quarter, a very short burst at 600 yds and then 400 yds and a longer burst at 200 yds. Immediately after

opening fire on the last burst, flames appeared inboard of both engines. A hood came off and one of the crew started to climb out but as fire was continued, he slumped back. Enemy aircraft attempted a belly landing but bounced, dropped a wing and went in nose first.. "

No Ju 88s were reported lost over the North Sea that night but Oberleutnant Ernst Haberland and Unteroffizier (Sergeant) Heinz Danigel flying a Me 210 A-1 were reported missing from an operational flight. Four days later, 266 Squadron struck again but still failed to correctly identify what they had shot down.

At about 1830hrs on 13 August 1942, Me 210 A-1 took off from Soesterberg on an anti-invasion reconnaissance up to the English east coast. Flying the aircraft was Leutnant (Pilot Officer) Heinz Menger with Unteroffizier (Sergeant) Erich Rudolph as radio operator/gunner. 30 minutes later, four Typhoons of 266 Squadron led by Flight Lieutenant Tony Johnston got airborne from RAF Duxford in Cambridgeshire the hope of catching a Ju 88 of the reconnaissance unit 3.(F)/122. Their intention was to fly to just south of Southwold on the Suffolk coast, then fly out to sea 20 to 30 miles from the coast, then head north for 50 miles and then return south 50 miles. Some 40 minutes into the flight, an aircraft was spotted flying west at zero feet so the Typhoons, flying line astern, turned port to intercept; the aircraft, which also turned to port, was thought to be a Ju 88. It was Tony Johnston (Blue 1) who got closest first:

...Blue 1 got astern of the enemy aircraft which at once opened fire using tracer and self-destroying ammunition, some of which came close. Using full boost, range was closed but Blue 1 feared that the enemy aircraft might reach the cover of the rain storm so he gave a short burst at 1,000 yds and saw strikes on the water below enemy aircraft. For the same reason he gave another short burst at 600 yds, again short. Closing to 400 yds he saw one strike on starboard engine. Closing from 300 to 30 yds firing a series of short bursts he saw the port engine smoking and the starboard engine and under part of the fuselage catch fire. Up to this point, enemy aircraft had flown straight and level but when well on fire it climbed to 600 feet, a hood cover came off and one man baled out; enemy aircraft dropped a wing and went into the sea and sank..."

Erich Rudolph reported that at 1936hrs when they were off Great Yarmouth and flying at sea-level they had been attacked by four Typhoons flying in line astern. He had tried his best to return fire with the blister guns but found it hard to bring the guns to bear. His pilot climbed to 600ft and with the port engine and fuselage on fire, he transmitted an SOS, jettisoned the cockpit canopy and baled out. The aircraft then crashed into the sea and sank, taking the pilot with it. Rudolf was picked up six days later "...somewhat the worse for wear" and not in a fit state to be interrogated.

Six days later, three Me 210s were involved in the raid on Dieppe on 19 August 1942 but doing what is not known. One apparently lost an engine to enemy gunfire and had to crash-land at Soesterberg but there is no record of this. However, on 1 September 1942, Erprobungsstaffel Me 210 became 16./Kampfgeschwader 6 (16./KG 6) (coincidentally, a few days later, Major (Squadron Leader) Walter Storp took command of the newly formed KG 6). Walter Maurer then carried out a night probing flight over East Anglia at the start of the month at heights between zero feet and 10,000ft and was fortunate to hear British night fighter transmissions which allowed him to turn and dive away. Shortly after this, on 3 September 1942 he had a discussion with Major Storp after which two days later, it was decreed that the Me 210 could carry out its first bombing attack on mainland Britain.

Between 1500 and 1600hrs on 5 September 1942, two Me 210s, flown by Oberleutnant Maurer and Feldwebel Max Blättler, took off from Soesterberg and flew towards the Thames Estuary at 26,000ft with the probable target of Chatham. However, off Southend they were intercepted by two Spitfires of 610 Squadron flown by Australians Flight Sergeant 'South' Creagh and Sergeant Rupert Gregory. Creagh attacked first, the aircraft, correctly identified as an Me 210, had dived from 20,000ft to 15,000ft where Rupert Gregory took over:

"...I closed in astern and fired a short burst closing from 400yds. I saw no results so I closed in to 100yds and fire a two second burst. The port engine began to burn behind the nacelle. I noticed that the starboard propeller had stopped and the aircraft turned slowly to starboard and dived into the sea..."

Both Blättler and Unteroffizier Reinhold Graf were killed when their Me 210 A-1, crashed into the sea while Maurer dropped his bomb near Southend and streaked back for Soesterberg. Less than 24 hours later, Maurer would not be as lucky. Mid-morning on 6 September 1942, two Me 210s flown by Oberleutnant Maurer and Feldwebel Heinrich Mösges and headed towards Middlesbrough, their route taking them towards Texel, then west to a point 10 miles off Hartlepool and then west-south-west into the mouth of the River Tees. However, at 1116hrs, two Typhoons of 1 Squadron flown by Pilot Officers Des Perrin and Tom Bridges lifted off from RAF Acklington in Northumberland. They were ordered to fly towards the Farne Islands and then south to Blyth climbing to 30,000ft. It was when they were off Redcar at



Crewing in for another mission in North Africa in 1942. Photo © Author

28,500ft that they spotted two aircraft, which they identified as either Me 210s or Ju 88s at the same height headed north-west and weaving gently. When these unidentified aircraft turned west, the Typhoons gave chase. After about four minutes, they spotted one of the aircraft jettisoning its bombs before turning steeply away from the coast. Des Perrin then went after the port aircraft flown by Heinrich Mösges, Bridges the starboard aircraft flown by Maurer. The combat reports make quite exciting reading:

"Pilot Officer Perrin turned steeply to port, diving and following the port aircraft....Closing to approximately 250yds, he fired a two second cannon burst from astern and slightly to port. Perrin saw strikes and saw pieces fly off the port engine. He then crossed over and fired another two second burst from astern and slightly to starboard and saw strikes and pieces fly off starboard engine. Typhoon then began to overtake the enemy aircraft and fired a third burst of one to two seconds from 100 to 50yds from dead astern and saw enemy aircraft's rudder on fire and partly shot away. Enemy aircraft then turned on its back and dived vertically...."

Perrin tried to follow but he blacked out with his air speed indicator reading 520mph. When he recovered, the starboard cockpit door had come loose and was hammering in the slipstream so he had a cursory look for his victim and then returned to base. What he did not witness is the tail of the German aircraft break off at 3,000ft and the aircraft then fluttered down to crash on its back at New Buildings Farm, New Marske near Redcar. The radio operator/gunner Austrian Obergefreiter (Cpl) Eduard Czerny, whose 23rd birthday was this very day, had managed to get out but his parachute failed to open. Heinrich Mösges managed to get away from the aircraft just before it crashed but he had left it too late and his body fell into a pool alongside a reservoir. Meanwhile Tom Bridges was attacking Walter Maurer's aircraft:

"...Pilot fired a short deflection burst from port quarter at long range to test cannons....enemy aircraft continued turning to port and began diving in a south-east direction. Typhoon closed rapidly and fired two or three bursts at approximately 200yds from port quarter astern and saw strikes between port engine and fuselage and on top of the fuselage and cockpit cover. He saw pieces fly off and white smoke from port engine. enemy aircraft



Another view of the aircraft being readied for flight. Photo © Author

then began weaving violently but stopped turning to port He then fired a final burst from 100 to 50yds from dead astern and slightly to port. He saw port engine catch fire and more pieces fly off. Enemy aircraft then slowed down and dived steeply to port..."

Again, Tom Bridges blacked out in the dive and came to over Whitby, where he saw a launch headed for a patch of something in the sea. This was Oberleutnant Walter Maurer who had baled out none the worse for wear and had landed in Robin Hood's Bay and was picked up by the motor boat Florence. Also unwounded, Rudolf Jansen landed close to the village of Sledgate and was captured by a holidaymaker. The Me 210 A-1 crashed at Sunnyside Farm, Thorpe seven minutes after the first Me 210 had crashed.

Within 24 hours of the Me 210 being cleared for operations over Britain, three aircraft, including one flown by the unit commander, had been lost and of those, two came down on land. Furthermore, the RAF had captured three crew and as a result, managed to produce a very comprehensive intelligence report on both the aircraft and unit. Furthermore, the wreckage of Mösges' aircraft was recovered for analysis by the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough as Maurer's aircraft had both disintegrated and caught fire so would reveal little if any of its secrets.

Who now took command of 16./KG 6 is not known and whether it flew any more missions over the UK is also not known. It did move from Soesterberg to Beauvais in France and suffered one more accident on 16 September 1942 when Me 210 A-1 was all but written off as a result of an engine failure, crashing at Beauvais.

When Oberfeldwebel Hermann Bolten arrived back in October 1942, the aircraft now carried tactical codes 3E and the final letter Q, but on 28 October 1942, he picked up a new Me 210 from the Messerschmitt factory at Augsburg and flew to the Mediterranean where their Me 210s would fly missions subordinate to 10./ZG 26. He would fly just 17 operational flights from Crete, Italy, Tunisia and Sicily but in January 1943, he would start flying the Ju 88 C-6 with 10./ZG 26 before being sent back to Lechfeld in February 1943 to join a new unit-Erprobungsstaffel Me 410, this new aircraft, a vast improvement on the Me 210, started to appear over the UK from July 1943 onwards.



A rare head on shot of the 210 showing the under nose bomb doors. Photo: © Author



Messerschmitt 210 underbelly view. Photo: © Author



The wreckage of Fw Heinrich Mösges aircraft under guard before being recovered by the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough for analysis. Photo: © Author

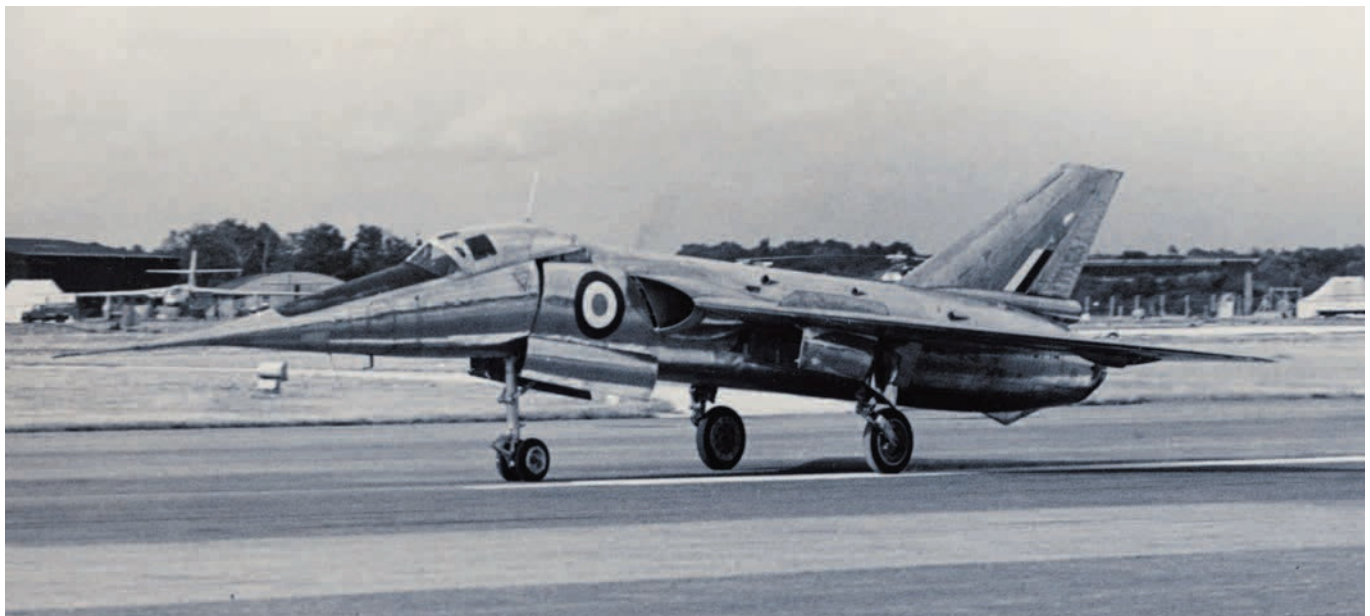
Images from the Archive



In its day in 1961, the Bristol Type 188, above, was a revolutionary aircraft being made of mainly stainless steel rather than aluminium to deal with the extreme heat experienced in supersonic flight.

The aircraft was designed specifically for research into supersonic flight to meet a government requirement. The aircraft was powered by two de Havilland Gyron Junior engines which had reheat. Unlike its American rival of the the time the X-15, it was designed for conventional take off and landing, the X-15 however, was launched from a 'mother ship' and returned for a conventional landing.

Although the aircraft was expected to exceed Mach 2, sadly neither of the two prototypes reached this speed, Mach 1.88 was its maximum. An example of this aircraft is part of the RAF Museum collection.



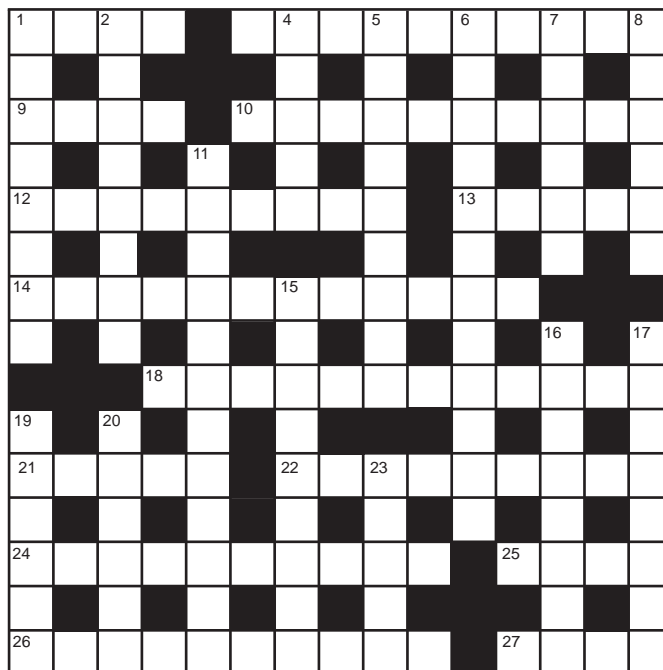
The Fairey Delta 2 was another research aircraft, initially manufactured by Fairey, for wing research. It was later modified by the newly formed British Aircraft Corporation (BAC) to investigate delta wing design and had several wing configurations during its short service life.

The original design had intakes in the wing root, but after modification the intakes were repositioned under the wings and the fuselage extended to enable the wing to extend further forwards. As can be seen in the photograph the aircraft had an elongated nose which could be lowered to give the pilot better forward view for take off and landing, not unlike that which was later fitted to Concorde.

Photographs: © MoD/Crown

Easter 2017 FUN CROSSWORD

by Enigma



Across

- 1 Is Nadal a member of 'our' organisation? (4)
- 3 Part of shaving equipment (5,5)
- 9 Got a type of garment (4)
- 10 Influencing the mind or passions (10)
- 12 Underlying principle to limit beer (9)
- 13 Needed for vehicle access, by the sound of it, is dust coloured (5)
- 14 Colour of 'our' uniform (3,5,4)
- 18 Engine component for roller-shaped principal! (8,4)
- 21 Some emblem eliminated metal filings (5)
- 22 Carpet for a variable priory church (9)
- 24 Engage in conflict (4,6)
- 25 Sage, for example (4)
- 26 Short waterproof over garment (6,4)
- 27 Man, for example, surrounded by water (4)

Down

- 1 Train or a kind of club member (8)
- 2 eg, Spitfires and Hurricanes (8)
- 4 Combat location (5)
- 5 Shellfish cot! (6,3)
- 6 Dark fruit (12)
- 7 Beast (6)
- 8 Cover for facial organ (6)
- 11 I, me, eye terse or laconic (12)
- 15 Relating to the most interesting part (9)
- 16 Not so much relaxation - never still (8)
- 17 Loveable, crazy Dora is clever (8)
- 19 Act of fleeing air force unit (6)
- 20 Not an 'A' film (1-5)
- 23 Island with a George Cross (5)

Notes

Solution to this crossword can be found on page 63

Images of war - WW1



The wreckage of the FE2d crewed by Sergeant Mottershead and Lieutenant W E Gower. Photo: © Author

On the morning of 7 May 1917, FE2B serial A1942 got airborne from Sainte Marie Cappel south-east of Cassel in northern France. It headed east over the French-Belgian border towards Ypres where it was to carry out a bombing raid against Houthulst Forest. Houthulst Forest had been made into a fortress by the Germans with artillery, ammunition dumps, command centres and concrete emplacements and as a result it was a highly fought over target. At the controls was 2nd Lieutenant (2/Lt) Leonard Bacon, formerly of the Hampshire Regiment and his gunner was Aircraft Mechanic 2nd Class Gerald Worthing, formerly of the Monmouth Regiment. Both were aged 26.

Unfortunately for the British airmen, German fighters had been directed towards them and one of them was flown by 20 year old Leutnant Walter Götttsch of Jasta 8 based at Rumbeke in Belgium. Götttsch had volunteered for service in the German Army in July 1915 but transferred to the Air Force in 1916. After initially flying in artillery spotting aircraft, he trained on single-seat fighters and Vizfeldwebel Götttsch was then posted to Jasta 8 at the start of September 1916 flying Albatross D.III fighters. His first kill was a balloon on 14 November 1916 and three days later he shot down a DH2 of 29 Squadron south-west of Ypres. His next kill was a BE 2c of 6 Squadron on 5 January 1917 and then two days later he attacked an FE2d of 20 Squadron crewed by Sergeant Thomas Mottershead and Lieutenant W E Gower. Despite terrible burns that proved fatal five days later, Mottershead managed to land behind British lines at Bailleul for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross; his citation reads as follows:

"For most conspicuous bravery, endurance and skill, when attacked at an altitude of 9,000 feet; the petrol tank was pierced and the machine set on fire. Enveloped in flames, which his Observer, Lieutenant Gower was unable to subdue, this very gallant soldier succeeded in bringing his aeroplane back to our lines, and though he made a successful landing, the machine collapsed on touching

the ground, pinning him beneath wreckage from which he was subsequently rescued. Though suffering extreme torture from burns sustained, Sergeant Mottershead showed the most conspicuous presence of mind in the careful selection of a landing place, and his wonderful endurance and fortitude undoubtedly saved the life of his Observer. He has since succumbed to his injuries."



Leutnant Walter Götttsch. Photo: © Author

Göttsch then shot down two more 20 Squadron FE2ds on 1 February 1917 but was then shot down and wounded near Wervicq on 3 February 1917 by 2/Lieutenant C Gordon Davis and Captain R M Knowles of 20 Squadron. His wounds meant that he did not return to operations until April 1917 but got his revenge on 20 Squadron on 5 April 1917 when he shot down another FE2d from that Squadron. By the morning on 5 May 1917, his score stood at 11 when he intercepted Leonard Bacon's aircraft over Schaep-Baillie, north-west of Ypres. The dogfight resulted in Bacon being badly wounded in the right arm and Gerald Worthing being killed with a shot to the head and as a result the pilot had no alternative but to force-land on the Poelkapelle-Langemack road. Bacon's wounds resulted in him losing his arm and he would be repatriated before the end of the war while Gerald Worthing now lies in the Tyne Cot British Military Cemetery.

Walter Göttsch's successes continued, but at a cost. He was apparently shot down a second time on 29 June 1917 and was then wounded a third time, again by 20 Squadron, on 25 September 1917 by which time his score stood at 17. He would be wounded again on 30 November 1917 and when recovered, took command of Jasta 19 in February 1918. He would achieve



German troops inspect the wreckage. Photo: © Author

just three kills with his new unit, as on 10 April 1918 and now flying a Fokker Triplane, he was shot down by return fire from his 20th victim, an RE8 of 52 Squadron flown by 2/Lieutenant H L Taylor and 2/Lieutenant W I E Lane, both of whom were wounded in the action. The German fighter crashed at Gentelles, south-east of Amiens and behind British lines. After the war, his body was returned to his home city of Hamburg and had he survived, he would have been awarded the coveted Pour Le Mérite or Blue Max for 20 kills (seven of which were from 20 Squadron). It is possible that he was awarded this posthumously, but this cannot be confirmed.

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We record with sadness the passing of the following members of the RAF Association

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Squadron Leader R A Anderson
 Teignmouth
- Mr C Andrew** Corsham/Chippenham
Mr V Ashton Wolverhampton/District
Mr S Attard Malta GC
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Mr K Gault Ryedale
Mr D George Swiss
Mr W George Oldham
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NOTICES

Help

Association of RAF Women Officers. Female officers of WAAF/WRAF/RAF and equivalent reserve positions or nursing services. Do join your Association. E-mail Hon Secretary, Mrs Daphne Short: mo.da@sky.com

I am writing a new book about **RAF West Malling** and would like to hear from anyone who served there in any capacity. Contact me by phone 01233 627911, e-mail: ajm20flight@btinternet.com or write to A J Moor, 190 Hythe Road, Ashford TN24 8PP.

For family history research if anyone with knowledge or information of **Edward Guthrie Davison RAFVR** 745988/1282450 1939-1946 Cornwall, Fairwood Common, Bahrain, please contact syncopator2014@sky.com or call 01743 3595056.

Seeking photos of **Bristol Brigand Met 3s** of 1301 Met Flight, RAF Negombo, Ceylon in 1949 - 1951. Contact Tony Fairbairn at tony.fairbairn@btinternet.com or tel: 01249 449031.

Old Colleagues

A warm welcome extended to anyone who served at **RAF Changi, including HQ FEAFF between 1946 and 1971**. See www.rafchangi.co.uk for joining information or apply to Malcolm Flack, Membership Secretary 01494 728562, memsecchangi@telco4u.net for free enquiry pack.

Friend seeking **Flt Lt Dave Gibbs, PEDO, OIC RAF pentathlon**. Served at Henlow (1963), Halton and Butterworth. Contact Stu Clarke 07786134413 or e-mail clarke.stuart44@sky.com

continued on page 62

Old Colleagues

continued from page 61

The RAF Locking Apprentices Association welcomes contact from apprentices who trained at either RAF Locking or RAF Cranwell and wish to renew comradeship. www.raflaa.org.uk or tel 01933 317357.

MALTA 1976-1978. Sandy Dickson would like to hear from any old friends from our Malta days. Call 0113 264 2457.

102 Squadron Association Remembrance Day Service Sunday 12 November 2017. All welcome. Meeting at St. Catherine's Church, Barnby Moor 10 am for 10.15 service and wreath laying. Followed by service at Pocklington Airfield Memorial for further service and wreath laying. Contact Hon Sec email: mikeparish1918@gmail.com or telephone 01923 711818.

RAF Administrative Apprentice Association. Did you train as a supplier or clerk at either RAF St. Athan, Bircham Newton, Halton or Hereford? Please contact www.rafadappasn.org or call 01425 511378 for details of your association.

Mildenhall Register Reunion 2017 at Mildenhall 12 - 14 May. Open to all who have served either at RAF Mildenhall or its WWII satellite bases plus friends and families. Full details from Secretary tel: 01775 841585 or secretary@mildenhallregister.org.uk

No 214 (FMS) Squadron Association will hold its Final Reunion and celebrate formation centenary of 14 Squadron RNAS/214 Squadron over weekend 7/8 October 2017 to include dinner in Derby and memorial wreath-laying at Alrewas Arboretum. Former squadron members/families/friends welcome. Details at www.214squadron.org.uk or contact John Gulliver on 01983 873248 or no214fms@btinternet.com

RAF Changi Association (incl HQ FEF). The 21st annual Reunion will be on 5 - 8 May at the Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford, ST16 1JJ. Non members are welcome so come and meet us. Contact Malcolm Flack 01494 728562 or MembSecChangi@telco4u.net

No 174 Course (Jet Provost) at RAF Syerston. Members who graduated 50 years ago should contact Mike Sedman for proposed reunion. Contact mikesedman@aol.com

Reunions

RAF Seletar Association including RAF Tengah annual Reunion October 20 - 23 2017 at Hallmark Hotel, Derby. For more info contact Christine Mackie (Membership Secretary) on 01623 407136 or email chrismonteban@hotmail.co.uk

No 46 Squadron RFC and RAF Association. is holding its 100th consecutive annual Reunion dinner at RAF Benson Officers Mess Saturday 3rd June. A few places may still be available for this unique historic occasion. Contact Secretary: dougiebarr@gmail.com

continued in the next column

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Cheshunt, Herts EN8 0TU
Tel: 01992 442608
www.blenheimsociety.org.uk
E-mail: r.j.scott@ntlworld.com

Easter 2017 Crossword Solution

1 Rotarian; 2 Fighters;
4 Arena; 5 Oyster bed;
6 Blackcurrant; 7 Animal;
8 Eyelid; 11 Monosyllabic;
15 Climatic; 16 Restless;
17 Adorable; 19 Flight;
20 B-movie; 23 Malta.

Down:

1 RAFA; 3 Razor blade; 9 Toga;
10 Persuasive; 12 Rational;
13 Khaki; 14 Air Force blue;
18 Cylinder head; 21 Lemel;
22 Axminster; 24 Give battle;
25 Herb; 26 Trench coat; 27 Isle.

Across:

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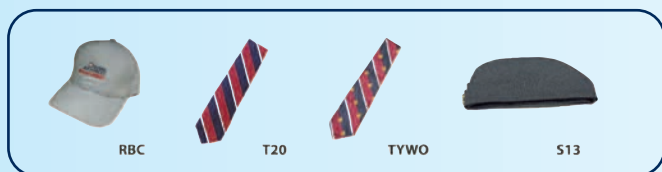
RAF ASSOCIATION

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	Order Code	Price £
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Blazer badge Ord Member Cut Out gold wired	B17M	11.00
Blazer badge Ord Member Cut Out cloth	B17MCL	10.00
Blazer badge Ord Member Full gold wired	B17F	11.00
Blazer badge Ord Member Full Badge cloth	B17FCL	10.00
Button Large Chrome 20 mm	B20L	4.50
Button Small Chrome 17 mm	B20S	4.50
Forage Cap/Beret Badge	B24	10.50

Clothing

Baseball cap - Sky blue	RBC	8.00
Beret exc eyelets and cap badge (see B24 above)	S19A	18.00
Bow Tie Ordinary Member Striped ready made	T10B	11.00
Cravat Ordinary Member Striped Polyester	T10CR	14.50
Forage Cap inc RAFA buttons state size (see B24 for badge)	S13	68.50
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Tie Full Associate Polyester	T15	11.00
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Tie Ordinary Member 50 Year Member Poly	TY50m	14.50
Tie Ordinary Member 60 Year Member Poly	TY60m	14.50
Tie RAFALO serving RAF Liaison Officer Poly	T21	11.00

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Association Pocket Diary 2017	XR6	4.00
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Coin Holder £1.00 (holds £5.00)	C5	2.50
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Pen "Clear for Take Off"boxed	PEN2	15.00
Pennant - RAF Crest gold wired (as B19)	P3	36.00
Pennant Sqn/Station to order 6/8 wks gold wired	P1	36.00
Purse - Soft Black	RAF367R	15.00
Ribbon RAF 1 1/4" wide price per metre	R4	9.00
Sweetheart Silver/Marcasite Brooch boxed	R3	110.00
Table flag with 10" pin RAF	M5	6.00

	Order Code	Price £
Tankard one pint Pewter - RAF boxed	T3RAF	38.50
Tea towel - Battle of Britain	T23	4.50
Tea towel - Bomber Command	T24	4.50
Tea towel - Coastal Command	T22	4.50
Tea towel - Help the RAF, Join the WAAF	T33	7.00
Tea towel - RAF (red - aircraft)	T31	4.50
Tea towel - RAF Ensign & Lancaster	T43	4.50
Tea towel - Spitfire and Hurricane	T32	4.50
Tea towel - Union flag	T34	4.50
Teddy Battle of Britain Pilot 9"	BOBTBR	20.00
Teddy Fit Lt Uniformed with kit bag	TED2	36.00
Teddy Red Arrows Flying Suit	RAFATBFS	20.00
Teddy Veteran with kit bag,	TED3	36.00
Tie Slide - Red Arrows Hawk boxed	RAF269R	12.00
Wallet Leather - RAF Logo boxed	RAF203R	18.00
Wallet Leather - RAF Wings boxed	RAF202R	18.00
Wallet - Red Arrows Silhouette	RAF259R	18.00
Wallet - Red Arrows Crest	RAF260R	18.00
Wall shield - RAF Crest boxed	S12	48.50
Wall shield - Sqn/Unit/Station - to order boxed	S99	71.50
Watchstrap nylon - RAF colours	W1	9.00

Lapel and Stud Badge

	Order Code	Price £
Bomber Command stud badge boxed	LB1	4.50
Coastal Command stud badge boxed	LB2	4.50
Fighter Command stud badge boxed	LB3	4.50
Maintenance Command stud badge boxed	LB4	4.50
"My Daughter is Serving" Badge boxed	R7	13.50
"My Son is Serving" Badge boxed	R6	13.50
RAF Ensign Badge boxed	B31	4.00
RAF Medical stud badge boxed	LB13	4.50
RAF Police stud badge boxed	LB14	4.50
RAF Regiment stud badge boxed	LB15	4.50
RAF Wings pin badge Silver Plated boxed	RAF188R	12.00
Strike Command stud badge boxed	LB6	4.50
Support Command stud badge boxed	LB7	4.50
Transport Command stud badge boxed	LB8	4.50
Wings - Gold/Blue Enamel Kings Crown boxed	LB10	6.50
Wings - Gold/Blue Enamel, Queens Crown boxed	LB12	6.50
Wings - Gold effect Queens Crown boxed	LB16	6.50
Wings - Silver/Blue Enamel Kings Crown boxed	LB9	6.50
Wings - Silv/Blue Enamel Queens Crown boxed	LB11	6.50
WAAF brooch badge boxed	LR2	4.50
WRAF brooch badge boxed	LR1	4.50

Prints

Air Sea Rescue Launch Ltd Edition print	P25	23.50
Bob Doe signed prints - call for designs & availability	P30	10.00
Come into My Parlour WWI Ltd Edition print	P28	10.00
The Drop 1917 46 Sqn WWI Ltd Edition print	P26	10.00
The Drop 54 Sqn WWI Ltd Edition print	P27	10.00

MISCELLANEOUS

Gifts

Apron Cotton - Union Flag	U2	10.50
Double Oven Glove - Union flag	U3	8.00
Medal Holder - plastic - takes 5 mounted medals	M10	6.50
Napkins pk 12 - Union flag when folded	U4	3.50
Notepad - Black/White	BWNPR	5.00
Table Flag with 10" pin Union 6" x 3"	M4	6.00
Wooden Base for Table Flags	M7	4.49

Glassware: UK only.

RAF or RAF Association crest. Lancashire Crystal. Phone for details.
 Made to order - 2-4 weeks. Wording can be added to some items at cost.
 Most items presentation boxed. Despatch to UK only.

Wine, Champagne, Hi-Ball, Whisky - pairs or sixes £66.00 / £159.50
 Whisky, Wine or Ships Decanter £152.50
 Scalloped Optical Clock £42.50, Paperweight £31.50. Vase £96.00
 Tankard - 1 pt £79.00.

POSTAGE AND PACKING:

UK - add cost below to order	
Up to £5.00	Add £1.80
Up to £20.00	Add £3.80
Up to £50.00	Add £5.00
Over £50.00	Add £6.50

Overseas -add cost below to order

Europe	Add £8.75
Rest of World	Add £15.00

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