

AIR MAIL

WE'RE HERE TO KEEP YOU INFORMED

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2016

 **ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association**

The charity that supports the RAF family



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

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**Standards on parade at
Annual Conference**

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The charity that supports the RAF family



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From the Secretary General

This issue of Air Mail comes to you after, what I hope those who attended would agree, was our most successful Annual Conference to date.

We took delegate and guest feedback from previous years into account and while there may have been a few areas this year that we can address for next year, on the whole the delegates and guests who filled in their feedback forms were happy.

This year's Conference was focused on the future. We had many resolutions addressing required updates to the Association's Royal Charter, Rules and Byelaws. The Council and I are pleased to report that these were all carried, meaning our official documents will now reflect the organisation we are and wish to become.

Two other resolutions of note that carried were 4 and 26. Resolution 4 relates to the wives/partners of former personnel being able to become Ordinary Members of the Association if they wish to, in recognition of the support they give to their partners. This was passed with a large majority, reflecting the strong feelings many Branches clearly have about their important contribution.

Resolution 26 dealt with the venue for Conference in 2017 and 2018. Again, I am pleased to report on behalf of the Council that this was carried and that Conference for the next two years will be held at Yarnfield Park in the Midlands. This central venue, which will accommodate all aspects of Conference in one place, will hopefully bring more delegates and guests together than ever. In 2018 we are planning to hold the service of remembrance on the Sunday at the National Memorial Arboretum. This will be open to all members wishing to come along, as well as those attending Conference. More details on this will follow in due course.

If you have any questions or comments about Conference or the resolutions, do not hesitate to drop me a line to secgen@rafa.org.uk

Until next time...



National Presidential Certificates

The following people were awarded National Presidential Certificates to coincide with HM The Queen's Birthday Honours List in recognition of their ongoing support and dedication to the RAF Association.

Eddie Duke-Low

Brian Fox

Joseph Corr

Jeanne Roach

Kath Allison

Arlene Dowson

Alan Goudge

Warrant Officer Jon Barnes

Keith Moule

Vince Taylor

Caryl Vivien Williams

Richard Noel Williams

City & Central London Branch

Edinburgh, Lothians & Borders Branch

Carrickfergus Branch

South Shields Branch

York Branch

Skipton Branch

RAF St Mawgan Branch

Camborne Redruth & Illogan Branch

North Cotswolds Branch

Corsham/Chippenham Branch

Llanidloes Branch

Carrickfergus Branch

Promote your Branch

At this year's Annual Conference, we fully launched our print on demand service and free Branch websites.

Print on demand is designed to help anyone involved with the Association. We have created a range of templates for A4 posters, A6 two-sided leaflets and pull-up banners for a number of uses, all of which have areas of text you can personalise. The templates will allow you to create bespoke marketing materials for your events this summer and beyond. We will occasionally update these templates to ensure you have access to the most recent marketing materials. You will have the option to either print these at home yourself or have them professionally printed and delivered to you at a cost. If you want to set up your own Branch website or want to move from your existing site to the Association's template, get online. The Branch websites are gaining a great response so far with over 30 Branches interested.

Print on demand and an online submission form for Branch websites can be accessed through www.rafa.org.uk/promotion. If you have any questions please email marketing@rafa.org.uk or call 0116 266 5224.



You need to be in it to win it

Grand Draw 2016



We are pleased to launch this year's Grand Draw, where the top prizes include a BMW 1 Series, a Fred Olsen Cruise for two and a wing walking experience.

The Grand Draw has been running successfully for 12 years and every ticket bought goes towards helping RAF personnel, past and present, who have given up their chance to live a normal, stable life in order to serve their country.

Applications for tickets can be found on the address sheet of your copy of Air Mail, but if you or your Branch would like additional tickets please call Jo Bray on 0116 268 8766 or email jo.bray@rafa.org.uk.

Good luck everyone!



RAF 100

On 1 April 2018 the RAF will mark the centenary of its formation as the world's first independent air force. This will be an important opportunity for those in the RAF and the RAF family to commemorate their past, celebrate their success and also inspire the public as to their contribution to the UK's national security and prosperity.

The RAF100 programme of events will start in October 2017 and end in September 2018 and a number of flagship events will take place across the UK between March and September 2018 including a service in Westminster Abbey and a parade along the Mall, followed by a Royal Salute and flypast.

The four main RAF charities (the RAF Association, RAF Benevolent Fund, RAF Charitable Trust Enterprises and RAF Museum) have taken the unprecedented step of creating a joint venture charitable company, the RAF100 Appeal Ltd. Its purpose is to deliver a coherent and collaborative campaign realising both income and profile.

More information about RAF100 can be found at www.raf.mod.uk/raf100

There is also an opportunity to put forward any ideas that will help COMMEMORATE the achievements of the RAF and all who served, CELEBRATE the RAF of today, or INSPIRE people in your local community and beyond: www.raf.mod.uk/raf100/your-ideas

Further updates will be given as more information becomes available.



Storybook Wings celebrates World Book Day

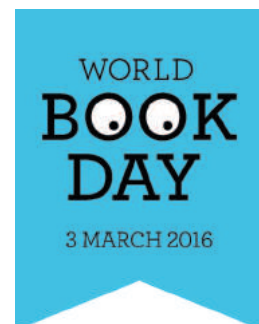
Storybook Wings marked World Book Day with a 'One Word Story' event at Wittering Primary School.

After an introduction to story construction and what the important elements of a story are (character, setting, plot, conflict and resolution), they then created a story together by saying one word each around the circle.

Lisa Thipthorp, Storybook Wings Manager, said: "The children were very enthusiastic during the day and it was great to see their creativity being drawn out by each other – they were learning cooperation as well as storytelling and having so much fun at the same time. After lunch the children were asked to illustrate their story and we were left with some fantastic pictures of green dragons named Angela, a unicorn and a cave!"

Around 75 per cent of the children at Wittering have RAF parents who work away from home at some part of the year so they are our key target audience for Storybook Wings.

You can watch a video that was made on the day on www.youtube.com/rafassociation



Cyprus memorial – RAF personnel invited



A memorial to the 371 personnel who lost their lives in the Cyprus Emergency, 1955-1959, is to be placed in the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) at Alrewas in Staffordshire.

It will be a rock from Cyprus with an inscription on a plaque in the shape of the island, and a copper time capsule inserted in the rock with the names of those who died serving their country. The rock was transported to the UK by the RAF, which has shown great support for this project.

If you would like to make a donation to the cost of a plinth for the memorial, placing it in the NMA and for its upkeep, search for 'Cyprus Memorial NMA' on www.gofundme.com

The memorial will be unveiled on Sunday 21 August at 1100hrs by Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon (retired). If you are interested in attending please email david.littlemore1@btinternet.com

Thom gets in a spin

"With the sun beating down on me, I could feel the heat on the back of my legs, unsure if the burning feeling was being caused by the sun or by the fact that I was coming towards the end of my second two hour stint on the spinning bike. However, looking at my watch I realised that time was actually moving a lot slower than I thought and I still had at least 30 minutes left. I leant forwards over the handlebars and started to spin my legs that little bit faster, spurred on by the sight of passers by stopping to donate!"

SAC (T) Thom Dobson has been fundraising again and his 'spinathon' at RAF Leeming raised a grand total of £354 for the Association. Thank you Thom and to all those who supported him.



L to R: SAC Jak McKenna; SAC (T) Thom Dobson; SAC Craig Macduff and SAC Ben Carter

Congratulations to all our marathon runners



We would like to say a huge well done to our 20 runners who completed the 2016 Virgin London Marathon on Sunday 23 April, together raising over £31,600 to date!

Completing a marathon is a huge achievement requiring an intensive and time-consuming training regime. The physical demands of the marathon, paired with the excellent fundraising efforts from our runners, call for massive dedication and commitment. We are incredibly proud of each of our runners and privileged that they have gone so far to support the Association.

The dedication of our runners goes a long way to ensure that we can continue our work in supporting the RAF family. Our work is completely reliant upon the ongoing generosity of our members and vital donations. The London Marathon is a key date in our fundraising calendar, since 2013 76 runners have raised an enormous £99,900.76 for our welfare work.

When asked why they would take it on one runner, Alex Tennant, said: "I ran for the RAF Association because I'm in the RAF and I like the work you do for people that can't help themselves."

If you would like to sign up for a challenge such as the London Marathon, email challenge-events@rafa.org.uk

Picture left: Craig McMurrough on the course with the model Red Arrow he carried on his back for the entire 26.2 miles

Frequently asked wills questions

Here our wills partner, BTWC, answers some of your questions on managing your estate. More questions and answers will appear in future issues of Air Mail or if you'd like to see the full list now, please visit the Association's website.

Why do I need to make a will?

By leaving a will that states clearly who you would like to receive your property, money and possessions, you can prevent unnecessary distress at a difficult time for your loved ones. If you don't write a will, everything you own will be distributed according to the law of intestacy which may not be the way you might want.

A will makes it much easier for your family or friends to sort out your affairs when the time comes as without a will, the process can be more time consuming and often stressful. Writing a will is particularly important if you have children, family or other people who depend on you financially.

Who can be an executor?

You can nominate anyone over the age of 18 with full mental capacity who is not an undischarged bankrupt to be your executor. Remember, being an executor is a responsible and demanding role and can involve large sums of money. Ensure the people you choose are happy with the role.

You can appoint professional executors or trustees who will charge your estate for the duties they carry out but this service may well buy your family peace of mind knowing that everything is conducted correctly.

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.

City of Manchester Branch sets a new Standard

The City of Manchester RAF Association Branch officially opened on 4 May, with the inaugural meeting being held. During the meeting the Area Chairman, Martin Watkins, handed over the new Standard to the Branch Chairman.

We wish them every success with their new Branch. If you would like to know where your local Branch is you can visit www.rafa.org.uk/who-we-are/where-we-are-located or call the membership team on 0116 268 8783.



New support for RAF Veterans from the RAF Benevolent Fund

The RAF Benevolent Fund has launched a number of new welfare initiatives to support the RAF family. Also available to RAF Association members, these services provide financial, practical and emotional support to serving and former members of the RAF, as well as their partners and dependants, whenever they are in need.

Take a break at Princess Marina House

For anyone who wants to get away from the stresses and strains of daily life, or for those who just want to meet people from a similar RAF background, Princess Marina House in West Sussex is ideal for a recuperative break. Highly skilled staff are available should you need them while guests can enjoy all the comforts of home including home-cooked meals and a full range of organised activities and entertainment.

To book visit www.rafbf.org/PMH

Come dine with us

Another new service reaching out to help RAF veterans make friends and meet with people from a similar background is the RAF Veterans' Lunch Club. Held daily at Princess Marina House, Lunch Clubs offer veterans a delicious three course meal, afternoon entertainment and home-made tea and cakes all within a beautiful setting. The RAF Veterans Lunch is supported by the Aged Veterans Fund.

To book your place or for more information call 01903 784 044 or visit www.rafbf.org/lunchclub

Celebrating a centenary?

We would like to highlight those members that are reaching this milestone birthday, so if you or members you know will be celebrating their 100th birthday before the next issue of Air Mail, please send us your pictures and birthday wishes to be featured in our October to December issue.



Please send them by 23 August 2016. You can e-mail marketing@rafa.org.uk

Correction

On page 26 of the April-June issue of Air Mail we published an article on the anniversary of the first flight of the Spitfire.

The second paragraph states that the prototype, K5054, was first flown by Squadron Leader Ralph Sorley on 5 March 1936. However, this is incorrect as the first flight was made by Capt 'Mutt' Summers, the Vickers chief test pilot, at the time of this flight Sorley was a student at the Imperial Defence College.

Apologies for the mistake and thank you to the reader who brought this to our attention.

Northern Area names its Young Person of the Year

The Morecambe & Lancaster Branch nominated Flight Sergeant Elizabeth Newton of 1127 (Kendal) Air Cadet Squadron for the RAF Association Northern Area Young Person of the Year award and were delighted when she was selected as the winner.

Elizabeth has an impressive array of academic qualifications, leisure activities (including driving a tractor!) and personal achievements with the Air Cadet Organisation and is working towards her Private Pilot's Licence. She is currently studying for her A-levels and after university hopes to join the RAF as a Medical Officer. She recently received the ACO Commandant's Special First Aid Commendation for her prompt action in treating two of her classmates who were injured during a chemistry lesson.

Pictured right, left to right, 1127 Squadron Officer Commanding, Flying Officer Tim Corry, Flight Sergeant Elizabeth Newton and Branch Chairman, Wing Commander Bob Latin.



Get your name on a Red Arrow

'Names on a Plane' is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity from the RAF Museum for everyone to be a part of the RAF's history.

The RAF Museum has announced an exciting new campaign offering members of the public the opportunity to have their name written on the wings of an RAF Red Arrows Hawk Jet that will fly throughout the Red Arrows' 2017 display season.

For one spectacular season of air shows and celebrations, the underside of one of the Red Arrows Hawk Jets will display names chosen by members of the public who have contributed to this unique campaign. From a donation of just £30, these can be the names of the people themselves, or dedications to friends and relatives.

Squadron Leader David Montenegro, Red 1 and Team Leader of the Red Arrows, said: "Through



the Names on a Plane campaign, thousands of people will be joining us as the Red Arrows fly in 2017, displaying to millions of people. On each of these occasions, the team aims to showcase the excellence of the Royal Air Force and, as we approach the Centenary of the Service in 2018, we are especially delighted to be supporting the RAF Museum."

The appeal will officially run until September 2016, with the 'Names on a Plane' appearing on a Red Arrow Hawk throughout their 2017 display season. For more information visit www.namesonaplane.org

Talking Air Mail goes digital

Talking Air Mail is another way in which the RAF Association keeps members in touch with the RAF family. To improve the sound quality, while embracing newer technology, Talking Air Mail has moved from CDs and cassettes to mp3 players.

The volunteers who delivered the mp3 players demonstrated a great amount of flexibility and commitment to the distribution task and we were delighted that so many were keen to help the Association in this way.

One volunteer, Shaun Griffin, said: "I delivered the excellent Air Mail reader today to Mr Swales. He was delighted with the reader and despite his poor eye sight is fit and well for an 85 year old. He described the player as easy to use and great sound quality and he considered himself lucky to have been sent it."

Several of those receiving their new mp3 player were identified as having a need and a desire to be linked with one of our new befrienders, enabling them to take advantage of our new service to combat loneliness.

We hope our 'listeners' will notice the improved sound and also enjoy the added benefits of having access to the huge range of additional material now available to them, free of charge, from the Royal National Institute of Blind People.

If you know of any member who would like to receive Talking Air Mail, please contact talking.airmail@rafa.org.uk or call Lisa on 01780 783645.



rafaYOUTH visits Northern Ireland

Helen Gibson, Youth Community Manager, paid a visit to Northern Ireland in April, visiting 12 Air Training Corps squadrons. She travelled the length of the country, from Ballynahinch to Coleraine. Helen said: "It was great to meet so many squadrons, and find out all of the brilliant things they have lined up for their 75th anniversary year of the ATC."

To find out more about rafaYOUTH email helen.gibson@rafa.org.uk or call her on 07798 898680.

Pictured below: 2350 Coleraine, upper right: 2062 Carrickfergus and 806 Larne; lower right: 1137 East Belfast and 1134 West Belfast.



Award for Dame Vera

Dame Vera Lynn DBE was awarded the prestigious Outstanding Contribution Award at the 2016 Soldiering On Awards.

Dame Vera's charitable work led to her appointment as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 1969 New Year Honours "for services to the Royal Air Forces Association and other charities." She was then promoted to Dame Commander (DBE) in the 1975 Queen's Birthday Honours "for charitable services". Dame Vera has been active with our Dutch branch and attended their Spring Charity Ball at the Amsterdam Hilton Hotel for 21 years.

We are incredibly grateful for Dame Vera's contribution to the Association and we are proud that she has received prestigious national recognition for her hard work and passion for the wider RAF family.



Radio presenter Jeremy Vine presenting Dame Vera with her award

Royal Air Force Physical Education Memorial

The Royal Air Force celebrates its 100th birthday on 1 April 2018, but you may not be aware that the RAF School of Physical Training will be celebrating its 100th birthday that same day. To mark this momentous occasion the PTI Association is to install a memorial in the National Arboretum.

A roebuck, from the school crest, will stand on a granite plinth with school specialisations engraved around it and a fund to raise the £20,000 required for the project has been set up. All donations will be acknowledged (if the donor wishes) on a plaque next to the wooden roebuck in the School of PT Museum.

Further information or details on how to donate can be obtained from Project Co-ordinator Darrald Jones on 01952 527346.

Breaking Ground Heritage



Breaking Ground Heritage is a project designed by ex-military personnel and senior archaeologists for veterans and serving personnel. It aids the recovery of the wounded, injured and sick via heritage and archaeological experiences. It can also help facilitate transitioning service personnel, with the primary aim to provide a productive and safe learning environment for participants, enabling them to explore the options a new chapter in their life may bring.

Past projects include excavating a Bronze Age burial site near Stonehenge where artefacts discovered included a bronze saw, copper chisel and cremated human remains. Experts believe the burial may have been that of an archer. They have also excavated World War One artefacts at Mametz Woods in the Somme, working alongside well respected archaeologists and historians to tell the gruesome story of the events that unfolded in July 1916.

If you would like to take part in a project either as a veteran, a serving member of the Armed Forces or as a family member then you can email enquiries@breakinggroundheritage.org.uk

A knockout night at Marham

On 16 March 2016 RAF Marham held a boxing night, a key event of the 100 that the station is undertaking to mark its centenary.

Throughout the night there were nine bouts each lasting three rounds. The physical prowess and style of six of the Marham boxers was highlighted and five recorded a win.

A total of 300 personnel attended and everyone made a real effort dressing to impress. The night raised £1,660 for the Association and due to its success plans are already being made for next year.



Combatting loneliness in the RAF family

In the last issue of Air Mail we told you about the launch of our Befriending service and highlighted some of the surprising and troubling statistics around loneliness and isolation. The need for befriending is greater than it's ever been and it's something that has been happening within the Association since it started, but never formally recognised. Whether it's a welfare officer popping in for a cup of tea or a Branch member telephoning a housebound member to catch them up on Branch news, these visits and calls are vital to alleviating isolation in the RAF family.

The service is necessary for members like Mrs E, who recently lost her husband and was struggling not to burden family with her grief. Her befriender was there at the end of the telephone

or when she wanted to see a friendly face, and she says that, "it's nice to be able to speak to someone outside the family." Mrs E also appreciates the solid and enduring presence of her befriender, describing her as a "brick wall of support".

If you feel that you, or someone you know, could benefit from befriending email welfare@rafa.org.uk or call 0800 0182 361.



Get set for wings and music at the Scottish International Airshow

The Scottish International Airshow continues to evolve and has marvellous support from all the Armed Forces and close links with the RAF Association as its nominated charity. It has been a challenging winter where the air show industry worked closely with the CAA to review the rules and practicalities of running an air show following the very sad event at Shoreham.



For the first time in Scotland the air show will bring the amazing sight of what can only be described as flying fireworks! The new look Friday night has a number of night-time aerobatic aircraft, which will discharge fireworks as they fly. The Aerosparx formation team will finish the Friday night flying programme and be followed by a spectacular beach fireworks display.

The Saturday will have a full day of entertainment with all three Armed Forces participating. The Royal Navy will perform a beach assault, the Army will have a large presence on the beach side Low Green in Ayr town centre and the RAF will bring highlights from the Falcons parachute team to the day's finale – the world renowned Red Arrows.

The show has also added music on Friday and Saturday nights, and is truly evolving into a wings and music festival weekend. For more information see page 13 or visit www.tsia.scot

DID YOU KNOW? In 2015...



WELFARE

*We distributed
over £1.8m in
grants*

over
102,000

welfare calls and
visits carried out



MEMBERSHIP

Six new Branches were formed.

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP:

61,962

£100,000

We provided £100,000 to refurbish
CONTACT HOUSES on RAF stations, to
enable separated families to stay together



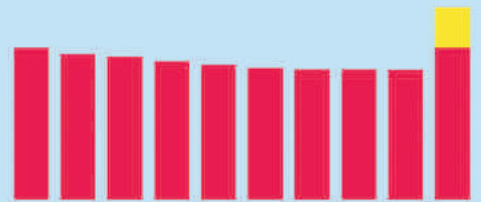
SUPPORT for RAF stations



We have provided free
wi-fi in communal areas on
12 RAF stations



Recruited 5,109 new members.



The first membership increase in 25 years

423



CHILDREN

missed mum or
dad a little bit
less, thanks to
Storybook
Wings



FUNDRAISING

In 2015, our fundraising volunteers were
sponsored to **RUN, CYCLE, DRIVE,**
WALK and **SKYDIVE** approximately
31,500 miles, that's 1.3 times around
the world!

2,500 GUESTS
were welcomed to our caring
Wings Break hotels

From firefighter to first aider

Steve served as an RAF Firefighter and Crew Commander for nearly 16 years, and served all over the world, including tours of Kuwait, the Falkland Islands and the Ascension Islands. He sustained a life changing injury while on duty, when there was an explosion in a simulator where he was observing newly trained firefighters practising their techniques. Steve was thrown into the air and landed hard on his back, causing his neck to hyper-extend. After several medical tests a prolapsed disc was also discovered. Although Steve had surgery to try and correct this, it proved unsuccessful and he was medically retired from the Force in July 2005.

Steve had always been a pragmatic person and so, used to doing physical jobs, he started up a new career, however the injury again became a problem and this also ended. He was applying for lots of jobs, but his medical past was becoming an issue, as well as his inability to do the physically demanding jobs that he had done for many years. It was at this point that Steve got in touch with the Royal Air Forces Association, a service he had always been aware of since his Forces days.

A visit from a local welfare volunteer, Jan, put Steve's mind at ease about asking for help, as in Steve's words she "made me feel that I wasn't a burden." Steve received assistance from the Association for him to undertake a First Aid instructor course, as well as four mannequins to aid in his future teaching. The money and training meant the world to Steve, as it developed a new career and skills that Steve could draw on from his firefighting experience.

Steve says that without the support of the Association he has no idea where he would be, the constant application for jobs was becoming "soul destroying." He was getting positive feedback on his experience but his applications were being rejected. For all of those in a similar position to Steve, he says the advice he would give is, "swallow your pride and don't be afraid to ask for help."

Steve places a great deal of credit on the Midlands welfare team, especially Jan, as he says just talking to them and knowing that they heard him and cared about his situation was a relief. Steve is not completely up to where he would like to be, but feels there is a light at the end of the tunnel, he just hopes, "it's not someone with a torch," typical firefighter humour!



Turn to Starboard

On Wednesday 1 June, a team of 38 military veterans started a journey that would challenge their minds and bodies by sailing 2,000 miles around the British Isles.

The voyage began in Falmouth, with the epic journey expected to last eight weeks, stopping at ports including Ipswich, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Glasgow and Liverpool. The team – many with little or no sailing experience – will circumnavigate Britain anti-clockwise on board a 92-foot replica tall ship to help participants re-engage, reintegrate and gain new skills to help start new careers across the world. Some of the 38 veterans will sail the complete expedition while others will join for shorter sections. They will be joined by two additional yachts also crewed by ex-servicemen and women to meet the unexpectedly high number of applicants.

Turn to Starboard was set up by former RAF Squadron Leader, Shaun Pascoe. He said: "For most of our participants leaving the military, particularly on medical discharge, sees them facing significant challenges, with some losing the true comradeship and sense of purpose that is so important in a military setting. The Round Britain adventure aims to help them readjust by providing the same level of challenge in the company of those who have experienced the same testing conditions. The crew are expected to experience physical exertion and sleep deprivation while overcoming the psychological challenges of living and working in a turbulent natural environment. We are looking forward to the challenge and helping those taking part to regain the sense of value and the belonging they were once so proud of."





THE SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW

2016

AYR LOW GREEN

FRI SEPT 2nd

NIGHT DISPLAY ~ 5PM

BLADES AEROBATICS

AEROSPARK & FIREWORKS

SAT SEPT 3rd

ALL DAY DISPLAY ~ 10AM

RED ARROWS * RAF TYPHOON

BATTLE of BRITAIN FLYPAST

AEROSPARK NIGHT SHOW



SCOTLAND'S BIGGEST FAMILY EVENT

FREE ENTRY! PREMIUM TICKETS ONLINE - WWW.TSIA.SCOT

South
AYRSHIRE
COUNCIL

EventScotland

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Hilton Hotel, Blackpool 13 - 15 May 2016

This Conference report is taken from the Abridged Report, which is available on the Association's website and has been sent to all those members for whom we have an email address. If you would like a copy of the report, please contact Kelly Brotherhood (details at the end of this article).

The 2016 Annual Conference of the Royal Air Forces Association was held at the Hilton Hotel, Blackpool between 13 - 15 May 2015. The Conference was opened by The Worshipful the Mayor of Blackpool, Councillor Peter Callow. Presiding was Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller KBE; the Chairman was Mr Anthony Rees.

Saturday 14 May 2016

The President welcomed the eight Branches at RAF St Mawgan who were connecting to Conference via video link and explained that they were taking part in a pilot to test the remote connection to Conference. It is hoped in the future this will allow greater engagement for members who are unable to travel.

Adoption of the Report of the Annual Conference Committee

The Chairman of the Annual Conference Committee, Mr A Rees, moved the adoption of the Report of the Annual Conference Committee, which was duly seconded and adopted.

2015 and the Future Presentation, Secretary General, Nick Bunting

The Secretary General gave a presentation to Conference which highlighted the importance of the work which has taken place over the last year and the investments being made to meet our objectives for 2020. A video of the full presentation can be

viewed within 'Conference 2016' in the Members' Portal of the Association's website as well as the Chairman and Honorary Treasurer's presentations.

The Annual Report for 2015, Chairman of Council, Air Vice-Marshal Nigel Bairsto

The Chairman's presentation for Conference 2016 has been posted in the Members' Portal of the Association's website. AVM Bairsto moved the adoption of the Report of the Annual Conference Committee, which was duly seconded and adopted.

Presentation of the 2015 Financial Statements, Honorary Treasurer, Mr Philip Tagg

The Honorary Treasurer's presentation for Conference 2015 has been posted in the Members' Portal of the Association's website. Mr Tagg moved the adoption of the Financial Report and asked Conference to elect the auditors for 2016, which was duly seconded and adopted.

Address by the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford

Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford reflected that the world in 2016 is a more troubled one facing many uncertainties. This means that the Royal Air Force (RAF) is busier than it has ever been with 2,500-3,000 personnel on operations and over 50 per cent recovering from operations.

Sir Andrew stated that the RAF is growing, that the Typhoon force is fully committed and that Combat Air and Intelligence Surveillance, Targeting, Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) will be increased. He also noted that the Whole Force continues to be asked to work more efficiently and effectively and that the pressure on its people is not going to reduce.

continued on next page

Sir Andrew expressed that he is extremely proud of what the RAF is doing to make this world a better, safer place. He reflected that the RAF Association is an essential element in helping sustain and support serving members of the RAF and is equally vital in supporting those who have already served.

Sir Andrew thanked the Association for its work, highlighting Storybook Wings, wi-fi on stations to help connect families, the contact houses which provide a lifeline to serving personnel and the volunteering and befriender schemes which ensure that no one is left alone or vulnerable. He made particular mention of the hard work and commitment of the RAFALOs.

Sir Andrew thanked the Association for all it is doing; he is delighted to see that the Association is growing and thriving and wishes the Association all the best for the future.

Following his address, Sir Andrew presented the Association's Flying Scholarship Awards. More on this can be found on page 22.

The President invited Sir Andrew to become a Life Vice-President of the Association and this was acclaimed by Conference. Sir Dusty then presented a number of National Presidential Certificates, which have already been detailed in previous issues of Air Mail. The President also made a formal presentation to Mr Bob Norburn on behalf of his friend Roy Adair of Roy's General Service Medal, awarded to him recently for his past service in the RAF.

Results of Elections

Twelve nominations were received for election to Council (in the office of Elected Member) for the eight positions, plus one nomination for election to the Annual Conference Committee (Tom Feeley) who was elected unopposed.

The following eight Elected Members will serve on Council for 2016-18

Candidate	Votes received
Dr B Pattison	124
Mr D Gibson	116
Mr A Rees	116
Mr C Goss	110
Mr M Blackman	96
Mr I McEnnis	95
Gp Capt. (Ret'd) R Whittingham	78
Mrs J Boothman	65

Mr Barry 'Smokey' Furness and Ms Jan Dowlen-Gilliland withdrew their nominations.

Air Vice-Marshal John Cliffe was voted by acclaim as the Chairman of Council.

Conference business began after lunch and details of the Resolutions that were carried and those that fell can be found on page 16.

Details of trophy winners can be found on page 20.

Sunday 15 May 2016

The Sunday started, as ever, with a time to reflect and commemorate at the Service of Dedication. Many of our standards were proudly paraded in the bright sunshine ahead of current and former members of the RAF and other services.

The service was led by new Chaplain in Chief AVM Jonathan Chaffey and everyone was treated to a flypast by a Hurricane from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. As in previous years, passers-by stopped to pay tribute to the many men and women of the Royal Air Force who have given their lives in defence of our country.

Conference was then concluded with the presentation of parade trophies, more resolutions, a vote of thanks and the closing ceremony. On completion of the vote of thanks, the President, on behalf of the RAF Association, paid tribute to those Council Members who were stepping down from their positions:

AVM Nigel Bairsto, Mr B Furness,
Mrs J Dowlen-Gilliland and Mr M Clulow

The President invited AVM Nigel Bairsto to become a Life Vice-President of the Association and this was acclaimed by Conference.

Photographs

Photographs taken over the Conference weekend will soon be available and details of how you can access these will follow shortly.

Venue for Annual Conference 2017 and 2018

The RAF Association's Annual Conference 2017 and 2018 will be held at Yarnfield Park Training and Conference Centre, Yarnfield, Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 0NL on 12-14 May 2017 and 11-13 May 2018.

Conference Registration and booking of accommodation will open in September 2016.

If you have any enquiries about Conference, please contact Kelly Brotherhood on: 0116 268 8770 or email: kelly.brotherhood@rafa.org.uk



Annual Conference – Resolution Results



Please note the number of the Resolution is the number it appeared within the Conference programme. Percentages have been rounded up or down so may not always add up to 100 per cent

Resolutions carried – Indicated in Green

Resolutions NOT carried – Indicated in Red

Special Resolutions requiring a two-thirds majority are indicated with an *

* Electronic voting

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.

CARD VOTE – **CARRIED**

Rules review presentation

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.

FOR 94% AGAINST 4.07% ABSTAINED 1.63%

Rules review presentation

3. This Conference resolves that the draft changes to the Royal Charter, Rules and Byelaws proposed by Central Council following the review carried out by them are rejected and that Central Council be instructed to submit to the next Annual Conference draft amendments to the Royal Charter, Rules and Byelaws for consideration on an individual basis.

If Resolution No. 3 is passed, Resolutions 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 fall

FOR 32.79% **AGAINST 64.75%** ABSTAINED 2.46%

* Reaffirming resolution

4. This Conference resolves to reaffirm the decision of the 2007 Conference to approve the following resolution:

“This Conference, recognizing the great support given to the Association over many years by the spouses and partners of Ordinary and Life Members, and the comradeship enjoyed by them, resolves that Associate Member spouses and partners be offered the choice of taking up Ordinary Membership if they so wish, and that Rule 8 be amended to include a clause to that effect.”

FOR 74.8% AGAINST 19.5% ABSTAINED 5.69%

*Royal Charter

5. This Conference resolves that the Royal Charter be amended to reflect the decisions of past Conference to incorporate the membership classes of Junior Membership (Annual Conference 2012) and ordinary membership for those spouses, partners, civil partners, widows or widowers who are an Associate Member and who wish to change their class of membership (subject to Resolution No. 4 passing). That Article 5 of the Royal Charter should be amended as follows:

5. Membership of the Association shall consist of such classes of members as shall be prescribed and shall be open to all persons who are serving or have served in one of Our Air Forces and who qualify in accordance with the Rules. Other classes of membership may be described in the Rules.”

FOR 86.07% AGAINST 8.20% ABSTAINED 5.74%

* Rules 6 – 15

6 Subject to the acceptance of Resolution No 5, this Conference resolves that draft Rule 8 be adopted to reflect the previous resolutions of Conference to add membership classes of Junior Membership to be able to attend and speak at Branch meetings, Area and Annual Conferences:

FOR 97.58% AGAINST 1.6% ABSTAINED 0.81%

7. Having approved a category of junior membership for the Air Cadet Organisation, this Conference urges Central Council to extend this scheme to all air minded young people between the age of 12 and 17 [Draft Rule 7 – Membership –Classes of Membership].

Note: This lower age was changed by consent of Conference.

FOR 89.26% AGAINST 9.09% ABSTAINED 1.65%

8. This Conference resolves that Council members shall be appointed triennially at Annual Conference and the tenure of members of Council, in line with best practice, is limited to a maximum of 9 years (three three-year terms).

FOR 83.61% AGAINST 12.30% ABSTAINED 4.10%

9. This Conference resolves to incorporate best practice from the Charity Commission guidance by increasing the number of independent co-opted members from two to four on Council.

FOR 91.74% AGAINST 7.44% ABSTAINED 0.83%

10. This Conference to resolves that 'virtual branches' are recognised within the Draft Rules:

Draft Rule No. 27 "Branches – Function"

Draft Rule No. 28 "Branches – Formation"

Draft Rule No. 29 "Branches – Virtual Branches"

Draft Rule No. 30 "Branches – Amalgamation, Sub-Division and Closure"

FOR 100% AGAINST 0% ABSTAINED 0%

11. This Conference resolves that the ability for Council to vest or transfer assets or property of a Branch is limited to those Branches that are either closing or are not in conformity with the Charities Act or other legislation or regulation or are being mismanaged and that Draft Rule 31 is amended accordingly.

FOR 98.36% AGAINST 0.82% ABSTAINED 0.82%

12. In line with current Charity Commission guidance this conference resolves to introduce a Conflicts of Interest policy.

FOR 99.18% AGAINST 0% ABSTAINED 0.82%

13. This Conference resolves to introduce a Complaints Procedure to address all aspects of the Association and its membership.

FOR 97.6% AGAINST 0.8% ABSTAINED 1.6%

14. This Conference resolves that the Rules are amended to reflect previous Conference decisions to introduce Registered Members Groups within the Association:

FOR 93.5% AGAINST 4.07% ABSTAINED 2.44%

15. This Conference to resolves to bring up to date the following Rules, simplify the language used and references made to legislation and regulation of the Governments of the UK or devolved Administrations used in the following Draft Rules:

Draft Rule No. 1 "Definitions"

Draft Rule No. 4 "Byelaws"

Draft Rule No. 5 "Standard Regulations"

Draft Rule No. 7 "Membership – Classes of Membership"

Draft Rule No. 10 "Membership – Life Vice-Presidents"

Draft Rule No. 11 "Membership – Officers of the Association"

Draft Rule No. 15 "Council – Functions and Powers"

Draft Rule No. 16 "Council – Proceedings"

Draft Rule No. 21 "Conference – Conference Business"

Draft Rule No. 22 "Conference – Annual Conference Committee"

Draft Rule No. 23 "Conference – Decisions of Conference"

Draft Rule No. 24 "Areas and Regions – Areas"

Draft Rule No. 25 "Areas and Regions – Area Councils"

Draft Rule No. 26 "Areas and Regions – Regions"

Draft Rule No. 33 "Finance and Accounts – The Accounts of the Association"

Draft Rule No. 36 "Finance and Accounts – Investments"

Draft Rule No. 37 "Finance and Accounts – Investment of Branch Funds"

Draft Rule No. 38 "Fundraising"

Draft Rule No. 39 "Liability and Indemnity"

Further, that this Conference to resolves to delete the following existing Rules:

Rule, 8, 9 and 10 – Incorporated within Draft Rule No. 7

Rules 11 and 12 – Removes duplication and amplified within the Byelaws

Rule 23 – The power to create committees is incorporated in Draft Rule 16 (4) (i)

Additionally, that this Conference to resolves to renumber the

existing Rules as follows:

Rule No. 14 to become Rule No. 9

Rule No. 17 to become Rule No. 12

Rule No. 22 to become Rule No. 17

Rule No. 24 to become Rule No. 18

Rule No. 25 to become Rule No. 19

Rule No. 27 to become Rule No. 20

Rule No. 28 to become Rule No. 21

Rule No. 38 to become Rule No. 31

Rule No. 39 to become Rule No. 32

Rule No. 41 to become Rule No. 34

Rule No. 42 to become Rule No. 35

Rule No. 47 to become Rule No. 40

FOR 92.68% AGAINST 4.07% ABSTAINED 3.25%

Byelaws

16. This Conference resolves to bring up to date and simplify the Byelaw detailing the membership of the Association reflecting the changes proposed in Resolutions 4, 5, 6 and 7.

FOR 95.83% AGAINST 0% ABSTAINED 4.17%

17. That the current regulation which states that only Branches with more than 500 Ordinary and Life members are entitled to a second Delegate at Conference be amended to a Branch with more than 200 Ordinary and Life Members and that Byelaw 24(2) [Draft Byelaw 9 (2)] be amended accordingly.

FOR 33% **AGAINST 63.64%** ABSTAINED 3.31%

18. This Conference urges Central Council to amend the regulations so that with effect from 1 January 2017, all new memberships will be run on an anniversary basis, i.e. the date of joining will be the date of renewal and that the Admin Handbook be amended accordingly.

FOR 63.41% AGAINST 34.96% ABSTAINED 1.63%

continued on page 18



An amendment through RP5 to Resolution 19 was proposed:

19. a. This Conference urges Central Council to allow RAF Association Ordinary and Associate Members to pay one annual subscription to a designated home Branch, but also for them to be able to attend and participate in the activities of any Branch but only hold office in one Branch at any one time; and that Life Members who have nominated a home Branch should be afforded a similar opportunity.

FOR 35.4% **AGAINST 60.18%** ABSTAINED 4.42%

19. This Conference urges Central Council to allow RAF Association Ordinary and Associate Members to pay one annual subscription to a designated home Branch, but also for them to be able to attend and participate in the activities of any Branch; and that Life Members who have nominated a home Branch should be afforded a similar opportunity.

If Resolution 19 is carried then Resolution 32 falls.

FOR 89.92% AGAINST 10.08% ABSTAINED 0%

1. This Conference has recognised the need to adopt electronic voting methods the Draft Byelaws shall be expanded accordingly:

FOR 62.18% AGAINST 34.45% ABSTAINED 3.36%

2. This Conference to resolves to bring up to date the Byelaws, simplify the language used and references made to legislation and regulation of the Governments of the UK or devolved administrations used in the following Draft Byelaws:

Draft Byelaw No. 1 "Byelaws"
Draft Byelaw No. 2 "Definitions"
Draft Byelaw No. 5 "Admission to Membership"
Draft Byelaw No. 6 "Register of Membership"
Draft Byelaw No. 7 "Subscriptions"
Draft Byelaw No. 8 "The Council – Membership"
Draft Byelaw No. 9 "The Council – Qualification"
Draft Byelaw No. 17 "Regions"
Draft Byelaw No. 18 "Branches – Formation"
Draft Byelaw No. 19 "Closure of Non Effective Branch"
Draft Byelaw No. 21 "Branch Closure – Forwarding of Accounts and Funds"



Draft Byelaw No. 22 "Financial Year"
Draft Byelaw No. 23 "Keeping of Accounts"
Draft Byelaw No. 24 "Credits to Association Funds"
Draft Byelaw No. 25 "Examination of Accounts"
Draft Byelaw No. 26 "Availability of Accounts"
Draft Byelaw No. 27 "Expenses"
Draft Byelaw No. 29 "Supply of Royal Charter, Rules, Byelaws and Regulations"

Further, that this Conference to resolves to delete the following existing Byelaws:

Byelaws 6, 7, 8, 9, 34, and 36 are incorporated in Draft Byelaw 30
Byelaws 11 and 12 covered in Draft Byelaw 10
Byelaw 15 incorporated in Draft Rule 14
Byelaw 17 incorporated in Draft Byelaw 8
Byelaws 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 46 – incorporated in Draft Rule 16
Byelaw 42 incorporated in Draft Byelaw 20
Byelaws 45 and 47 incorporated in Draft Rule 36
Byelaw 50 – Club Affiliation Fees
Additionally, that this Conference to resolves to renumber the existing Byelaws as follows:
Byelaw No. 24 to become Byelaw No. 10
Byelaw No. 26 to become Byelaw No. 12
Byelaw No. 27 to become Byelaw No. 13
Byelaw No. 28 to become Byelaw No. 14
Byelaw No. 43 to become Byelaw No. 21
Byelaw No. 48 to become Byelaw No. 28

FOR 93.22% AGAINST 4.24% ABSTAINED 2.54%

Resolutions for amending the draft document 22 – 25*

22. Subject to the acceptance of any of the preceding resolutions this Conference resolves that the Council takes the necessary consequential action to amend the Draft Royal Charter, Rules and Byelaws placed before this Conference in accordance with the intention of the resolutions.

If Resolution No. 22 falls then Resolutions 23, 24 and 25 fall

FOR 98.06% AGAINST 1.24% ABSTAINED 0.7%

23. Subject to the implementation of any amendments resulting from the preceding resolutions that have been adopted by Conference, this Conference resolves that the Draft Royal Charter placed before this Conference be forwarded for the approval of the Privy Council and gives the Council the authority to agree any amendments required by the Charity Commission or the Privy Council Office providing such amendments do not affect the basic policy represented in the documents and in accordance with Article 23 of the Royal Charter to petition Her Majesty The Queen in Council for a Supplemental Charter in the form attached to this notice.

FOR 95.9% AGAINST 1.58% ABSTAINED 2.52%

24. Subject to the implementation of any amendments resulting from the preceding resolutions that have been adopted by Conference, this Conference resolves that the Draft Rules placed before this Conference be forwarded for the approval of the Privy Council and gives the Council the authority to agree any amendments required by the Charity Commission or the Privy Council Office providing such amendments do not affect the basic policy represented in the documents.

FOR 97.76% AGAINST 1.57% ABSTAINED 0.68%

25. Subject to the implementation within the Draft Byelaws of any of the preceding resolutions that have been adopted by Conference and of any consequential amendments that may be



needed as a result of amendments to the Draft Royal Charter and Rules required by the Privy Council Office or the Charity Commission, this Conference resolves that the Draft Byelaws placed before this Conference and attached to this notice be adopted as the Byelaws of the Association, to the exclusion of all previous Byelaws, subject to the passing of Resolutions 22, 23 and 24 and shall come into force simultaneously with the approval by Her Majesty The Queen of the Draft Royal Charter and Rules.

FOR 97.7% AGAINST 1.59% ABSTAINED 0.69%

Annual Conference

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

FOR 99.07% AGAINST 0.93% ABSTAINED 0%

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

FOR 97.95% AGAINST 2.05% ABSTAINED 0%

28. This Conference resolves to accept the recommendations of the report of the Trophy Review Committee.

If Resolution 28 is carried then Resolution 29 falls.

FOR 38.94% **AGAINST 55.66%** ABSTAINED 4.41%

29. Conference resolves that there should be no removal of trophies awarded by the Association without prior approval of Annual Conference.

FOR 91.72% AGAINST 6.09% ABSTAINED 2.19%

Organisation

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.

FOR 71.89% AGAINST 24.13% ABSTAINED 3.98%

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:

- (a) a person shall be eligible for Ordinary Membership of the Club if he is an Ordinary or Life Member of the Branch and
- (b) a person be eligible for Associate Membership of the Club if he is an Associate Member of the Branch.

FOR 81.99% AGAINST 11.07% ABSTAINED 6.94%

32. That Council should investigate the situation whereby virtual Branches could be established in a way which is not detrimental to existing Branches through the transfer of Ordinary members from an existing Branch to a virtual Branch and report back to Conference in 2017

WITHDRAWN AS RESOLUTION 19 WAS PASSED

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.

FOR 89.65% AGAINST 1.87% ABSTAINED 8.48%

34. That RAFA should consider the employment of a Property Manager.

FOR 65.61% AGAINST 29.17% ABSTAINED 5.23%

Note: percentages have been rounded.



Resolutions NOT debated at Conference

The following Resolutions will be remitted to Council for its consideration at its meeting on 7 September 2016:

Finance

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

continued on page 20

General

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

Conference Awards

We can all be proud of what was achieved in 2015 and the trophy winners certainly reflect the hard work and dedication of our members. We look forward to seeing what can be achieved in 2016. So, to the winners:

Branch trophies for Wings Appeal Collection



Sir Thomas Pike trophy, awarded for the highest net Wings Appeal collection - **Shoreham Branch**

Lord Craig trophy, awarded for the highest net Wings Appeal collection, excluding Airshows - **Carrickfergus Branch**

Gwynne-Vaughan trophy, awarded to the Branch which achieves the highest net collection per member including air shows in the UK - **Falmouth Branch**

Lord Stirrup trophy, awarded for the highest net collection per member excluding Airshows in the UK - **Carrickfergus Branch**



Trefusis Forbes trophy, awarded for the highest net collection per member including Airshows for overseas - **Jersey Branch**

Bill Bailey trophy, awarded for the highest net collection per member excluding Airshows for overseas - **Luxembourg Branch**

Sir Douglas Bader trophy, awarded for the highest Wings Appeal collection per capita by an ATC Squadron - **415 (Merthyr Tydfil) Squadron**

Sir Robert Saundby trophy, awarded for the ATC squadron collecting the highest net Wings Appeal amount - **1224 (Wharfedale) Squadron**



Sir Andrew Humphrey trophy, awarded to the Unit making the greatest sustained effort and overall contribution to Wings Appeal - **Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets (Walsall)**

Shell Mex Trophy, awarded for the area with the highest percentage annual renewal of annual members - **Scotland & Northern Ireland Area**

Overseas Membership trophy, awarded to the branch with the highest percentage increase in membership - **Newcastle and District (NSW) Australia**

Amodio Trophy for Overseas Branches, awarded to the overseas branch with the highest number of new members - **Jamaica Branch**



President's Cup, awarded to the branch judged to have made the most outstanding achievement - **Erewash Branch**

Dickie Collins Branch Club Efficiency trophy, awarded to the branch club that is judged to be the most efficient of those clubs whose parent branch has over 200 Ordinary or Life members - **York Branch**

Branch newsletter trophy, awarded to the branch judged to have produced the most interesting and informative newsletter over the year - **Grimsby & Cleethorpes Branch**

RAF Stations and Units



Lord Tedder trophy, is awarded to an RAF unit for the highest net collection for Wings Appeal - **RAF Brize Norton**

Sir Charles Wheeler trophy, the trophy is awarded to the home RAF unit achieving the highest net collection per head of personnel - **MOD Corsham**

Marquis of Amodio trophy, awarded to the RAF station recruiting the highest number of new members pro rata to unit personnel - **RAF Fylingdales**

Ken Jago trophy, awarded to the overseas unit achieving the highest net collection per head of personnel - **Joint Force Command Brunssum**

Sir Geoffrey Bromet trophy, RAF Unit trophy, awarded to the station or unit that demonstrates exceptional achievement in support of the Association - **RAF Brize Norton**



Airshow Plate, awarded for exceptional achievement by an RAF Unit in support of the many Airshows that take place throughout the UK - **RAF Benson**



Wally Marriott trophy, is awarded to the RAFALO judged to have made an outstanding contribution to the Association - **Warrant Officer Vince Taylor**

Standard Bearer Competition

The standard bearer who most impressed the judges and the one representing the Association as the **National Standard Bearer** for the next three years is **Sean Marston** from **Wales, Midland and South West Area**

The **Reserve National Standard Bearer** is **Martin Latham-Scott** from **Scotland and Ireland Area**

The **Deputy National Standard Bearer** for 2018 will be **Mike Facey** from **Wales, Midland and South West Area**

The following trophies were presented on Sunday morning, following the parade:

The Johnson trophy for the smartest Flight on parade was awarded to the **Wales, Midland and South Western Area**.

The Fred Brisley Challenge Cup awarded to the smartest Area Standard Bearer was awarded to the **Northern Area**.

RAF Association 2016 Flying Scholarships

The RAF Association runs an annual Flying Scholarship programme, which offers six awards in total to outstanding members of the Air Cadet Organisation (which includes the ATC and the Combined Cadet Force), Air Explorer Scouts and the Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets. The scholarships recognise the continuous support these organisations give to the Association.

The top candidate is rewarded with a course of 35 hours flight training in a light aircraft, which covers all or part of the tuition needed to obtain a National Private Pilot Licence. Five runners-up receive 12 hours training each.

The winners were presented with their prizes by the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford, and Brian Fare, Membership Support Officer for the RAF Association, after receiving their awards at Annual Conference in Blackpool.



The winners pictured with Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford and Brian Fare, Membership Support Officer for the RAF Association, after receiving their awards at Annual Conference in Blackpool.

They were:

Cadet Flight Sergeant Christopher Clarke (18), a cadet with No 156 (Kidderminster) Squadron ATC.

Cadet Flight Sergeant Oliver Harding (18), a cadet with No 177 (Blackpool Airport) Squadron ATC.

Cadet Corporal Andrew Harrison (18), a cadet with No 1408 (Cranleigh) Detached Flight ATC.

Cadet Flight Sergeant Dilan Patel (17), a cadet with No 1454 (Harrow) Squadron ATC.

Cadet Corporal Matthew Stoner (17), a cadet with No 2443 (Oakhampton) Squadron ATC.

This year's overall winner, who is receiving the prestigious 35-hour flying scholarship:

Cadet Warrant Officer Lauren Rynsberger (18), a cadet with Magdalene College Oxford Combined Cadet Force.



Cadet Flight Sergeant Christopher Clarke



Cadet Flight Sergeant Oliver Harding



Cadet Corporal Andrew Harrison



Cadet Flight Sergeant Dilan Patel



Cadet Corporal Matthew Stoner



Cadet Warrant Officer Lauren Rynsberger

Entries for next year's scholarships will be accepted from 1 October this year.

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Annual Conference 2016 in pictures





Area Conferences 2016

As well as Annual Conference, each Area held its own conference earlier in the year. Here we report on two of them and share some pictures of two great weekends.

Northern Area

A fantastic weekend was held at the Gateshead Marriott Hotel on the weekend of 11-13 March, with over 120 members gathering to complete the formal parts of the Area AGM coupled with the social aspects of being part of this special Association.

Saturday saw presentations by Group Captain David Bradshaw MA BSC RAF, RAF Leeming's Station Commander, David Prowse, Director of Membership and Operations and the afternoon saw a brilliant presentation by Yeoman Serjeant R B Loughlin MBE. He spoke on the modern day life of a Yeoman, the official bodyguards to Her Majesty the Queen. This dovetailed perfectly into the Saturday Evening Gala Dinner which was themed in line with Her Majesty The Queen's 90th birthday.

Our thanks go to the entrants into both the Standard Bearer and Junior Standard Bearer competitions and once again all participants were of a very high standard. Our congratulations go to Mr Chris Peel and Cadet Jack Kenton 2359 (Woolton) Squadron as the overall individual winners.



Wales, Midland & South Western Area

A remarkable 46 Branches from throughout the Area of Wales, Midland and the South West came together for their 12th Annual Reunion and AGM which took place at the Cheltenham Chase Hotel in Brockworth, Gloucester in early March this year.

In his first year as Area President, Air Commodore Andrew Neal was delighted to welcome guest of honour, Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller, along with David Prowse, who delivered a very positive update on Association business which included recent success in membership recruitment and the launch of the Association's Befriending Service. Once again the Area came together and enjoyed minimal business with maximum reunion!



Bentley Priory Museum

On 14 July 1936, RAF Fighter Command was founded at RAF Bentley Priory in Stanmore, north west London, with Air Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding appointed as its first Commander-in-Chief. The new specialised Fighter Command was created by the Air Council alongside Bomber Command, Coastal Command and Training Command.

As Britain prepared for war, RAF Bentley Priory – under the determined leadership of Dowding – was developing the world's first integrated system of air defence.

The 'Dowding System' as it became known, collated and analysed information about incoming enemy raids from radar stations across Britain's coastline and from the Observer Corps, and passed it down a chain of command at Group and Sector levels to enable squadrons to be scrambled – at the right position and critically the right height to intercept.

A Filter Room was created within the Mansion House at RAF Bentley Priory, to receive information from the radar stations. The information was communicated via telephone from radar operators to plotters within the Filter Room, who plotted the information on a large map of Britain. Once the information had been assessed and 'filtered', details of enemy raids were passed to the Operations Room at Bentley Priory who had an overview of the country. To protect them from bombing, the invaluable Filter and Operation Rooms were moved to a bunker on site shortly before the Battle of Britain commenced in July 1940.

The leadership of 'The One', Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, the courage of 'The Few' - the Battle of Britain aircrew, and tireless work of 'The Many' who worked on the ground, many as part of the 'Dowding System' were all critical elements to RAF victory during the Battle of Britain.

Eighty years after RAF Fighter Command was founded, Bentley Priory is now a commemorative museum, exploring the history of the place from where the Battle of Britain was won. Dowding's Office has been transformed into an award winning audio visual film which highlights the importance of his leadership during the Battle of Britain, and the pivotal role that RAF Bentley Priory played. A recreated Filter Room explores the 'Dowding System' and contains bronze resin models based on WAAF personnel who worked at RAF Bentley Priory, and whose histories were so integral to its accurate recreation.

Serving HM Forces and veterans receive discounted admission of just £5. The museum is open on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays and on Tuesdays and Thursdays to schools and pre-booked large groups. Tours are available for pre-booked RAF groups.

For more information visit www.bentleypriorymuseum.org.uk



Exterior Shot of Bentley Priory



The recreated Filter Room



The Rotunda histories of The Few display

Thanking our volunteers this Volunteers' Week



The first week of June is National Volunteers' Week and the RAF Association planned a variety of things to celebrate what volunteers mean to us, Katharine Montgomery, Volunteer Manager explains: "While we hope they feel appreciated all year round, Volunteers' Week provides us with the perfect opportunity to say a huge thank you to them all."

Every day of Volunteer's Week we posted a Volunteer spotlight on our website, telling people's stories and showing their highlights of volunteering for the Association. To say thank you to all volunteers we sent out a thank you card from Sir Dusty and volunteer recognition pin, which was endorsed by Council. We also produced a video to thank all our volunteers, which can be viewed on the Association's website at www.rafa.org.uk/volvid

Our Area Volunteer Co-ordinators went out and about, attending a number of events celebrating volunteers, and attracting some new participants. We spoke to Graeme Russell, who was in Wales attending a drop-in session for volunteers and he spoke of the passion and life skills involved in volunteering, as, "volunteering gives you a personal value, while offering your values to others."

We also started a conversation on our social media platforms, so volunteers could let us know what they had been doing and what volunteering means to them and were overwhelmed with the positive responses from our supporters.

Bill Kerr is a welfare caseworker in Scotland and has always been involved in charity work, throughout his career with the RAF and since leaving. It was because of the support afforded to him by our Scottish Area Welfare team that Bill decided that he would like to give something back to the Association and help others in similar circumstances. Bill found the caseworker training to be very poignant, and hopes to be in a position to try and help people whatever their situation, while raising awareness of the welfare support that the RAF Association offers to those in need.

When asked what he would say to anyone thinking of volunteering Bill said: "If you have the free time and enthusiasm, then do it."

It is not too late to fill in your volunteer audit and be recognised for the valuable work you do for the Association. You can request a form from volunteer@rafa.org.uk or by calling 0116 268 8794

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.

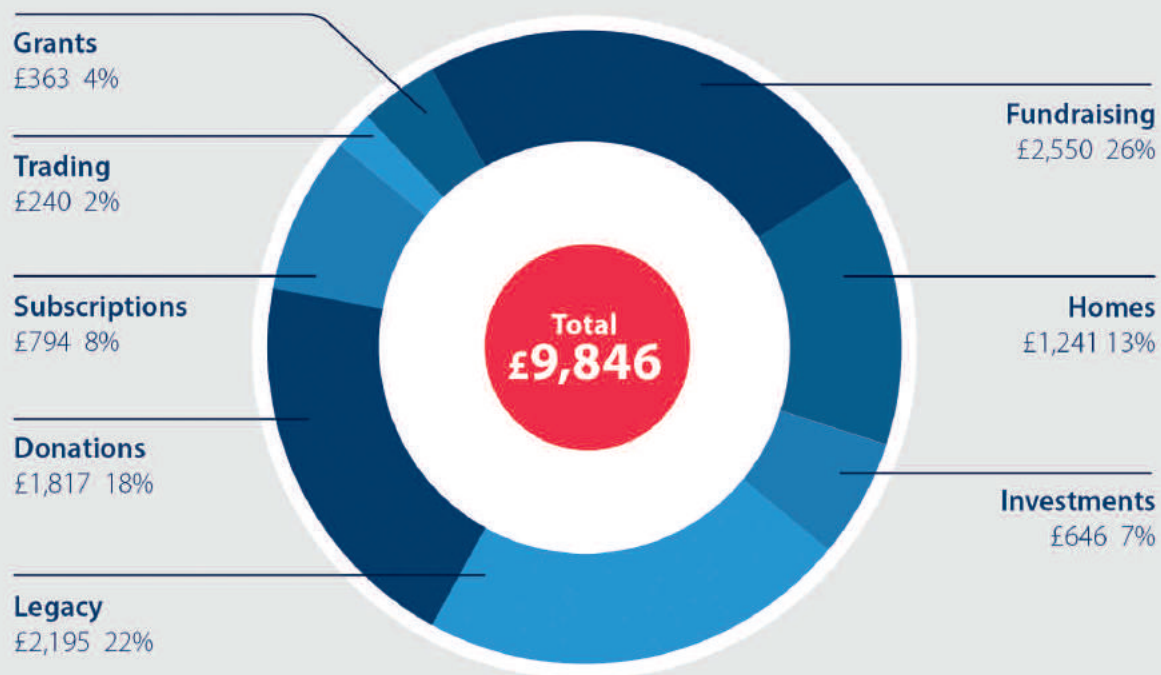
These outstanding acts of generosity help make such an amazing difference to the lives of the RAF family in need, both serving and ex-serving.

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

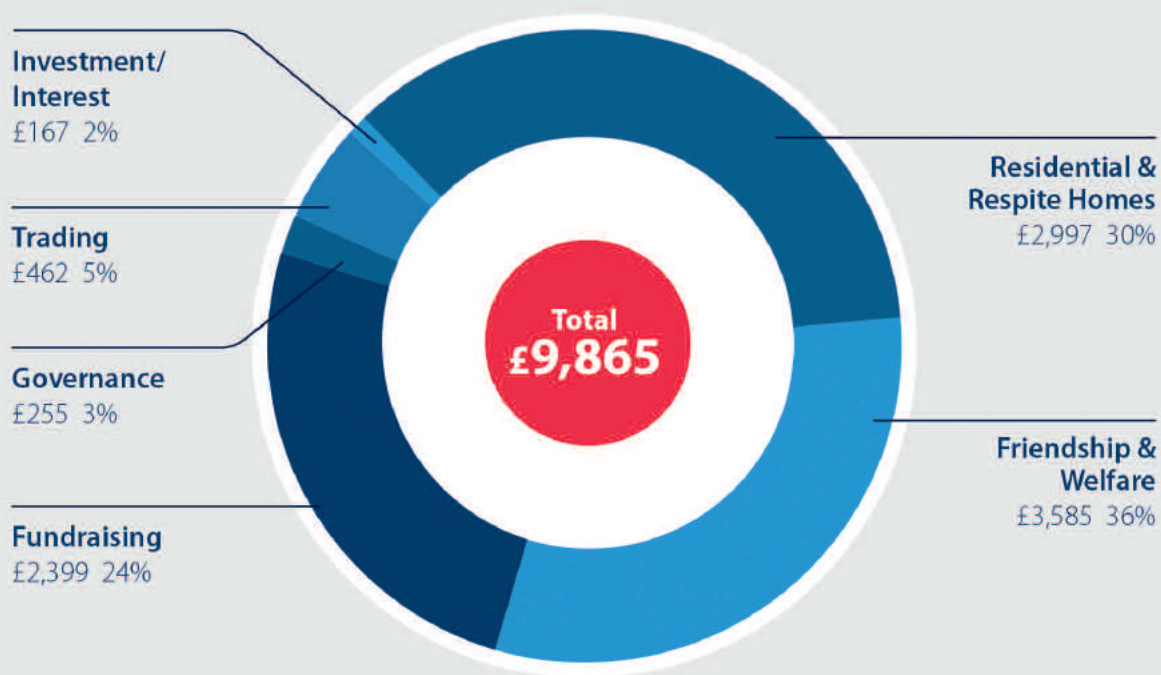
www.rafa.org.uk/legacy



2015 income



2015 expenditure



All figures quoted are 000s

2016 'Keeping in Touch' campaign

The Association's 2016 'Keeping in Touch' campaign began at the end of May and is proving effective in ensuring that members of the RAF family requiring support can access it when they need it most. The Association loses thousands of members each year through non-renewals and it has become clear that this can often be due to welfare reasons. A scheme is therefore underway to contact lapsed Association members to check on their wellbeing.

A specialist company (Connect Assist, which also provides the Royal British Legion's welfare helpline and the Government's Money Advice Service) has been employed by the Association to make the initial calls. Any welfare issues are then immediately passed to the Association's own expert team so that they can offer the appropriate support. Of the 98 calls made in the campaign's first week, 31 individuals either had a welfare issue or were suffering from loneliness and isolation.

"Mr S has been registered blind for four years and was very disappointed that he didn't have contact from his local Branch, after being a committee member for so many years. Mr S explained that his wife is now in a nursing home. Mr S was touched that we phoned and would be open to having phone calls on a monthly basis to check on his welfare."

"Miss B is 75 years old and used to serve for the RAF. Miss B has a son, who isn't able to support her as he has his own problems. Miss B is very unhappy. Miss B doesn't leave the house. Miss B says no one cares. Miss B got very upset on the phone and very worked up. I asked Miss B if she has seen a doctor and Miss B broke down on the phone."

The campaign will continue for several months and, based on results so far, a significant number of RAF family members will receive the support they desperately need as a result.

RAF Families Federation news

This time of year finds us out on the road at the many families' days on units and at other similar serving community events. It's a really important and enjoyable part of our role, giving us the chance to meet our Servicemen and women, together with their families, and hear at grass root level just what life is like for them.

Surveys

Earlier in the year, we launched the first two surveys for 2016— one for Royal Auxiliary Air Force (RAuxAF) personnel and one for those families who access childcare. We have had a brilliant response to both.

For the RAuxAF cadre, our survey is aimed explicitly at understanding what works and what does not work. We'll report their views and concerns to the HQ Air Reserves staff, identifying trends and issues that they may need/want to address.

Childcare is an issue for many in terms of access and, especially, cost. We want to get this issue on the MOD agenda because it influences adversely so many other initiatives like spouse employment and Help to Buy. The biggest single reason we are given as to why spouse/partners do not get a job is the cost and availability of childcare. Yet a second income is crucial to many families if they are to be able to save for a deposit, pay the mortgage or even pay the private sector rents that landlords are asking for in many parts of the country. We don't think we can expect the MOD to routinely subsidise childcare costs but we do think they can help by having a childcare policy (there isn't one at the moment) that works with local authorities to ensure parity of access and cost wherever possible. Our report will be out in the summer, so please keep an eye on our website if you are interested in the outcomes.

Our other surveys include the Future Accommodation Model, Life Overseas, Quality of Life, Children's Education, The Armed Forces Covenant and Dispersed Families. Again, keep an eye on our website or sign up to our eBULLETIN, and we'll be able to keep you up to date on progress on each.

Finally, a warm welcome to our newest member of staff. Graeme Spark is a former CASWO (Chief of the Air Staff's Warrant Officer), as just about everybody in a blue uniform will know, and we are delighted that he is bringing his knowledge and experience to us in order to help you. He joined us in June and he's made his mark already with some great ideas.

For further information or to sign up to eBULLETIN at www.raf-ff.org.uk



Bill Mahon, Director RAF FF



Graeme Spark, Regional Covenant Manager

Best of British Entertainment

Musical entertainment performed by the Royal Air Force's finest musicians. The programme includes *Dambusters March*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Devil's Gallop*, *Bring Me Sunshine*, *633 Squadron*, *Impossible Dream*, *O Fortuna*, *Crown Imperial* and the *RAF March Past*

Friday 21 October	Harrogate	Royal Hall
Sunday 23 Oct	Gateshead	Sage Gateshead
Wednesday 26 October	Basingstoke	The Anvil
Thursday 27 October	Bristol	Colston Hall
Sunday 30 October	High Wycombe	Wycombe Swan
Tuesday 1 November	London	Cadogan Hall
Sunday 6 November	Canterbury	Marlowe Theatre
Friday 18 November	Manchester	Bridgewater Hall
Saturday 19 November	Nottingham	Royal Concert Hall
Sunday 20 November	Birmingham	Symphony Hall
Wednesday 30 November	Eastbourne	Congress Theatre
Thursday 1 December	Southend	Cliffs Pavilion
Saturday 3 December	Ipswich	Ipswich Regent
Sunday 4 December	Norwich	Theatre Royal
Sunday 11 December	Poole	Lighthouse

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Vocalist: Squadron Leader Matthew Little



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Paul repays debt of gratitude, 60 years on



Above: Shorts Sunderland. Photo: © RAF Museum

Below: Paul's father during World War II

More than 60 years ago, the widow of an RAF Warrant Officer was struggling to pay for her son Paul's first school uniform and looked to the RAF Association for a helping hand. Sixty-three years later, Paul returned the compliment, so that the Association could come to the aid of another person in need.

Paul Ryder, a retired silver engraver from Gillingham in Kent, told us that his father, RAF Warrant Officer Charles 'Jim' Ryder, was a wireless operator and rear gunner in Sunderland flying boats with Coastal Command during World War II, based at Pembroke Dock. He survived the war but died of cancer in 1952, aged just 31.



Above: Paul Ryder today

Paul was 10 at the time. The years that followed weren't easy for Paul, his brother Tom and their mother, Violet. He said: "We lived in a prefab in Chelsea and in the year after my dad died I was about to start secondary school at Buckingham Gate Central School, not far from Buckingham Palace. My mum was really struggling at the time."

Finding the funds to pay for Paul's school uniform was beyond his mother's means, but she turned to the Association for help, and received a grant that did the job: "I don't know what would have happened if she had not been given the grant. Money was different then – it was only about a fiver, but it was enough to pay for my uniform and my gym kit and that sort of thing," said Paul.



"I'm 73 now but I've never forgotten it. That's why I'm glad to give the Association the chance to help somebody else out." Paul's mother died in December 2014. A year later, after receiving the proceeds of his mum's small life insurance policy, Paul sent his donation. In his letter to the Association he wrote: "I know you will put this to good use in helping someone who has found themselves in a similar situation as my family. Many belated thanks from the son of Warrant Officer C.J. Ryder (Coastal Command)."

Your loved ones must always come first when providing for the future. If you also wish to leave a gift in your will, in memory of a loved one or simply give us a donation to enable us to continue supporting the welfare of the wider RAF family, we promise we will use your gift wisely.

For more information, please contact the RAF Association on 0116 268 8791 or email vinny.manak@rafa.org.uk

Air Vice-Marshal John Cliffe OBE

John Cliffe is the Association's new Chairman of Council. We spoke to him earlier in the year to find out what it meant to be on the Council of the Association as a Non-Executive Director and what his thoughts were as he hoped to become Chairman.

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

I joined the Air Force from school, completing officer training and then pilot training. My first operational aircraft was the Lightning, which I flew for eight years, becoming a Qualified Weapons Instructor and, for a time, the RAF's Lightning Aerobatic Display Pilot. I then converted to the Phantom, before eventually completing my operational flying on the Tornado F3. I was lucky enough to fly operationally at all ranks from Flying Officer to Air Commodore.

Command appointments included 'boss' of XI Squadron, Station Commander at RAF Leeming and Commander of British Forces in the South Atlantic theatre of operations. My last two roles were in the rank of Air Vice-Marshal, the first as Chief of Staff for RAF Operations, and then as Director General of Defence Training & Education. I retired from the Service and joined the private sector in 2008 and am currently representing a UK plc in the Defence Growth Partnership.

You are hoping to become Chairman of Council – what are you looking forward to? What challenges are you facing?

After 36 years of service, during which the RAF supported me and my family, I jumped at the chance to play a part in a charity that is all about supporting the 'RAF family' and agreed to be co-opted as an Association trustee in 2014 with a view to hopefully becoming Chair of the RAF Association's Council.

I am looking forward to becoming Chair of Council. Having been a co-opted trustee for two years, I have come to know an organisation that is in good shape and getting better. I want to maintain the trajectory the Association is now on, thanks to some excellent work by members, volunteers and employees. We have a strong membership – which is the bedrock of the Association, with our welfare activities being rooted in comradeship. We must build on the recent successes in recruiting new members, reaching out to all age groups, while providing support to our branches, ensuring that membership and volunteering are attractive.

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

As I alluded to earlier, the need for the good work done by the Association is going to continue. We have a population that is living longer, which brings new welfare challenges. Fundraising is vital and we must ensure our money is used in the most effective way, delivering welfare support that is needed today and in the future. However, we must be agile enough to pick up trends and foresee future welfare needs, together with all the enabling aspects such as membership, volunteering, funding and communication, and adapt accordingly. As such,



an important role for Council is to ensure it hands on a strong legacy to our successors in continuing the good work.

What do you like doing in your free time?

In my spare time, I enjoy fly-fishing, ornithology and an occasional round of golf ensures I continue to play the game badly. My wife Mandy is a former RAF Fighter Controller and we spend as much time as we can walking our dogs around the countryside.

Kevin O'Neill Station Officer & Ian Campbell Branch Support Officer

Kevin served for 21 years as a Provost Officer with the RAF Police, has scuba-dived in every ocean and every continent and his latest challenge is as an RAF Association Station Officer. Ian Campbell is a Branch Support Officer based in the Midlands and Wales area. He is also serving as an SAC in the Royal Auxiliary Air Force. We found out what their Association roles entail and the highlights:

What does your job involve?

Ian: My role is varied and I drive a lot, but my main objective is to make sure Branches are fit and healthy for the year ahead and they have the support they need. I am trying to get my Branches some new and active members so committees will continue to function and the Branch can deliver welfare support and collect for Wings Appeal. The role also includes advice and guidance to those who operate Branch Clubs, ensuring they remain financially sustainable.

Kevin: I provide direct support to RAF stations and units in order to improve their relationship with, understanding and support of the Association. I am a regular presence on stations, seeking out opportunities to publicise the Association and attract new members including RAF families, civil servants and contractors. I also work with Branches, from the Isle of Wight all the way up through the South East, so like the Branch Support Officers I spend a lot of time on the road.

What is the best part of your job?

Kevin: This job is about establishing enduring relationships based on mutual trust and respect to further the work of the Association. I am genuinely astounded by the commitment shown by the RAFALO teams who, despite significant demands of primary duties give up their valuable time week in, week out, finding the drive and enthusiasm to dream up new ways to support the Association.

Ian: I am a big history fan and I love listening to what the RAF was like for our members. I also enjoy being out and about at events promoting the Association and what we do. We are a brilliant charity, but more people need to know about us.

What has been your happiest moment/key highlight?

Ian: Working with the Solihull Branch; they were looking to close the Branch due to lack of interest in members taking on committee positions and the current committee tired after 19 years in position. Thankfully, after months of work and some last minute volunteers the Branch was retained and is bouncing back.

Kevin: There are so many and for different reasons. When my advice has helped a struggling Branch to do old business in new ways and enables them to keep going? Wonderful.

When I'm quietly approached by someone who tells me how the Association stepped in and helped when they had nowhere else to turn? Priceless.

What is it like to work as part of the RAF Association?

Kevin: I feel privileged to be doing something that I believe in so strongly, working alongside people who are dedicated to the aims of the Association and passionate about their role in the organisation.

Ian: I have a great team in the Area and we have some good fun, and lots of cake! I work with fantastic Branches working hard for their members and eager to try new ways of doing things.



Kevin O'Neill, RAF Association Station Officer



Pictured above right, Ian Campbell, RAF Association Branch Support Officer

RAF Apprenticeships

The Royal Air Force Apprenticeship scheme is available to anyone between the ages of 16 and 30 who meet the entry criteria. It gives participants the opportunity to earn as they learn, first rate-travel and a civilian recognised and transferable qualification at the end of it. Here three apprentices talk a little about their experiences.

SAC(T) Polly McKinlay – Aircraft Maintenance Mechanic (Avionics)



I joined the RAF on an Aircraft Maintenance Mechanic Apprenticeship, and the best part is no two days are the same, there are always new things to learn and I'm able to move postings every three to five years so the job is never dull.

I have an NVQ Level 3 in aeronautical engineering and won the RAF Advanced Apprentice of the year in 2015 which was a great honour. But the best experience I've had was serving in Afghanistan with the Chinooks; it shows what all the training is for and how we can make a difference around the world.

Corporal Sian Galvin – Vehicle and Mechanical Equipment Technician



Joining the RAF gave me the opportunity to acquire a skills set and trade as well as being able to apply skills practically as I learnt them. I'm currently an administrator for Ground Support Systems, working closely with the Typhoon squadron.

I completed 13 months apprenticeship training at RAF Cosford, and am currently studying for an NVQ Level 3.

The best thing about my role in the RAF is the potential to travel, as anywhere that engineering support is required, a team of people such as myself is also needed. I would recommend an apprenticeship in the RAF to anyone, as you are paid to learn, with a competitive salary, top medical and dental care and a secure job.

For more information of RAF Apprenticeships visit www.raf.mod.uk/recruitment

I joined the RAF as I liked the idea of earning money as I learned a whole new skill. Every day is different in this role and the educational opportunities are excellent. Due to them I have successfully completed an NVQ Level 3 in Mechanical Engineering.

The lifestyle of the RAF is very social, as you work, live and socialise with your colleagues. My best detachment was four weeks in Oman as part of exercise Magic Carpet, where I was lucky enough to spend my 30th birthday. I have also done Adventurous Training, white water rafting, mountain biking and high-level walking in Pennsylvania and more recently in Scotland where I took part in kayaking, gorge walking and mountain biking.

SAC Steven Barnett – Cyberspace Communication Specialist



News from the RAF



A Russian An26 Curl aircraft being shadowed by an RAF Typhoon. Photo: © MoD/Crown.



A Russian Su-27 Flanker aircraft intercepted by an RAF Typhoon. Photo: © MoD/Crown.

Typhoons deployed in NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission (BAP)

Royal Air Force Typhoon fighter jets have carried out their first intercepts of Russian aircraft in this round of NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission (BAP).

The jets which are deployed to the region, were scrambled from Amari air base in Estonia, to intercept three Russian aircraft approaching the Baltic states. The military transport aircraft identified as a AN-26 'Curl', AN-12 'Cub' and IL-76 'Candid' were intercepted as they were not transmitting a recognised identification code and were unresponsive.

The typhoons were scrambled for the second time to intercept Russian aircraft in NATO's area of interest. The Typhoons scrambled to investigate five unresponsive Russian aircraft over international waters. The Russian aircraft - identified as four Su-27 Flanker fighters and one Coot-A communications aircraft - were not communicating with air traffic control, and did not transmit a recognised identification code.

Four RAF Typhoon and pilots from RAF Lossiemouth, were deployed in April to support the BAP mission, an enduring

defensive NATO effort that sees alliance members without their own air policing assets assisted by others in four-monthly cycles. This rotation, which is the third consecutive year the year the UK has committed to BAP, will see UK jets operating alongside Portuguese F16s operating from Šiauliai in Lithuania.

Last time, Typhoon fighters were scrambled 17 times, and intercepted over 40 Russian aircraft. During one launch last July, the Typhoons intercepted 10 separate Russian aircraft, including eight fighters.

RAF aircraft assist in the support of search for lost flight

An RAF Hercules from RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus assisted in the search and rescue effort for the EgyptAir flight MS804 which disappeared en-route from Paris to Cairo in May.

To support the ongoing search efforts, the vessel RFA Lyme Bay has also been sent to the area and the Defence Secretary said "We stand ready to offer further assistance should it be required."

Photos: © MoD/Crown



RAF continue to conduct air operations against Daesh

The offensive by Iraqi ground forces to liberate Fallujah has continued to be the major focus for the RAF contribution to the coalition campaign against Daesh.

Tornado GR4s and Typhoon FGR4s provided close air support to Iraqi units on the southern outskirts of the city in June. One Tornado flight conducted four attacks with Paveway IV guided bombs, striking a bunker and three teams of terrorists armed with an anti-tank gun, rocket-propelled grenades and a heavy machine-gun. A second Tornado mission delivered simultaneous attacks on two Daesh-held buildings, then a third bombing attack on a heavy machine-gun position that had opened fire on Iraqi troops. The Typhoon flight dealt with a further artillery piece, using a Paveway IV.

In northern Iraq, another pair of Typhoons struck a group of terrorists spotted advancing towards peshmerga positions near Kisik, then headed to an area south-east of Mosul where they used three Paveways to attack more extremists mustering in and around a large warehouse.

Operations over southern Fallujah continued when a pair of Typhoons conducted Paveway attacks on two Daesh strongpoints which had opened fire on Iraqi forces with machine-guns and other weapons. Two Reaper remotely piloted aircraft patrolled over the city the following day, exploiting their long endurance and excellent surveillance capabilities to provide persistent overwatch for the Iraqi troops on the ground.

The Reapers delivered five attacks, using two GBU-12 guided bombs and three Hellfire missiles, against two machine-gun teams, two Daesh firing positions and a tunnel network. They also provided assistance to five other air strikes conducted by coalition fast jets on terrorist positions.

Tornados were also in action again over southern Fallujah on where a factory producing improvised truck-bombs was struck with a pair of Paveway IVs, destroying two vehicles that were being prepared for use, and two further attacks with Paveways accounted for two anti-tank weapons.



An RAF Reaper taxiing for another mission. Photo: © MoD/Crown.



An RAF Tornado loaded with Paveway IV bombs. Photo: © MoD/Crown.

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Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1. Addlestone and Chertsey Branch. Colin Hignett MBE presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the CO of 398 Squadron ATC, Plt Off Ben Wakefield, for their help and support over the last sixteen years at the RAF Association Remembrance Day Service at the RAF Memorial, Runnymede.

2. Bedford Branch. February saw a very good turnout of collectors and helpers and it was smiles all round for a successful day collecting for Wings Appeal in Bedford town centre, where over £370.00 was collected. A big thank you to Oakley 2462 Squadron Air Cadets, DISC Chicksands personnel and RAF Association Bedford Club for their attendance on the day and for assisting with the street collecting.

Despite dreadful weather there was still a fantastic turnout of more than 15 collectors, plus in club organisers and counters. The Club provided tea, coffee and soup for the volunteers and had a roaring open fire to help warm everyone up on such a cold day.

The Branch is working hard to build up its membership and to promote its fabulous club and the many varied events that it holds and is also working together with local ATC Squadrons and air bases and has also set itself a new fund raising target this year for Wings Appeal and to date £2300 has been raised.

Pictured are Fg Off Dewson VR(T), cadets Binney, Day, Padian, Peacock, Bradley, Burton, from Oakley 2462 Squadron, DISC Chicksands personnel White, Marshall, Long, Rowney, Wings Coordinator Sharen Mason and Life Vice-President Eric Dawson.



3. Scunthorpe Branch. Sir Dusty Miller attended the Presentation Evening of 119 Squadron ATC at the invitation of the Branch which had purchased a new Standard for the Squadron. Sir Dusty presented the Standard on behalf of the Branch.

Chairman Doug Gawley and Vice Chairman Mick Lutton took the opportunity to present Official Adoption Certificates to 119 Scunthorpe and 2222 Brigg Squadrons. Both squadrons are planning fundraisers for the Association in conjunction with the Branch.

Photo shows Doug Gawley, Lisa and Tony Murphy collecting the Standard from supplier.



4. Cranwell Branch. There was a star attraction at the Branch AGM - a visit of the Cranwell Military Wives Choir. Members thoroughly enjoyed their performance and it is difficult to believe that, with continual turn over of members leaving Cranwell, that they can be so competent.

After this the AGM took place and was more significant compared with previous years with several changes in the Branch Committee. The major change was that after 18 years the Chairman, Gordon Watson, handed over to Tony Crossman.

Gordon had a long career as a policeman in the RAF with a vast number of moves accompanied by his wife Mary whom he met and married whilst in Germany and finally settled in Leasingham. After a few years he took over the helm and put his successful mark on the Branch. As a sign of recognition he accepted the post of Life Vice President, a post that he also holds in the East Midlands RAF Police Association.

He thanked committee members for their support and was presented with a Certificate of Thanks a, set of wine glasses and a bottle to christen them.



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News

5. Wantage and District Branch. Three members who attended the Didcot Street Fair last year were suitably dressed for the Tudor themed evening. The Branch attends the Fair each year, which it has done since it began over 10 years ago. The Tombola stall raised £416 during the evening.

A week later the Branch attended the Wantage Dickensian Evening held in the Market Square. Members again dressed in Dickensian style clothing, as they have done every year at this annual event. The stall's Tombola raised £316 during the evening.

6. Clacton on Sea Branch have good liaison with its local ATC unit - 1630 Tandring ATC Squadron. In March President, Ken Butcher, presented the Oven Trophy plus a voucher, to Cadet Clare Rose. Out of all the cadets taking part, Clare collected most money during Wings Week last year.

7. WRAF Branch. In March, the Branch held its 4th AGM. This year the meeting was held in the United Reformed Church, Weston-super-Mare.

There was a complete change of committee and Sue Walker, BEM, won the vote by a large majority and became the new Chairperson. Once again, there was silverware on the table and for the third year running the Branch won an area trophy for the biggest increase in membership. However, now over the threshold, it won the trophy as a large branch and not a small one!

The RAF Association Club, Weston-super-Mare was the venue for the evening meal after the AGM and all were very grateful for the warm welcome received from Charlie and Diana Hewson not to mention the wonderful food. All the ladies had an enjoyable evening and the bar profits were fairly healthy by the end of the night!

8. Abbots and Kings Langley Branch. 92 year old David Francis DFC, Branch President, was recently awarded the French Legion Of Honour Medal for his part in the liberation of France in Dec 1944.

David was presented with his medal by AM Sir Roger Austin KCB, Association President - South East and Eastern Region, at the branch social evening in March.

David was Branch Chairman for many years. He was also OC of Watford 2F Squadron ATC for over 20 years and the present HQ building is named after him.

Branch members, family and friends, ATC representatives and members of the Parish Council attended the presentation and congratulated David on his most prestigious award.

Photo (courtesy Tim Perkins Clerk of Abbots Langley Parish Council) shows David with Sir Roger Austin, Chairman of the Council Steven Giles -Medhurst and Branch Chairman, Trevor Hayes.

Trevor Hayes and his deputy, Geoffrey Elmes were awarded Area Presidential Certificates at Area Conference. The branch was also awarded the Small Branch Efficiency Certificate for the fifth consecutive year. The Branch is very proud of its achievements.



Branch News

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1

1. Formby Branch. 13 members attended the February meeting. Various donations have been made including £5000 to 'Wings Breaks', £1000 to SSAFA, Sefton, Liverpool and £500 to Northern Area Welfare Fund as well as a well earned £1000 to Samantha and Kristen for their Tandem Bike Ride last year. Photo shows members present at their meeting room - Officers Mess RAF Woodvale where they are always made very welcome. Thanks to Wg Cdr G P Hellard, OC 611 Squadron ATC who offered this facility.

At a recent holiday in Norway, the coach driver stopped so all could examine the wreckage of a Heinkel fighter. The place is known as "Two Friends". The German pilot engaged in a dog-fight with an RAF pilot. Both were shot down and spent some days in the only hut in the area and soon became friends! They were finally rescued when the wreckage was discovered - a wonderful story!



2

2. Huddersfield Branch. 94 years old Frank Smith served around the world during WWII but always retained fond memories of his first operational posting to RAF Linton on Ouse where he served as a signaller in flight operations from 1940.

On leaving the RAF, Frank became a founder member of the Branch, a relationship he retains to date. He was recently invited to accompany colleagues to a welfare meeting at Linton on Ouse. Unknown to Frank, arrangements had been made behind the scenes for him to meet the base's CO. To Frank's great surprise, Gp Capt Ian Laing did not only make time to meet him, he also chauffeured him on a tour of the base, which is now home to the RAF's No 1 Flying Training School. Frank was able to point out the actual position from which he operated his Very Light during the war, as well as being taken on a tour of the present-day control

tower and radar operations room. A week later, Frank was delighted to receive a copy of the photo as a memento of this revisit to the camp where he had first been stationed.



3

3. Birmingham Moseley Branch. In March the branch along with 493 Sqn ATC (Kings Heath Moseley) combined both their anniversaries, Branch's 70th and ATC 75th anniversary of the founding of the cadets, of which the squadron had been active for the full 75 years.

The formal dinner, held at Highbury Hall, the one time residence of Neville Chamberlain, was attended by 40 cadets old and new and 45 branch members. Main guests were AM Sir Dusty Miller KBE, John Tisbury MBE Area Chairman and Paul Baker Area Director. Flt Lt Diana Atkinson CO of the cadets and David Jelfs

Branch Secretary presided over the evening. The Branch and Sqn. have a close liaison with each other - going on trips, attending parades and collecting for Wings Appeal. The members try and help the cadets as much as possible, after all they are our future RAF. Finally a big thank you to everyone who attended the anniversary dinner.



4

4. Sheringham and District Branch. Photo shows Branch President Air Cdre Tom Benson with Chairman Ken Macnish awarding the President's Cup for 2015 to the Branch Standard Bearer - Ray Loake.

Ray served for nine years in the RAF and over 20 years as a volunteer with the Air Training Corps. Ray is also the Wings Week Appeal co-ordinator for Sheringham - indeed service to our Country, our Youth and our Veterans.

Branch News

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5. Downham Market Branch. At a recent Branch meeting, John Stanton, a long serving member since 1974, was presented with a Certificate commemorating his appointment as a Life Vice-President of the branch by Len Algar, Branch Chairman. John has fulfilled just about every post available and also served on Area committees. His devotion to the Association and Branch is greatly appreciated.

A bouquet was given to John's wife Shirley in thanks for her undying support to John.

6. RAF St Mawgan Branch has been awarded the South Midland and South West Area Trophy for 100% membership renewal for 2015-2016, quite an achievement when you consider it has only been in operation for 3 years.

Photo shows the trophy being presented to Membership Secretary, Mick Headleand, by Chairman Wg Cdr Steve Richards.

The Branch has gone from strength to strength since its first meeting in March 2013 winning the coveted President's Cup for best branch from 450 branches worldwide and it now has over 140 members, recruiting more serving personnel than ever before.

Last year was busy with a Military Band Concert in May followed by the Royal Cornwall Show and other occasions followed. The Standard has been proudly presented by Barry Fryatt at many events throughout the region.

7. Shetland Branch stalwart and Welfare Officer Jim Nicolson stepped down at the AGM after 18 years service. He has also spent a remarkable 50 years behind the bar of the Club.

The Branch and Club held a Social Evening to present him with a suitably engraved quai ch in recognition of his work over all those years. Branch Chairman Tom Bulley (I) made the presentation. He spoke for all members when he thanked Jim for his contribution to the Branch. Jim has agreed to continue as interim Welfare Officer until a new appointment is made.

8. Rugby & District Branch visited RAF Coningsby to see 29 Squadron and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. The group were looked after by Flt Lts Wright and Vine who did a great job and their excellent organisation of the visit was very much appreciated by all.

All of the Station staff involved in the visit went out of their way to make it thoroughly enjoyable. Both staff talked to the groups about the Typhoon and everyone came away feeling they had really learnt a great deal about the aircraft and its operation.

Wg Cdr Spencer-Thomas and her team took good care of the group at lunchtime in the mess, and their hospitality was very much appreciated.

Members commented how RAF Coningsby is so uniquely placed to show visitors both the RAF's history and its modern technology, with the BBMF and Typhoon together on the same site. The Branch would like to thank everyone who contributed to making the day so very special.



Branch News

including Region, Area and Overseas News



1

1. Swansea Branch members were proud to present a certificate of thankful appreciation to Ronald Draper, President, on reaching his 100th Birthday on 27th April 2016.

Ron has dedicated 70 years of service to the Branch since he formed it in 1946; one of the first Branches to open. His dedicated service to the Association has included the role of Life Vice President of the Wales Area and Vice President of Central Council.

Photo (right to left) shows Paul Loughlin Chairman presenting the certificate, Brian Davies BEM Secretary/Welfare Officer, Ronald Draper and John Jenkins, committee, who joined the Branch in 1948 and became a life member in 1954 at a princely sum of seven shillings and six pence.



2

2. Newcastle upon Tyne Branch. The annual ANZAC Ceremony, organised by the branch at Chevington Cemetery, grows bigger year by year and was this year attended by over 200 people.

A large number of RAF Veterans were joined by an Honour Guard from RAF Boulmer, cadets from the ATC, representatives from Australia and New Zealand, civic dignitaries, local residents and schoolchildren. Fifteen standards were in attendance and wreaths were laid by service and civic representatives and the graves of the ten ANZAC airmen were each honoured with a remembrance cross. The event ended with a march-past. Photo shows Standards at the RAF Memorial.

3. Costa Blanca Branch has been quite active recently publicising its activities, celebrating national events, fund raising, and visiting places in Spain.

On St David's Day it held a luncheon at La Cosecha, near Benijofar, on the Queen's Birthday, another lunch, this time at Sabores near the club house at Quesada Golf and on St George's Day, at the Emerald Isle, La Florida, it raised money for 'Wings Appeal'. Members were also present at the Hombro Del Mar in Torrevieja at which local charities were encouraged to publicise their activities to the general public. Not content with all these activities some members (pictured) joined with the Association of Retired Police Officers in a trip to Toledo and Aranjuez.



3

4. Diss Branch. Members visited RAF Lakenheath in April, which is the home of 48th Fighter Wing of the USAF. They saw a special demonstration by the 48th Security Forces Squadron before visiting the control tower. From the lofty viewpoint they saw F15s of the 494th squadron taking off and landing together with a couple of visiting F22 Raptors of 95th Fighter squadron who were making a rare visit to the UK. The control tower includes the darkened radar room which was most informative, especially to those who fly their planes near the Lakenheath airspace.



4

A tour of some of the support operations, including the fuel supplies section, proved very interesting with a final visit to the kit room to greet the pilots as they returned from their sorties.

It was so interesting to learn of what goes on behind the scenes and the hospitality of the hosts was outstanding.

Branch News

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5. Retford & District Branch. Last year's Wings Appeal total of over £5,000 was a record for the Branch. This year's collection has also started well, and as seen in the photograph, Branch members had some unexpected visitors from another galaxy (perhaps future aircrew!) turn up at their stall during Retford Town's Charter Day celebrations on May Day

6. Cape Town Branch. Wg Cdr Nigel Cookson (Deputy Defense Advisor, British High Commission, Pretoria) presented 94 year old Brig Gen Albie Gotze, Branch member, with the 1918 General Service Medal at the SAAF AFB Ysterplaat, Cape Town, in March.

Albie Gotze joined the SA Air Force in June 1942 and was selected for fighter pilot training, receiving his wings in 1943. Posted to the Middle East, Egypt and Palestine returning to England with RAF 127 Sqn, where he flew patrols and bomber escorts into Europe, intercepting V1 flying bombs and flying cover during the D Day landings.

From 1944 Albie flew Hawker Typhoon ground attack aircraft at very low level which was extremely dangerous and high risk. He survived several crash landings after his aircraft was hit by ground fire. In 1949 he participated in the Berlin Airlift flying supplies into the beleaguered city. In 1951 he completed a tour 2 Sqn SAAF in Korea flying P51 Mustangs. After this he was responsible for the introduction of the SAAF's Air Defence System. He finally retired from the SAAF in 1978.

Albie is the last surviving SAAF pilot in South Africa who flew in the D-Day landings.

7. Beccles and Southwold Branch in its new marquee in the town square, supported by Town Mayor Lt Col Hugh Taylor MBE (who is also a member of the branch), collecting for Wings Appeal in April. Photo shows (l-r) Jon Randall (member); Hugh Taylor; Eddie Earl (member) and Branch President Brian Vousden.

8. Alton Branch. Pop Chandler, aged 92, WWII Bomber Aircrew Veteran and branch member, was presented with the Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur (with the rank of Knight). In a ceremony held at the Alton Town War Memorial in April, presided over by the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson, Captain Francois Jean, French Honorary Consul, presented the medal.

Captain Jean told the assembled onlookers that Pop had been awarded the medal in recognition of acknowledged military engagement and steadfast involvement in the liberation of France during the D-Day landings. The Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire added his congratulations and commended him for his bravery during WWII and for his Service to his country.



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Branch News

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1. Sturminster Newton & Gillingham Branch.

Sir Dusty Miller joined the Mayor of Gillingham, David Walsh and Consort Belinda Ridout, along with members of the Branch and representatives from adjacent branches at Wimborne, Shaftesbury and Sherborne, to congratulate Tony Edmunds at a special luncheon which was organised to present Tony with his National Presidential Certificate. Many congratulations Tony on your outstanding efforts in support of the Branch and wider Association!

Pictured with Tony and Enid Edmunds is the National President, Sir Dusty Miller, Area Director Paul Baker, Mayor and Consort.



2. 1066 Branch. The Campaign for Real Ale announced the winner of its National Club of the Year Competition as the Albatross Club in Bexhill-on-Sea, which saw off competition from more than 28,000 clubs nationwide.

Club of the Year final judge Keith Spencer, who presented the award in March, said: "The club offers a wide range of beer and cider which is kept in great condition, but that is only part of the story. The bar staff and steward are part of a bigger team that makes the Albatross the epitome of what a community asset should be. Everyone connected with the club ensures the welcome is warm for everyone that enters the club".



The Albatross hosts popular beer festivals in April and September in its large function room and has a full diary of regular social events including jazz, folk and quiz nights.

3. Thurrock Branch. A big 'thank you' goes to Andy and team at the Harvester (The Crown) Langdon Hills for arranging a second charity evening in February on behalf of Wings Appeal, also to the clientele who helped raise a total of £190.00 which was much appreciated.

Photo shows Eddy Coull, Wings Appeal Officer, receiving the cheque.



4. Calne and District Branch. Sqn Ldr Gordon "Buster" Sweetlove MBE has been presented with a certificate of appreciation for 70 years service with the Association

.He joined the RAF in 1943 as an Halton Apprentice of 46 entry, passing out in 1945. In November of that year he joined the Bath branch. Buster transferred to the Barry branch in 1948 on posting to St Athan where he became a life member on 1 Jan 1965 finally transferring to the Calne and District branch in the early 2000s.

He has, for the past 10 years, been deputy Chairman.

Buster was an Air Engineer and during his service flew 36 types with 10,000 hours. He retired from the RAF in 1976 on redundancy, he then moved to work for GEC until he was 60.

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5. Harrogate Branch has had another successful awareness and fundraising push at the Bilton Gala in Harrogate. Raising £109.67 with a few old favourites including 'which key opens the box' and 'pull a straw - win a fiver'. Many old and new friends tolerated torrential downpours in good humour to enjoy a fun-filled day.

Lots of fellow stalls also raised plenty of money for their good causes, but it was particularly nice to see so many air cadets from 58 (Harrogate) ATC Sqn involved in the Gala, who raised £220.06 with a large cake sale and a very popular crockery smash.

6. Leamington Spa, Warwick & District Branch. "Mr Fixit", Pat Hall, recently arranged a visit to the RAF's air transport base at RAF Brize Norton.

All were welcomed by Flt Lt James Eyles and toured the Base Hangar with specialist guide Ch Tech Dave Craven who described the function and working of it. Members climbed inside both a C-17 and an A.400M 'Atlas'. All were suitably impressed by the sheer volume of the cargo holds on both aircraft. Next stop was to view the interior of a 'Voyager' aircraft - a multi task aircraft that could be fitted out as a flight refueling tanker or as a cargo aircraft.

An excellent lunch was partaken and then a visit to the control tower and the exterior of a Hercules. The final visit was the 'Hercules' flight simulator, where some 'flew' the aircraft.

At the Branch AGM, Mike Harrison retired from the committee after serving 36 years as Treasurer and Secretary. John Tisbury, Area Chairman, attended and made presentations to both Mike and his wife, Sheila.

7. Harwich and Dovercourt Branch enjoying themselves before a Fish and Chips supper themed to celebrate St. George's day. Plenty of red and white was in evidence, together with one or two silly hats; luckily there were no dragons to be slain.

8. Sud-Ouest Branch. On 8 May in the small village of Audenge, due West of Bordeaux in France, the words "Died for Liberty" resonated with over 200 people who were attending this year's local "Victory in Europe" commemoration. In 2015, the names of 2 RAF airmen were placed on Audenge's War Memorial in memory of the crew of a Mosquito of 151 Sqn from RAF Predannack who died when their aircraft crashed in the village on 10 June 1944. This year was even more poignant to the villagers as both the daughter and son of the 2 dead aircrew were able to attend the ceremony.

Valerie Fletcher, daughter of Sgt Ernest Tickle and Clive Birch, son of WO Terence Birch, attended the ceremony, visited the Mosquito crash site and then subsequently paid homage to both fathers at their graves in the communal cemetery in Bordeaux. It was a tearful and moving day for everyone and in particular Valerie, Clive and their respective families.

Picture shows the Mayor of Audenge, Madame Le Yondre, supported by Valerie Fletcher, Clive Birch and Branch President, Beryl Dennett Stannard, making the welcoming speech before wreaths and flowers were laid in honour of those who died for freedom.



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1

1. Global Branch. Twenty five members & friends of the Branch enjoyed a visit to the RAF Scampton Heritage Centre during May. This was the first arranged event for the new branch and members had come from as far afield as Wales and Dorset.

A great day was had by all with the two guides, Colin & Barry, taking this informed group around the whole Heritage Centre. The branch is now looking to expand its trips with one with an international flavour already penciled in for 2017.

2. Sudbury Branch. In May Branch Chairman Ray Smith was presented with an RAF Association National Presidential Certificate.

The presentation was made by the National President AM Sir Dusty Miller in the Sudbury Town Mayor's Parlour. Also in the photo with Ray is AM Sir John Kemball, Branch President.



2

3. Falmouth Branch. The Cornwall County Chairman and Falmouth Branch Chairman Lance Smale and wife Carolynn, who is the Branch Secretary, were given the honour of being amongst the first to greet the Princess Royal when she visited the HQ of the Turn to Starboard (T2S) charity in Falmouth.

The founder, Sqn Ldr Shaun Pascoe had invited Princess Ann to meet supporters of his charity which uses sailing as a means of helping serving, ex Service personnel and their families affected by military operations.

The Branch holds its monthly meetings at the T2S offices and, being in such close contact with its volunteers and those receiving help, it is self inspiring and is pleased the Association is a supporter.

The photo was taken by Branch member Simon Sweeney.

4. Bognor Regis Branch. The Branch Skiffle Band took to the stage at the town's Alexandra Theatre in May, performing in a production of "One Man, Two Guv'nors" over four nights.

Since 2011 the comedy, adapted from Goldoni's "A Servant and Two Masters", has been performed all over the world to great acclaim. It won star of "Gavin and Stacey", James Corden, a Tony Award in the Broadway adaptation. The play was staged by "TJ Productions".

The members of the Skiffle Band were very much part of the action, and not just playing their instruments! As Constables of the Brighton Borough Police Force, armed with truncheons in a police raid, they received spontaneous applause.

Pictured (l-r): Bob Coyne, Ken Dean, Tony Sheraton, Bob Stubbs, Tony Cummings, Frank Hull and Cliff Mewett (Branch Chairman).

The Band, known to the Branch as "Lost Direction" and "The Oldest Boy Band in Bognor", has helped raise thousands of pounds for local charities, Wings Appeal and, in a 3 hour street performance, notably raised nearly £1,000 for the Philippines' Disaster Fund following its devastating earthquake.



3



4

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5. No. 4 Squadron 309 Entry RAF Hereford held its 10th reunion at The Green Dragon Hotel, Hereford in April with members attending from several branches including **St. Neots** and **Northern Region**. Guests from 308/310 entry also attended and the raffle raised £52 for the Association. A fantastic weekend with visits to old haunts and a formal dinner. Next year is the 50th anniversary of attestation and a large turnout is expected.



6. Bodmin Branch. A display of memorabilia of the late Air Commodore Joy Tamblin was unveiled at the museum to the RAF on the old Davidstow Moor airfield in May. RAF Association President Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller KBE, regional and county officers plus members from several Branches were in attendance as well as Tamblin family members and other supporters. A Guard of honour was provided by 2533 Squadron ATC Cadets under the command of Flt Lt Peter Brand.

A Dedication was read by Bodmin President Gerry O'Connor and museum Curator David Keast gave an address on Joy Tamblin. Veterans, James Brash-Blake (100) who flew Beaufighters and Cliff Clarke (93) who flew the Halifax and Liberator also attended the event.



If you are travelling to Cornwall the museum is well worth a visit. Pictured l to r Mr Peter Marlow, AM Sir Dusty Miller and Mike Stevenson. The postcode for your satnav is PL32 9YF.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Salisbury Branch. Members joined Romsey members for a Skittle evening at the Wellow Golf Club in April. The highest winner for the Ladies was Karen Berryman (Salisbury); highest for the Gents Bob Oliver (Romsey); lowest for Ladies Keta Moggridge (Salisbury) and the lowest Gents Bob Sankey (Romsey).

An excellent meal was provided by the Golf Club which all enjoyed. Also a good raffle was held and the profits were split between the two branches. All in all a very good evening and a jolly good laugh and chat was had.

Glasgow Branch volunteers assisted by 2 NCOs from the RAF Careers Office raised £1647 in May at Central Station. This is the third collection of the year with the first two being Tesco in Shettleston and Bearsden. Another collecting day in September at the station is planned and the Branch hope to do better.

Lords and Commons Branch Annual Dinner 2016. As part of their support for the Association's 2020 plan, the Lords and Commons Branch held another successful annual dinner in the House of Lords, hosted by co-chairs Marshal of the Royal Air Force the Lord Stirrup and Madeleine Moon MP.

The event formed an important part of the national launch of the Association's new befriending service, with a poignant speech from the Association's President, Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller. The event was well attended by Branch members and also gave the Association the opportunity to showcase its work to a wider group of influential guests, such as Ministers, Members of both Houses, the Air Force Board and existing and potential corporate supporters. The guest of honour was the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford.

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IMAGES OF WAR



The wrecked aircraft pictured being examined by German soldiers. Photo: © Author

Air Mechanic First Class (AM1) William Henry Cox was born in Derby in 1896 to Frederick and Georgina Cox of 25 Breedon Hill Road, Derby.

Cox went to France as an observer on 12 October 1915 and joined 13 Sqn which arrived at St Omer on 19 October 1915. Two days later the Sqn moved to Vert Galand and it was flying from there that Cox would be killed in action less than three months later.

Early in the afternoon of 5 December 1915, Henry Cox and his pilot, Lt. Arthur Richard Howe Browne (born 7 March 1894, at Burnie, Tasmania, Australia, the son of Arthur R. Browne) took off in BE2c serial number 2049. Just after 1400 hrs, the BE2c was intercepted by a Fokker Eindecker EIII monoplane flown by Lt. Gustav Leffers of Kampfeinsitzer Kommando (KEK) Bertincourt which was based near Achiet-le-Grand between Cambrai and Bapaume. Attacking from behind, the British aircraft was quickly shot down with the deaths of both of the crew who were buried with full military honours by the Germans at Achiet-le-Grand (Extension) Cemetery.

BE2c serial 2049 was the first air combat victory for Gustav Leffers who was born in Wilhelmshaven in 1895, the son of a naval engineer. After his school education, he joined the Holland America shipping line as an engineer candidate but on the outbreak of war, joined the German Army and was assigned to a field telegraph battalion but shortly afterwards, transferred to be a pilot. After pilot training, he was posted to Feld Flieger Abteilung 32 (FFA 32) in February 1915 which was flying from Velu/Bertincourt. Starting as a non-commissioned Gefreiter, Leffers rose quickly through the ranks and on 25 July 1915 was commissioned as a Leutnant Der Reserve due to his excellent skills carrying out reconnaissance work flying the LVG B aircraft.

On 24 September 1915, Leffers was sent for training on single-seater aircraft at Mannheim, returning to FFA 32 on 5 November 1915 and joined KEK Bertincourt, the fighter section of FFA 32. On 5 December 1915, he was flying serial 84/15 when he shot down his first aircraft, that of Browne and Cox of 13 Sqn.

By March 1916 Leffers had four air victories. His fourth, on 13 March, was especially hair-raising when he just escaped a midair collision with a BE2c, scraping his plane's landing wheels across his opponent's upper wing before turning in behind and shooting it down.

KEK Bertincourt eventually became the famed Jasta 1 in August 1916 and Leffers scored another five times with this unit. He received the Royal House Order of Hohenzollern after his sixth victory on 31 August 1916 (a Martinsyde of 27 Sqn), and the Pour le Merite or Blue Max in November 1916 after his eighth kill (an FE2b of 11 Sqn on 17 October 1916). 11 November 1916 would see his 9th and last kill, a DH2 of 29 Sqn.

On 27 December 1916 Gustav Leffers was shot down and killed in combat with FE2b's 11 Sqn, probably the one flown by Capt. John Quedstedt and Lt. Harold Dicksee. His Albatross DII serial 1757/16 crashed near Cerisy and his body was later buried in his home city of Wilhelmshaven. In turn, Quedstedt and Dicksee's aircraft was badly damaged by Offizierstellvertreter Wilhelm Cymera but Quedstedt managed to land behind British Lines; both British officers would survive the war.



The Pour le Merite or Blue Max. Photo: © Author

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BLOODING THE FRIEDRICH

by Chris Goss



German ace Werner Mölders Bf 109 E. Photo: © Author.

Regarded as a match for the Spitfire and Hurricane, the Messerschmitt Bf 109 E had been in front line service with the Luftwaffe since before the start of the Second World War. By the Battle of Britain, the Bf 109 E-4 with its Daimler Benz DB601A engine, improved armoured plating for the pilot, modified cockpit for better visibility and improved MG FF cannon in the wings (to complement the MG 17 machine guns on top of the nose) was starting to be replaced by the Bf 109 E-7 (fitted with a DB 601N engine and a centre line external tank) and the Bf 109 E-8 (fitted with a DB 601E engine). However, Messerschmitt had already been working on an aerodynamically refined Bf 109 and unfortunately for the RAF, the first of these arrived in France at the start of October 1940 where it would be used in action by the Luftwaffe's top ace. Chris Goss tells the story of what happened.

Messerschmitt took the Bf 109 E design and fitted a DB 601E-1 (initially the DB 601N) engine which was housed in an entirely redesigned and symmetrical cowling. The supercharger air intake was modified and moved out further from the engine to increase the ram air effect whilst the spinner was enlarged but the airscrew reduced. Shallower under wing radiators were fitted and the braced tail of the Bf 109 E replaced by a cantilever unit. Changes took place on the wings-rounded wingtips, different ailerons and flaps, the rudder was modified and the tail wheel became fully retractable. Armament was a single 20 mm MG FF/M and two 7.92 mm MG 17 machine guns on the F-1 variant and a single 15 mm MG 151 and two MG 17s on the F-2 variant.

The precise date when the first Bf 109 F arrived in France is not known but the first pilot to use it in action is. Major Werner Mölders was well known both sides of the Channel. A fighter pilot with the Legion Condor in Spain and having commanded III Gruppe/Jagdgeschwader 53 (III/JG 53) in the Battle of France, he was shot down and taken prisoner on 5 June 1940 by which time

his score was 24. He had been awarded the Ritterkreuz (Knights Cross) on 29 May 1940 so was quite a 'bag' for the Allies but following France's capitulation, on 30 June 1940 he was repatriated and on 27 July 1940 given command of JG 51 based at St Inglevert in the Pas de Calais. His first operational flight was the following day when he shot down a Spitfire only to be slightly wounded himself which meant his next flight was not until 12 August 1940 and his next kill 26 August 1940. By the end of August 1940, he had shot down 32 aircraft and the end of September 1940, that had risen to 42 and he had been awarded the Ritterkreuz mit Eichenlaub (Knights Cross with Oakleaves). His nearest competitors for leading ace were Major Adolf Galland of JG 26 who was just two kills behind him with the Oakleaves being awarded 24 September 1940 and Hauptmann (Hptm) Helmut Wick of I/JG 2 who had 34 kills at the end of September 1940 and would be awarded the Oakleaves on 6 October 1940. Mölders was clearly the best man to evaluate the Bf 109 F.

A Bf 109 F-1 Werk Nummer (Wk Nr or serial number) 5628 and carrying the factory code SG+GW on the fuselage arrived at Pihen, south-west of Calais early October 1940 (an F-2 Wk Nr 6060 would follow at the end of January 1941). The fuselage was repainted with the chevrons denoting a Geschwader Kommodore and the nose and rudder painted yellow. He first flew this aircraft on an operational flight 7 October 1940 but from 10 to 17 October, went back to flying his Bf 109 E-4/N during this time he had increased his score to 48. However, at 1403 hrs UK time on 22 October 1940, he lifted off from Pihen and 45 minutes later, recorded the first kills of the war for a Bf 109 F.

On that mission, JG 51 was tasked with escorting Bf 109 fighter-bombers in an attack on London and as usual, a number of RAF squadrons were tasked to intercept. 12 Hurricanes of 605 Sqn lead by Sqn Ldr Archie McKellar got airborne at 1410 hrs from Croydon and told to patrol base. Flying at 22,000 feet over Tunbridge Wells

and flying in pairs, they spotted enemy aircraft identified as eight Bf 109s 2,000 feet above them and flying south-east. However, before they could get close, the Squadron was bounced by two hitherto unseen Bf 109s which had split from another formation of five aircraft. Coming out of the sun, Werner Mölders and his wingman pounced on A Flight which was at the rear of the Squadron and described afterwards as "...a new and successful tactic on the part of the Hun." Plt Off John Milne's Hurricane was hit as was the Hurricane flown by Plt Off Derek Forde. Milne was wounded in the back but managed to force-land near Dorking at about 1440 hrs fracturing his pelvis in the process; Forde managed to get his damaged fighter back to Croydon. Mölders claimed three Hurricanes north-west of Maidstone at 1440 hrs, 1441 hrs and 1442 hrs; there were no other claims by German fighter pilots that day. 74 Sqn reported that the Spitfires of Fg Off Peter St John and Plt Off Bob Spurdle were shot down at 1350 hrs crashing at South Nutfield in Surrey and Hadlow Place near Tonbridge respectively so it is possible that Mölders could have got one of them but this cannot be proven.

Werner Mölders would be successful on the next two flights, both of which took place on 25 October 1940. Taking off from Pihen at 0912 hrs, at 0945 hrs he shot down a Spitfire north-west of Dover. It is possible that this victim was Fg Off Bobby Oxspring who was leading B Flight of 66 Sqn on a patrol in the Maidstone/Tunbridge Wells area at 30,000 feet. Spotting about six Bf 109s below, Oxspring decided to bounce them out of the sun and latching on to one, was about to open fire when, in his own words, "all hell broke loose":

"...Something smashed into the fuselage behind me with a crash and I ducked my head, a somewhat futile reaction when it's too late anyway. It was something I'd half been expecting for the past two months but when it arrived, it surpassed all expectations. The stick felt loose in my hand and there was no elevator control. Whatever trim forces were left were certainly of the nose-up variety because despite my pushing the useless pole, the Spit violently rounded out of the dive and soared viciously into an upward zoom..."

With his Spitfire now flying a series of uncontrolled loops, he managed to throttle back the engine and, with difficulty, baled out. His Spitfire crashed at Capel in Kent whilst he eventually landed in a wood just north of Pembury. An hour and a quarter later, Mölders took off again and at 1210 hrs claimed to have shot down a Spitfire off Margate. On this mission, in addition to Mölders' Rottenflieger (wingman), believed to be Feldwebel (Fw) Erwin Fleig, was Hptm Hans Asmus. Asmus had commanded 4 Staffel (Heer)/Aufklärungsgruppe 22, a tactical reconnaissance unit which flew the Henschel 126, until July 1940 but then asked to fly fighters. After converting to the Bf 109, he requested to Mölders, an old friend, if he could fly with him. As Mölders was flying now the Bf 109 F-1, Asmus was flew Mölders Bf 109 E-4/N (with the DB 601N engine) Wk Nr 3737.

As usual, Mölders was aiming to bounce his prey but as he bore down on a formation 1,500 feet below, they noticed another gaggle of RAF fighters above them. This was the Hurricane-equipped 501 Sqn; Hans Asmus relates what happened next:

"I could not keep up in my Bf 109 E with the faster Bf 109 F and found myself in a most unhealthy tactical position versus 15 RAF fighters higher than me and on my tail. I had to get away from them and put the nose of my aircraft down and dived away from them headed east. I then saw a battle formation of about eight friendly aircraft at about 20,000 feet. I recovered under them they were headed west) and I decided to fly the rest of the mission with them..."



Above: Mölders in his Bf 109 F in 1941. Photo: © Author.

What happened next has been misinterpreted by many. Asmus suddenly lost consciousness and when he came too, saw that there was little left of his fighter around him. Still sitting in his seat, he unfastened the seat belt so that the bucket seat fell away and he opened his parachute just before losing consciousness again; he would next regain consciousness in Maidstone General Hospital. Asmus thought that he had been hit by a falling bomb and passed this thought to his interrogator. However, Plt Off Vivian Snell and Flt Lt Eustace Holden of 501 Sqn each shared a Bf 109 south of Maidstone at 1210 hrs which exploded in mid-air; the remains of Asmus' fighter came down at Marden in Kent (almost due south of

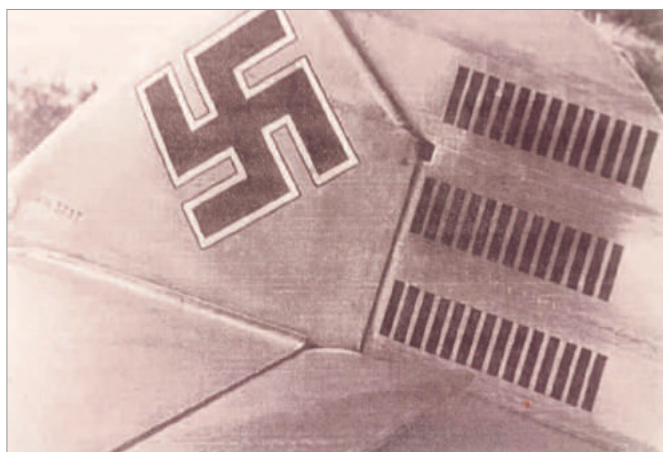


Letter asking Irvins for Caterpillar badges for those pilots who had baled out. Three of the pilots listed were shot down by a Friedrich. Photo: © Author.



Mölders brand new Bf 109F. Photo: © Author.

Maidstone) at around the same time the same. The wreckage was a puzzle for the RAF—clearly a Bf 109 E-4/N because of the letter 'N' stencilled on the engine and a rudder emblazoned with nearly 50 kills leading them to think they had shot down an ace.



The rudder of Mölders Bf 109E-4 which was being flown by Hptm Hans Asmus. Photo: © Author.



Engineers work on Mölders Bf 109 F1 under the camouflage nets. Photo: © Author.

Mölders would fly the Bf 109 F-1 once more in the Battle of Britain on 26 October 1940 before achieving his 54th kill on 29 October 1940 back in a Bf 109 E-4. The Battle of Britain finished, the Bf 109 F now began to appear on I/JG 51. Photos show Hptm Hans-Heinrich Brustellin, the Gruppen Kommandeur of I/JG 51 in the cockpit of a Bf 109 F-1 before he moved to take command of I/JG 53 after the death of Hptm Hans-Karl Mayer on 17 October 1940. His place (and presumably his aircraft) would be taken by Oberleutnant (Oblt) Hermann-Friedrich Joppien, formerly Staffel

Kapitän of I/JG 51 whose place would be taken by Werner Mölders' good friend Oblt Georg Claus who moved from being the Geschwader Adjutant. There is no firm evidence that the kills made by I/JG 51 were by pilots flying the Bf 109 F but during the period November to December 1940, Joppien claimed seven RAF fighters and Claus three and the latter would be reported missing flying a Bf 109 F-1 Wk Nr 5635 with the factory code SG+ED over the Thames Estuary on 11 November 1940.

Mölders would resume flying the Bf 109 F-1 on 11 November 1940 flying it on operational flights 15 times before JG 51 moved back to Germany on 8 December 1940. He noted but did not claim a possible Hurricane shot down in the afternoon of 28 November 1940, possibly Sgt Leonard Patterson of 501 Sqn who was shot down into the Channel east of Hastings. However, Werner Mölders and I/JG 51 were particularly successful on 1 December 1940 against 605 Sqn which recorded in its Operations Record Book "a really bad day on which everything seemed to go wrong."

Having diverted to Kenley due to fog at Croydon the previous evening, when 605 Sqn was called to readiness, it was discovered that there had been a problem with starter batteries with the result that they were 20 minutes late reporting at Readiness which "called forth a strong rebuke from Group which was most depressing". Then on taxiing for take-off to return to Croydon, three aircraft



Alec Ingle (with pipe) with other members of 605 Squadron. Photo: © Author.

suffered broken tail wheels due to a very hard frost. Even when 10 aircraft got airborne from Croydon at 1005 hrs to go on patrol with 253 Sqn, things went from bad to worse. Fg Off Peter Parrot was flying as top weaver when in the Brighton area and still flying south, the Sqn was informed of German fighters approaching from the east 20 miles away. Turning east, Peter then found himself starboard of the Squadron and zig-zagging at the back. Still thinking that the enemy was about 20 miles away, he flew straight and level to catch up and then the inevitable happened:

"A couple of bangs on the armour plating behind me and some tracer overtaking me made me put the aircraft into a steep descending spiral. Although I called the Squadron, I got no reply. I never saw the aircraft which shot me down. I pulled out of the spiral at 10,000 feet having made quite sure that there was nothing still on my tail. The rudder controls had been shot away, the engine although still running would deliver no power and there was a lot of oil swilling around the foot runners. I started looking for a field to land in knowing it would be wheels up when there was a flash of flame from the starboard side of the engine and this prompted me to bale out..."



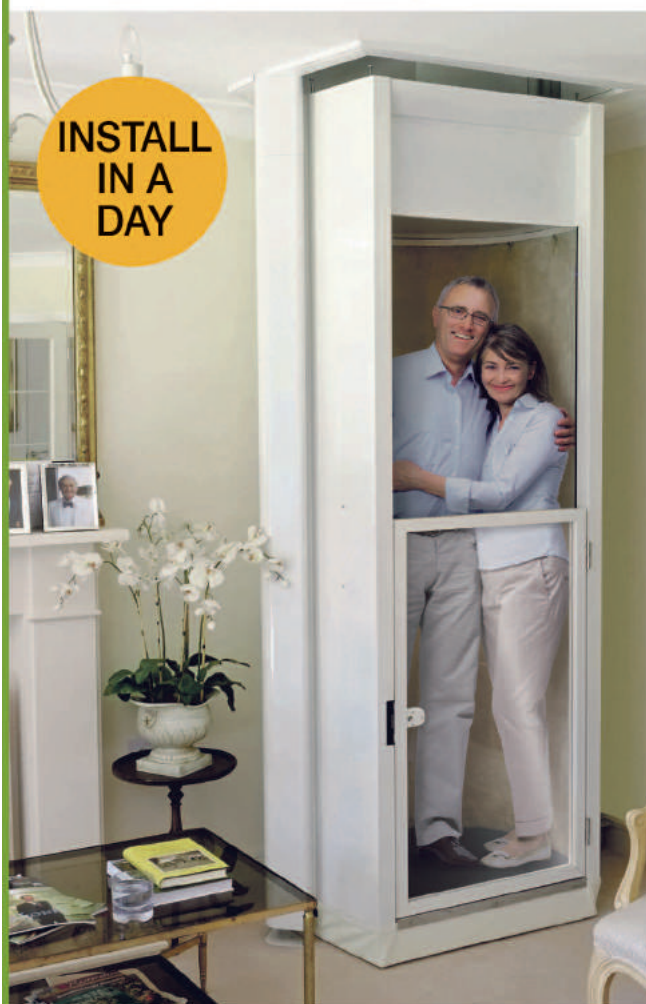
Oblt Herman-Friedrich Joppien. Photo: © Author.

Leaving the aircraft was not without difficulty and he hit the tail with his right arm. He also damaged his right knee when he hit the ground near Uckfield in Sussex (he would be back flying again 10 days later). Meanwhile, the rest of the Squadron had turned to attack two Bf 109s below them only to be attacked by another which badly damaged Sgt Norman Howes' Hurricane forcing him to crash-land at Gravesend airfield. Only two claims were filed that morning by the Luftwaffe namely Oblt Hermann-Friedrich Joppien at 1040 hrs and Fw Erwin Fleig at 1100 hrs; as Howes is recorded as landing at 1105 hrs and Parrot was shot

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down before Howes, it is assumed that Joppien got Peter Parrot (his 28th kill of the war) and Fleig got Norman Howes (his 8th of the war). According to Werner Mölders' logbook, he got airborne from Mardyck at 1035 hrs on that day for an uneventful fighter sweep—it would therefore appear that I/JG 51 was doing similar but slightly earlier.

However, the day did not finish there for JG 51 and 605 Sqn. 10 Hurricanes got airborne at 1320 hrs and whilst patrolling in the Dover area at 28,000 feet together with 253 Sqn, 605 Sqn spotted four Bf 109s below and another two above. A Flight, led by Flt Lt Christopher 'Bunny' Currant went after the lower aircraft whilst B Flight led by Flt Lt Alec Ingle went after the two above. Bunny Currant claimed to have shot down one of the Bf 109s into the sea whilst Fg Off James Hayter, flying a new Hurricane II, claimed to have shot down one of the upper Bf 109s. Who they were is unknown as the RAF claimed to have shot down eight Bf 109s with another two probables and eight damaged during this day when the Luftwaffe lost just two in combat and two damaged. It was now that JG 51 pounced. It would appear that Hermann-Friedrich Joppien shot down Flt Lt Roy Watts of 253 Sqn who managed to crash-land his Hurricane wheels up near Ashford and although there was no other claim, Sgt Ernest Kee's Hurricane was also badly damaged but managed to get back to Kenley; neither pilot saw their attacker. At the same time, Werner Mölders and Oblt Hartmann Grasser bounced B Flight of 605 Sqn as the Squadron diary records:

"As the Sqn was returning for home at 15,000 feet near Maidstone it appears that the other upper 109 must have followed and shot down Flt Lt Ingle and Fg Off Passy both of who baled out near Maidstone each with a slight cannon wound in his calf..."



Alec Ingle's parachute release box. Photo: © Author

Both RAF pilots managed to bale out at 12,000 ft—Alec Ingle landed near the Ringlestone Inn at Harrietsham whilst Cyril Passy came down near Hollingbourne. Ingle's wounds were more serious and saw him being taken to a hospital at Leeds Castle.

Werner Mölders flew one more uneventful fighter sweep on the afternoon of 1 December 1940 then another three on 4, 6 and 7 December 1940 before he and JG 51 moved back to Germany for rest and recuperation, not returning to France until the start of February 1941. The Bf 109 F, especially flown by such experienced fighter pilots as Werner Mölders and Hermann-Friedrich Joppien, had made an impressive start to its combat career and by March 1941, many more German fighter units were re-equipping with the 'Friedrich', something Fighter Command would soon find to its cost as it went on the offensive.



Alec Ingle and Bobby Oxspring (both now Group Captains) pictured at MoD after the War. Photo: © Author



Oblt Georg Claus pictured in the cockpit, the first pilot lost flying a Bf 109 F. Photo: © Author



Mölders in his cockpit. Photo: © Author

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WORLD MILITARY NEWS

CROATIA



The Croatian Armed Forces are to acquire sixteen Bell Kiowa Warrior light attack helicopters from surplus US Army stocks. They will be supplied free of charge by the USA but Croatia will pay for some modifications. These helicopters will replace Croatia's retired Hind gunship helicopters.

INDIA



INDIA - Indian Air Force IL-76 AEW. Photo: © Beriev.

The Indian Air Force is to receive two additional airborne early warning (AEW) aircraft based on the IL-76 transport aircraft, bringing their fleet to five in due course. The basic aircraft will be obtained from Uzbekistan after modification there and the AEW Phalcon system will subsequently be installed by Israel Aircraft Industries.

The Indian Navy has retired its last British Sea Harriers after 33 years' service. The final operational flights took place on 6th March this year from the 11 aircraft that remained in use out of the total of 31 single and twin seaters received. The Sea Harrier squadron was No 300 and it will eventually be reformed with Mig 29Ks.

ISRAEL



The Israeli Air Force is considering expanding its C-130J "Samson" fleet from the current level of three in service and three more on order. Of the latter, two are due for delivery this year.

ITALY



ITALY - An RAF Merlin similar to those to be operated by Italy. Photo: © J M Henderson.

The Italian Air Force has started to operate its UK-built AW101 helicopters from its Cervia base. They are called Caesars and are

used for personnel recovery and special forces' missions as well as performing peacetime search and rescue and medevac roles. A fleet of fifteen will eventually be operated.

The Caesar is a variant of the Merlin that was operated by the Royal Air Force until their recent transfer to the Royal Navy.

JORDAN



JORDAN - Sikorsky Blackhawk at NAS Patuxent River. Photo: © J M Henderson.

Jordan has received eight Sikorsky Blackhawk transport helicopters from surplus US Army stocks. The last were handed over in Amman in early March this year.

KUWAIT



Kuwait has become the eighth customer for the Eurofighter Typhoon after an order was recently signed with Finmeccanica, the Italian part of the 4-nation consortium, for 28 aircraft – 22 single seaters and six two seaters. They will be assembled in Italy from components produced in all four countries that make up Eurofighter including the UK. The first deliveries are expected in 2019.

NATO



NATO operates three C-17 transport aircraft through its Hungary-based Heavy Airlift Wing but, until now, the crews have had to use simulators in the USA for training. This is now changing and a Boeing-owned international C-17 training site in Farnborough will be used instead.

NORWAY



The first of sixteen search and rescue AW101 helicopters for the Royal Norwegian Air Force has flown from Finmeccanica's UK plant at Yeovil. These helicopters, which are also similar to the UK Merlin, will replace the UK-built Sea Kings that have been in Norwegian service for many years. Deliveries will take place between 2017 and 2020.

PHILIPPINES



The Philippine Navy plans to acquire two Agusta Westland Wildcat anti-submarine helicopters which would be manufactured at Yeovil and delivered in 2018. In addition to anti-surface and anti-submarine tasks, these helicopters could be used for search and rescue and maritime surveillance. The Philippines would be the first country to acquire the Wildcat



PHILIPPINES - A Royal Navy Wildcat similar to those ordered for the Philippines Navy. Photo: © MoD/Crown.

without previously being a Westland Lynx customer; the Lynx is the Wildcat's predecessor.

RUSSIA



The Russian air force is to expand its Sukhoi Su-35 Flanker-E fleet of twin-engined fighters with a recent order for 50 more. Additionally, they have also ordered 30 more Su-30SM Flanker-Cs which will make this aircraft the most numerous fighter in Russian service.

SAUDI ARABIA



The Saudi Air Force has ordered another twenty-two Hawk advanced trainers from BAE Systems bringing the total on order to forty-four. First deliveries from the original batch commenced in March.

UK



Following the Government's decision in SDSR 2015 to expand the RAF's fighter force, the original version of the Typhoon, Tranche 1, will be retained beyond their original planned retirement date of 2019. However, as it would be too expensive to bring these 24 aircraft up to the multi-role standard of the later Tranches, they will be used to form two separate air defence

squadrons which could also have a secondary air combat training role. It has not yet been decided where these aircraft will be based or what squadron identities will be allocated.

The RAF is developing the tactical transport capabilities of the C-17 Globemaster aircraft following its initial use in the strategic role only. In April this year a 206(R) Sqn crew from Boscombe Down was involved in an initial military freefall parachuting trial from the aircraft over Little Rissington; the parachutists were from the Joint Aerial Delivery Test and Evaluation Unit at RAF Brize Norton.

Two major exercises took place in the UK in April:

Firstly, the first Joint Warrior exercise of the year was held in April. This is a tri-service and multinational exercise conducted during the spring and autumn of each year. The major aviation element was based at RAF Lossiemouth where maritime patrol aircraft from Canada, France, Norway and the US were deployed. The US Navy brought two Poseidon aircraft whilst the other nations brought an Aurora, an Atlantique and an Orion respectively. Additionally, and unusually, the Turkish Air Force brought five F-16 fighters to the base. The Royal Air Force plans to operate their Poseidons from Lossiemouth by the end of the decade.

Secondly, in the same time period, Exercise Griffon Strike took place at RAF Leeming. Four French Air Force Rafales and eight RAF Typhoons were involved in scenarios intended to exercise the two nations' Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, which was created to support the two countries' shared security interests. No 135 Expeditionary Air Wing, based at RAF Leeming, controlled the exercise.

USA



The USAF deployed twelve F-22 Raptor stealth fighters to RAF Lakenheath, Suffolk, in April for several weeks. The aircraft came from Tyndall AFB, FL and were here to reinforce the US Global Response Force, supporting European security.

Whilst in the UK some of the aircraft deployed to other NATO nations and also trained alongside other nations' aircraft including RAF Typhoons.



UK - A Hawk T2 of 19 (R) Sqn similar to those ordered for Saudi Arabia. Photo: © JM Henderson.

UNAUTHORISED FLIGHT



The unassuming photograph above shows two RAF pilots in front of the Officers Mess at RAF Thorney Island; the story behind the photograph is somewhat surprising.

At about 1900 hrs on Monday 25 April 1955, the RAF station of Thorney Island near Chichester in West Sussex was coming to the end of a training exercise. The Station was expecting return of three Vickers Varsity crew trainers from 2 Air Navigation School (2 ANS) when, without explanation or authorisation, Varsity serial WF246 started up and began taxiing out. At the controls was 20 year old Leading Aircraftsman Nanik 'Nick' Agnani and nobody was sure what he was doing and why. Nick had been born in India but apparently he was flying mad so joined the RAF. The problem that Nick had was that his eyesight was not good enough for him to be a pilot and that something had now forced him to do what he was now doing.

Despite the best attempts of Air Traffic Control to prevent him taking off, Nick just about managed to get airborne. Two Varsities then gave chase captained by Flt Lt Humphrey 'Johnnie' Smiles DFM and the other by Flt Lt Peter Jones. Not much is known about the latter pilot but Johnnie Smiles was an experienced bomber pilot. He joined the Vickers Wellington-equipped 214 Sqn based at RAF Stradishall in Suffolk in late 1940 and by the end of May 1941, had flown 29 missions for which he was awarded the DFM. During the Second World War, it would appear he had a charmed life. He was involved in a number of accidents but his first accident was the most spectacular. Getting airborne at 0302 hrs on 30 Jan 41 in Wellington serial T2841 coded BU-K and briefed to attack Wilhelmshaven, the port engine failed and the fully laden bomber flopped back onto the runway and burst into flames. One of the first to reach the burning bomber was the 214 Sqn Padre who was instrumental in getting Johnnie and his five crew out without serious injury. For his selfless act of heroism, the Padre was awarded the George Medal.

Johnnie was then posted to 21 Operational Training Unit at Moreton in Marsh to be an instructor only to be injured in an

accident on 16 June 1941. Commissioned later in the war, his subsequent career is not known but in 1955, he was a Flight Commander on 2 ANS.

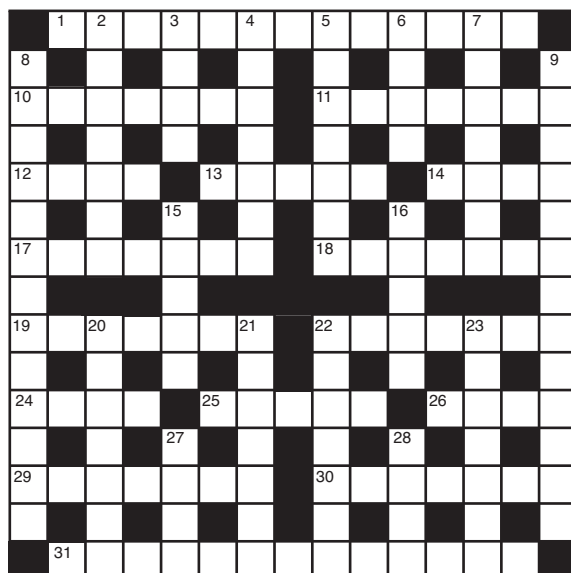
Johnnie Smiles now faced a situation that he or nobody else could have predicted. Both he and Peter Jones tried to shepherd the twin-engined aircraft and radioed the untrained pilot but to no avail. Nick circled the airfield a number of times before heading towards Chichester and Brighton at low level with the two other Varsities in tow. From Brighton he headed north towards Hornchurch in Essex before turning west and flying over central London, at times descending to 200 feet. As the light began to fade, the pursuing Varsities soon lost visual contact and the last time it was seen for certain was by Johnny Smiles at 2105 hrs.

By now, the RAF and civilian authorities were concerned as to what was going to happen next. The Varsity was still being tracked by radar but as it was flying at such low altitude, identification was hard. All RAF airfields in southern England were instructed to turn on their runway lights in case Nick Agnani now wanted to give himself up. However, it was to no avail as just after midnight, the Varsity crashed into a farmhouse at Onnaing near Valenciennes in northern France killing the 'pilot'. Sadly, it was reported that three French civilians were killed and another three badly injured. Of these, 10 year old Vladislav Mlynczak and his nine year old sister Stephanie were killed as they slept whilst their Grandfather Martin Monajack and his wife were seriously injured.

What triggered LAC Agnani's reckless act is not known for sure - some thought at the time that he was defecting to the Russians (the Cold War being at its height), others that he simply felt the urge for a joyride, an urge which had tragic results. The Press had a field day, hailing the two experienced RAF pilots as heroes and even going as far to say that Nick had tried to ram them. It was discussed, albeit briefly, in Parliament, the main concern being compensation in respect of the damage done and the lives lost. Nearly 60 years have passed since this curious but tragic incident which has all but been forgotten.

Summer 2016 FUN CROSSWORD

by Enigma



Across

- 1** RAF (5,3,5)
- 10** One of fire, air, earth or water (7)
- 11** Storm of an aircraft (7)
- 12** Behold! Saint failed (4)
- 13** Often in between red and green (5)
- 14** Used to arrange hair (4)
- 17** Highest mountain (7)
- 18** Someone who carries a spill (7)
- 19** Another storm of an aircraft (7)
- 22** Naval underwater weapon (7)
- 24** Two such wars in the Middle East (4)
- 25** Sulphur, Phosphorous, Uranium and me make foam (5)
- 26** Tranquil in musical mayhem! (4)
- 29** Stillness (7)
- 30** Enthusiastic reception (7)
- 31** Military U/T (5,8)

Down

- 2** Superintendent lacks the right to superintend (7)
- 3** 'So let it be' (4)
- 4** Endeavour (7)
- 5** Withdrawal of mad tree rat (7)
- 6** Man-eating monster (4)
- 7** Loud outcry of shellfish belonging to us (7)
- 8** Vera Lynn's 'Rendezvous' (4,4,5)
- 9** The Lancaster was part of this in WWII (6,7)
- 15** Military headgear (5)
- 16** Recreation (5)
- 20** Mull over one German plant (7)
- 21** Toast PM about part of ship (7)
- 22** Type of lottery/bingo (7)
- 23** Euphoria (7)
- 27** Filthy place to get eye infection (4)
- 28** One of 16 at start of chess game (4)

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

Mrs M A A'Court PMRAFNS

Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle

Mr S Alter Harrow District
Mr P J Andrews Guildford
Mr D Aquilina Malta GC
Mrs O Arnold North Cotswolds
Mr R C Avann Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle
Mrs I Bailey Rushden
Mr C Bandy South Eastern Area HQ
Mr R D Banyard Sydney Metropolitan
Mr A H Barber Kenley and Caterham
Mr J Bartley St. Helens
Mr R J Beatty City of Bristol
Mr V Beilby Orpington
Mr R Binstead Hartlepool
Mr D N Bishop Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle
Mrs V Bishop Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle
Mr M Blake Doncaster
Mr H Blakesley Doncaster
Mr J Bolitho Penzance
Mrs P Bolt Bexhill-on-Sea and Battle
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Mr D Bougourd Guernsey
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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 information or telephone number etc of **Ann (Nan) Cartwright**, ex WAAF Accounts, RAF Hereford 1947-1948. Please contact Reg Wheeler (Cheltenham) on 01242 513740 - no commitment sought.

Info wanted re **LAC George O'Brien**, heavy recovery driver in the "AD Salvage" unit, operating in the Western Desert WWII CO Sqn Ldr Edward Hatchard (Killed Dec 1942). Contact pat@pllelliott.freereserve.co.uk

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

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Notice is given of the death in March 2016 of **Flt Lt Peter Winward 195473**. Served as a flight engineer on Shorts Stirlings with 149 Squadron during WWII.

101 Direct Entry Course at South Cerney c 1966. Where are you now? Gerry would love to catch up with members of the course and hear their news. e-mail me at gher6569@westnet.com.au

Reunions

313 Supply Entry RAF Hereford 1968-1969. 2018 will be 50 years. Anybody interested in a reunion, contact David Johnson, davidcj440@btinternet.com Please include in subject field: 313 entry and service number.

RAF Seletar Association including RAF Tengah. Annual Reunion 21 - 24 October 2016 at the Novotel Hotel, Long Eaton, Nottingham NG10 4EP. Also many local reunions held throughout the year. Contact our Membership Secretary David Taylor on 01904 593259 or e-mail dt@deltatango.net or website: www.rafseletar.co.uk

304th Entry Clerks. 50th Reunion Saturday 13 August 2016 at the Lea Marston Hotel, Sutton Coldfield. Contact Mike Hudson 01356 625584 or e-mail mikejune1967@gmail.com

51st Entry Boy Entrants, Clerk Secretarial 1964-65. Annual reunion will be held at the 3 Counties Hotel, Hereford 20 - 22 July 2016. Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/556576747694396/Ron.stevenson@virginmedia.com>

Calling all existing and ex-230 Squadron members. **230 Squadron RAF Association** Annual Reunion 7 - 9 October 2016 at Dorchester-on-Thames near RAF Benson. Contact Rod for details: rodgoodier@btinternet.com

206 Squadron Centenary celebrations this year - 16 July at Boscombe Down and 29 October at RAF Museum, Hendon. Details for ex-206 personnel from davejerry@hotmail.co.uk

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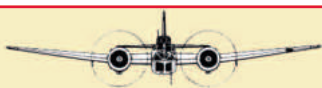
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Across: 1 Royal Air Force; 10 Element; 11 Tornado; 12 Lost; 13 Amber; 14 Comb; 17 Everest; 18 Taperer; 19 Tempest; 22 Torpedo; 24 Gulf; 25 Spume; 26 Calm; 29 Inertia; 30 Ovation; 31 Under training. **Down:** 2 Overseer; 3 Amen; 4 Attempt; 5 Retreat; 6 Ogre; 7 Clamour; 8 Well meet again; 9 Bomber Command; 15 Beret; 16 Sport; 20 Muller; 21 Topmast; 22 Tombola; 23 Elation; 27 Style; 28 Pawn.

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Card - BBMF - single blank card	CB12	2.50
Card - Blenheims - single blank card	CB1	2.50
Card - Halifax - single blank card	CB3	2.50

	Order Code	Price £
Card - Hurricane - single blank card	CB2	2.50
Card - Lancasters - single blank card	CB4	2.50
Card - Lysander - single blank card	CB9	2.50
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 x 2 Our Finest Hour (various) Special Edition	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	5.00
China Mug - Red Arrow	CMPLANE4	6.00
China Mug - Spitfire	CMPLANE5	6.00
China Mug - Typhoon	CMPLANE6	6.00
China Mug - Vulcan	CMPLANE7	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
Corgi Model - Vulcan	CS90567R	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 - 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	10.50
Cufflinks - Typhoon boxed	RAF194R	12.00
Cufflinks - Vulcan boxed	RAF209R	12.00
Cufflinks Wings boxed	RAF185R	12.00
Dog Tag & Chain - Red Arrows Diamond Nine	RAFATDTR	4.50
Giftwrap - One Sheet - Red Arrows	LSGWRR	2.00
Giftwrap - One Sheet - Spitfire/Lancaster	LSGWLR	2.00
Hip Flask - Red Arrows	RAF263R	13.00
Hip Flask stainless steel roundel/wording boxed	FL2	10.00
Jotter - 3D Live Life - Apache	3DLLJAR	4.00
Jotter - 3D Live Life - BBMF	3DLLJLR	4.00
Keyring - BoB 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	2.50
Magnet - 3D Live Life - BBMF	3DLLMLR	2.50
Magnet - 3D Live Life - Red Arrows	3DLLMRR	2.50
Magnet - 3D Live Life - Spitfire	3DLLMSR	2.50
Notebook & Pen - Red Arrows Diamond Nine	RAFATNPR	4.50
Pen "Ace Pilot" boxed	PEN1	10.50
Pen "Clear for Take Off" boxed	PEN2	10.50
Pencil Sharpener - Spitfire	SPITPSR	3.00
Pennant - RAF Crest gold wired (as B19)	P3	36.00
Pennant Sqn/Station to order 6/8 wks gold wired	P1	36.00
Purse - Soft Black	RAF367R	15.00
Ribbon RAF 1 1/4" wide price per metre	R4	9.00
Sweetheart Silver/Marcasite Brooch boxed	R3	110.00
Table flag with 10" pin RAF	M5	6.00
Tankard one pint Pewter - RAF boxed	T3RAF	38.50
Tea towel - Battle of Britain	T23	4.50
Tea towel - Bomber Command	T24	4.50

	Order Code	Price £
Tea towel - Coastal Command	T22	4.50
Tea towel - Help the RAF, Join the WAAF	T33	7.00
Tea towel - RAF (red - aircraft)	T31	4.50
Tea towel - RAF Ensign & Lancaster	T43	4.50
Tea towel - Spitfire and Hurricane	T32	4.50
Tea towel - Union flag	T34	4.50
Teddy Battle of Britain Pilot 9"	BOBTBR	20.00
Teddy Fit Lt Uniformed with kit bag	TED2	36.00
Teddy Red Arrows Flying Suit	RAFATBFS	20.00
Teddy Veteran with kit bag,	TED3	36.00
Tie Slide - Red Arrows Hawk boxed	RAF269R	12.00
Tie Slide Wings Silver Plated boxed	CTS6	10.50
Wallet Leather - RAF Logo boxed	RAF203R	18.00
Wallet Leather - RAF Wings boxed	RAF202R	18.00
Wallet - Red Arrows Silhouette	RAF259R	18.00
Wallet - Red Arrows Crest	RAF260R	18.00
Wall shield - RAF Crest boxed	S12	48.50
Wall shield - Sqn/Unit/Station - to order boxed	S99	71.50
Watchstrap nylon - RAF colours	W1	9.00

Lapel and Stud Badge

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 Crest Mini stud badge boxed	B32	2.50
RAF Ensign Badge boxed	B31	4.00
RAF Etched stud badge boxed	LB5	4.50
RAF Medical stud badge boxed	LB13	4.50
RAF Police stud badge boxed	LB14	4.50
RAF Regiment stud badge boxed	LB15	4.50
RAF Wings pin badge Silver Plated boxed	RAF188R	12.00
Strike Command stud badge boxed	LB6	4.50
Support Command stud badge boxed	LB7	4.50
Transport Command stud badge boxed	LB8	4.50
Wings - Gold/Blue Enamel Kings Crown boxed	LB10	6.50
Wings - Gold/Blue Enamel, Queens Crown boxed	LB12	6.50
Wings - Gold effect Queens Crown boxed	LB16	6.50
Wings - Silver/Blue Enamel Kings Crown boxed	LB9	6.50
Wings - Silv/Blue Enamel Queens Crown boxed	LB11	6.50
WAAF brooch badge boxed	LR2	4.50
WRAF brooch badge boxed	LR1	4.50

Prints

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Gifts

Apron Cotton - Union Flag	U2	10.50
Double Oven Glove - Union flag	U3	8.00
Medal Holder - plastic - takes 5 mounted medals	M10	6.50
Napkins pk 12 - Union flag when folded	U4	3.50
Table Flag with 10" pin Union 6" x 3"	M4	6.00
Wooden Base for Table Flags	M7	4.50

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

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

POSTAGE AND PACKING:

UK orders, please add cost to order

Up to £4.99	Add £1.70
Up to £19.99	Add £3.70
Up to £49.99	Add £5.00
Over £50.00	Add £6.50

Overseas (debit/credit card payment only) charged at cost

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