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JANUARY - MARCH 2016

 ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association

The charity that supports the RAF family



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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New Year message from the President

It is with a feeling of immense pride tinged with a deep sadness that I write this New Year's message.

2015 will long be remembered for the accident at the Shoreham Airshow, where many lost their lives or were in some other way affected by the tragedy, and I would like to reiterate our sincere and ongoing condolences to the families concerned.

This sadness also extends to the members who have passed away during the course of the year, so many of them dedicated and steadfast supporters of the Association over a good many years. Each passing is a personal tragedy, their loss is felt throughout the Association, but we remember them all by continuing their work and looking ahead as they would have wished.

My immense pride comes in part from the services and concerts arranged to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Collectively and individually, these were a stunning success and displayed the nation's pride in the part played by all members of the RAF during that crucial battle upon which our very survival depended. It was an honour to be part of these commemorations, and a greater honour still to meet some of the veterans who took part in the Battle itself.

2015 was also a very productive year and our many volunteers enabled us to deliver another increase in welfare calls, visits and contacts. This work is unlikely to diminish in the months and years ahead and we are now busy identifying the future welfare requirements of the RAF family in order to be ready to respond when the need arises. We will continue to depend on our volunteers, and we will continue to strive to ensure that they are as well-prepared for their task as is possible.

The year will also go down in our history as the first time in a quarter of a century that the number of members increased. Reversing the year-on-year decline in membership, the Association grew in size by recruiting nearly 5,000 new members. I would like to thank the staff who put in such a tremendous and sustained effort, but you too can rightfully share the credit because I know you also recruit new members while going about your daily work, while out collecting, while at events, and in the



myriad other situations where we interact with potential members – thank you and very well done. Just imagine what we could achieve if we all recruited just one member each next year.

Looking forward to 2016, I hope it will be one of many highs, hitting and possibly exceeding the targets set in the plan for the next five years. The staff in Central and Area Headquarters, together with our volunteers, will embrace some worthy challenges in further building our membership, fundraising and volunteering, and many other things. I feel confident that I will be able to look back again with immense pride for what you have all achieved.

Lesley joins me in wishing you all a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller KBE
President

Presidential Certificates and Honours

Twelve members have been awarded a National Presidential Certificate to coincide with the New Year's Honours List in recognition of their support and dedication to the RAF Association.

Mr Jim and Mrs Linda Doyle – Barry Branch
Mr Tony Edmunds – Sturminster/Gill Branch
Mr Alan Hartley – Coventry Branch
Mr Norman Hiscock – Basildon Branch
AVM P J O'Reilly – Melksham Branch
Cpl William Runciman – RAF Henlow Branch

Mr Ray Smith – Sudbury Branch
Mr Graham Timms – Basildon Branch
Mrs Maud Whitelaw – Ayr and Prestwick Branch
AVM David Whittaker – Larne Branch
Mr Ian Wroe – Halifax Branch

We are also delighted to report that Miss Jean Calway (Bristol Branch) was awarded a British Empire Medal in HM The Queen's Birthday Honours.

New Year message from the Secretary General

As we contemplate the New Year, the implications of the tragedy at Shoreham will remain with us for a long time, and the grief and loss felt by the families and friends of those involved will of course go on indefinitely. Our thoughts and condolences go out to them.

The RAF Association Shoreham Airshow, run by the Shoreham Branch, has been a major fixture for over 25 years and the implications of last year's tragedy for both the air show circuit and for the Association cannot be underestimated.

But as we look to the events programme for 2016, it is our respectful duty to maintain and protect the interest of the Association and those whose welfare depends on us, and on the events which raise funds for us.

Our emerging Volunteering Programme has already assisted Branches in providing key officer roles and honorary welfare officers to ensure the sustainability of those individual Branches. But we will need to recruit more volunteers, particularly to help us deliver a growing welfare output. First indications are that we have distributed well over £1.5m in grants and other financial support for members of the RAF family in 2015, and we have seen year-on-year growth in our welfare output.

On membership too, numbers have grown for the first time in 25 years – and

we've recruited new members in every age group, from under 25 to over 95. This is to the great credit of everyone concerned.

The challenge for 2016 is to continue that momentum, to increase the overall number of members by 10 per cent and ensure that 55 per cent of the Serving population are members of the Association, compared to 43 per cent currently.

We have seen far fewer Branch closures in 2015 – the work that Branch Support Officers are doing with the Branches is significantly helping their sustainability, and a small number of new Branches has been formed.

By the end of 2016, the Association will have moved from its current Leicester offices. These are housed in an old Edwardian building which would require significant investment to comply with modern standards and legislation. Refurbishment costs would exceed the value of the building itself. Central Council has

therefore approved the purchase of a new, single-storey building on an industrial estate in Leicester, funded by the sale of the current building and adding to our overall balance sheet value.

The new offices will also be more economical to run and will facilitate cross-departmental working, to improve the services to members and beneficiaries. The Leicester and Eastern Area offices will both move to this new building during 2016.

**Nick Bunting
Secretary General**



Poignant painting resonates for Graham

Readers may recall how in Air Mail last April, we mentioned two remarkable art works – 'The Sun Went Down' and 'Spitfire Dropping Poppies' – donated to Penrith Branch by the artists and auctioned to raise funds.



Retired fighter pilot Gp Capt Graham Clarke contacted us to say he had bought the former painting, by Jacquie Brown, and went on to paint in his own family's RAF history, which made the purchase of the evocative picture seem almost like fate.

Graham joined the RAF at 17 and spent 11 years on Lightnings plus seven on Phantoms, having also served at Ramstein and in Iraq as Commander South Iraq. He was Commanding Officer of 74 Squadron at Wattisham.

Graham's grandfather was George Green, a Dublin-born farrier who worked for Guinness until he joined the Army as a shoemaker and served with the Royal Horse Artillery in the South African campaign and in World War I. George was killed in action with K Battery on 6 November 1914, aged 36.

"My wife June and myself were in the Menin Gate on 6 November 2014, exactly 100 years later, and we were the first to lay a wreath there on that day. It was a great evening, a very moving moment, and Jacquie's painting was being painted at the time we were there," said Graham.

The painting is being reframed before being given pride of place in the couple's home.

Blue-sky thinking for summer holidays



A chalet at Hemsby



The Selsey static caravan

Looking forward to summer holidays is a great way to lift winter gloom – and the RAF Association has holiday homes in two delightful locations at very affordable rates, available to all serving and ex-serving personnel in the RAF family.

Our Hemsby Holiday Chalets offer fantastic value and are on Norfolk's popular East Coast, just north of Great Yarmouth, well-placed for the Broads and so close to the beach.

We have six very well-equipped chalets at the Sea Dell Estates site. Young families

love the location and each chalet sleeps up to four (sorry, no pets) with two bedrooms, sitting room, kitchen area and modern shower – one also has a bath.

The season runs from May to October. Bookings are allocated no more than 10 weeks ahead to give priority to those with identified welfare needs. For more information, prices, or to apply for a chalet please contact Eastern Area Office on 0116 268 8782.

The Association also has an attractive self-catering static caravan at the Green Lawns holiday park run by Bunn Leisure

at Selsey, near Chichester, on the West Sussex Coast.

The caravan offers great value, accommodates up to six (double bedroom, twin bedroom and stowaway bed in the lounge) and is fully wheelchair-accessible. There's a well-equipped kitchen and lounge/dining area with TV and DVD player.

To book or find out more contact our South East and Eastern Area office on 020 8268 6677.

Headstone marks George's final farewell

The RAF Association family rallied round to make sure that the memory of RAF veteran George Thompson would live on long after his passing at the age of 96.

With no living family members and few surviving friends, the Rotherham Branch appealed for people to attend George's funeral. The enormous response saw 700 mourners attending, and the Branch went on to launch a successful appeal to raise the money to create a lasting memorial to the former WWII pilot.

George began his pilot training in April 1942, flying solo for the first time just 17 days later. He flew night missions over the jungles of Burma during the war and was almost shot down over Morocco when he flew a Mosquito from the UK to what is now Bangladesh.

The appeal raised more than £1,500 and paid for a cemetery plot for George's ashes plus a handsome headstone in black marble. The Branch held a ceremony to mark George's burial and the installation of the headstone as a permanent reminder of George's life and his service to the RAF.



Get applying to get flying

This year's deadline for applications for the RAF Association's annual Flying Scholarship programme is winging its way towards us. The last date for applications for 2016 is 31 January, so would-be flyers need to move quickly to apply.

The scholarships reward outstanding members of the Air Training Corps, Combined Cadet Force (RAF), Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets and Air Explorer Scouts. The scheme was set up to recognise their continuous support to the Association.

For more information and application forms go to www.rafa.org.uk/What-we-do/Air-Cadets/Flying-scholarships



Successful recipients of the Association's 2015 scholarships with Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford

Wings Lotto windfall for Alan

Wings Lotto rollover winner Alan Trinder had forgotten he was still playing – until he heard he'd won £6,500!

A delighted Alan said: "I've been taking part for years and had forgotten I was still paying it. But I will definitely carry on playing. I might win again!"



Alan lives in Wantage, Oxfordshire, and is already making good use of his Wings Lotto windfall: "We've bought a new 40" TV and I was able to give our five grandchildren a special Christmas present. We haven't had a proper holiday for a few years so we can enjoy a more expensive one this year – probably to Italy or Spain."

Alan and wife Margaret ran a chemist's in Wantage for 25 years but Alan kept quiet about having just completed his pharmacy course when he did his RAF National Service from 1955 to 1957.

He liked the idea being a radar technician, passed the aptitude test and after nine months of training at RAF Yatesbury in Wiltshire he stayed on to teach other recruits: "I'd always had an interest in electronics and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was great!"

Alan has been an active member of the Yatesbury RAF Association Branch for many years. "The Branch has about 400 members and quite a few thousand of us trained at Yatesbury. We have a reunion every August. The camp closed long ago but some buildings remain, so we hope they might be restored and perhaps we can have a museum."

Wings Lotto has raised £1m+ for the RAF Association's Wings Appeal since its launch in 2008, as well as producing winners like Alan. To find out more or sign up, go to – www.rafa.org.uk/lotto or contact the Helpdesk on 0870 0845 8844 or freephone 0800 0182 361, or email lotto@rafa.org.uk

Leigh's latest targets

Archer Leigh Bland is now in his second year of support from the RAF Association and is heading into the indoor season with a few goals – getting his arrow count, fitness and stamina back up after a recent operation on his leg.

In 2016 Leigh is targeting the scores required to get into Team GB for both the World Championships and the Invictus Games. Leigh began his campaign at the Combined Indoors event at Stoneleigh Park in December 2015.

Good luck in 2016 Leigh!



Band reaches out to Air Transport pilots and crew



The RAF Association Concert Band is helping to publicise the search for any surviving Air Transport Service pilots and Bristol Beaufighter aircrew who served at the old Weston-super-Mare Airfield. The band has been asked to play at the opening ceremony of the refurbished 'Ferry Pilots' Crew Room at the Helicopter Museum there later this year.

The date of the opening has still to be fixed but organisers of the event would love to hear from any surviving ferry pilots and crew who might be able to attend. During World War II, male and female ferry pilots and crews used to prepare and deliver aircraft manufactured at the nearby Bristol factory. Concert Band musical director Peter Skellon said: "They are very keen for us to come on board and to put out the call for anyone who flew Beaufighters out of the old RAF camp, which is now a housing estate across the road.

"The road is surprisingly wide – that's because Beaufighters were towed along from the factory to the airfield," said Peter.

Other concert dates awaiting confirmation include an invitation to play as part of the summer celebrations for Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday, while confirmed bookings include 6 March at the Cheltenham Chase Hotel and a classical concert at the Helicopter Museum on 21 May.

If you were a ferry pilot or aircrew at Weston during WWII, or know someone who was, please contact Alison Page on 0734 183 6097 or e-mail helimarketing@hotmail.co.uk

Have your say on the Association's Rules, Regulations and Byelaws.

Consultation versions of the suggested updates to the Association's Rules and Byelaws have been circulated to Branches and members for comment, with the results of this consultation to be a topic for discussion at each Area Conference. Dr Bryan Pattison, who chairs the Governance Task and Finish Group, said: "I would encourage every Branch to read the documents and discuss their thoughts as early as possible. This really is your chance to influence the future of the RAF Association."

Feedback should be sent to rules.review@rafa.org.uk or you can write to: Rules Review Group

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Hannah's hard at it



The London Triathlon, the final race in the British Triathlon Super Series, was a tough swim for Hannah Lord but she finished 11th overall with a finish time of 02:10:03.

Hannah qualified for the Aquathlon World Championships as well as the standard distance triathlon in Chicago. The Aquathlon swim was in Lake Michigan in clear blue water with a bit of chop. She came into the run in the lead and finished first in her age group, with the second-quickest time across all age groups.

For the triathlon Hannah came out of the water in fourth and was second after blitzing the 40km bike. By 5km of the run she was in first and hung on to come in sixth to finish the season. Hannah says on reflection that "more pool time is a priority, as is getting much quicker at running... to make next season an even bigger success."



Air Cadet Anna takes to the skies



Cadet Sergeant Anna Culshaw took to the skies at RAF Leeming in a Hawk Jet with 100 Sqn in recognition of winning the Northern Region Royal Air Forces Association 2014 Young Person of the Year.

Anna from the 1918 (Ruthin) Squadron Air Training Corps, based in North Wales, was nominated for the award by her Squadron Commander and was shocked to win. Anna overcame a rare cancer in childhood and spent a year recovering in isolation. Aged 12 she joined the Air Cadets, which gave her the chance to be with other youngsters again.

Anna is a true role model for her positive, enthusiastic determination to get on with life and she has supported many other children over the years. Her commitment to squadron duties and support for others saw her chosen for this prestigious award.

Squadron Leader James Errington, Officer Commanding Operations Squadron and RAFALO at RAF Leeming, attended the Association's Northern Area Conference when the award was presented. He said: "As the citation was read out, every man and woman in the audience remained absolutely silent. They listened to what Anna and her family had been through at a young age and what this extremely brave young lady has achieved... Her determination and courage was coupled with a natural modesty that was humbling from someone so young."

Sqn Ldr Errington then successfully put forward a case to give Anna a flight in a Hawk Jet. Anna and her family spent the day at RAF Leeming and, with a mixture of nerves and excitement, Anna took off. On landing, an exhilarated Anna said: "It was so amazing, words cannot describe it... I feel so honoured that this was arranged for me."

Cash help a good match for Branches

Branches could benefit from cash support from the Helping Hand and Branchmatch schemes. Since their launch last year, almost all requests submitted in 2015 were granted.

"We've approved 13 of the 14 applications so far, so we are very keen to see more Branches applying," said David Prowse, Director of Membership and Operations.

Helping Hand offers grants of £500-1,500 to aid member recruitment and retention, from replacing a banner to renewing equipment, though it does not apply to bar serving areas.

Branchmatch covers grants of £1,500-5,000 which must be matched by an equivalent Branch contribution. It is intended for capital improvements

such as renovating washrooms or any part of the premises apart from the bar service area.

A Branch can apply for a total of £5,000 under both schemes over a two-year period.

The vibrant Grimsby and Cleethorpes Branch is among beneficiaries so far and Chairman Graham Malster is an enthusiastic proponent: "It's definitely a step in the right direction. I would say these schemes provide a very useful tool which I would encourage all Branches to use."

Grimsby and Cleethorpes successfully applied for a £3,200 Branchmatch grant to improve the ladies' and gents' toilets as well as a £1,500 Helping Hand grant towards up-front architectural drawing and survey

costs for more extensive renovations:

"We have a three-storey building here in Cleethorpes but the top storey has been derelict for a long time," said Graham. "We want to bring the top floor back into use and use it for an office and meeting room and possibly a flat, to help with security and to produce some revenue."

The improvements will no doubt help to maintain the Branch's impressive growth. Grimsby and Cleethorpes recorded the biggest increase in members last year - 42 - for the year ending December 2014. Membership is approaching 600 at the time of going to press.

For more information on Branchmatch and Helping Hand, contact your local Branch Support Officer.

RAF Association Spitfire gives Headley Court patients an engineering challenge

Patients at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Unit (DMRC), Headley Court, are getting some hands-on engineering experience on a Spitfire.

The half-scale model of the iconic World War II aircraft is there courtesy of the Association.

It was originally used by the Christchurch Branch as a crowd-puller at air shows and other events. After several years' service the model was in need of a little TLC, and that's when Warrant Officer Roy Woodruff of RAF Benson came in.

The engineer and his colleagues took on the restoration project in their own time, hoping to bring the Spitfire back up to scratch.

When one of the volunteers was assigned to DMRC, he thought restoring the Spitfire would be beneficial to the patients, by giving them something 'real' to work on.

The model was delivered in February this

year and has proved to be very popular. Chris Osborne, RAF Association Fundraising Events Manager, said: "The model Spitfire always brings in the crowds at events, as children are able to sit in it and play with the controls – something they couldn't do in a real Spitfire!

"It's quite fitting that wounded, sick and injured RAF personnel and other servicemen and women, are working to restore it. Everything progressed well and we were able to show it to the public outside St Paul's Cathedral on 15 September, when we commemorated the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain."

Flight Sergeant Dave Barr, who runs the Rehabilitation Support Workshop at Headley Court, said: "Everyone on the



workshop team is really proud to be involved in this project, it has proved a great means of providing rehabilitation to injured personnel. The aircraft is a very recognisable link to Headley Court's role after WW2, the excellent rehabilitation work carried out today and the continuing support of the RAF Association. We're all looking forward to seeing it completed."

Tandem tour takes in nearly 400 miles and £4,000

The long-awaited Northern Area Tandem Tour took place from 7-12 September as Sam Loughlin (Association Admin Support Officer) and Kirsten Morrissey (Assistant Area Welfare Officer) completed their epic six-day, 393-mile, journey around the North of England to highlight the Association's work and to raise funds.

The duo started bright and early on the Monday morning with a drive to Carlisle town centre, completing their first 80 miles in just under four hours before travelling to RAF Spadeadam for an overnighter and an early start to RAF Boulmer – "our most difficult and sore day," said Kirsten. "It took us just over four hours to complete our second 80 miles. Wednesday was another long drive to RAF Linton-on-Ouse to complete our third."



Linton RAFALOs arranged a quiz night with all proceeds going to the tandem tour. "It was a great night, with a very respectable second place for the tour team and the winners donating their prize."

By Thursday the physical demands of the tour were taking their toll as the riders reached RAF Leeming in glorious sunshine and occupied a prized spot in front of the Station Commander's Office in the SWO's parking space. All RAFALOs supported the fundraising, shaking buckets at the entrance and encouraging staff to donate.

The encouragement from everyone spurred the riders on to complete their fastest 80 miles of the week, followed by a photo opportunity with 100 Squadron and a tutorial in a Hawk.

On the final day they travelled the last 55 miles home to Northern Area Headquarters, more specifically to the RAF Association Club in Leyland.

Joined by all the staff from the Leyland Offices and by members, the duo completed the whole tour in 17 hours 44 minutes of constant cycling and nearly 23 hours of cycling with intermittent breaks, raising almost £4,000. Said Kirsten: "We want to say thank you to all the Branches and members that have very kindly donated money to the tour and all the good wishes we received before, during and after the event."

PM honours Ena's shining light

Long-serving Swindon Branch member and World War II veteran Ena Day found her star shining brightly when Prime Minister David Cameron presented her with a Point of Light award after nearly 70 years of fundraising.

The Points of Light awards honour shining examples of volunteering across the UK, and Ena's legendary fundraising prowess has combined over the years with providing pastoral care and welfare to families and individuals. She has been a dedicated member of the Association since leaving the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) in 1946.

In the late 1930s she was a government telephone exchange operator but volunteered to join the WAAF in 1942 and trained as a Direction Finding Operator at RAF Hawkinge in Kent, where she was stationed on D-Day. After the war, her experiences inspired Ena to join the WAAF and RAF Associations and, even though she has been employed throughout her life and raised two children, she has remained dedicated to furthering the aims of both.



Mik's dragon 'Biggles' spitting fire

Biggles the RAF Dragon looked poised to spitfire as part of the GoGo Dragons sculpture trail held in Norwich. Biggles was the fantastical creation of Mik Richardson, a Norfolk-based artist who served for 27 years in the RAF.

Mik served at Honington, Laarbruch and finally Coltishall, where he remained for 16 years, serving as a flight line mechanic and leaving the Service as an instructor with the rank of sergeant when the base closed in 2006.

Mik seized the chance to hark back to his RAF career when he was commissioned by Norwich financial advisers Almary Green to create a dragon for the trail. The company's Managing Director is also ex-RAF, former Flight Lieutenant Carl Lamb.

"It was the year of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain and so the timing just worked so well. One of the first ideas I had was that the dragon could be kind of his own Spitfire, with a little flying helmet and the wings and tail of the aircraft," said Mik.

"It was wonderful to see the reaction to him with visitors tweeting and taking photographs. The most important thing for an artist is to see your work out there and see that it's appreciated by the public."

His creativity was also appreciated by local charity Break, which helps vulnerable people. Biggles was one of 84 dragons auctioned off at the end of the two-month event, raising a total of £369,500.



Calling World War II aircrew veterans

The organisers of Project Propeller, the annual gathering of veterans who served or trained as aircrew during World War II, are seeking registrations from qualifying veterans for their next event, at RAF Scampton on 4 June 2016.

Veterans who register will be flown from their local airfield by a volunteer, entertained for the day and flown home in the evening. Veterans will enjoy lunch, live 40s music, a chance to meet up with old comrades and take to the skies again. A fly-past by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight is also being organised.

Veterans may bring a companion, aircraft space permitting. Local Air Cadets will provide assistance at RAF Scampton, and wheelchair assistance can also be arranged.

A veteran who first attended the 2014 event summed up the camaraderie: "There was banter and insults traded humorously and with the kindest intent between friends and unknowns alike. The old wartime spirit of unit comradeship and morale was plainly evident – and amongst a body of elderly men whose peacetime lives had often dimmed those priceless and unique attitudes. I hope that spirit of mental rejuvenation and reawakening of morale in we veterans was evident to the volunteer pilots and all helpers. I could feel it, almost like being back on the squadron, aviators together!"

For more details on the event, please visit the project's website at www.projectpropeller.co.uk or call Graham Cowie on 01858 571031.

Bomber Command memorial aspires to inspire

A new memorial to the thousands who served and lost their lives in Bomber Command during the Second World War is gradually taking shape in 'Bomber County.'

Fundraising has been going on for nearly four years to create what is described as a world-class facility to serve as a point for recognition, remembrance and reconciliation for Bomber Command. The centre is being established on Canwick Hill, Lincoln. From the site, visitors can see across the city to Lincoln Cathedral, that striking landmark for crews based at the 27 bomber airfields across Lincolnshire during the war.

The first phase of the International Bomber Command Centre is already complete. This is the Memorial Spire and the Walls of Names which record the 26,296 men who lost their lives while serving with Numbers 1 and 5 Groups in Bomber Command. The Walls will eventually record all of the 55,573 Bomber Command losses.

More than 80 volunteers have been working for more than a year to double-check all the names on the numerous Squadron Rolls of Honour and ensure that they will be recorded correctly and that omissions are rectified. Aircrew from 60 nations flew with Bomber Command, including men from China, Peru and Nigeria. Some names never made some Rolls of Honour because the crews did not die over enemy territory.

"The next phase for the memorial will include the Chadwick Centre, named after the designer of the Lancaster," says the Director of the Trust behind the project, Nicky Barr. "This will tell the full story of Bomber Command with exhibitions and displays, highlighting the controversy around bombing as well as the



bravery of the young men who were sent to war. Once the project is completed, there will also be an education centre available to all schools, a reference library, a digital archive, a restaurant and a shop."

People can find out more at www.internationalbcc.com

Jim the Jet Provost book takes off at Cosford

Sales of a new children's book called *Jim The Jet Provost* took flight when more than 100 copies were sold at its launch at the RAF Museum Cosford – with 10 per cent of the profits going to the RAF Association.

It's the story of a decommissioned Jet Provost called Jim who is quietly decaying in a mice-infested hangar – only to be restored

to gleaming glory before being hauled on to a lorry and taken away to a new home, the squadron museum.

The book is by ex-RAF driver Amanda Cundall, with illustrations by artist Spencer Trickett and an introduction by Association President Sir Dusty Miller, outlining his own memories of the Jet Provost and the welfare work of the Association.



Pictured left to right, artist Spencer Trickett, author Amanda Cundall, Cosford Museum Education Assistant Julie Brierley and Association President Sir Dusty Miller.

"I wrote the first version in 1981, when I was 11," said Amanda. "My father was also in MT and he took me to work one day at RAF Church Fenton in North Yorkshire. I was really impressed with these little red aircraft.

"I always had a picture in mind of what my character would be but had never found an artist who could bring it to life. Then I saw Spencer's picture and thought 'That's my character!'"

Spencer's aircraft art was inspired by his grandfathers, both of whom served in the RAF in World War II – one as a flight engineer on Stirlings, the other as an electrical technician on Sunderlands.

Sir Dusty Miller said he had a soft spot for the Jet Provost, in which he himself had learned to fly and had taught others to fly.

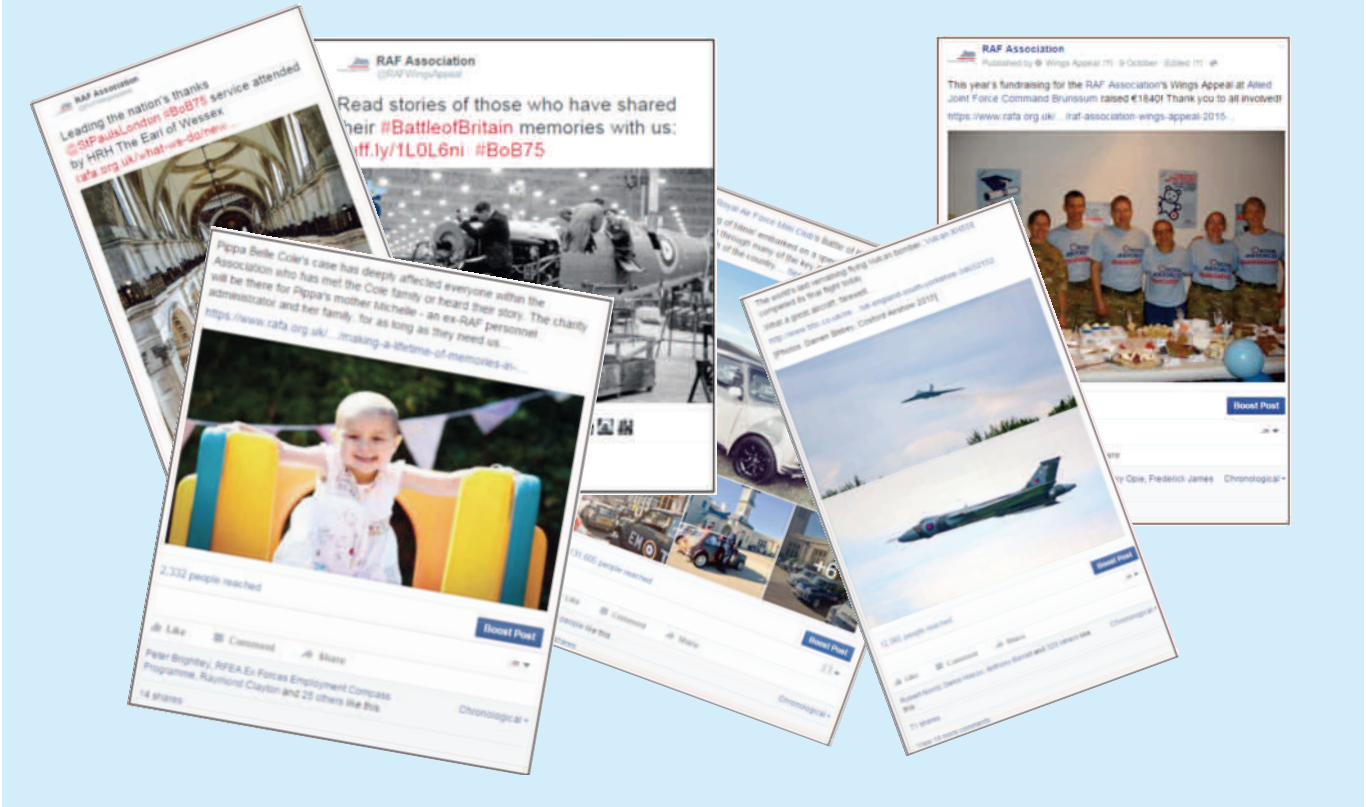
What's happening on social media?

Here's a selection of some of our most popular tweets and posts recently. Have you joined the conversation yet?

www.facebook.com/rafwingsappeal

www.twitter.com/rafwingsappeal

www.youtube.com/rafwingsappeal



New CS Healthcare product bridges the gap

Mutual friendly society and RAF Association Partner CS Healthcare has launched HealthBridge, a new health insurance plan designed to bridge the gap between the NHS and private health cover. The plan aims to connect people to quality private health insurance and quicker access to treatments at a more affordable price.

With a cover limit of £15,000 per person per policy year, HealthBridge provides members with support when they need it, and quick access to those all-important diagnostic tests, plus treatment and surgery, avoiding potentially lengthy NHS waiting times.

Cover can be extended to include children and spouse or partner, giving peace of mind that the whole family is protected. With HealthBridge there is no need to complete a health questionnaire, which means joining is straightforward and simple. Instead, CS Healthcare will automatically exclude the cost of treating any pre-existing conditions under the company's Moratorium Underwriting.

Further information on HealthBridge can be found at www.cshealthcare.co.uk



Artist Spencer Trickett with some of his illustrations.

The illustrated story/book also includes a brief history of the Jet Provost. Two sequels will follow – Larry the Lightning and Fat Albert, the latter about an RAF Hercules suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

To order Jim the Jet Provost, go to www.jimthejetprovost.co.uk/
Books cost £14.95 plus p&p.

Vulcan project rumbles on



Photo: © Steve Comber and VTTST

Part of the soundtrack to the Cold War was the cacophonous thunder of Rolls-Royce Olympus engines rolling round the sky. People would watch in awe as four mighty Vulcan bombers crawled into the sky from their V-force bases and dispersal airfields, belching black smoke. The 'four-ship scramble' from the operational readiness platform at the end of the runway was an airshow highlight across the 1960s and 70s.

The Royal Navy took over the British nuclear deterrent from the V-bombers in 1969. However Vulcans were given new roles until the type was finally withdrawn in 1984 after its final spectacular contribution to the Falklands War two years earlier. The RAF set up the Vulcan Display Flight and allocated XH560 to the task. But the paperwork for XH558 revealed it had more flying hours in hand before the next major service and it was rescued from its planned demise on the Marham fire dump.

The RAF flew XH558 until it was sold to the Walton family at Bruntingthorpe airfield in Leicestershire in 1993. The family's technically challenging and expensive ambition to get the Vulcan back in the sky was realised 14 years later in October 2007, thanks to the 'Vulcan to the Sky' project team led by Dr Robert Fleming.

Support from British Aerospace, Marshalls, Rolls-Royce and the Heritage Lottery Fund – and the overwhelming generosity of the public – kept XH558 in the air until last October. Indeed the interest in the last flying Vulcan grew more and more intense, with huge crowds turning out to see it on the display circuit and on its 'farewell tours' around the UK. People were urged to stay away from its base at Doncaster Robin Hood Airport because the crowds turning up to watch it take off and land were disrupting the airport and causing problems on surrounding roads.

XH558 finally touched down at Doncaster on 28 October last year. Dr Fleming says: "The aircraft will now become a living centrepiece for a set of new inspirational and educational activities. Current plans begin with a Vulcan Aviation Academy and Heritage Centre offering courses in aviation topics to 14 to 18-year-olds, enabling them to leave the academy ready for jobs in commercial aviation."

As part of the Heritage Centre, XH558 will be kept as a 'live' aircraft capable of taxiing and ground runs. Consequently the familiar Vulcan 'howl' should still echo round the old RAF Finningley for many years to come.

The public is still being asked to support the Vulcan project. Full details can be found at www.vulcantotheskyy.org



Photo: © Steve Comber and VTTST



Photo: © Neil Cave and VTTST

Area RAFALO spotlight - WO Vince Taylor

Our team of RAF Association Liaison Officers (RAFALOs) raise thousands of pounds for the Association every year. They provide a link between serving personnel and our wider Branch network.

We have a team of five Area RAFALOs, who bring together RAFALOs from all the stations in their region, galvanising them to do their best to raise money and support the RAF family. Here we speak to WO Vince Taylor Area RAFALO for the Wales, Midlands and the South West Area.



Tell us a bit about your RAF career.

I am now into my last 18 months of service having completed 37 years in July. I am currently WO PSF at MOD Corsham but have served in a variety of roles and places like Kinloss, Catterick, Winterbourne Gunner, JOC Maastricht, Dharan, British Embassy Athens, Lyneham (twice), Innsworth, British Embassy Berlin, British Embassy Beirut, Al Udeid and now Corsham. Well, you did ask!

Why did you become a RAFALO?

Well I was actually forced/cajoled by the RAF Lyneham Station Warrant Officer (the illustrious Ian Norris now of the Weston-super-Mare Branch) into doing things for the Association and it went from there. I left Lyneham in 2000 and when I returned as a WO in 2007, more or less the same committee members welcomed me back.

What sort of events have you been involved with?

You name it, I have had a go. Whether it's a Summer Show, supermarket collection, running the hilly Swindon half-marathon in 2014 or Great North Run last year, I've done it. At Corsham we have organised a Brew for the Few, games evenings in the Junior Ranks Mess, Corsham Fun Runs plus loads more.



Why did you want to become an Area RAFALO?

I am a passionate advocate for the Association and believe my hard-working ethics and enthusiasm for the charity benefit my fellow-RAFALOs. I would like to think that my ability as a WO helps in promoting the work RAFALOs do and enables them to take the Association forward on their units.

What do you enjoy most about being a RAFALO?

Making a difference for our RAF charity and mixing with our veterans. The Association is a brilliant organisation and once you really become involved with the charity side, it really is good fun.

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

Baileys cheesecake.

Tea or coffee?

Tea white, no sugar, please.

Renew for New Year

Thousands of our members have already renewed their membership. If you haven't yet done so, please take a moment to renew your membership now.

Memberships can be renewed either online at <https://www.rafa.org.uk/members/renew>

by phone on 0116 268 8762/8783

by email membership@rafa.org.uk or by post - 117½ Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5ND.

Thank you!

Battle of Britain 75th anniversary commemorations – 15 September 2015



The RAF Association held a number of events around the country last year to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Battle of Britain day on 15 September was our main focus, with a service at St Paul's Cathedral followed by a reception at the Guildhall, courtesy of the City of London Corporation.

The service saw invited guests from a number of countries, members of the Association and members of the public come together to commemorate the Many who supported the Few throughout the battle.

The congregation included many World War II veterans as well as veterans from other conflicts. Other notable guests included His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex, Prime Minister David Cameron, Secretary of State for Defence Michael Fallon, as well as the President and First Lady of Poland. The role the 15 other nations played in the Battle of Britain was also something we wished to commemorate and we were fortunate to have representatives from many of these countries at the service.

The service included reflections of veterans such as Gladys Eva, a filterer at RAF Bentley Priory, read by current Air Traffic Controller Wg Cdr Ruth Wilson; Peter Price, an Air Cadet who lived in the south of England during the Battle of Britain, read by Cadet WO Jonathan Mouny; and Ron Mason, an armourer at RAF Manston during the battle, read by armourer Cpl Kerry Sawyer. The Prime Minister gave a reading (Mark 10, 35-45) which was of particular significance when we think of the many who have sacrificed so much in times of war.

The Chaplain-in-Chief of the RAF, the Venerable Jonathan Chaffey, delivered the address remembering the Many and the generation that the war created, 'Ye are a chosen generation' (1 Peter 2:9) a particularly fitting term used within an address that was powerfully evocative for all within the cathedral. The emotive imagery stayed with the congregation as Chief of the Air Staff Sir Andrew Pulford read 'The Lost' by Herbert Corby, a touching reminder of the Few's role in the changing fortune of the Battle of Britain.

The Guildhall reception was attended by many veterans as well as HRH The Earl of Wessex, who was able to meet groups of World War II veterans. The feedback from this was wonderful, as the focus was very much on the roles that the veterans played and their invaluable contribution as 'the Many'; from plotters, to armourers, to Bletchley Park veterans. The setting of the Main Hall of the Guildhall was suitably grand to honour the guests and our priority was to ensure that all veterans had an enjoyable afternoon.

Before the service WWII veteran Wiliam Clark was presented with his wartime service medals by Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford.

Teams of serving personnel, Branch members and other volunteers were out collecting at the major rail stations in London on 15 September. They raised a large part of the £38,000 brought in on the day, which also included the income from the Association's mobile exhibition trailer outside the cathedral, as well as from a collection during the service.

Photographs from St Paul's and the Guildhall reception can be viewed at: www.flickr.com/photos/rafwingsappeal



The congregation at St Paul's



WWII veteran William Clark



HRH The Earl of Wessex with the Lord Mayor of London



Congregation members on the steps of St Paul's



Carole Vordeman and congregation members



Air Cadets on parade outside St Paul's

Sunset ceremony as Cardiff commemorates



A reception and sunset ceremony were held in Cardiff on 14 July to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

The evening was organised by members of the Wales, Midland and South West Area and brought together public figures, Association members and several World War II veterans.

Our sponsor was Dame Rosemary Butler AM, Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales (pictured top right with Association President, Sir Dusty Miller). The Cardiff Pierhead Building provided an impressive venue, both inside and out, overlooking Cardiff Bay. The RAF Association Concert Band ensemble played a selection of music for those present.

Wales has a long and proud history with the Royal Air Force. Around 30 airfields were active during the WWII and several contributed directly with squadrons of Spitfires and Hurricanes. There were also many who supported the Few, who risked their lives day after day.

The Association is well represented in Wales with some 4,000 members affiliated to 23 Branches and Branch Clubs throughout the Principality and they in turn were well-represented at the reception. Other guests for the evening were Dr Peter Beck, Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, accompanied by Mrs Lyn Beck; Air Commodore Adrian Williams, Air Officer Wales, and the Chief of the Air Staff was represented by Air Vice-Marshal Gavin Parker.



Above: Sgt Lisa Millar, RAFALO MoD St Athan pictured with her husband Dusty

A number of WWII veterans were guests of honour: Mrs Eileen Younghusband was a Filter Room Officer and mathematician who, among other achievements, was the first to warn of the impending V2 bombs in an operation codenamed Big Ben. Also attending was Mr Bob Froude who, although not old enough to serve during the Battle of Britain, did find himself on Omaha Beach in Normandy in the summer of 1944 as a young RAF Regiment Gunner; and Mr Richard Stephens, who joined the RAF in 1938 and witnessed the first Sunderland Flying Boat arriving at Pembroke Dock. During the Battle of Britain he was a flight mechanic on the Hampden – a twin-engined aircraft deployed to destroy enemy invasion barges.

Dame Rosemary welcomed those attending the event and our President, Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller, responded.

The drizzle that had persisted for most of the evening meant that the planned Hawk aircraft flypast had to be cancelled, but the weather cleared for an excellent display of music and marching by the Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment, by permission of the Air Force Board of the Defence Council. A guard party was provided by MOD St Athan and Standards were paraded as part of the sunset ceremony.



Pictured right, our VIP veterans with Assembly members and RAF Association President Sir Dusty Miller

Thanks to 'The Few' from a packed Truro Cathedral

A special service attended by 900 people and a host of dignitaries was held in a packed Truro Cathedral on 13 September as the centrepiece of the West Country's commemorations of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

With the blessing of the Mayor's office, the service was arranged jointly by the RAF Association and RAF St Mawgan, so that all members of the RAF family in the South West could come together to remember the Battle of Britain.

Distinguished guests included the Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, Association President Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller, the Lord-Lieutenant of Cornwall, Colonel Edward Bolitho, Air Commodore Andrew Neal, Mayor of Truro Mrs Lorrie Eathorne-Gibbons, Association Area Chairman John Tisbury, County Chairman Mr Lance Smale and Association Secretary General Nick Bunting.

The service was conducted by the Dean of Truro, the Very Reverend Roger Bush, who was joined by RAF Chaplain-in-Chief, the Venerable Jonathan Chaffey. Some 130 Association members from Cornwall and Devon were present, representing all of Cornwall's eight Branches, plus ATC squadrons from Plymouth and Cornwall Wing as 16 Branch Standards were paraded alongside the RAF Association Union, National and Area Standard.

Sir Dusty Miller read the RAF Association Dedication, expressing the nation's thanks not only to the aircrew of many nations involved in the Battle of Britain, but also to the groundcrew and to all those involved in the sacrifices that made such a crucial contribution to this vital and historic victory. There was also a poignant reading by Flight Lieutenant Sam Warren, a serving officer at RAF St Mawgan.

Wreaths were laid in silence by the Lord Lieutenant, the Mayor of Truro, the Royal Air Force, the RAF Association and RAF Association Cornwall, the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal British Legion.

The Band of the RAF Regiment provided musical support at the service and led two flights of marching personnel from RAF St Mawgan through the streets of Truro. Truro High School for Girls' Chamber Choir also took part, singing Sebastian Temple's Make Me A Channel of Your Peace and Howard Goodall's The Lord is my Shepherd.



The Dean of Truro releases the National Standard



Mayor of Truro, Mrs Lorrie Eathorne-Gibbons



Veterans from the South West



Flight Lieutenant Sam Warren



The marching contingent from RAF St Mawgan

Edinburgh Battle of Britain service keeps faith with tradition

The final service and reception to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain was held at St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh on 24 September. The service, much like the cathedral, was steeped in tradition. The first hymn, *Old Hundredth*, set a suitably Scottish tone, with its roots firmly in the early Reformation and ideas of customary worship and celebration.

Distinguished guests included His Royal Highness The Duke of York, the Scottish Veterans Minister Keith Brown and Scottish Secretary David Mundell. We were also fortunate to have World War II veterans in attendance, including Geoffrey Payne, a Lancaster bomber rear-gunner and Marjorie Richardson, a member of the Entertainments National Service Association during the war, who was deployed to Italy, performing at army camps, gun sites and all of the major theatres. Association President Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, an introspective reading that left the congregation in a thoughtful mood.

Psalm 121 was then sung and the Very Reverend Dr Finlay AJ Macdonald read John 15:13, tying in the St Giles' service with the St Paul's Cathedral service and parade with the words "Greater love has no man than this: to lay down his life for his friends." This theme ran throughout the commemorative year, as we shared the stories of the many involved in the Battle of Britain.

During the sermon the Reverend Jonathan Wylie spoke of the loss and bravery of the Few as well as the sacrifice of the Many during the months of the battle. The hymns and acts of worship were focused on all those whose lives were touched by the momentous battle and there were RAF hymns, memories and praise to make the service feel inclusive, bringing home to the congregation the sacrifices made. The veterans were also delighted to be able to meet HRH The Duke of York after the service and regaled him with tales of their involvement in the war.

Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* accompanied the congregation out of the cathedral, and a reception for selected guests was held immediately after the service in the Upper Library of The Lothian Chambers. Veterans and guests listened to speeches by The Rt Hon Donald Wilson, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and Sir Dusty, to complete a memorable day for all who attended.



The evocative model Spitfire



Air Cadets lining the steps



HRH The Duke of York and Sir Dusty Miller



The congregation



Beaming cadets after the service



Guests at the reception after the service



Birmingham Tattoo brings the message home to the many

The Birmingham International Tattoo provided the final opportunity of the year for the Association to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

Association President Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller said the Association's presence at the tattoo, held over the weekend of 28/29 November, was

"to honour everyone who played such a vital part during the Battle of Britain, from the groundcrews who repaired, re-fuelled, re-armed and returned the fighter aircraft to the battle day after day, the people who worked long and often frightening hours in the sector and filter rooms keeping track of enemy raids, to the civilians who stubbornly refused to be cowed by the brutal assault of an enemy bent on our subjugation. We remember and honour them all."

Area President Air Commodore Andrew Neal took the salute on Saturday accompanied by Group Captain Mark Hunt, Station Commander at RAF Cosford and Commandant of the Defence School of Aeronautical Engineering.

The salute on Sunday was taken by Wing Commander Chris Jones, Officer Commanding No. 1 School of Technical Training, accompanied by Sir Dusty Miller

Some 54 Area and Branch Standards from across the country were paraded and a total audience of more than 19,000 attended over the two days at the Barclaycard Arena. Sixteen of the Standards were carried by serving RAF personnel from RAF Shawbury and MOD St Athan, deputising for veterans who would have found the physical challenge too demanding.

Paul Baker, Association Area Director for Wales, Midland and South West, said: "This event was extremely well-supported and provided a memorable image of what the Association can do when veterans, serving personnel and cadets all work together under the Association banner."

The Band of the RAF College Cranwell, under the baton of Squadron Leader Matthew Little, also played their part. The band entertained the vast crowd with a stirring programme of music including compositions by Ron Goodwin, creator of film themes such as Battle of Britain and 633 Squadron.

The Association also welcomed the appearance of the RAF Association Concert Band, which did excellent work entertaining the crowds on the concourse during the interval and earlier, with musical director Peter Skellon handing over the baton at one point to Sqn Ldr Little, the tattoo's musical director.

"The tattoo proved to be an excellent opportunity to engage with the public and to reach out to them as well as offering an opportunity to work with our RAFALOs, who were busy handing out membership forms and taking donations for 75th anniversary pin badges," said Paul Baker. "We were pleased to raise nearly £5,000 through merchandise sales in only about four hours of selling, so we were very happy with that."



Annual Conference 2016



This year's Annual Conference will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Blackpool from 13 to 15 May, where the theme will be 'Changing to meet future needs'.

Much of Conference will be given over to discussing the proposed changes to the Rules, Regulations and Byelaws of the Association, but enough time will be left for the usual Conference business.

As usual, Conference will begin on the Friday evening with an informal 'meet and greet'. This will give everyone the chance to catch up with old friends before Conference proper starts on Saturday. The opportunity to register your attendance will be offered on the Friday evening again, as feedback from 2015 showed this was a popular option.

Any outstanding registrations can be dealt with from 08:30 on the Saturday morning, with everyone to be seated by 09:10. The Annual Conference Committee is delighted, once again, to be able to welcome Sir Andrew Pulford, Chief of the Air Staff, to address Conference. The time for this will be confirmed in your conference pack. He will be invited to present the Flying Scholarships to the successful cadets after his address. Secretary General Nick Bunting has been asked again by the Annual Conference Committee to make a presentation on Saturday morning.

Saturday evening will allow us to recognise the Branches, RAF units, Air Cadet Squadrons and others who excelled in 2015. The Association depends on the money raised and members recruited by our volunteers, so it's always good to have the opportunity to say thank you.

Musical entertainment will allow those who would like to take to the dance floor to do so and we hope to have another marching display, as these remain very popular.

On Sunday we will remember all those who have fallen in service of their country. Standards will be paraded along the usual route, where Sir Dusty Miller, President of the Association and the Mayor of Blackpool will take the salute. This will be followed by the Service of Dedication and a flypast (weather permitting).

We are giving members the option this year to register their attendance online. Anyone who would like to do so can visit www.rafa.org.uk/rafaconference2016



The opening ceremony, 2015



Mingling in the market place, 2015

You can still use the booking forms sent to Branches in December. Additional forms can be requested from Kelly Brotherhood, Governance and Operations Manager. You can reach her by phone on 0116 268 8770, on email using kelly.brotherhood@rafa.org.uk or by post at 117½ Loughborough Road, Leicester LE4 5ND.

We look forward to seeing you in Blackpool.

Remembering friends and family

On 19 June 2015 the Royal Air Forces Association held its annual service of dedication to those remembered in our garden at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire. It provided an opportunity to commemorate members of the RAF who have selflessly given their lives to their country and for all present to remember loved ones.

The service was led by the Venerable (Air Vice Marshal) Jonathan Chaffey QHC BA MA RAF, Chaplain-in-Chief of the Royal Air Force and the Reverend (Squadron Leader) Chris Carré, Station Chaplain of RAF Cosford. Music was provided by the RAF Association Concert Band under the musical direction of Peter Skellon BEM. Readings were delivered by our President Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller and Secretary General, Nick Bunting. The RAF Association Dedication was led by Second World War fighter pilot Eric Carter (picture below right).

Eric is one of only four surviving members of a secret mission, code-named 'Force Benedict'. Sanctioned by Winston Churchill in 1941, Force Benedict was dispatched to defend Murmansk, the USSR's only port not under Nazi occupation. If Murmansk fell, Soviet resistance against the Nazis would be hard to sustain and Hitler would be able to turn all his forces on Britain.

Following the service everyone followed the Association's standards to the RAF Association Remembrance Garden for a wreath-laying ceremony and the planting of the Cross to the Unknown Airman. This was followed by a flypast by a Dakota from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, then another by two helicopters (a Squirrel and a Griffin), also courtesy of the Royal Air Force.

Retired Group Captain Nicky Loveday was there to pay tribute to her friend Flight Lieutenant Simon 'Bear' Broadway. She raised a glass of wine to him, saying: "Bear was a very special person who lived life to the full. The Association's Remembrance Garden is a nice place to come and remember him, along with many other members of the RAF family."

Secretary General Nick Bunting said: "The RAF Association Annual Remembrance Service is a very important event in our calendar. I was pleased that so many friends and family members were able to make the service to remember their loved ones – this is what being part of the RAF family is about."

The Association encourages anyone making a visit to the Arboretum to visit the garden all year round to pay their respects. Further information on the garden or remembrance stones and crosses is available from Legacy and In Memoriam Manager vinny.manak@rafa.org.uk or by calling 0116 268 8791.



Memorial crosses laid in the Garden of Remembrance



World War II fighter pilot Eric Carter



Cadet Stuart Baugley presents the wreath to Sir Dusty Miller



Dedication of the memorial stones laid in 2015



The RAF Association memorial with the Dakota in the background

Revived Scottish Airshow rises higher

The 2015 Scottish Airshow set its sights even higher than the previous year's revival, which re-launched after a 22-year gap. The show attracted more than 60,000 people over two days at the seafront Ayr Airport and Glasgow Prestwick, with excellent help from Bob Chandler, RAF Association Chairman for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The 2015 two-day event was again held with support from the Association and had Platinum Airshow status from the RAF. The Royal Navy and Royal Marines provided a role demonstration and the Army had a large presence in a full, ambitious programme. All eyes were on the weather as Friday saw heavy showers but Saturday 5 September arrived dry and sunny and this continued for Sunday.

The tragic events at Shoreham had brought the Scottish Airshow into sharp focus and a minute's silence provided a moving tribute. We very much welcomed the experienced military oversight of The Military Aviation Authority and they interfaced smoothly with Mike Woods from R5 Air Displays.

Saturday kicked off with a beach assault demonstration by the Royal Marines, supported by HMS Pembroke in Ayr Bay and a Merlin providing heavy machine-gun support, finishing with more than 30,000 people on the promenade and filtering through the large ground exhibitions. Months of anxiety faded as we saw huge crowds through the exhibition areas.

At 1300hrs the RAF Typhoon rocketed in to start the airshow in style. A full four hours of flying was seen by approximately 120,000 spectators, but one of the biggest successes was the greatly-expanded ground display area where two large marquees featured many interesting companies, universities and education organisations. The astonishing life-size model of the Bloodhound supersonic car was a highlight of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) marquee.

The varied flying display included the Spitfire and Hurricane, celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Sadly the Lancaster did not make the show after the near-disastrous engine fire in early summer. The Red Arrows made a welcome return, arriving and departing several times in their usual exciting style, and the Swedish historic flight and spectacular Draken also flew. B17 Sally B made a late appearance after an engine problem at base. The Irish Historic Flight brought a great De Havilland show with the Dragon and Dragonfly making their Ayrshire airshow debut.

On Sunday at Prestwick the Vulcan was making its last airport appearance away from its Doncaster base. Returning to Prestwick after Saturday's display, the nosewheel failed to lower completely. At one time she was accompanied by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Spitfire observing the nosewheel position and a safe landing was a relief to all.

Overall, a great success. The Association had a strong presence both days and played a key part in the extremely demanding organisational period. Plans are well underway for this year's show, with the lessons learned guiding us to what we hope will be a bigger and even better Scottish Airshow.



Rare Tea Company relaunches Brew for the Few

The Royal Air Forces Association marked the relaunch of its 'Brew for the Few' tea parties with a generous donation from the Rare Tea Company.

Henrietta Lovell of the Rare Tea Company developed RAF Tea in honour of the pilot Terry Clark who flew during the Battle of Britain. A donation of 50 pence is made to the Association's Wings Appeal for every tin sold. The brew has proved popular with tea lovers of all ages and the company has donated a total of £30,000 to date to the Association.

A mix of former, current and future members of the RAF shared a brew and a slice of the red, white and blue cake made to mark the £30,000 donation. Cadets from 2236 (Stanmore) Squadron joined the fun at Bentley Priory Museum. This was a fitting venue for the event in the 75th anniversary year of the Battle of Britain, as it was the home of Fighter Command during the Second World War.



Rare Tea Lady Henrietta Lovell (left) with Rachel Huxford cutting the cake for veteran members

Rachel Huxford, Director of Marketing, Fundraising and Trading at the Association, said: "Many say that the RAF runs on tea, so Brew for the Few is the ideal way to raise funds for the charity that supports the RAF family. They can be run on any scale, from a small gathering in your kitchen to a larger event in your work's canteen. Anywhere you can plug in a kettle, you can have a Brew for the Few – the important thing is to get together, have fun and enjoy a brew."

Rare Tea Lady Henrietta said: "RAF tea is a traditional English breakfast tea at its best – not an industrial teabag but a beautifully-crafted leaf tea. This is tea the men and women of the RAF, past and present, might be proud of, when only the best will do; calming in times of peril and fortifying when courage is required."

For more information on running your own Brew for the Few visit www.rafa.org.uk/brew

Sir Alan's flying Circus lands at Cosford

A new exhibition dedicated to Sir Alan Cobham, a First World War pilot and a forgotten giant of civil aviation, will open at the RAF Museum Cosford in March.

Sir Alan was a true aviation pioneer, both as a long-distance aviator and as an aeronautical innovator, who became famous for his exploits in the interwar years. Among his many contributions was the 'air-to-air' refuelling technique, still used by air forces across the globe today.

Sir Alan was one of the biggest celebrities of his era. Brave, visionary and innovative – he was a record-setter whose legacy still holds to this day with an aerospace company that provides technology to air forces around the world.

He learned to fly in the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War and later went on to set many long-distance aviation records. These include becoming the first person to fly from London to Cape Town and back in 1926, for which he received the Air Force Cross. He was knighted by King George V in the same year, aged 32, after the successful completion of his Australia flight, where he famously landed his seaplane on the River Thames outside the Houses of Parliament. He won many notable aviation trophies such as the King's Cup air race in 1924 and the Britannia Trophy in 1923, 1925 and 1926.

Sir Alan also organised a series of flying tours of the United Kingdom, Ireland and South Africa. The tours became affectionately known as 'Sir Alan Cobham's Flying Circus'. They promoted aviation to the public and were a source of inspiration for countless pilots in the Second World War.

He went on to pioneer the advanced 'probe and drogue' technique of air-to-air refuelling still used today, through technology he developed with his company, Flight Refuelling

Limited. His legacy to aviation lives on through the company, which continues to pioneer aeronautical technologies.

This new exhibition will open in the Museum's Temporary Exhibition Gallery. It will be a highly visual portrayal of Sir Alan's life and his many notable achievements, showcasing some of the treasures from the collection. These include a Union Flag that was flown on Cobham's de Havilland D.H.50J biplane while on his Cape Town flight. The exhibition will also feature film footage showing how he made aviation into a breathtaking spectacle.

For further information visit the museum website www.rafmuseum.org/cosford or call 01902 376200. The museum is open daily from 10am and entry is free.



ROYAL AIR FORCE museum
COSFORD

Heroism and sacrifice - remembering Burma's 'Forgotten Army'

South East Asia was a hot, inhospitable and unhealthy place to fight a war. After Pearl Harbour, the Japanese began to attack more American, British and Dutch territories around the Far East including Burma. RAF servicemen were in the thick of much of the action, supporting General William Slim's 14th British Army, all of whom eventually became known as 'The Forgotten Army'.

RAF veterans who fought in the region are anxious that the contribution of British troops in that campaign between 1941 and 1945 is not lost among the commemorations of the end of the war in Europe and the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Many believe that they are still The Forgotten Army and do not get the attention that their bravery and sacrifice deserved.

Former fighter pilot Peter Proctor (right) has a good example of how the Burma campaign sometimes gets overlooked. About 10 years ago, he was at a Remembrance Parade preparing to lay a wreath on behalf of the Burma Star Association but the man on the tannoy forgot about him.



Peter Proctor during the war.

"We were supposed to lay our wreath after the Aircrew Association but we were never called," says Peter. "We had a word with the Town Hall people later and they were full of apologies. I thought 'We are still the Forgotten Army' – not many people seem to know about that campaign, which is a great pity."

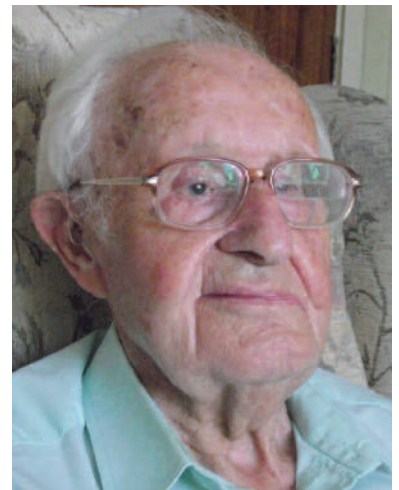
Peter spent most of the war flying fighter, ground attack and reconnaissance missions in Burma, Egypt, India and Africa. He started on what was nick-named the 'Hurri-bomber' after the Hurricanes were equipped with cannons and a bomb under each wing for ground attack missions. His squadron – No: 11 – was at Imphal when the Japanese surrounded British and Commonwealth troops and they had to be supplied by air drops from Dakotas.

"As we moved down Burma, the Army would cut airstrips in the jungle for us. When we moved on, a whole airfield would be packed up into three Dakotas and moved on to the next strip,"



Peter Proctor on his parachute jump. Photo: © Sarah Hall

said Peter, who is now 93 and a member of the Ormskirk Branch of the RAF Association. He made the news last year with a sponsored parachute jump (pictured below left) in support of the Association with the help of the RAF parachute display team The Falcons.



Peter Proctor today

"The heat in Burma was terrific but it was worse in India because of the humidity. I got prickly heat – it was like millions of needles being stuck in your body. I had six cold showers a day."



RP strike on a station in Burma. Photo: © RAF Museum

Dennis Chandler (right) was still a teenager when he was sent to the war in the Far East to join the RAF's 224 Mobile Signals Unit. He survived but told nobody about his experiences there except for his second wife Wendy. He died in March 2012 at the age of 87 but throughout his life he was haunted by what he saw and did in his brief time at war.



Denis Chandler during the war

"Dennis got malaria and skin diseases from his time in the jungle. Their clothes and their boots rotted, they ran out of ammunition, had to deal with leeches and endure terrible monsoon weather," says Wendy.

“He was shot and wounded on two occasions – in a leg and in the head. The medical treatment in the jungle was very basic. One of his responsibilities was to establish radio contact with aircraft which were dropping supplies. It really upset him when the parachutes landed in the wrong place – he blamed himself. His later nightmares turned a square lampshade above his bed into a crate like the ones that were parachuted into the jungle.”

Wendy was sometimes woken by Dennis gripping her arm and shouting “Have you got a grenade?” or urging her to take cover. In his nightmares, she became one of his wartime colleagues. Another night she awoke to hear him talking in his sleep as an 18-year-old, telling someone “I cannot speak Hindi – I have no boots. I need a translator.”

She added: “Dennis believed that the bravery of troops in Burma was not recognised properly and it left him with a bitter feeling. The emphasis has been on what happened in Europe and it is right that events such as the Battle of Britain are properly commemorated. However people like Dennis were still fighting when VE Day was being celebrated in May 1945.”

Corporal Stan Holland was one day away from being captured by the Japanese. His Signals Unit was almost surrounded by the enemy at Kohima in north east India and the senior officers were warning the men to give away no more than their name, rank and number if they were taken prisoner.

“We slept on the tennis courts of the British Deputy Commissioner’s bungalow,” said Stan. “Those courts later became part of the battleground of Kohima which was as far as the Japanese got. We were moved out before the battle and later followed the 14th Army down Burma after the victory at Kohima.”

Kohima was the turning point of the campaign in the region and stopped the Japanese advance on India. The small group of British and Commonwealth troops held out against repeated attacks by a Japanese division. Earl Mountbatten, who was the Supreme Allied Commander in South East Asia, described Kohima as “probably one of the greatest battles in history” and that his troops displayed “naked, unparalleled heroism.”

As a wireless operator following the 14th Army, Stan was not directly involved in the fighting. However he is keen to ensure that the British and Commonwealth

troops who served in India and Burma are not forgotten. He feels that the Burma campaign gets overshadowed by commemorations of battles and events closer to home in Europe – and contacted the RAF Association to make his point. “You do not hear the Burma campaign mentioned very much but it is important that it is not overlooked,” he says.

In the year before he died, Dennis Chandler bowed to his wife’s repeated suggestion that he should claim his campaign medals. Wendy chased the paperwork and the medals were duly acquired, including the Burma Star. A senior Army officer came to formally present them to Dennis. Although the nightmares continued until his death, he finally was proud to own the medals that he had deservedly earned serving with the RAF in the jungles of Burma nearly 70 years before.



Liberators bombing over Burma. Photo: © RAF Museum



Vultee Vengeance dive bomber used in Burma. Photo: © RAF Museum

Volunteer in Focus

Success on a plate for exceptional Scampton

Serving personnel at RAF Scampton are devoting more and more time and effort to support fundraising for the RAF Association. Their achievements were marked at the Annual Conference when the base was awarded the Airshow Plate for exceptional achievement by an RAF station or unit in support of fundraising at air shows.

The Scampton volunteers actively support three Association Branches at Retford, Scunthorpe and Grimsby/Cleethorpes. They have set up a stall at the famous Lincoln Christmas Market for the last three years and organised the 'Swing Wing' night in the city featuring the Big Band of the RAF College Cranwell Band.

There are 13 RAFALOs at Scampton drawn from across the base, which is home to the Red Arrows, No 1 Air Control Centre and the Mobile Meteorological Unit. Many more personnel volunteer their time, which is particularly helpful in running the stall at the Christmas Market, now an international event attracting a quarter of a million visitors.

"The market is on for four days and every day is a long one, finishing around ten o'clock at night, but we always have plenty of volunteers from Scampton to help us," says the Senior RAFALO, Sergeant Paula Murphy. "Everyone loves to stop and chat, from the European visitors to local veterans. The first year we raised more than £4,000 and the second year it was nearly £7,000."

The Association's volunteers are fundraising all year round. Apart from the Christmas Market and the Swing Wing concert at Lincoln's Drill Hall, they help to staff the Red Arrows stall at the Lincolnshire Show in June and run their own stall at the Scampton Families Day. Last year they staged a special Veterans' Day on the base and organised a Battle of Britain film night in one of the hangars. They won the Sir John Baker Trophy in 2014, which is awarded to the unit raising the second highest amount over the previous year.

Paula, who is one of the Human Resources managers at Scampton, took over as the senior RAFALO when she arrived in April 2012. Married with one son, she was with the Allied JFC at Brunssum in Holland before Scampton and has served in the Falkland Islands and Afghanistan during her 24 years in the RAF.

"We all love supporting the Association. It is very much a team effort and there is a willingness across the whole station to help out," adds Paula. "The management team gives active support in allowing people time away from their work to help with fundraising events, and they also facilitate events on base. We all enjoy helping whenever we can, whether it is at Scampton, at air shows or wherever the Association exhibition trailer goes."

Paula is just one of many Association volunteers who give up countless hours each year. To find out more visit www.rafa.org.uk/volunteer



Scampton RAFALO Paula Murphy in action



The Scampton contingent raising funds in Scarborough



Paula still going strong



Scampton volunteers display the Airshow Plate



Paula Murphy receiving her trophy with Sir Dusty Miller

Di's warm welcome for hotel guests

The renaming of the RAF Associations Wings Breaks appears to be having the desired effect on bookings for our three hotels.

Di Jones, who runs Flowerdown House in Weston-super-Mare, says that the number of first time guests has been on the increase since last summer.

"For too long, people regarded our Wings Breaks locations as care homes rather than hotels," says Di. "In fact the majority of our guests do not need care and lead very active, independent lives. Research has shown us that our guests want a holiday break. I aim to run Flowerdown House like a hotel which can also offer care if required."

Di grew up in a hotel in Minehead and gained vast experience across a range of hospitality services before taking over at Flowerdown House in August 2014. This experience ensures that she knows what guests enjoy. She is fully behind the idea of promoting Flowerdown House, Richard Peck House in Lytham St Annes and Rothbury House in Northumberland as hotels offering holiday breaks.

"We are not always full and we need to expand the catchment of guests. We want to explain that we are not just care homes for older people but are open to any one of any age in the RAF family," she says. "The guests who stay with us love the links with the RAF and appreciate the mementoes and the RAF Association branding. Apart from welcoming first timers, we also see guests returning time and again which shows that the Wings Breaks offers really work well."

"For too long, people regarded our Wings Breaks locations as care homes rather than hotels"

The Association opened Flowerdown House in 1998. The Victorian building is in a prime location on the seafront at Weston-super-Mare and is close to local amenities. It has 19 rooms and can take a maximum of 37 guests. Eight of the beds are allocated to guests who do require some sort of care during their stay.

Although only one of the rooms is designated as a single, in fact 75 per cent of the guests are people on their own. Many used to come to Flowerdown as a couple but continue to book their break there after bereavement. There are trips three times a week to places such as Cheddar Gorge, the



Di Jones of Flowerdown House. Photo: © Peter J Nicholls Photography

National Helicopter Museum, Slimbridge Bird Sanctuary and the sights of Bristol. There is in-house entertainment four nights a week with music, comedy and quiz nights.

"People feel comfortable here. They know the layout of the building and the area around it," says Di. "My team is brilliant and they get to know everyone who stays. Guests describe the experience as a most wonderful and relaxing break. Many rarely leave without booking their next Somerset break."

To find out more about Flowerdown House or our other Wings Breaks hotels visit www.homesfromhome.org.uk or call Jo Bray on 0116 268 8751.



Di attending a Royal Garden Party

Making a lifetime of memories in just a few months

Pippa Belle Cole runs around happily with her sisters and brother like any other lively three-year-old. She loves princesses, Peppa Pig and the colour pink. The only clue that Pippa is unwell is her very short, fine hair – the result of chemo- and radiotherapy.

For Pippa's parents, ex-RAF personnel administrator Michelle Howard and partner Scott Cole, her illness came out of the blue, being diagnosed only two weeks after falling ill.

Michelle vividly remembers July 2013. "Pippa was 18 months old when she had a long bout of sickness. After a couple of days in hospital we were told that our little girl had a brain tumour and within another two days she underwent a 10-hour operation which removed 98 per cent of its mass.

"The doctors thought the tumour was benign, so it's hard to put into words how we felt when two weeks later we were told that Pippa had a grade three ependymoma – cancer – the highest grade for this type of tumour, but we were determined to fight it."

A gruelling year of chemotherapy, 20 rounds of radiotherapy and long brain operations followed.

Pippa turned two in hospital and despite being very poorly still managed a massive smile for everyone she saw. Pippa has remained a cheerful, smiley little girl through everything.

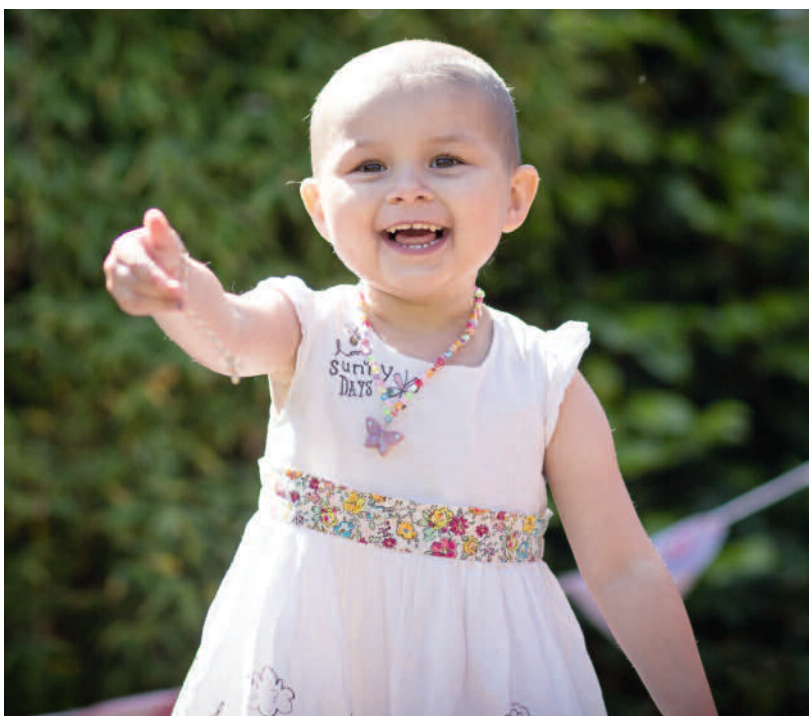
The family received the news they were longing for in September 2014 – Pippa had the all clear. Michelle said: "The next months were amazing – we started to see our Pippa again. She began eating and sleeping properly, and her hair grew back."

Sadly, subsequent scans revealed not only more brain tumours, but many more on young Pippa's spine. The family was raising funds for proton beam therapy in the USA, but a deterioration in Pippa's condition made this impossible.

Darrell Slater-Smith, the Association's Northern Area Director, said: "We knew we had to do whatever we could to help. We originally provided funds to allow the whole family to travel to the States, giving Michelle and Scott one less thing to worry about. When the trip was cancelled, we were keen that they use the funds to make some amazing family memories in the short time they have left together."

Pippa has had a princess party, visited Disneyland Paris and travelled all round the UK. "Without the support from the RAF Association we'd have been really stuck," said Michelle. "We are trying to make a lifetime of memories in a few months... but knowing that the Association is there for us really takes a weight off our minds."

Families like Pippa's shouldn't have to cope by themselves, please help us to help them by donating now at www.rafa.org.uk/donate



Providing the means to do a professional job



Facing life after leaving the RAF can be daunting for anyone, but add to that leaving for reasons you can't control and having a complex mental health condition too and it can be overwhelming.

The Royal Air Forces Association has supported one former member of the RAF Regiment who found himself in just such a situation.

Kevin* served in the RAF Regiment for 30 years in Force Protection. His career saw him serve in Cyprus, Germany, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Sudan. He was medically discharged in January 2015, following a diagnosis of complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of serving on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

When he started working with the Wounded Injured and Sick Specialist Employment Consultant (WISSEC) Kevin was unsure of what he could do, but was willing to consider a number of alternatives. His RAF career and experience made him a prime candidate for project management roles within the defence sector, although he suspected his PTSD would make it hard for him to work in a stressful office environment.

While on indefinite sick leave and considering his options, Kevin set about renovating his home. He thoroughly enjoyed the work; being alone and able to plan his own daily tasks gave him back a feeling of control over his life and ongoing recovery.

The WISSEC suggested it might be an area he would want to pursue professionally, and suggested a number of courses available through Able Skills. He subsequently undertook a carpentry course, funded by the RAF Benevolent Fund and a

follow-on handy man course, which has prepared him to start up his own business as a property renovator. Within two weeks of discharge, he successfully acquired a contract for a four-month property renovation project.

Talking about his decision not to become a project manager, Kevin says: "I can no longer operate when I feel stressed, so if I had to get a report on time, I would not be able to cope with the deadline. I react badly to sudden noises and have difficulty dealing with situations where I am not fully in control. While manual work is not in itself a therapy for me, I do find it very therapeutic. I can become completely absorbed in a task and exclude everything else, which helps me to cope with my PTSD symptoms. I like everything to be 'just so', although my wife calls this being obsessive!"

Kevin needed professional quality tools to make sure he was properly equipped to carry out the carpentry jobs he was trained for. He successfully applied to the RAF Association for a grant to buy the power and hand tools he required.

Kevin doesn't know how he will feel from day to day, so working for himself suits him perfectly. He will plan jobs 'to the nth degree' to avoid stressful moments of indecision. He says it took a long period of reflection to decide what he wanted to do, but that life is now better and more manageable. He realised that although the defence sector beckoned, he needed a complete change of direction, which took into account his ongoing recovery.

He said: "I want to thank the RAF Association. The contribution towards professional carpentry tools is another step in my ongoing recovery."

** Not his real name.*

Association takes the lonely under its wing



The Royal Air Forces Association has launched a befriending scheme to ensure members of the RAF family in Lincolnshire do not suffer from loneliness and isolation. The scheme's initial phase covers RAF Waddington, Coningsby, Cranwell and Scampton, but we plan to expand it to cover the whole of the UK in March 2016.

The Association is responding to research published by the Royal British Legion showing that isolation and loneliness is particularly acute within the ex-service community, with one in six reporting some relationship/isolation difficulty. This equates to around 770,000 people. The research suggests that this is particularly prevalent in areas of transition into civilian life and for older veterans.

At the other end of the age spectrum, mental health charity YoungMinds carried out a survey in 2014 which found that loneliness is also a problem for the young; talking to hundreds of people on social networks is no substitute for real relationships, and when they are using these sites they are often alone in their bedrooms.

Sophie Witkowski, Association Head of Welfare, said: "We have launched our befriending scheme in Lincolnshire as we know there are a lot of ex-RAF personnel in the county, as well as a large serving population. The 'light blue link' is a good starting place for friendships, as most serving or former serving RAF personnel enjoy sharing stories!"

Someone who needs a befriender (a beneficiary) could be anyone who is isolated through the use of social media or an older person who has increasingly become lonely and isolated over time and needs a hand to help them find new interests in the community.

Befrienders will equally be from all ages and groups, and will meet with a beneficiary to listen to what they need and help to identify ways to connect them to others, to promote friendship. In addition, befrienders themselves could also help to provide some practical assistance or just a listening ear.

The Association is formalising this scheme while recognising that much of this wonderful work is already happening within Branch welfare teams. A one-day training course will provide the expectations of the role, information about the different age groups that may need support, and guidance on how to establish someone's needs and how to achieve the outcome they are looking for. The course will also give additional resources and help for volunteers already acting as befrienders.

For more information on how to become a befriender visit www.rafa.org.uk/volunteer

Or if you or someone you know could benefit from being taken under someone's wing, please call the Association's welfare team on 0116 268 8751.

Wayne 'Swiggys' Swiggs became an RAF Association Trustee in 2005

He joined the RAF in 1997 and completed his ground electronics training in 2000, subsequently working in the UK Military Satellite Communications centre responsible for maintaining ground tracking and telemetry equipment for Skynet satellites.

Other ground appointments in the RAF include: shift leader responsible for continuous control and surveillance of NATO's global network; service assurance for the RAF's proprietary network spanning across 102 sites and delivering to 75,000 customers. He has also worked alongside FUJITSU, IBM, and ICL technical consultants during the design and roll-out of a number of high-profile military developments.

Returning from Cyprus on promotion, he has moved from Information Support Officer responsible for the island's information management to overseeing operations and planning at the MOD's Joint Cyber Unit Corsham.

What does your role on Central Council entail?

I represent the RAF at Central Council and it is a real honour. Squadron Leader Ady Morris and I continue to find ways to ensure we can be a voice for the RAF and RAF Association Liaison Officers (RAFALOs). Our formal route of connection is the quarterly Area RAFALO meetings chaired by the Senior RAFALO – Group Captain Community Support. By far the most enjoyable and insightful method this year has been the Wales, Midland and South West RAFALO 'huddle' in October. The huddle was an excellent opportunity to engage our front-line RAFALOs and listen to their ideas and concerns. It was also an opportunity for me to talk about the structure of our complicated organisation and sow a seed for future Area Reps and Trustees!

Why do you give up so much of your time for the Association and how did you get involved?

I got into the RAF Association by accident. I injured my knee playing semi-professional football and tried my hand at management to aid my recovery. In order to build team cohesion, the management and players often took part in charitable events. Consequently, I was asked if I would collect some money tins dotted around the station. After a few months of collecting, I went on a mission to



WAYNE SWIGGS

understand what the blue tins of the Association supported and why. The mission was harder than it should have been but I met some incredible people along the way. It is the amazing people that support the RAF Association and the incredibly brave beneficiaries that keep the fire in my belly burning.

What do you get from being a Trustee and Central Council member?

Although I have been a Trustee for more than 10 years, I still have lots to learn about my responsibilities as a Trustee and RAF Association Central Council member. Attending Central Council Meetings every three months requires a lot of reading and collaborative working over prospective council papers. Thematic committees play a pivotal role in 'separating the wheat from the chaff' and have been, I think, a real success story.

The way Trustees are working closely with our professional staff is beginning to reap rewards by improving transparency and, moreover, contributing to better decision-making.

What would you like to achieve in your time on Central Council?

As we enter a transformational period of change, I want to ensure that the RAF Association delivers efficient and effective services to our beneficiaries now and in the future. It is the latter that is at the forefront of my mind. As Chairman of the Information Environment Committee, we will examine innovative business cases to ensure new technologies are in line with our strategic objectives, are scalable, and above all, stem from needs not wants.

What do you like doing in your free time?

Without the steadfast support of my wife Emma and my boys Archie, five, and Charlie, four, I could not play such a pivotal role in driving the Association forwards. So, when I'm not working late or supporting the Association, my free time is totally dedicated to quality family time. I'm not great at getting the balance right but Emma has inimitable techniques to bring me back into line! We are avid National Trust members and geocaching novices. Archie and Charlie love the outdoors and their passion for outdoor adventures and sports keeps me aged 25 – well, in my head anyway!

The RAF Families Federation

Gauging the views of our spouses in the RAF

The RAF Families' Continuous Attitude Survey (FamCAS) 2015 Report came out during the summer and the RAF Families Federation has been busy sharing it within the serving RAF community.

Produced by the Occupational Psychology Team (OPT) at HQ Air, the aim of FamCAS is to assess and monitor the views of spouses and civil partners of RAF personnel in key areas such as family life, childcare, deployment, education, employment, healthcare and housing. The answers are then used to help with the development of personnel policies, informing defence personnel programmes such as the New Employment Model (NEM) and the Armed Forces Covenant. The 2015 survey was sent to some 7,500 spouses and civil partners and achieved a 26 per cent response rate.

What the survey told us:

- Compared to the 2014 survey, responses were largely unchanged.
- More feel supported by the RAF than in previous years. However, some elements of service life continue to impact negatively on families and an increasing number of spouses "would feel positive" if the service person left the RAF.
- The majority of RAF families own a home, although over half of the respondents were presently living in Service Family Accommodation (SFA). Most were satisfied with the condition of and charges for their accommodation but were dissatisfied with the quality and timeliness of maintenance/repairs.
- Spouses continue to experience difficulties with employment and training, including having to leave their civilian jobs for Service reasons and not being able to pursue a full career of their own.
- The report says that most RAF families with children do not experience any difficulties accessing childcare. They were also satisfied with the quality, cost and opening hours of local childcare facilities. Some did indicate that gaining a place at the school of their choice was problematic.
- Continuity of healthcare treatment appears to be problematic, especially access to treatment after moving to a new location; more so than for Army or Royal Navy spouses.

Our thoughts:

Whilst supporting the work of the OPT, our role is also to provide an independent voice for RAF personnel and their families, putting views and concerns directly to Senior RAF Leaders, MOD staffs and government ministers. With that in mind, we were surprised at some of the FamCAS findings and a couple of issues in particular stand out:

Childcare: We have just published the results of our own survey, which suggests that availability and cost are significant issues for many RAF families that need access to childcare. Our report contradicts the FamCAS report, with 56 per cent of our respondents saying cost is the biggest challenge.

Healthcare: We were disappointed to see the number of spouse/partners that the report says some have experienced issues with continuity of healthcare. The AF Covenant has achieved an awful lot in removing disadvantage in terms of access to or continuity of treatment, and we have worked hard with NHS England in particular to tackle this problem.

RAF Families Federation: www.raf-ff.org.uk or telephone 01780 781650.



News from the RAF Benevolent Fund

Hear better – live better

Hearing-related problems and tinnitus are common issues for current and ex-service personnel. Hearing loss affects 40 per cent of over-50s*, more than 10 million people in the UK.

To hear better is to live better! If you struggle to hear conversations, find it difficult to hear in open environments or are forever being told you have the TV too loud – you're not alone. Your hearing is known to have a positive effect on overall health, family life, social life and working life. Untreated hearing loss can have a negative impact on wellbeing that can result in cognitive decline, social isolation and other health problems. The earlier you detect a hearing loss, the better your chance of effectively treating it.

Former RAF chaplain Wally Bamford booked a free hearing assessment and has not looked back since being fitted with his hearing solutions. Wally explains: "Before I had my Starkey hearing aids, I had the television and radio volume very loud. With my new hearing aids, I can listen at a much lower volume which is comfortable for people around me. These devices are almost impossible to see when they're in my ear."



A hearing consultation is quick, painless and straightforward. The latest hearing aids help you stay connected with friends and family, and you can even stream sound directly from your TV, radio and phone.

Starkey Hearing Technologies and JustHear are very excited to be a chosen partner of the RAF Benevolent Fund. They warmly invite current and former members of the Royal Air Force who can benefit from reduced rates on hearing packages to get in touch.

For your free hearing guide or to book a free hearing assessment:

Freephone: 0800 068 3533

Email: info@justhear.co.uk

Website: www.justhear.co.uk/rafbf.php

*Action on Hearing Loss:

<http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/your-hearing/about-deafness-and-hearing-loss/statistics.aspx>



**Royal Air Force
Benevolent Fund**
THE HEART OF THE RAF FAMILY

2016 Central Council and Annual Conference Committee Elections

Thirteen nominations have been received for election to Central Council (in the office of Elected Member) following Annual Conference in 2016. Details of all the nominees will be available online within the Members' Area and Branches will receive the ballot form and instructions in due course.

Central Council Nominations

Michael Blackman

History: RAF 14 years, joined RAFA 1980, Branch Standard Bearer 18 years, Area and National Conference Delegate 21 years, Branch Chairman 22 years to date, Wings Appeal Officer 22 years to date, Regional Chairman 10 years to date, Northern Area Councillor since March 2013, member of Central Council since May 2014, Chairman of local ATC Squadron for 18 years. Courses attended = Governance for Charity Trustees and Finance for Charity Trustees.

Council Attendance Record: From May 2014 - 100%

Committees: Engagement in the Wider Community – 3 of 3 attended.

Mission Statement: To promote the recruitment of younger members and also encourage membership of rafaYOUTH and also the future of welfare and fundraising in all forms.



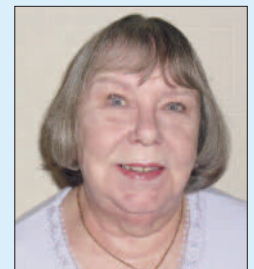
Judith Boothman

History: Branch Chairman until this year's AGM when I stood down after the loss of my husband of 50 yrs. I am now Vice-Chairman. Long service on C.C. and N.A.C. fundraising for Wings at Airshows for in excess of 20 years. Elected Councillor on Chorley Borough Council until I moved 2 years ago. Served on Licensing Committee and Standards Committee. Also School Governor with responsibility for special educational needs.

Council Attendance Record: From May 2014 - 80%

Committees: Engagement in the Wider Community – 1 of 7 attended.

Mission Statement: If re-elected to Central Council I believe that my primary duty is bringing the concerns of the membership and branches to the forefront as they are our lifeblood. Whilst the financial climate has improved considerably I will endeavour to ensure that we remain financially secure and continue to build reserves to ensure the future of our Association. I will continue to support and promote the Association and do all that I can to recruit new members and retain our existing members. I will also ensure that we continue with our excellent charitable work in the many diverse welfare fields which we are involved in. The Royal Air Forces Association is OUR Association and we must ensure that it is there for future generations.



Mike Clulow

History: Delegate to Area and Annual Conferences for several years. President of Erewash Branch. Member of the Northern Area Council. Area Representative to Central Council and member of the Engagement in the Wider Community Committee.

Council Attendance Record: From May 2014 - 50%

Committees: Engagement in the Wider Community – 4 of 7 attended, Income Generation, 1 of 6 attended

Mission Statement: Support for the Association has been my priority for some years. After a year in limbo due to medical issues I am looking forward to being fully involved once more. My efforts will be devoted to helping the association to move on into the future.

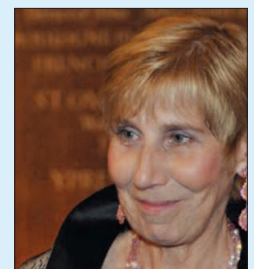


Jan Dowlen-Gilliland

History: I have extensive experience in operational and strategic management in the acute, community and mental health services, managing and developing staff, financial management, teamwork, and leadership. I have sound understanding of the NHS and the processes associated with commissioning and provision of health and social care across acute primary and community and mental health services. My work has inevitably required the development of skills in multi-agency partnership work particularly in relation to strategic planning and operational delivery and development. For the last 15 years, working for SSAFA under contract to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) I have led the operation delivery of health and social care to military personnel and their families abroad and at home. I have developed an extensive knowledge of Governance, quality and risk management systems and requirements across health and social care settings. I am a member of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children and Young Peoples Board and pan defence Safeguarding Children Board providing subject matter expert advice to the MoD on health matters and more recently have been appointed to advise the MoD Directorate of Children and Young People (DCYP) in relation to the Lowell Goddard Historic Abuse Inquiry

Council Attendance Record: From Co-opted from May 2015 - 100%

Committees: Strengthening our Membership – 3 of 3 attended; Information Environment – 1 of 1 attended.



Mission Statement: I have worked in the public sector all my life and come from a family that holds strong the values of public service. I believe that my extensive knowledge of health and social care together with a passion for ensuring that the quality of service to those in need of help and support is at the forefront of all I do, will add value to the aims of the association in the future. As a recently co-opted member of Council, I have over the last few months had an opportunity to see the contribution that the association makes to the lives of its members and would very much like to continue to play a part in realising the aims going forward. I have tireless energy, enjoy working as part of team and if I elected to Council will relish the chance to use my experience both strategically at corporate level and as a representative of the members of the Rothbury branch.

Barry 'Smokey' Furness

History: A life member of the Association. Chairman of the South East and Eastern Area since 2004. Chairman of Fareham Branch 2002 to date. HWO for over 7 years and a member of the Welfare strategy group for 4 years. Wings appeal organiser for the last 8 years and occasional reluctant Standard Bearer for the Branch. Delegate to the Hampshire Regional Committee and also Vice-Chairman of the Region. I also attend the 1350 Sqn ATC as the Branch representative on the Civilian Committee. As the Area Chairman I have visited many branches and regions as a guest at functions and also to give advice to branches, regions and clubs that have had problems. I remain active as a member of the ALM's Association, 22 Sqn Association and The Canopy Club, the Parachute Instructors Association parading our Standard when required.



Council Attendance Record: From May 2014 - 90%

Committees: Strengthening Our Membership – 1 out of 3 attended.

Mission Statement: As a longstanding member of the Association since 1976 I have served on branch and club committees in various roles. I was a RAFALO for over 10 Years and a founder member of the Aphrodite branch. I have always supported the view that we are first and foremost a membership organisation that is administered in an efficient manner. I certainly believe that my experience as a member has benefitted from filling various active roles at all levels. My last two years as a member of Central Council has been a valuable experience in seeing at first-hand how our Association is managed. I have been actively engaged in the Volunteering Project and although we have a long way to go we need it to be a success if the aims and goals of the Association are to be achieved. If I am fortunate enough to be re-elected I can assure all of the members that I will be an active member of Central Council on their behalf. Your support will be very much appreciated. Thank you.

Dean 'Gibbo' Gibson

History: Since becoming a RAFALO in July 1999 I have been actively involved with the full gamut of Association business from branch to Central Council (CC). Over the past 10 years, I have been a Station, overseas and European and SE & E Area RAFALO and member of their Area Councils, RAF co-opted member of CC, member of the RAF Senior RAFALOs' Cttee, providing a link between RAF personnel and RAFA, and a member, and latterly, Chairman of RAFA's Internal Audit Cttee. I have spoken at Area and Annual conferences, delivering a keynote speech at Annual Conference 05 that was pivotal to bringing RAFA and RAFBF back together. As well as RAFALO duties, I have gained invaluable 'grass roots branch and club experience' from my roles as Vice Chairman, Chairman and currently President of the Harrow and District Branch/Club. For the Harrow Branch I have collected for Wings, fostered closer links with the local ATC Sqns, fronted up at civic events, cleaned and gardened at the Club and made innumerable welfare visits. I believe the experience detailed above gives me an unprecedented perspective of RAFA and its links with today's RAF, providing me with tactical and strategic perspectives for the future.

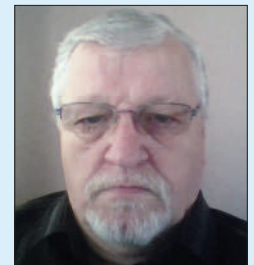


Mission Statement: With almost 30 years' service in the Royal Air Force, including over 16 years' service as a RAFALO, at all levels, from branch to Central Council, I have an unprecedented perspective of RAFA and its links with today's RAF. This provides me with a great tactical and strategic perspective to help take RAFA forward in accordance with its aims and needs of the RAF. Through years of flight commander duties, and having been on many UK and overseas deployments, I am cognisant of the force multiplying effects of a strong community support structure and the pivotal role RAFA has to play in that structure. As I come towards the end of my Service, I fully appreciate the need for that community support to continue to encourage the youth of today to step up to the plate and serve the RAF for the security of the nation and to support its many veterans. The three ages of RAFA, those about to serve, those serving and those who have served, are pivotal to our Association's future if we are to move into, and most importantly thrive, in the second century, of the Royal Air Force's service to the Nation and beyond.

John Gilmour

History: Life Member. Branch Secretary 2002 - 2014, 2015 - Present. Branch Chairman 2008 - Present. Branch Wings Appeal Officer 2012 - Present. Branch Liaison to ATC 2014 - Present. Branch Representative on Combined Ex- Services Association 2008 - Present. South East/Eastern Area Council 2010 - Present. Annual Conference Delegate 2010 - Present.

Mission Statement: My Commitment to the Association over the next two years, should I be elected, is to improve the level of communication between Central Council and CHQ to the membership. The Membership is the most important factor in our way forward and should have an important say in that way forward.



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2016 Elections continued

Chris Goss

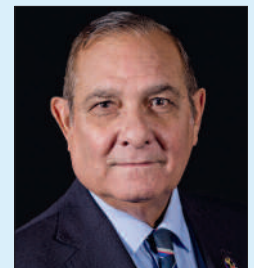
History: I joined the RAF in 1979 and was commissioned in 1980, retiring early in 2012 with the rank of Wg Cdr. I joined RAFA in 1986 as a member of Cirencester Branch and then in 1990 began my active involvement in RAFA as RAFALO RAF Wattisham 1990-92 where I not only organised countless RAFA/Branch events but organised the first Eastern Area RAFALO's Conference. I was then RAFALO RAF Northolt 1992-94, RAFALO RAF Akrotiri 1994-96 and RAFALO RAF High Wycombe 1996-98. I then became SE and latterly SE & E Area RAFALO which culminated in me being nominated as RAFALO member on Central Council to 2012 when I had to resign on leaving the Service. I have been a regular contributor to Air Mail for 18 years both as a published historian and assisting in production of unit articles. For 10 years until 2013, I was the Air Mail book reviewer. When work permitted, I was a regular attendee and contributor at National and Area Conferences and have assisted in numerous major RAFA events either as attendee, contributor or advisor. In 2014, I was elected Vice-Chairman of the Sud-Ouest Branch and attended National Conference 2015 at my own expense.



Mission Statement: The RAF Association now has unique challenges to contend with. Notwithstanding recruiting new members as they enter training, the membership has, like the serving strength of RAF, decreased - most of us will remember the days when we did have a membership of 100,000 members and we are well short of that now. To survive, RAFA must remain relevant not only to the retired but also the serving members and the general public of all ages. Central Council is crucial to this and to achieve the Association's strategic aims. We must have the trust of and be truly representative of our members and not be afraid to get our hands dirty, so that our efforts are seen by all, both inside and out of RAFA as having the Association and its members' best interest at heart. Having been a member for the last 30 years and as one who has been seen by the Association to put the time and effort into helping RAFA for the past 25 years as a RAFALO, Area RAFALO and nominated RAFALO Central Council member, I feel the time is right for me to continue my personal commitment to RAFA by being an elected member of Central Council.

Ian McEnnis

History: RAF Service 1961-1995. 1989 – 1995 RAFALO. 1992 to date Hon Secretary/Vice-chairman High Wycombe Branch and Club. 1995 – Present - Elected member on RAFA SE & E Council. 1996 – Present - Elected member on Central Council, Lead Member on Income Generation and Fund Raising Committee, Internal Audit Committee and Annual Conference Committee. 29 July 2009 - Appointed Director on RAFATRAD Board. 2002-03 - Mayor of High Wycombe. 2011-12; 13-14; 15-16 – Chairman of Wycombe District Council. During which I signed off the Deed of Covenant for the Armed Forces with RAF High Wycombe.



Council Attendance Record: From May 2014 - 70%

Committees: Income Generation – 6 of 6 attended. Annual Conference Committee – 2 of 2 attended.

Mission Statement: As an elected member of Central Council I want to promote the profile and standing of the Royal Air Forces Association as an excellent Authority and wish to continue to play a positive role contributing to its success. I feel I can contribute with enthusiasm and motivation in taking forward the Association's strategic direction through corporate planning, financial management and policy development. We are facing a wide-ranging agenda in the future and I hope to work with my peers in responding to the challenges, which we will face. I am clear that the delivery of our welfare services is becoming more entwined in partnership working. The system for obtaining funding for Respite and Convalescence from other charities seems to be working well. I would like to try and influence the development of existing arrangements and to seek to establish new working relationships. I am encouraged by the innovative initiatives taking place in conjunction with our business partners and I hope to take an active role in encouraging and developing Fundraising. This together with increasing membership is essential to the delivery of our core activity, which is Welfare. I ask for your support to represent your interest on Central Council.

Bryan Pattison

History: Member of the Swiss Branch since 1981 and Chairman since 1990; Annual Member Penrith Branch. European Area: Past President and Chairman. Central Council: Elected Member since 1998, Vice-Chairman 2007-9, 2010-16. Currently Chairman of the Governance Group revising the Rules and Byelaws etc of the Association for presentation at Annual Conference 2016. Member of the now suspended Executive & Finance Committee/Board 1998-2012; Standing Orders Committee/Annual Conference Committee 1998-2014. Central Council Lead Member for Conference 2002-2013. RAF Service: 1956-58 Technical Training Command. RBL (Swiss Branch) Committee: 1994-2011. Professional Career: Senior scientist in an international organization (CERN) from 1966, until retirement, involved with the budgeting, managing (including personnel management) and controlling the construction, operation and expenditure of multi-million pound scientific projects in collaboration with scientists and engineers from more than 20 different countries (currently an active Honorary Member of Staff). Awarded the OBE in the 2003 New Year Honours List for Services to British Interests in Switzerland.



Council Attendance Record: From May 2014 - 100%

Committees: . Annual Conference Committee – 5 of 5 attended.

Mission Statement: A long term strategy is necessary to ensure the Association's future, and I would like to continue to be actively involved with its development. However, consultation at all levels within the Association is vital!

As Chairman I am ensuring that this is reflected by the Governance Group which has distributed the proposed revision of the Rules,

Byelaws etc widely to Members of the Association for comments. Care is being taken to not disenfranchise the Membership and, if re-elected, I will ensure that the decisions of Conference are implemented. The Association has weathered the global financial crisis well and, if re-elected, I would be in a position to help ensure that our assets are properly protected. Concerned by the reduced attendance, averaging 35% over the last eleven years, of Branches at Annual Conference I would encourage, through the Areas, a reversal of this. I believe that my experience and knowledge of the work of Central Council, together with that gained in my professional career in an international environment concerned with multi-million pound budgeting, management, and organizational skills, even 'trouble shooting' at an international level, stand me in good stead to continue serving the Association.

Anthony 'Taff' Rees

History: Royal Air Force 1984 to 2010. Joined RAFA in 1995. Member of Brecon Branch and Porthcawl Branch. Member of Wales Area Council 1997 to 2001. Member of Wales Area Executive Committee 1998 to 2001. Member Wales Area Development Committee 2000 to 2001. Chairman Brecon Branch 2000 to 2001. Member of Area RAFALO Committee 1996 to 2000. Member of Central Council 1999 to 2010, 2013 to date. Member of Executive & Finance Committee 2000 to 2002. Member of Fundraising Advisory Committee 1999 to 2002; Chairman 2000 to 2002. Member of Membership Advisory Committee 2000 to 2001. Member of Executive Board 2007 to 2010. Member of ACC 2007 to date: Chairman 2011 to date



Council Attendance Record: From May 2014 - 70%

Committees: Annual Conference Committee – 6 of 6 attended.

Mission Statement: I have had experience of serving on various committees and fundraising projects both within the Service and my local community, helping with the welfare of others, ensuring that events and services are delivered to the persons that need it, at the time they require it. My priority if elected as a member of your Central Council and Chairman of your Annual Conference Committee will be to liaise closely with both the retired and serving members of the Association and make your Annual Conference a more enjoyable a productive experience for all members. I hope in achieving this it will in turn help to make our Association more attractive to join and encourage both old and new members to become an active part of our Association. I want to ensure that our Association survives for the next 75 years delivering support to the RAF family for the many generations to come.

Dick Whittingham

History: During full career as RAF officer was Ministry of Defence and NATO sponsor responsible for the delivery of major multi-million pound communications and IT programmes. Retired from the RAF as a Group Captain in 2001. From 2002-2011 Principal Technical Coordinator in the International Military Staff at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, managing a variety of senior international NATO Committees as Chairman, Secretary and expert advisor in the areas of strategic planning, architecture, interoperability and programme management. Elected as a member of Central Council in 2014: contributed to Council meetings and to all Council Committees, founder member of the new Information Environment Committee and member of the Finance Committee and the Group revising governance documentation. Participated in trustee and charity governance training and contributed to strategy and operational planning development. Remained a member of the Belgian Branch: joined in 2004 and Chairman from 2009 to 2014. Currently Branch Vice-President. Whilst Chairman, edited the quarterly Branch Newsletter, winner of the Newsletter Trophy in 2012, and supervised the establishment of the Branch Website. Represented Belgian Branch at Area and National Conferences 2009-2013. On return to UK in 2014, also joined Mid-Somerset Branch



Council Attendance Record: From May 2014 – 90% **Committees:** Finance – 4 of 7 attended. Information Environment – 1 of 1 attended. Income Generation – 2 of 3 attended (no longer on).

Mission Statement: An exciting time to be on Central Council! In the last 2 years Council has sought to improve our ability to meet the welfare and comradeship needs of existing and future members: we are only part way through this journey. If elected to serve a further term on Council, I will endeavour to ensure that our financial base remains sound and that we use our funds for the long-term benefit of the Association, investing in the skills and capabilities that we need to best meet the needs of our members and the RAF family. I will seek to ensure that the end result is a strengthening of Branches' ability to support comradeship and enhanced and relevant welfare support. Achievement of these aims requires active recruitment amongst serving, youth and veteran colleagues and innovative, but caring, fundraising. It also requires effective management within the staff structures and good governance by Council. As a Trustee of the Association, I am very conscious that the buck stops with Council – we need to be busy and alert if we are to avoid the pitfalls into which some other Charities have fallen in recent times – I look forward to the opportunity to play my part.

Annual Conference Committee Nomination

Tom Feeley

History: This will be my fourth term. If elected. During this time I have contributed towards the efficient running of the ACC in many ways. When I was the National Secretary of the RAF Regiment Comrades' Association (12 years) I was responsible for the organisation of National Reunions & Social weekends at various places around the country, along with other members of the National Committee, which gave me very good insight to how these sort of events should be held/run. This to show to the younger element that they could be just as much involved with a long standing Association and that "young blood" is necessary for any association to go forward into the 21st century, plus that the fact that although there is rank within our membership it is not something that should hold our younger members back from taking an active part in



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2016 Elections continued

Tom Feeley continued:

what we are, hoping to prove in the long run that they have as much to offer as the "old and bold". Plus enhance the comradeship that we found within the serving side of things when we wore the "uniform". I am also heavily involved within the welfare setup and have been a Case Worker for the last 9 years.

Mission Statement: It is my intention, with help, to promote the Association in respect of "recruiting" younger members. We have the recruitment established via Honington, Cranwell and Halton but do we have any input to the University Air Sqns? We also have the rafaYOUTH set up but somewhere along the line we seem to be losing the thread to all of these outlets and still seem to be losing contact with those who register via the recruiting stages. All Area's/Branches will have tried to contact these members via their home addresses or emails but have not got any great returns. We are assisting BSO's in their efforts to recruit at any shows that the BSO's are able to attend, hopefully this year with the extra MET van that we have in the Northern Area we may be able to reach more recruits. I work along with other members associated with the adult staff at the ATC and they are quite happy to work with us but again their commitment has to be to the Cadets, another point is that the Cadets also want to know more about who/what we are. How they learn things like this is via their Wings but again some Wings are loath to deal with us or is it just the way they have perceived other visitors from the RAFA! At the present moment I am working with RBL in my area on any displays/parades in an effort to let the local populace know that there is a contact point within the locale.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Memorial

In the first few pages of the Association diary is a list of 15 organisations comprising the Royal Air Forces. Air Mail is supposedly a magazine covering the activities of all these organisations, but I cannot recall the last time most of them got a mention.

In October there was a service in the RAF Church, St Clement Danes, attended by Chief of the Air Staff and many other senior officers. There were also over 400 ex-members of the ROC present. The occasion was the formal laying-up ceremony of the Sovereign's Banner of The Royal Observer Corps – one of our Air Forces. Fighter Command could not operate in the Battle of Britain without the information provided by this organisation, and it would be a nice change to have a report of this ceremony, and the reception which followed.

The Air Forces listed in the RAF Association diary must have thousands of ex-members, all potential recruits for RAF.

What is being done to tap this resource?

Tony Maasz
Southampton and Eastleigh

Memorial

May I remind any surviving members and relatives, and others interested, that a memorial to the two Bomber Command VCs, Sqn Ldr I Bazalgette of 635 Sqn and FS A Aaron of 218 Sqn is situated just off the A1122 Downham Market to Swaffham Road.

The memorial is clearly signposted as you approach the turning to Bexwell Church.

The site, whilst privately owned, is maintained by members of the Downham Market branch of the RAF Association and has recently undergone refurbishment and a planting scheme to reflect the RAF colours.

There is also a collection of items in St Mary's Church relating to the VCs. RAF Downham Market was home to Pathfinder Squadrons of Bomber Command towards the end of WW2.

A wreath is laid every Battle of Britain Sunday to remember the sacrifice of the two brave airmen.

Len Algar
Downham Market

Battle of Britain

If Sir Keith Park were alive today he may well object to being cast as one of the many and the suggestion that he supported the Few.

It is disappointing to see such a well respected veteran organisation perpetuating a distorted view of the Battle of Britain by suggesting the battle was won by the Few supported by the many. It is true that any battle is supported, in one way or another, by many but once the Luftwaffe was engaged in pitched battle under Dowding's overall leadership there were three wholly interdependent elements of Fighter Command that delivered victory and these were the skill of the victorious commander Air Vice Marshal Park, the personnel of the Dowding System and, of course, the Few.

Had any one of these failed the battle would have been lost. Nothing could

possibly demean the truly amazing achievements of the Few in mortal combat but it demeans the achievements and direct contribution to victory of Park and the personnel of the Dowding System by suggesting they merely supported the Few.

The reality is that Park orchestrated the battle and the Dowding System provided him with the means to do this and manage the minute-to-minute direction of the battle.

Tim Willbond
Chairman

The Association of Fighter Control Officers

Remembrance

As more anniversaries of RAF aircraft incidents are remembered here in SW France, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the Branch requires expert support to fill a gap in its current portfolio. Therefore, via the medium of Air Mail the Branch is seeking a genealogist who would love to help unearth family connections of aircrew that crashed and died whilst on missions over France.

Already this year, Louise Pullen of the Air Mail staff has helped the Branch find family members for a ceremony near Bordeaux for which the Branch was very grateful. However, as more and more requests to contact family members are received by the Branch, it would be superb to have a "willing volunteer" to take on the genealogy task for the Branch. Can anyone help us?

Terry Dennett
Sud-Ouest France



TALKING AIR MAIL

Did you know that there is an audio version of Air Mail?

The audio version of our popular magazine is another great way to keep up to date with Association news. If you know of a member who would appreciate 'Talking Air Mail', **find out more by calling 0800 018 2361.**



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1

1. Rotherham Branch held a 75th Battle of Britain Concert in Rotherham Minster on the evening of 15th September, 2015. All profits went to Wings Appeal. It was a wonderful evening featuring the Chilwell Military Wives Choir and Thorpe Hesley Brass Band.

The concert was well attended, and the programme was a varied one, many of the audience joining in. Guest of honour was Mrs M Clark (Mayor of Rotherham) and her consort.

Two members of the Branch were standard bearers for the Union and the Branch Standard.

2. King's Lynn Branch. Cadets from 42F (King's Lynn) Squadron ATC assisted the local branch members with the annual Wings Appeal street collection.



2

Shoppers gave generously to the cadets who undertook the task, as always, smartly, politely and with a smile on their faces. Many people were keen to tell anecdotes of their RAF service or of wartime service.

One lady, putting some change into the tin of a member of 42F Squadron's civilian committee who was assisting with the collection, having apologised for donating what she described as 'not much' said "It's in remembrance of my mother's brother" and as she turned to walk away continued "They never did find him."

Yes people do still 'give a little for those who gave so much.'

3. Chelmsford Branch. Pictured are ex-service associations and local cadet groups marching along Moulsham Street towards St. John the Evangelist Church for a service of thanksgiving to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.



3

Guests of honour included the Rt Hon The Lord Petre, Lord Lieutenant of Essex; The Mayor of Chelmsford Councillor Paul Hutchinson; AVM Peter Collins and Norman Bartlett, Branch President.

Cadet detachments included 276 (Chelmsford), 2476 (Hutton) and 2531 (South Woodham Ferrers and Burnham/Crouch) Squadrons of the Air Cadets. Chelmsford Army, Marine and Sea Cadets were also represented.

Music was provided by the King Edward VI School Corps of Drums. The service was led by the Very Revd Nicholas Henshall, Dean of Chelmsford.

4. Newark Branch. Well done to Wings Appeal 2015 organisers, John and Cally Barber! Their marketing, organisational and people skills together with hard work and dedication meant that the Branch more than doubled 2014's total as they raised over £5000.



4

John and Cally embraced the branded goods available and sold out many of the items ordered including ducks and small bears, and had a very novel way of preparing packs for members to use for collecting. They purchased shopping trolleys and loaded them up with badges and stickers, collecting tins, and freebies and these trolleys were trundled along to shops and supermarkets, Open Days and Shows. Brilliant idea! Many thanks from everyone at the Branch and here's to 2016!

Ps Congratulations to John and Cally on the adoption of three little boys which they have been fostering for over two years. Have a happy life!

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Aberdeen Branch members, together with Cadets from 102 (Aberdeen Airport) and 107 (Aberdeen) Squadrons of the Air Training Corps held a Service of Commemoration for the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

The Service was held at Aberdeen Airport where the memorial to those who served at RAF Dyce was the fitting focus. The Airport Chaplain, Lewis Rose, officiated. Branch Secretary, Sandy Elrick, read the poem "High Flight" and members' wives, cadets' families and airport customers also took part.

The event was enhanced by the Area's Spitfire model providing a most suitable background.



6. North Costa Blanca Branch hosted a dinner/dance commemorating the Battle of Britain 75th Anniversary commencing with a cava reception in the gardens of the El Canor Restaurant.

A welcome speech, given by Branch Chairman, Wg Cdr Bob Hunt, described events of the time. Guest of honour, Lloyd Milen HM Vice Consul, proposed the toast to "The Few". Music, from the 1940's, was provided by the TK Swing Sextet.

An auction of framed aircraft prints, a week's holiday in their home in Croatia, donated by Wg Cdr and Mrs Cameron Gair, together with donations and raffle raised €2,000 for Wings.

In October a party travelled to Castillon airfield when Vice Chairman Colin McNae completed a sponsored skydive.

The drop was from 14000 feet (4000 metres) - a terrifying 50 seconds, the parachute opened and the next 7 minutes were spent enjoying the view! It is hoped to raise about 1000 Euros to split between Wings Appeal and the Costa Blanca Chaplaincy.



7. Northern Ireland Regional Committee together with reps from JHCFS Aldergrove launched the annual Wings Appeal from Parliament Buildings at Stormont.

Dick Trebbett, Regional Chairman, opened the proceedings. Miss McIlveen (Junior Minister) replied wishing every success for the Appeal.

The party were then taken on an interesting and very informative conducted tour of the Buildings before breaking for lunch which was followed by a Regional Committee meeting.

Northern Ireland Region also attended the Remembrance Service held on Sunday 8 November at the Belfast City Hall.

Dick Trebbett, Regional Chairman is shown pictured with OC 502 Res Sqn Wg Cdr Alison Moodie and Cpl Graham Taylor NI RAFALO laying the wreath on behalf of the Association.



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Teignmouth Branch. Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, the Branch organised a Wreath Laying ceremony at the Town War Memorial on the sea front.

Wreaths were laid by the Mayor, dignitaries, representatives of local organisations and cadet units. After the two minutes silence a flypast took place by six WWII light aircraft, participating for no fee asking that it be donated to Wings Appeal. A church service was then held in St. Michael's Church from whose tower the Royal Air Force Ensign flew proudly kindly provided by the Town Council.



2. Île-de-France Branch. In a very moving ceremony held in the War Pensioners' residence in Paris, Madame Geneviève Camus (née Soulié) was decorated with the "Croix d'Officier de la Légion d'Honneur" in the presence of her husband, 99 year old Col Jean Camus, her family, representatives from the US Embassy in Paris and the French Air Force. The Branch (of which Genevieve is a long serving member) was represented by Mike Close.

Geneviève was sent to the UK when she was 6 and became fluent in English, returning to live in Paris. She wanted to join the Resistance and was put in touch with Georges Broussine, an Agent setting up a new escape line. She was integrated into the "Burgundy Line" recuperating crews of allied planes that crashed in the area. She helped 144 allied airmen escape back to the UK.

Her efforts were recognised by King George VI when she was awarded an MBE on 18.6.1946 and by the USA receiving the "Medal of Freedom with Silver Palm". She also received the "Medal of the Resistance" and the "Croix de Guerre". Charles de Gaulle decorated her with the title of "Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur". This wonderful lady is held in highest esteem by all who meet her. In October, Francois Hollande took the initiative to raise her grade to "Officer of the Legion d'Honneur" which was presented by General Ract-Madoux.



3. Erewash Branch. HWO, Mrs Marian Robinson felt that members and friends should have somewhere to meet and share quality time with others of a similar interests. Along with her AWO, Steve Jones, she started a 'drop-in centre'. The branch hired a local hall and are testing the water on this initiative. Its use will be monitored closely to test its success. A broadband deal with BT has been negotiated and she hopes to encourage all to attend activities such as chair-based exercises, computer classes, coffee mornings, beetle drives, tombola etc. Organised by the Branch Welfare Team, an inaugural coffee morning was held in October. In excess of 2 dozen people attended and enjoyed a couple of hours over a cup of tea/coffee and a buttered scone.



4. Clacton-on-Sea Branch members collected for Wings Appeal at the Clacton Air Show and Clacton Golf Club where the Spitfire Trophy and other prizes were played for by more than fifty golfers. As well as receiving part of the Golf Club's sweepstake the Association themselves organised a popular raffle.

During Battle of Britain weekend, local Air Cadets helped with collections. The total sum raised was £2,242.12.

Photo shows Chairman Ken Butcher, flanked by the Membership Secretary John Scurrrell and his wife Jean.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Coningsby & District Branch finds itself in a unique situation. It meets in the Sergeants Mess at RAF Coningsby. The Station is also home to a Service personnel RAF Association section and 17 Squadron (Coningsby) Air Cadets.

Short notice postings do cause a lack of continuity with the Service section but forging a new collaborative relationship with the Air Cadets has already proved beneficial through a Wings Appeal Day at Coningsby Co-op in September. Keen to 'do their bit' the Cadets collected the magnificent sum of £128.31 and are looking to increase their involvement with the Association this year.

6. Wantage Branch members held a cake stall in front of the Bear Hotel in the Market Place in September and raised £138 during the morning from local people out shopping.

7. Carrickfergus Branch is delighted to announce that the wonderful people who support its welfare work have raised its highest total collected for Wings Appeal surpassing its own previous record set back in 2013.

Wg Cdr Noel Williams, Wings Appeal Organiser, said: "People just love to chat with our older veterans and recognise the service they have given and are kind enough to support them by donating their hard earned cash. Many are equally mindful of the service and sacrifice of our younger veterans, which, when coupled with the particular milestone of the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, led them to give extremely generously, hence a magnificent total of £40,159.23."

Branch Welfare Office, Kevin McRandle MBE said: "The Association continues to play a vital role in providing welfare support and relief for a large number of veterans who served in the RAF and their families. We would like to particularly thank the veterans and many other supporters who freely offered their assistance to raise funds throughout 2015.

Photo shows George Smith, Kevin McRandle MBE, Wg Cdr Noel Williams, Dan McCormick, Billy Boyce and Joe Corr.

8. Greenock Branch Club hosted a social BBQ. All members in the south west of Scotland had been invited, and there was a great turn-out for the event. Attendees were treated to beautiful blue skies, a relaxed atmosphere and some delicious food. The Branch Club also organised entertainment to take place inside the Club while attendees relaxed at the bar. Shown in the photograph are (left to right): Margaret Wooler, HWO; Frank Stewart, Chairman; Robert Moran, Inverclyde District Provost and George Park, Branch Committee.



5



6



7



8

When submitting Branch News to Air Mail, please note that the wording should ideally be around 100 words, accompanied supporting photographs. Please note that due to space limitations, submission does not guarantee publication.

Please ensure that you give as much information as possible about those shown in any photographs and any copyright information relating to the photograph.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1

1. Weymouth & Portland Branch celebrated its 70th anniversary in 2015 at the Wings Club.

The Association Concert Band Quartet (based in Weston-super-Mare) played as members and friends celebrated the occasion and a buffet was partaken by all present.

Photo shows (l-r) Peter Price; Gp Capt Tripp; Lady Mayor of Weymouth, Christine James; Lord Lieutenant of Dorset, Angus Campbell; Eileen Galling (Branch Secretary); Dave Setterfield (Chairman); John Hitchings (Treasurer); Paul Baker (Area Director) and Ron Vincent (Vice President).



2

2. Huntingdon & District Branch Standard Bearer, Alan Webb, shown outside St Paul's Cathedral at the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain celebrations. He had previously been collecting that morning for Wings Appeal at Euston Station. In the foreground is Ernie Bounds from **Dunstable Branch**.

3. Plymouth Branch held a commemorative service for the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain in September at St. Andrews Minster in the presence of the Lord Lt of Devon, Lord Mayor of the City, Service chiefs, dignitaries, air cadets, veterans and citizens of Plymouth.

Courtesy of the Branch, the Plymouth Branch of the Burma Star Association layed up its Standard on the same occasion.

After the Service the BSA colour party, consisting of Jim O'Connor (RN/BSA), Fred Ford (Army) BSA Standard Bearer and Bill Hatherley (RAF Association) escorts, marched slowly through the Minster when Jim handed over the Standard to the receiving Minister.

It was a very moving ceremony and the Burma Star veterans present were most grateful to the Association for allowing them to remember all those who gave their lives.

Photo shows (l-r) Bill Hatherley; Bernard Chapman (BSA/ex RAF); Fred Ford; Gp Cap R Colver (Branch President); Lord Lt of Devon; Stan Mullins (BSA/ex RAMC); John Paul (BSA/exRA); Jim O'Connor and Eileen Pickering (ex WRAF/ Widow of BSA member).



3

4. Sudbury Branch has been quite busy since the last Air Mail.

The Standard Bearer attended the St Paul's Cathedral parade on Battle of Britain Day and the Branch held its own Battle of Britain Parade on the Sunday through Sudbury, which was very well attended as was the annual Branch Dinner in October.

Members visited the ATC 2470 (Sudbury) Squadron in November to present a cup to the cadet who helped raise the most in Wings Appeal in 2015.



4

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Steyning/Adur Valley Branch. A retiring collection at a concert held on Battle of Britain Sunday at Steyning Parish Church in celebration of all those who died in the Battle of Britain 75 years ago added nearly £1,000 to 2015's Branch Wings Appeal street collections in Steyning and Henfield of £840.

Cadets from the local 1140 Squadron ATC assisted both in the street collection and at the concert itself.

John Darwood, Chairman, said "The concert collection was truly amazing, and we are deeply grateful to all those who contributed; thanks also to all our street collectors and donors".

Picture shows John receiving the church's cheques for £961.75 from the Vicar of St. Andrews and St. Cuthman, Father Neil Roberts.



6. Wrekin (Wellington) Branch held a sponsored canoe challenge from Ironbridge to Bridgnorth to raise funds for Wings Appeal.

Branch members Bob and Sally Ann Raymont completed the journey down the River Severn in three hours assisted by fellow branch member Darrold Jones who kindly provided the canoe and acted as navigator and safety man.

The challenge raised £500 for the Appeal. Bob and Sally Ann have had no previous canoe experience so it was an incredible achievement for them to raise this amount.

Pictured (l-r) Sally Ann Raymont, Darrold Jones & Bob Raymont.



7. Dunstable Branch members took part in the annual Remembrance Sunday parade with Chairman John Gilmour acting as Macebearer for Mayor, Councillor Liz Jones.

The Standard was paraded by Cadet Kieran Geary of 460 (Dunstable) ATC Squadron. It transpired that he is the Great Grandson of Reginald Geary one of the founding members of the Branch. His Grandfather, Roy Geary, was also a member. The Squadron were unaware of the connection when Kieran was nominated to parade the Standard.

It was an honour for the Branch to have the family connection and we are sure it was an honour for Kieran and his family to be selected as his Great Grandfather was an engineer during WWII and worked on the Liberator aircraft in Ireland and Iceland.

Photo shows, John Gilmour, Cllr Liz Jones and Cdt Kieran Geary at the Dunstable War Memorial (courtesy M Gilmour).



8. Potter Heigham Branch. In November the Branch organised a day out at the Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum at Flixton near Bungay. In 2014 Alan Garrod, a branch member sadly passed away. Alan was an air engineer during WWII on Lancaster bombers and joined the famous 617 'Dam Busters' squadron shortly after the dam raids. One of Alan's wishes was to have his medals, flying log books etc., donated to the Museum where he was a regular visitor. Wendy, Alan's widow, was joined by family members and friends along with branch members to make the presentation. The museum will make up a display case to house the items which will be placed alongside their other 'Lancaster' exhibits.

Photo donated to the branch via EDP/Nick Butcher.



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1

1. Torquay Branch marked the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain with a service in St Lukes Church in Torquay followed by a lunch in Raffles club. The Chairman of Torbay Council, Cllr Ray Hill is pictured with Branch Secretary, Linda Tombs, cutting the specially designed 75th anniversary cake.

2. Sud-Ouest Branch. After the terror attacks in Paris on the evening of 13 November, local commemoration ceremonies continued unabated in South West France but with the added measure of an armed guard of French Gendarmes.

The picture shows Branch Chairman, Beryl Dennett Stannard supported by 9 year old Jasmine Siddons, laying a wreath to remember the 8000 German soldiers buried in the Charente Maritime at a little village called Berneuil. The cemetery is run and maintained by the German equivalent of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Also in the picture are the many standards of the local retired servicemen associations. To be respectful to the French Armistice Day ceremonies, this German ceremony always occurs on the Sunday after the 11 November and is supported by the German Consul from Bordeaux.



2

3. Leamington Spa, Warwick and District Branch. The raising of the German Dornier Do 17 aircraft from the Goodwin Sands in June last year received wide publicity on press and television, but where is it now?

After 18 months in hydration tunnels, the aircraft has been moved into the Michael Beetham Conservation Centre (MBCC) at RAF Museum Cosford, where technicians, apprentices and Volunteers are carrying out detailed conservation work, following which it will be put on public display.

About 20 privileged members were given the opportunity to see this work in progress when they visited in September, by courtesy of the MBCC Manager Darren Friday who conducted the tour. The extensive aircraft museum was also visited and made for a memorable day out. Many in the party were surprised by the sheer size of the BAC TSR-2 supersonic bomber which only carried a crew of two. Some also commented that the V-Bombers in the 'Cold War' display looked much larger indoors than they used to appear on an airfield when in service.

The trip was organised by branch member, Pat Hall and the Conservation Centre Tour was arranged by Patrick Fitzgerald (Squadron Leader RAF retired), to whom all are indebted.

Photo shows the Dornier Do.17 undergoing conservation work.



3

4. Cranwell Branch continued with its monthly meetings and lunches in the Sergeants Mess and its Wings efforts. This included hosting a concert in Whittle Hall Cranwell, attendance at the Rauceby War Weekend and considerable collections in September in Sleaford and neighbouring villages, including again over £1K on a house to house collection by one of the Welfare Officers, Diana Robertson. As a result the Branch total exceeded £13k a record for the Branch.

Following this, a contingent had an R & R in Rhodes which coincided with a "significant Birthday" celebrations of the Branch Treasurer – Richard Taylor (shown far right).



4

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Hailsham Branch. In the Waitrose Green Token Scheme, Hailsham shoppers donated £615 to the Branch's Welfare Fund - a great result!

Photo shows local Manager presenting a cheque to Chairman Reg Holdstock flanked by Wings Organiser John Bass and Social Organiser Fred Fowler.

The store was presented with an Appreciation Certificate.

6. Streatham/Norbury Branch. On Remembrance Sunday 2014, a Timber Bench to be located in the Streatham War Memorial Garden, Streatham, was received by Councillor Donartus Anyanwu, then Deputy Mayor of the London Borough of Lambeth, on behalf of the Borough, in the presence of Chuka Umanna MP for Streatham, following its dedication by the Venerable Simon Gates, Archdeacon of Lambeth, to mark the work of the Branch in the district since 1946.

The Branch was closed on 31 December 2014 and the Standard was received by The Revd. Dr Gareth Powell, Vicar Missioner of the Church of St. Margaret the Queen, Streatham Hill, in the presence of The Venerable Simon Gates, that being the Church in which it was dedicated in November 1946; a stainless steel plaque was provided by the Branch reading "to be held in the House of God until it shall pass to dust like those whose courage, devotion, and duty to their Sovereign is enshrined in its history". Photo shows: Mrs Pat Randle, Roy Voce, Chy-Quaine (branch members), Revd. Dr Gareth Powell and Michael Mullally President.

At the closure of the Branch the sum of £53,875.16 was donated to the RAFA Heritage Fund and £1492.00 to the South East Respite Fund.

7. Cranbrook & Hawkhurst Branch member Gordon Wise was one of 20 veterans to receive the Legion of Honour at the French Ambassador's Residence in London on Armistice Day 2015. The award was made as part of President Hollande's pledge to honour all those surviving veterans who had served to liberate France in WWII. Gordon, an Australian now living in East Sussex, was formerly a pilot in 461 Squadron RAAF flying Sunderland Flying Boats for Coastal Command.

Photo shows Gordon being congratulated on his award by the Australian High Commissioner.

8. The Commonwealth War Cemetery at Berlin is probably one of the largest RAF final resting places with more than 3500 graves.

Although there is no official Association presence, one or two members always ensure that a wreath is laid in memory of those brave airmen.

9. The formal laying-up ceremony of the Sovereign's Banner of The Royal Observer Corps (ROC) took place at the RAF Church St Clement Danes in October 2015 attended by Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford KCB CBE ADC RAF and many other guests.

Over 400 ex-members of the ROC were present for the ceremony. Fighter Command could not have operated as effectively in the Battle of Britain without the valuable information provided by the ROC.



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8

THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTOGRAPH

by Chris Goss

Readers will recall the photograph on Page 24 of the July-September 2015 issue of Air Mail showing a crashed Messerschmitt 109. Chris Goss now tells the true story behind that photograph.

Hebert Bischoff was born in Heidelberg in September 1917 and like many of his age, joined the military in the late 1930s. He trained as a fighter pilot and joined the Messerschmitt 109 - equipped 1 Staffel/Jagdgeschwader 52 (1/JG 52-1st Sqn of Fighter Wing 52) at Lachen-Speyerdorf in February 1940. He and his unit took part in the Battle of France (albeit for just over two weeks), shooting down one French fighter and losing one of their own in return before withdrawing to Germany and Poland only to return to the Channel coast on 3 August 1940. Their new airfield was at Coquelles near Calais (which would now be close to the massive 'Cite Europe' shopping centre by the Channel Tunnel). Herbert, by now holding the rank of Feldwebel (Flt Sgt), participated in the shooting down of a Spitfire between Calais and Dover on 11 August 1940. The kill was shared between him and Feldwebel Ignaz Schinabeck (who would be shot down by a Spitfire of 72 or 401 Sqn on 22 November 1941 and died in hospital 2 December 1941) and their victim possibly came from 64 or 74 Sqn. Herbert would fly around 25 missions from Coquelles before his luck ran out whilst on a fighter sweep near London on the afternoon of 24 August 1940 as he remembers:



Above, Gribbles burnt out Spitfire on the beach at Dunkirk. Photo: © Author.



The crashed Me109. Photo: © Author.



The Me109 before its was shot down. Photo: © Author.

"It was a Spitfire than got me - coming out of the sun above me. He hit my engine which was then 'kaput'. I was at 6,000 metres (18,000 feet) altitude near London at the time so I dived away but soon realised that it was impossible to get back to my radiators were caput so I crash-landed near Margate and became a POW for the next seven years." The Spitfire pilot that got him was almost definitely

George Gribble of 54 Sqn which was based at RAF Hornchurch in Essex. Dorian George Gribble was born in Hendon, North London on 19 June 1919 but spent much of his early life at Ryde on the Isle of Wight. He joined the RAF in March 1938 and after training was posted to 54 Sqn. His first kill was on 24 May 1940 (a Messerschmitt 109 in the Calais area) but the following day, he was shot down and force-landed his Spitfire wheels down on the beach near Dunkirk. Typical of Gribble, he removed the radio "Seemed the sensible thing to do, old boy. So far as I know, these particular sets are still on the secret list and we don't want the Germans to get free copyright" he later told one pilot, set fire to

his Spitfire and hitched a ride home. He would claim two more German fighters, albeit unconfirmed, on 25 July 1940 and would be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on 13 August 1940. By 24 August 1940, his successes numbered three aircraft destroyed, one probable, six damaged and two unconfirmed. On the morning of 24 August 1940, he damaged a Me 110 and then in the afternoon, he was in action again:

I was leading B Flight when the Sqn attacked about nine He 113s [sic] over Dover and itself was attacked by a large number of Me 109s. After a dogfight in which I engaged several enemy aircraft but was unable to see any results of my fire, I joined up with three other Spitfires over Manston and proceeded to Hornchurch. Between Manston and Herne Bay I saw about 50 Me 109s in vics line astern. I dived onto the last section and fired the remainder of my ammunition (about 10 seconds' worth) in bursts from 250 yds in astern attack. My last burst hit the starboard radiator of the Me109 and after that, the aircraft fell away out of control.."

On the ground at Westgate-on-Sea, teenager Dick Hambidge heard the results: "My Mother and I were in our air raid shelter in the back garden of our home. We had been there for most of the day because we were having quite a hectic time at that stage of the Battle of Britain. We were sitting talking when all of a sudden 'zoom!'-we never heard it coming and only heard this for a few seconds. About half an hour later, the air raid warden came into the garden and told us that it was a Messerschmitt that went over just now and that it had crashed in the cornfields. He said he was one of the first to get to the scene of the crash and that the pilot was OK and had offered him a cigarette."

Two days later, the German fighter was taken away on the back of a lorry but the story didn't end there. As it passed by air raid warden Robert Blackman, he took a photograph only for him to be arrested 'for photographing the wreckage of a German aeroplane without a permit'. The Chief Constable felt that it was not a case for punishment but added: "The police and military are very disturbed about the large number of people who are running about with



Above, The German fighter is taken away. Photo: © Author.

cameras taking photographs which out not to be taken. People do not like their liberty interfered with but we are at war and a little discipline is needed by some of them".

As this was the first of its kind, the Magistrate dismissed it with a formal warning!

Postscript

Flt Lt George Gribble survived the Battle of Britain and by the end of 1940, had been credited with six and one shared destroyed, two unconfirmed destroyed, two probables and at least nine damaged.

54 Sqn was withdrawn for a rest from operations to RAF Catterick in Yorkshire in September 1940, returning to Hornchurch in February 1941. By June of that year, George was the only original member still on 54 Sqn but on 4 June 1941, he and his wingman were bounced off Dungeness by a Messerschmitt 109 flown by Feldwebel Stefan Litjens of 4/JG 53; although his wingman got away, George was never seen again.



Above, The crash site pictured recently. Photo: © Author.

Lightning II development continues apace

The F35-B Lightning II testing programme is currently taking place at Edwards Air Force Base, California. 17(R) Test and Evaluation Squadron comprising RAF and RN personnel, make up part of the Joint Strike Fighter Programme with the USA, Netherlands and Australia.

The F-35B Lightning II has recently carried out its first ski-jump launch from the land facility at the US Navy's air station at Patuxent River in Maryland.

The aircraft are on order for the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force and will be used on the Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers, amongst other tasks.

The carriers will be equipped with a ski-jump and, therefore, this successful test is a key milestone for the UK.



Photos: © MoD/Crown.

The RAF role extended in Op Shader.

Six Royal Air Force Typhoons and two Tornado GR4s arrived at RAF Akrotiri to supplement aircraft already deployed in support of OP Shader. The aircraft arrived less than 24 hours after the UK parliamentary vote gave approval for operations to be extended to undertake air strikes in Syria.

The government granted approval for the UK to extend their airstrikes to include Syria, as well as Iraq, as part of counter-Daesh coalition operations. Within hours of the decision, Royal Air Force Tornados flew their first offensive operation on terrorist targets inside Syria.

Pictured above right, examples of the Tornado and Typhoon aircraft that will operate on missions from RAF Akrotiri.



Photos: © MoD/Crown.

Red Arrows flypast

The Red Arrows were delighted to support the visit by the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, with a flypast over Parliament Square, London.

The team swapped its normal red, white and blue smoke for those of the Indian flag during the flypast.

The Indian Air Force aerial demonstration team (Surya Kiran) has recently reformed using four Hawk aircraft and India has over 100 BAE Systems Hawks within its fleet of aircraft, some of which were built in the UK, so the trade ties remain strong between the two countries.

Images by SAC Adam Fletcher © MoD/Crown



IN THE BAG

Fighter Command Prisoners of War in the Battle of Britain

by Chris Goss

Many might be mistaken in thinking that few if any RAF fighter pilots were taken prisoner during the Battle of Britain as the air battles generally took place over mainland Britain or just off the British coast. These are the stories of the 10 Spitfire and Hurricane pilots who became guests of the Germans in the Summer of 1940.

The first recorded Fighter Command pilot to be captured was not RAF but RN. 24 year-old Sub-Lt Frank Dawson Paul had joined the Fleet Air Arm almost a year before, his first unit being the Telegraphist Air Gunner Training 758 Sqn based at Eastleigh in Hampshire. He then undertook a Fighter Course after which he was loaned to the RAF and after having converted to Spitfires with 7 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at RAF Hawarden, joined 64 Sqn at RAF Kenley on 1 July 1940. Frank's first kill, a Dornier 17 which he shared with three other pilots, came that evening and five days later he shot down a Messerschmitt 109 near Rouen and damaged another off the English coast after which he force-landed his Spitfire at RAF Hawkinge. His success continued until 25 July 1940 by which time he had been credited with six and one shared destroyed and one damaged. However, his luck was about to run out. Despite being credited with the destruction of another Messerschmitt 109 that day, at about 1745 hrs, Spitfires of 54 and 64 Sqn fought with Messerschmitt 109s off Dover.

The German fighters were possibly from III Gruppe/Jagdgeschwader 26 (III/JG 26) led by Hauptmann Adolf Galland. He and four other pilots from 7/JG 26, Oberleutnant Georg Beyer (POW 28 August 1940) and Leutenants Josef Bürschgens (POW 1 September 1940), Gerhard Müller-Dühe (killed 18 August 1940) and Walter Blume (POW 18 August 1940), each claimed a Spitfire.

54 Sqn would lose three Spitfires in this battle whilst it would appear that 64 Sqn strayed closer to the French coast losing Fg Off Alistair Jeffrey (whose body would later be washed ashore in Holland) and Frank Dawson Paul. Badly wounded, the Naval fighter pilot was rescued from the sea by the Germans and taken to the military hospital at Hardinghen near Boulogne where he succumbed to his wounds five days later.

15 August 1940 would be another memorable day in the Battle of Britain and from the British side, would be remembered as a day



Unidentified Spitfire shot down either over Dunkirk or during the Battle of Britain which has eluded identification. Photo: © Author.



Oblt George Beyer and Lt Josef Bürschgens of III/JG26
Photo: © Author.



Hauptmann Adolf Galland
Photo: © Author.

not just for the bitter fighting that took place the length and breadth of England but for the fact that three RAF fighter pilots were taken prisoner and two of their Spitfires captured.

After two attacks on north-east England in the morning, the scene of battle moved permanently southwards and it was during an attack by Dornier 17s against airfields at Rochester and Eastchurch that the first Spitfire was captured. The escort for this attack was made up from at least three different Messerschmitt 109 units whilst II and III/JG 26 carried out a fighter sweep. Hauptman Adolf Galland, pictured above, was again leading III/JG 26 and remembers clearly what happened:

"The second aircraft I shot down on that day was at 1600 hrs east of Folkestone-Dover at an altitude of 6000 metres. Our mission was a fighter sweep west of Maidstone. When crossing the coast, we were bounced by 12 Spitfires coming from a higher altitude. Immediately, many individual dogfights started. I was able to get just behind one of the last Spitfires in this Squadron without being discovered. From a distance of 100m to 300m, I fired with my cannon and machine guns until the Spitfire caught fire and big parts of it were flying all around, forcing me to evade. The Spitfire dived away and took a considerable time before it crashed.

"The third aircraft I shot down on that day was again a Spitfire only seven minutes later at an



Fg Off Ralph Roberts' Spitfire force landed in a beet field near Calais. Photo: © Author.

altitude of 3000 metres in the middle of the Channel. I had reformed the Gruppe again just off the French coast and when flying back towards the British coast, I met some Spitfires. I attacked one and was able to approach him from under the cover of his tail and shot directly into him from a distance of 100m. The aircraft made a half roll and remained on its back thus enabling me to keep on firing. Metal parts were suddenly all around and a thick grey-blue flame came out from the body and a white one from out of the wings. After I broke away, the Spitfire was again fired at by Oberleutnant Gerhard Schöpfel; he followed it down and saw it ditch."

In addition to the two shot down by Galland, another six were claimed by JG 26. Who exactly their opponents were cannot be ascertained for certain apart from again 64 Sqn was involved. 23 year-old Fg Off Christopher Andreae (who despite his surname, came from London and had been educated at Cambridge) was reported missing over the Channel but Fg Off Ralph Roberts was a little luckier as German fighter pilot, Leutnant Josef Bürschgens of 7/JG 26 remembers:

"After the dogfight following the fighter sweep, Ralph Roberts from Sheffield was forced to land near the beach at Wissant. Walter Blume, Gerhard Müller-Dühe and I met him after we returned from the sweep over southern England. I was the first to run out of ammunition and was low on fuel and in the end it was Gerhard who was credited with Roberts. It was a hard fight and Roberts was a very brave and excellent pilot."

What exactly happened is uncertain but Roberts force-landed his Spitfire in a beet field near to Calais where he was captured. He was a great loss to his Squadron having flown Gloster Gladiators in France with 615 Sqn before being posted to 64 Sqn in July 1940. Two days before, he had shot down a Dornier 17 but this would be his first and last 'kill' and he was destined to remain a prisoner of war until the end of the War.

About an hour later, attacks developed in the west when a synchronised and heavily escorted series of raids were carried out against airfields in Hampshire and Dorset. One of the RAF squadrons tasked to intercept was 234 Sqn based at RAF Middle Wallop and it would appear that they fought a running battle with the retreating German fighters. The only 234 Sqn pilot to lose his life in this battle was 22 year-old New Zealander Plt Off Cecil Hight whose Spitfire crashed at Walsford Road, Meyrick Park, Bournemouth but two more pilots were captured.

Having strayed too close to the French coast whilst chasing a Messerschmitt 110 of II Gruppe/Zerstörergeschwader 76 (II/ZG 76), it would appear that Australian Plt Off Vincent Parker fell victim to his intended victim. Unteroffizier Willy Lehner, radio operator/gunner to Leutnant Siegfried Hahn of Stab II/ZG 76 (Hahn was killed 3 January 1944) reported shooting down a Spitfire off Cherbourg before they crash-landed their damaged fighter at Cherbourg-West. Parker crashed in the sea off Cherbourg where he was picked up by a German motor torpedo boat.



Above, 234 squadron St Eval July 1940. Curiously two pilots captured on 15 Aug are next to each 3rd from the right in this photograph is Parker and 4th from the right Hardy. To Hardy's right is Hight killed in the same combat. Photo: © Author.

He too would remain a POW until the end of the war, finishing up in Colditz Castle. Sadly, on 29 January 1946 and whilst with 56 OTU at RAF Millfield, he was killed in a flying accident when his Hawker Tempest crashed at Felkington Farm, Duddo near Berwick-on-Tweed.

The fate of the final RAF POW on this day, Plt Off Richard Hardy, was recalled by Unteroffizier Werner Karl from 1/JG 53 (POW 2 Sep 40) who was on the ground at Cherbourg-East/Theville airfield:

"Somebody shouted "Spitfire!" and I looked up to see a Spitfire coming over the airfield. The anti-aircraft guns opened fire and the Spitfire banked around and landed. Having got over the shock, we crowded around the Spitfire. The pilot got out and surrendered to Hauptmann Rolf Pingel, Staffel Kapitän of 2/JG 53"

It is believed that Hardy had strayed even closer to the French coast and low on fuel and ammunition and wounded (photos have shown a shirt-sleeved Hardy with wounds to his shoulder probably caused by a cannon shell which hit his fuselage just behind his seat) was forced to land at Theville airfield; his demise has been credited to Oberleutnant Georg Claus of Stab III/JG 53 (killed



B Flt 616 Squadron Leconfield Aug 40. Tom Westmorland front left, Philip Wareing standing far right. Photo: via Pitchfork.

11 November 1940). Richard Hardy would also spend the rest of the war as a prisoner of war.

It would be 10 days later that another Spitfire pilot would be captured. 25 year-old Sgt Philip Wareing was on 616 Sqn in July 1940 and moved with the Sqn from RAF Leconfield in Lincolnshire to Kenley in Kent on 19 August 1940. Three days later he was credited with shooting down a Messerschmitt 109 which crashed close to the burning wreckage of a Spitfire of 616 Sqn which had been bounced shortly before, Plt Off Hugh Dundas baling out wounded; no Messerschmitt 109s were recorded as being lost over the UK that day. Three days later, 616 Sqn took off to intercept a raid by Dornier 17s during which they were again bounced by German fighters. Sgt Tom Westmoreland was shot down and killed whilst Philip Wareing was seen chasing a Dornier 17 out to sea. Philip later recorded what happened:

"My aircraft must have been hit in the radiator in an earlier melee because after I intercepted the four Germans over the Channel, it started getting hot. The oil pressure and temperature went right off the clock. I didn't realise it but I was now over France-it only took three minutes to fly across the Channel. I was beginning to slow down and another lot of Germans appeared and went for me. I was going lower and slower and then my engine caught fire. I side slipped and it went out. I was almost gliding by then. The Germans were using me for target practice. Their machine gun bullets on my armour plating sounded like one of those old alarm clocks going off...."

"I looked at my poor Spitfire. It was a new one. I'd only had it a few days. Now there were holes all over it. I knew I'd have to get out. There was a lot of smoke. It seemed quiet again for a moment. I opened the cockpit, undid my straps and took off my helmet. I thought I'd remembered everything when I was hit again and then everything happened at once. The petrol tanks just in front of me went up in flames. I felt the heat coming up my legs. At the same time they blew my tail off and I was thrown clear of the plane..."

It is possible that the coup de grace was given by Oberleutnant Kurt Ruppert of 3/JG 26 (killed 13 June 1943) who claimed to have shot down a Spitfire south of Calais at the time Wareing was reported lost. Philip Wareing came down on land and after capture was taken to a nearby fighter airfield where he was entertained by German pilots, one of which would be captured over Britain shortly afterwards and was able to confirm to the RAF that Philip was a POW. However, his war didn't end there as on 16 December 1942, Philip escaped from Oflag XII near Schubin in Poland and managed to reach Sweden the following month, his escape resulting in him being awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Philip Wareing passed away in 1987

The sixth RAF pilot to be captured was Plt Off Jim Caister of 603 Sqn. Caister was older than most of his contemporaries having been born in 1906 and after serving as ground crew in the mid-1920s, volunteered for pilot training after which he flew as an NCO in the Middle East. At the start of the war, he was posted to 603 Sqn and on 19 January 1940 he shared the destruction of a Heinkel 111. By 3 September 1940, had two plus four shared enemy aircraft destroyed and one shared damaged and for this, on 13 September 1940 he would be awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal after having been commissioned on 21 August 1940. His last kill was a Messerschmitt 109 off Dunkirk on 3 September as three days after that, his Spitfire was damaged in combat



Above, Plt Off Jim Caister's crash landed Spitfire near Guines. Photo: © Author.

after he had strayed too close to the French coast. He was then escorted to crash-land near Guines by Hauptmann Hubertus Von Bonin, Gruppen Kommandeur of I/JG 54 (killed 15 December 1943) even if Von Bonin was not credited with the kill. After his capture, he was entertained by I/JG 54 after which he remained a POW until the end of the war and he died in 1994.

It would be another nine days until the Luftwaffe captured another Spitfire pilot. Sgt John Potter of 19 Sqn had already been shot down during the war when his Spitfire was damaged in combat with Messerschmitt 110s of I/ZG 1 over Dunkirk on 1 June 1940. With his oil cooler damaged, the engine began to overheat so he ditched 15 miles off the English coast. He was quickly picked up by a French fishing boat which, to his consternation, then took him towards Dunkirk. After an eventful few hours, he was landed at Dover and soon back with his Sqn.

Potter would claim two Me110s on 16 and 18 Aug 1940 but then on the afternoon of 15 Sept 1940 was shot down mid-Channel, probably by Feldwebel Franz Lüders of 6/JG 26 (POW 21 June 1941). Baling out wounded in one foot, he could see both a British and German patrol boat heading towards where he was expected to land; unfortunately for him, the German boat won and he spent the remainder of the war a POW. John passed away in 1977.

234 Sqn was to suffer a third pilot to be captured during the Battle of Britain when on 23 Sept 1940, Fg Off Terry Kane was shot down off the French coast, probably by the ace Hauptmann Wilhelm Balthasar Gruppen Kommandeur of III/JG 3 (killed 3 July 1941). Terry had just celebrated his 20th birthday on 9 September and then



Caister's Spitfire being repainted at Guines. Photo: © Author.

joined 234 Sqn at St Eval five days later. He participated in the shooting down of a Junkers 88 believed to be from 4(F)/121 off Start Point on 22 September only to be shot down the following morning, baling out at 6,000 feet over the Channel. Terry did claim the destruction of a Messerschmitt 109 before his demise but as RAF pilots claimed nine destroyed, four probably destroyed and four damaged at around the same time, this is hard to substantiate. Terry Kane would be the last Spitfire pilot taken prisoner in the Battle of Britain as the last two would be Hurricane pilots, the first of which occurred the day following Terry Kane's capture.

Late in the afternoon of 24 September 1940, Plt Offs Ian Muirhead and Witold Glowacki of 605 Sqn lifted off from Croydon to patrol Beachy Head. On arriving, they immediately spotted a Dornier 17 scudding in and out of cloud and headed east. They gave chase and opened fire on the German bomber flown by Unteroffizier Hans Figge of 2/KG 76 who was briefed to carry out a nuisance attack on London using the cloud for cover. After the second attack, Figge dropped his bombs and after a series of further attacks, headed back for France. The Hurricane pilots gave chase, noticing that the bomber was losing height and then stated it crashed into the sea five miles south-west of Cap Gris Nez [German records state the bomber force-landed 10 km north-east of Boulogne, very much on land and with a seriously wounded crew member - Author]. It was then that the two Hurricanes were bounced by four Messerschmitt 109s of 3/JG 51-both Hurricanes dropped to sea level, crossing the coast at Ambleteuse after which Ian Muirhead did not see Glowacki again. Over land, Muirhead hedgehopped east for nearly 20 miles before turning south-west, crossing the coast between Boulogne and Le Touquet where the German fighters broke off their attack.

Claims for two Hurricanes were filed by Oberleutnant Michael Sonner (killed 4 April 1943) and Unteroffizier Adolf Benzinger (killed 27 November 1940) but only one Hurricane was lost. Glowacki crash-landed his Hurricane near Ambleteuse, totally wrecking it and injuring himself in the process. A German cameraman was quickly on site, photographing the Hurricane and the captured Glowacki. However, despite what appears to be minor injuries, in under 24 hours Glowacki was dead either as a result of shock or anaphylactic shock as result of an injection.

The final RAF pilot to be taken prisoner in the Battle of Britain was Fg Off Don McHardy of 229 Sqn. He was on the Sqn at the start of the Battle of Britain and his only kill was a Heinkel 111 destroyed on 27 September. However, on 26 October, whilst patrolling Croydon, the Sqn sighted a number of Messerschmitt 109s which they chased to France and whilst approaching the French coast, spotted a low flying Heinkel 59 float plane of Seenotflugkommando 3 and commanded by Leutnant Heinrich Wilcke. Blue Section, Fg Off Geoff Simpson, Sgt Rupert Ommanney and Don McHardy, dived onto the Heinkel and after two bursts of fire from Ommanney, it landed on the sea off Boulogne. It was then that the tables were turned when the Hurricanes were bounced by Messerschmitt 109s whilst at the same time, guns on the shore opened fire. Rupert Ommanney managed to get away but the other two Hurricanes failed to return. Geoff Simpson simply disappeared whilst Don McHardy was reported a POW. Just one claim was submitted for a Hurricane in the vicinity of Cap Gris Nez by Feldwebel Otto Junge of 6/JG 52 (POW 2 November 1940) albeit Leutnant Fritz Geisshardt of 1(Jagd)/Lehrgeschwader 2 (killed 5 April 1943) and Oberleutnant Egon Troha of 9/JG 3 (POW 29 October 1940) each claimed a Hurricane west of Boulogne shortly



Glowacki beside his crashed Hurricane. Photo: via Matusiak.

after Junge's kill. Don McHardy would remain a prisoner until the end of the war and passed away in 1967.

The parts played by these 10 Spitfire and Hurricane pilots captured in the Battle of Britain have generally been forgotten as have the small number of Blenheim aircrew (three from 248 Sqn POW on 20 October 1940 and three from the Fighter Interception Unit POW on 13 September 1940).

Hopefully this article will now remind readers of the bravery and sacrifice those who can be regarded as the forgotten Few.



Do 17 believed shot down by 605 Squadron Hurricanes on 24 Sep 1940. Photo: © Author.



Rudder of Balthasar's Bf 109; Kane could have been his 32nd or 33rd kill. Photo: © Author.

WORLD MILITARY NEWS

AUSTRALIA



The RAAF is to add two more KC-30A multi-role tanker transports to its fleet of five in 2018 by converting two Qantas passenger-carrying Airbus 330s. The conversion will be carried out by Airbus in Spain.

CANADA



The Royal Canadian Air Force has recently re-established No 401 Tactical Fighter Squadron at Cold Lake, Alberta equipped with CF-18 Hornets. This means that Canada now has two operational fighter squadrons at Cold Lake in central Canada and two nearer to the East coast at Bagotville in Quebec. The extra squadron was required to help the RCAF cope with the high tempo of operations at home and in the Middle East.

DENMARK



The Royal Danish Air Force is to receive a fleet of nine Sikorsky MH-60 Seahawk maritime warfare helicopters to replace its ageing fleet of Westland Lynx. Deliveries will commence in 2015.

INDIA



An Indian Air Force detachment of four Sukhoi Su-30 fighters of No 2 Squadron operated from RAF Coningsby in late July & early August 2015 on Exercise Indradhanush (which means Rainbow). This was an air and ground exercise with RAF Typhoons led by No 3 Squadron and involved working both with and against each



ITALY - First Italian Air Force KC767 tanker/transport. Photo: © J M Henderson.

other. The Indians were supported by an Ilyushin IL78 tanker that operated from RAF Brize Norton. This is the second such exercise involving Indian Air Force Su-30s visiting the UK; the previous one was in 2007 when six of the aircraft were based at RAF Waddington. Ground crew and equipment were transported to and from the UK in an Indian C-17 Globemaster and a C-130J Hercules; these aircraft remained at RAF Brize Norton during the exercise.



DENMARK Sikorsky MH-60R Seahawk US Navy, NAS Patuxent River. Photo: © J M Henderson.

ITALY/USA



An Italian Air Force Boeing 767 tanker/transport is the first international tanker to be certified to refuel the US Air Force's Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II fighter. It completed a series of test flights over the Western US in late July. The Italian Air Force operates four of these tanker aircraft.

SOUTH KOREA



South Korea has announced that it is to order four Airbus 330 multi-role tanker aircraft for its air force with deliveries expected by 2019. The country joins a growing number of countries operating this tanker including the UK, Australia and France.

QATAR



Qatar signed a contract for four additional C-17 Globemaster aircraft at the Paris Air Show in June.

The Qatar Armed Forces already operate four of

the type and this additional purchase means they will have the same fleet size as the Royal Air Force.

UK



Following the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, the Government has announced the following major enhancements to the RAF's aircraft fleet:

- Nine Boeing Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft are to be based at RAF Lossiemouth. The first three should be in service by 2020.
- The full planned purchase of 138 F-35 Lightning IIs will proceed. These will be operated jointly with the Royal Navy.
- Two of the current Tornado squadrons will remain operational until 2019 with a third continuing to 2018. The squadrons are Numbers 9, 12 and 31.
- Two additional Typhoon squadrons will be formed to add to the current five front line units.
- Fourteen C-130J Hercules will continue in service to 2030.

The last of the RAF's Merlin transport helicopters have been transferred to the Royal Navy when No 28 (AC) Squadron was disbanded at RAF Benson in July and handed them over to No 845 Naval Air Squadron. No 28 Sqn was immediately reconstituted in a reserve role as the training unit for Chinook and Puma helicopters at RAF Benson.



UK RAF SAR Sea King Photo: © MoD/Crown.

Royal Air Force UK search and rescue (SAR) air operations drew to a close on 4 October 2015, when the final operational flight landed at Chivenor in Devon as the handover of the SAR service to the new civilian contract was completed. While RAF SAR air missions in the UK had come to an end, a small number of Sea King crews continued to train at Chivenor for a few weeks. This was to prepare them for service in the Falkland Islands where the Sea Kings will continue to operate for a few more months.

UK/USA

The F-35B Lightning II has carried out its first ski-jump launch from the land facility at the US Navy's air station at Patuxent River in Maryland. This is the aircraft that is on order for the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force and will be used on the Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers, amongst other tasks. The carriers will be equipped with a ski-jump and, therefore, this successful test is a key milestone for the UK.



UK/USA F-35B Lightning II on first ski jump test. Photo: © MoD/Crown.

USA



For the second year in a row, USAF B-52 bombers have been deployed to RAF Fairford to take part in NATO exercises. Three B-52s were based there for 2 weeks in mid-June and took part in long missions to the Baltic area where they operated with the air forces of countries such as Poland and Sweden. Additionally, as part of global training missions, several B-2 stealth bombers stopped over at Fairford for crew changes and refuelling during the same period.

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

- Mr R Adams** Grimsby/Cleethorpes and District
- Mr H Amphlett** Stourbridge
- Mr E M Andrews** Evesham
- Mr J Apedaile** Uxbridge
- Mr E Armeni** Leicester
- Mr W A Archer** Spennymoor
- Mr G Arnell** South Eastern Area HQ
- Miss J B Arnold** North West Area HQ
- Mr T E O Arnold-Forster** Skipton
- Mr S D Arthur** Penzance
- Mr P Ashley** Burtonwood and Warrington
- Mr J H Aspinwall** The Lords/Commons
- Mr E Atkinson** Hartlepool
- Mr S Atkinson** Hexham
- Mr D Atwell** Taunton Deane
- Mrs E L M Austen** Halisham
- Mr S G Ayre** Southend-on-Sea
- Mr A Backrath** Midland Area HQ
- Mr C Baguley** Whitby & District
- Mr M Bailey** Leamington/Warwick
- Gp Capt S W Bainbridge** Eastern Area HQ
- Mr J Baldock** Bury St Edmunds
- Mr J Balzan** Malta GC
- Mr R F Banning** Stamford and District
- Mr R Bannister** St Neots
- Mrs C Barber** Dereham and Swaffham
- Mr E A Barker** CHQ
- Mr J Barratt** Worthing
- Mr A Barrett** Midland Area HQ
- Mr G Barrington-Whitfield** Cwmbrian
- Mr H E Batchelder** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mr S C Batcheller** Maidstone
- Mr C U Bate** Cape Town
- Mr F Beaver** Leigh
- Mr E Beesley** Leicester
- Sir M Beetham** CHQ
- Wg Cdr C Bell** City/Central London
- Mr P Bell** Darlington
- Mr L J Bennett Torquay**
- Mr G W Betts** Mablethorpe/Sutton
- Mr C J Bevan** Haverfordwest
- Mr A Bibby** St Helens
- Mr A Bishop** Dartford
- Mr F Bishop** York
- Mr R A Black** Isle Of Man
- Mr R Blagdon** Plymouth
- Mr P Blake** Rothbury
- Mr D W Bloxam** Natal (1st Natal)
- Mr R Bond** Beccles & Southwold Area
- Mr J Bowyer** Ilford and Woodford
- Mr D J Boyland** Melksham
- Mr R Brabbins** Clacton-on-Sea
- Mr B A Bray** Fordingbridge/District
- Mr K Bredin** Littlehampton
- Mrs H Brierley** Blackhall
- Mr D E Bristow** Brighton and Hove
- Ms L Bromwich** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mr R Brookes** Melbourne
- Mr T Brophy** Bracknell
- Mr L Brown** Wimborne
- Mr M Buckland** Penzance
- Mr A Buckley** CHQ
- Mrs J Bull** Birmingham Moseley
- Mr C Bullock** Pontefract
- Mr W Burnell** Poole
- Mr C Buskin** Camborne, Redruth & Illogan
- Mrs V Butler** Hartlepool
- Mr T J C Butt** City of Bristol
- Mr K Butterfield** York
- Mr E B Buttree** North East Area HQ
- Mr J Byrne** Sydney Metropolitan
- Air Cdre D L Bywater** Huntingdon & District
- Mr H Cade** Tunbridge Wells
- Mr D W Callaghan** South Fylde
- Sqn Ldr B Cape** Basingstoke
- Mrs P Carney** Hull
- Mr L Carter** Tamworth
- Mr I W Castle** Bromsgrove/Redditch
- Mrs M Cater** King's Lynn and District
- Mr M Cauchi** Hinckley & District
- Mr L Chalmers** Stowmarket
- Mr S W Channing** Herne Bay
- Mrs A Charlton** Weston-Super-Mare
- Mr P Chase** City/Centr London
- Mr P Ashley** Central Headquarters
- Mr J T Cheese** South West Area HQ
- Mr D C H Chessun** Bodmin
- Mr F Chesworth** Holbeach
- Mr K Clare** Melksham
- Mr K Clark** Grimsby/Cleethorpes and District
- Mr W Clarke** Doncaster
- Mr R Clement** Morecambe/Lancaster
- Mr J Clifford** Barrow-in-Furness
- Mr E J Clough** Batley and Birstall
- Mr H Cole** Midland Area HQ
- Mr J Cole** Swindon
- Mr M Cole** Frome
- Mr M Collie** Lossiemouth
- Mr A D Condon** Basingstoke
- Mr F H Conn** Maidstone
- Mr W J Constable** Crawley RMG
- Mr D Cook** Hastings and St Leonards
- Mr C Cope** Kenley and Caterham
- Mr D Copen** Clacton-on-Sea
- Mr C Coquot** Sud-Ouest
- Mr D G Cornell** Hythe/Romney Marsh
- Mr C Cornish** North Cornwall
- Mr D P Cousins** Norwich
- Mr H Cox** Swansea
- Mrs M M Crole** Ramsgate/Broadstairs
- Mr D Crossland** Mablethorpe/Sutton
- Sqn Ldr P Cunningham** Central Headquarters
- Mr G Culverwell** King's Lynn & District
- Mr D Dagless** Fakenham
- Mr E Daintith** Burtonwood and Warrington
- Mr J P Dale** Mablethorpe/Sutton
- Mrs C Davies** Dawlish
- Mr D Davies** CHQ
- Mr R W Davis** Poole
- Mr G Day** Northampton and District
- Mr D Dean** Eastbourne
- Mr S Dixon** Wymondam
- Mr R Dodd** Leamington/Warwick
- Mr J Douay** Sud-Ouest
- Mr K Douglas** Hartlepool
- Mr B Downs** Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle
- Mr R Draper** Huyton with Roby and Liverpool
- Mr A Dyer** Truro
- Mr G G Edwards** St Helens
- Mrs K Edwards** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mr R Edwards** Preston
- Rev W Elliot** Guildford
- Mr H Ellis** Lowestoft
- Mr J Ellwood** Skipton
- Mr D P Engall** Clacton-On-Sea
- Mr D Evans** Eastern Area HQ
- Mr G Everett** Eastern Area HQ
- Mr R Fairburn** Clacton-on-Sea
- Mr G G Fenn** Swindon
- Mrs P Fernihough BEM** Morecambe/Lancaster
- Mr D Findlater** Orpington
- Mr J Findlay** City of Bristol
- Mr F Fleckney** Dunstable
- Mr R Fleming** Leek
- Mr G J Ford** Weymouth/Portland
- Mr J Forder** North Cornwall
- Mr K Fosker** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mrs M Found** St Austell
- Mr D Franklin** Worthing
- Mr R French** North West Area HQ
- Mr B M R Fryer** Trowbridge
- Mr A Fryer** Eastbourne
- Mr M Fuke** Cambridge
- Mr J F Gall** Lowestoft
- Mr E D Gamble** Cheltenham
- Mr C S Gardiner** Morecambe/Lancaster
- Mr R Gardner** North Cotswolds
- Mr M S Gate** City/Centr London
- Mr M Gibson** Hartlepool
- Mr A Gillan** South Eastern Area HQ
- Rev T Gillott** Sheffield
- Mr P Glasson** Lewes
- Mr P Godwin** Ilford and Woodford
- Mr V Goodlip** Malta GC
- Mr F Gopie** Trinidad & Tobago
- Wg Cdr E J Goss** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mr M E Goss** Bletchley (Milton Keynes)
- Mr A Graddon** Dunstable
- Mr G Green** Spalding
- Mr N Green** Eastbourne
- Mr R E Green** Penzance
- Mr J Gregory** City of Bristol
- Mr N Grenfell** Penzance
- Mr D Griffiths** Isle of Man
- Mr J Grove** Maidstone
- Mrs E Gudge** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mrs F Hackman** Eastbourne
- Sqn Ldr A Hadfield** Northwich
- Mr B Hadland** Witney RMG
- Mr A Hallett** North West Area HQ
- Mr J Hamling** Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle
- Mr G Hanson** Cranwell
- Mr H Harber** Dartford
- Mr A T Harding** Kenley & Caterham
- Mr C Harris** Rothbury
- Wg Cdr J G M Harrison** Fleet
- Mr C G Hart** Ormskirk
- Mr D Hart** Wimborne
- Mr E Hart** Eastern Area HQ
- Mr P Hartley** South Fylde
- Gp Capt P M Harvey** Camberley/District
- Mr B Hastings** CHQ
- Mr D Hatch** Barnstaple/N Devon
- Mr D Hawkins** Warminster RMG
- Mr I Hewitt** Hull
- Mr N E Heywood** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mr D C Hibberd** Birmingham Moseley
- Mr W Hickling DFM** Leigh
- Miss D Hickton** Coventry
- Mr J Hill** Romsey
- Mr M Hinton** Potter Heigham
- Mr P Hobday** Grimsby/Cleethorpes & District
- Mr D Hobbs** New Milton and District
- Mr C Hodgson** Wimborne
- Mr R E Hogben** Dover and District
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- Mr J W Holford** Wimborne
- Mr K Holland** Evesham
- Mr J Hollis** Doncaster
- Mr R Holmes** Twickenham
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- Mr K W Holt** Morecambe/Lancaster
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- Mr A J Hopwood** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mr S Horsley** Fareham
- Mr T B Hughes** Treorchy
- Mr M Huish** South Eastern Area HQ
- Mr G Humphrey** Eastbourne

Mr S F V Hurrell Plymouth
Mrs K E Hyde Driffield
Mrs K F Irving Banbury
Mr A Jackson Braunstone
Mr B Jackson North West Area HQ
Mr K Jackson Woking
Mr J Jackson North East Area HQ
Mr P Jackson European Area HQ
Mr A S Jameson Witham & Rivenhall
Mrs S J Jegge Swiss
Mr S Johnson Kensington
Mr B C Jones Northallerton
Mr D W Jones Sherborne
AVM G Jones TCW and 90SU
Mr L Jones Poole
Mr P Jones Bognor Regis
Mr P Jones Horsham and Storrington
Mr H de Jonge Amsterdam
Mr K V Kean Huntingdon & District
Mr M Kemp Camberley/District
Mr S Kerr Batley and Birstall
Mr B King Cambridge
Mr N R King Headcorn
Air Cdre P King Stamford RMG
Mrs E Kirkham Melbourne
Mr R Kitchen Morecambe/Lancaster
Mr K Kneen Wimborne
Mr G Knights Great Yarmouth & District
Mr H Knox Ormskirk
Mr T Lamkin South Eastern Area HQ
Mr N J Langley Wisbech
Mrs G Lee Steyning/Adur
Mr J Le Moine Stafford
Mr L E G Lettice South Eastern Area HQ
Mr J C Lewis High Wycombe
Mr J M Lewis Andrews Plymouth
Mr H Lightfoot Wantage & District
Mr M Lignon Sud-Ouest
Mr N S Lindley Eastern Area HQ
Mr A G Lines Redcar & District
Mr W Loakes Central Headquarters
Mr M Lomas Huntingdon and District
Mr L J Loosemore Trowbridge
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Mr E Lowe Leigh
Mrs P M Lowe Wrekin/Wellington
Mr B Lucas Cannock Chase
Mr J V Ludgrove East London
Mr B Lund-Hansen European Area HQ
Mr L Lux South West Area HQ
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Mr B J Maddox Stevenage
Mr D Maitland Ayr and Prestwick
Mr R Maley Eastbourne
Mr E T J Manning Poole
Mr C Marcus Trinidad & Tobago
Mrs V Mark South West Area HQ
Mr K Markillie Long Sutton
Mr W B Masters Burnham (Bucks)
Mr L Mather St Helens
Mr J Mathis Plymouth
Mr J H May Maidstone
Mr E R Mayne Chesham & Amersham
Wg Cdr J W McCulloch Ile-de-France
Mr R McGill Aberdeen
Mr J J McGrath Wisbech
Mr R McKay Cranwell
Mr R McKeon Morecambe/Lancaster
Mr J McKinlay Ayr and Prestwick
Mr C McLeod High Wycombe
Mr G McLoughlin Belington
Mr D O McQuone Leicester
Mr D Mead Erewash
Miss O Mercer Wakefield

Mr G Milburn Hexham
Wg Cdr A Mills Steyning/Adur
Mr J Misseldine European Area HQ
Mr L W Moore Nazeing
Mrs W Moore Weston-super-Mare
Mr J S Morgan Wales, Midland and SW Area
Mr B Moss North West Area HQ
Mr R E Munday South Eastern Area HQ
Mr J Murphy Rep of Ireland
Miss J Nabb South Eastern Area HQ
Mr S News Warminster RMG
Mr W Nicholas Clacton-on-Sea
Mr D Nichols Hythe/Romney Marsh
Mr C North Chesham and Amersham
Mr J O'Reilly South Eastern Area HQ
Rev S A Outhwaite Mid-Somerset
Mr A Owen Llangollen
Mr T Oversby Guildford
Mrs P F Page Solihull
Mr D Painter Tamworth
Mr W G Painter Wisbech
Mr D Parker Bedford
Miss J Parkinson Morecambe/Lancaster
Mr R V Parnell Guilford
Mr J C Parsons Market Harborough
Mrs D Pearce Cwmbran
Mr E Perry North West Area HQ
Mr R P Pett Birmingham Moseley
Mrs S Pickles Batley and Birstall
Mr J-C Pinchon Ile-de-France
Mr F Pond City/Central London
Mrs N Porter CHQ
Mr W H P Powell Sudbury
Mr R Pratt Dunstable
Mr D J Prendergast Wythenshawe
Mr C C Prior
 Girmsby/Cleethorpes and District
Mr J W Purdy Eastbourne
Mr I Ransome Sud-Ouest
Mr S Y Richard Huntingdon and District
Mr K Richardson Stanley
Mr K Roberts
Mr G Robertson Eastbourne
Mr D J Robins Leigh
Mr F W Rogers Bognor Regis
Mr C R Rooke Norwich
Mr K L Rose Eastern Area HQ
Mr S Rose High Wycombe
Mr D Rouse Shrewsbury
Mr K Rowe South Eastern Area HQ
Mr M Rowson Colchester
Mr D Rush Penzance
Mrs A M Rushton Cannock Chase
Mr J Russell Hastings and St Leonards
Mr K Sanders Tamworth
Mrs E Saunders Gloucester
Mr A Savage Towyn & Aberdovey
Mr M Scard Hastings and St Leonards
Mr T Scrivener Woodbridge
Mr R Selwood Sherborne
AVM J Severne KCVO OBE AFC DL
 Mid-Somerset
Mr P Sharpe Boston
Mr R G Sharples North West Area HQ
Mr D Shepherd South Eastern Area HQ
Mr J Sheppard Poole
Mr K Sims Tunbridge Wells
Mr B W Sinclair Bracknell
Mr J Sisson Mansfield and District
Mr H Smillie Holbeach
Mr C Smith Coningsby & District
Mr D G Smith Newton Aycliffe
Mrs E Smith Horsham and Storrington
Mr E F Smith Melksham
Mr L W J Smith Dereham and Swaffham

Mrs R E Smith Ryedale
Mr S Smith Clacton-on-Sea
Mr W W Smith Republic of Ireland
Mr N Southern Abbots/Kings Langley
Mr S Sowerbutts Penrith
Mrs P Spencer Stockton/Thornaby
Mr S R Springall Romford
Mr R Spruth Grantham
Mr L R Stanhope Rushden
Mr R Stansbury Worthing
Mr K Starkie Morpeth
Sqn Ldr J Steenson City of Bristol
Mr G M Stewart Republic of Ireland
Mrs P Stocker Alresford and District
Mr B Stone South Eastern Area HQ
Mr S A Stone New Milton and District
Mr D Stoneman East London
Mr C Stowell Leyland and District
Mr E Sullivan Porthcawl and Kenfig
Mr A M Sutherland South Eastern Area HQ
Mr R Swift Stamford RMG
Mr J Swindells Teignmouth
Mr D Tansey Eastern Area HQ
Mr D Taylor Swindon
Mr D R Taylor Chislehurst/Sidcup
Mr R W Taylor Southend-on-Sea
Mr T Taylor Basingstoke
Mr L J Telling Poole
Mr R Theobald Bedford
Mr J A Thomas Uxbridge
Mr G Thompson Tamworth
Mr J Thompson Worthing
Mrs M Thorogood South Eastern Area HQ
Mr K Thursby Aberdare
Mr D J Thwaites North West Area HQ
Mrs J D Tidmarsh Bromsgrove/Redditch
Mrs M R Todd Potter Heigham
Mr D Towler Wisbech
Mrs W Toyne Fordingbridge/District
Mr L Tucker Melbourne
Mrs L J Tucker Plymouth
Mr J Turnbull Faversham
Mr K H Turner South West Area HQ
Mr R Tyson Bodmin
Mr S Vaughan Dawlish
Mr E Vines Melton Mowbray
Mr T D Wake South Eastern Area HQ
AM P B Walker European Area HQ
Mr A Walkley Dursley and S Gloucestershire
Mr D Ward Waddington
Mrs J Washer South West Area HQ
Mrs J Watson Kenley & Caterham
Mr S A Webster Huntingdon and District
Mr A Wellings Stowmarket
Mr W J West Steyning/Adur
Mr C Westrup Amsterdam
Mr D White Erewash
Mr B Whiteley Cranwell
Mr E Wilcock Wakefield
Mr B Wilson Cranbrook and Hawkurst
Mr T Williams Cannock Chase
Mr S Willis Dunstable
Mr J E Wilson Burnham (Bucks)
Mr T Wiseman Colchester
Mrs G M Wishart Shetland
Mr F Witcher Pontefract
Mr E Wood Southampton/Eastleigh
Mrs P Wood Fareham
Mr C Woodedd North Cotswolds
Mr B Woodhall York
Mr F Woodhurst Seahaven
Mr R Woods South Eastern Area HQ
Mr A Woodward Hexham
Mr J F Worsfold South Eastern Area HQ
Mr G H Wright Northampton and District

Please note: That all obituary notifications must be notified to Branch, Area Offices or Central Headquarters. Air Mail cannot accept obituary notices that have not been recorded via this route.

NOTICES

Help

Seeking information about **RAF Langtoft**. Did you serve there or have artefacts? Some buildings still exist including the Guard Room and married quarters. Contact Brian Smith: briandi@uwclub.net or Tel 01778 425815.

Australian-based biographer of late **Sqn Ldr David John Shannon DSO and Bar, DFC and Bar**, Australian Dam Buster is searching for family and friends of air and ground crews from 106 and 617 Sqns who flew worked and socialised with Shannon during WWII. e-mail Sandra Lee at tabloidbaby@mac.com or write to PO Box 722, Potts Point, NSW, 1335 Australia.

Seeking families of **Sgts Alexander Aitken and Alexander Glen RAF**, both of Glasgow, KIA when Wellington R3236 crashed 7.7.1940 near Jever Air Base, Germany. Contact relative of Fg Off Douglas Weatherall Lindsay (Wellington pilot) at dougaylward@talktalk.net

Seeking a volunteer genealogist. As we get more and more requests, Sud Ouest France Branch is looking to fill a gap in its current portfolio to help the branch with requests to help unearth family connections of aircrew who crashed and died whilst on missions over France. It seeks a "willing volunteer" to take on the genealogy task for the Branch. Interested then please contact Terry Dennett, Secretary of the Sud Ouest Branch via e-mail to: rafasof@orange.fr

Seeking contact with the family of **Wg Cdr Ken Nalson** who served in Blioa, North Africa 1943/44, also **Ray Ford** who was posted to Brindisi in 1944 after North Africa, **Flt Lt Ron Towell** HQ Unit MACAAF RAF CMF also **Bill Yardley**. If you can help please e-mail me with any details you may have at: ltjamesthepagoda@gmail.com

Old Colleagues

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

All personnel, serving ex-service or civilian, who have served at either **RAF Masirah or RAF Salalah** are invited to join the Masirah/Salalah Association for contacts, comradeship and future reunions. Contact membership secretary Colin Blakelock: cblakelock@rogers.com. All will be made welcome

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

WAAF/WRAF/RAF(W) Association warmly welcomes all as full members. £10 pa. Twice yearly magazines. AGM/Reunion, annual service St Clement Danes. Membership details contact: Linda Hamill 01472 232986. All other enquiries: Sandy Faloon 01753 582170

RAF Changi Association welcomes enquiries for membership. 1000 current members. Reunions, newsletters, buddy lists and meets. Membership Secretary M Flack 01494 728562 or www.rafchangi.co.uk

Welcome to personnel who served at **RAF Changi, incl HQFEAF 46/71**. Reunions, newsletters, contacts meet and greet. Contact M Flack 01494 728562 or www.rafchangi.co.uk

Further to last issue notice re Master Pilot Crawford Campbell (561292), his colleague's name received as **Paddy Blackwell-Smythe**. Any more info? Contact Eric (Paddy) Burke, 7 Egdon Drive, Luton LU2 7AZ or 01582 507185.

Seeking **Bernard DUBOCH**, lived in Essex. National Service RAF Regiment 1953-54? Also at Catterick. Fondly remembered friend. Would love to know if alive? Contact Eric Rimmer 01798 867666 or mail@ericrimmer.com. DO CALL.

RAF Administrative Apprentices Association. Welcomes all who trained as clerks or suppliers at Bircham Newton, St. Athan, Halton or Hereford. For details of your association contact Jim Wilcox 01452 863935 or www.rafadappassn.org

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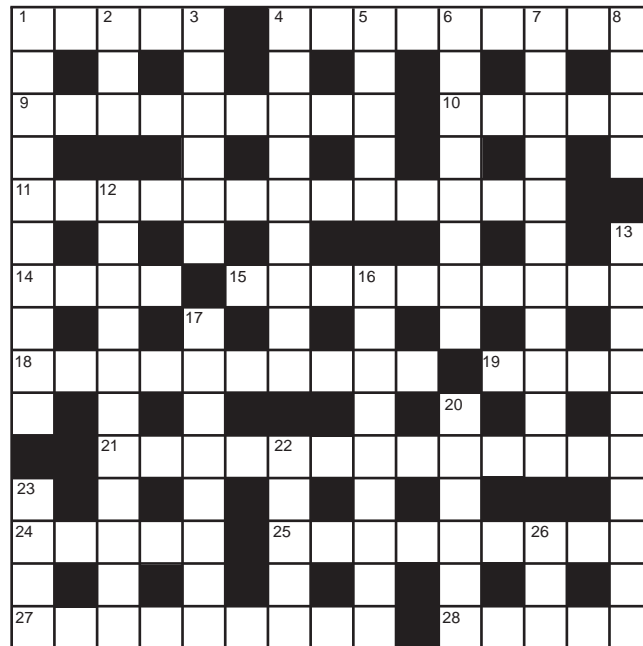
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NEW YEAR 2016 FUN CROSSWORD

by Enigma



Across

- 1 & 9** 1/1 (5,2,7)
- 4** George Cross awarded 'For ?' (9)
- 9** See 1 across
- 10** A feeling of anxiety (5)
- 11** 'It's' almost beyond belief (3,5,5)
- 14** Require part of one edition (4)
- 15** Perhaps relating to The Netherlands (10)
- 18** Precautionary confinement (10)
- 19** Aerobatic manoeuvre (4)
- 21** How one might get fresh air (4,3,6)
- 24** Result of first lady with her book (5)
- 25** Heavier-than-air powered machine (9)
- 27** Explained ethically (9)
- 28** Helicopter component goes round either way (5)

Down

- 1** A glider can do this to stay airborne (5,2,3)
- 2** British government in India (1838-1947) (3)
- 3** Andy's game (6)
- 4** Military accommodation for prisoners (9)
- 5** Faithful (5)
- 6** Alabama giving weapons with startling effect (8)
- 7** Uncommunicative (5-6)
- 8** Abominable snowman (4)
- 12** To work for the success of the candidate (11)
- 13** Starts on 1 & 9 across (3,3,4)
- 16** Large node possibly that rabbit might be (4-5)
- 17** From the East (8)
- 20** Captain loses his head to a fish (6)
- 22** Nets flapping sprat (5)
- 23** Laser ray of light (4)
- 26** Suitable apartment (3)

Notes

Solution to this crossword can be found on page 63

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New Year Crossword Solution

Across: 1 First; 4 Gallantry; 9 Of January; 10 Angst; 11 The giddy limit; 14 Need; 15 Hollandish; 18 Internment; 19 Spin; 21 Open the window; 24 Event; 25 Aeroplane; 27 Moralised; 28 Rotor.

Down: 1 Float on air; 2 Raj; 3 Tennis; 4 Guardroom; 5 Loyal; 6 Alarming; 7 Tight-lipped; 8 Yet; 12 Electioneer; 13 The New Year; 16 Long-eared; 17 Oriental; 20 Kipper; 22 Traps; 23 Beam; 26 Apt.

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