

AIR MAIL

WE'RE HERE TO KEEP YOU INFORMED

JANUARY - MARCH 2017

 ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association

The charity that supports the RAF family



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Registered Charity 226686 (England & Wales), SC037673 (Scotland).

Useful contact details

Useful RAF Association contact addresses and telephone numbers

AIR MAIL CONTACTS

Editorial/Advertising:
01892 600190
colin.pullen@rafatrad.co.uk

Branch News
01892 600191
BranchNews@rafatrad.co.uk

Editorial Office Postal Address:

RAFATRAD Ltd
Unit 3, 5 Sybron Way
Crowborough
TN6 3DZ

Views expressed in Air Mail are those of the contributors alone and do not represent policy of the RAF Association, except where shown. Reproduction of any part of this publication, text, photographs or illustrations is strictly forbidden without written permission from the editor.

The editor regrets that it is impossible to respond personally to all letters received except where the subject specifically necessitates a personal response.

While every effort is made to ensure information is accurate at the time of going to print, no responsibility can be accepted for loss or damage caused by published information found to be inaccurate.

Submissions for the April-June 2017 issue must be received at the editorial office no later than:

21 February 2017

Printed by:

Southern Print Ltd
17-21 Factory Road
Upton Ind Estate
Poole
BH16 5SN

ISSN 0002-2446

**Average distribution
Jan-Dec 2016 49,625 per issue**

COVER PICTURE

C17 being de-iced

© MoD/Crown

Headquarters The RAF Association

Atlas House
41 Wembley Road
Leicester
LE3 1UT

Telephone: 0116 266 5224

Website: www.rafa.org.uk

Area Office contact details

Northern

Area HQ and North West Office

Wings Centre
82-83 Fishergate
Preston
PR1 2NJ

Telephone: 01772 426930

North East Office

Halifax Block
RAF Linton-on-Ouse
YO30 2AJ

Telephone: 01347 847525/847496

South-East and Eastern

South East Office

46-50 Coombe Road
New Malden
Surrey, KT3 4QF

Telephone: 0203 823 8130/31

Area HQ and Eastern Office

Atlas House, 41 Wembley Road
Leicester, LE3 1UT

Telephone: Office 0116 266 5224
Welfare: 0116 268 8781/8782

Scotland and Northern Ireland

Area HQ and Scotland Office

20 Queen Street
Edinburgh, EH2 1JX

Telephone: 0131 225 5221

Northern Ireland Office

21 Talbot Street
Belfast, BT1 2LD

Telephone: 02890 325718

Wales, Midland and South Western

Area HQ and South Western Office

RAFA House, Chancel Lane
Pinhoe, Exeter EX4 8JU

Telephone: 01392 462088

Wales Office

Celynyn Collieries Institute
Memorial Hall
High Street, Newbridge
Newport, NP11 4FH

Telephone: 01495 249522

Midland Office

The Windermere Club
110 Wake Green Road
Moseley
Birmingham, B13 9PZ

Telephone: 0121 449 9356

Overseas

21 Talbot Street
Belfast, BT1 2LD

Telephone: 02890 325718

The RAF Families Federation

13-15 St Georges Road
Wittering
Peterborough
PE8 6DL

Telephone: 01780 781650
Website: www.raf-ff.org.uk

Flowerdown House

55 Beach Road
Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1BH

Telephone: 01934 621664

Rothbury House

West End, Rothbury
Morpeth, NE65 7TT

Telephone: 01669 620235

Richard Peck House

1 St Thomas Road
Lytham St Annes, FY8 1JL

Telephone: 01253 725519

CONTENTS

Inside the January-March 2017 issue

The charity that supports the RAF family



NEWS

NEWS 02

Messages and Association news

MEMBERSHIP 7

Subscription prices 2017/2018

SPORTS UPDATE 12

Association supported sports

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 20

Details of the 2017 Conference

TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT 29

Chris Goss – Elected Member

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT 30

Shawn Marston - National Standard Bearer

OTHER FEATURES

MILITARY WORKING DOGS 39

Corporal Butler and Military Working Dog Eron

OPERATION CORSICAN 54

The story of the first SOE operation

REGULARS

BRANCH NEWS 42

News from around the Association

WORLD MILITARY NEWS 56

Military aviation news

OBITUARIES 60

Last flights

NOTICES 61

Help, Old Colleagues and Reunions



New Year's message from the President

Three years ago in my January 2014 New Year message I sought your permission to continue as the Association President for a further three years – we had just begun an important journey together and I simply could not summon the will to step down when so much of the future of the Association still hung in the balance. Collectively, we had agreed to take resolute action to increase membership, bear down on costs and provide more effective support to branches and clubs. This was all very easy to say, but a great deal more difficult to do in practice, particularly as it needed us all to think about the Association, what we do and how we do it in a manner unfamiliar to many of us. Now, three years later, reflecting on how far we have come on that journey, how much the Association has grown and developed, how determined you have all been in ensuring that we remain relevant to the RAF family and your pride that we are now one of the leading charities in the military sector, it is with very mixed feelings that I pen my final New Year message as your President.

None of us are comfortable with change, and that is simply part of the human condition, but change has had to come through the need to recognise new and emerging legislation, and the need to adapt our practices to the ever changing environment in which we live, work and support our colleagues. We have started to learn to do the right things, and do them well, while at the same time occasionally stopping doing things that perhaps we have done for many years that do not actually add to the quality or the value of the Association or our work. I have been immensely proud of your willingness to get stuck in and help wherever you have been able, and I am endlessly grateful for your enduring trust, without which we would by now be greatly diminished and would be facing a very bleak future. My pride and gratitude embrace all those who have brought us to where we are today, be they members, volunteers or employees – you have each individually and collectively helped us turn the all-important corner. There is still much to do, but I know you can do it.



In some parts of the world, pretty much anyone can be President, but not so the Royal Air Forces Association, and I have taken great care to seek the right person as my successor. In November the Council approved the nomination of Air Marshal Sir Barry (Baz) North KCB OBE MA FRAeS RAF, the immediate past Deputy Commander Capability and Air Member for Personnel & Capability, and I hope you will endorse their recommendation and support by acclaim the appointment of Sir Baz at the next Annual Conference in May. Frankly, they do not come any better than Sir Baz and, with your approval, I will hand over to him in the certain knowledge that he will do an outstanding job in the years ahead and the Association will continue to grow with increasing strength and increasing confidence. It is impossible to sum up on one page what being part of the Association has meant to me. It has become a very major part of my life and it has been an honour and a privilege to have served you all. I have met countless inspiring members and volunteers who freely give their time with no desire for reward or recognition – they do so because it is what they have always done and because people need them. Nevertheless, thank you most sincerely; without you we are nothing, as you are the enduring backbone of the Association from the distant past, through the present, to the foreseeable future.

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

Sir Dusty Miller
President

New Year message from the Secretary General

The last three years have seen a transformation in the RAF Association and we have all made huge strides in the areas of membership and welfare – the two reasons our Association exists.

We, with the backing of Council, continue to invest in our services and our people, employees, members and volunteers alike. This is essential to meet the changing and increasing welfare needs of the RAF family, as well as the changing priorities of our members. One activity from last year that really brought home the current and future need for the Association was the Keeping in Touch campaign. This was originally started to encourage previous members to rejoin the Association, but it quickly became evident that many people who had once been a part of the Association now needed our help. Some people had lost touch with us when their local branch closed, some were simply unable to travel to branch meetings and some were incredibly lonely – one person said that our call was the first time they had spoken to someone in three weeks.

At this point Keeping in Touch became a welfare campaign, with the focus of the call being to check that those who had once helped others by being members received help if they now needed it. This reaffirmed the need for our befriending service, which is slowly but steadily growing each month.

Although we have come a long way, there remains a number of cultural challenges for the Association. We must continue to adapt to sustain the growth in membership after a long period of decline. It is the responsibility of all of us, employees and members, to keep on recruiting members – sometimes it's as easy as just asking a former RAF colleague to join. You'd be surprised how often this works.

The leadership of Council has been vital in both recognising the challenges we face and giving the management and wider headquarters team the resources necessary to meet them. It would be naïve of me to say that we have always made the right decision in recent years, but they have always been made for the right reasons. Sustaining our membership growth and ensuring we meet the changing needs of the RAF family will remain the focus for 2017.

I would like to finish by wishing you all a very happy and peaceful New Year.

Nick Bunting
Secretary General



Presidential Certificates and Honours

Fourteen 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.

James Brandon – Bodmin Branch

Mike Davis – Poole Branch

Mike Facey – Neath Branch

Mr and Mrs Kelsey – Littlehampton Branch

Mr and Mrs Latin – Morecambe/Lancaster Branch

Bill Paterson – Ormskirk Branch

Mr and Mrs Sach – Colchester Branch

Pauline Skellon – RAF Association Concert Band

Terry and Beryl Dennett Stannard – Sud-Ouest Branch

Gordon Watson – Cranwell Branch

100th birthday celebrations

Dover Branch member Alfred Meadows, turned 100 years old in November 2016. Alfred served as a navigator on Mosquitoes during the Second World War, as part of 608 Pathfinder Squadron until the end of the war. After retiring from the RAF he trained as a teacher, remaining in the profession until he retired.

Jack Lovell (pictured right) also celebrated his 100th birthday in 2016, and in February, he is turning 101. Jack served in the RAF throughout the Second World War, in Italy, England and Africa. He retired from the RAF in the 1960s having reached the rank of Wing Commander.

Many happy returns to Alfred and Jack, on their milestone celebrations. If you or an Association member you know has celebrated their 100th birthday, please email marketing@rafa.org.uk with brief details and attach a high resolution photograph or two. If you prefer the post, you can write to the team at the Headquarters address, enclosing photographs, which will be returned.



RAF Benevolent Fund news

Affordable breaks for RAF veterans at Princess Marina House

It may be cold outside but a warm welcome awaits you at Princess Marina House, the RAF Benevolent Fund's flagship welfare break centre in Rustington, West Sussex. One or two week-long breaks are available to RAF veterans, including RAF Association members, and their spouses.

There's nowhere quite like Princess Marina House where you can catch up with old friends or meet some new faces and share service tales! Highly skilled staff are available should you or your spouse need care or a respite break, while guests can enjoy all the comforts of home including home-cooked meals and a full range of organised activities and entertainment.

From 9 January 2017 to 6 February 2017 winter warmer weeks can be booked at a discount price of £250–280 a week, including breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Welfare assistance is available to help with accommodation and transport costs depending on financial status. To book visit www.rafbf.org/PMH or call 01903 784 044.

Come dine with us

Another new service reaching out to help RAF veterans make friends and meet people from a similar background is our daily Lunch Clubs. Held at Princess Marina House, Lunch Clubs offer veterans a delicious three course meal, afternoon activities and homemade tea and cakes, all within a beautiful setting, for just £8. To book your place or for more information call 01903 784 044 or visit www.rafbf.org/lunchclub

Respite at Home

Finally, for those living within 15 miles of Rustington, we have launched our Respite at Home service offering up to five hours of support to relieve loneliness and to offer respite to informal carers for just £5 per hour. For more information email RespiteAtHome@rafbf.org.uk or contact 01903 788952.



Winter maintenance on rare Lancaster aircraft can be seen by visitors to Duxford

The Royal Air Force Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's Avro Lancaster recently arrived at the Aircraft Restoration Company's new Stephenson Hangar at Imperial War Museum Duxford (IWM). The Lancaster, the sole flying example in Europe of the most successful heavy bomber of the Second World War, will undergo major maintenance work over the winter months.

For the first time, visitors to IWM Duxford will be able to see the maintenance work in progress from a viewing gallery on the ground floor of the hangar. Included in the major inspection is the servicing of all of the instrument systems and undercarriage.

Following the major inspection, the aircraft will be repainted in a new scheme that commemorates the sacrifice of thousands of Bomber Command aircrew during the bombing campaign of the Second World War.

The major service is due to be completed in April 2017.

For more information, please visit www.iwm.org.uk or call 01223 835000.



Cleveland Way challenge

Four personnel from RAF Leeming walked the entire length of the Cleveland Way, aiming to raise as much money as possible for the RAF Association.

Sergeant Kane, Corporal Worton, Senior Aircraftmen Conroy and MacDuff began the 109-mile hike through the North Yorkshire Moors National Park at Helmsley. From there they headed across the beautiful heather moorland, before reaching the coast at Saltburn. They then followed the coastal path along the dramatic North Yorkshire coastline down to Filey. Morale was high throughout the walk, although every uphill climb was coupled with sweat and tears.

Sergeant Kane said after the event: "The walk went really well, with many injuries to all concerned! The end goal was to raise as much money as possible for a fantastic cause, which we are all passionate about."

In total the fundraisers raised £561.17. A brilliant achievement, for a really challenging event.



B&B help for separated families

The RAF Association has extended its help to separated serving RAF families. Funding has been provided to refurbish contact houses on RAF stations for several years. These provide safe, comfortable places for separated families to spend time together.

Unfortunately these contact houses are in such high demand that some families are struggling to find room. The Association has stepped in to help and will provide up to two nights' bed and breakfast accommodation for those serving personnel with a welfare need.

Better combat compensation – have your say

Members of the Armed Forces and their families are set to receive bigger compensation payments for injuries or death sustained in combat, Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon has announced.

The Ministry of Defence has launched a consultation on proposals to deliver better compensation in future combat situations. Under the new enhanced scheme, individuals or their families will be awarded better compensation for injury or death in combat, without having to bring lengthy and costly legal cases.

When death or injury is as a result of combat, the long-held common law principle of 'combat immunity' means those affected are not able to get court-awarded compensation for negligence. That can force them into difficult, long and expensive litigation to persuade the courts that this principle should not apply, arguing that the negligence arose at a point before combat, e.g. in training or decisions about equipment.

The new scheme, proposed by the MOD, means that those injured or killed in combat situations will get payments equal to the often larger amounts paid out in court cases, without having to go through that costly and stressful litigation.

The consultation will seek views on things like the definition of combat and how the new scheme should operate. The MOD will consider the outcomes of the consultation closely, and it is hoped that scheme will be implemented as quickly as possible. The consultation is now open and will run until 2345hrs on 23 February 2017. For more information visit www.gov.uk and search for 'better combat compensation'.



Photo: © MoD/Crown

If the cap fits!



Warrant Officer Roberts, RAF Association Liaison Officer to the Sheringham and District Branch and Station Warrant Officer at RAF Marham, arranged a presentation of a 'spare' cap for branch member Terry Haycock. Terry lost his Warrant Officer forage cap in 1945 and had not forgotten!

Terry joined the RAF in 1943 and trained as an Air Engineer. In 1944 he joined 101 Squadron, flying on Lancasters. Having completed his 30 missions, Terry went on to serve in India, as part of the administrative team working to bring back wounded Prisoners of War and returning personnel from all three services. He later moved to Saigon to help returning personnel from South East Asia.

Terry commented that although he was very pleased and honoured to receive the replacement cap, it was a bit small!



The Skype's the limit for 95 year-old blind RAF veteran

Thanks to the vital support of Blind Veterans UK, vision-impaired ex-Service men and women can learn essential new skills to discover life beyond sight loss.

RAF veteran, Bob Feltham, has taken to Facebook and Skype, with the help of IT training from the charity. Now, at the age of 95, Bob is able to use social media to keep in contact with his family and friends for the first time ever.

Bob was born in 1921 and enlisted in the RAF at the age of 19. He served in the UK and then in Egypt during the Second World War before he was discharged five years later in 1946.

By 2015 age-related macular degeneration had robbed Bob of most of his vision. He found this extremely tough, as he could no longer do many of the things he used to.

Bob said: "I would recommend Blind Veterans UK to any vision-impaired veteran. The support and advice has made a big difference to me. I'd urge other veterans to get in contact, all you've got to do is ask."



If you, or someone you know, served in the Armed Forces or did National Service and are now battling severe sight loss, find out how Blind Veterans UK could help by calling 0800 389 7979 or visiting noonealone.org.uk

RAF Scampton got the kettle on to host Brew for the Few

RAF Scampton RAF Association Liaison Officers have been busy fundraising with a Brew for the Few. The Hawk Room in the Barnes Wallis Community Centre was set up and decorated with Association banners and a stall, with a main table full of cakes.

The team was very grateful to all those that donated cakes to the event, as well as to ISS, who donated tea and coffee. The word went out and the room started to fill with personnel wanting to give donations for a slice of cake and a cuppa. The cakes sold fast, especially the Mars Bar crispy cakes. Through the generosity of station personnel, as well as civilian staff and visitors, the team raised £148.49.

If you would like to hold a Brew for the Few visit www.rafa.org.uk/brew or call the team on 0116 268 8758 to get a printed copy of the fundraising pack.



Membership subscriptions 2017/2018 - prices held from 2015/2016

Category	2017/2018 membership fee
Ordinary Member – 1 year	£20.50
Ordinary Member – 4 year	£78.00 (Existing 4 year members only)
Associate Member – 1 year – Air Mail	£14.50
Associate Member – 1 year – No Air Mail	£8.50
Associate Member – 4 year – Air Mail	£55.50 (Existing 4 year members only)
Associate Member – 4 year – No Air Mail	£30.50 (Existing 4 year members only)
Give As You Earn (GAYE) Serving RAF (Gross payment before basic tax relief)	£25.68
(Net payment after basic tax relief)	£20.52

Following the decisions of Annual Conference 2016, from 1 January 2017 a number of changes were introduced to the membership criteria.

Cessation of membership

The grace period for the lapsing of a membership has changed from 90 days to one month. See Byelaw 7 – Membership – Subscriptions.

Membership will cease if a renewal subscription is not paid within 30 days of the end of the membership period. For all members to date, the end of the grace period is 31 January 2017. If a member renews after that time, their membership will run to the end of the 2017 calendar year, even if they renew in December 2017. If a member does not renew until 2018, they will transfer from calendar membership to anniversary membership (see below). They will retain their original membership number.

Anniversary memberships

Anniversary memberships will apply to all new members who join the Association from 1 January 2017. For example, if a member joins the Association on 31 August 2017, their membership will be valid until 30 August 2018.

Multiple branches

A member may now be a member of as many branches, including branch committees, as they wish. Members have to nominate one primary (or home) branch and the nominated branch will receive the membership rebate. The member will only pay one membership subscription, irrespective of their membership of other branches.

Members will only receive a membership card for their primary branch.

Members of a primary branch may sit on the committees of other branches. This will be reflected on the F1056 forms, which all branches are required to submit annually to the Association's Headquarters.

The Association's membership database will only record a member's primary branch.

If you have any questions about any of the above you can email membership@rafa.org.uk or call 0800 0182 361.

New RAF Association scheme rewards members

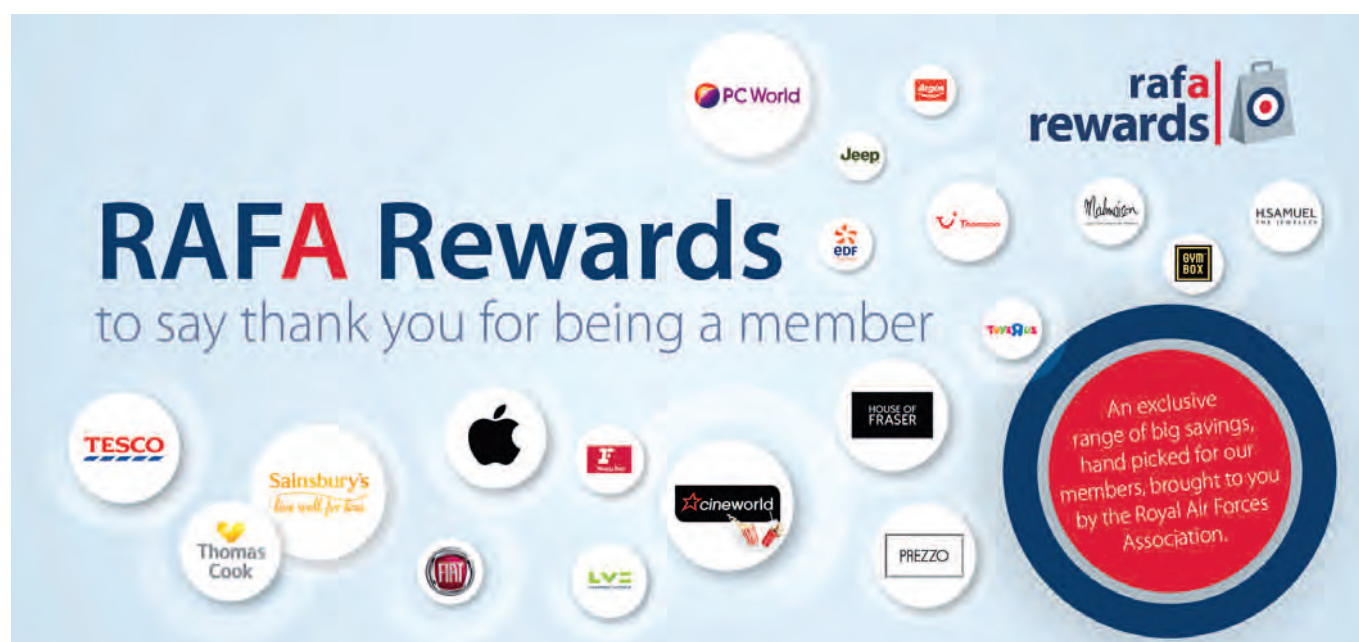
The Association has launched a new scheme to give members discounts on a wide range of products and services*. David Prowse, Director of Membership and Operations at the Association, said: "Many of our members join us for the friendship that comes from being part of a branch. Many join to support our welfare work. Our new RAFA Rewards scheme allows members to get something back, whatever their reason for joining."



Discounts available include up to 15 per cent off in high street stores, 10 per cent off books at Foyles and five per cent off holidays from big names like Thomson, Cosmos and Thomas Cook. Film buffs can save up to 40 per cent at Showcase, Cineworld or Empire cinemas. For those that want to learn more about technology and computers, training courses on Microsoft Word, Excel or PowerPoint are half price. With further discounts on golf membership and new cars there's something for everyone.

Members can also reduce their insurance costs, with savings of up to 10 per cent on car insurance and 20 per cent on travel insurance – plus discounts on private medical insurance.

RAFA Rewards is only open to Association members. To find out how much you could save with your RAFA Rewards, try our savings calculator at www.rafa.org.uk/rewards after emailing membership@rafa.org.uk for the password. Each offer requires a different code or way of accessing it, so if you do not have access to a computer, you can request a very brief description of each offer and the relevant phone number to call for each by calling 0800 0182 361.



*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits, see website for more details. Offers are subject to change without notice. Insurance subject to underwriting. RAFA Rewards is managed on behalf of the RAF Association by Parliament Hill Ltd of 3rd Floor, 127 Cheapside, London, EC2V 6BT who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for noninvestment insurance mediation only under registration number 308448. Details can be checked on the Financial Services register by visiting the FCA's web site at <https://www.fca.org.uk/>

Frequently asked Wills questions

Here our Wills partner, Beneficial Trust and Will Company (BTWC), answers more of your questions on managing your estate. More questions and answers will appear in future issues of Air Mail or you can visit the Association's website to see the full list.

I own my house jointly with my spouse, is this important?

How you own your property will determine how it passes on after your death. As 'joint tenants' your share will pass to your surviving spouse automatically. If you wish to pass your interest in the property to your children to ensure they inherit in the future, you may wish to consider changing the way you own your property to 'tenants in common'. You can then create a trust within your will to determine what happens to the property while your spouse is still alive and after they pass away.

There's much talk about care fees at the moment, should I be worried?

We all know that the social care system is under pressure and that we should expect to have to contribute something to our future care should we need it, whether that's home help or residential care. Planning can help ensure you and the people you nominate to support you via a trust arrangement can ensure you and your family remain in control of how your assets are apportioned and used in the future.

For more information on Wills and estate planning, please contact Vinny Manak. You can email her using vinny.manak@rafa.org.uk or call 0116 268 8791.

Thanks to our Wings appeal volunteers

A huge thank you to everyone that collected on behalf of the RAF Association last year. We are reliant on the funds raised to carry on the vital welfare work that we do and we would not be able to raise so much without our teams of fantastic fundraisers.

From street collections, to bag packing or holding a Brew for the Few, our members and supporters once again worked tirelessly to promote the Association and raise funds.

If you would like to fundraise for the Association you can contact the community fundraising team by emailing wings@rafa.org.uk or by calling 0116 268 8797. You can also get in touch with your local branch and see what fundraising opportunities they have in your community.

Tandem challenge raises over £300

Norman and Sylvia Powell, aged 78 and 76, cycled on their vintage tandem from the site of the former RAF Bridgnorth at Stanmore Park to RAF Cosford, on to RAF Shawbury and back to raise funds for the RAF Association – a total of 80 miles. They were given an official send off by the Mayor of Bridgnorth.

On arrival at RAF Cosford they were met by Wing Commander Tim Mason, Officer Commanding Base Support Wing, for official photographs. After a quick cup of tea, they headed off to RAF Shawbury.

The weather deteriorated and they arrived on time at RAF Shawbury just as a thunderstorm erupted. They had lunch in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess. Despite the heavy rain, they returned to the gate to meet Group Captain Jason Appleton for more official photographs before setting off on their return journey.

It rained most of the way back to RAF Cosford, where they were greeted for more photographs and another cup of tea, before once again setting off in driving rain on the last leg of their journey.

Norman and Sylvia arrived back at RAF Bridgnorth at 6pm having achieved their goal and astounding those who followed them every step of the way.

Our warmest thanks go to the Commanding Officers and personnel of RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury for their superb support in allowing this epic journey to take place.

So far the tandeming two have raised over £300.



Norman and Sylvia arriving at RAF Cosford



Despite the heavy rain they pose for a photograph at RAF Shawbury

Grand Draw success for Vicky

Sergeant Vicky Stewart of RAF Halton received her RAF Association Grand Draw tickets with Air Mail and thought she'd 'give it a go'. Having paid for her tickets online she forgot she'd entered. It therefore came as something of a surprise to receive a letter telling her she had won the top prize of a car.

Vicky said: "It was a complete shock to win, but a nice shock! I chose to take the cash equivalent and I've used some of the money to pay off my credit card, but I will use most of it for a trip to America I'm planning for later this year to celebrate a milestone birthday."

The 2017 Grand Draw will be launched in May, so look out for your tickets on the address sheet of the July issue of Air Mail. Every £1 spent on a ticket helps us support members of the RAF family when they need us most.



Challenge yourself to a challenge event

As the season of over indulgence draws to a close, you may be thinking of ways to kick-start a new fitness drive or what sort of challenge you would like to set yourself for 2017. The RAF Association is here to help, with lots of challenge events to choose from to keep fit and raise money for a worthwhile cause.

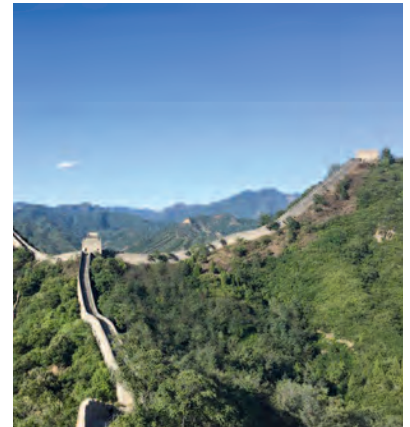
The Edinburgh Marathon Festival on 27-28 May has a variety of distances to suit many levels and ages. Runners will get to see the beautiful scenery of the city, while running around landmarks including Arthur's Seat or Holyrood Park.

The London to Paris cycle ride will have participants feeling like they are in the Tour de France! Taking place from 19-23 July, the four-day trip will encompass the beautiful British countryside, as well as the sights and sounds of beautiful Paris. What's more, cyclists will be able to see the final stage of the Tour de France, after completing it themselves.

If you like the wind in your hair, why not try wing walking? The Association has places available for a lucky few. Strapped to the top of a 1940s biplane, fundraisers will spend around 12 minutes in the air as the pilot whizzes around performing dives, climbs and flypasts. This is a rare opportunity and spaces are likely to fill up fast.

For something a little further afield, why not take on an overseas challenge? One of the most popular trips is trekking the Great Wall of China. It will be nine days of challenging hikes, along the ancient and beautiful wall, while having a little time to explore the wonders of this historic and breathtaking country.

To kick-start your 2017 with a challenge, get in touch with the team via email jules@rafa.org.uk or call 0800 0182 361. Minimum fundraising amounts apply.



Darlington Branch gets help online from local air cadets

Many branches have been taking up our offer of a free branch website. In 2016 almost 70 branch websites using the new template were completed, with plenty more in the pipeline. Darlington Branch came up with a marvellous way of combining this new technology with their local air cadet squadron.

Peter McGraghan, Vice-Chairman of the branch, is planning on taking on a senior air cadet to update the site with all of the latest branch news, events and volunteering opportunities. In return, the cadet will be able to use this opportunity to work towards their Prince's Trust Award Project. This mutually beneficial arrangement will bring the links between cadets and the branch ever closer and we think it's a fantastic way of sharing knowledge and skills.

If you want to set up your own branch website or to move from your current site to the Association's template, do get in touch. An online submission form for branch websites can be found at www.rafa.org.uk/promotion.

LIBOR fines to alleviate loneliness

The RAF Association will be putting cash recovered from a major banking scandal to good use, following the award of almost £500,000 from LIBOR fines to the charity in the Chancellor's 2016 Autumn Statement.

The grant will be used to fund the Association's befriending scheme, providing much-needed support to thousands of RAF veterans and their families across the UK and further afield. It will pair isolated veterans or family members with volunteers from within their local community, creating new friendships and ensuring no member of the RAF family is forgotten.

The LIBOR grant funding will be used over the next three years to recruit and train volunteers throughout the UK, as well as providing awareness programmes for those who could benefit from the scheme.

Rachel Huxford, Fundraising Director, Royal Air Forces Association, said: "We are delighted that the RAF Association has been chosen to receive these funds, as announced in the Autumn Statement. It will transform our ability to rescue thousands of members of the RAF family from loneliness.

"I urge anyone who could benefit from the scheme – or anyone who knows someone who they think needs support – to contact us via www.rafa.org.uk/befriending or 0800 0182 361."



Tom's Mam Tor challenge



Tom McCarthy, rafa YOUTH member and cadet from Woodford and Bramhall (55) Squadron Air Training Corps marked the 75th anniversary of Air Cadets last year by climbing Mam Tor in Derbyshire 75 times in 24 hours. This equates to around 24 miles of climbing and descending.

Tom raised over £380 for the RAF Association in the process.

Thank you Tom!

Green plaque for youngest airman to receive VC



Members of the RAF Association, including two standard bearers from local branches, join John Hannah's family at green plaque unveiling

A brave gunner who used his hands to put out a fire on board his bomber was awarded a green plaque, thanks to a nomination by the RAF Association.

More than 100 people attended the unveiling of John Hannah's green plaque at Birstall British Legion, home of the Association's Birstall Branch, which is the 11th plaque put up by Leicestershire County Council to honour notable people from the county.

Flight Sergeant John Hannah became the youngest-ever airman to be awarded the Victoria Cross in 1940 after receiving severe burns during a bombing raid against invasion barges moored off Belgium on 15 September of that year. The 18 year old was credited with saving the bomber and those on board when he put out a blaze that started after the aircraft was hit by flak from anti-aircraft artillery.

The cockpit, which contained ammunition, filled with smoke and became increasingly hot because of the blaze, during which two of the crew bailed out. After using up the aircraft's fire extinguisher, John used his hands to put out the remaining flames and the aircraft made it back to England. He was taken to hospital near Lincoln. It was his last mission.

He spent the rest of his life in Birstall, Leicester, but passed away due to illness in 1947, two years after the end of the war.

RAF 100 update

On 1 April 2018 the RAF will mark the centenary of its formation as the world's first independent air force. Numerous activities and events will be taking place across the UK from 2017 until the end of September 2018. If you haven't already, do let us know if your branch or area are planning any centenary events via RAF100@rafa.org.uk

The anniversary gives us a great opportunity to increase both income and profile with the RAF100 Appeal. This is a joint venture between the RAF and four major RAF charities: the Royal Air Forces Association, the RAF Benevolent Fund, the RAF Charitable Trust and the RAF Museum. The aim of the appeal is to raise money for the RAF family and to create a lasting legacy.

The appeal forms part of the wider RAF100 initiative that seeks to commemorate the achievements of the RAF and all those who have served. At the same time the appeal celebrates the vital contribution that the RAF continues to make, inspiring both the public and the RAF family as we look forward to the next 100 years.

Donations made to the RAF100 Appeal will be distributed equally between the five organisations at the end of the appeal period to enhance their support of the RAF and its people. The fifth organisation, the RAF, will nominate specific charitable projects to which its share of the proceeds will be allocated.

Donations can be made online at <http://raf100appeal.org>

Sports update

Becci set to foil her opponents thanks to the RAF Association

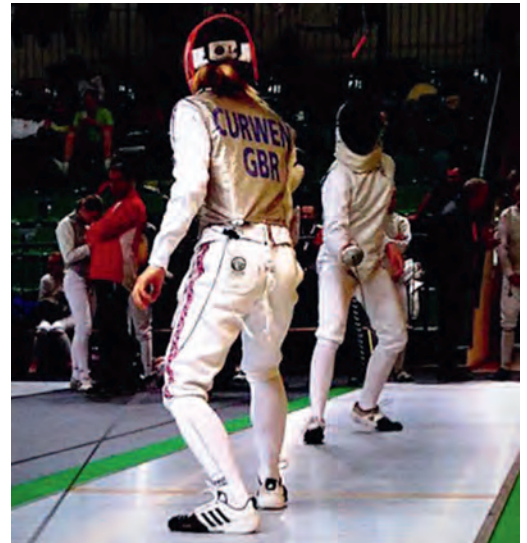
The RAF Association helps many people to achieve their dreams. Like student, Becci Curwen, who finds time in between schoolwork and air cadet meetings, to be a top Great British fencer.

At just 15 years old, Becci is part of the GB under 17 Fencing Foil team, and at the end of last season ranked sixth in England and 24th in Great Britain. She has now jumped to 13th place in the GB rankings, after some fantastic results.

Becci's parents are no stranger to the Association's work, with dad a part of the RAF Apprenticeship Management Team and her mum working for the Ministry of Defence, and helping to organise Becci's cadet squadron.

Becci's achievements are more remarkable because of the learning difficulties she tackles every day: Asperger's Syndrome, dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Irlen's Syndrome (a visual processing disorder). Fencing provides Becci with a focus, not just in the sporting arena, (her goal is to be picked for the 2024 Olympics) but also academically. It gives her more co-ordination, develops her memory and communication skills, and gives her a sense of self-worth.

Rory O'Connor, Director of Welfare and Policy said: "We are thrilled to be supporting Becci and know that her drive and determination will help her to achieve her goals!" We look forward to sharing her progress as she works her way up the rankings.



London Elite and a French farewell

After a mixed season, Hannah Lord has decided to say farewell to triathlon, at least for now. Here is how the final races of her season went and her plans for the future:

"The Quiberon Grand Prix was my last race of the season, and what a race. It was a 750m sea swim with a long beach start, after working my way up the field I came out with three other girls from Team Libourne. Once on the bike we bridged the gap to the front pack, unfortunately dragging the rest of the group with us. I came into transition two in a great position and once I found my running legs, came through to finish in 17th place.

"After a bittersweet summer, I started an exciting job for a drug development company in London. With limited time, I plan to concentrate more on cycling in terms of racing and running for enjoyment. A huge thank you to everyone that has supported me over my short love affair with triathlon. To my coaches and to the RAF Association, whom without I couldn't have done all the races overseas."

Roundall Racing update

As the season comes to a close and the dark nights have drawn in, things in the motorcycle short circuit racing world start to take a very different route. Many get out the motocross bikes, aiming to stay bike fit. For others it means time to strip down or rebuild their race bike, for Roundall Racing it's a rebuild. After buying a 1971 Honda CB350 K4, Simon decided to turn it into a beautiful race bike and join the Classic Racing Motorcycle Club.

The build has been a little tricky to say the least, as it is being done remotely while Simon is in Cyprus on Search and Rescue duties. The engine is now built and with some excellent internal work, should reach a respectable top speed. However, there is much more to work on in the bike before the season starts. As you can see from the images though, it is coming along quite nicely.





RAF Athletics Association sprint to a successful 2016 thanks to Association support

The RAF Association is not just dedicated to helping individuals reach their potential, but also supports teams to achieve their targets. One of those teams is the RAF Athletics Association. We spoke to Mike Kallenberg, team spokesperson and long distance runner to find out how the 2016 season went.

"2016 was a great success for the team, after winning numerous titles at Inter-Service level. The number of personnel involving themselves in athletics increased dramatically, which was wonderful to see.

"With athletics and cross-country teams looking strong and having some real depth to them, we are really looking forward to all of next year's matches. In particular the Inter-Service championships. We are also looking forward to planning athletics events for the RAF's centenary in 2018.

"We are thrilled to have a great relationship with the RAF Association and thank them for their ongoing support into the 2017 season. The next event for the Athletics Association will be the Inter-Service cross-country event on 15 February 2017."

We will be keeping you up to date with the RAF Athletics Association throughout the 2017 season, but if you want to keep up to speed yourself, you can follow on Facebook www.facebook.com/RAFathletics/ or Twitter www.twitter.com/rafathletics.

Triathlon duo end the season on a high

Flight Lieutenants Ben Terry and Lynsey Carveth recently represented Team GB in the Age Group World Triathlon Championships in Cozumel, Mexico. Ben was first on the start line in the 'Aquathlon', crossing the finish line in sixth place in the highly competitive 30-34 age group.

Only a day later, they both lined up for the sprint race, with Lynsey finishing in 17th position in her age group and as the third European across the line. After a slow start in the swim, Ben crossed the line in a sprint finish for seventh place and was the first European.

With the standard race just 72 hours later, both athletes worked hard during the bike stage, conserving energy for a challenging and hot run. Lynsey crossed the line for 23rd overall and third European, while Ben finished in 10th, the highest placed European.

They capped off a successful season at the end of season dinner, with both athletes winning awards in recognition of their 2016 performances. Lynsey was crowned the RAF Ladies Duathlete of the season and Ben picked up the award for RAF Male Triathlete of the year.

We congratulate them both and look forward to following their progress this year.



For more information, take a look at page 8 and see how you can claim your rewards

Glasgow Wings Café opens

Glasgow Wings Café was launched on 11 November 2016 to will provide a community hub for the RAF family and supporters every Friday from 1000 to 1400 hrs. The café will be run by the Glasgow Branch in partnership with Cathcart Old Parish Church (where the café is located) and will provide an opportunity for people from the local community to meet and enjoy a relaxing brew and a bacon butty.

The event, which coincided with Armistice Day, was supported by members of the Glasgow Branch, 612 Reserve Squadron, Glasgow Armed Forces Careers Office and people from the local community in Cathcart. The 40 strong crowd also took part in a Remembrance Service held at the War Memorial in the grounds of Cathcart Old Parish Church.



Joe Stanfield, Area Director for Scotland and Northern Ireland described the event as: "A successful opening to what we hope will be a successful venture for the Royal Air Forces Association."

Mental Health First Aid

The RAF Association is dedicated to supporting all members of the RAF family, whatever they may be going through. The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Lite course offers an introduction to mental health and mental health issues, and gives participants the tools to help support those with mental health problems and relate to their experiences.

Employees and volunteers attended a MHFA Lite workshop in late 2016, as part of the Association's commitment to ensuring we can give the best possible support to our members and beneficiaries.

Pete Brocklehurst, Community Fundraising Manager, said: "I found the course really helpful. It taught me a lot about the stigma around mental health and will help me to empathise with those dealing with mental health problems."

Jenny Gammon, Welfare Project Development Officer at the Association, said: "We are pleased to be able to offer the MHFA Lite course, which breaks down barriers surrounding mental health issues and helps us to support people in distress. It also provides an introduction to those undertaking the course on looking after their own mental health. We will be releasing dates for 2017 courses very soon."



Museum benefits for Association members

As well as a great range of discounts available to members via RAFA Rewards, we have negotiated the following for Association members.

- Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre (01790 763207) – 2-for-1 entry
- Dumfries and Galloway Aviation Museum (01387 251623) – 20 per cent entry discount
- 1940s Swansea Bay (01792 458864) – 2-for-1 entry
- de Havilland Aircraft Museum, Hertfordshire (01727 826400) – entry discount

Please contact each museum directly for more details.



Fundraisers take to the air for the RAF Association

When Bryony Fuller jumped out of an aeroplane to raise money for the RAF Association, she stepped into the shoes of the RAF Falcons Parachute Display team – literally. Bryony's own slip-on shoes were not appropriate for the fall from 12,000 feet so one of the Falcons whipped off his lace-up trainers!

Bryony was one of eight fundraisers who volunteered to do a sponsored parachute jump over Hinton-in-the-Hedges airfield in Northamptonshire. Once again, the Falcons were on hand to take them on the tandem skydives. Four members of 1440 (Shoreham-by-Sea) Squadron ATC were among those who took part, along with two of the team from the Association's Leicester headquarters.

The jump was a particular challenge for 64-year-old Bryony who suffered serious spinal injuries in a fall in 2008. Her doctor, physiotherapist, son George and daughter Claire told her to 'go for it'. George drove up from London to support his mum from the ground but was persuaded to extend that support by jumping alongside her!



Like all the fundraisers once they were back on the ground, she searched for the words to sum up her experience: "Gee whizzaroo! Fantastic! It was totally and completely mad! Thank you to the Falcons and thank you everyone who has given money to us to support the wonderful RAF Association."

Congratulations are also due to our seven fantastic wing walkers, who took raising money to new heights, as they were strapped to the top of a 1940s biplane. The wing walks lasted approximately 12 minutes and the pilot performed a series of flypasts, zoom climbs, steep dives and banks, while our daredevil fundraisers hung on tight.

Our wing walkers have to date raised around £3,000 and the skydivers almost £4,000.

If this has inspired you to take on a challenge and raise funds, then contact jules@rafa.org.uk or call 0800 0182 361.

Jim the Jet Provost flies in with a donation

Amanda Cundall, author of *Jim the Jet Provost*, has generously donated £300 to the Association thanks to sales of the children's book. Thank you Jim, Amanda and everyone who bought the book.

Copies can be bought for the young aviation enthusiast in your family from www.jimthejetprovost.co.uk



Top tips for recruiting new members

Here David Prowse, Director of Membership and Operations, shares some top tips from across the Association for recruiting members. He said: "All of us can recruit members, it's not just something for branch committee members or the membership team at headquarters. Sometimes you just need to ask!"

- Dig out your Christmas card lists and address books. Do you have friends or relatives that serve or have served but aren't members? Ask them to join!
- Go through your email contacts and send any current or former RAF colleagues a link to the Association joining page www.rafa.org.uk/members/become-a-member/
- For those of you active online, ask your friends and contacts on Facebook, Forces Reunited, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat etc to join.

This is just three ways to encourage new members to join. What works for you? Email marketing@rafa.org.uk with your suggestions and we'll share some of the best ones in future issues of Air Mail.

Scampton Airshow ticket sales take off



Tickets are now on sale for this year's hugely anticipated Scampton Airshow. Lincolnshire's new airshow at RAF Scampton will take place on 9-10 September at the home of the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team – The Red Arrows.

This exciting event promises two fun-filled family days out each featuring a spectacular five-hour flying display showcasing exciting aircraft from around the globe.

Tickets can only be bought in advance at www.scamptonairshow.com. Tickets are priced at £39 with all under 16s able to enjoy the airshow free when accompanied by an adult.



The charity sector needs to work together better

Only charities that collaborate will continue to successfully serve and support their beneficiaries, argues Rory O'Connor, Director of Welfare and Policy at the Association.

The days when one charity would offer all-encompassing support and welfare are well and truly behind us. Collaboration is undoubtedly the future of the UK charity sector and only those charities that accept and adapt to this rapidly changing

reality will continue to successfully serve and support their beneficiaries.

This is the start of an article on the Third Sector website. Third Sector is the UK's leading publication for the voluntary and not-for-profit sector. You can read the full article by visiting www.thirdsector.co.uk and searching for the name Rory O'Connor.

Accommodation vacancies in Melton Mowbray and Moffat for RAF veterans and family members

There are vacancies at the Association's Wexford House assisted living facility in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire and Dowding House independent accommodation in Moffat, Dumfries and Galloway.

For more information on each facility, please call the Welfare Team on 0800 0182 361.



RAF Association Concert Band



The RAF Association Concert Band had another busy year in 2016, despite Musical Director Peter Skellon suffering a stroke in September.

The band took centre stage, along with the Bristol Male Voice Choir, for an Armistice concert held in St Georges Hall, Bristol.

Honoured guests included Association President Sir Dusty Miller, who commented: "I was incredibly proud of the RAF Association

Concert Band, who provided a bravura performance and filled the evening with uplifting music. Peter was his usual magnificent self and together they brought great credit to the RAF Association. Well done team and thank you."

To find out more about booking the Concert Band for an event and for details of future concerts visit www.rafaconcertband.org.uk

Your holiday
starts with a
great place to stay

WINGS BREAKS
HOTELS
STAY WITH FRIENDS

ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association
The charity that supports the RAF family

Hotel news

Autumn and winter are always a busy time for the Wings Break Hotels, as their guests continue to keep them busy, along with trips and events for each hotel. Here is a snapshot of what they have been doing.

Flowerdown House now has three new mobility scooters, thanks to kind donations from the local RAF Association branches. These will allow guests to get out and explore the surrounding area independently.

The hotel also played host to Brize Norton's RAF Association Liaison Officers, when they visited to present a cheque towards the refurbishment of the courtyard area. While visiting, they spent time meeting and sharing stories with hotel guests, as well as sampling the afternoon tea and cakes on offer.

The Weston-super-Mare branch of Asda awarded Flowerdown House £200 after being part of its Green Token Scheme. The hotel was selected from several nominated charities.

In October, the hotel went all out to celebrate Halloween with employees dressing up and the whole place decorated with cobwebs and a rather scary skeleton!



Di Jones with the Asda Community Champion



Flowerdown staff dressed in fancy dress to celebrate Halloween



Ken and George road test the new mobility scooters at Flowerdown

Richard Peck hosted the mayors of Fylde and St Annes for a coffee morning after the Battle of Britain church service. After a very well attended church service, all enjoyed cakes, scones and sherry.

Finally, the Not Forgotten Society came to entertain with an all singing, all dancing show, that really raised the guests' spirits. Employees got involved in the frivolity too!



The Not Forgotten Society entertain the guests



Richard Peck House Annual Garden Party in full swing

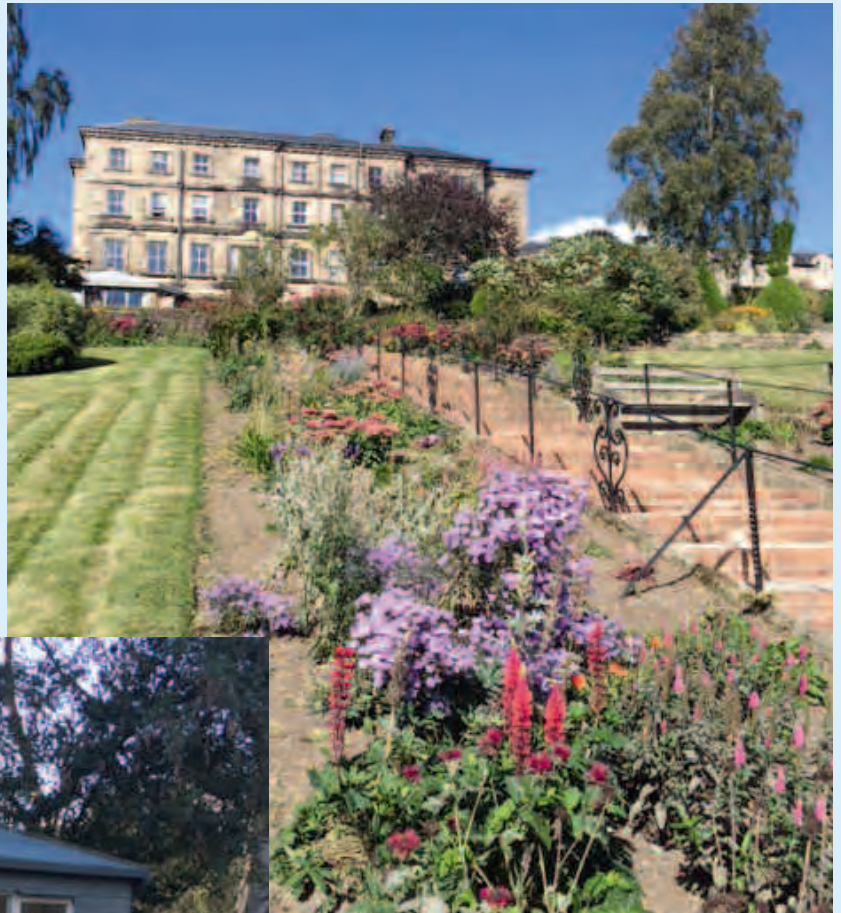


Richard Peck guests arriving at the St Annes Carnival

Rothbury House has been doing a spot of gardening. After some green-fingered personnel from RAF Leeming helped refurbish the summerhouse, Darren the head gardener has been busy sprucing up the greenery. The hotel has also hosted a work party from Northumbria Water, painted railings and refurbished the second summerhouse.

Colin and his team went all ghoulish in celebration of Halloween, with a dinner featuring 'slimy pumpkin soup'.

If you would like to escape the worst of the winter weather and enjoy the warmth, cosiness and hospitality offered during a stay at one of our Wings Break Hotels, book now for your getaway.



Rothbury House after the garden tidy up



Rothbury House refurbished summer house

Three wonderful hotels in three beautiful locations provide all the comforts of a home from home. We can also accommodate anyone who needs that extra little care and assistance and offer special facilities for a wide range of needs.

With seven-night breaks starting at just £300, book your winter stay with friends today by calling 0800 0182 361.

RAF Football Association makes huge Kenya delivery

The Taking Football to Africa and Beyond Charitable Appeal is run by Wing Commander Neil Hope and operates through the RAF Football Association. Since its founding in 2006, it has delivered over 153,000 items to 52 countries worldwide.

A team of 12 volunteers from military and civilian backgrounds travelled to Nairobi, Kenya, to deliver the latest batch of items. Football clubs and people from across the UK donated the items, including Premier League clubs such as Manchester United and Leicester City.

The team visited some of the huge slum areas in Nairobi, including Kibera, the largest slum town in Africa and home to over one million people. Living in an area of less than three square-kilometres, the residents live with no mains electricity, no sewerage system and very little running water. Despite the hardship they face, the obvious desire of the children to learn is incredible.

Neil said: "I am very pleased to have been able to deliver the masses of kit donated by so many clubs and people. The appreciation of the children and adults who receive the kit leaves a lasting impression on everyone who volunteers for these visits."



Annual Conference 2017

This year's Annual Conference will be held at Yarnfield Park Training and Conference Centre, in the Midlands, from 12 to 14 May.

As in previous years, 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 properly starts on Saturday. The opportunity to register your attendance will be offered on the Friday evening again, as this is 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 pleased to be able to welcome Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, the Chief of 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. The Secretary General, Mr 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 2016. The Association depends on the money raised and members recruited by our branches, so it always good to have the opportunity to say thank you.

The entertainment is still being finalised, but there will be a musical element to it, to allow those wanting to show off their dance moves to do so.





On Sunday we will remember all those who have fallen in service of their country. The parade will take place at Yarnfield and will be followed by a service and a flypast (weather permitting).

As it proved popular last year, you can again register your wish to attend online. Anyone who would like to do so can visit www.rafa.org.uk/annualconference and follow the link from this page to the booking system.

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 0800 0182 361, via email using kelly.brotherhood@rafa.org.uk or by post at the headquarters address.

Yarnfield Park requires attendees to pay in full when booking, but the Association has negotiated a longer cancellation period. You can cancel your booking and get a full refund if you do so by 28 April 2017.

We look forward to seeing you in Yarnfield.



Update on 2016 Annual Conference Resolutions

Many resolutions were debated at Conference last year and this article will give an update on those that were passed, as well as those that were remitted to Council for its consideration at the 7 September 2016 Council meeting. Council made a number decisions about those resolutions not debated at Conference, which are outlined at the end of this article.

Resolution 1

This Conference resolves to allow voting by card or electronic vote, the number of votes that can be cast by a Delegate is the number to which their Branch is entitled to under the Byelaws.

Approved by Conference.

Resolution 2

This Conference resolves to receive a presentation on the review of the Royal Charter, Rules and Byelaws by members of the Review Team set up by the Council which will also provide an opportunity for questions and answers on factual aspects of the review.

Approved by Conference.

Resolution 3

Fell.

Resolutions 4-15

All these resolutions changed elements of the Royal Charter or Rules of the Association. The changes were submitted to the Privy Council for informal review and recommended amendments were incorporated into the Rules, in line with resolutions 22 and 23, and were then formally submitted to the Privy Council for approval by Her Majesty The Queen. These changes went before Privy Council on 16 November 2016 and we are very pleased to report that they were formally approved.

Resolutions 16 and 18-25

The Byelaws have been updated following the changes recommended by Privy Council. These were also formally approved on 16 November 2016 and were circulated to branches soon after.

Approved by Conference.

Resolution 17

Fell.

Resolution 26

This Conference resolves that Conference 2017 and 2018 be held at Yarnfield Park in Staffordshire.

Branches received details for Conference 2017 at Yarnfield in late 2016 and we look forward to an enjoyable and productive Conference.

Approved by Conference.

Resolution 27

This Conference urges Central Council to review the Branch delegate travel expenses process and report back to Conference in 2017.

A review is in progress by the Annual Conference Committee. Recommendations will be made for discussion at the February 2017 Council meeting. If accepted, these will be implemented for Conference 2017 and details circulated accordingly.

Approved by Conference.



Resolution 28

Fell.

Resolution 29

Resolution was amended to: Conference resolves that there should be no removal of trophies awarded by the Association without prior approval of Annual Conference.

Approved by Conference.

Resolution 30

This Conference urges Central Council to develop and introduce, within each Area, a rafaYouth Council that will comprise one youth member from each ATC Wing that sits within the Area. This could be a 'virtual' gathering the purpose of which is to be more co-ordinated in support of Association Branches and to recruit new members to rafaYouth.

The Membership, Supporter and Partnership Engagement Committee reviewed this and developed proposals for Council; Council will reconsider the proposals later in 2017.

Approved by Conference.

Resolution 31

This Conference resolves that Area Councils should take formal steps to ensure that Branches that operate Clubs adhere to Standard Club Rule 9 which states that:

1. A person shall be eligible for Ordinary Membership of the Club if he is an Ordinary or Life Member of the Branch and
2. A person be eligible for Associate Membership of the Club if he is an Associate Member of the Branch.

Branch Support Officers are supporting Area Councils and branches to ensure that branch clubs operate to Standard Club Rule 9.

Approved by Conference.

Resolution 32

Withdrawn.

Resolution 33

Conference requests that Council review the advice and guidance provided to Branches on their day to day management of their Branch Clubs through the Branches.

Appropriate guidance from professional advisors is being sought and will be shared when finalised.

Resolution 34

That RAFA should consider the employment of a Property Manager.

Approved by Conference.

The Association's Director of Finance is currently reviewing the charity's property portfolio, with a view to regularising the current position and we have appointed a part-time property administrator to support this work. The 2017 budget includes funds to provide local support and guidance as necessary.

Resolutions not debated at Conference

Council reviewed all resolutions not debated at Conference 2016 at the September Council meeting. Full details can be found in the Conference 2016 folder on the members' area of the Association's website, but the accepted recommendations are included here.

Resolution 35

That the Branch Match and Helping Hand grants should be made available annually and the amounts offered be increased.

Recommendation accepted by Council (presented by the Honorary Treasurer) – Not to support the Resolution on the grounds of cost to the Association, of around £2 million annually if every branch received the full grant, however Council agreed that additional communication should be provided regarding the availability of the grants.

Resolution 36

Conference requests that Council review the provision of transport within Areas.

Recommendation accepted by Council (presented by the Honorary Treasurer) – Whereas a review of the provision of transport within Areas is supported, it is not possible to support a resolution that seeks to solve the transport problems on the grounds of affordability and other complicating factors such as insurance, maintenance, driver training, accessibility legislation, regular availability of the vehicles and overall cost.

Resolution 37

This Conference encourages those responsible for RAFA communications and data management to improve administration and information flow in a way which acknowledges the role of Branches in supporting the membership.

Council supported the resolution and agreed with the recommendation of the Information Environment (IE) Committee that they should develop, in association with the Fundraising and Communication Committee, an article for publication in Air Mail and on the Association's website explaining the IE Committee's plans to develop the technology and the data mechanisms to better support the Association's communication processes. (See article on page 24.)

Resolution 38

This Conference requires that an Abridged Report on Annual Conference, similar to those which were published for

Conferences up to and including the 2012 Annual Conference, be produced and be made available to Branches and that this should occur for all future Annual Conferences.

Recommendation accepted by Council (presented by the Annual Conference Committee) – To acknowledge the support and importance of the abridged report for the Annual Conference and for Council to update the South East & Eastern Area Council with what measures are now being taken forward to keep the Association informed.

Resolution 39

This Conference being aware of the deterioration in service and support that Branches have received since the introduction of the new CRM database resolves that an independent investigation be carried out into its procurement, implementation and costs and that the findings of such an investigation be circulated to all Branches by 30 November 2016. The investigation to be led by a mutually agreed Association member of retired air rank.

Council noted the recommendation of the Information Environment Committee to support the spirit of the resolution and that to provide transparency and openness, a review of the decision making process which lead to the current situation with regards to the Association's CRM system should be conducted. Council noted that the recently approved IE Committee report on CRM had comprehensively covered the background issues and the way forward. Council agreed the IE Committee proposal that an article, similar to the response to resolution 37, be published covering the CRM background, investigation and way forward. (See article on page 24.)

Resolution 40

This Conference resolves that, following satisfactory due diligence, for our Wings Appeal, a more substantial Wing emblem, should replace the sticky backed Wing, currently given out by collectors. This new Wing could essentially be the RAF Association's version of the Poppy, a more durable emblem.

Recommendation accepted by Council (presented by the Fundraising and Communication Committee) – the Association will continue to seek a cost-effective item which is more durable than the Wings Appeal sticker but less durable than the metal Wings Appeal pin badge.



Communication – getting it right and improving the information environment

This is the first of a series of articles to inform members and branches about the Association's communications that are supported by the 'information environment'. This article addresses the questions raised in Conference 2016, namely Resolutions 37 and 39 (see page 23). The subject has many parts, so additional information will be regularly added to the members' area of the Association's website – log in to www.rafa.org.uk to read more.

Introduction

Good communication throughout the Association is crucial if we are all to succeed in achieving our 2020 Strategic Vision. Good communication requires us to have the right procedures and practices in place, to ensure they are understood and followed by all and that we have accurate information and the right 'electronic tools'. This starts with Council, hence a strategic vision for 2020 has been developed, supported by an annual operating plan. Both are created by Council and its committees: membership, welfare, fundraising, governance, finance and, last but not least, the 'information environment' (IE), (this encompasses the Association's computer equipment, software and all the information we hold, plus our web, social media and 'cloud' presence). The IE Committee was formed in 2015 to provide focus and direction for all elements of the Association's IE and is led by Council members who develop the IE strategy and policy, and make sure it is implemented properly.

Data protection

The UK Data Protection (DP) Act (DPA) 1998 controls how personal information is used by organisations, such as ourselves, and is the key legislation covering data security and confidentiality of personal data. Council approved an audit of our data handling, which concluded that it was necessary to make our data processes and DPA compliance more robust. A new DP policy, together with new procedures, had to be introduced to ensure that the Association and its branches (i.e all of us) are fully compliant. Transition to the new requirements was challenging, but we are pleased to report that nearly all branches have confirmed that they are now complying with the DPA – it is the law after all! The Association's DPA documents can be found in the members' area of the Association's website. The IE Committee and Council will continue to ensure that we all remain fully compliant with the DPA.

The Association's data management system

In 2014, Council recognised that the Association's database was not 'fit for purpose' and that it would cost too much to change it to meet current and future needs. Council therefore supported proposals to introduce an updated database as part of a 'customer relationship management' (CRM) system, together with supporting specialist 'applications' (initially for membership activity). Following a tender process, Council received proposals from three organisations, all of whom suggesting using the 'Salesforce' (SF) system. The selected contractor then recommended the application 'Member Nation' (MN) to handle membership data. The project started in mid-2014 and was launched in February 2015 but it soon became apparent MN was not performing as anticipated: in particular, there were data issues and MN didn't work in key areas and was inflexible.

The IE Committee and Secretary General analysed the state of play and came to a number of key conclusions as to why requirements were not being met. In September 2015 Council agreed it had to put further development on hold subject to the completion of rigorous in-house analysis of the business requirements. The IE Committee therefore looked very closely at SF and MN and made recommendations on the best way to proceed. Council concluded that the initial IE Committee proposals to separate the finance and IT functions and to establish a Chief Information Officer (CIO) to lead IE activities were crucial to future success and, as a result, Phil Sherwin was appointed to lead the IE area in April 2016.

With Phil's help, the IE Committee produced 'CRM Plan to 2018 – The Way Forward' (which you can see in the members' area of the website) and at the September 2016 Council meeting, it was agreed that:

- A CRM programme is essential to support the Association's 2020 strategic objectives
- The best option was to continue with the development of SF
- The Association would stop developing MN and modify 'core' SF to meet Association requirements
- The system should be fielded via a phased project with enhanced governance and project management arrangements under the watchful eye of the IE Committee, with a target completion date of mid-2018.

Council was made aware of the cost and manpower implications of the proposals all of which would be included within the operating plans and budgets. A project governance board has now been established, the activities of which will be monitored by the IE Committee.

Improving communications

The IE Committee recognises that the adverse effects of the challenges of DP and introducing the CRM system have been felt throughout the Association and can only apologise for this. The committee now seeks support for the future to introduce the IE which will transform the Association's ability to meet the needs of its members and their families. The IE Committee will keep you informed by publishing updates in Air Mail and in the members' area of the website. We therefore seek your full support and encourage your feedback.

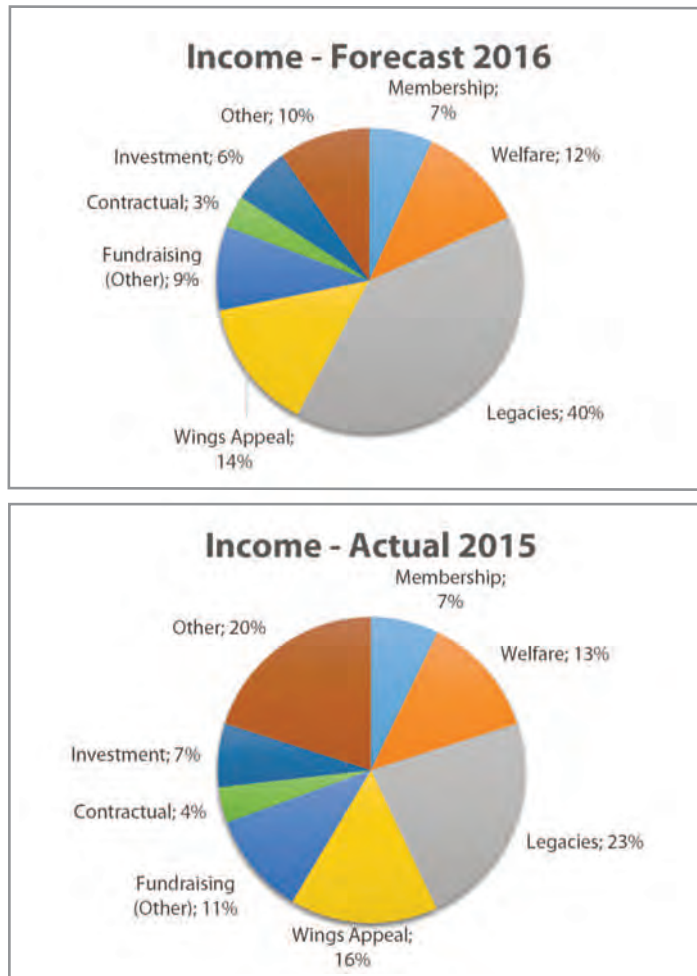
Dick Whittingham
Member of Council, Chairman of the IE Committee

Finance Update – December 2016

As we approach the end of another year and the summer recedes, we start to see the fruits of our labour. As we look back on another good year we must take a minute to reflect on all the amazing work undertaken by all of you, our members and supporters, without which it would be impossible to achieve the things we do.

As I write, we are starting to see the Wings income come in and early indications are that the total will be in line with 2015 as we expected. Income overall is ahead of the budget we set for 2016, with legacies once again being a strong component. It is likely that total income for 2016 will be in excess of £10 million for the first time since 2010 and is indicative of the growth the Association is experiencing across all areas. As our volunteer base grows, as our welfare reach and membership grow, so does our financial strength and our ability to be here for the RAF family today and tomorrow.

The Association's income comes from many different sources and a breakdown is shown below where our 2016 expectations are shown together with the 2015 numbers which were approved at Annual Conference in May 2016.



We remain financially strong during a difficult time for many charities that are seeing their income reducing and available funding being squeezed. Charitable organisations are coming under more and more scrutiny and are having to improve their governance structures to satisfy stakeholders and the public at large that they are being run appropriately and effectively. The Association meets these strict governance requirements through Council, our committees and Conference, together with adherence at all times to our Royal Charter.

The reserves of the Association, which stood at £27.55 million at the end of December 2015, allow us to plan for the longer term and to ride out some of these wider risks to ensure we are able to meet the future needs of our members and the wider RAF family. Future welfare needs are difficult to define and quantify and, as such, there is a need to retain sufficient funding to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

We are currently finalising our plans for 2017, which will see the Association continue to grow and strengthen. Financial strength built on a solid investment portfolio, viable asset base and sufficient cash reserves is very much the focus during these rather strange times. None of this is possible, of course, without your continued help and support.

Andrew Wilkinson-Sharpe
Director of Finance

Generous donation from Basutoland marked with full size Spitfire

A former RAF intelligence officer has fulfilled his ambition to acknowledge the generosity of a small African country during the Battle of Britain. A full size replica Spitfire is now on display in the centre of Maseru, the capital city of Lesotho, representing the 24 Spitfires that the country paid for to help the Royal Air Force in 1940.

David Spencer Evans, who is a member of the RAF Association's Redruth, Camborne and Illogan Branch, fell in love with the Spitfire when, as a 14 year old air cadet, he was asked to 'guard' one at an RAF exhibition. He came up with the idea six years ago and the proposal was put to His Royal Highness Prince Seeiso of Lesotho, formerly known as Basutoland.

The fibreglass replica has been meticulously assembled by David and a group of volunteers from the Spitfire Heritage Trust. The team made moulds from real Spitfires to ensure that the model of the Mk Vb variant was authentic. They studied drawings, photographs and models to get everything right. The replica came together in a small shed in Withiel in Cornwall.

"Basutoland, which is now called Lesotho, is a country the size of Wales. In 1940 it had a population of only 400,000. So to provide the money for 24 Spitfires was a disproportionately generous contribution from that Commonwealth country," says David. "Lord Beaverbrook, the Minister for Aircraft Production, announced that each Spitfire cost £5,000 to build and the tribes and people of Basutoland raised enough money to cover 24. This is our way of saying thank you. The Spitfire is much more than a vintage aircraft. It is a British icon that symbolises the coming together of all the nations of the Commonwealth."

In October 2016, the Spitfire had its wings 'unplugged' and it was loaded onto a lorry for the trip to Bristol docks. It was taken by ship to Durban before being unloaded and moved to the landlocked Lesotho. Its voyage took an unexpected circuitous route in South Africa, meaning it did not arrive in Maseru until the day it was due to be unveiled – 11 November (Armistice Day). More than 50 people helped to unload the Spitfire and re-



The Spitfire in the centre of Maseru

assemble it before sunset. King Letsie III formally unveiled it a few days later.

The Basutoland-funded Spitfires were particularly associated with 72 Squadron which was nicknamed the Basutoland Squadron. The replica has been given the name Bahlabani, meaning warrior in Sotho, the national language of Lesotho. It carries the squadron code of 72 Squadron RN and the call-sign letter E. This is in tribute to Tony Weller, a 72 Squadron veteran and member of the same branch as David Spencer Evans. Tony flew RN-E in the Sicily campaign on his 21st birthday.

David Spencer Evans organised a visit to RAF Linton-on-Ouse for Prince Seeiso of Lesotho, where he watched a flying display and was guest of honour at an evening ceremony. Linton-on-Ouse is the current home of 72 (R) Squadron, flying the Tucano.

The Spitfire Heritage Trust would like to extend the replica gesture to other Commonwealth countries who donated money to the war effort. It also has plans to build a full-size replica of a two seater Spitfire and get it into the air in a few years time.



Local veterans with David Spencer Evans (right) and members of the Spitfire Heritage Trust

Ayr and Prestwick Branch set up shop again

Once again in 2016, the Ayr and Prestwick Branch opened an 'awareness' shop in Ayr town centre for three months to coincide with the Scottish International Airshow of which they are the designated charity. A number of large model aircraft, a large TV screen showing a loop version of the 2015 airshow and RAF Association case studies were used to draw the customers in. The shop was also adorned with many paintings and pictures of aircraft both historical and supersonic, but more importantly Association advertising pull-up banners to inform the public of the welfare provided by the Association to members of the RAF family.

Oliver Payne, the son of the Branch Secretary, volunteered to help out with the shop. He became shop manager, responsible for preparing the shop for its opening, security of the premises and management of the volunteer staff. As manager he was also responsible for opening and closing up every day, helping to set up the shop and carry out daily stock and cash checks. Before the opening Oliver did a lot of research into the Association to enable him to talk knowledgeably to customers.

Along with branch members working in the shop, was Mary Noble a volunteer who came to us thanks to the Area Volunteer Co-ordinator. Both Mary and Oliver chose to become Association members, which shows the value of welcoming new volunteers into your branch. Oliver admitted that being able to interact with customers from all backgrounds and age groups has been a tremendous opportunity to overcome his shyness and to use his new found confidence to progress in understanding his potential.

If your branch is reaching the public in a new or different way, please contact the marketing team and you may be featured in a future issue of Air Mail.



The impressive RAF Association display table



The shop entrance



Ayr and Prestwick Branch mascot 'Monty' on duty in the shop

Scottish International Airshow 2016

The 2016 show changed in format, with the inclusion of a Friday evening show that featured a spectacular night flying display and a music concert. This was followed on the Saturday by the traditional airshow format. The inclement weather did not prevent the crowds, with 40,000 people attending on the Friday night and around 100,000 on the Saturday.

As the airshow's designated charity, we needed to ensure the public were aware of the RAF Association and its welfare work. As the airshow continues to evolve, so does the Association's footprint. Highlights were our two pop-up welfare cafés, a professional trading exhibition trailer, two small marquees and an exhibition trailer with Branch Wings Appeal trading, membership recruitment and volunteering recruitment. We were committed to setting up and manning over one third of the RAF Village.

This was a significant effort from our small team of operational employees, augmented by a dedicated volunteer footprint from Ayr and Prestwick, Edinburgh Lothians & Borders, Leuchars, Glasgow and Greenock Branches. Glasgow Branch ran one of the Welfare Cafés on their own.

Uniformed support was received from the Armed Forces Careers Office Glasgow, the Air Cadet Organisation, Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde Air Squadrons and RAF Association Liaison Officers from RAF Lossiemouth, demonstrating a tremendous effort and serving as shining example of the RAF family working together towards one goal.

Both welfare cafés were a tremendous success and provided a free restful break from the airshow for veterans and members of the RAF Village. All produce for the cafés was supplied by Tunnocks, Pathhead Bakery and the Scottish Grocers Federation who are commended for their continued support.



The Scottish International Airshow 2016 was a tremendous success and all the members, employees and directors continue to work together to provide a free airshow, which in turn highlights the tremendous welfare work carried out by the Association. Thanks to everyone who committed so much time and energy that contributed to the enjoyment of thousands of people of all ages.

Success only comes with hard work and commitment, and preparations for 2017's airshow started on 1 October!

Aircraft photograph © Alister Firth Photography



Chris Goss

Each issue we speak to a member of Council, so you can get to know our trustees better. This time we spoke to Chris Goss, who was elected to Council in May 2016.

Can you start with a short bit about your RAF career?

I left the RAF four years ago having been commissioned in 1980. Initially a pilot, then a supply officer specialising in movements, my last job was Wing Commander Movements at HQ Air Command. In my career, I have been as far north as Tromsø, as far south as Harare and the Falklands, as far east as Fiji and as far west as Los Angeles. I then worked for an airfield support services company for nearly three years, but am now a full time aviation historian and author.

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

It is a great honour to be elected as a trustee by the members of the Association. I was fortunate to serve on Council a few years ago, when I was one of the two RAF Association Liaison Officers (RAFALOs) on Council. However, if one thinks that this has prepared me for election in my own right, the answer is yes and no! It means a lot of reading, commenting, phone calls and meetings in Leicester and elsewhere, so one cannot take the job of trustee too lightly. I easily spend an hour or so a day on Council business, when I have access to a computer and then have all the meetings to take into account. For example, in the month when this article was written I spent five days at the European Area Conferences and three days in meetings in Leicester and London.

Why do you give up so much of your time for the Association?

I think and hope that I can make a difference. I have been a member since 1986, during which time I have been a RAFALO, an Area RAFALO and a serving elected member on Council, so I am used to the Association and passionate about ensuring its present and future. Hard work yes, but I would not have volunteered if I didn't already know that. I am fortunate to



work with equally dedicated fellow trustees and a hard-working, effective and vital HQ staff supports us.

What do you like doing in your free time?

I try to keep my research and writing to Monday to Friday and keep weekends free. I have eight books due for publication in the next six months or so, with contracts for another eight, and I am currently 73,000 words into writing another book. Added to that, I am a regular contributor to national and international magazines including Air Mail. Despite my age, I am still a Level 6 rugby referee, which keeps me busy and fit during the season.

My wife and I live in Buckinghamshire, but have a flat in Cardiff and a house in France, the latter two being where we try to spend as much time as my wife's work allows.

Keeping the RAF family safe



Stepping out of the shower without worrying about falling is something the majority of us do every day without a second thought. This was not the case for Andy though, before the Royal Air Forces Association helped him modify his bathroom.

Andy joined the RAF in 1991, aged 23, as a telecoms technician. His 22 and a half years of service saw him in many places, including RAF Swinderby, RAF Cosford, PJHQ Northwood, 12SU Episkopi Cyprus, the Falklands and Bahrain. He also served at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Belgium, finishing at Waddington.

Andy loved his time in the RAF, but after much deliberation he decided in 2013 that it was time to look for another challenge. He was already going through the Premature Voluntary Release (PVR) process when he was helping some colleagues rearrange an office move and felt a 'tweak' in his upper back, a bit like a pulled muscle.

Several months of physiotherapy followed for a suspected trapped nerve, but after months of sporadic pins and needles in his left arm, Andy suspected it was something more serious. His physio referred him to the Regional Rehabilitation Unit at RAF College Cranwell. He was again told that it was probably a trapped nerve, but he was sent for an MRI scan, just to be sure. This revealed that, in fact, Andy had two protruding/bulging discs in his neck.

As is usual when many people leave the RAF, Andy and his wife had used his gratuity to purchase a house. Due to being medically discharged, however, he was not entitled to the amount he received and had to pay back money he simply did not have.

Andy was unable to pay for modifications to his bathroom that would improve his quality of life. His shower was a corner shower, meaning he had to step out into the centre of his bathroom, with nothing to hold onto. The situation was made more precarious as the shower tray was around eight inches above floor level. This would be no problem for most people, but for someone who could easily end up in a wheelchair if he slipped, showering became a real issue.

Andy applied to his local authority for a disabled facilities grant, but was unsuccessful, so he approached the RAF Benevolent Fund to see what help he could get. They put him in touch with the RAF Association, who sent a volunteer welfare officer to see Andy. An application was made for funding to change the shower tray and door in Andy's bathroom. He obtained three quotes and was all set to have someone come to do the work, when the plumber was taken ill and didn't know when he would be able to start work. Andy was left with a higher second quote, so the RAF Association funded the difference to make sure work could be started as soon as possible.

The new shower tray is only an inch off the floor and it's a little larger, meaning Andy can easily bend to wash his feet and lower legs – something that simply wasn't possible in the previous cramped shower.

Andy says: "I would just like to say a huge thank you to both the RAF Association and the Benevolent Fund for all the help they have afforded me with the adaptations to my bathroom and the difference it has made to my life; I can't thank everyone involved enough."



Set your course to a perfect retirement home...

...and we will make sure it is a smooth touch down!

When you move into one of our retirement homes, there will be plenty of opportunity to meet like-minded people, enjoy the countryside or just put your feet up. All our properties are especially for members of the RAF family, so you will immediately feel at home.

There's something for everyone. Wexford House in Leicestershire has en-suite bedrooms with all your meals provided. You may fancy the beautiful scenery of Scotland with your very own apartment at Dowding House. Or maybe the tranquillity of a self-contained studio at Lord Tedder Court in the grounds of Rothbury, our house in a magnificent Northumberland valley.

"I could not wish for anything better... you make new friends and nothing is too much trouble."

Wexford House resident.

"It is a delightful place to live and the gardens are lovely. We moved into an absolutely perfect flat which gave me one less thing to think about."

Dowding House Sheltered Accommodation resident.

"Our flat is superb...we can go over to Rothbury House in the evening if there is entertainment on and we can pay to have meals in the house too if we'd like to eat there. We feel like we have our social life back again."

Lord Tedder Court resident.

All our properties are very popular and we have very limited availability. **Please don't delay in registering your interest.**

Call us to find out more on **0800 018 2361**

email **welfare@rafa.org.uk**

visit **rafa.org.uk/independent-living**



RAF Association gets revolting and beastly for Roald Dahl Day

On 13 September each year, people around the world come together to celebrate one of the world's literary geniuses, Roald Dahl, on the day of his birth. Dahl was named one of the 50 greatest British writers since 1945 by The Times in 2008 and to date his books have sold more than 250 million copies worldwide. This year marks what would have been his 100th birthday and the Royal Air Forces Association was pleased to play a part in the milestone celebrations.

As one of the Royal Air Force's most famous veterans, Dahl's remained a much-cherished member of the RAF family long after his passing, just as his works continue to have a profound impact on the imaginations of millions of children. Therefore, the Association decided there was no better tribute than to use the Storybook Wings initiative to help parents introduce Dahl's vivid fantasies and legendary storytelling to a new generation.

'Storybook Wings: Roald Dahl 100' offered parents the opportunity to record a heartfelt reading of some of Dahl's most memorable children's literature, while also giving their children a unique and deeply personal keepsake. All serving RAF parents at participating stations, were invited to record a Revolting Rhyme or Dirty Beasts poem at their local HIVE, which would then be shared with their children.

RAF Waddington was one of the participating stations that saw an overwhelmingly positive response from personnel. An incredible 24 parents took part, recording poems for their children. Sergeant Jeff Knight, Senior Non-commissioned Officer Community Support, said: "At RAF Waddington there is a high operational tempo and this brings many challenges for Service parents. It was great to have a special week celebrating Roald Dahl and supporting our Service families. Embraced by all, recordings were made by personnel ranging from Senior Aircraftsmen to Wing Commanders and I believe that there will be many happy children excited to receive their stories. Additionally, the Dahl 100 week has also promoted general awareness of Storybook Wings; a fantastic opportunity available to deploying personnel and so easy to do."

While the Roald Dahl 100 celebration has now drawn to a close, the regular Storybook Wings programme remains available to those parents who will be away from home due to work. It helps to keep families together despite the distances imposed by training courses, work patterns or overseas deployments. Started in 2008, the scheme is just one of the ways the Association offers support to serving personnel and members of the 1.5 million strong RAF family.

If you would like to record a story, please contact either your HIVE or the Storybook Wings Manager's office by email (storybookwings@rafa.org.uk) or telephone 0116 464 5030.



Sergeant Kate Clancy, Airmen's Command Squadron RAF Halton, recording a Revolting Rhyme for her two sons.
Photo: © Crown/ RAF Halton

Shawn Marston, National Standard Bearer

Can you start with a bit of background about your RAF career?

I served for nearly 20 years as a pilot flying the C130 Hercules. While in service I was involved in worldwide operations, taking troops, equipment and supporting the other services. I participated in many operational tours including the Falkland Islands, the former Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan and Northern Ireland. I spent a brief time as Officer Commanding 24 Squadron and spent the last year of my RAF career as Executive Officer of the Air Wing in the Falkland Islands.

How did you find out about the volunteering role of standard bearer?

In good old military tradition, I was earmarked for the job. The late Alan Poole (the Shrewsbury Branch Honorary Welfare Officer and member of Council who sadly passed away in 2015) was the interim Branch Standard Bearer when I joined the Association and he was looking to hand over the role to a younger, fitter person.

In March 2014 I was asked if I would attend the Area Conference as a delegate and at the same time, to take the standard and to participate in the Standard Bearers Competition. While in the competition my competitive spirit kicked in and there was no stopping me. I came second by a couple of points to Mike Facey. I have not looked back since, as the competitive spirit has kept me going.



At last year's Annual Conference in Blackpool there was a competition to choose the National Standard Bearer, a Deputy and Reserve for the next three years. I was given the prestigious honour of being announced the winner of the competition, so will be representing the Association for the next three years. Mike was given the honour of being the Deputy National Standard Bearer and Martin Lathan-Scott will be the Reserve National Standard Bearer.

What appeals about the role?

A standard makes any event an occasion. It feels a little surprising, but I get great satisfaction in attending funerals, which are naturally sad events. I hope the impact that having a standard bearer present has on family and friends to celebrate the contribution those individuals made to the RAF helps to ease their pain and provides a sense of pride.

I also enjoy the fact that everyone loves a military parade and having a standard in attendance reminds the public that the RAF is part of the Armed Forces and highlights the presence of the RAF Association. Seeing veterans marching behind their Branch Standard, you see that they have a little more swagger. We are part of a parade and we have pride as we have a standard at the front.

What memorable experiences or events stand out?

The most memorable event has been the Battle of Britain parade in Truro in 2015, which Mike Facey and I attended together. Mike carried the Union Flag and I carried the National Standard for the first time. That was a fantastic event as the standard bearers were front and centre, and had a pivotal role marching up the aisle and laying the standards in front of the clergy. I have also been involved in the Armed Forces Day parade at Plymouth Hoe, which attracts fantastic crowds. It is an honour to lead the final parade of several hundred veterans from all services.

If you were to recommend volunteering for the Association to others, what would you say?

Get involved! There are so many different things you can do to help the Association – whether it's supporting the welfare side, assisting with Wings Appeals collections, being part of a parade or ceremonial event, or just turning up in your blazer and marching as one of the veterans.

When you hear the stories of the help that has been provided it's fantastic, and the fact that you can have a closer connection to your ex-service buddies makes you feel that part of your family is being supported.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I would like to finish by saying thank you to Mike Facey for the fantastic work that he did for many years as the National Association Standard Bearer and for taking me under his wing and showing me the ropes.

Wish you were here?

When it's grey outside, planning a summer holiday can help lift the winter blues.

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.



The beach area at Hemsby



Hemsby Chalet cooking and dining area



Hemsby Chalet cooking and lounge area

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 find out more about either holiday option call 0800 0182 361.



Selsey caravan cooking and dining area



Selsey caravan lounge area

RAF Families Federation update

Those readers among you who are serving members of the RAF will know that both the New Employment Model (NEM) and the MOD's People Strategy have brought some significant changes in recent months to life in the RAF, ranging from the new pay model and changes to the pension, to revised Terms of Service for many. There are more changes afoot: the Future Accommodation Model (FAM), the Future Engagement Strategy (FES) and New Joiner, New Offer (NJNO) initiatives all have potential to further impact on many of you to some degree.

We have been working hard with both the MOD and the RAF to make sure that, as far as possible, serving personnel (and their families) are consulted about these initiatives where it is appropriate to do so, for example via the recent FAM surveys. However, one of the more surprising outcomes of this work is how little people know about what they are now entitled to. It's evident that many have trouble understanding the implications of potential changes on which they are asked to comment, because they do not know enough about the current process to be able to make a comparison. We're not suggesting for a moment that serving personnel spend every waking moment reading assorted Joint Service Publications, but it does pay to have an appreciation of the basics that underpin the Service "offer" in the round. Otherwise personnel might find themselves with something they don't want and didn't ask for.

On a slightly more cheerful note, we'd like to say a huge "thank you" to everyone who was in contact with us during 2016. Survey response rates increased by 100 per cent, website visits were up 17 per cent and the number of followers on Facebook and Twitter rose by around 30 per cent. We have been able to use the evidence gathered on topics such as Service Family



Accommodation maintenance and childcare provision to make sure the voice of today's RAF is heard and to influence some of the policies as they develop.

If you are currently serving, please keep contributing your views in 2017 – there's plenty to say.

Bill Mahon
Director, RAF Families Federation

www.fischerfutureheat.com

Innovative replacement for night storage heaters and gas central heating

Call **0116 242 5533** or **FREEPHONE 0800 103 2708**

Maintenance free (no pipes) *Easily installed - direct from the manufacturer* *Even heat distribution*

Slimline: 11cm *Unique 40mm fire clay core* *No noisy convection fans*

"We've just received our one year electric bill and have had a hell of a shock, being £125 in credit thanks to our Fischer heaters. We want nothing in return, but tell the World we are delighted with the Fischer heating system."

L. Clough, Crewe

Patented in Europe

10 *year guarantee*

Wirelessly control an accurate temperature
24/7 programming
Take control of your bills
Warmth when you need it
Control each room independently

0% APR REPRESENTATIVE

Available on all our heating systems*

*Credit is subject to application and status. Terms and conditions apply.

Request your free catalogue today
Call us **FREE** on **0800 103 2708**
Quote discount code AIRM0117

or post the coupon

Address the envelope to: **FREEPOST FISCHER FUTURE HEAT** (no stamp or address required)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____

Your information will not be sold to a third party.

AIRM0117

With a two year guarantee on the thermostats. *Credit is subject to application and status. Terms and conditions apply. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Fischer-Future Heat UK Ltd, The Waterfront, 19-20 North Mills, Leicester, LE3 5DH act as a credit broker and only offers products from Barclays Partner Finance. Barclays Partner Finance is a trading name of Clydesdale Financial Services Limited a wholly owned subsidiary of Barclays Bank PLC. Clydesdale Financial Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (Financial Services Register Number: 311753). Registered in England. Registered No. 2301725. Registered Office: 1 Churchill Place, London, E14 5HP. Fischer Future Heat Ireland Ltd, Lower Ground Floor Unit 4C, Fingal Bay Business Park, Balbriggan, Co Dublin

RAF Cosford's new RAFALO committee



This feature usually highlights the work of one RAF Association Liaison Officer and this time we thought you would like to read about a whole team that is working closely with a local branch. We visited RAF Cosford on a soggy, blustery autumn day to speak to members of the RAF Association committee about their work and why they volunteer for us.

Chief Technician Kerrie Stevens from the Defence School of Aeronautical Engineering is the committee chair. She said: "There are 11 of us on the committee, which is really encouraging, as we only reformed in 2016. It helps that we have quickly developed a close relationship with the Cosford and District Branch and that we can support each other with events and advice.

"The committee has a lot of ideas for events in 2017, so we need to prioritise those that will appeal most to personnel on station. We do know that we will be heavily involved in the Association's presence at the RAF Cosford Airshow on 11 June, meeting the public, telling them about the charity and hopefully selling a duck or two!"

Flight Sergeant Dean Atkinson is the committee's secretary and as such has written to other branches in the area offering the support and involvement of Cosford personnel. The plan is to allocate at least one committee member to be the main point of contact for each branch, providing a valuable link between former and current serving personnel.

Corporal Martin Knight wanted to get involved and help the

Association as he has seen first-hand the support provided by military charities. He said: "I come from an Army family and when my cousin was killed in Afghanistan I saw the support that was given to my relatives. This is my way of giving something back." We were joined by Marilyn Addison and Stephen Hucker, chairman and treasurer of the Cosford and District Branch respectively.

Marilyn said: "The branch was about to close in March 2016 when I accepted the chairmanship. Hitherto, there had been a good relationship between the station and the Association. We simply could not let the branch close and so, with a new committee comprising Fiona Burton as secretary, Stephen Hucker as treasurer, Jack Morris remaining as welfare officer and myself as chairman, we are breathing new life into the branch.

"Having the support of Kerrie and the RAF Cosford committee is vital to the health of the branch. This two-way relationship allows both sides to help each other and the input from younger serving personnel helps us stay relevant. We have also had great support from our Area office and Branch Support Officer Ian Campbell."

As Air Mail went to print, plans were well under way for a Christmas quiz night in the Families Club on station. We're sure the night was a great success, as it was organised by the enthusiastic RAF Association committee from Cosford, with support from the branch. A great example of how working together across the generations is keeping our Association strong and fit for the future.





Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

Bringing the world closer

The RAF Association have teamed up with award-winning Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines to give you a very tempting 10% membership discount* on your first sailing with them – and that's on top of any current offers. Existing Fred. Olsen customers can save 5%, in addition to their 5% Loyalty Club discount.

With 10 departure ports conveniently located across the UK and more than 200 ports of call to choose from, you can travel the whole world with Fred. Olsen. Discover the spectacular Norwegian Fjords, cruise the beautiful rivers and waterways of Europe or relax on the white sand beaches of the Caribbean. Wherever you sail, you'll be enjoying it all on our smaller, more friendly ships.



To book using your discount code **RAFA10** call the RAF Association booking hotline **0800 0355 108** to validate your membership, or visit fredolsencruises.com/RAFA

*All bookings are subject to Fred. Olsen's (FOCL) standard terms & conditions, available on our website & on request. All prices quoted under the RAF Association members discount offer are exclusive to qualifying members & their travelling companions only, members must quote their discount code at time of booking. Membership discounts cannot be applied retrospectively. Bookings must be made via the booking hotline number 0800 0355 108. Proof of membership will be required at the time of booking. Offers cannot be extended to any unrelated third party, are subject to availability & may be withdrawn or amended at any time without prior notice. From time to time FOCL may run special offers which cannot be combined with this discount, including selected group travel deals. All guests booked under this scheme are requested to refrain from disclosing the fare paid whilst on board. Offer is for first-time cruisers with Fred. Olsen only. Fred. Olsen Oceans members are entitled to a 5% RAF Association discount subject to the same terms & conditions, to be applied after the standard Oceans discount, where applicable. In this instance, Oceans Terms & Conditions apply. Offer expires on 31st July 2017. E&OE.



Wendy Bridgett – Care Assistant at Rothbury House

The RAF Association's Wings Break Hotels are much loved by guests for their idyllic settings, delicious food and regular day trips out. There is always lots to see and do at Rothbury and the bookings show how popular they are, having been fully booked for most of autumn and winter. What makes the hotels extra special though, is the hard-working and dedicated employees, like Care Assistant Wendy Bridgett.

For Wendy, being a Care Assistant at Rothbury House is not simply a job, but a vocation. No two days are the same for Wendy and it is the variety of her job that she loves, saying: "I am either rushed off my feet with guests requiring assistance and support or quiet, with minimal support needed." Either way, Wendy enjoys being a part of the team at Rothbury House, taking on additional responsibilities when it is needed. She believes the best part of being part of the Rothbury House team is: "Making everyone happy." Whether this is sitting with a guest and having a chat over a cup of tea or helping someone who needs some extra support to enjoy his or her holiday, Wendy throws herself in to her work with an enthusiasm that is infectious.

Wendy has worked at the Wings Break Hotel for the past nine and a half years as a Care Assistant, but she is much more than that. When it comes to dressing up, celebrating and entertaining guests, she is first in line. Whether it's entertaining at the annual garden party, giving guests a fright on Halloween or performing in the Christmas pantomime, there is nothing Wendy enjoys more than to join in the festivities that the hotel puts on.

As the hotel celebrates its 20th anniversary, it is clear that employees like Wendy are part of the reason that people keep going back to Rothbury House. Colin Lee, Hotel Manager of Rothbury House, said of Wendy: "Wendy always gives her spare time freely to help out in any way she can and we are really proud to have her as a member of our team."

If you would like to visit Rothbury House or one of our other Wings Break Hotels and experience the warmth, hospitality and charm for yourself, go to www.rafa.org.uk/wingsbreaks or call 0800 0182 361.



Wendy at work



Wendy with other hotel employees dressed up for Halloween entertaining the guests

Corporal Richie Butler and Military Working Dog Eron

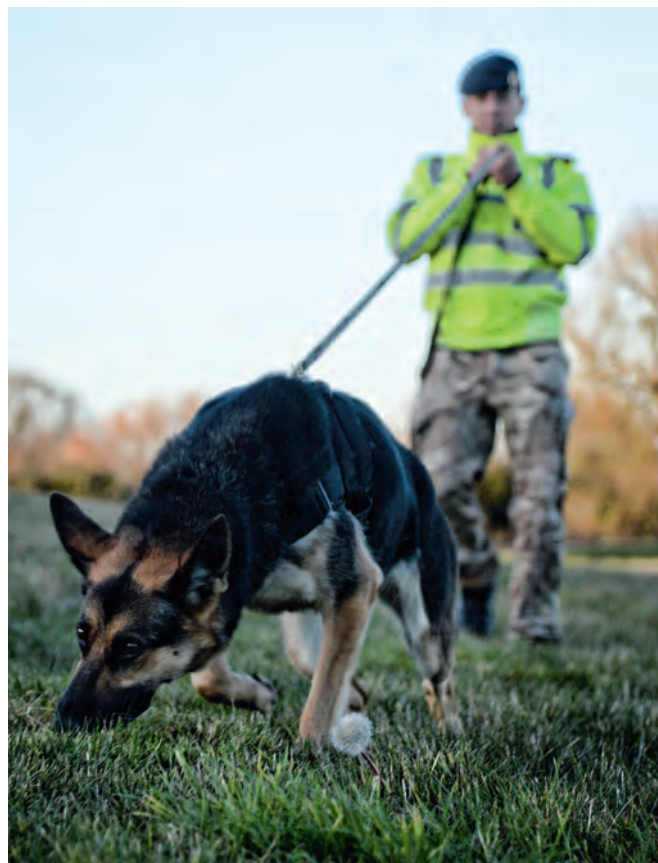
Continuing our series of features on canine members of the RAF family, this issue we meet Eron.

Eron is a five year old female German Shepherd dog. She was born in the Netherlands in 2010 and arrived at the Defence Animal Centre (DAC) in Leicestershire in 2012. After initially 'passing out' from DAC in the summer of 2012, Eron returned the following year to team up with Corporal Richie Butler on his Police Dog Handler Course. Richie told us about their time working together:

"Our first posting was to RAF St Mawgan on the sun-kissed shores of Cornwall. Within a few months of settling in, the call came through requesting us for a six-month detachment to Mount Pleasant Airfield (MPA) in the Falkland Islands. News that excited Eron a slight degree more than me!

"The tour would present us with challenges we were yet to face. Once we completed our annual licensing and carried out scenario based continuation training, Eron was given the 'fit to fly' nod from the vet and we prepared for the 20 hour combined flight down to the Falklands. My trusted four-legged partner and I arrived in the Islands in early October 2014 and were grateful the seasons are reversed from that of the northern hemisphere. We discarded the thermals and hit the ground running, but little did we know our finest hour was only a couple of phone calls away.

"A report had come through regarding a theft of valuable goods at the NAAFI shop. The perpetrators were detained, but it was believed they had concealed a number of goods on an open area



of land. As it was late with minimal light, along with the fact the suspects were in custody, it was agreed Eron and I would carry out a property search the following morning.

"At what felt like the break of dawn, we were set and eager to go, along with a RAF Police colleague. I carried out a brief assessment of the search area and established the prevailing wind to give Eron the best possibility of locating any property. Within a few minutes, Eron went down a few feet drop into a small, scarred pit area. After a few seconds of her not returning, I went to investigate, sensing she may be indicating on something. Once she was back in view, I could see she was laid next to a small waterproof bag, looking pleased with herself and awaiting praise. I called my police colleague over to assess the bag, it appeared it was what we were looking for and the items were seized.

"Eron was released to continue the search over the remaining area and after a few minutes she headed up the bank behind me. Before she reached the top, she performed a 'justifiable noticeable difference' and turned back into the wind. Eron worked the scent down and after approximately 80 metres, she worked her way into a large shrub, went into her indication and then waited for me to arrive with her reward!

"We completed clearing the area and were satisfied the items we'd located were all that had been reported stolen. I was impressed with Eron's work and determination to search, it is always rewarding to see training sessions put to the test. As for Eron, it was all just a walk in the park!"

European Area Autumn Conference 2016

In early November 2016 Malta hosted the European Area autumn conference. The branch committee and members of the Malta Branch, led by Tony Abela, ensured that all those who attended this memorable event had an enjoyable, trouble-free and productive weekend.

Of the 18 branches of the Area, 14 (78 per cent) were represented by a delegate, reflecting an excellent attendance and a show of outstanding enthusiasm for taking part in this extremely valuable aspect of Association life.

When all the island's visitors had settled into the San Antonio Hotel in Buggiba, the conference weekend started on the Friday evening. Led by our Area President, Air Marshal Philip Sturley, we all visited the Malta Presidential Palace for a meeting with the Island President, Marie Louise Coleiro Preca.

Those attending were delighted by the opportunity to meet the President, particularly as her role placed considerable demands on her availability. During the visit, Air Marshal Sturley presented a donation, raised by members of the Area, to the President in aid of her personally supported charity. On returning to the hotel, the rest of the evening was occupied with a meet-and-greet followed by an excellent buffet supper.

Due to the visit to the President's Palace on the Friday evening, the meeting of the Area Council was delayed until the Saturday morning. After which, the Area Council, along with branch delegates and visitors gathered for the Area Conference. The Dedication was read by Brian Darke; the Area Chairman, Bob Hunt, asked conference to remember those who had sadly passed away since the previous conference and, in particular, to remember Air Vice-Marshal David Whittaker, President of the



Chairman of Central Council, Air Vice Marshal John Cliffe, during his presentation to the European Area conference in Malta

Scotland and Northern Ireland Area and long-term supporter of the Association. The Area Chairman then welcomed Air Marshal Sturley, President of the Area, Air Marshal Graham Stacey, Service Vice President, Air Vice-Marshal John Cliffe, Chairman of Council and Conference guest speaker and Nick Bunting, Secretary General. The Chairman also welcomed Dr Bryan Pattison, Area Life Vice President and co-opted member of the Area Council. Finally, the Chairman welcomed the councillors, branch delegates and a significant number of visitors.

Before continuing with the agenda, the Chairman extended warm congratulations to Tich Taylor, a member of the Germany Branch, on the receipt of a Commandant General's Commendation awarded in recognition of his work in integrating the RAF Association's welfare system into the RAF Regiment Association and the Association of Warrant Officers and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers.



Area President entertaining the British High Commissioner and representatives of the Malta Government at the Area Gala Dinner

Apologies were received from Life Vice President Air Marshal Sir Christopher Coville who, unfortunately, could not attend the conference due to a previously arranged engagement. Similarly, apologies had been received from Flight Lieutenant 'Spike' Milligan, Area RAF Association Liaison Officer (RAFALO).

The Area Chairman presented the Area Council's Report during which he explained the revised membership renewal system, as it would affect the European Area from 1 January 2017.

Covering the reduction of the 90-day grace period to one month and that for new members joining after 31 December 2016 their renewal would be due on the anniversary date of joining. He also advised that the previous 'free' membership period for those joining after the end of June would be withdrawn from 31 December 2016. Branches were encouraged to start their 2017 renewal procedures early. However, the Chairman added that area branches could continue to remit renewal subscriptions minus the branch rebate, saving unnecessary expenditure on bank transfers.

The Chairman also advised on the Area Council's involvement with the Council Transition Programme and the drafting of the Association's future strategy. He encouraged branches that had not yet complied with the Association's directive regarding data protection to do so as soon as possible. He hoped that branches had had a successful Wings Appeal. Finally, he advised branches that the Area had a significant number of lapsed members from 2015 and encouraged delegates to recover as many of these as possible.

The Service Vice President, Air Marshal Graham Stacey, then gave a comprehensive brief on ongoing RAF operational commitments and provided an insight into the Service's new equipment procurement programme. Current overseas operations had led to an increased manpower requirement being met, the first time for many years. With the introduction of new equipment, the RAF's capabilities were improving all the time and the men and women of the Service were fully capable for the task in hand.

Next came the report from the Area Representative on Council, Brian Darke who enlarged on some of the topics raised by the Area Chairman and gave a comprehensive briefing on some of the decisions being taken by Council.

A report by the Area RAFALO was presented to the conference as 'Spike' was unable to attend.

After a break for coffee, the Chairman of Council, Air Vice-Marshal John Cliffe was introduced. John opened his presentation by providing a brief insight into some aspects of his RAF career, particularly those involving his days flying the Lightning fighter – having flown the last Lightning from RAF Luqa. John then gave the conference an update on some of the important aspects of the work of Council. The conference also benefitted from John's

explanation regarding the division of responsibilities and decision making between the executive at HQ and Council. Next, the Costa Del Sol delegate gave an update on preparations for the 2017 Autumn Area Conference. This was followed by a presentation from the Belgium Branch delegate proposing to host the 2018 Area Conference in Brussels – this proposal was seconded and approved by a majority decision.

Air Marshal Philip Sturley then presented Area President Certificates to Maggie Dennis, North Costa Blanca Branch (NCBB), and Tony Abela, of the Malta Branch, in recognition of their outstanding support to their respective branches. The Dennis Emes Shield, presented annually to the Ordinary or Life Member who was judged to have displayed the best all-round performance during the current year was presented by Air Marshal Graham Stacey to Alan Gill of the NCBB – Alan could not attend in person, so the shield was presented to the branch delegate and arrangements would be made for presentation to Alan at the Branch.

There then followed an open discussion on Brexit. There were many concerns, particularly relating to pension payments, medical cover and the possible need for visas. However, several delegates reported positive sounds coming from the governments of their respective adopted countries. There was a sense that it was too early to forecast the outcome of discussions relating to Brexit.

Finally, Air Marshal Sturley summed up what had been a very busy and productive conference.

For the Saturday evening the Malta Branch had organised a gala dinner that was also attended by the British High Commissioner and several members of the Malta government and their armed forces. Pre-dinner entertainment was provided by the Wallace Pipes and Drums, Malta and members of the Band of the Armed Forces of Malta provided excellent music and singing for after dinner dancing.

On Sunday morning conference participants were taken by coach to the old RAF base at Ta' Qali where a remembrance service was held in what had become an aviation museum.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable and productive weekend. Congratulations to the Malta Branch for making all the excellent arrangements.



European Area personnel attending the conference at the President's Palace, meeting the President of Malta

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Mid Wales Region. At the last Mid Wales region meeting at Knighton Branch Headquarters, Mrs Vivien Williams was presented with her Area Presidential Certificate. The certificate was presented in the absence of the Area President by Mike Chappell, Area Vice President. Also in the photograph is J R Williams, Area Vice Chairman.

2. Northern Ireland Wings Appeal 2016 was launched by the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Brian Kingston, in the gallery of the NI War Memorial on Monday 5 September 2016. Pictured are the NI Regional committee, the Lord Mayor, Air Officer Northern Ireland Air Vice-Marshal David Niven and the Chairman of the Council of the Northern Ireland War Memorial who very kindly granted permission for the event to take place in the gallery.

3. South Fylde Branch. When Fylde Borough Council started the 1940s weekends on Lytham Green, the branch was invited to sell merchandise supplied by RAFATRAD.

This has now become a yearly occasion and with time, grew so large that the branch found it could not cope. The Area was approached and a trailer was supplied.

This year, headquarters took over and brought the mobile exhibition trailer, which was a great success from the sales made. With members of the branch helping throughout the weekend.

4. Harrogate and District Branch. Late summer has been a busy time for the branch, with the highlight being the commemorative service at Stonefall Cemetery, Harrogate.

On Sunday 11 September, the 65th Annual Parade and Service was undertaken to commemorate the young airmen who died during the Second World War, of which a large number died in the Harrogate General Hospital. The majority were based at airfields within Yorkshire and of the 1,017 graves, 666 are Canadians, 224 are British, with the remainder being Australians, New Zealanders, Russian and Germans.

It is the branch's responsibility to organise the service and once again saw participation from personnel from RAF Linton-on-Ouse and air cadets from across the region.

The event was also very well attended by various local dignitaries including the Mayor of Harrogate, Councillor Nick Brown and the MP for Harrogate, the Right Honourable Andrew Jones MP as well as RAF and United States Air Force representatives from Menwith Hill, the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Jewish Association and the North Yorkshire Police.

On the following Saturday a large contingent of Association volunteers and air cadets also undertook Wings Appeal street collections across the region. When combined with the Starbeck Gala and supermarket collections undertaken over the summer holidays, they raised an impressive total of £2,992 for the Wings Appeal.

As a conclusion to this year's Battle of Britain commemorations the branch also arranged a commemorative service held at St Peter's Church followed by wreath laying at the Cenotaph. Another successful event, very well supported by local dignitaries, military representatives and air cadets.



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. York Branch. Wednesday 7 September was a special day for some of the older members who visited RAF Linton-on-Ouse. This was made possible by a generous donation to the branch welfare funds.

All were joined by Wing Commander Rupert Joel, deputising for the Station Commander, for afternoon tea – sandwiches, cream scones and delicious cakes and the mess staff pulled out all the stops; linen table cloths and silver aircraft trophies, all readily identified by the bold aviators. At an appropriate lull in the conversation, Wing Commander Joel announced his surprise. All were to be treated to a flypast so there would be a slight delay in departure – no objections were made!

Adele from the Association's Area welfare department based at Linton joined everyone and chairs were arranged at the front of the mess where they waited in the sunshine. A faint familiar engine noise was heard in the distance and all eyes turned towards the sky. Through the trees was the Spitfire from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, and just to make sure he hadn't been missed, the pilot made a second pass, much lower. There was great applause, maybe an odd tear. All those present will remember tea at Linton for a long time.

6. Teignmouth Branch organised a marathon weekend to commemorate the Battle of Britain writes Teignmouth journalist/historian, Viv Wilson MBE. A street and pub collection yielded around £700, the service on the Den attracted over 400 people and the afternoon concert in Teignmouth Pavilions drew an audience of 140. The assembly by the war memorial, attended by standard bearers and cadets, took place in perfect weather and a significant collection of motorcyclists accepted the honour of providing a ride past of honour, much to the crowd's delight.

The Last Post was played by the trumpeter from the RAF Association Concert Band, playing in Teignmouth for the first time. The Dambusters March was a highlight. Mick and Trish Flory, who planned and executed the event on behalf of the branch, were delighted with the response from the public and wish to convey their gratitude to everyone who contributed financially and helped in any way.

7. Calne and District Branch consecrated a new standard and laid up its old one in St. Marys Church, Calne on Battle of Britain Sunday, 18 September. Although the branch started at RAF Yatesbury in 1944 it was not until its relocation to Calne in 1946 that the standard was purchased. It has been paraded at every Calne remembrance parade and also at the Royal Wootton Bassett repatriations. It has also been paraded at the Arnhem Commemorations where a number of members have attended on numerous occasions.

Photo shows (l-r) Rev R Kenway, Air Commodore B Poulton President, Squadron Leader G Sweetlove Deputy Chairman, Mr Paul Ellis standard bearer, Mr A Stackman Branch Chairman.

8. Castleford Branch. Since the closure of a popular local venue, the Castleford Branch of the George Formby Society have been holding its meetings at the Flarepath Club in Castleford every month.

In September the evening's entertainment was dubbed "Strings For Wings" and all proceeds went towards the Wings Appeal, £50 was raised and the society has promised its support in future fund-raising efforts.

Photo shows Peter Pollard, Vice President of the George Formby Society with Branch Secretary Felicity Richardson.

The branch also hosted a Battle of Britain 1940s night, recreating the spirit of the blitz complete with camouflage nets, Union flags and taped-up windows. Though thankfully the only "blackouts" were the ones some wore! A merry evening was had with music, skits, period clothes and a feast which included that well-loved wartime staple the spam sandwich. In all, the evening was a roaring success and £221 was raised towards the Wings Appeal.



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Ellesmere Branch. In September, Warrant Officer Anita Coyles RAF Association Liaison Officer arranged for the club to attend a Battle of Britain service at RAF Shawbury which was conducted by Wing Commander Alastair Bissell, station padre.

Photo shows cadets from Whitchurch and Shawbury with branch members and serving RAF from the base.



2. Trowbridge and West Wiltshire Branch. Recently branches around Trowbridge have closed down due to lack of members, so for those who wanted to attend meetings, the Trowbridge Branch decided to extend a warm welcome. It has decided to change its name to Trowbridge and West Wiltshire to accommodate these members. A new standard was ordered and a laying up and dedication service date set, Battle of Britain Day. Branch Secretary Mike Sale liaised with Rev Dr Rob Thomas and it was duly organised.

The parade assembled with the old standard, carried by Barry Gladman, accompanied by the standards of other Services. The service was attended by Mayor Mrs Linda Self, Air Vice-Marshal Martin Clarke and Deputy Chairman Phil Lobb.

2196 (Trowbridge) Squadron was presented with the newly named Branch Adoption Certificate to reflect the change of title. It was presented by Air Vice-Marshal Martin Clark CB RAF, Branch President to Officer Commanding 2196 Squadron Flight Lieutenant Ben Evans RAF Vr(T)(T). Cadets and parents along with members and civilian committee members attended.



3. Bognor Regis Branch. Honorary Wings Appeal Officer Marion Mewett (right) and Wings Appeal supporter Ann Hewings, met racing legend Sir Stirling Moss and his wife, Lady Susie Moss, while manning the branch stand in the Hurricane restaurant at the Goodwood Revival. The results for the weekend were very satisfactory. Ron Flatt ran a stand in the Spitfire restaurant, with his team of helpers. The combined total from sales and collections was a great boost to the total achieved by the branch for 2016.

Battle of Britain weekend saw the Wings Appeal team out for the street collection. The branch's skiffle group were on hand, much to the shoppers' delight. More fundraising in the evening with the annual Wings dance and draw – first prize of a helicopter ride was won by the Branch Secretary, Tony Tucker. On Sunday, the bowls section hosted the annual "Jim Lorimer Wings Appeal Cup", following the church service and parade. Jim sadly passed away while playing bowls.



4. Oxted and Limpsfield Branch. Vic Farmer, RAF Bomber Command veteran, former headteacher and Branch President, celebrated his 93rd birthday in September at the RAF Club in Piccadilly. Guests included Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, Lady Hillier and ex-RAF friends. During the Second World War, Vic and his crew from 550 Squadron undertook 30 missions, including attacking targets such as submarines at Le Havre, France and the factories of the German industrial war machine. Vic has raised over £200,000 for the Association.

Photo shows Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier and Lady Hillier at the front with Vic Farmer.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Dover and District Branch. A Battle of Britain 76th anniversary memorial service was held at St Mary in Castro Church, Dover Castle in September.

Ten branch members including the standard bearer along with seven cadets from 354 (Dover) Squadron ATC and the standard bearer of the Royal Artillery Association (Dover Branch) attended the service.

The photo was taken on the green, outside the church, after the service.



6. Coningsby and District Branch. 77 (Coningsby) Squadron Air Cadets did the branch proud again this year, collecting on behalf of the Wings Appeal at the local Co-op. Despite exceptionally inclement weather which significantly reduced footfall, they raised a total of £157.06 over the day. Grateful thanks go to them for their continued support. Two stalwart members, Doreen Watkins and John Reeson, also gave their time on consecutive days to collect at Tattershall Co-op later in Wings Week raising £168.30. A big thank you to the tenacious duo for their commitment and stamina.



7. Fareham Branch was invited by Tesco, Fareham to join the staff in celebrating Battle of Britain Day. A successful day for the Wings Appeal and Tesco's national charity. Kari Pratt, the store Community Customer Liaison Manager, organised what was a very enjoyable day with music provided by a local ukulele group. Ted Burridge, Brian Sharples and Smokey Furness are the branch members in the photograph.



8. Leuchars Branch. Following an article in the Fife Press by Dawn Renton in August, regarding Thorntons' commitment to the UK Armed Forces Covenant, members of the branch were presented with a cheque for £250 from Sally and Douglas Kinnear, partners in Thorntons Law LLP, St Andrews.

Thorntons was demonstrating its ongoing support for the country's servicemen and women, and are the first Fife law firm to sign the Covenant.

Photo shows (l-r) Malcolm Hodgson, Branch Wings Appeal Co-ordinator; John Hanson, Branch Chairperson; Douglas and Sally Kinnear, Partners Thorntons Law LLP; Diane Manweiller, branch member and her guide dog Tigger.



Branch News can be submitted by e-mail to BranchNews@rafatrad.co.uk or via Royal Mail to the address shown on the inside front cover. News should ideally be around 100 words, accompanied by a supporting photograph (min 300 dpi).

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

Please note that due to space limitations, submission of an item does not guarantee publication.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Sheringham and District Branch. A major attraction held annually on the north Norfolk coast is the 1940s weekend when locals and visitors alike dress up to support social functions organised on the North Norfolk Railway, the Poppy Line.

Throughout the year the Poppy Line runs steam and diesel passenger trains over seven miles between stations at Sheringham and Holt. Both stations afford the opportunity to collect for the Wings Appeal.

With the cooperation of the North Norfolk Railway, collectors mingled with the revellers to raise funds and, with the addition of supermarket, pier, house-to-house and street collections, this year over £4000 was raised.



2. TCW & 90SU Branch. Members, together with current and former members of Tactical Communications Wing and 90 Signals Unit, honoured their departed colleagues with their annual service of remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) in Staffordshire.

The event, which is held in beautiful, peaceful surroundings, provides the opportunity for families and colleagues of those who have died to meet, remember and reflect.

Family, friends and colleagues stood in silent remembrance as the names of all personnel listed on the TCW and 90SU memorial were read out. The stone, which is one of more than 200 memorials in the UK's year-round centre of remembrance, commemorates and celebrates all those who died in the service of TCW and 90SU.

Group Captain David Rowland, Commanding Officer 90SU said: "I am delighted and proud that a large number of past and present members of the unit were able to join family members in the magnificent surroundings of the NMA to remember those members of the (TCW and 90SU) family that have passed away."



3. Costa Blanca Branch. In October, members manned a stall at the second Torrevieja charity fair held on the seafront near the Hombre Del Mar statue. The Association had aircraft lapel pins, flags, ducks, pens, stickers and balloons available to the Spanish public and ex-pats in exchange for a donation to the Wings Appeal. Money collected on the day amounted to €55.66. In the Torrevieja area there are an amazingly large number of welfare needs, which means the Branch Honorary Welfare Officer is very busy. Last year alone several hundreds of euros have been spent helping those in need.



4. Corsham and Chippenham Branch held its annual Wings luncheon in October at the Cumberwell Golf Club, Bradford on Avon.

During the afternoon Wing Commander Mark Brady (President) presented two branch members with certificates to mark them being made Life Vice Presidents in recognition of their long service and dedication to the Association and the branch.

Mike Woodberry (left) served as Treasurer, Vice Chairman, Chairman and lastly Secretary, spanning over 21 years of service. Les James (right) served as Chairman and Honorary Welfare Officer spanning over 16 years, the latter post being held for some 10 years. Both are shown with Chairman Arthur Antill and President Wing Commander Mark Brady.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Glasgow Branch. In November the Wings Café was formally opened by Wing Commander Ken Watt, Branch President, in the Haven Café of Cathcart Old Parish Church. The café will be open every Friday from 1100hrs to 1400hrs using the church's facilities and all are welcome who wish to attend. Should any veterans who are unable to drive, or use public transport, please contact the Branch Support Officer Russ McMillan on 07887 746260 so transport to/from the venue may be arranged.

The opening ceremony was attended by members of 602 (City of Glasgow) Squadron RAuxAF, RAF Careers, West of Scotland Wing ATC, Area staff, branch and church members and an Act of Remembrance was held by the Rev Neil Galbraith, minister of Old Cathcart.



6. The Isle of Man Branch has collected £2,652.44 for the Wings Appeal in 2016. The fundraising was done through collections at various Shoprite stores and the Battle of Britain Concert held at All Saints Church, Douglas, Isle of Man.

On Saturday 10 September, collections were conducted island wide at Shoprite stores in Douglas, Onchan, Ramsey, Port Erin and Peel. The community was very welcoming and donated generously to the cause.

The Castletown Metropolitan Silver Band, The Regal Singers and Catriona Mills performed at the Battle of Britain Concert on Friday 16 September at All Saints Church. The weekend was rounded off perfectly with a parade and church service to commemorate the Battle of Britain on Sunday 18 September, which was attended by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Richard Gozny KCMG CVO, local politicians and members of the public.

The Manx community was extremely supportive during Wings Week. Their generosity allowed us to beat the 2015 total of just under £2,000. We are looking forward to this years fundraising in order to promote the Association and give back to the local community.

7. Poole Branch. Member John Kennan bridged the age gap while collecting for the Wings Appeal during the Bournemouth Air Festival in August last year. Several other members of the branch assisted on the mobile exhibition trailer in the RAF village over the four days of the air festival.



8. Beccles and Southwold Area Branch held its annual presentation evening in October. Items on the agenda included the election of a new Life Vice President, Bob Honeywood.

Branch President, Brian Vousden, commented: "The award of the position of Life Vice President to Bob Honeywood is for supporting our branch over many years and his efforts in collecting for the Wings Appeal.

Bob served for over 25 years and was a Crew Chief on Vulcan Bombers during the period of the Cold War. His record of service is exemplary and his efforts in supporting our branch are an example to us all. We are delighted that he has accepted this award".



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Huddersfield Branch. Karen Todd and Sharon Pearson, the branch's intrepid fundraisers, took part in a five-day walk from Holme on Spalding Moor to Huddersfield and hoped to raise £1,000 for the Association. A magnificent total in excess of £2,000 has been raised as a result of their endeavours. The walk was planned as a memorial to the crew of Wellington Bomber Z1327 which crashed at Farnley Tyas. The aircraft left RAF Brighton in February 1942 on its final cross-country training flight. The majority of the crew are buried in Holme on Spalding Moor graveyard.

The pair, with loyal back-up from husbands Mike and Rob, set off from Holme on Spalding Moor towards Brighton airfield, where a wreath was laid to the accompaniment of a fly-past by local pilot Alan Marsland.

The final sector was completed in good spirits and branch members, including President Jason McCartney MP, were able to accompany Karen and Sharon part of the way (photo also shows Martin Pearson – Sharon's son). They completed the walk with the laying of a final wreath on the Z1327 memorial at Wellington Cottage.

Karen and Sharon wish to thank all those who kindly chose to sponsor them on their JustGiving page, including an anonymous donor who gave £200 with the comment: "Good luck – fingers crossed for sunny weather!" They are overjoyed that they have been able to honour the memory of the Z1327 crew in such a positive manner.



2. Clacton on Sea Branch has commissioned a new memorial stone for the town's seafront gardens and a special service of dedication was

held in November. The new stone has replaced a plaque which had become worn and tired, despite regular care and attention from members. The service, conducted by the branch padre, was attended by the Chairman of Tendring District Council; Clacton branch members and standard; Clacton Royal British Legion standard; Commanding Officer of the local ATC Squadron and Matt Gwinnell on behalf of the constructor R. Gwinnell & Sons.

The Branch President said: "The new memorial stone is there to remember the men and women of the town and all others who served in any capacity with the Royal Air Force and unselfishly gave their lives for the benefit of others."



3. Birstall (Leicestershire) Branch recently celebrated its 40th anniversary with a social evening at the local Royal British Legion Club. Guests included Ken Clarke (South East and Eastern Area Director) and representatives from three local ATC squadrons.

Pictured are two of the original branch members, Barry Smart (now Chairman of Leicester Branch) and Tony Lord, cutting the cake.



4. Caduceus Branch is one of the virtual branches of the Association and is named after the insignia worn by the RAF Medical Services, it has just reached the end of its inaugural year with a membership of more than 60.

The standard was dedicated in 2016 at the kind invitation of Air Commodore Kilbey during the biannual RAF Medical Services Memorial Service at the National Arboretum.

Members attended the Cenotaph Service of Remembrance and a wreath was laid by John Bailey. Members Claire and Kevin Horner were interviewed by the BBC.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Lossiemouth Branch. Last year saw branch members attending many venues throughout Moray. Being the last branch within many miles, it has at times, been a herculean task and big thanks must go to President Dave Martin who organised these events. Photo shows (l-r) some of the dedicated team at Tesco in Buckie: Dave Martin (President), Janet Payne (Secretary), Eddie Pratt, Liz Nelson, Marty Latham (Chairman) and Ian Nelson. Under the leadership of the Chairman, the branch has been updating and modernising its image to encourage younger members to join the cause.

For many years the monthly meetings have been held in the Royal Naval Association's headquarters in Lossiemouth, however by the time this article is published it will have moved into the Ex-Serviceman's Club, Elgin. Moving to a more central location may encourage more of the 250+ members on branch books to attend.

6. Hythe and Romney Marsh Branch members attended the Battle of Britain service at the Hythe War Memorial. A service was also held at Lympe Church which was very well attended by the Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, Mrs Amanda Cottrell, Shepway District Chairman and the mayors of Hythe/Folkestone/New Romney and Lydd plus escorts and representation from the Royal British Legion/Burma Star Association/local councils and cadets from 99 Squadron Folkestone Air Training Corps and children from Lympe School.

7. Sydney Metropolitan Branch. The annual Royal Australian Air Force Association ceremony at the Cenotaph was once again well attended. Present were serving RAF officer, Squadron Leader Sally-Ann Knox who chatted to members after the service. President Val Dougherty delivered a greeting from RAF Association President Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller.

Photo shows Val Dougherty, Squadron Leader Sally-Ann Knox, Liam Farrell and Thomas Thorpe at the Battle of Britain commemoration.

Another great event was the service at the Garrison Church, enhanced by the attendance of Knox College pipes and drums. A substantial number of members and children of former members attended. The highlight event was the Battle of Britain dinner. Guest of honour was Wing Commander Jonathon Hough, Air and Military Adviser, British High Commission. He gave a hugely interesting talk about the modern RAF and afterwards mingled with guests.

8. Solihull Branch proudly present the committee under leadership of Chairman Joe Mullen, who volunteered at the AGM to step in and save the branch from closure. Davick Back followed suit and became Vice Chairman. The team has gone from strength to strength.

Photo shows (l-r): Davick Back, Joe Mullen, Derek Tilford, Eddie Baker, Margaret Harris, Mike Pidgeon and Ron Harris. Two branch officers not in the picture are Gary Allport and Chris Bullen.



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Northern Ireland Area. The field of remembrance was opened on 7 November in the Belfast City Hall. Sergeant Su McGinlay, one of the hardworking RAF Association Liaison Officers, planted the poppy cross in the Association plot on behalf of the Association in Northern Ireland.

On Remembrance Sunday, Dick Trebbett, Regional Chairman and Scotland and Northern Ireland Vice Chairman, laid the wreath at the Belfast City Hall ceremony. Along with Dick, were Wing Commander Alison Moodie Officer Commanding 502 (Ulster) Squadron and her husband Phil who is a retired Wing Commander.



2. North Costa Blanca Branch. At the European Area Autumn Conference held in Malta, two members were honoured for their outstanding contribution.

Mrs Maggie Dennis is currently the Branch Treasurer and Honorary Welfare Officer and has given outstanding service to the branch as an associate member. Area President, Air Marshal Philip Sturley CB, said that he was delighted to present her with a European Area President's Certificate.



Alan Gill was awarded the Dennis Emes Shield in appreciation of his many years service as Branch Entertainments Officer. He could not attend the conference but was given his award at the November meeting by Wing Commander Bob Hunt MBE. Bob

told members that the shield was a special award for outstanding dedication and commitment and that the recipient was selected annually from candidates nominated by all branches within the European Area.



3. Llandaff and Ely Branch. A recent autumn dance event held at the branch, saw a presentation to RAF Association Liaison Officer Sergeant Lisa Millar from branches in East Glamorgan and Gwent Region. RAF Association Liaison Officer Sergeant Millar will be missed by many people around the Area for her boisterous activities and very strong support and engagement within branches. The region congratulates Lisa on her promotion to chiefie.

Photo shows the Chairs of the branches who attended along with Sergeant Millar (l-r): Terry McKeown (Barry), Lyn Jones

(Cwmbran), Gwen White (Treorchy), Tich Taylor (Penarth Branch and Regional Chairman), Sergeant Lisa Millar, Normandy Vets Association, Dave Ford (Llandaff and Ely) and Mike Facey (Neath).



4. Sud-Ouest Branch. The blue cornflower coupled with the red poppy always makes for a poignant presence here in France on Armistice Day as both flowers represent remembrance. The branch covers an area the size of Wales and thus nine official ceremonies, spread far and wide, were supported by members where wreaths were laid and the flowers were worn for remembrance.

Once again the branch also attended the German war graves in Charente-Maritime at Berneuil where two young supporters, Holly and Jasmine Siddons, laid wreaths in remembrance of 9,000 Second World War German soldiers. Photo shows the young girls thanking the many standard bearers for their stalwart attendance.

Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Knighton Branch. In October a large crowd of members descended on Knighton RAFA Club to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the club opening. The branch was formed 62 years ago and it bought the club 60 years ago.

All members enjoyed the evening with reduced prices on the drinks, which was supported by the brewery and a large selection of food organised by the ladies in the club. A grand draw, with £50 first prize and second prize a large hamper donated by committee members, raised some £150 for the Wings Appeal.

Pictured with the 60th anniversary cake and some of the many guests are Knighton Mayor Councillor Sally Vaughn and Mrs Lilian Bright, Club Chairman. Also shown are two special guests in the background – Mike Chappell (Area Vice President) and John Williams (Area Vice Chairman).



For the first time the branch hosted the Wales, Midlands and South Western Area Regional Conference. The branch felt it was a great honour to be able to act as hosts for the event. Some of the regional committee had not been to mid Wales before.

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

Pictured at Knighton are the Area committee – Air Commodore, Andrew Neal Area President, John Tisbury, Area Chairman, Mike Chappell, Wales Vice-President, John Williams, Area Vice-Chairman. Standing, Geoff Bridgman, Councillor, Steve Colmoop, co-opted member and Warrant Officer Joe Tomlin, Area RAF Association Liaison Officer representative. Two other councillors, Denzil Haynes and Tom Phillips also attended but were not available for the photo shoot.



6. Aphrodite Branch held its Battle of Britain Ball at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Limassol in September. 130 people attended and many emails and telephone calls have been received stating how much everyone enjoyed the evening and hoping that it is replicated this year.

Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller KBE, was the guest of honour, accompanied by Lady Lesley Miller. Sarah Waugh, Overseas Director, also attended. Sir Dusty's speech honouring all who took part in the Battle of Britain was very stirring and well received.

The Royal Air Force Akrotiri Voluntary Band put in a marvellous performance at the start of the evening, and throughout dinner. After the grand draw, the dance floor was crowded most of the time with guests dancing to Katrina.

The evening ended with a rousing Auld Lange Syne, and everyone joined in. A truly memorable evening. €1,200 was raised on the night and another €800 in the daily collections at RAF Akrotiri for Wings Week.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Skipton Branch's 70th anniversary was celebrated in November last year with a dinner at the Skipton golf club. The branch was formed on 12 November 1946 at the Unicorn Hotel in Skipton. In 1947 it was able to obtain the lease for premises on Moorview Way, which was converted from a bungalow with additional toilets, kitchen, cellar and bar and opened the following year. It is still in these premises today.

The current membership stands at 100 ordinary members with 145 associate members. Last year's Wings Appeal collection amounted to £9,601 thanks to a small band of dedicated collectors, plus the invaluable help from three Air Training Corps squadrons: 64 Skipton, 2431 Keighley and 1224 Wharfedale.

Air Commodore Charles Clarke OBE – Part two

by Chris Goss

Readers would have read of 20 year-old RAF Bomb Aimer Flying Officer Charles Clarke's story up to 2250 hrs on 24 February 1944 in the previous Air Mail. Having successfully baled out of his Lancaster, his war was far from over - this is the second part of Charles' war.

Baling out at 18,000 feet, Charles was now concerned that his stricken Lancaster would come down on him and possibly collapse his parachute so waited as late as possible before pulling the 'D' ring after which the parachute opened without incident and he landed, none the worse for wear, on snow-covered German soil. Charles was not sure exactly where he landed, but having gathered his wits, began heading in the direction of Switzerland.

However, it soon became obvious that reaching neutral territory would be harder than he thought. With no practical experience of how to escape and evade, especially in deep snow, Charles ploughed through snowdrift after snowdrift. Soon, exhausted, cold and desperate, he was convinced that his frozen corpse would be found in the spring thaw. Luck, though, was on his side and he came across a hut and managed to get inside where he tried to make a fire. Trouble was the matches from his escape pack were wet and when he tried to cut slivers of wood with his escape knife, it broke.

At daybreak, Charles headed onwards and soon came across a road, the other side of which was a frozen river. He was convinced that the ice wouldn't take his weight, but his future was then determined by a German patrol who spotted him and fired warning shots which convinced him to surrender. Quickly surrounded, he was well treated by German soldiers who were amazed at the age of what they called a 'Boy Flieger'. He was put into a lorry and then taken to the jail in a nearby town.

Once warm and dry, Charles started shouting out in the hope of another RAF captive hearing him and shouting back. However, in no uncertain terms he was told to shut up. This didn't stop him as he began singing songs which would have been popular in Britain on a Saturday night and was pleased when someone then joined in. Who that was, he never knew as he was then taken to a nearby Luftwaffe airfield where he had a close escape:

"One of the Goons (German guards) had a negligent discharge with his rifle. Luckily the bullet missed me but the Feldwebel (Sergeant) in charge really tore him off a strip!"

From the airfield, Charles was taken to Dulag Luft at Oberursel near Frankfurt, where all captured aircrew were taken for interrogation. In solitary confinement in a hot and tiny cell with very little to eat, he was only there for a week as the Germans knew more about him and 619 Squadron than he did and of no further use, he was taken to the local railway station. It was now that he was glad he had a guard as the locals were not friendly, screaming 'Terror Flieger' and spitting at him. He felt that without the guards, he would have been lynched but safely on a train, he now was heading for the Prisoner of War (POW) camp Stalag Luft III at Sagan just to the east of what would be the Polish border, 160 km south-east of Berlin.

On arrival, he was quizzed by fellow POWs just in case he was a German 'stool pigeon' which was understandable, especially because of what was going on underneath the camp. In the spring of 1943, plans were hatched to dig tunnels out of the camp and on the night of 24-25 March 1944, 77 POWs managed to get out before the Germans discovered their escape and raised the alarm. Being a recent arrival, Charles was not involved, but he heard the shot which signalled the escape being discovered. All day on 25 March 1944, he and fellow prisoners were made to stand in the open air while the Germans tried to discover who and how many had escaped. Of the 76 that managed to get away, 73 were captured and in a dreadful example of retribution, 50 were then murdered. What exactly had happened was not known for certain until the Senior British Officer, Group Captain Herbert Massey, was repatriated due to ill-health. He stated what had happened and in June 1944 the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden promised that those who were responsible would be brought to exemplary justice, which after the war, they were.

Meanwhile, back in Sagan, Charles was settling in to life as a POW. By June 1944, he knew that the Allies had invaded in Normandy, thanks to an illegal radio, and there was now a misguided belief that they would be 'home next week'. Home would not come for another 11 months and those 11 months would see increasing hardship. Nevertheless, they plotted the Allied advance on a hidden map, comparing it to German reports. Even the German Commandant asked for the Allied news, obviously distrustful of the German news!

From summer 1944 onwards, food became scarcer. One thing they were never short of was cigarettes, which was the currency of the camp. Each Red Cross parcel (if they got one) contained 50 cigarettes but what Charles longed for were the chocolate bars and he could think of nothing better than at night, cutting a small chunk of chocolate and lying on his bunk seeing how long it would last. However, chocolate was becoming rarer, not helped by the German guards opening all parcels to check for escape tools and to ensure that rations could not be hoarded for escape attempts (even though escape attempts after the Great Escape had stopped). German-supplied bread was mainly sawdust and with only one machine capable of cutting loaves, prisoners would try to cut slices as thin as possible so that the bread would



Above: POW camp Stalag Luft III.



A representative picture of prisoners of war, of particular note the prisoner in clogs . Photo: © Author

go further. They then cut cards to see who got the slice of their choice (and also who licked out any food tins!) as there was always a risk of splinters!

On 23 November 1944, Charles celebrated his 21st birthday at Sagan "No cake but the other prisoners did make a fuss" as he recalls. However, little did he know, his time at Sagan would last just under another two months.

By the end of January 1945, the Soviets were a mere 20 mile away and Charles clearly remembers hearing the gunfire. With little warning, Sagan was evacuated west, the last leaving just before midnight on 27 January 1945. Charles remembers leaving at 0200 hrs in a blizzard, in temperatures well below freezing. He and three others had made a sledge to take what belongings they could but most, including cigarettes onto which they deliberated urinated, were left behind.

It was not a march, but more of "a chaotic trudge" as Charles remembers, not helped that he was suffering from chilblains, which cleared in a day or so. After 36 hours and still not having been fed, they stopped at what was believed to be Bad Muskau 33 miles from Sagan. Those lucky enough managed to get into a barn, but those outside nearly all suffered frostbite. Charles remembers clearly that one didn't dare take off one's boots as feet would immediately swell and then you couldn't get the boots back on.

After five days, the sledge broke, but two days later, they over-nighted in a much warmer glass factory and shortly after that they arrived at Spremburg, his only possessions being the clothes on his back and a tin for food. With constant below zero temperatures day and night and intermittent snow, even today Charles cannot hazard a guess how many they lost on the way but was always amazed that those who appeared to be strong were invariably the first to fall by the wayside.

At Spremburg, they were loaded 40-50 at a time into rail trucks. Conditions were dreadful, with just one bucket for a toilet and most, including Charles, suffering from debilitating dysentery.

The train took them north towards Bremen where their new home would be Marlag Milag Nord 19 miles north-east of Bremen. They arrived on or around 4 February 1945, marching the last few miles in driving rain and snow to be greeted by a dilapidated smashed up camp.

Things at the new camp were very bad with just one doctor, very little food and hardly any fuel to keep themselves warm. After about a month, a delivery of bread arrived by truck only for the truck to be strafed and destroyed by an RAF Typhoon:

"We were starving and if that Typhoon had been shot down and the pilot baled out, I am sure we would have lynched him!"

At last, in March 1945, the weather improved allowing the starving prisoners to scavenge for food – swede tops intended for cattle made a passable soup. However, at the start of April 1945, Marlag Milag Nord was evacuated with

POWs heading west, arriving at the Elbe on or around 18 April 1945. Charles recalls it was easy to escape, but the risk of crossing first German and then Allied lines was too great. The Germans had stopped counting before they arrived at Luckenwalde where the prisoners split, Charles heading north to Lübeck. It was a dangerous time with Allied aircraft overhead almost constantly forcing them all to wave towels to avoid being strafed. It was now that Charles saw aircraft being shot down – something he never saw before, as in Sagan they were always locked up.

On approaching Lübeck, there was concern as typhoid had apparently been reported, so the Germans dumped them at a farm. It was now on or around 28 April 1945 and gunfire coming from the west was clearly heard. A few days later, by which time the German guards had disappeared, a two-man British armoured car arrived. Apparently they were on a recce and had got lost but according to them the rest of what was the British 11th Armoured Division was not far behind. It was now that Charles and a few others made a decision:

"Bugger this! We found a car with as much fuel as possible and we drove west until it ran out!"

The next few weeks were quite eventful, but they eventually made it to Brussels and after a few days, managed to get on a Lancaster which flew them to RAF Westcott in Buckinghamshire. They were then taken to London where they "hit the town" after which they went to RAF Cosford to be "debriefed and deloused" and checked out medically before a month's leave.

Leave over, he returned to RAF Wittering where he was asked what he wanted to do now. His answer was: "To leave the b****y RAF!" He did just that but not until 25 November 1978, by which time he had reached the rank of Air Commodore in first the Equipment and then Supply Branches!

Today, 92 year-old Charles lives in south-west London and after a successful civilian career, still keeps himself busy especially with the RAF ex-POW Association and the Bomber Command Association.

Operation Corsican



A formation of Armstrong Whitworth Whitleys. Photo © via author

On 20 October 2016, a memorial ceremony was held near Belymas in the Dordogne region of France, just to the north of the town of Bergerac. The memorial was to a little known but crucial event in the history of the Second World War, the first dropping of Special Operations Executive (SOE) operatives over occupied France by the RAF.

138 Squadron was formed at RAF Newmarket at the end of August 1941 from 1419 Flight and commanded by Wing Commander Edward Knowles with A Flight commanded by Flight Lieutenant Ashley Jackson and B Flight by New Zealander Flight Lieutenant John 'Whippy' Nesbitt-Dufort DSC (both flight commanders would be promoted to squadron leader by the autumn). The squadron was equipped with a mix of Westland Lysanders and Armstrong Whitworth Whitleys which would soon be supplemented by Handley Page Halifaxes. The squadron's task was for Special Duties, namely dropping men and equipment for clandestine tasks over occupied Europe.

Operation Corsican took place on the night of 10 October 1941 and involved the dropping of SOE operatives Jack Hayes (code

name Victor), Clément Jumeau (Robert), Jean Le Harivel (Georges XXV) and Daniel Turberville (Daniel), all specialists in sabotage. At 1812 hrs, Flight Lieutenant Ashley Jackson (with his crew Pilot Officer Stanley Widdup (second pilot), Sergeant Holden (Navigator), Flight Sergeant Wood (Wireless Operator/Air Gunner), Sergeant Bramley (Rear Gunner), Sergeant McAlister (Despatcher) and Captain Wood) got airborne from Newmarket in a Whitley, headed for Abingdon, then Tangmere, crossing the British coast at Bognor Regis just after 1930 hrs. The weather was rough with low cloud, so Jackson tried to climb above it, but over the channel weather conditions deteriorated further with 10/10ths cloud below 5,000 feet and 9/10ths cloud above 6,000 feet and added to that, occasional heavy rain.

At 2225 hrs, he descended to 3,000 feet and was pleased to note that the weather conditions had improved, but were still not brilliant. However, 15 minutes later he spotted a town to starboard which he thought was Bergerac, so then set course for the drop zone. Seeing no signals, he then returned to Bergerac and then retried heading back for the target area again, but failed a second time. They then realised that what they had seen was



An example of the Westland Lysander type used for dropping SOE operatives in occupied territory. Photo © via author



A Handley Page Halifax being prepared for a mission during World War II. Photo © via author

not Bergerac and that they were slightly west of the town, so they reset course and circled the drop zone waiting for the signal which eventually they got at 2345 hrs. The "four bodies" were then dropped, after which they circled again and dropped two containers of equipment, setting course for home at 0009 hrs and landing at Newmarket just after 0400 hrs.

Meanwhile, three of the four men had been met by Jean Pierre-Bloch, (Gabriel) Edouard Dupuy and Albert Rigoulet (Le Frisé) when they landed in woods at Lagudal, but from then on, things did not go well. Daniel Tuberville had landed 10 kms away from the main party, not far from the containers, and he and the containers were captured by Vichy police the following day. The Vichy authorities set a trap for the remainder, who were then captured at Marseilles. After which they were taken to the prison at Perigieux not far from where they had originally landed and where Turberville was now being held. Daniel Turberville managed to escape in December 1941 when he was being transferred to Lyon, arriving back in the UK in April 1943. Haynes, Jumeau and Le Harivel managed to escape from Perigieux on 16 July 1942. Jumeau was the only one of the four not to survive the war, as he was injured and captured on a subsequent mission in 1944 and died of maltreatment in Berlin on 26 March 1944. Wing Commander Edward Knowles DFC was killed in an accident on the Isle of Man on 23 August 1942 while with 296 Squadron. Wing Commander Ashley Jackson was killed in action on 5 January 1944, flying with 207 Squadron prior to taking command of another Lancaster Squadron and was buried at Poznan in Poland. Pilot Officer Stanley Widdup was reported missing in action off the Dutch coast on 27 March 1942, still flying with 138 Squadron, while John Nesbitt-Dufort would be awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) and survived the war.

The well attended memorial ceremony in Belymas was organised by Claude Pierre-Bloch, son of Jean and who passed away in

1999. Among those attending was Jean-Marc Todeschini, the French Veterans Minister, as well as many senior political and government officials from the region. The RAF was represented by Squadron Leader Dave Ford, who is on an exchange tour at Bordeaux and by the Chairman of the RAF Association Sud-Ouest Branch, Mrs Beryl Dennett Stannard.



Squadron Leader Dave Ford pictured at the memorial ceremony

AUSTRALIA



The Royal Australian Air Force has taken delivery of its first Lockheed P-8 Poseidon, with the remaining 11 due to enter service over the next three to four years. These aircraft will gradually replace the P-3C Orions currently in service. Additionally, the Royal Australian Navy has received the last of 24 new Sikorsky Seahawk helicopters for maritime operations from their warships.

GERMANY



The German Air Force is planning to buy up to six Lockheed C-130J Hercules and to pool them with those being bought by France. These aircraft would be used to supplement the A-400M, as with the French Air Force, operating into more restricted airfields and also supporting Special Forces. It is hoped that these Hercules will be in service early in the next decade. They will probably be based at a French airfield to maximise efficiency of operation and support.

INDIA



The Indian government is likely to purchase up to 12 amphibious ShinMaywa US-2 surveillance and search and rescue aircraft from Japan for operation by the Indian Navy. This would be one of Japan's first sales of military equipment since a 50 year old ban on arms exports was recently lifted. This aircraft is already in service with the Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force.



INDIA - ShinMaywa US-2 Amphibian. Photo: © ShinMaywa

ISRAEL



The US Air Force has transferred ten of its two-seat F-15 air superiority fighters to the Israeli Air Force to supplement the latter's fleet of this aircraft. Eight of these aircraft passed through RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk in mid-September on their delivery flight. They had been designated as excess to requirements by the USAF.

ROMANIA



The Romanian Air Force has acquired its first modern jet fighters in the shape of Lockheed Martin F-16s. These are being acquired from Portugal and the first six of an eventual 12 were handed over in late September; the remainder will be received by the end of 2017. There are three two-seaters among the 12 and the type will replace some of the Romanian Air Force's MiG-21 fleet. Romania hopes to acquire another 12 F-16s in due course to replace its remaining MiG-21s.

SINGAPORE



The Republic of Singapore Air Force is to receive two new helicopter types to replace existing fleets. The Airbus Helicopters H225M (formerly the EC225) will replace the Super Pumas that have been in service since 1983, while the latest version of the Boeing Chinook, the CH-47F, will replace the CH-47D models that were obtained in 1994. The H225M was developed from the Puma/Super Puma models. The new helicopters possess greater range and lifting capacity than the aircraft they are replacing.

TURKEY



Turkey has now committed to purchasing 30 F-35A Lightning II aircraft, with a recent contract for 24 to add to their initial orders for six aircraft. Turkey has plans to acquire a total of 100 of these fifth-generation multirole fighters in due course.

UK



The Airbus A400M Atlas has recently completed two weeks of soft surface landing and take-off trials at the former RAF Woodbridge in Suffolk. A pre-prepared sand runway was used and this had to be artificially softened in order to fully test the airframe. This test site was prepared by the Royal Engineer's 23 Parachute Engineer Regiment. Sand is the last of three unprepared landing strips that Airbus is certifying the aircraft to operate from. Earlier testing saw the aircraft operating from a gravel surface in Spain and grass in France.

Portuguese F-16 fighters joined Canadian, French and US Navy maritime patrol aircraft for the latest Joint Warrior exercise that took place at RAF Lossiemouth for two weeks in mid-October. The US Navy detachment was operating the P-8 Poseidon which will be based at Lossiemouth with the RAF from the end of the decade.

The RAF undertook two major deployments to the Far East in October and November last year under the overall title of Exercise Eastern Venture. Firstly, Typhoons from two of the Lossiemouth squadrons carried out exercises in Malaya, Japan and South Korea with the local air forces; the US Air Force was also involved in the South Korean exercise. The Japanese exercise was the first time this nation had carried out such activity with any foreign nation other than the United States. Secondly, during the same period, the Red Arrows visited the United Arab Emirates, India, Singapore, Malaya and, for the first time ever, China to carry out displays at major



UK - A400M Sand Surface Landing Trials, Woodbridge. Photo: © MoD/Crown



UK - The Red Arrows over Airshow China at Zhuhai. Photo: © MoD/Crown

airshows and to perform fly pasts at important sites. The RAF Air Transport fleet supported these varied deployments with air-to-air refuelling and the transportation of essential equipment and support personnel.

The Secretary of State for Defence has confirmed that the Red Arrows will receive new jet aircraft in the next few years although the type involved has not yet been decided. Their current Hawk T1s have been in service for some 40 years and are gradually being phased out of service with the Royal Air Force.



USA - B-52H 'Ghost Rider' Test Flight before Repainting. Photo: © USAF

USA



In a first for the US Air Force, a 55 year old B-52H Stratofortress bomber has been resurrected from eight years of desert storage in Arizona and has now re-entered squadron service. The USAF is allowed to maintain a total of 76 B-52Hs in operational service in accordance with international treaties. Therefore, when one was severely damaged by fire in 2014, they had to obtain a replacement. The aircraft that was chosen, named Ghost Rider, was taken out of storage last year and has since been undergoing a major overhaul and modification programme to bring it up to the standard of the rest of the fleet.

The US Marine Corps (USMC) has awarded a contract to the British company Cobham to develop a palletised in-flight refuelling system to allow their tiltrotor V-22 Ospreys to pass fuel to other aircraft such as the F-35 Lightning II. This system will utilise Cobham's existing hose drum unit that the USMC already use on their Hercules aircraft. The system should be in service in about two years and will allow the Osprey to carry out air refuelling from either land or sea.



UK - Typhoon FGR4 of 1 Sqn at RAF Lossiemouth. Photo: © J M Henderson

Images of war

by Chris Goss



Spitfire IX serial BS540 coded AH-E pictured after the forced landing near Wissenkirke. Photo: © Author

Nils Fuglesang was born at Rasvag in Hidra, Norway on 7 October 1918. After education in both France and Norway, when the Germans invaded in April 1940, he was working as an apprentice with an Oslo shipping company. However, he decided to escape in order to fight the Germans and on 12 March 1941, he and 11 others sailed to the Shetland Islands.

On arrival in Britain, he joined the Norwegian Army Air Service and in May 1941, he sailed to Canada to train as a pilot. Sergeant Fuglesang successfully completed his training at the end of 1941 and returned to Britain to be a fighter pilot, joining 332 Squadron at RAF Catterick on 9 June 1942. Commanded by Major Odd Bull, 332 Squadron was formed on 16 January 1942 and was the second operational Norwegian fighter squadron.

Shortly after Nils' arrival, 332 Squadron moved to RAF North Weald in Essex where it would remain until April 1944. At 1320 hrs on 20 January 1943, Nils damaged a Focke Wulf Fw 190, 10 miles inland from Cap Gris Nez, which would be his only air combat success. Shortly after, he was commissioned as a Lieutenant and then awarded the King Haakon VII Freedom Medal in March 1943, but his flying career would last just under another two months.

On the early evening of 2 May 1943, Nils was flying one of a number of Spitfires supporting Ramrod 12, escorting Lockheed Venturas attacking Ijmuiden. The RAF formation was attacked by Fw 190s of Stab, I and II Gruppe/Jagdgeschwader 1. The Germans claimed to have shot down seven Spitfires and two Venturas but in reality, just four Spitfires were lost – two from 331 Squadron and two from

332 Squadron. One of those lost was Spitfire IX serial BS540 coded AH-E and flown by Nils Fuglesang. Nils' Spitfire was badly damaged by a Fw 190 probably flown by Leutnant Rüdiger von Kirchmayr of Stab II./Jagdgeschwader 1 and was forced to crash-land near Wissenkirke where he was quickly taken prisoner.

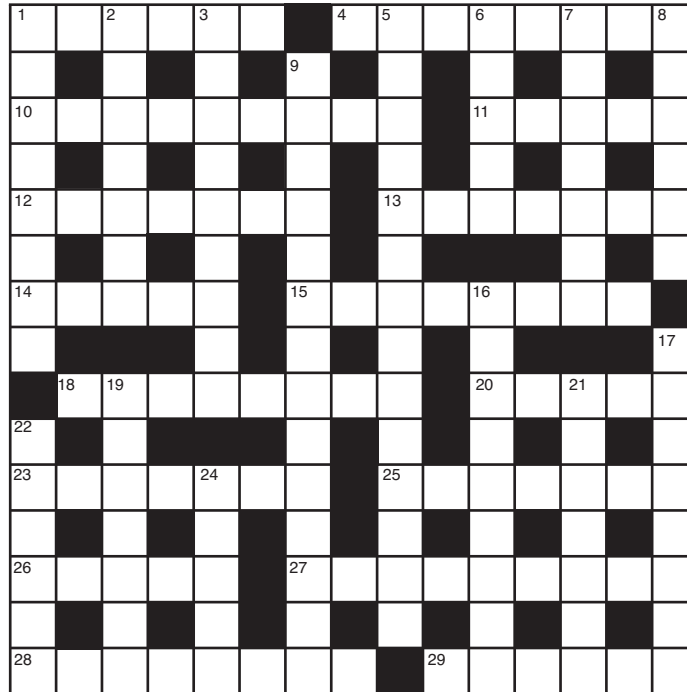
After interrogation, Nils was shipped to Stalag Luft III where he quickly became an active member of the escape committee and was one of the 76 who escaped during The Great Escape of 24-25 March 1944. With four others, they decided to make for Denmark and ultimately Sweden via Berlin, Hamburg and Flensburg. However on 26 March 1944 and near the Danish border, their luck ran out. A suspicious policeman called for a complete check of all in their train carriage and all four were discovered and arrested. Taken initially to Flensburg, they were then handed over to the Gestapo at Kiel and after interrogation, they assumed they would be returned to Sagan. What they were not aware of was that the Gestapo had a list of 50 escapers who were to be shot.

On 29 March 1944, one of the escapers was driven away in one car with three Gestapo personnel, while the other three, including Nils, would follow in a second car. Just outside Kiel, the second car stopped and the three prisoners told to get out and stretch their legs in a field alongside the road. On doing so, they must have discovered the body of Squadron Leader James Catanach DFC (Australian, 455 Squadron, POW 5 Sep 42) and immediately afterwards Nils, Flight Lieutenant Arnold Christensen (New Zealand, 26 Squadron, POW 19 Aug 42) and Lieutenant Halldor Espelid (Norway, 331 Squadron POW 27 Aug 42) were murdered. Their bodies were cremated at Kiel and then buried at Stalag Luft III at Sagan.

After the war, Nils's cremation urn was returned to his home village.

NEW YEAR CROSSWORD

by Enigma



Across

- 1 Firm location not for the skater! (6)
- 4 Specific crew had one too many drinks, perhaps (3,5)
- 10 Starts something (9)
- 11&12 Salutation on 1 January (5,3,4)
- 12 See 11
- 13 4 ac wouldn't get far if they were this (7)
- 14 Lady Tamara located chancels (5)
- 15 When pulled it releases some mechanism (8)
- 18 WA in WAN (4,4)
- 20 Provider of military canteens (1,1,1,1,1)
- 23 Stretchy (7)
- 25 To go before prior to give way! (7)
- 26 Banishment (5)
- 27 Struggling, I am in a net dead (9)
- 28 US stock farming (8)
- 29 Afterburner (6)

Down

- 1 Eastern (8)
- 2 Smooth turf between tee and green (4,3)
- 3 Sharp rise in illegal activity (5,4)
- 5 Past drama (10,4)
- 6 There could be an anaesthetic (5)
- 7 Time off before university (3,4)
- 8 Given to trifling - playful (6)
- 9 Is an Air Cdre such a main celebrity? (4,10)
- 16 Get ready for cold season - bury in wise surroundings (9)
- 17 Safety device in water (8)
- 19 Modern Roman (7)
- 21 Declare time mean (7)
- 22 Remote type of aircraft (6)
- 24 Note the sort of gnashers (5)

Notes

Solution to this crossword can be found on page 63

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

Mr D Akers Batley and Birstall
Mr C Alderton Littlehampton
Mrs M Amy Waddington
Mr B D J Annandale Hull
Mr M H Armstrong Cranwell
Mrs B Atherton Mablethorpe/Sutton
Mr A P Banyard Northern Area HQ
Mr P Beckinsale Harrow & District
Mr P Ball Eastbourne
Mr D Bargman Gold Coast
Mrs C Belton Angus
Mr J Y Binnie Scarborough
Mr R A Bird Bridlington and District
Sqn Ldr J Blair DFM Huntingdon and District
Mr J Blinkhorn Christchurch
Mr R Bolt Rhyl and Abergele
Mr T A Bond Pontefract
Mr H G Boucher Potter Heigham
Mrs G Boulton Wales, Midland and SW Area HQ
Mr A Bowie Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders
Mr J W Bracey Norwich
Miss J Brandreth Edinburgh, Lothians & Borders
Mr R Breeze-Hatchett Waddington
Mr K Britland Wallasey
Mr J Brock Northern Area HQ
Mr N Brodie Glasgow
Mrs J Brodie Gloucester
Mr J F B Brumell Great Yarmouth and District
Mr J Byrne Chelmsford
Mr J Cadogan Cambridge
Mr D Calveley Teignmouth
Mr D Carroll Inverurie
Mr C S Carter South Eastern Area HQ
Mr A L Chandler Ormskirk
Mr R Childs Cambridge
Mr P K A Clark Weston-Super-Mare
Mr W J Clarke Preston
Mr F Clee Northern Area HQ
Mr B K Cocken Ormskirk
Mr J Colbourne Lewes
Mr T M Collins Northern Area HW
Mr R Colnbrook South Eastern Area HQ
Mr A S Cooper Salisbury
Mrs W Cooper Eastern Area HQ
Mr H Corry East Belfast
Mr D M Cousins Stowmarket
Mr J Cox Stockton/Thornaby
Mr K Cranefield DFC South Eastern Area HQ
Mr W B J Cullum Northern Area HQ
Mr S Culmer Faversham
Mr W Currie Aberdeen
Mrs D A Curston Teignmouth
Mrs J Davies Mid-Somerset
Mr K Davis Birkenhead
Flt Lt N Davis Castleford
Rev J Delfgou North Weald/Ongar
Mr J Dennon Eastern Area HQ
Mr H Dent Silloth
Mr J Doughty Bishop Auckland
Mr M F G Dove Great Yarmouth and District
Mr H Dowdle Dunkeswell/Honiton RMG
Mr L Dutton Wantage and District
Mr J Dryburgh Diss and District
Mr C Edwards Anglesey
Mr P Elby-Hennion Ile-de-France
Mr A D Ellis Brighton and Hove
Mr J E Errington Crook and District
Sqn Ldr D A Exley MBE Doncaster
Mr W Farlow Gloucester
Mr P Farnell Enfield
Mr C Field Worthing
Mr A Finch West Bromwich
Mr E Fisher Truro
Mr J Ford Colchester
Mr J Foster Doncaster
Mr P J Foy Northwich
Mr J Francis Central Headquarters Area HQ

Mrs J M Francis Bodmin
Mr M French Dover and District
Mr A Friar St. Helens
Mr G Frost Huntingdon and District
Mr L Fry Hythe/Romney Marsh
Mr K Furness Londonderry
Mr G Gardner Blackhall
Mr G Garrett Fleet
Mr F Giddings Nottingham
Mr E Gilmore Banbridge
Mr E Glynn Malta GC
Mr B Golledge Waddington
Mr P Goodchild City of Bristol
Mr A Goodwin Dunfermline and Stirling
Mr D Gostelow
 Grimsby/Cleethorpes and District
Mr A Green MBE Guernsey
Mr P Green Kidderminster
Mr K Grice Cheltenham
Mr J Griffin St. Neots
Mr H L Gwyther Harrow & District
Mr B L C Hackett North Walsham
Mr P J Haley Windsor and Eton
Mr J Hamilton Costa del Sol
Mr M Hammence Costa del Sol
Mr R Handyside Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders
Mr A E Hannan Brighton and Hove
Mr G A Hardy Melbourne
Mr R Hargreaves Rotherham and District
Mr H Harris OBE Littlehampton
Mrs A C Harrison Bracknell
Mr I G Harrison Silloth
Mr R Haskell Walton, Weybridge and District
Rev D W Hickman City of Bristol
Dr S M Hicks Sydney Metropolitan
Mr S J Hill Northern Area HQ
Mr R Holdstock Hailsham
Mr R Hopkins Kidderminster
Mr J Hopley Sydney Metropolitan
Mr E Horbury Barnsley
Mr J Horne Sud-Ouest
Mr H Hotson Grimsby/Cleethorpes and District
Mr A G Howard Reading
Mr K Hunt South Eastern Area HQ
Mr K F Hunt Northern Area HQ
Mr A R J Hurst Littlehampton
Mr A Hutton Central Headquarters Area HQ
Mr G Hutton Gold Coast
Mr J Ingham Thornton Cleveleys
Mr R Ingrey South Eastern Area HQ
Mrs E D Inkersole Eastbourne
Mrs H James Ely
Mr S Jardine Wales, Midland and SW Area HQ
Mr K Jarvis Solihull
Air Cdre E G P Jeffery
 Grimsby/Cleethorpes and District
Mrs J Jewiss South Eastern Area HQ
Mr P Johnson City/Central London
Mr G Jones Mablethorpe/Sutton
Rev R W A Jones Haverfordwest
Mr D O Joseph Wales, Midland and SW Area HQ
Wg Cdr T Kane Cambridge
Mr A S Keeling Melton Mowbray
Mr W Keenan Larne
Mr D King Erewash
Mrs E Kinsman Witham and Rivenhall
Mrs E Knapp Apollo (Cyprus)
Mrs O Lancaster Mablethorpe/Sutton
Mr R Langdon Sydney Metropolitan
Mr B Laraway Cheltenham
Mr A G Larner Long Sutton
Mr R Lee Witham and Rivenhall
Mr M Lewis Shrewsbury
Mr W Linaker Kettering
Mr W Livingstone Romford
Mrs S Lloyd Ryedale
Mr R D Loadsman Shoreham-by-Sea

Mrs J Loughlin Lowestoft
Mrs M Lovell Poole
Mr K Lowe Wales, Midland and SW Area HQ
Mr J Luxford Tunbridge Wells
Mr E Mackay South Fylde
Mr R Madsen Romford
Mr R Maguire Scotland and N Ireland Area HQ
Mr P Major Fareham
Mr R Maraval Lyon
Mr M M C Martin Ile-de-France
Mr R A Massey Sale
Mr B Matthews Barry
Mr J H C May Castleford
Mr W Mayes Seahaven
Sqn Ldr E J Mays Whitstable/Tankerton
Miss J McCulloch MBE Brighton and Hove
Mr I C S McIvor Ripon and District
Mr J McLure Dunfermline and Stirling
Mr J R Meadows Morecambe/Lancaster
Mr H Mearns Northern Area HQ
Mrs M Meller Wythenshawe
Mr C Metcalfe Northern Area HQ
Mr J Metcalfe Skipton
Mr F J Mills Isle of Wight
Mrs P Milton North Cotswolds
Mr F Moore Sydney Metropolitan Branch
Mr A G D Morris St Davids and Solva
Mr R Morris Cwmbran
Mrs W U Morris Huntingdon and District
Mrs G M Morwood Sandwich and Deal
Mrs D Munn Johannesburg
Mr R Oglesbee
 Grimsby/Cleethorpes and District
Mr C Parker Hailsham
Mr W E Parker Sale
Mr C Parsons Witham and Rivenhall
Mrs S Pasche-Scott Swiss
Mr J Patient Eastbourne
Mrs N Pearson Wimborne
Mr P Pearson Bexleyheath and District
Mrs I Peck Great Yarmouth and District
Mr J R Penton Northern Area HQ
Mr A Pickering Lincoln
Mr R Pidgeon Romsey
Mr P Pilling Harare
Mr C Poland Biggin Hill
Mr C Portess Melton Mowbray
Mr R Pratt Ramsgate/Broadstairs
Mr B Prior Stowmarket
Mrs N Proudlock Hartlepool
Mr J B Quinton Reading
Mrs M A Riggs South Eastern Area HQ
Mr D W Robinson Cambridge
Mr M Romain Maraval Ile-de-France
Mr I Ross Central Headquarters Area HQ
Mr D Rowson Sale
Mr P Rubie Brighton and Hove
Mr S R Rush Waddington
Mr J Rutherford
 Grimsby/Cleethorpes and District
Mr S T Rycroft Bedford
Mrs O G A Sampson Oxted and Limpsfield
Mr R Sargent St Albans
Mr J W Scott South Eastern Area HQ
Mr R Shearing Taunton Deane
Mrs N E L Sheppard Northern Area HQ
Mr H Shinton Wolverhampton/Dist
Mr R Shipley Long Sutton
Mr A Shrubsole Lewes
Mr A Smith Wokingham/Woodley
Mr J R V Smith Newcastle
Mr P Smith Trowbridge and West Wiltshire
Mr T H Smith Kenley and Caterham
Mr R Spencer Tamworth
Mr B A Stark Tunbridge Wells
Mr G Steel South Elmsall/Kirkby
Mr J O Stewart Keyworth

Mr J Styler Ormskirk
Mrs J K Summerhayes North Costa Blanca
Mr J Sydes Newark
Mr R P Symons Truro
Mr J Syrett Wimborne
Mr R Tagli Orpington
Mrs B Taylor Wales, Midland and SW Area HQ
Mr L Taylor Exmouth
Mr W Taylor Fraserburgh
Mr H Thevisen Amsterdam
Mr N Thom BEM Amsterdam and Swiss Branches
Mr I Tidy Downham Market
Mr J Tilleard MBE Amsterdam
Mr N E Tincello Gloucester
Mrs J M Tomsett South Eastern Area HQ
Mr M Towill RAF St Mawgan

Mr M Townsend Plymouth
Mrs J A W Turnbull City/Central London
Mrs P Upton Johannesburg
Mr R J Venus Tunbridge Wells
Mr D Wakely South Eastern Area HQ
Mr P Wallace Eastern Area HQ
Mr H U Walls Formby
Mr J Ward North Walsham
Mr P W Warwick Cheltenham
Mr G Waterfield Retford
Mr R Watson Shetland
Mr E Wedge Birmingham/Sheldon
Mr S Wells Costa del Sol
Mr R S F Wharton York
Mr D Wheeler Rothbury
Mr M Whelan Leamington/Warwick

Mr R White Erewash
Miss S Whittaker Reading
Mr J T Wild Oldham
Mr N Wilkes Ramsgate/Broadstairs
Mr H S Wilkinson Twickenham
Mrs J Willcox Melbourne
Mr A M Willson Eastbourne
Mr G H W Wilson Frome
Mr W Wilson Rushden
Mr R Woodhead Leicester
Mr A Wright Basildon
Mr N Wright East Grinstead
Mr R F Wright-Brown Horsham and Storrington
Mr S Young Global
Mrs E Youngusband Barry

Please note: Air Mail cannot accept obituary notifications, they must be notified to branch and area offices

Time to make an amazing difference . . .

One of the ways the RAF Association is able to help the thousands of people each year, is through the generosity of those who help us by leaving us with a gift in their will.

These outstanding acts of generosity help make such an amazing difference to the lives of the RAF family in need, both serving and ex-serving.

If you would like further information about gifts in Wills or our Will-writing service, please call Vinny Manak on 0116 268 8791 or visit

www.rafa.org.uk/legacy



NOTICES

Help

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

Seeking any ex-RAF who trained in codes and cyphers at **Compton Bassett** and was then promoted to **Sergeant**. Contact Harold Tracey at dvrdigital@gmail.com or tel 01691 659986.

RAF Swannington. Did you or anyone you know, serve at any time at RAF Swannington? Information please to Mike Hillier at: m.hillier091@hotmail.com

Old Colleagues

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

Seeking Veterans or their descendants who served at **RAF Ingham (Cammeringham)**. Also ground and aircrew of 300, 301, 304 & 305 Polish Bomber Squadrons. Contact Geoff Burton 07787805978 or rafingham@hotmail.co.uk

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

72 Squadron will be celebrating its Centenary in 2017 for which several celebratory events are planned, although most events have number limitations, all interested parties are welcome to apply for tickets. Dates of note are:

Fri 30 Jun 2017 - Friends and Families Day and Centenary Guest Night,
Sat 1 Jul 2017 - Centenary Hangar Bash at Elvington Air Museum
Sun 2 Jul 2017 - York Minster Commemorative Service and Parade.

For further information contact Flight Lieutenant Christopher Nash at RAF Linton on Ouse, 72(R) Squadron via Christopher.nash687@mod.uk

Reunions

WAAF/WRAF/RAF(W) Association AGM/Reunion 2017
Friday 7 - Mon 10 April 2017. Members/new members welcome. For further information contact Linda Hamill (membership) 01472 232986 or Sandie Faloon (general enquiries) 01753 582170.

RAF Locking Apprentices Association 2017 Reunion/AGM Marriott Hotel, Peterborough - Saturday 22 April 2017. Details from Tony Horry, tel 01934 628383 or tony.horry@gmail.com

The **XV Squadron Association** will be holding its **Annual Reunion Dinner** at RAF Wittering on 12 May 2017. Details and booking forms will be available in the New Year. Contact secretary@xvsnqassociation.co.uk

For details of how to place a notice in Air Mail please call 01892 600191 or visit www.rafatrad.co.uk

RAF ASSOCIATION CLUBS

BOGNOR REGIS RAFA

CLUB & BAR OPEN DAILY
except Christmas Day

BOWLS SECTION - SNOOKER ROOM

Entertainment every Saturday
Quiz Nights, Line Dancing etc on Weekdays

Restaurant Open for Lunches/Snacks
Telephone Club for Opening Times

New Members and Visitors Welcome

Waterloo Square, Bognor Regis PO21 1TE
Tel 01243 865615
website: www.rafa381.co.uk

CORNWALL

The Gremlin Club

Chapel Street, PENZANCE

Cornwall's only RAF Association Club

Open every day

Telephone Number: (01736) 363720

CHELTENHAM RAFA HQ & CLUB

WELCOMES VISITING MEMBERS

Thursday-Sunday Lunchtimes
Thursday-Saturday Evenings
(Wings Coffee Bar Thurs/Fri 10am-12noon)

1 ROYAL CRESCENT,
CHELTENHAM

(Off Promenade to rear of Coach Station)
Branch Admin: Mrs Adlam 01242 516285
Branch Treasurer: Mrs Blake 01242 233225

EASTBOURNE BRANCH CLUB

Open Tuesday - Sunday

Telephone 01323 723551

Opening hours 11.00am - 3.00pm
and 7.00pm - 11.00pm

E-mail dave@condor1.co.uk

Exmouth

RAF Association Branch and Club

open every day

Lunchtime & Evening
Branch Meeting 1st Tuesday

Also home to the RBL, &
East Devon Branch Aircrew Association
close to Seafront & Shops
Coach parties by arrangement

33 Imperial Road (opposite large car park)

01395 266685

The Teignmouth Branch & Roundel Club

Teignmouth, Devon

B&B, Lunches

Enquiries Tel: 01626 774375

e-mail rafateignmouth@btconnect.com

When in TORBAY or
SOUTH DEVON

visit the

RAF ASSOCIATION CLUB

7 Scarborough Road

TORQUAY

LUNCHTIME FROM 12 Noon

Evenings 5pm - 11 pm

Weston-super-Mare

RAF Association Branch Club

Open Wed to Sat

Lunch & Evenings

Except Thursday lunch

Coffee Mornings on

Wednesdays at 1100hrs

Branch meetings 2nd Wed of Month

- Open for Parties, Meetings.
- Hot Food available – pre book
- Visit during Day trips to
Weston and Flowerdown
- Will open for Coach trips
- Close to beach and Shops

21-22 Alexandra Parade (Opposite Odeon)

Telephone: 01934 644024

or 01934 515883

RAFA

Visiting Weymouth

Call at the WINGS CLUB

MAIDEN STREET (Near Old Harbour)

Open daily - MORNING and EVENING

LUNCH AVAILABLE (Monday to Friday)

Chairlift available

Telephone: 01305 785581

You could advertise your
branch in this space

Linage advertisements start for
as little as £25.82 for 25 words

Boxed adverts start at £42.38 for
a 3cm boxed advert

For details or to discuss the
available options why not call us
01892 600192

BADGES and MEDALS



regimentalbrooches.com

ON-LINE SHOP

with large selection of genuine RFC
and RAF sweetheart brooches from
WW1, WW2 and through to
the current reign.

RN, FAA and many regiments
also available.

All guaranteed original.



BOOKS and SERVICES

BOOKFINDING SERVICE

All subjects. Also CDs and DVDs.
Books mailed abroad. Visa/MC welcome.

BARLOW MOOR BOOKS

29 Churchwood Road,
Didsbury, Manchester, M20 6TZ
Telephone: 0161 434 5073

e-mail: books@barlowmoorbooks.co.uk

BOOK PUBLISHING

Authors invited to submit manuscripts,
all categories including Poetry

New Authors welcome

A.H. STOCKWELL LTD,

Dept. 827 Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8BA.

Tel 01271 862557

www.ahstockwell.co.uk

Publishers For 100 Years

WRITE YOUR LIFE STORY

Whether you are starting from scratch,
or have already written something,
Bound Biographies can work with you
to produce a handsomely bound book
for your family. Call Wendy on 01428
643591 or e-mail

WendyBB@compuserve.com

ACCOMMODATION

including self-catering

CYPRUS, Pissouri (near Episkopi)

Two bedrooms, garden, shared pool,
peaceful location overlooking beautiful
bay. Five minutes to beach, tavernas and
water sports close to charming mountain
village, good restaurants and golf course.
Telephone 01243 780381
or e-mail: sue@1aacclaim.co.uk

Intentionally blank

FOR SALE

Let's Retire To The Lounge Volume 2

Nostalgic Musical Memories played
on piano by **Ray Whitehouse**

Taking you back in time with tunes such as
My Foolish Heart-Misty-Garden in the Rain
to name but a few, all in all 22 Tracks on
this superb CD. **£9.75 inc p&p.**
Cheque please, made payable to
R.Whitehouse

**SEVERN MUSIC. PO Box 7780.
Redditch. B98 8PZ UK**
email: info@severnmusic.co.uk
website: www.severnmusic.co.uk

WANTED

FLYING CLOTHING and LOG BOOKS

WANTED: Helmets, goggles, masks,
boots, gloves, parachutes, lifejackets,
rations, escape kits etc. Anything
considered. Unbeatable prices!
Contact: D Farnsworth, 192 Broadway,
Derby. DE22 1BP Tel/Fax: 01332 345729

AIRFIX and all other unmade model kits
wanted. All subjects. Aviation and military
books also sought by serving collector.
Contact Richard with details
on 07801 257323

AVIATION ANTIQUES All plastic kits and
Die cast aircraft models wanted. Also
aviation/military books, uniforms, curio's.
Collections purchased. Contact 27A, The
Grove Biggin Hill Kent TN16 3TA or
mobile 07973885754

Societies etc



The Blenheim Society HELP US TO KEEP HER FLYING

Want to preserve living history? Want to help raise
money to keep the only airworthy **Bristol Blenheim**
in the world **maintained and flying**, as a fitting
memorial to all the ground crews and those that flew
and fought in Blenheims during World War Two, but
especially the many that lost their lives doing so?
Then why not join **THE BLENHEIM SOCIETY**, her
support organisation, for a mere
£15 annual subscription (£7 for juniors)?
Members receive three journals a year and there are
several activities organised throughout the
year to enjoy as well.

For more information, please contact:

The Hon. Treasurer, 25 Herongate Road,
Cheshunt, Herts EN8 0TU
Tel: 01992 442608
www.blenheimsociety.org.uk
E-mail: r.j.scott@ntlworld.com

New Year Crossword Solution

1 Oriental; 2 Fair way;
3 Crime wave; 5 Historical play;
6 Ether; 7 Gap year; 8 Toyish;
9 Star attraction; 16 Winterise;
17 Lifebelt; 19 Italian; 21 Average;
22 Meteor; 24 Teeth

Down:

1 Office; 4 The Eight; 10 Initiates;
11 Happy; 12 New Year; 13 Carless;
14 Adyta; 15 Tripwire; 18 Wide Area;
20 NAFI; 23 Elastic; 25 Precede;
26 Exit; 27 Inanimate;
28 Ranching; 29 Reheat

Across:

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING PRICES

BOXED

Size	Price
8cms	£113
7 cms	£98.99
6cms	£84.75
5cm	£70.62
4cms	£56.50
3cms	£42.38

LINEAGE

Private	Trade
£21.95 (max 25 words)	£25.82 (max 25 words)
Extra words (each) £0.86	Extra words (each) £1.03

Classified prices shown are per issue and include VAT

Call us on 01892 600192 for more details

Have you visited our new website yet?

www.rafa.org.uk/shop

Profit
goes to
supporting
the RAF family



We offer a wide
selection of
RAF Association and
RAF gifts and
memorabilia for sale
see our range and
prices on page 64.

Postal Address: **RAFATRAD Ltd Unit 3, 5 Sybron Way, Millbrook Ind Estate, CROWBOROUGH TN6 3DZ**

Order online at: www.rafa.org.uk/shop or call 01892 600191
(Monday to Friday 9am - 3pm excluding public holidays)

RAF ASSOCIATION SHOP – Price List 2017



RAF ASSOCIATION

Blazer Badges and Buttons

	Order Code	Price £
Blazer badge Full Associate gold wired	B18A	11.00
Blazer badge Ord Member Cut Out gold wired	B17M	11.00
Blazer badge Ord Member Cut Out cloth	B17MCL	10.00
Blazer badge Ord Member Full gold wired	B17F	11.00
Blazer badge Ord Member Full Badge cloth	B17FCL	10.00
Button Large Chrome 20 mm	B20L	4.50
Button Small Chrome 17 mm	B20S	4.50
Forage Cap/Beret Badge	B24	10.00

Clothing

Baseball cap - Sky blue	RBC	8.00
Beret exc eyelets and cap badge (see B24 above)	S19A	18.00
Bow Tie Ordinary Member Striped ready made	T10B	11.00
Cravat Ordinary Member Striped Polyester	T10CR	14.50
Forage Cap inc RAFA buttons & badge state size	S13	68.50
Ladies Long Blue Polyester Scarf with RAFA Crests	S20	24.50
Tie Full Associate Polyester	T15	11.00
Tie Ordinary Member Silk RAF with RAFA Crests	MR29	22.00



Tie Ordinary Member Silk Striped	MR10	22.00
Tie Ordinary Member Silk Striped Crest	MR9	22.00
Tie Ordinary Member Striped/Crested Poly	T9m	11.00
Tie Ordinary Member Striped/Crest Clip-on Poly	T9CM	11.00
Tie Ordinary Member Striped Polyester	T10m	11.00
Tie Ordinary Member Striped Clip-on Polyester	T10CM	11.00
Tie Ordinary Member 25 Year Member Poly	TY25m	14.50
Tie Ordinary Member 50 Year Member Poly	TY50m	14.50
Tie Ordinary Member 60 Year Member Poly	TY60m	14.50
Tie RAFALO serving RAF Liaison Officer Poly	T21	11.00

Gifts

Association "Chocs Away" Chocolate Bar 100g	WWCHOC	3.50
Association Pocket Diary 2017	XR6	4.00
Association Tea for Heroes 50g Breakfast Loose Leaf	RTCTR	5.50
Coin Holder £1.00 (holds £5.00)	C5	2.50
Credit Card Case - leather - Crest	LR4	15.50
Cufflinks and Tie Slide Crest boxed	CTS4	25.00
House flag 6" x 3"	H5	56.00
Letter opener Nickel boxed Crest	L4A	14.00
Mug - Brew for the Few	B4F	3.50
Pennant - Full Wording gold wired (as B17F)	P2	36.00
Table flag with pin (6" x 3") Crest	M3	6.00
Tankard 1 Pint Pewter boxed Crest	T3RAFA	38.50
Wallet Leather with ID window boxed Crest	LR6	21.00
Wall shield - boxed Crest	S4m	48.50
Wings Appeal Ducks - set of 3 - red/white/blue	D3	6.00
Wings Appeal Fridge Magnet	F11	3.00
Wings Appeal Hessian Bag	HTBR	4.00
Wings Appeal Pen	PEN3	1.50
Wings Appeal Teddy Bear (Sgt) 9"	SGTTBRR	20.00
Wings Appeal Wrist Band	WRBR	2.00

Lapel and Stud Badges

Branch Associate lapel badge	B14	3.00
Full Associate lapel badge	B13	3.00
Ordinary Member stick pin 50mm long	B9	3.00
Ordinary Member mini stick pin 40 mm long	B10	3.00
Ordinary Member lapel badge	B11	3.00
Ordinary Member stud badge	B12	3.00
Ordinary Member 25 Year badge	B25m	3.50
Ordinary Member 50 Year badge	B50m	3.50
Ordinary Member 60 Year badge	B60m	3.50
Silver/Marcasite Crest Brooch boxed	B16m	57.50
Wings Appeal -75th Anniv Battle of Britain badge	LB75	1.50
Wings Appeal - 70th Assoc Anniversary	LB70	1.50
Wings Appeal Stud Badge	LB71	1.50
Wings Appeal - Chinook stud badge	LB25	1.50
Wings Appeal - Harrier stud badge	LB26	1.50
Wings Appeal - Hercules stud badge	LB27	1.50
Wings Appeal - Hunter stud badge	LB34	1.50
Wings Appeal - Hurricane stud badge	LB21	1.50
Wings Appeal - Lancaster stud badge	LB20	1.50
Wings Appeal - Lightning stud badge	LB32	1.50

	Order Code	Price £
Wings Appeal - Lightning II stud badge	LB37	1.50
Wings Appeal - Mosquito stud badge	LB23	1.50
Wings Appeal - Pilot Bear badge	LB35	1.50
Wings Appeal - Regiment Bear badge	LB36	1.50
Wings Appeal - Red Arrow stud badge	LB28	1.50
Wings Appeal - Sea King stud badge	LB29	1.50
Wings Appeal - Sentry E3D stud badge	LB33	1.50
Wings Appeal - Spitfire stud badge	LB22	1.50
Wings Appeal - Tornado stud badge	LB30	1.50
Wings Appeal - Typhoon stud badge	LB31	1.50
Wings Appeal - Vulcan stud badge	LB24	1.50



ROYAL AIR FORCE

Blazer Badges and Buttons

Beret/Cap badge (staybrite) Queens crown	S14A	7.00
Bomber Command badge gold wired	B25	17.00
Coastal Command badge gold wired	B26	17.00
Fighter Command badge gold wired	B27	17.00
RAF badge Kings Crown gold wired	B19A	17.00
RAF badge Queens Crown gold wired	B19	17.00
RAF badge Queens Crown cloth	B19CL	10.00
RAF Regiment badge gold wired	B40	17.00
Squadron/Station wired badge (to order - 6/8 wks)	B99	17.00
Button Large Chrome 23 mm	B21L	4.50
Button Small Chrome 16 mm	B21S	4.50
Button Gilt Domed Cap14 mm	B21CS	3.50
Button Gilt Domed Large 24 mm	B21DL	3.50
Button Gilt Domed Small 18 mm	B21DM	3.50

Clothing

Baseball Cap Black with embroidered crest	B98	14.00
Baseball Cap Dark Blue with embroidered crest	B98A	14.00
Baseball Cap - Red Arrows Adult	KBBARR	10.00
Baseball Cap - Red Arrows Kids	KBBCRR	8.00
Beret with eyelets (excludes cap badge - see S14A above)	S19	18.00
Bow tie (ready made) RAF Polyester	T13	11.00
Bow tie (self-tie) RAF Polyester	T13S	14.50
Bow tie and Cummerbund Set RAF (T11 and T13)	T12	22.00
Bow tie RAF Tartan ready made	T27	23.00
Bow tie and Cummerbund RAF Tartan M/L	T29	47.50
Children's flying suit RAF Olive state size	FS	25.00
Children's flying suit Red Arrows (red) state size	RA	25.00
Children's flying suit Typhoon (black) state size	RAFTFSR	25.00
Cravat RAF	T30	14.50
Cummerbund RAF	T11	13.50
Forage Cap inc RAF buttons and badge - state size	S13RAF	68.50
Handkerchief RAF Polyester 12" square	T4L	5.00
Handkerchief RAF Silk 7.5" x 6.25"	T4	10.00
Scarf Wool RAF (college type - felt backed)	S5	32.50
Scarf RAF Tartan Ladies (long)	S6	21.00
Stable belt RAF L/XL (new style buckle)	S16	35.00
Sweater V Neck - Blue - RAF Crest Chunky 36 or 38-40	RVSH	46.00
Tie Bomber Command Polyester	T17	14.50
Tie Clip-On RAF Polyester	T20CM	11.00
Tie Coastal Command Polyester	T18	14.50



Tie Fighter Command Polyester	T19	14.50
Tie RAF Polyester	T20	11.00
Tie RAF Regiment Polyester	T40	11.00
Tie RAF Silk	MR6	22.00
Tie RAF Tartan	T26	19.50
Tie RAFVR Polyester	T14	14.50
Tie Warrant Officer	TYWO	11.00
Trouser belt - RAF 1" webbing 34 - 44	T2	16.50
Trouser belt Keyring to fit T2 above	K4	5.50

Gifts

1:72 Die Cast 75th Anniversary BofB set of 3	SET01	38.50
1:76 Die Cast David Brown Tractor (Olive) boxed	DBT001	6.00
1:76 Die Cast David Brown Tractor (Sand) boxed	DBT005	6.00
1:72 Die Cast Hurricane Mk1 model boxed	AC003	15.00
1:76 Die Cast Land Rover RAF (Sand) boxed	LAN76	6.00
1:76 Die Cast RAF Scammell Pioneer boxed	SP005	14.00
1:72 Die Cast Spitfire Mk1 model 57 OTU boxed	AC066	17.50
1:76 Die Cast Tilly, Tractor, Land Rover (sand) boxed	SET23	16.00
Airfix Quick Build Spitfire	J6000R	10.00

	Order Code	Price £
Airfix Quick Build Typhoon	J6002R	10.00
Airfix Quick Build Hawk	J6003R	10.00
Car badge with fitting to car grill RAF crest	B28	15.50
Card - BBMF - single blank card	CB12	2.50
Card - Blenheims - single blank card	CB1	2.50
Card - Halifax - single blank card	CB3	2.50
Card - Hurricane - single blank card	CB2	2.50
Card - Lancasters - single blank card	CB4	2.50
Card - Lysander - single blank card	CB9	2.50



	Order Code	Price £
Card - Mosquito - single blank card	CB5	2.50
Card - Red arrows - single blank card	CB13	2.50
Card - Spitfire 3D single card	SPITCR	3.00
Card - Spitfire - single blank card	CB8	2.50
Card - Stirling - single blank card	CB6	2.50
Card - Sunderland - single blank card	CB7	2.50
Card - Typhoon - single blank card	CB10	2.50
Card - Wellington - single blank card	CB11	2.50
CD - At Last (Heather Marie)	HMCDR	6.00
CD - A Very Vintage Christmas (Heather Marie)	HMCD1R	6.00
CD - Our Finest Hour (various) Special Edition 2 discs	CD7	12.00
China Mug - Chinook	CMPLANE1	6.00
China Mug - Hurricane	CMPLANE2	6.00
China Mug - Lancaster	CMPLANE3	6.00
China Mug - Land Army	CMLAR	6.00
China Mug - Red Arrow	CMPLANE4	6.00
China Mug - Spitfire	CMPLANE5	6.00
China Mug - Typhoon	CMPLANE6	6.00
Clock - Biplane	9973R	17.50
Clock - Lancaster	9421R	25.00
Clock - Spitfire	9420R	25.00
Corgi Model - Red Arrow	CS90561R	6.00
Corgi Model - Typhoon	CS90599R	6.00
Cufflinks - Back to Blighty	RAF121R	12.00
Cufflinks - Clear For Take Off	RAF120R	12.00
Cufflinks - Lancaster boxed	RAF192R	12.00
Cufflinks - Press on Regardless	RAF122R	12.00
Cufflinks - RAF Gilt Crest round boxed	CS5	20.50
Cufflinks and Tie Slide Set RAF Gilt Mounted Crest	CTS5	29.00
Cufflinks - RAF Roundel boxed	CS11	8.00
Cufflinks - Red Arrows Crest boxed	CS4	9.50
Cufflinks - Red Arrows Hawk boxed	RAF268R	15.00
Cufflinks - Spitfire boxed	RAF189R	12.00
Cufflinks - Tornado boxed	RAF191R	12.00
Cufflinks - Typhoon boxed	RAF194R	12.00
Cufflinks - Vulcan boxed	RAF209R	12.00
Cufflinks - Wings boxed	RAF185R	12.00
Dog Tag and Chain - Red Arrows Diamond Nine	RAFATDTR	4.50
Giftwrap - One Sheet - Red Arrows	LSGW2R	3.00
Giftwrap - One Sheet - Spitfire/Lancaster	LSGW1R	3.00
Hip Flask - Red Arrows	RAF263R	13.00
Jotter - 3D Live Life - Apache	3DLLJAR	4.00
Keyring - BofB Teddy Pilot	75BBPKRR	4.50
Keyring - Harrier boxed	RAF139R	6.50
Keyring - Hurricane boxed	RAF141R	6.50
Keyring - Lancaster boxed	RAF142R	6.50
Keyring - RAF Leather fob	K2	5.50
Keyring - Red Arrows cloth	K12	4.50
Keyring - Spitfire boxed	RAF140R	6.50
Keyring - Tornado boxed	RAF138R	6.50
Keyring - Typhoon boxed	RAF137R	6.50
Keyring - Vulcan boxed	RAF148R	6.50
Lanyard - Red Arrows	RAFATLYR	4.50
Letter opener RAF Crest Nickel boxed	L4B	14.00
Magnet - 3D Live Life - Apache	3DLLMAR	3.00
Magnet - 3D Live Life - BBMF	3DLLMLR	3.00
Magnet - 3D Live Life - Red Arrows	3DLLMRR	3.00
Magnet - 3D Live Life - Spitfire	3DLLMSR	3.00
Notebook and Pen - Red Arrows Diamond Nine	RAFATNPR	4.50
Pen "Ace Pilot" boxed	PEN1	15.00
Pen "Clear for Take Off" boxed	PEN2	15.00
Pennant - RAF Crest gold wired (as B19)	P3	36.00
Pennant Squadron/Station to order 6/8 wks gold wired	P1	36.00
Purse - Soft Black	RAF367R	15.00
Ribbon RAF 1 1/4" wide price per metre	R4	9.00
Sweetheart Silver/Marcasite Brooch boxed	R3	110.00
Table flag with 10" pin RAF	M5	6.00

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

Lapel and Stud Badge

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

Prints

Air Sea Rescue Launch Ltd Edition print	P25	23.50
Come into My Parlour WWI Ltd Edition print	P28	10.00
The Drop 1917 46 Squadron WWI Ltd Edition print	P26	10.00
The Drop 54 Squadron WWI Ltd Edition print	P27	10.00

MISCELLANEOUS

Gifts

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

Glassware: to order only

RAF or RAF Association crest. Lancashire crystal. Made to order, delivery 2-4 weeks. Wording can be added to some items at extra cost. Most items presentation boxed. Delivery to UK addresses only.

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

POSTAGE AND PACKING:

UK - add cost below to order

Up to £5.00	Add £1.70
Up to £20.00	Add £3.70
Up to £50.00	Add £5.00
Over £50.00	Add £6.50

Overseas - add cost below to order

Europe	Add £8.75
Rest of World	Add £15.00

Visit www.rafa.org.uk/shop for more gift ideas



The charity that supports the RAF family

Your holiday

starts with a
great place to stay



Three beautiful locations,
one family of friends

Book your perfect break at Rothbury House, Richard Peck House
or Flowerdown House today. Call 0800 018 2361 or visit
www.rafa.org.uk/wingsbreaks for more information.



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Registered Charity 226686 (England & Wales), SC037673 (Scotland).