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COVER PICTURE

The new Declaration was signed on 1 April 2018 by Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier in the presence of Air Marshal Sir Baz North, President of the Association. The event took place on the site of the former Hotel Cecil in London – where the very first headquarters of the newly formed RAF were based from 1918 to 1919. © Crown/MOD.

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From the editor

As we post you this issue of Air Mail, the biggest flypast in the RAF's history will be in the final throes of its preparations. The 10 July event in London, which is expected to attract hundreds of thousands to The Mall to watch, is the largest of many thousands of events this year to mark 100 years of the RAF. We would not be doing the centenary year justice if we hadn't packed the pages of this issue full of news about it. So, from a bumper branch news reporting on Association celebrations in all four corners of the UK and the world, to pictures and reports on the RAF's own national events, and from our own 100th flying scholar to history from 100 years ago, we trust we've given you a banquet, rather than just a taste of this special year. We've also managed to fit in all the latest news from Conference and the latest on the Association's own work and successes. For our welfare work, our feature on how we helped John face his demons focuses on the very personal and urgent needs of some of our members – and the many options we can use to respond and help. And our roundup of Area activity in 2017 shows the sheer breadth of our work. Let's raise a glass to toast the centenary. Here's to the remainder of the year's celebrations.

Annie O'Brian
editor@rafatrad.co.uk

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S T R E T H O O

Pick of the contents NEWS

All the latest news from the Association and the RAF family, including: a Royal visit, the RAF re-dedicating itself to the Association, RAF100, Conference, and awards to recognise members' and branches' huge achievements in 2017. Also a new crest, new ducks and more.

FEATURES

Membership update and news 12

The first rise in membership fees for four years, branch rebates and how the Association is growing in all areas and all age groups.

Our own service to celebrate the RAF's centenary 14

2,500 attend the Association's service at the National Memorial Arboretum. Reports and pictures from the day.

Conference 2018 18

Resolutions, recognising commitment and achievements, reunions and a little bit of revelry too.

Helping John face his demons 24

The impact of post traumatic stress disorder on one man's life, and how the Association made a difference.

Aviation fascination 32

Relive your childhood or inspire future generations through this personal obsession with the history and etiquette of looking at aircraft.

100 years ago - Egbert Cadbury and the Zeppelin 46

The RAF was just 126 days old when a little-known victory off the coast of Norfolk saved civilian lives, helped end Zeppelin bombing raids and possibly rescued New York from the war.

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Meet the 'tireless and energetic' Kerrie Stevens, winner of this year's Wally Marriot trophy.

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Chris Goss's personal recollection of the RAF's humanitarian mission in Ethiopia to "feed the world".

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Celebrating more centenary centenarians

Flight Lieutenant Harry Richardson DFC

Flight Lieutenant Harry Richardson joined the Royal Air Forces Association in 1948 and has enjoyed 70 years of uninterrupted membership. In February 2018 he turned 100, a little ahead of the RAF itself.

Harry goes to the RAF Association club in Prestwick every Monday night and enjoys beating his friends at the snooker table. At weekends he often goes to dance at the 65 Club with his second wife of 17 years, Marjorie.

When asked the secret of his longevity, he revealed: "It is all in the good lineage. Dancing also helps, especially because you have to learn and remember the moves' sequences, which train your brain."

The couple recently joined a computer class offered by Ayr College. Although they were the oldest in the classroom, Harry wasn't bothered by it. He said: "I know there will come a time when we are not so fit and have to stay in our house more, so it will be good to have computing skills and still be able to communicate with the outside world."

Family and friends flocked to the RAF Association club to celebrate his birthday and he was presented with a birthday card from Her Majesty The Queen by the Lord-Lieutenant's clerk Nigel Martin. Friends honoured him with speeches and gifts, including a snooker cue and a trip for him and Marjorie to the Association's Rothbury House Wings Breaks hotel in Northumberland.

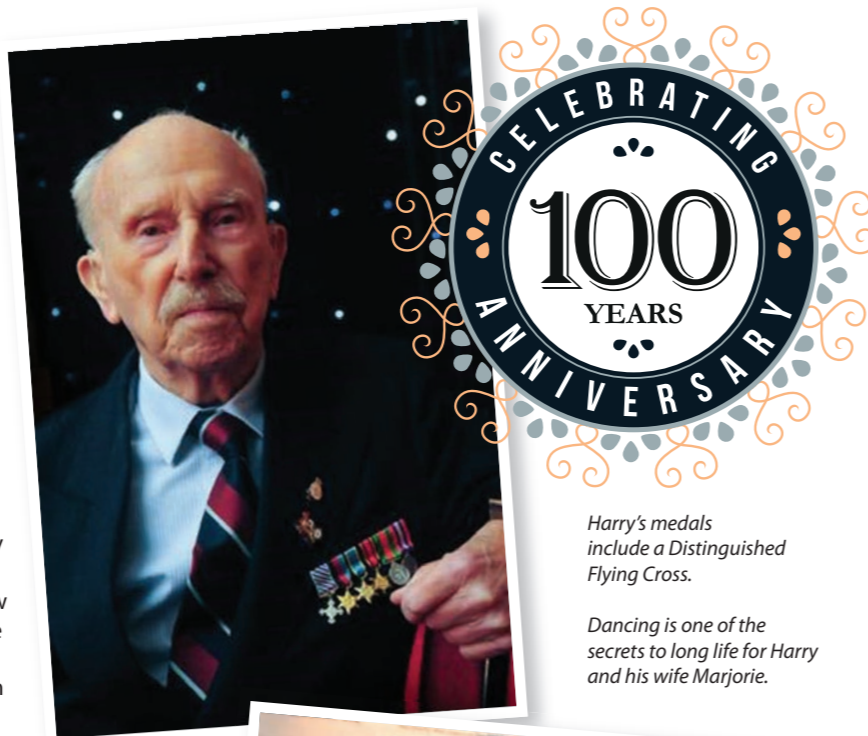
Harry was awarded a number of medals including: 1939-1945 War Star, Air Crew Europe Medal, Burma Star, War Medal, Defence Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross.

Squadron Leader Jim Lewis

The 100th birthday merrymaking for Squadron Leader Jim Lewis in April was part of a triple celebration hosted by the Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Branch at The Church of the Good Shepherd, Murrayfield. Squadron Leader Lewis joined the RAF in 1934 and trained as a ground fitter and then as a pilot, flying Lancasters (his favourite) among other aircraft. He left the RAF but rejoined a year later, winning the Sword of Honour on graduation from RAF Halton.

A print of a Lancaster was donated by Squadron Prints and presented to Squadron Leader Lewis by two of the RAF's youngest flyers on behalf of Air Officer Scotland, along with a RAF100 coin. "It was a pleasure to celebrate with him, his family as well as regular and reserve RAF personnel, air cadets, and branch and church members", said Susan Kidston of the branch. "It was also an excellent opportunity to celebrate RAF100, as well as the annual partnership celebration between the branch and the church".

Congratulations to Harry and Jim and our best wishes to the other 43 Association members due to turn 100 between now and the end of the RAF100 year.



Harry's medals include a Distinguished Flying Cross.

Dancing is one of the secrets to long life for Harry and his wife Marjorie.



The Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders Branch celebrate Jim Lewis's 100th birthday.

NEWS

Updates and information for members and the wider RAF family

Message from the Secretary General

In an already packed year I want to highlight a handful of wonderful things.

On 1 April 2018, the 100th birthday of the RAF, I was honoured to be alongside Association President Sir Baz North for a very special event. Before the RAF's centenary church service at St Clement Danes in London, at a breakfast ceremony in Whitehall, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, Chief of the Air Staff, signed a statement on behalf of the Air Force Board re-dedicating the RAF to the Association. This is the third such re-dedication by the RAF, the last one being some 25 years ago. It recognises the Association's 'continued dedication to the welfare of serving and former RAF personnel and their families ... and the enduring importance of our shared relationship in looking after our greatest asset, our people.' The dedication, which is now hanging for all visitors to read in the Volant Suite at Atlas House in Leicester, went on to 'thank every one of your members for ensuring that our family feels supported and is treated with dignity and respect at all times'.

On 2 May the Association was also honoured, with a royal visit. His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester visited Atlas House to meet RAF Association trustees, area representatives, directors, members of local branches, beneficiaries - residents of Wexford House - and cadets from local squadrons in Leicester and Loughborough. As well as talking to members and beneficiaries about support for the RAF family, he toured the building to meet employees and find out more about their work.

And while I come to it last, it is by no means least. The energy and dynamism that I have seen powering our own celebrations of the centenary of the RAF - across branches and stations in the UK and the rest of the world and from individual members - is phenomenal. You will see reports of it on most of the coming pages of the magazine, and opportunities to join in even more. As Air Mail comes out, the national celebrations will be reaching a peak with the parade and flypast at Buckingham Palace and nationwide city collections for the RAF100 Appeal. Let's bottle all this and use it to sustain us as we take the Association forward for the next 100 years of the RAF.

Nick Bunting
Secretary General

The declaration now hangs at Atlas House for all visitors to see.



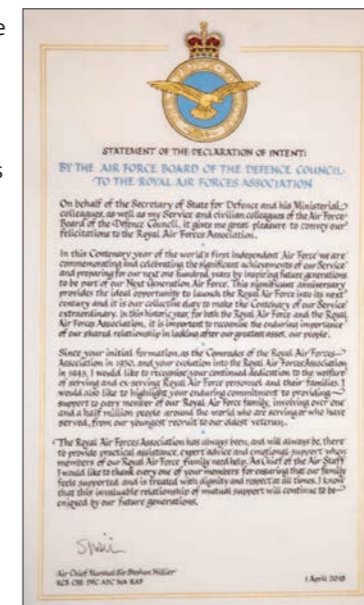
© Phil Greig



Before the visit, from left, The High Sheriff of Leicestershire, Mrs Diana Thompson, High Sheriff's Consort, Mr Gavin Pritchard-Gordon, The Lord Mayor of Leicester, Councillor Rashmikant Joshi, The Lady Mayoress, Mrs Mita Joshi, and the the President of the Royal Air Forces Association, Air Marshal Sir Baz North, ready to welcome His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester to Association Headquarters at Atlas House. © Phil Greig



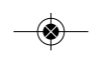
From left, air cadets from 2070 (Glenfield) ATC Squadron chat to Jennifer, Lady Gretton, Lord-Lieutenant of Leicestershire, while the Association's Director of Marketing, Fundraising and Trading, Rachel Huxford, introduces the Duke of Gloucester to trustees Flight Sergeant Wayne Swiggs and Ian McEnnis, Mike Loasby and Leicester Branch Secretary Roy Rudham. His Highness also met residents and employees from Wexford House and learned more about our welfare and membership work. © Phil Greig.



National Presidential Certificates announced

The following people and branches were awarded National Presidential Certificates to coincide with Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday Honours List 2018, in recognition of their ongoing support and their dedication to the RAF Association:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Bob Bertram MBE | Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders Branch |
| Pip and Ilene Iles | Basingstoke Branch |
| Martin Latham | Moray Branch |
| Cliff Mewett | Bognor Regis Branch |
| George Prentice | Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders Branch |
| Mike Smith | Cranwell Branch |
| Kenneth Watt | Glasgow Branch |



Finishing touches as museum re-opens

© RAF Museum.



Live music from the jive and swing band, The Jive Aces, at the special preview day for RAF veterans and serving personnel.



Just popping the last few bits and pieces into place. The RAF search and rescue boats get moved into their new positions before the formal opening.

The RAF Museum welcomed visitors into its newly transformed London site when it formally reopened on Saturday 30 June. The new immersive galleries, freshly landscaped green spaces, children's playground and new restaurant make it the only place in London where visitors can test their flying skills, explore RAF stories, sit inside an iconic cockpit and enjoy a picnic in a single day.

An exclusive preview for 1,000 RAF veterans and serving personnel took place at a special 'RAF Day' on 10 May. Visitors went round the new Hangar 1, which houses two new galleries exploring the first 100 years of the RAF and its role today, and invites visitors to imagine its future contribution and technology. Event organiser Anji Patel, said: "RAF Day was a huge success and it was wonderful and emotional to have such a large gathering of current serving personnel and veterans. We want to make this an annual event and look forward to inviting them again next year."

© RAF Museum.

The RAF Falcons



The RAF Falcons team has renewed its commitment to the Association for 2018. Throughout this year's display season the team will promote the RAF Association's work and help fundraise for the Wings Appeal. The Falcons are the UK's premier military parachute display team, based at RAF Brize Norton, Oxfordshire, and they display at venues all over Britain and Europe throughout the year. Image shows Falcon 4, Carly Hodges, displaying the Association flag during the 2017 season.



Falcon 7, Corporal Sean Kilkenny, demonstrates crucial parachute packing skills to onlookers at the RAF Falcon's 2018 launch day.

Association's new crest unveiled

"Oohs" and warm applause from members greeted the unveiling of the Association's new crest at Conference this May.

Pictured here, our new official symbol shows the eagle and globe, topped with the Queen's crown, and over the Latin motto: non nobis sed vobis (not for ourselves alone). Its design follows the style of the RAF's squadron badges.

Following its creation by the Royal College of Arms, the new crest was approved by Her Majesty The Queen, Patron of the Association, before being formally presented to the Association by the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier on 1 April 2018.

First reactions from delegates were warm. Warrant Officer Steve Guppy, Service Community Support Officer at RAF Benson and Chair of the Oxford and District Branch said: "It's good to see. It's been a long

time coming. In the centre is the heritage of the organisation, but this brings it now in line and formalises it as a recognised crest."

A staged roll out of the crest will now start, replacing the old eagle and globe on printed materials and merchandise as they run out. The electronic changeover has already started, for example on the Association website. Merchandise has already been ordered and items such as ties and lapel pins will start to be stocked from late summer onwards. Versions of the crest will be uploaded to rafa.org.uk/promotion to allow branches to download and use it.

The Royal College of Arms has been creating and keeping official registers of coats of arms since 1484, and advising central and local government, corporate bodies and private individuals on all aspects of heraldry, flags and national ceremonial issues.



Capturing the new crest at Conference, to share with others.



Non nobis sed vobis – not for ourselves alone.



Awarded second place in the Amateur Military Category in 2017. Raining Cats and Dogs by Senior Aircraftman Thomas Hammond-Haley shows a team of engineers battling to repair a Red Arrow in torrential rain during the Zhuhai Airshow in China.

To celebrate the 100th year of the RAF, the force's annual Photographic Competition is being opened up to the general public, service dependants, families and cadets. Every year the RAF celebrates the skill and technical work of its professional and amateur photographers, and in its 100th year it will also have a special amateur category, open to everyone. Organisers are asking you to be inspired by RAF100 and enter images that commemorate the history of the RAF, celebrate the RAF of today or inspire future generations.

Judges will be looking for a high quality photograph or short video, of no more than one minute, that can be used in traditional and social media channels. All photographs or videos must have been taken between 18 July 2017 and 16 July 2018 and entries must arrive no later than 31 July. Please email entries to: rafphotocomp@gmail.com More details on rules, terms and how to apply from: raf.mod.uk/raf100/news/raf-photographic-competition/

Archive revived

Air Mail's appeal for archive copies has unearthed the first issue of its predecessor, The Airman - the 'official journal of the Comrades of the Royal Air Forces Association'. Lord Trenchard 'father of the RAF' wrote the foreword of the magazine which was published in November 1943. A paper insert that has survived inside it explains to members that the journal would become quarterly "owing to government restrictions on paper". Adverts in it range from the familiar (Rolls-Royce, Lockheed, Lipton Tea and Cadbury's chocolate) to the less familiar or defunct (Lodge spark plugs, Craven A cigarettes 'made specially to soothe sore throats' and Lystalite 'becoming hats of distinctive charm'). Annual subscriptions for members at the time were 2/6 (two shillings and sixpence).



Thank you so much to everyone who has sent in missing copies to help complete the Air Mail archive. We now are only looking for the following:

- December 1948
- April 1951
- March 1960 right through to the end of 1970

Two caseworkers shortlisted for national award

Two RAF Association caseworkers have been shortlisted for the RAF Benevolent Fund's 2018 Welfare Caseworker of the Year award. The top secret results were due to be announced just after Air Mail went to press.

Frank Barrett from Lincoln Branch and Peter McGraghan from Darlington Branch were both nominated, alongside Michael Raw of SSAFA Lincolnshire.

If either Frank or Peter win, it will be the third year in a row that an Association caseworker has taken the prize. Hartlepool Branch caseworker, David Stacey, won the award in 2017 and Stuart Carvell, a North Eastern Area caseworker, was recognised in 2016.

"The Fund is strongly reliant on the Association's very strong and highly able network of caseworkers to act as both our eyes and ears on the ground and be the enablers of the delivery of critical welfare support to those who need it," said Air Vice-Marshal David Murray, Controller, RAF Benevolent Fund in the Association's 2018 Conference brochure. "To provide some flavour of the way and scale in which our two organisations are connected, £2 million of the money we spent on welfare was channelled directly through RAF Association caseworkers to beneficiaries. This equates to around 34 per cent of the total of our caseworker-delivered welfare support," he continued.

"Without your level of commitment and quality of service, the task of the RAF Benevolent Fund would be very significantly more difficult. So, a huge thank you to the Association's staff and hard working caseworkers for making this possible."



Last year's winner, David Stacey, Hartlepool Branch (left).

Moving up a perfect fifth



Corporal Ellen Driscoll conducting her winning transcription and arrangement of Edvard Grieg's Symphonic Dances, Allegro Giocoso. © Crown/MOD.

A new arrangement of Edvard Grieg's Symphonic Dances, Allegro Giocoso, has won Corporal Ellen Driscoll the RAF Association Wings Appeal Trophy.

The award is given annually for the best arrangement or transcription by a member of Royal Air Force Music Services under continuing professional development training. It was presented in early May by Secretary General Nick Bunting at the RAF Music Services Presents Concert at RAF Northolt.

Corporal Driscoll, a member of the horn section of the Central Band of the RAF, then conducted the band playing her music.

Transcription is a particularly demanding technical skill, developed in music theory. Ellen's was judged by the civilian music professors employed by RAF Music Services to be the best of the four personnel on the course. The judges were Mark Eager, Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of The Welsh Sinfonia, and clarinettist, Emma Johnson, one of the UK's biggest selling classical artists, who has sold well over half a million albums worldwide.

Speaking about the awards, Flight Sergeant Andy Allott from RAF Music Services, RAF Northolt said: "Our connection with the RAF Association is a long one and we hope it will continue well into the future".

Would you like to Connect?



Connect is our magazine specifically for serving RAF personnel. It is currently delivered three times a year to more than 70 sites, and distributed to over 10,000 people. With contributions from those serving, including RAF Association Liaison Officers (RAFALOs), it is a magazine for serving personnel and by them. It's filled with all sorts of relevant items including the support we offer serving families, fundraising efforts on our behalf and welfare work in the communities near stations. If you are a serving member and would like to receive some copies of Connect, please get in touch with lauren.park@rafa.org.uk or call 0800 018 2361.

Spreading a little joy

The stories of WWI pilots from Stow Maries Aerodrome near the Tiptree jam factory in Essex are now being celebrated on a brand new range of limited edition products, available from the RAF Association. Alongside the 100 years of the RAF trio box (£6) there will be a heritage canister of strawberry jam (£11). To order call 0800 081 2631 or go online at rafatrad.co.uk. Profits from the sales will support the Association's welfare work.

© Wilkin & Sons Ltd of Tiptree

100th flying scholarship awarded



Cadet Sergeant James Gordon (centre) and his parents (right) with Sir Baz North.



Joshing with the 100th flying scholar, Sir Baz North, Association President, and Bertie Bear amuse the flying scholarship winners during the photo shoot.



Cadet Corporal Benjamin Stephens (centre) with (right) Steve Colhoun of the Torquay Branch, one of the scholarship sponsors.

Akinme Akingbade has won the Association's 100th flying scholarship. The 18 year-old cadet warrant officer from 370 (North Sheffield) Squadron ATC was awarded his 35 hours flying tuition by Air Marshal Julian Young at Conference this May.

"I remember going with the cadets to airshows and seeing the aerobatics and really wanting to do that," said the Sheffield University aerospace engineering student. "It was the Typhoon display team. But my eyesight is too bad to be an RAF pilot. Flying with the air cadets and through this flying scholarship is the only thing I can do. And being able to fly, having that practical experience, gives me a much greater understanding of flying – I will have a feel for it, as well as learning the theory."

Normally, one overall winner receives 35 hours' flying tuition, with five others each receiving 12 hours, as thanks to the air cadets for their support of the Association. This year, because of generous funding from sponsors, we awarded two 35 hour scholarships and six 12 hour scholarships.

15 cadets were shortlisted for aptitude testing and panel interview from 300 applications. The quality of the candidates was exceptionally high and the selectors had great difficulty choosing the top eight.

The runner up, who also received a 35 hour scholarship, sponsored by the Teignmouth and the Torquay branches, is **Cadet Corporal Benjamin Stephens** (16), a cadet with 2487 (Easingwold) Squadron ATC.

Cadet Flight Sergeant Harrison Juhasz said: "I always wanted to fly - since my second birthday when I was given Thunderbirds. I have never deviated from that. I just want to fly. A fast jet would be ideal, but I'll fly anything."

The scholars will start their tuition this summer at the South Warwickshire Flying School

The 100th flying scholar - Akinme Adingbade and his mother, Charity, with Association President Sir Baz North

The 12-hour flying scholarship recipients are:

Cadet Sergeant James Gordon (17), a cadet with 492 (Solihull) Squadron ATC.

Cadet Flight Sergeant Harrison Juhasz (18), a cadet with 331 (Chesterfield) Squadron ATC.

Cadet Sergeant Jack Oliphant (19), a cadet with 1271 (Bathgate) Squadron ATC.

Cadet Sergeant Samuel Page (17), a cadet with 1279 (Melton Mowbray) Squadron ATC.

Cadet Flight Sergeant Alexander Woods (17), a cadet with 1137 (East Belfast) Squadron ATC

The 12 hour scholar who will be sponsored by the Aviation Focus Group, is **Cadet Sergeant John Haile** (16), a cadet with 444 (Shoreditch) Squadron ATC.



SUBSCRIPTIONS

The RAF Association has grown by more than 25,000 people since 2014. "This rejuvenation and continued growth is great news," says the Association's Director of Membership, Del Rowlands. "Each Air Mail reader is now one of more than 72,000 paid up members who benefit from our network and camaraderie, and who support our vital welfare work."

"Our membership is still growing and we are aiming to reach a total of 100,000 by 2020. I am delighted to report that routinely 80 to 90 per cent of new recruits at RAF Halton join the Association before moving on to their various Phase 2 trade training courses."

"To hit our overall target of 100,000 members in the next two years, each branch needs to recruit 110 new members. We have recently heard of branches who are already going great guns, some achieving membership growth of 200 per cent in three years, increasing from 400 to 800 members. And of course we'll be working from HQ to attract more serving and retired RAF personnel, as well as helping share the best ideas from branches about how to attract new members."

"We hope to see you again in 2019 so we can continue our good work together and help improve life for everyone in the RAF family. I also hope you will be taking advantage of some of the benefits we arrange specially for you through RAFA Rewards."

"Thank you for your continued support of the Association. It's great to have you with us."

Subscriptions for 2019:

2019 will see the first increase in membership fees in four years. It has been set in line with the increase in the UK retail price index. For everyone renewing after 1 January 2019, the fees will be as follows:

| Membership Class | 2019 Fee | 2019 Rebate ¹ |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Ordinary | 23.00 ² | 5.00 |
| Ordinary 4 Year | 86.00 | 20.00 |
| Associate | 16.00 | 3.00 |
| Associate 4 Year | 61.50 | 12.00 |
| Non-Air Mail Associate | 12.00 | 2.00 |
| Non-Air Mail Associate 4 Year | 48.00 | 8.00 |
| Minimum Branch Rebate | - | 128.50 |

Notes:
¹ Branch membership rebate (minimum of £128.50 from 2020) will be paid on an annual basis regardless of 1 or 4 year membership direct to branches following receipt of F1056 and F1056A.

² Monthly fees collected through RAF pay from serving personnel under the Give As You Earn (GAYE) scheme will be £2.40 from January 2019. This includes a defined addition for tax relief.



Families and friends at a recent graduation at RAF Halton. 80-90% of new recruits now join our Association. © MOD/Crown..

Take care not to lapse

The grace period for the lapsing of your membership is one month. (Byelaw 7 (4). Membership – Subscriptions). So your membership will cease if the subscription has not been paid within the month after it is due.

Annual / anniversary memberships

Byelaw 7(3)

Joined before 1 January 2017?

Your annual subscription will be due on the first day of January in each year.

Joined after 1 January 2017?

Your annual subscription will be due on the anniversary of your joining.

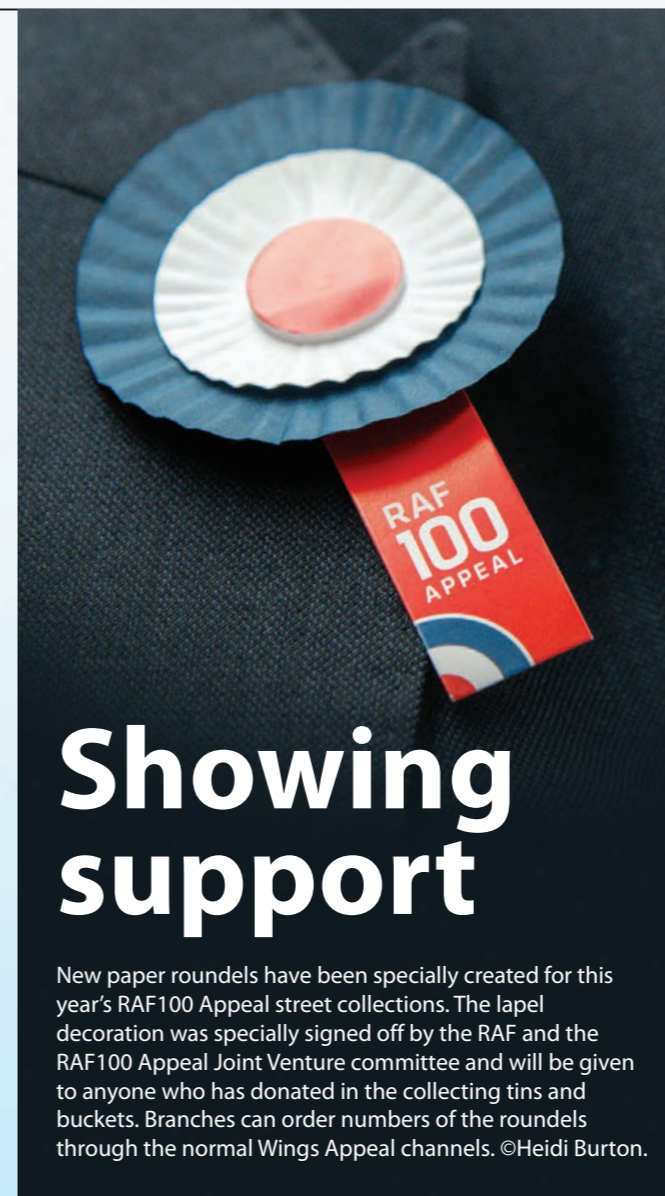
Multiple branches

Members only need to pay one annual subscription regardless of the number of branches with which you are registered. (Byelaw 7 (5) Membership). The secondary branches will be recorded on the Association's database and membership will follow the same 12-month period as your primary membership.

If you are registered with more than one branch, you will have the full rights of a member for every branch with which you are registered. (Byelaw 5 (5) Membership). The primary branch will receive the membership rebate and members will only receive a membership card for their primary branch.

If you wish to become a member of an additional branch (secondary) please contact the membership team by phone or email, and have your main branch name and your membership number handy.

0800 018 2361 / membership@rafa.org.uk for help.



Showing support

New paper roundels have been specially created for this year's RAF100 Appeal street collections. The lapel decoration was specially signed off by the RAF and the RAF100 Appeal Joint Venture committee and will be given to anyone who has donated in the collecting tins and buckets. Branches can order numbers of the roundels through the normal Wings Appeal channels. ©Heidi Burton.

amazon smile You shop. Amazon gives.

You can now fundraise for the RAF Association every time you shop online with Amazon. The online retailer has created a new website called Amazon Smile with the same prices, range and shopping experience as amazon.co.uk. The added bonus is that Amazon will donate 0.5 per cent of what you buy to the Association – with no effort from you.

To sign up, go to smile.amazon.co.uk. (You won't find a place to sign up for it listed on your normal Amazon account before you register for Smile). On your first visit to smile.amazon.co.uk you need to select a charitable organisation to receive the donations before you start shopping. (We suggest you consider the RAF Association, of course). Amazon will then remember your charity.

You have to sign in via Amazon Smile each time to raise the funds – use a bookmark as a reminder. Your shopping cart, wish, wedding or baby list, and other account settings are the same, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.co.uk will result in a donation.

You can also fundraise for the Association through Easyfundraising and eBay while you shop.

2018 ducks ready to go

The Association's newest bath ducks have landed, ready for the summer. The set of three, specially created to mark the history of the RAF in its 100th year, are an SE5 biplane, a Spitfire and a Lightning F-35. Available from the Association's display team at events and airshows around the UK, online from rafatrad.org.uk or from our contact centre on 0800 018 2361, they cost £2 each. All money raised supports the Association's welfare work. (The RAFATRAD team tried every way possible to get the top wing of the bi-plane above the duck's head, but found the design incompatible with the need to float upright, so came to an engineered compromise). © RAF Association.



2,500 attend Association's RAF100 service

2,500 guests gathered in the grounds of the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) on Sunday 13 May for the Association's special commemorative service to mark the centenary of the RAF.

Many had come direct from Conference at nearby Yarnfield Park. They joined dignitaries, hundreds of other guests and 62 branch and Association standard bearers in the sunshine, next to the Armed Forces Memorial at the Staffordshire arboretum. Many were also remembering a loved one with a stone or cross at the RAF Association remembrance garden at the NMA.

A drumhead ceremony and service was led by the Venerable (Air Vice-Marshal) Jonathan Chaffey, RAF Chaplain in Chief and the Reverend (Wing Commander) Alastair Bissell, Station Chaplain, RAF Shawbury. Readings were given and wreaths were laid by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, the RAF's Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, RAF Association President, Air Marshal Sir Baz North, and Falklands veteran, retired Flight Lieutenant David Chandler.

Cadet Sergeant Ravneet Sokhi, 2070 (Glenfield) ATC Squadron, read the words of Herbert Corby and music was provided by the Central Band of the Royal Air Force.

A flypast by a WWII Spitfire from the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight brought the event to a poignant close.

Speaking just after the service, Nick Bunting, Secretary General of the RAF Association said: "This year we wanted to expand this to celebrate the 100th birthday of RAF. The RAF family sacrifices a normal lifestyle so that the people of our country can feel secure and safe at home. Today we gave thanks for this, and looked ahead to the Association's continuing support of the RAF over the next 100 years. For this special year it is important for us to come together and commemorate those who have served, those who are serving and their loved ones."

The service was reported on BBC Midlands Today and a photographer from the Daily Telegraph also attended. A private service of remembrance and rededication of stones and crosses was later attended by families, friends and colleagues and a further 12 standard bearers at the Association's own remembrance garden at the arboretum.

The Association has hosted an annual remembrance service in its own remembrance garden at the arboretum since 2009. Anyone making a visit to the arboretum at any time of year is encouraged to visit to pay their respects. Further information on the garden or the remembrance stones and crosses that can be placed there in memory of individuals or groups related to the RAF is available from suki.malhi@rafa.org.uk or by calling 0116 268 8791.



Clockwise from top left: The Reveille, with standards; Cadet Sergeant Ravneet Sokhi gives the reading of Herbert Corby's poem 'Think of them...'; The Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire lays a wreath; the Spitfire flypast over the eagle and globe in the RAF Association Memorial Garden; (left to right) Sir Ian Dudson Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Air Marshal Sir Baz North President of the RAF Association, Lady North, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier Chief of the Air Staff, Lady Hillier, and Cadet Sergeant Ravneet Sokhi; Air Vice-Marshal Warren 'Bunny' James talking to cadets after the service; dipped standards during The Last Post.

62 branch and Association standard bearers travelled from all over the country and the world to take part in the once-in-a-lifetime ceremony.



RAF100 round up



The 100-day RAF100 baton relay is nearing its close. Since setting off from London on 1 April, the baton has been carried by (willing) volunteers with connections to the RAF to venues all around the UK – including our Rothbury House and Richard Peck House hotels. The relay is an orienteering challenge. Each baton carrier has been given just a start and end point and has had to work out the rest themselves.

As well as batons being simultaneously raised on the peaks of Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike, and Snowdon, the main baton has been rowed along the River Thames, parachuted by the RAF Falcons, ridden on horseback and power kited along the Outer Hebridean island of Benbecula.

The relay ends on 10 July on Horse Guards Parade, London.

RAF Association Token tour

Three RAF Association tokens, each bigger than the Olympic relay torch, are being taken around 85 RAF Association branches and local RAF units in Wales, the midlands and the south west.

Parading the token through the City of Worcester with 350 veterans, air cadets and serving personnel as part of the Worcester and District Branch event to celebrate the RAF's centenary. © Ian Campbell.

Each token commemorates a different aspect of the formation of the RAF. The Wales area is carrying the token representing the Royal Naval Air Service. The midland area is touring the token representing the Royal Flying Corps. The south western area will transport the token representing 'father of the RAF' Lord Trenchard.



The tokens started their journey together, in Gloucester at the RAF Association Area Conference on 25 March. They are travelling hundreds of miles through each region and will be reunited to represent the formation of the RAF, at the Birmingham International Tattoo on Saturday 24 November.

Happy birthday RAF – 1st April in London

The RAF formally and ceremonially celebrated its 100th birthday on 1 April in London with a special breakfast, a service at St Clement Danes church and the start of the RAF100 Baton Relay. Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, Chief of the Air Staff said: "Our 100th anniversary celebrations give us a unique platform from which to showcase the character of the RAF and the opportunities we offer. We want people across the UK to be inspired to find out more about why the RAF is so extraordinary and to realise that the world-class training and opportunities that we offer make it an outstanding place to learn, develop and progress. We want young people to be ambitious and realise their potential, so that we can continue to be a dynamic force for good across the nation and can continue to protect the nation, as we have done so successfully throughout our first one hundred years."



Air Vice-Marshal Gary Waterfall, Ted Rexter-Baker (seated) a former Spitfire engineer befriended by the AVM, and Mrs Waterfall leave the RAF's 100th birthday service at St Clement Danes church, London on 1 April. At attention behind are standard bearers of the RAF Association.



I know, sir! Pick me! School children got a preview of the Spitfire at the RAF100 national aircraft tour in Cardiff, before thousands of the general public were let in. © MOD/Crown.

National RAF100 events July, August and September

NATIONAL AIRCRAFT TOUR
Horse Guards Parade, London
6 to 9 July

RAF100 PARADE AND FLYPAST
The Mall, London
10 July

ROYAL INTERNATIONAL AIR TATTOO
RAF Fairford
13 to 15 July

NORTHERN IRELAND AIRSHOW
Portrush
4 to 5 August

NATIONAL AIRCRAFT TOUR
Victoria Square, Birmingham
25 to 27 August

NATIONAL AIRCRAFT TOUR
Newcastle, Northern Ireland
1 to 2 September (corrected date)

NATIONAL AIRCRAFT TOUR
Glasgow Science Centre
1 to 2 September

NATIONAL AIRCRAFT TOUR
Cathedral Gardens, Manchester
15 to 16 September

BATTLE OF BRITAIN SERVICE
London
16 September

To join hundreds of volunteers for the RAF100 Appeal fundraising collections, email the RAF Association's volunteering team at raf100volunteers@rafa.org.uk

Look out for more detail of forthcoming RAF100 events in your neighbourhood, in branch and area newsletters, your local media and, especially, on the RAF100 website events page: raf.mod.uk/raf100/whats-on/. (And don't forget you can list your own event there too).

RAF100 Appeal – air cadets to help Marks and Spencer celebrate RAF links

High street favourite Marks and Spencer is supporting the RAF100 Appeal, to celebrate its strong links with the RAF.

The connections go back as far as WWII when, keen to help with the war effort, M&S employees raised £5,000 to pay for a Spitfire. The aircraft, aptly named 'The Marksman' joined B Flight of 609 West Riding Squadron at Biggin Hill in June 1941.

Today's support will see hundreds of air cadets helping shoppers in 100 M&S stores around the UK over the weekends of 7 and 14 July. They are hoping to raise thousands of pounds for the RAF100 Appeal by packing bags in stores near RAF stations or with other links to the force.

M&S is also raising money through the sale of a leather bomber jacket (right) designed to commemorate the RAF's centenary and to remember 'The Marksman'. All profits will go to the RAF100 Appeal. The leather flight jacket will retail for £199, with £38.50 from each being donated to the appeal.



©M&S

Gold award for RAF100 Appeal garden



Talking about the Memories of Service garden to Joe Swift of BBC Gardeners' World. © Martyn Wilson.

Claret, white and blue flowers represent the Royal Air Force in the award-winning Memories of Service Garden. © Martyn Wilson.

An official RAF100 garden has won gold at the Royal Horticultural Society Malvern Spring Festival, and will now stay there as a permanent memorial.

'Memories of Service' was designed by third-generation RAF, Martyn Wilson, and built by landscapers who are ex-RAF Regiment. The garden is not only beautiful but steeped in symbolism and helped raise funds for the RAF100 Appeal.

The garden is crossed by four elliptical shaped paths based on a four bladed propeller. The central seating area, features a sculpture formed from aircraft parts. Topiary balls refer to radar (specifically the 'golf balls' at RAF Fylingdales and at RAF Defford). Lines of hedges represent vapour trails and white-barked birch trees signify peace and remind us of the birch ply of early aviation and air frames. Perennial planting is in the claret, blue and white of the RAF.

See more pictures online at: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/malvern-spring-festival/Gardens/2018/memories-of-service-raf100-centenary-garden>.

More news of RAF100 celebrations by branches around the country and world in our extended Branch news on page 35.

RAF
100



Band - evening



Presiding

CONFERENCE 2018

The Association's 2018 Annual Conference returned to Yarnfield Park Training and Conference Centre in Staffordshire on 11 and 12 May. It was chaired by Air Marshal Sir Baz North, guided and supported by Anthony "Taff" Rees. Sir Baz thanked the Association for its warm welcome and hospitality over the year since he was appointed.

112 branch delegates and their guests attended. With a voting strength of 28,783 they represented 39% of the Association's branches. Others watched from the comfort of their own homes via the live video streaming and more than 50 RAF Association Liaison Officers (RAFALOs) also attended.

If you would like to watch proceedings, and have access to the internet, look out for the links and time codes given throughout this report, which will direct you to where you can see video of Conference.

Messages of greeting were received from Her Majesty The Queen, Patron of the Association, His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, past President, and from His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, also a past President.

The Silent Tribute

The Silent Tribute to the fallen was conducted by Reverend (Wing Commander) Alastair Bissell.

Results of the Council Elections



Newly elected trustee, Heather Little.



Newly elected trustee, Beryl Dennett-Stannard.

The following eight elected members will serve on Council from 2018 to 2021:

- Mike Blackman
- Beryl Dennett-Stannard
- Dean 'Gibbo' Gibson
- Chris Goss
- Heather Little
- Ian McEnnis
- Bryan Pattison
- Anthony 'Taff' Rees

Peter Ramrayka is the designated reserve member of Council. The President thanked the departing council members for all their service to the Association including Dick Whittingham and Judith Boothman.



Dipping the standard



Marching band - Keeping time



Marching band - bugle off

Report of the Annual Conference Committee

Chairman of the Annual Conference Committee, Taff Rees, presented the report of the Annual Conference Committee, noting one resolution (Number 3) which was daggered and needed a simple majority vote for the resolution to be debated at this year's Conference.

He moved the adoption of the Report of the Annual Conference Committee. This was seconded by the Penarth Branch and duly adopted.

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAINED |
|-------|---------|-----------|
| 98.9% | 0% | 1.1% |

Presentation of the 2017 Financial Statements

Honorary Treasurer, Philip Tagg, reported on the financial statements. A written summary is on page 44 of this issue of Air Mail. You can also watch the report online at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=onPAg08jCYk at 00hrs 36mins 40secs.

Mr Tagg, proposed the appointment of RSM UK LLP as the auditors for 2018.

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAINED |
|------|---------|-----------|
| 100% | 0% | 0% |

He then moved the adoption of the Financial Report 2017, which was seconded by the Global Branch and duly adopted. Please note this vote was taken following Conference questions to the officers of the Association.

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAINED |
|------|---------|-----------|
| 100% | 0% | 0% |

Debating resolutions



The Annual Report for 2017

Presented by the Chairman of Council, Air Vice-Marshal John Cliffe

The Chairman's presentation to Conference can be seen online at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=onPAg08jCYk at 00hrs 55mins 45secs. Copies of the report are also on the Members' Portal (or available from your branch and Area office).

The report was seconded by the Armourers Branch and the vote was taken following conference questions to the officers of the Association.

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAINED |
|------|---------|-----------|
| 100% | 0% | 0% |



The Association gives 'massive support' to the RAF, said Air Marshal Julian Young during his address.

Address by the Chief of Materiel (Air) Defence Equipment and Support

Air Marshal Julian Young CB OBE, (also a proud member of the Trowbridge and West Wiltshire Branch) presented to Conference the RAF Strategy which included the people and equipment involved and how the economy and the development of threat is changing the lives of the RAF serving personnel. He also talked of the 'massive support' that the Association brings to everyone, and of the value of the confident, well informed, worldly wise young people entering the RAF today. Air Marshal Julian Young outlined his expectations of the future and welcomed the continued support of the RAF Association in the future.

This address was not broadcast via the live feed of Conference business, and not recorded.

Flying Scholarships Awards 2018

Following his address, Air Marshal Young presented the Association's flying scholarship awards. A full report of the winners is on page 11.

Right: 2018's National Presidential Award winners





Presidential drinks reception



Presidential drinks reception

Questions for Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Treasurer and Secretary General

The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Honorary Treasurer and Secretary General took questions from the floor. Watch these on YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQzX4eFS4WU at 01hrs 00mins 04secs.

Resolution Results

Please note the number of the resolution is the number as it appeared within the Conference programme. You may view all the presentations and debates online at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQzX4eFS4WU at 01hrs 30mins 15secs.

Resolutions Carried

All the resolutions presented to the 2018 Conference were carried.

Resolution No. 1

This Conference resolves that Council should undertake a study into the feasibility, whereby, all members of the Association have the right to vote on Association elections and resolutions, through a plebiscite (a direct vote) of all of the membership. Reporting back its findings, along with any details of any proposed changes (if appropriate) to the Association's governance documents and administrative structure to effect the findings, to Annual Conference 2019.

Proposed: Wales, Midland and South Western Area Council
Seconded: Scotland and Northern Ireland Area Council

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAINED |
|-------|---------|-----------|
| 82.4% | 13.7% | 3.9% |

Resolution No. 2

This Conference resolves that Council examines and reviews the continued individual charity registration of branches vis-à-vis branches becoming legally part of the Association, under a single charity registration, consulting with Regulators as appropriate. Reporting back its findings, along with any details of any proposed changes (if appropriate) to the Association's governance documents and administrative structure to effect the findings, to Annual Conference 2019.

Proposed: Northern Area Council
Seconded: South East and Eastern Area Council

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAINED |
|-------|---------|-----------|
| 81.2% | 14.9% | 4% |

Conference voted and agreed for the dagger* to be removed from Resolution 3, seconded by Dunstable Branch.

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAINED |
|-------|---------|-----------|
| 59.3% | 24.2% | 16.5% |

* A Resolution marked with a dagger [†] means that it was the subject of debate and lost at last year's Annual Conference and the consent of Conference will be required (by a vote being taken by Conference with a simple majority) for the resolution to be debated at this year's Conference.

Resolution No. 3

This Conference resolves that; AR8(11) be withdrawn from the Area Rules and so remove a duty of action for Area Councils that is not practicable.

Northern Area Council
Seconded: Dunstable Branch

| FOR | AGAINST | ABSTAINED |
|-------|---------|-----------|
| 51.6% | 40.7% | 7.7% |

Parade Trophies

As the Association's Centenary Service for the RAF was taking place at the National Memorial Arboretum on Sunday 13 May, the Johnson Trophy (for the smartest flight on parade) and the Fred Brisley Challenge Cup (awarded to the smartest Area standard bearer) were placed on hold for 2018 and not presented.

Life Vice-Presidents

The President nominated Sir Glenn Torpy GCB CBE DSO and Sir Stephen Dalton GCB ADC LLD BSC FRAeS CCMI for Life Vice-Presidents of the Association and this was acclaimed by Conference.

Venue For Annual Conference 2019

The Chairman of the Annual Conference Committee presented the venue for the Association's Annual Conference 2019. The event will be held at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole on 10, 11 and 12 May 2019.

You can see this online, including photos of the venue at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOq6ZA2x7Fk at 00hrs 04mins 53secs.

Conference registration and booking of accommodation for 2019 will open online in September 2018.

Vote of Thanks

Taff Rees proposed the vote of thanks for the following:

- Air Marshal J A Young CB OBE, Chief of Materiel (Air) Defence and Support
- The Venerable (Air Vice-Marshal) Jonathan Chaffey for all his support to the Association over many years
- Reverend (Wing Commander) Alastair Bissell
- The Central Band of the Royal Air Force (by permission of the Air Force Board of the Defence Council)
- The Association employees, for all their work, especially the Conference organisers and Conference office team
- The Staffordshire division of St John Ambulance
- The Chairman of Conference, Air Marshal Sir Baz North, for overseeing the "business end" of Conference and the Chairman and members of Council



Above: European drinks fundraiser.
Centre: Workshops.
Left: Standard handover.

Acknowledgements

The Association acknowledges with gratitude the help of all those who made the Conference in Yarnfield Park such a success, particularly:

- The Annual Conference Committee for their organisation of Conference
- The Association Standard Bearer, Mr Shawn Marston, and all Area Standard Bearers
- The Worshipful Mayor of Stone Town Councillor Mrs Kristan Green
- The Worshipful Deputy Mayor of Stone and President and Honourable Secretary of the Stone and District Branch, Councillor Jim Davies
- The Teignmouth Branch and Torquay Branch along with the Aviation Focus Group, represented by Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford and Air Vice Marshal Sean Bell, who provided generous funding for the flying scholarship awards
- The Media Group, in particular Jonathan Gordon, the Managing Director for his technical support and audio visual and communications expertise for Conference
- The staff of Yarnfield Park, Stone, for their helpful support, in particular Beth Chell, the Conference Operations Coordinator, Paul Sharratt, the Operations Manager and Neil Wilson the Assistant Operations Manager

Photographs

Photographs taken over the Conference weekend will soon be available on Flickr. The album is labelled 'RAF Association Annual Conference 2018'; please visit: www.flickr.com/photos/rafwingsappeal/albums/72157695081822851

The formal, abridged report of Council business can be seen on the Members' Portal.

If you have any enquiries about the RAF Association Annual Conference 2018, please contact Kelly Brotherhood on: 0116 268 8770 or email: kelly.brotherhood@rafa.org.uk

Presentation of National Presidential Certificates

The President awarded the National Presidential Certificates to:

- Len 'Griff' Griffiths MBE RAF Association
- Peter Heatley, Gwyn Jeans and David Ford Llandaff and Ely Branch
- Duncan McIntosh Fraserburgh Branch
- Terry and Margaret McKeown Barry Branch
- Derf Mockford Aylesbury and Halton Branch
- Ashley and Kieran Oldroyd-Clarke Germany/RAF Cranwell
- Paul Sharp Shrewsbury and District Branch
- Muriel and Derek Simpson Oldham Branch
- Linda Taylor Penarth Branch
- Windssock Club Harrow Branch

Association members who had been awarded national honours were also announced, together with National Presidential Certificate winners who had not been able to attend conference.

The presentation of the flying scholarships and National Presidential Certificates can be viewed www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_vIKTmTriY.

Presentation: 2017 and the Future

The Secretary General, Nick Bunting, highlighted the importance of the work that has taken place over the last year and the investments being made to meet our objectives for 2030. The Secretary General's presentation for Conference 2017 can be viewed here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQzX4eFS4WU at 00hrs 00mins 50secs.

The Secretary General then presented Conference with the new crest of the Association, which had been approved by acclaim at 2017 Conference. See the new crest, details of its development, and first reactions to it in the news story on page 7.



Helping John with his demons

John is on medication for life for his post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but sometimes the medication and counselling cannot stop the dreams. When the dreams got more frequent and he started to lose control, he got in touch with the RAF Association for support.

He recalls his childhood fondly. He grew up learning about the military as his dad served in the Second World War. When he was alone in the house, John used to sit and look at all of his dad's war medals. As a young man, John went through the rebellious phase that many do, growing his hair long and working in a shipyard. His father didn't approve and provided him with some very blunt advice, 'get a haircut and enlist.'

He did just that, joining the RAF in 1965. John served for nine years, working on top-secret crypto equipment. The work he was trusted with was so secretive that he even had a list of those who were and were not allowed into his workroom.

John says he has strong shoulders and has held a lot of responsibility throughout his career. But there is only so much you can take on before it becomes too

much - and John was diagnosed with PTSD. He was managing his condition until very recently when a lot of stressful things happened in a very short period of time. John's father passed away, his wife was diagnosed with cancer, his son is gradually losing his sight and the family were made homeless after retiring.

John started to experience vivid dreams of sitting in a hearse, with the coffins of his mum and dad in front of him. When he looks closer he sees that they are skeletons and they smile up at him. He wakes up terrified and screaming.

Following the advice of an old RAF colleague, John eventually got in touch with the RAF Association. After a long conversation, their welfare officer arranged for him to have a couple of days visit to RAF Linton-on-Ouse. A bit of rest and relaxation for his wife, and the good memories of the past for John. John says: "As soon as I got in touch it set me back on the road of recovery. It just gave me some of my psychological strength back that I'd lost." At the station he was escorted around for the two days by the Station Warrant Officer, and met the Station Commander. He visited the Air Traffic Control tower and learnt about the history of the station. He was also treated to the full dining experience and felt thoroughly taken care of during his time there.

The support he received from the Association didn't stop there, as the couple also received a subsidised break to a Wings Breaks hotel in Weston-super-Mare. It was a chance for his wife to visit her friends and family who still lived in the area, both of them knowing this may be the last chance she would get to do so before the cancer became worse.

When John reflects what the support means, he said: "without that support I would have tipped over the edge. I was so close to snapping, just being back in the RAF fold made me feel that a weight had been lifted."

Through years of living with PTSD, John has developed coping mechanisms, but he would advise anyone who is struggling in any way to ask for help: "When you're wearing the uniform you think the world is your oyster. As you get older you never know what is going to happen." The RAF Association is here to support those who are struggling. If you need support email welfare@rafa.org.uk or call 0800 018 2361



Thumbs up for adrenaline and fundraising at the 2017 jump.

Harness up for the biggest 2018 tandem skydive

Another amazing fundraising parachuting experience is being planned for 2018 by the team that brought you the hugely successful Lumpy Jumpers sky dive in 2017.

Called the V100 Jump, organisers are "looking for at least 100 RAF veterans who have served as a regular to undertake this once in a lifetime opportunity". The aim is to raise £50,000 for the RAF Association's welfare projects, with 100 people doing tandem sky dives on the same day.

More information about the jump on 9 August 2018 at Brackley, Northants, can be found at rafa.org.uk/get-involved/events/ or call 0800 018 2361.

R'n'R in Scotland's sunniest place

A new RAF Association holiday home on the east coast of Scotland is now taking bookings. Glasgow Branch has opened the modern, welcoming and wheelchair accessible mobile home near the seaside town of Dunbar – to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the RAF. It offers rest and recuperation, with woodland walks, children's play areas and a freshwater lake fishing in the park. A supermarket, bar area, snack bar, restaurant and function suite are also all on site. The two twin-bedroomed holiday home is perfect for exploring Edinburgh (an hour's drive away) and Northumberland. Dunbar has a picturesque harbour as well as restaurants, coffee shops and an invigorating cliff walk. Take advantage of the high sunshine hours every year to visit the sandy beaches nearby.

For further details and how to book call the Association's friendly contact team on **0800 018 2361**.



Set in 175 acres of countryside, near the sea and with a swimming pool, sauna, steam room and gym on site. Book this Association seaside holiday home to take advantage of all this and more. © Glasgow Branch

Our areas in numbers

"The Association is about so much more than money. Friendship and care of the lonely or bereaved has always been a strength in our branch structure and we must continue to recognise this key attribute in the modern world"

Air Vice-Marshal David Niven, Area President, Scotland and Northern Ireland Area

These snapshots give just a flavour of the immense amount of effort, dedication and challenges faced in 2017. The full reports give much more detail and crucial narrative, and clearly show the passion and work of members everywhere. Your branch has been sent a copy, or look on the Members' Portal to read the reports on line.

European Area

Membership: Total members: **3,213**. Membership news: The future beyond Brexit is unclear as the ability for those in the UK who might wish to move to countries within the European Union becomes more difficult and as many British expatriates have returned to the United Kingdom.

Welfare: Cases: **199**. Contacts: Employees in the Edinburgh office receive casework requests from all over the world, where we have no honorary welfare officers.

Money raised: £52,782.41

Special to us: The many organisations and people who help us with cases when we have no one on the ground in countries around the globe. Captain Lance Gill of the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League deserves special mention for the help he's given on complicated cases.

Northern Area

Membership: Total membership: **12,861**. Change in membership: Growth of **1,304**

Membership news: We said farewell to the Brighthouse and Rastrick and Redcar Club, but have welcomed new branches, TG6 and the Bedale and Leeming Branch.

Welfare: Other funds distributed (almonised): **£400,000**

Money raised: £220,319.64

Special to us: We are very proud of the Wings Centre in Preston which has grown from strength to strength since its official opening in April 2017. The centre has enabled the RAF Association to create links with various other charities within the Northern Area. It is a safe haven for all veterans, and has regulars; some who travel a significant distance to sit and have a cuppa and a chat with like-minded veterans.

Other news: More than **100 branch and station visits** by area employees.

Scotland and Northern Ireland Area

Membership: Total members: **4,857**. Change in membership: Growth of nine point seven per cent

Welfare: Cases: **554 visits** to people's homes in Scotland. And an increase in online and self referrals in Northern Ireland. News: Welfare workers have been busier than ever and the complexity of their casework and the number of clients under the age of 55 has increased. A notable increase in 2017 was the number of requests for someone to visit lonely people either in their home or in hospital.

Money raised for the Wings Appeal: £157,374 in Scotland and Northern Ireland, with the Carrickfergus Branch raising £35,001.18 on their own.

Special to us: The Wings Café project set up by the Glasgow Branch has been a great success and providing a much needed service.

Other news: The employee team supported the branches at over **50 events during the year**, made 95 branch support visits and 77 visits to RAF establishments.

South East and Eastern Area

Membership: Total members: **31,667**. Change in membership: Growth by **4,569**

Welfare: Cases: **753**. Contacts: **47,334**, Grants and loans from the Benevolent Fund: **£536,793.48**
Other funds distributed (almonised): **£21,970 604**

Money raised for the Wings Appeal: £497,193

Special to us: The Hemsby chalets had **125 bookings**, which equates to an 87 per cent occupancy rate. Efforts are being made to encourage greater use of the chalets by serving personnel. The holiday home at Selsey remains popular and had an occupancy rate of **71 per cent**.

Wales, Midland and South Western Area

Membership: Total members: **18,074**. Change in membership: **1,707** new members, growth of 9.7 per cent. Membership news: The Chepstow and District Branch moved to registered member group (RMG) status during 2017. We were delighted to open a new branch, the Sailing Branch, which operates out of the Turn to Starboard organisation in Falmouth, but which is a 'virtual' branch in many respects. So a net increase again and we now have 87 branches, seven RMGs and 29 clubs, eight of which are operating independently.

Welfare: Cases: 1,075 new cases. Contacts: 13,000. Welfare news: Our employees and volunteers processed applications for assistance with issues such as care home top up fees, beneficiaries facing eviction, funeral costs and a steady stream of applications for assistance with white/brown goods and respite breaks at our Wings Breaks hotels. We continue to work closely with the RAF Benevolent Fund, other charities and statutory authorities due to the complexity of cases.

Money raised for the Wings Appeal: £323,246.62

And the winners are...



Astonishing ingenuity, commitment and effort in fundraising and membership recruitment has been shown by branches, stations, air cadet squadrons, RAF Association Liaison Officers (RAFALOs) and individuals across the country and the world. This was recognised when 22 trophies were awarded at the gala awards evening at Conference. And the winners, presented with their trophies by Air Marshal Sir Baz North, President, were...

1. The Sir Thomas Pike Trophy was awarded to **Bognor Regis Branch** for the highest net Wings Appeal collection, including airshows. It was collected by Marion Mewett, Wings Appeal Officer, and members of the branch, who raised more than £16,026. The branch also won the Dickie Collins Branch Club Efficiency Trophy for the branch or club judged to be the most efficient (and whose parent branch has more than 200 ordinary or life members). They were praised for their outstanding efforts in improving every facet of branch and club business, and this trophy was picked up by Branch Club Secretary Ann Hewings and members of the branch.

2. The **Carrickfergus Branch** won two awards; The Lord Craig Trophy for the highest net Wings Appeal collection, excluding airshows, and the Lord Stirrup Trophy for the highest net collection per member excluding airshows in the UK. For raising £34,283 in the first category and £581 per member in the second, the trophies were collected by the branch Vice Chairman and Wings Appeal Coordinator Noel Williams.

3. The Gwynne-Vaughan Trophy was given to **Armagh Branch** after they achieved the highest net collection per branch member including airshows in the UK. More than £238 was raised per member leading to a grand total of £11,672. It was collected by Regional Chairman Dick Trebbett.

4. With over £11,000 raised in total and £77 per member, the **Guernsey Branch** won the Trefusis Forbes Trophy. Mick O'Connell Area Vice President picked up this award for the overseas branch which achieves the highest net collection per member including airshows.

5. The **Lyon Branch** won the Bill Bailey Trophy for the highest net collection per overseas member excluding airshows by raising £5,000 in total, which equates to £178 per member. They also won the Overseas Membership Trophy for the overseas branch achieving the highest percentage increase in membership. Both were collected by branch member Regis Pizot.

6. Air cadets from **72 (Omagh) ATC Squadron** took home two trophies on the night. The Sir Douglas Bader Trophy is awarded for the highest Wings Appeal collection per capita by an air cadet squadron and they raised a total of £398 per person. The Robert Saundby Trophy goes to the air cadet squadron collecting the highest net Wings Appeal amount – and they raised more than £10,748. The trophies were picked up by Flight Lieutenant Graham Dodds RAFAC and members of the squadron. A more detailed report on their work is planned for the October-December edition of Air Mail.

7. The **Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets (Walsall)** won the Sir Andrew Humphrey Trophy for the unit making the greatest sustained effort and overall contribution to Wings Appeal. The trophy was received by Hayley Dale-Dolan and members of the Walsall Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets.

8. The Shell Mex Trophy is given to the area achieving the highest percentage renewal rate of annual membership. This year, for their outstanding efforts in organising numerous membership campaigns, the award went to the **South East and Eastern Area** and the trophy was collected by Area Director Ailsa Gough.



Culture Vultures



9. The overseas branch recruiting the highest number of new members is awarded the The Amodio (Overseas) Trophy. Once again showing their enthusiasm and expertise in this area, the trophy was awarded to the **Aphrodite Branch** and was collected by Chairman Barry Higgs and Membership Secretary Anne Higgs.

10. The President's Cup is awarded for outstanding achievement by a branch. This year's winner, **Glasgow Branch**, was identified as the most forward thinking; embracing every opportunity to enrich the lifestyle of the RAF family. This has culminated in the introduction of the Wings Café, a facility which has undoubtedly captured a community spirit from which many have benefitted. There has also been a tremendous amount of work and effort carried out in support of the Wings Appeal and to recruit new members. The award was picked up by Chairman Ken Watt, in recognition of the branch's marvellous commitment and dedication.

11. The Branch Newsletter Trophy went to **Aylesbury and Halton Branch** who were judged to have produced the most interesting and informative newsletter over the year. It was collected by branch Chairman, Derf Mockford.

12. Turning to serving personnel, the Lord Tedder Trophy is awarded to a RAF unit for the highest net collection for the Wings Appeal. For a truly magnificent effort by all station personnel in raising £24,882.33, the trophy went to **RAF Wittering** and was collected by 'Team RAF Wittering'.

13. 'Team **AFCO Bournemouth**' collected the Sir Charles Wheeler Trophy for the home RAF unit achieving the highest net collection per head of personnel, after raising more than £305 per member.

14. Marquis of Amodio Trophy is awarded to the RAF unit recruiting the highest number of new members pro rata to unit personnel. The

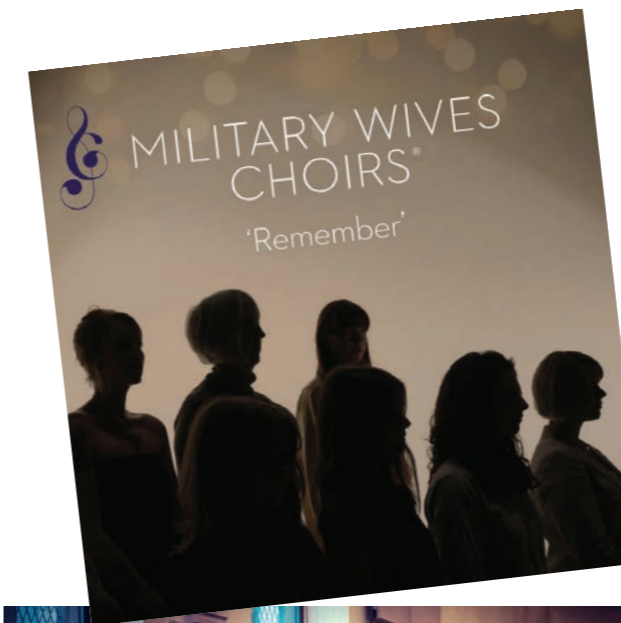
station RAFALO team at **RAF Halton** have worked tirelessly in promoting the Association and its work this year and 'Team Halton' came on stage to collect the award after running an extremely successful recruitment campaign.

15. Warrant Officer Rich Harbon collected the Ken Jago Trophy on behalf of **UKSUPU Ramstein**. They raised a total of £1,483, which equates to £22 per head of personnel, and took away the award for the overseas unit achieving the highest net collection per head of personnel.

16. Without exception **RAF Benson** has demonstrated its unwavering allegiance in providing the Association with outstanding and sustained support. In recognition, it was awarded the Sir Geoffrey Bromet Trophy for the station or unit that demonstrates exceptional achievement in support of the Association. Station Commander Group Captain Hamish Cormack and Chief Technician Lisa Millar accepted the award on behalf of the station.

17. The Airshow Plate is awarded for exceptional achievement by an RAF unit in support of the many airshows that took place throughout UK. For their ever present and valued support at the Association's many airshows, **RAF Cosford** were the worthy recipients. The trophy was collected by 'Team RAF Cosford'.

Last but not least, the Wally Marriott Trophy was awarded to the RAFALO judged to have made an outstanding contribution to the Association. **Chief Technician Kerrie Stevens** won, for her superior performance as a RAFALO and her genuine commitment to providing quality support to the RAF family. She becomes the RAF Association's RAFALO of the year. Her award was collected on her behalf by Flight Sergeant Dean Atkinson. Read more about her on page 51.



Top: One of the 1,105 singers on Remember said: "The women of 100 years ago are exactly the same as us: proud, adaptable, capable and supportive. We owe it to our ancestors to commemorate what they did for us to have the freedom we have today." © Military Wives' Choirs

Below: RAF choirs from Digby, Cranwell, Coningsby and Waddington contributed through this recording session in York. © Military Wives Choirs/Jason Ferdinando

Brand new album from Military Wives' Choirs

The Military Wives' Choirs' new album, 'Remember' was released on Friday 29 June 2018.
by Michael Napier

It features 69 of the choirs from across the UK and abroad, which have joined together to acknowledge the end of WWI. They worked with musicians from across the three services to create an album that tells the story of 'then' (1918) and 'now' (2018). You can listen to the first track, 'The Poppy Red', on the Choirs' website: militarywiveschoirs.org/newalbumpreorder/ The 74 choirs, in the UK and overseas, are not just open to wives of serving personnel. Anyone with a military connection can join, including those currently serving, veterans, mothers, sisters and daughters. Rehearsals are weekly, with a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere and no experience or auditions necessary. Find out more at militarywiveschoirs.org.

A poem from our centenary service

Herbert Coby's poem was read at the Association's service to commemorate the 100th birthday of the RAF, by Cadet Sergeant Ravneet Sokhi of 2070 (Glenfield) Squadron:

Think of them. You did not die as these
Caged in an aircraft that did not return.
Whenever hearts have song and minds have peace
Or in your eyes the pride of banners burn,
Think of these who dreamed and loved as you,
And gave their laughter, gave their sun and snow,
Their grave blessed by their native dew
That you should live. To them this debt you owe.
Their glory shines about the sky for ever,
Though in these things they left to you, the ghost
Should haunt your field of ease and resting river.
Their lives are ended, but dreams are not yet lost
If you remember in your laugh and song
These boys who do not sing and laugh not long.



Take to the skies from the comfort of your own sofa and celebrate the centenary of the RAF with Ewan McGregor and his brother, former RAF pilot, Colin. © BBC/Lion TV/Freddie Claire.

DVD – RAF at 100 with Ewan and Colin McGregor

The BBC's fabulous programme to celebrate the centenary of the Royal Air Force, shows Ewan and Colin McGregor taking to the skies in some of the world's most iconic aircraft. These are the machines that were involved in aerial combat at every stage of the RAF's story, from the biplanes used in the early days of dogfighting in the First World War to the beautiful Spitfire, the plucky Lysander and on to the mighty Vulcan bomber, as well as the Chinook helicopter and supersonic Typhoon that are still in service today. This one and a half hour story also covers the tales of the men and women whose courage and ingenuity have been at the heart of the RAF for 100 years. From Battle of Britain pilot Geoffrey Wellum, to the Air Transport Auxillary's pilots Mary Ellis and Joy Lofthouse, and from Fred Bailey, who was plucked from a clearing in the jungles of Burma by an intrepid RAF pilot to David Morgan, who was the last RAF pilot to take part in a dogfight, while serving in the Falklands.

It is no longer available on the BBC iPlayer, but you can buy your DVD from rafatrad.co.uk or on **0800 081 2361**.

Aviation fascination

Inspiration – one of the main aims of RAF100 – comes in many forms. But for a large number of people it was an early love of aircraft that led them to a career in the RAF. Regular contributor Mike Curtis talks about ‘getting the aeroplane bug’ as a child, and outlines how and where we can inspire the next generation, or simply reconnect with our own memories.



Top: Smart turnout, Curtis! Ten year old Mike Curtis snapped in front of the Spitfire gate guardian at RAF Binbrook, January 1964. He and his dad had just enjoyed a special tour of the Lincolnshire station, watching Lightnings, Javelins, Hunters, Canberras and Meteors.

Below: Imitation is the highest form of flattery; inspired by a TSR-2 at Duxford in 1982. ©Editor

When I was a youngster and got the aeroplane ‘bug’ at eight years old, I would pester my mum and dad to take me to airfields to watch the flying. Long car journeys would be studied in advance in an old yellow AA handbook to see if the route took us anywhere near somewhere interesting.

Holiday trips to Cornwall ensured that Yeovilton and the Fleet Air Arm Museum was ringed in the handbook. Going north up the A1 would take us tantalisingly close to Dishforth, Leeming and Catterick. South down the A1 and there was a glimpse of Cottesmore, the runway lights at Wittering and the fervent wish that a Phantom would crawl out of Alconbury. Can we go and watch the yellow Whirlwind take off at Manston? If one of these locations coincided with lunch, where better to have your sandwiches and Vimto?

There are not many places now where parents or grandparents can take the youngsters to watch the RAF at work. The variety of dramatic aircraft types has shrunk as well. When I first got interested, a visit to RAF Binbrook in Lincolnshire would be rewarded with a busy circuit full of Meteors, Canberras, Hunters, Javelins and Lightnings. There were many airfields bursting with V-Bombers and a wide range of transports, trainers and helicopters.

Several airfields have museums alongside, including Coventry, Newquay (St Mawgan), Bournemouth, Manchester Airport and of course Middle Wallop, Yeovilton and Cosford. The East Midlands Aeropark is one such example, placed beside the runway of East Midlands Airport. Youngsters about to make their first flight for a holiday are often brought to the Aeropark to not only look around the exhibits but also be shown that it is normal and safe to climb into a long tube with wings and be launched into the dull grey overcast in pursuit of blues seas, waving palms, cloudless skies and distant relatives.

Flying clubs at small grass airfields often have a cafe and a viewing area to encourage people to visit them. One aerodrome near Manchester offers free food for military pilots who drop by, meaning the locals get to see plenty of Apache and Puma helicopters.

The majority of people who gather at the end of the runways at the major RAF bases are aviation enthusiasts and amateur photographers. They raise huge telephoto lens and click off hundreds of shots, hoping to catch that one moment when the manoeuvre, the light and markings come together. Many post fine examples of their work on-line for other enthusiasts to enjoy and review.

The two United States Air Force bases at Mildenhall and Lakenheath attract these dedicated souls nearly every day. The perimeter is particularly busy when there are special deployments of F-22 Raptors and F-35 Lightnings. Fairford in Gloucestershire, home to the Royal International Air Tattoo each July, gets crowded at other times when there are visiting B-52s and U-2s. Other favourites include Valley, Lossiemouth, Brize Norton and Marham, which will soon have the added attraction of the RAF’s first F-35s.

RAF Coningsby is one of the most popular UK attractions for the enthusiasts. The resident Typhoons are a big draw, along with the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and regular visitors from other countries. In recent years, big crowds have turned out for Indian Sukhoi Su-30s, Swedish Gripens, Saudi Typhoons and the Canadian Lancaster.

“We are grateful for people’s interest and would never discourage them. They are advocates for what we do,” says Jim Robinson, media and communications officer at Coningsby. “Many have been watching military aircraft for a long time and know the score. The base has always had a good relationship with people at the perimeter fence.”

There is a new awareness of where people are standing outside an airfield. For example, while the Typhoon display pilot at Coningsby works up the routine for the summer season, people are sometimes asked to move if they are on the display line of the aircraft. Most will happily take the advice, knowing that to stay may mean that the display practice will not go ahead. They are also aware that the UK authorities take a relaxed view of people photographing the military from outside the fence compared to many countries. In 2001, 12 British plane spotters in Greece were arrested as spies and spent some time in jail for doing what comes naturally in the UK.

...continued

Main picture: Enthusiasts get a good vantage point at RAF Cosford ©MOD/Crown

The RAF encourages regular spotters to support the security teams by reporting strange or unusual behaviour around air bases through publicised phone numbers. In turn the enthusiasts know not to lean ladders against fences, not to park across emergency exits, not to trespass on surrounding farmland, and to dispose of rubbish responsibly.

Some airfields have official viewing areas although they are not always where the photographers would like them to be situated! There are public car parks at places like Valley, Coningsby, Lakenheath, Culdrose and Waddington (The WAVE – Waddington Aircraft Viewing Enclosure). You can cross the famous Eelmoor Bridge over the Basingstoke Canal that gives you a view of Farnborough airfield or you can pull up in a lay-by next to Kemble! Of course there is always the risk that on the day you turn up, nothing is happening. The morning drags by with no movements and the growing realisation that the base is on night flying that week – or closed for the day! You should have consulted the right websites and message boards.

Up in the north-east in 1964, visiting grandparents, my dad read in the Northern Echo newspaper that the Lightnings of 226 Operational Conversion Unit were leaving RAF Middleton St George the following day for their new home at Coltishall. He rang the base and was told that there was no public event. However, the chap on the phone just said: "Come along anyway and use my name at the guardroom." Such relaxed informality. So we did – and had a front row view on the flightline as all the Lightnings started up, taxied out and took off. That set quite a precedent for subsequent expeditions pursuing aviation fascination!

East Midlands Aeropark - the view from the top of the steps into the museum's former RAF VC10 (XV108). Two grass mounds in the Aeropark allow you to watch the activity at East Midlands Airport over the top of the fence.
©Mike Curtis.



Inspiring the next generation

BRANCH NEWS

including region, area and overseas news



Welcome to a bumper issue of branch news, packed with news of celebrations of the 100th birthday of the RAF from all over the UK and the world.

supported by our Association branch support officer. The centenary year and social programme will provide the basis of an active and informative year ahead.

Our welcome also to the Association's newest branches, set up in the first half of this year: Wansbeck and District Branch and Beedale and RAF Leeming Branch.

Birstall Branch 4
Birstall (Leicester) Branch recently lost its president of 10 years' standing: Eve Cooper, who sadly passed away in January at the grand old age of 93. The branch has subsequently elected Arthur Towlson as its new president. Arthur spent two years in the RAF between 1949 and 1951 as an electrician at RAF North Luffenham and was demobbed with the rank of Senior Aircraftman. He has been a member of the branch for 30 years and was for many years its standard bearer. The photograph shows Arthur being presented with his president's medallion by Branch Chairman Julie Pears.

Abbots and Kings Langley Branch 1
RAF100 and Sopwith Camel lapel badges were a great success at the branch Wings Appeal collection in April. Although it was very cold and Asda did not appear to be as busy as usual, we managed to collect £1,603 on the day, which was amazing. We did have three serving RAF members helping us in the morning, and four veterans in blazers, badges, medals etc which always attracts attention and encourages the public to make a donation. We ordered more teddy bears (as we sold out very quickly), 100 lapel badges and windmills for our next collection in June.

Bodmin Branch 5
On Sunday 8 April the branch commemorated the 100th anniversary of the RAF in a service at St Petroc's Parish Church in Bodmin. High ranking current and retired service men and women joined RAF cadets and civilians for the event. Standards were paraded into the church and were presented to the clergy to be displayed around the altar and the Standard of the Royal Air Forces Association was laid over the altar. The ceremonial sword (pictured) that was initially presented to Bodmin Town Council by RAF St Mawgan in 1973 was brought to the Chancel steps and was presented to Mayor of Bodmin, Councillor Sara Kinsman by Officer Commanding RAF St Mawgan, Wing Commander Alex Mason.



Barrow-in-Furness Branch 2
Barrow-in-Furness Branch celebrated its 70th anniversary in style, which also marked 100 years of the RAF. Branch Treasurer Jean Frame was presented with a presidential award for ten years' dedication to the branch by Northern Area Branch Support Officer Laura Cort and by Tony Callister, Barrow's mayor. The event was attended by 150 members of the Association, friends, family and cadets from the Barrow and Ulverston ATC Squadrons. They were entertained by Ulverston Town Band, Becki Fishwick and Dave Took. Chairman Des Murphy said it was a very proud occasion.

Barnstaple and North Devon Branch 3
The branch recently held our annual general meeting at a local pub owned by a branch member. Difficult to get better than that. A better attended event than of previous years,



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BRANCH NEWS

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Bognor Regis Branch 6

With Bognor's mayor and local dignitaries, members celebrated the centenary of the RAF with a buffet dance at the RAF Association branch club on 31 March.

On 7 April, the 100th anniversary of a tragic accident was marked with a graveside memorial service. Joining the branch were the Lord Lieutenant, Susan Pyper (ex-RAF) and High Sherriff, Caroline Nicholls DL, of West Sussex, the MP for Chichester, Gillian Keegan, 92 Squadron Association members, representatives from the Tangmere Military Aviation Museum and staff and cadets from the Bognor and Chichester air cadet squadrons. Afterwards there was a flypast of replica WWI aircraft including an SE5a, representing the aircraft in which one of the three pilots from 92 Squadron died.



Braunstone Branch 7

R. Taylor, Chairman 'FWRC', Janice Richards, Chairman Leicestershire County Council, Lady Gretton, Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire and Rashmikant Joshi, Lord Mayor of Leicester jointly celebrating the 100th anniversary of the RAF. They had laid a wreath and inspected cadets from 2070 (Glenfield) Squadron ATC at a ceremony organised by the branch at Welford Road Cemetery on 7 April.



Bridlington Branch 8

To commemorate the 100th birthday of the RAF, the Bridlington Branch held a formal dinner at the Revelstoke Hotel on 2 April 2018. The dinner was attended by almost 60 guests including branch members, members of 252 (Bridlington) Squadron ATC and invited guests. The photograph shows Branch Chairman Bob Newman cutting the celebration cake with Cadet Corporal Seb Carvill-Belt. In the centre of the picture is Squadron Leader (Ret'd) Cameron Ashtton who acted as 'President of the Mess Committee' for the evening. His wife Heather had made the roundel of flowers for the occasion.



Burnham-on-Sea and District Branch 9

The Burnham-on-Sea and District Branch celebrated the 100th anniversary of the RAF in style. The Token was received from the Taunton Branch and the photograph shows members of the branch outside the Royal British Legion (RBL) Branch who hosted us in receiving the Token. The Token was transferred to the Weston-super-Mare Branch by motorcycle sidecar, and I can assure you, the sidecar contains the branch president clutching the Token. The sidecar was followed by 15 motorcycles of the RBL Motorcycle Club from Bristol. It was agreed by the members of the branch that we had done our best.

Bury St Edmunds Branch 10

On 1 April 2018, members of the Bury St Edmunds branch celebrated the 100 year Anniversary of the RAF with a dinner at the Ravenwood Hall in Rougham, Bury St Edmunds. This was well attended by members and their partners. An exceptional meal was had, followed by a toast to the RAF and Her Majesty The Queen.



Caduceus Branch

After a lot of hard work by the committee, and especially our new Wings Appeal Co ordinator Viv, the branch shop is now live. On its first day and a half of trading, over £150 of orders were received! The shop is our face to the world and anyone can buy - all proceeds go to the Association and it brings our total raised so far to £600: rafacaduceus.co.uk. For RAF100 we are co-hosting a RAF100 black tie ball with the Swindon Branch on 1 September. The ball will be at the Marriott Hotel, Swindon with a three course meal, the RAF Association Band and a disco. All proceeds will go to the RAF100 Appeal.

Cannock Chase Branch 11

A local greenkeeper who has been tending the grave of an Australian airman at Cannock Cemetery for more than 25 years was recognised by the Cannock Chase Branch. The ceremony to give a certificate of appreciation to Wayne Hartshorn was covered by the BBC (seen here, filming) and local papers. Wayne said he was humbled when he was recognised by John Allman, President of the branch, at the graveside of Warrant Officer John Burrows. He told the Express and Star newspaper: "I noticed he was from Australia, thousands of miles away, and thought it was a shame that he was buried so far from home. I did it out of respect."

Carrickfergus Branch 12

The branch has celebrated the 100th anniversary of the RAF by holding a dinner and dance at Carrickfergus Golf Club on Friday 20 April. Branch President, Maureen Irwin, welcomed all to the gathering during her speech and thanked the club captain for the outstanding support the club has afforded the branch. Branch Chairman, Colin Murphy, spoke of the great success the branch is enjoying: "Our secret is regular meetings, a great social programme, and the satisfaction the members get from raising so much money for our welfare work." George Smith, Branch Vice President received an Area Presidential Certificate for his outstanding contribution to fundraising. The Ensemble of the Royal Irish Regiment and Brian Horner and Chris Betts entertained us royally.



Chelmsford Branch 13

Jim Machin (pictured right) recently stood down as Chairman of the Chelmsford Branch having first been elected to the post 20 years ago. A recipient of the National Presidential Certificate for valuable service, Jim was delighted to then be appointed as branch president. The incoming Chairman Flight Lieutenant Richie Miller JP, GCGI, RAFVR(T) (Ret'd) said Jim has worked tirelessly for the branch for 40 years and wished him an enjoyable time as president in this, the centenary year of the formation of the RAF. Richie Miller added: "This is an exciting time for the branch, we have a new committee and are building a busy programme of events to mark this special year". For information e-mail chelmsford.rafa@gmail.com or call 07931 238380.

Christchurch Branch 14

On Sunday 8 April the branch commemorated the 100th anniversary of the formation of the RAF in The Priory, Christchurch. The Christchurch Branch standard bearer, Mr Des Waller, led the procession of standards ably supported by standard bearers of: Poole Branch, 171 (Christchurch) and 2391 (Parkstone) squadrons of the Royal Air Force Air Cadets, and various local naval associations. The large congregation consisted of serving and retired RAF personnel and their families, members and supporters of other armed forces organisations and members of the general public. In his address the Reverend Canon Turpin referred to the formation of the RAF, episodes in its history, the sacrifices made by personnel and the RAF's continuing peacekeeping roles.

BRANCH NEWS

including region, area and overseas news



Corsham and Chippenham Branch 15

In April, Strings Incognito and 992 (Malmesbury) Squadron ATC, proudly presented a family prom in Malmesbury Abbey to celebrate 100 years of the RAF. The audience listened to classical favourites before taking a short musical tour of the British Isles and finishing with a selection of patriotic songs led by the soprano soloist, Rhiannon Milner (pictured). Nicola Aston superbly conducted the string and percussion orchestra that is based in Chippenham. Later, at a squadron parade, members of Strings Incognito, Officer Commanding 992 (Malmesbury) Squadron, staff and cadets presented a cheque for £1,022 from the proceeds of the concert to Arthur Antill, Chairman of the Corsham and Chippenham Branch.

Cranwell Branch 16

The Cranwell Branch started their 2018 outings to the Cromford Mill near Matlock. A cold day but a very interesting location brought to life by two tour guides. The next was to the Lakeland Retail Centre near to Doncaster to be followed by a neighbouring visit to Brodsworth Hall. This is an English Heritage property where, once taken over, the decision was to try and maintain it as a 'lived in' property rather than update it. Both of these locations can be strongly recommended and the members thoroughly enjoyed both events.



Haverfordwest Branch

On 1 April 2018 Branch Chairman Tony Roe and members Ron and Ann Ansell and Gary and Fiona Evans helped mark the 100th birthday of the RAF. Their RAF Association stand was part of a 'major Welsh event' at Pembroke Dock Heritage Centre. More than 250 visitors came to the event, which was also attended by 948 Squadron (Haverfordwest and St Davids) ATC Squadron, The Pembrey Mountain Trust, The Welsh Spitfire, Coastlands History Group from Dale, Marloes and St Ishmael's, the Templeton History Group, and the Penfro Model Club. The RAF100 exhibition, 'Many Nations, Many Trades' runs at Pembroke Dock until September 2018.

Harrogate and District Branch 17

On Sunday 1 April 2018, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the date when the RAF was formed, the Harrogate and District Branch held their annual dinner at Ascot House, Kings Road, Harrogate. After a delicious lunch, the guest of honour, Squadron Leader Geoff Dickson, Commanding Officer RAF Menwith Hill, gave an inspiring speech on the history of the RAF followed by some of his personal memories from his 35 years of service. The Deputy Chairman, Squadron Leader Phil Crebbin then spoke of the achievements of the branch this year (including the impressive £3,500 raised for the Wings Appeal) and read the famous poem High Flight. The lunch was rounded off with a raffle, with the proceeds going to the Wings Appeal.

Huyton with Roby and Liverpool Branch 18

Our branch got off to a 'good start' with this year's Wings Appeal collections. We were fortunate enough to once again have the support of the local TESCO Superstore, (Old Swan, Liverpool), which allowed our branch to erect our pop-up stand within the store entrance on the weekend of 24 and 25 January 2018. The collection raised, £1,214.49. Our thanks go to all the staff and customers for their generosity. The photograph shows the Store Manager, Simon Jones, with our Wings Appeal Organiser, Phil Southern by his stand, and committee member Deryk Stanton (with beret). For further details, go to our website: rafa.org.uk/huyton-with-roby-liverpool



Ile-de-France Branch 19

The branch organised a Wings Appeal concert in Paris on 2 June to mark the centenary of the RAF. The branch is fortunate to have in its ranks Andrew Holford who was, in his youth, principal trumpet with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and it is Andrew who is the musical director and organiser of this important event for our small branch. This year the concert programme was changed to include vocalists who encouraged the audience to participate in their renderings of some Vera Lynn classics.

Isle of Man Branch 20

Pictured are prize winners from Foxdale School who took part in the RAF 100 art competition run by the branch for the Isle of Man's schools. With over 100 entries and some magnificent pictures it was a difficult job for the judges Jim Kewin, Branch Chairman and Mr B Cottier, President of the branch. The Isle of Man Branch is working hard across the island to raise the profile of the Association during the 100th anniversary year. They have also held a ball and will be fundraising throughout the year at various events.



Johannesburg Branch 21

The branch organised a service and lunch to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the formation of the RAF as well as the annual commemoration of the Joint Air Training Scheme between the RAF and the South African Air Force. 100 people attended, The Welsh Choir sang and a flypast of a Harvard was provided by the South African Air Force. Representatives from the British, Polish and Canadian Embassies, South African Air Force, RAF Association Johannesburg Branch and Area, South African Air Force Association, Royal Air Force Officers Club, Korean War Veterans, South African Legion, World Veterans Association, South African Legion Veterans, Warsaw Flights Organising Committee, Alpine 44 Club, 43 Air School, MOTHW Organisation, MOTHWA Organisation and Transvaal Scottish Regimental Association all laid wreaths.



King's Lynn Branch 22

King's Lynn Branch President, Wing Commander (Ret'd) Vic Stapley OBE DFC, presided over a very successful big band concert featuring the RAF Swing Wing Band, at the Corn Exchange, King's Lynn. The event was well supported by both the membership and general public together with a number of individuals and local businesses also making generous donations. Local dignitaries attending including Councillor Carol Bower, Mayor of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and Group Captain Ian Townsend, Station Commander RAF Marham.



Letchworth and Hitchin Branch 23

On Thursday 12 April the branch celebrated the centenary of the RAF. An evening of picture displays of RAF aircraft past and present, distinguished speakers and guests (including Lord Hugh Trenchard), memorabilia from when branch members served in the RAF and a raffle was topped off with an amazing buffet organised by the branch members. Everyone had a fantastic night, the older members of the branch enjoyed sharing their memories and stories of mischief with the current serving personnel. The laughter and chatter was deafening and it was wonderful to see so many old and new service personnel celebrating 100 years of the RAF. We hope it continues for another 100 years!

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Malta Branch 24

The annual wreath laying ceremony of the branch took place on 4 May at the Commonwealth Air Forces Memorial at Floriana. It was conducted under the patronage of H.E. Acting President of Malta, Ms Dolores Christina, in the presence of His Honorable Prime Minister of Malta, Dr Joseph Muscat. H.E. British High Commissioner, Mr Stuart Gill and other high commissioners, ambassadors and consuls from Commonwealth countries. To mark the 100th anniversary of the RAF and the 70th anniversary of the RAF (Malta), the ceremony started with a short message by the Honorary Secretary, Major Tony Abela who emphasized the close links of the RAF with Malta during these hundred years. Local presidents of other forces groups also laid wreaths.



24

Melton Mowbray Branch and Rutland Branch 25

Standard bearers for the Association's Melton Mowbray Branch and Rutland Branch were proud to attend the RAF100 service at St Clement Danes church and the Royal Courts of Justice in London, for the national celebration of the 100th anniversary of the RAF on 1 April 2018.



25

Moray Branch (previously Lossiemouth Branch) 26

The branch changed its identity from Lossiemouth to Moray Branch early in 2018 and moved to the Ex Services Club in Elgin. Our new standard was dedicated during the Area Conference Sunday service in Perth (the old one was laid up in Elgin). We said goodbye to three stalwart members at our annual dinner in Elgin. Janet Payne is moving to Lincolnshire after giving many years of loyal service as secretary to the branch and the area. She was also our principle welfare officer, helping resolve countless cases. Liz and Ian Nelson leave to move to the Inverurie area where they will be joining our colleagues. April also saw the annual wreath laying ceremony at Dallachy for ANZAC day, organised by personnel from RAF Lossiemouth and attended by Eddie Pratt as wreath layer (pictured).



26

Morecambe and Lancaster Branch 27

On 1 April, Morecambe and Lancaster Branch opened the RAF100 celebrations by unveiling a flowerbed of the RAF roundel in the town centre. It will be replanted later in the year as the RAF100 logo, using more permanent plants to last a couple of years. Other flower displays have been arranged for Halton in Lancaster, and Kendal. Later that afternoon the branch held a commemorative service at St Barnabas Church, Morecambe, in the presence of the High Sheriff of Lancashire and other civic dignitaries. Two weeks later Lancaster Military Heritage Group, with the support of the branch, arranged a talk by Nina Hadaway of the RAF Museum, entitled "1908-18: The Genesis of the RAF". The following day, the branch welcomed honoured guests to the Headway Hotel for a splendid formal dining-in night.



27



◀ Winner of the Spitfire Gin or Supermarine Vodka photograph of the month



28



28

WWII Air Gunner Lawrence Allen with former England international footballer, Peter Beardsley

Newcastle and Gateshead Branch 28

Newcastle and Gateshead Branch opened their RAF100 programme with a Commonwealth Remembrance Ceremony at Chevington Cemetery attended by more than 200 people. During the ceremony, wreaths were laid on the war memorial and remembrance crosses were placed on the graves of the 23 Commonwealth airmen who are buried there. The final salute was taken by Group Captain R C Jacob, Officer Commanding RAF Boulmer. The branch also attended the National Conference football match between Gateshead and Dagenham at the Gateshead International Stadium. Standard Bearer Dave Gilbert, RAFALO Mark Barker and member Chris James marched onto the pitch before kick off to the strains of the RAF March while, in the grandstand, 92 year old WWII Air Gunner Lawrence Allen met up with former England international footballer, Peter Beardsley (pictured). A collection raised £203 for the Wings Appeal.



29

North Costa Blanca Branch 29

The 100th anniversary of the RAF was celebrated in excellent style by members of the North Costa Blanca Branch, some of whom had managed to squeeze into their Mess Dress uniform. On Saturday 31 March they and their guests celebrated at the Canor Restaurant, Teulada until after midnight - when a grand toast was made on the actual date of the 100th anniversary.



30

Guests included Assistant to the Defence Attaché in the British Embassy in Madrid, and members of the RAF Engineering Team attached to the Tactical Leadership Programme at the Spanish Air Force Base in Albacete. A special welcome was made to Mrs Jenny Hart, President of the Masonic Home of Valencia Association and the Association's Treasurer, and Mr Hugh Parker, who presented a cheque for the magnificent sum of €2,000 in support of the Wings Appeal. Toasts were followed by the raffle and the naming of the bear competition - which jointly raised €535. The bear then headed off to a new home in Madrid.

Roe Valley Branch 30

The Roe Valley Branch raised the RAF Ensign at the town war memorial on 1 April to acknowledge the foundation of the RAF in 1918 (photo shows David Glasser, Branch Secretary). On 14 and 15 April the branch mounted an exhibition of RAF photographs and memorabilia in the parish hall at Christchurch, Limavady, and were permitted to fly the RAF Ensign from the flagstaff on the church tower for the weekend - an unusual occurrence remarked on by many members of the community. On Sunday 15 April a special church service and 'most sumptuous buffet' was held in Christchurch to commemorate the centenary. It was attended by members of Roe Valley, Causeway Coast, and Londonderry branches, members of other armed forces' associations and dignitaries.



31

Rushden and District Branch 31

The RAF Northolt Association committee hosted 13 members of the Rushden and District Branch in March and gave them a tour around the station. The tour started by visiting 32 Squadron (The Royal Squadron), where they met the crews and had the opportunity to look inside the BAe146 and A109 aircraft as well as having a presentation on the role of the squadron. After lunch in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess, they visited the WWII Ops Building which is in the process of being turned into a heritage centre and returned to how it would have been during the war. This was followed by a presentation by The Queen's Colour Squadron on their role and commitments during RAF100. The day was a great success and a fantastic opportunity for the station RAFALOs to forge links with a new branch.

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Rydale Branch 32

Ten members of Ryedale Branch gathered at Eden Camp Modern History Theme Museum to present Museum Manager Nick Hill with a wheelchair for the use of less mobile visitors. Welfare team members Rosie Schofield and Carol Sollitt explained that with all its exhibits on the ground, Eden Camp is perfect for a family visit for young and old alike. The wheelchair will help all members of the family to fully enjoy their visit. As well as being an enthralling modern history museum, Eden Camp is host to a number of service memorials and reunions including the Eden Camp All Services Veterans' Parade which is the largest gathering of veterans in the north of England. 95 year old Branch President and Chairman Cyril Shreeve (pictured) was the first to give the wheelchair a test drive.

South Fylde Branch 33

South Fylde Branch held a centenary dinner in St Annes, attended by 100 guests, including Fylde MP Mark Menzies, local mayors and mayoresses and the branch chaplain. Guests were welcomed by Branch Chairman Tony Barrett in full RAF tartan, and were piped in to dinner by Bill Bissett (both pictured). A highlight of the evening was when a letter from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was read out, sending her best wishes to all those dining to mark the most notable anniversary. Squadron Leader Will Thurrell gave a talk on the history of the RAF. The guests included Association members, serving and retired RAF personnel, employees from Richard Peck House, BAE Warton personnel and members of Fylde Veterans.

St Mawgan Branch 34

In April the St Mawgan Branch held a charity screening of the epic film 'The Battle of Britain' in the Newquay Lighthouse Cinema. The packed house of 200 included branch and committee members and service members of RAF St Mawgan. The evening started with wine and Cornish pasties in the cinema foyer. Then, with everyone seated in the auditorium, the county standards were paraded and dipped for the National Anthem. A prize draw was held and a very entertaining introductory talk given by branch member, 'local lad' Air Commodore John Bessell. With radio and local newspaper coverage, the event, as well as helping raise local public awareness for the RAF Association and RAF St Mawgan Branch, raised over £2,350 towards Wings Appeal.



Stockton and Thornaby Branch (in Bahrain) 35

Ron Morris, the deputy standard bearer of the branch, attended the annual wreath laying ceremony at the British Embassy in Bahrain during a holiday visiting relatives. He was proud to lay a wreath on behalf of the branch and to attend a reception given by the United Kingdom Ambassador.

Sud-Ouest France 36

On a very hot and bright Sunday in April, hundreds of British and French family and friends assembled in the small village of Losse to honour the Special Operations Executive (SOE) radio operator "Odette" - Flight Officer Yvonne Baseden MBE WAAF. There were many veterans and their standards, including a large contingent from the Sud-Ouest France Branch. Our picture shows the monument inaugurated to honour the SOE F Section Wheelwright Sector Operatives, many of whom lost their lives for the liberation of Europe. It marked the spot where Yvonne parachuted in in 1944. Despite capture and incarceration in the infamous Ravensbruck concentration camp, she survived to the age of 95. Her family were there on the day to honour this brave, special and courageous WAAF officer.

Swansea Branch 37

The City of Swansea marked RAF100 with a number of special events, the first being on Friday morning 20 April, with the hoisting of the RAF Ensign by the Air Officer Commanding Wales Air Commodore Adrian Williams OBE and the Lord Lieutenant of West Glamorgan D Byron Lewis KStJ, AFC. In the evening a concert was held with the RAF College Band from Cranwell accompanied by local male voice choirs and other supporting artists. On Saturday 21 April a church service was held at St Mary's Church, City of Swansea, conducted by the Archbishop of Wales the Most Reverend John Davies. It was followed by a parade, which included detachments of the Queen's Colour Squadron and regular RAF personnel, air cadet squadrons and veterans.



Woodbridge Branch 38

The Woodbridge Branch is constantly on the lookout for any branch members who live in the Woodbridge, Felixstowe and Ipswich area who are willing and able to give a bit of their time to help on the committee. The current Woodbridge committee has helped raise an amazing total of well over £6,500 for the Wings Appeal by attending events including the Suffolk Show in Ipswich, Armed Forces Day in Felixstowe, Martlesham Heath 100 celebration and by doing several collections. If anyone can assist, please get in touch with the Chairperson, Mrs Jacqui Bates, by email at woodbridgerafa@gmail.com.

Worcester and District Branch 39

350 veterans, air cadets, serving personnel and branch members paraded through the city of Worcester to a service at Worcester Cathedral for the branch's celebration of the 100th birthday of the RAF. "Standards were unfurled and the air trembled with the rumble of applause and thunder of drums as crowds in their hundreds lined the streets", reported the Worcester News. The parade and service were two and a half years in the making said Branch Chairman John Mason who decided to organise the event when he found out there was nothing planned for the city - which he described as 'not good enough'. He said: "It started as a pipe dream. Today is the culmination of an ambition." The RAF Association Token was also part of the parade. See more about its tour on pages 16 and 17.

Yaxley and District Branch 40

To celebrate RAF100, the Yaxley Branch and Lancaster Club held two special events on Saturday 31 March. The day began with an afternoon tea party for 21 local former RAF servicemen and women, as well as members of the Lancaster Club. Our valued guests were treated to a fabulous spread of homemade sandwiches, scones and cakes as well as a good old cuppa. For the more hardy there was something a little stronger on the menu. The afternoon went with a

And the winner of the April-June branch news photo competition is...

25 Melton and Rutland branches, for their image of their standard bearers at St Clement Danes on 1 April 2018. They get to choose from a bottle of gin or a bottle of vodka.

For your chance to win your choice of a bottle of either Spitfire Heritage Gin or Supermarine Vodka, simply submit the 'best branch news photo' in the next issue of Air Mail.



swing and a strong 'Cockney' flavour as our guests were entertained by local duo Ian 'Rosie' Rose and Matthew - on spoons (pictured). Songs included old favourites such as Knees up Mother Brown, Kiss Me Goodnight Sergeant Major and Roll Out The Barrel, with guests heartily joining in.

York Branch 41

In April York Branch members joined York Aircrew Association for a fascinating guided walk of York Cemetery. It focussed on graves and monuments with military connections - including the grave of 17 year old air cadet Anthony Lain, pictured, killed in an air collision in 1946. The York Cemetery Trust is now helping the cemetery regain some of its original dignity and it is also a much-loved nature reserve. Other activities in this 100th anniversary year include a trip to the Eden Camp Museum for the annual reunion and remembrance of the Escape Lines Memorial Society, the second turning of the page ceremony (see Apr-Jun Air Mail), an Easter bonnet competition, a presentation by the York Film Archive and representation at the annual RAF East Moor commemorative service in May.





Treasurer's report on the 2017 financial year

The trustees (Council) are responsible for ensuring that the Association's financial activities comply with the laws enshrined in four UK and Scotland acts, and with the provisions of the Royal Charter. The Association works to standard FRS 102, which is the main UK financial reporting standard and a mandatory requirement for the Association, based on its size and the nature of its operations.

Two sub-committees provide specialist expertise to Council. The finance committee gives detailed oversight on all financial matters and the audit committee provides oversight on business critical issues. Further scrutiny is applied by RSM UK LLP, the Association's external auditors. They have provided an unqualified opinion on the Association's 2017 statutory accounts and are happy that the accounts are free from material misstatement.

The 2017 annual accounts show a surplus net income of £2.28 million.

Income:
In 2017, the main sources of income were fundraising campaigns, including community fundraising (particularly that undertaken by branches) and individual giving, together with gifts given in wills.

Successful fundraising is critical to the sustained financial health of the Association and our ability to provide support to the RAF family. In 2017, consolidated incoming resources raised from members, volunteers, the general public and investment income was £14.5 million, an increase of 12.8 per cent, (2016: £12.85 million). Legacy income was £4.62 million, a fall of £1.79 million from 2016 (£6.4 million). The annual Wings Appeal remains an important source of funding, raising £1.28 million, an increase of £35,000 from 2016. Investment income of £1.01 million increased by 61.3 per cent (2016 £625,000) underpinned by strong investment asset performance. Investment assets (investment portfolio and property) grew by £1.9 million (2016 £2.45 million).

Expenditure:
In 2017, expenditure of £14.1 million was £2.36 million above the 2016 level, in line with the budget agreed by Council.

More than £12.3 million supported residential and Wings Breaks hotels and activities providing friendship and welfare support. There have been no significant changes to the nature of the charitable activities and there has been no decrease in levels of service. Costs of raising funds fell by £173,000; this is largely due to a pause in the investment associated with large door-to-door campaigns, the success of which will be evaluated in 2018, and the continuing drive to diversify, which will realise extra income without incurring extra costs in coming years.

Reserves:
Much work has been undertaken to understand the reserves of the Association. In line with charity guidelines and in consultation with the Association's auditors, reserves are categorised as restricted, designated and general. General reserves are held at a level to enable unhindered operational activity for 12 months. Designated reserves are held to ensure that the operational infrastructure of the Association can be maintained. The reserves as at 31 December 2017 breakdown as follows: Restricted - £1,338,000; Designated - £20,375,000; General - £11,325,000.

Restricted reserves grew marginally in the year from £933,000 to £1,338,000. These funds make up a smaller part of the Association's funds overall and may only be used for specific purposes which are all welfare-related.

Due care and consideration is taken to ensure that the level of reserves held does not detrimentally impact our ability to deliver our charitable purpose.

Balance sheet:
We have a strong balance sheet which continues to grow. In 2017 it grew by £2.57 million. Unlike many organisations it is underpinned by real assets - our investment portfolio, our property (our fixed assets) and cash (our current assets).

The Association's investment portfolio of £23.21 million reflects an increase in market value of £1.38 million from 2016. The Association's investment manager is, however, instructed to be ever more vigilant during a time of economic and political uncertainty.

costs of raising funds fell

The deficit in the defined benefit pension scheme has fallen from £2.27 million in 2016 to £1.62 million at the end of 2017. The Association remains firmly committed to reducing the deficit and, in the long term, eradicating it completely.

Consolidated unrestricted reserves totalled £32.95 million at the end of 2017 (2016: £30.37 million) which puts us a good position to fulfil our 2020 plan.

We must be careful not to build our reserves up to a point which actually becomes a weakness. We don't want to give those who might support us the impression that we don't need their money. This could undermine our fundraising activity and our ability to fund our welfare activities and prompt the Charity Commission to question why we're not using our wealth to fund our charitable objects.

Future financial planning:
Achievement of the 2020 objectives set by Council will continue to require prudent financial investment. This will enable the Association to grow while maintaining healthy financial stability.

We will continue to use independent assessors, ARC, to undertake an independent annual review of Rathbones' performance in managing our investment portfolio. The Association has no current plans to sell any of our investments as our financial plan generates sufficient income to cover the costs of delivering our charitable activities. The latest investment policy has refined our ethical approach regarding what funds we judge it appropriate to invest in.

Watch the Honorary Treasurer's report and presentation for Conference 2018 on YouTube, here: RAF Association Annual Conference 2018 Opening Session at 00hrs 36mins 40secs.



Honorary Treasurer, Phil Tagg. © Heidi Burton.

*The seal of the Association's Royal Charter, to which we must conform.
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100 YEARS AGO = THE DAY THE RAF SAVED NEW YORK

by Lawrence McGowan



Major Egbert 'Bertie' Cadbury DSC DFC - properly dressed for open cockpit flying.
© Image courtesy of Norfolk County Council Library and Information Service

A little-known RAF victory off the coast of Norfolk on 5 August 1918 changed the course of history. It saved civilian lives, helped end Zeppelin bombing raids that had already claimed almost 2,000 casualties in English cities, and is likely to have rescued New York from the ravages of war.

The action, just 126 days after the creation of the RAF as the world's first independent air force, downed the pride of Germany's Zeppelin fleet, the L70. It was carrying 8,000 pounds of bombs. Among the 21-member crew killed was Fregattencapitän Peter Strasser, the Führer der Luftschiffe (commander of all naval airships).

Four remaining Zeppelins abandoned the mission, dumped their bombs and headed for their base at Friedrichshafen.

Zeppelins never returned to the skies above England. The action also disrupted German plans for the L70 and two other airships in the group, the L53 and L65, to cross the Atlantic and bomb New York. The war ended just three months later.

Earlier that evening, Major Egbert 'Bertie' Cadbury, heir to the Birmingham-based confectionery empire, was attending a bank holiday charity concert in which his wife was singing.

On receiving news of the sighting from an RAF orderly Cadbury, in his own words: "roared down to the station in my ever-ready Ford, seized a scarf, goggles and helmet, tore off my streamline coat and, semi-clothed, with a disreputable jacket under my arm, sprinting as hard as ever nature would let me, took a running jump into the pilot's seat."

The major, a squadron commander, took up a two-man No 4 Group Airco DH4 from the RAF airfield at South Denes, Great Yarmouth, with Captain Robert Leckie in the rear gunner's seat. He took his aircraft to over 16,000 feet by jettisoning his reserve fuel and some small bombs.

Cadbury later recalled: "At 2220hrs we had climbed to 16,400 feet and I attacked the Zeppelin ahead slightly to the port so as to be clear of any obstructions that might be suspended from the airship. It was a most fascinating sight – awe inspiring – to see this enormous Zeppelin blotting the whole sky above one."

"The tracers ignited the escaping gas, the flames spreading rapidly and turning the airship into a fireball in less than a minute. The L70 dived headlong into the clouds. It was one of the most terrifying sights I have ever seen to see this huge machine hurtling down with all those crew on board."

Next day he wrote to his father: "Another Zeppelin has gone to destruction, sent there by a perfectly peaceful live-and-let-live citizen, who has no lust for blood or fearful war spirit in his veins."

Cadbury, Leckie and another pilot, Lieutenant Ralph Keys, attacked and damaged a second Zeppelin.

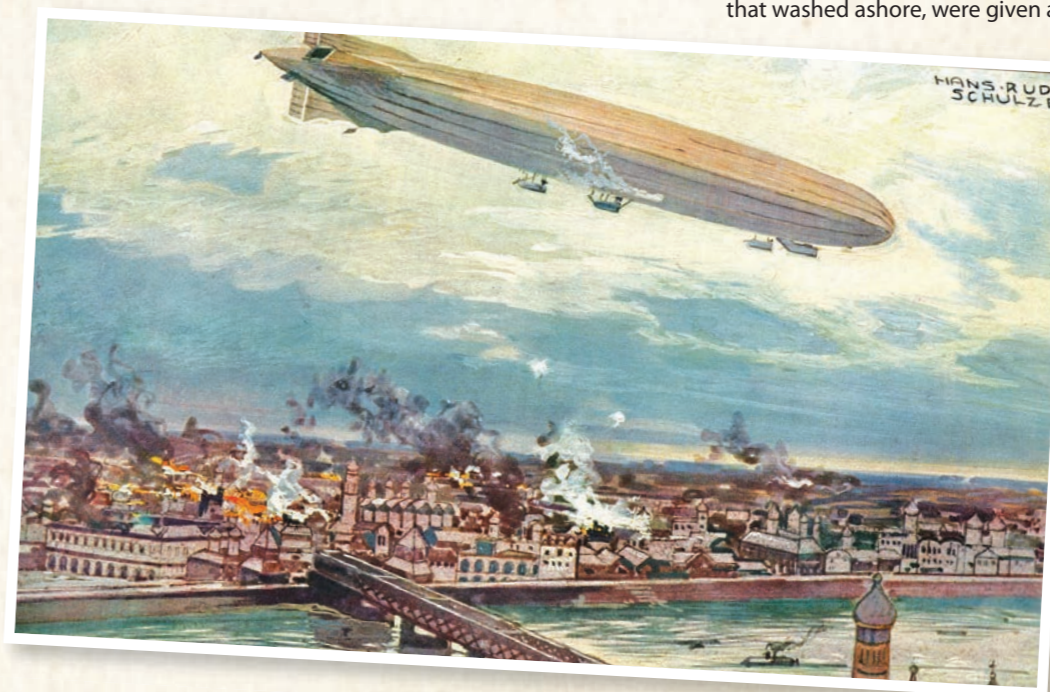
The Commodore of Lowestoft recommended Cadbury for a Victoria Cross for attacking two airships 40 miles out to sea in a landplane in freezing conditions. All three received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Cadbury, who transferred from the Royal Naval Air Service to the RAF on its formation, already had a Distinguished Service Order to his credit for his part in destroying the L21 Zeppelin in November 1916. Earlier that year the L21 was involved in a night-time bombing of the Black Country in mistake for Liverpool. 35 men, women and children were killed, including three generations of one family and the lady mayoress of Walsall who was a passenger on a No 14 tram.

After the war Cadbury was made an honorary air commodore and awarded a knighthood.

The L70 was the most advanced of the Zeppelins in service during the First World War. It was 693ft long, had a maximum speed of 81mph, maximum altitude of 23,000 feet and was capable of flying bombing missions against New York.

Skeletal remains of the L70 were found in 48ft of water on 7 August 1918. Several bodies were recovered, including that of Führer der Luftschiffe, Peter Strasser. These, together with bodies that washed ashore, were given a burial at sea some days later.



A 1915 propaganda painting by war artist Professor Hans Rudolf Schulze portraying a daylight attack on Warsaw by a Schütte-Lanz airship. Similar style paintings were created showing Zeppelin attacks on major cities all over Europe, including London. © Chris Goss.



'Finished! Now we just need to fold it up a bit to get it into the big red box!' The completed replica in Cornwall just before shipping.



Above: Small batches of John Walters' vodka are brewed in copper stills, sealed with wax, in an ancient barn in Cambridgeshire, before being steeped with the Spitfire Heritage Gin botanicals.

Doing good with Spitfires and gin



Above: Dressed specially for us. The RAF Association livery on the gin bottles.

Right: Hands on; younger volunteers find out all about the aircraft.

A small batch, single estate gin from the world's number one maker launched in the UK in the late spring of 2016 under the Spitfire Heritage brand. Now, as well as being stocked in Harrods, it is helping raise the profile of the RAF Association and gifting funds to support our welfare work through its specially liveried bottles.

But Spitfire Heritage Distillers' run up to take off is unexpected. Its story takes us, via Spitfires, to the African Kingdom of Lesotho and back to an old fashioned barn in Cambridgeshire. And it starts with a children's book.

The Ghost of Cameron Crow was written by Ian Hewitt. It's the tale of a secret 'dragon' which is really a Spitfire - stolen for love by a young boy's grandfather and hidden away in his barn. In the course of marketing the book, Hewitt hit the airshows trail where he fell into conversation with fellow Spitfire enthusiast and former RAF intelligence officer, David Spencer-Evans.



All photos ©Spitfire Heritage Distillers and ©Spitfire Heritage Trust

"It rained all day," recalls Hewitt, "so I spent the day in the marquee talking to David." From that the Spitfire Heritage Trust was born. The trust's aim was to promote the aircraft and keep it relevant to generations who were losing touch with the WWII icon as time went on.

Its highest-profile initiative was to build and deliver a full sized replica of a Spitfire - and give it to Lesotho to say thank you to the whole nation for their support of Britain during the Second World War.

The tiny kingdom - which had a population of 40,000 in the 1940s, in an area about the size of Wales - was known at the time as Basutoland. As well as losing 1,000 of its young men who volunteered to fight, it gave the most money per head of population to build wartime Spitfires - enough funds for Britain to build 24 aircraft.

The full-size GPR replica Spitfire was built from composite materials by Spencer-Evans and his team, assisted by young people keen to get involved and learn. Modelled from an



Arriving in Memorial Square in Maseru, Lesotho.

authentic mould used for an original aircraft, it was created over five years in a small industrial unit in Withiel, Cornwall. The aircraft was transported in a container in three parts (two wings and the airframe) by sea and road to Africa. A second container of mountain bikes was also sent as an extra gift from the trust for the school children of Lesotho. The journey ended on Remembrance Day 2016, when the Mk Vb was put back together and formally received by King Letsie III. Its livery includes the code letters of 72 (Basutoland) Squadron and it has been on display in Memorial Square in Maseru, the country's capital since it arrived. Plans are now afoot to relocate it later this year, to the soon-to-be-opened National Museum of Lesotho Culture.

But the good works of the Spitfire Heritage Trust didn't fund themselves. A commercial product was needed that would help pay for the work the trust had ambitions to deliver. Hewitt recognised gin as the 'quintessential British tippie' and a great fit with the Spitfire. He believed only a gin of real quality could honour the peerless aircraft and saw there was room in the market not just for a great gin, but a gin that did good too.



Ian Hewitt (left) is delighted to see the Spitfires in the Lesotho (or Basuto) Blanket - part of the national dress of the country.



...continued



Master Distiller Dr John Walters creating a gin to represent courage, remembrance, Britain and those who paid the ultimate price.

Master distiller Dr John Walters - voted distiller of the best gin in the world at the San Francisco World Gin Awards in 2015 - was asked to help create what would become Spitfire Heritage Gin: a 'good' gin, a gin brand with soul and philanthropic heritage. This small batch, single estate botanical gin, crafted on a farm in Cambridgeshire, is today described by Harrods as 'one of Britain's best artisan gins.'

It is one of only a handful of single estate gins distilled in the UK from sugar beet. Its recipe fuses juniper, two types of orange, almonds and borage alongside coriander, rosemary, star anise and rose petals.

The distillery is housed in a Victorian barn with a duck pond outside and chickens wandering about. Under the beautiful exposed beams stand ranks of hand-beaten copper stills, sealed with wax, distilling small batches of liquor.

Small batches are important to produce purer, sweeter liquor with no trace of bitterness (See 'the process distilled' to the right.)

The botanicals were deliberately chosen in tribute to the women of the Air Transport Auxiliary who flew their aircraft unarmed and without escort: borage for courage; rosemary for remembrance; English rose petals for the flowers of Britain; and blood orange for those who paid the ultimate price.

The gin, and its sister spirit, Supermarine Vodka, are joining the RAF Association team on the road this summer on the UK airshows circuit. They can be ordered at the RAF Association stands at air shows and events around the country this summer, or online at spitfireheritagegin.com/rafa. For each RAF Association-liveried bottle of gin and vodka sold, £3.50 of profits will be given to the Association.



Celebrating the arrival of the replica Spitfire in Maseru, Lesotho.



Looking for the sweet spot, Sarah Hewitt, director of Spitfire Heritage Distillers.

The process, distilled

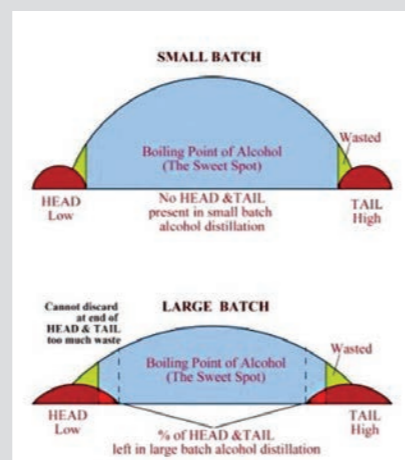
Sarah Hewitt, senior partner on the Spitfire Heritage Distillers' board describes why single estate, small batch is so important.

"With small batch distillations there are no impurities - because boiling point for the liquor is reached sooner. And that means you get a 100% clean finish.

"Gin is made from vodka. As a single estate distiller we grow, harvest and distil our own sugar beet to create vodka, then turn that vodka into an utterly sublime gin.

"The first fraction of product off the still is called the heads; the last is called the tails.

"The flavour of the vodka from the heads and tails is, quite frankly, dreadful. The larger the still - the larger the percentage of heads and tails you have to deal with. Distilling in small batches allows us to completely remove the heads and tails; leaving only the creamy delicious heart." (See diagram)



"The bit in the middle is the heart of the spirit. It's the best bit. The aim is to isolate the heart with no contamination either side from heads or tails

"So, our gin starts with something perfectly engineered - in our case its perfect vodka."

RAFALO of the year

Chief Technician Kerrie Stevens

A 'real driving force who shows unwavering enthusiasm and energy' has been awarded the Wally Marriott Trophy for the RAF Association Liaison Officer of the year.

Chief Technician Kerrie Stevens from RAF Cosford "gives up so much of her own time to support the local branches and wider RAF community. She was the first to engage the Wales, Midland and South Western Area team and puts real action to words and promises," said Area Director Paul Baker, when nominating her. "Kerrie often steps back from the limelight, allowing other members of the team to shine. In doing so she empowers the rest of the RAF Cosford RAFALO team to make a positive difference and share in her successes. Paul added: "The positive effects of her leadership are being felt at all levels. Kerrie provides structured and consistent support to all adjacent Association branches."

"As a uniformed presence at the Cosford and District Branch meetings, Kerrie has been encouraging the branch's development, providing support with their fundraising efforts and enhancing the bond between the serving RAF and veteran community," his nomination continued.

Chairman of Cosford and District Branch, Lyn Addison, spoke warmly of Kerrie's support to the branch: "[She] has been an absolute godsend. Whatever the branch is doing she's there supporting us and lending a hand. She's so full of energy and works tirelessly on behalf of the branch. She's a real credit to RAF Cosford and thoroughly deserves this award."

Top: Kerrie (centre) with guests at Rothbury House hotel.

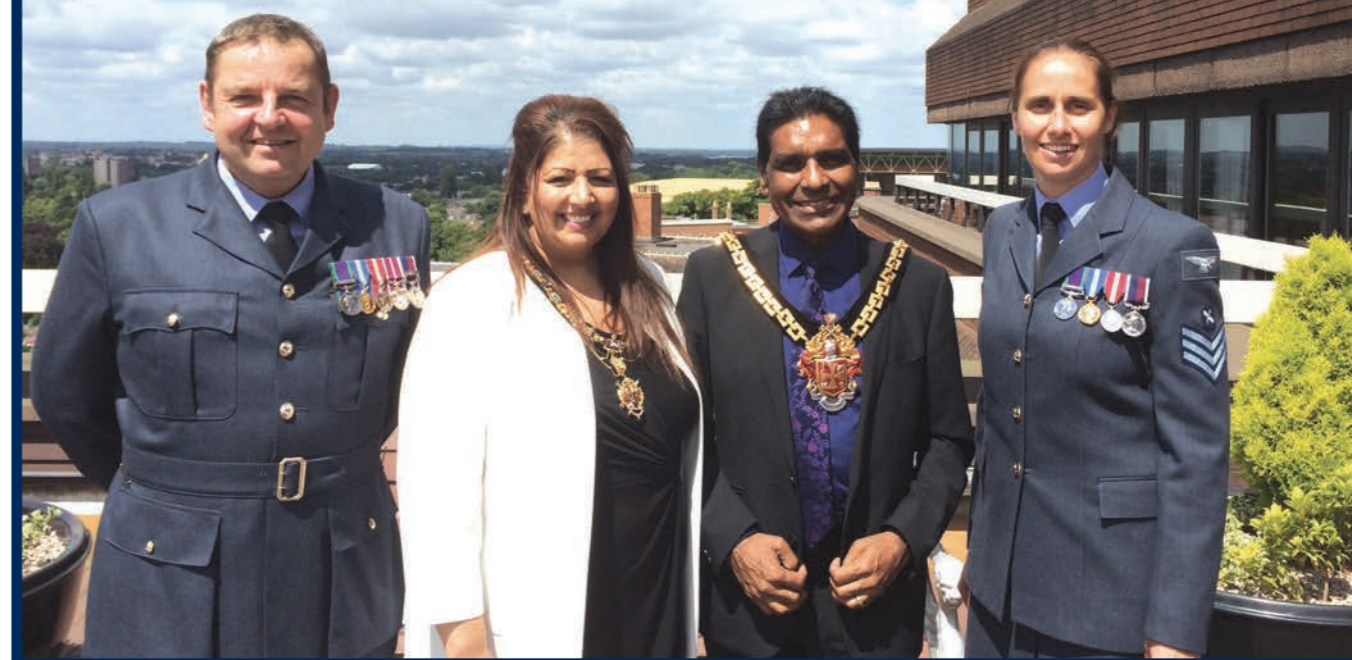
Centre: Fundraising and recruiting members at RAF Cosford Air Show

Bottom: From right - Kerrie at Wolverhampton Civic Centre with Elias Mattu, the late Mayor of Wolverhampton, his wife the mayoress, Asha Mattu, and Flight Lieutenant John Sloly, head of the RAFALO Committee at RAF Cosford

Paul Baker added: "Through her engagement with the RAF Association at all levels, branches, hotels and with the welfare department, the RAF Cosford RAFALO committee, and Kerrie in particular, are passionate about driving the RAF Association forward and intend to make their reach felt even further as they aim to support even more local branches to add to the seven they currently assist."

Kerrie said of her achievement: "I am extremely honoured to accept the RAFALO of the year trophy. I see the trophy as a team award, without the support of the rest of the RAFALO team at RAF Cosford and the guidance from the branch support officers, none of the excellent achievements we have accomplished throughout the year would be possible."

The Wally Marriott Trophy is presented at Conference every year to the RAF Association Liaison Officer who has made the most significant contribution in their role.



News from the RAF

by Mike Curtis

As celebrations marking the centenary year of the Royal Air Force continue around the UK, the service is looking to the future with the introduction of new aircraft. Three new training types are arriving at RAF bases and famous squadrons are being stood up to take on new roles.

Replacing the Grob Tutor, the Prefect 120TP is a new two-seat elementary training and aerobatic aircraft operating out of RAF Barkston Heath. Meanwhile the Embraer Phenom 100 has arrived at RAF Cranwell to eventually take over the multi-engine training duties of the King Air B200 and B200GT. With its touchscreen cockpit and comprehensive navigation, communications and flight safety suite, the Phenom 100 will deliver a quantum leap in flying training. It will be far closer to frontline types like the Atlas onto which its students will progress.

RAF Valley has also received new training aircraft – the first two Texan T6C advanced turboprops which are manufactured by Textron Aviation Incorporated in the United States. The Texans are part of a planned fleet of 10 that is set to deliver Basic Flying Training for RAF and Royal Navy pilots from 2019. The new Juno and Jupiter training helicopters are already in service

The arrival of the new aircraft represents a further development in the delivery of the UK Military Flying Training System (UKMFTS). This is a partnership between the Ministry of Defence and Ascent Flight Training Ltd which will replace the current military flying training programme with a modern system that is better-equipped to meet the needs of the next generation of front-line aircraft operated by the UK armed forces.

Two famous RAF squadrons are preparing to operate new aircraft out of UK bases. 617 Squadron (the Dambusters) has been formally stood up as the RAF's first F-35B Lightning II squadron. The announcement was made in Washington DC as part of the celebrations of the RAF centenary year. The squadron has been in the USA testing the aircraft and getting them ready to arrive at RAF Marham this summer.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson announced in May that RAF Air Command has assumed responsibility for command and control of UK military space operations to defend the UK's world-leading and crucial interests in space. His new defence space strategy will be unveiled in the summer. It will set out plans to protect the UK against threats such as jamming of civilian satellites used by broadcasters and satellite navigation to support military capabilities, and intends to boost employment in the UK defence space sector by a fifth in five years.

A £260 million agreement with the United States Government to support RAF's eight C-17 heavy lift transport aircraft into the next decade has been signed by the MOD. The deal will deliver spares, design services, reliability and maintenance improvements, access to technical resources, and RAF aircrew and maintenance crew training programmes. Defence minister Guto Bebb said: "This deal keeps them in the air into the next decade and affirms our leadership, alongside our American allies, in providing global security and humanitarian aid as we stand together in defence of our shared values."

RAF Typhoons have returned to Romania to continue their enhanced air policing mission which began last year. Aircraft and personnel from Number 11 (Army Co-operation) Squadron at RAF

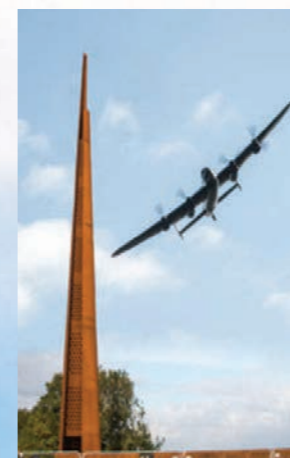
Lossiemouth have joined the Leeming-based 135 Expeditionary Air Wing (EAW) at Mihail Kogalniceanu Airbase near Constanta in southeast Romania. The crews have been involved in maritime exercises over the Black Sea. They will return to the UK in September.

The expansion of BAE Systems' Typhoon Training Facility at Lossiemouth has been completed. The upgrade to the system now allows RAF Lossiemouth squadrons to train in a formation of four aircraft that is essential on operations. Previously the Lossiemouth crews had to go to Coningsby for such "4 Ship" training.

As new aircraft come into RAF service, the Red Arrows team has retired its oldest Hawk T1. XX227 was among the first Hawks used by the team when it converted from the Gnat at Kemble in 1980. It had flown 8,077 hours and made 13,855 landings. Meanwhile six former RAF TriStars are getting a new lease of life. The aircraft, which have been in storage at Bruntingthorpe aerodrome in Leicestershire, have been bought by an American company that will serve military customers in the USA and NATO that have urgent requirements for air-to-air refuelling services.

300 veterans from the Second World War were among the guests at the formal opening of the new International Bomber Command Centre near Lincoln. The centre, which took eight years to complete, includes a memorial spire, a peace garden and the Chadwick Centre, which tells the story of Bomber Command through galleries and interactive exhibits.

Hungry for more frequent news of the RAF? Can't wait until the next Air Mail? If you are based in the UK, your membership of the Association gets you a discount on subscriptions to the fortnightly RAF News. Find out more on your members' portal, call RAF News at Sheffield Web on 01909 517 331 or email rafnews@jpress.co.uk. You will need to give your membership number to subscribe. There is no way to sign up online.



Top left: Typhoon fighter aircraft from the British Royal Air Force returned to Romania. In charge of 135 EAW is Wing Commander Chris Ball who said: "This is an important role for us that will build upon the success of last year's mission to help to secure NATO airspace in the Black Sea region".

Top right: 617 Squadron's Commanding Officer, Wing Commander John Butcher, at USMC base in Beaufort, South Carolina.

Bottom left: A Lancaster flies past the memorial spire at the International Bomber Command Centre. The centre was formally opened in April.

Bottom right: Remembering those who fell at the Wall of Names at the newly opened International Bomber Command Centre.



Main image: The Beech King Air B200, a twin-engine turboprop monoplane which first entered RAF service in 2004, is to be replaced by the Embraer Phenom 100. It was used as an advanced, multi-engine pilot trainer by No 45(R) Squadron, based at RAF Cranwell.

OPERATION BUSHEL

By Chris Goss

A 'biblical famine' and humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia was revealed to the world on 23 October 1984. BBC journalist Michael Buerk brought pictures of emaciated and dying men, women and children to our televisions, prompting a number of countries to respond. In Britain, the response was called Operation Bushel. Chris Goss tells its story and the part he played in it while serving with the RAF United Kingdom Mobile Air Movements Squadron.

In 1984 the authoritarian Ethiopian regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam was fighting a civil war against Tigrayan and Eritrean insurgents. People in these areas were starving because the government based in the capital, Addis Ababa, was deliberately bombing markets and trade convoys to disrupt food supply chains. With a starving population, it is amazing that defence spending accounted for half of Ethiopia's gross domestic product. Its Soviet-backed army was the largest in sub-Saharan Africa.



Half the problem; Soviet-made combat aircraft on the ground at Asmara

After some political wrangling at UK government level, six C-130s and the first personnel arrived in the country on 3 November 1984. 24 hours after, the first relief flight was flown. Loading and unloading of air land aircraft at Addis Ababa's Bole Airport was done by personnel from the United Kingdom Mobile Air Movements Squadron (UKMAMS), from RAF Lyneham. They operated with the C-130 Hercules which would do most of the work. Air drop operations were handled by 47 Air Despatch Squadron (47 AD) Royal Logistics Corps (which was also based at Lyneham) but they did not start operations until early 1985.

Due to the rush to get into Ethiopia, accommodation was hard to find, so personnel lived in tents in the British Embassy compound at first. At Bole Airport, working accommodation was also tented. By the time I arrived in September 1985, the detachment was accommodated in a hotel (but even that was not ideal - the beds had bed bugs which necessitated a nightly spraying with fly spray), but the working accommodation was exactly the same.

The daily routine was: take off early morning for an hour's flight to Assab on the Red Sea coast. Load up (helped by local labourers) with grain which had been brought in by ships. Fly another hour to where the grain was needed such as Mekele (480 miles north of the capital). Offload using local labourers. Then fly back to Assab. Then repeat at least once before flying back to Bole, usually with passengers.

Days were long with UKMAMS personnel initially working 18 hours a day, day on day off. Working at altitude (Addis Ababa is at 7,200 feet and Mekele is at 7,395 feet) and in the dry dusty heat was tiring for aircrew and ground crew alike. An added hazard was that, sooner or later, nearly all personnel would come down with a debilitating stomach bug which necessitated sufferers never being too far from toilets. The risk of bird strikes on the aircraft was also high and I remember just before returning to the UK that the air drop C-130 was hit by a vulture which penetrated the leading edge of the wing - and its remains lodged there. It had to be removed when we returned to Bole and it took five people to carry it - wing tip to wing tip.



Unloading - 42,000 pounds in 20 minutes



Our help

Those nations carrying out relief operations worked for the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Committee (RRC) and it was the RRC that decided who went where and what the loads would be. Loading and unloading was done by local labour, supervised (and helped) by the RAF team. They all worked hard, usually singing, and could unload a full Hercules of around 42,000 pounds - made up of stacks of 110lb bags of grain - in 20 minutes. Each bag contained enough grain to feed a family of five for a month.



Camel spider

It soon became clear that air drop missions to the more remote areas were also needed so, of the two aircraft now permanently based at Bole, one would be air land and one air drop. This allowed the UKMAMS detachment to reduce from 18 to 12. I flew on a mission to air drop Sekota on 2 October 1985 - a sortie lasted just under two hours and the image of flying low-level, pushing off pallets of grain and the dust flying up and into the aircraft's freight compartment is still strong after nearly 33 years.

The international famine relief operation began to increase as more countries were involved, with aircraft such as VC10s, TriStars, DC10s, Trans America and Belgian C-130s, Luftwaffe C-160s, Belfasts and Boeing 707s. In addition to wheat and rice grain, equipment such as graders and road rollers, high protein foodstuffs, tents and blankets were moved as well as a plethora of donated items like clothing and biscuits.



The people we were helping. Lemi, October 1985.

I arrived with my team on 28 September 1985 having left RAF Lyneham three days before. My first air land mission was to Assab, then Mekele and back to Bole on 3 October. The following day, I flew to Asmara, then to Assab - Mekele - Assab - Melele and back to the capital. In all, I flew 31 times before returning to the UK via Akrotiri on 24 October.

Memories of the flights are vivid: flying low-level over the edge of the East African Rift Valley; the heat and dust; and hard manual work irrespective of rank. One that really sticks in my head was when I was dozing on the

C-130, only to feel something on my head. I brushed it off, then off my face and, on looking down at my chest, saw that it was a camel spider. If you do not know what this is, search online or look in an encyclopedia and you will understand why six RAF men then quickly chased and caught the beast, much to the amusement of the Ethiopian passengers.

Later I was fortunate to fly from the Polish helicopter base at Leditia on the outskirts of Addis Ababa to Lemi (and don't forget this was when Poland was still a communist country). We were in a MI-8 Hip helicopter, to be on the ground to help call in an air drop sortie. Being on the ground with those who needed the grain and seeing the C-130 dropping its load pass after pass is still distinct and was humbling.



The end of Operation Bushel came in December 1985 and the final loads were dedicated to the movement of a prefabricated hospital clinic donated by the Italian government. It weighed 165 tonnes and we took 17 sorties to move it, using both airframes. The move was completed on 16 December 1985. All that was now needed was to recover the detachment and get it and its equipment back to the UK. By using resupply aircraft and full use of carrying capacity, all was returned to the UK with no extra additional airlift being needed.

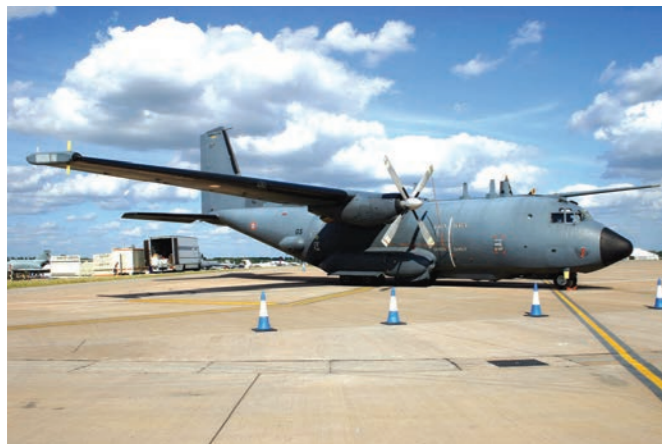
By the end of the operation, the RAF had flown 2,152 sorties. Between 3 November 1984 and 19 December 1985 we moved 38,676,301 pounds (17,580 tonnes) of freight and flew 983 passengers.



C-130. Chris Goss flew on XV 182, XV306, XV178 during his time. All images except the spider ©Chris Goss

World Military News

by J.M. Henderson



French Air Force C-160 Gabriel at RIAT 2005 © J M Henderson



Japanese C-2 Transport © Kawasaki



FA-18F Twin-Seat Super Hornet © Boeing



An-26 of the Romanian AF at RIAT 2005 © J M Henderson

Australia



The Royal Australian Air Force has achieved initial operational capability with its Boeing P-8 Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft, with half of its initial order for twelve aircraft in service. They are with No 11 Squadron at RAAF Edinburgh in Adelaide, South Australia and are replacing the Lockheed Orion fleet.

Belgium



Belgium has recently joined NATO's multinational multi-role Tanker Transport Fleet and is now the fifth nation to sign up, joining Germany, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and Norway. The fleet will operate eight Airbus A330 Tanker Transports and will be based at Eindhoven in The Netherlands. The aircraft will be delivered between 2020 and 2024 acquisition of a new fighter in the next decade.

Brazil



The Brazilian Navy is purchasing the Royal Navy's former assault ship, HMS Ocean. Ocean had also been the Royal Navy's flagship. Brazil intends to conduct a variety of operations from the ship which is capable of operating all of their current helicopter fleet including Lynxes, Seahawks and Super Pumas.

France



The French Air Force is to replace its current small fleet of propeller-driven Gabriel electronic intelligence aircraft with three special-mission Dassault Falcon jets. The Gabriels, a version of the C-160 Transall transport aircraft, have been in service for many years. The Falcons will be equipped with Thales-developed electronic equipment and sensors.

Jamaica



The Jamaica Defence Force is in the process of acquiring six new or second-hand helicopters of various Bell types for transport, medical evacuation and training and four new Diamond training aircraft. A surveillance aircraft has also been purchased and is currently being fitted out.

Japan



The Japanese Air Force will receive a new electronic intelligence version of their new C-2 transport, designated EC-2. It made its first flight in February this year and will eventually replace the EC-1 currently in service, which is also a transport aircraft derivative.

Kuwait



Kuwait has ordered twenty-eight Boeing Super Hornets consisting of twenty-two single seat F/A-18Es and six twin-seat F/A-18Fs to replace their current fleet of legacy Hornets. Kuwait has already ordered twenty-eight Eurofighter Typhoons to be produced by Leonardo in Italy, with deliveries due to begin next year.

Nicaragua

The Nicaraguan Army Air Force has acquired two Antonov An-26 transport aircraft from the Russian Navy. They were received late last year and are operated from Managua International Airport.

Qatar



Qatar has finally agreed a contract to purchase twenty-eight NH90 naval and troop transport helicopters. They are due for delivery in the middle of the next decade at a cost of some £3.7 billion. The twelve naval variants will be built by Leonardo in Venice, while the troop transports will be produced by Airbus Helicopters in Marignane, France.

The Qatar Armed Forces Air Academy is also due to receive some sixteen Airbus H125 light training helicopters under a separate contract.

Saudi Arabia



The Royal Saudi Air Force is negotiating with BAE Systems for another 48 Typhoon fighters to add to the 72 that are already in service or on order. If a contract is eventually signed, this will extend the Watton, Lancashire production line well into the next decade.

USA



The US Air Force is planning to replace the engines on its long-serving B-52H Stratofortress bombers. The current Pratt & Whitney engines have been in use since the aircraft's introduction in 1960, with eight installed on each aircraft. This massive programme will significantly improve payload, range and fuel efficiency.

The United States Navy has completed carrier qualifications for the conventional take-off and landing F-35C Lightning II using the USS Abraham Lincoln in the Atlantic Ocean in March this year. This was accomplished by the two extant training squadrons for the type carrying out numerous landings and take-offs by day and night, as well as deck and hangar manoeuvring with other aircraft types present. This variant of the Lightning has a longer wingspan to allow for the slower speeds required for carrier landings. The US Navy will now move on to operational testing later this year.

The US Army has ordered another 35 Airbus Lakota helicopters to add to more than 400 that are already in service. These latest machines will be used for initial and advanced training purposes at various locations in the United States. Airbus builds these helicopters, a version of the civilian EC145, at its factory in Columbus, Mississippi. They have been in service with the US Army since 2007, gradually replacing older types.

The US Navy is planning to purchase a C-130J Hercules from the RAF to support the Blue Angels, their flight demonstration team. Their current aircraft, a C-130T, has been grounded for many months following the crash of a similar aircraft. The RAF aircraft could be available very quickly as some are due to retire soon.

US Army UH-72 Lakota © J M Henderson



Doro what? Ah, Doro Wat!

To whet your appetite, here is the next recipe from the RAF100 Cookbook. Buy yours before they go out of stock and get 100 recipes, and 100 years of history of the RAF, all in one tasty package.

An Ethiopian wat is traditionally eaten by hand with a spongy, sour, pancake-like flatbread known as injera. But it can also be served with chapati or flatbread. Serves six.

Doro Wat Ethiopian Red Chicken Stew

Ingredients
Berbere spice mix – from your supermarket or high street

- For the wat*
- 3 tbsp white distilled or white wine vinegar
 - 2 limes, juiced
 - 6 chicken legs, jointed into thighs and drumsticks
 - 1.5kg red onions, thinly sliced
 - 3 tbsp ghee, olive oil or niter kibbeh (Ethiopian clarified butter)
 - 3 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
 - 2.5cm piece of ginger, finely grated
 - 2 tbsp smoked paprika
 - ¼ tsp ground cardamom
 - ½ tsp fennel seeds
 - 500ml chicken stock
 - 6 medium eggs (room temperature)
 - salt and pepper

To serve
Injera, chapati or flatbread



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Get your copy of the RAF100 Cookbook for £25 from rafatrad.co.uk or call 0800 018 2361. Profits from sales go to the RAF100 Appeal.

Method

To prepare the wat

- Mix the vinegar and half of the lime juice together, add the chicken pieces, mix to coat and marinate for 20 minutes.
- Add the onions to a large heavy-based saucepan (no oil or liquid) and cook, stirring frequently, for around 15 minutes. Add half a teaspoon of salt. Cook on a low heat, stirring occasionally, for about 45 to 60 minutes until onions are soft, caramelised and golden brown and all of the liquid has evaporated.
- Increase the heat to medium, add 2 tbsp of the ghee, oil or niter kibbeh; stir in the garlic and ginger. Cook for a couple of minutes.
- Add 2 tbsp berbere, the paprika, ground cardamom, fennel seeds and a few grinds of black pepper; cook, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes.
- Pour in the chicken stock, mix well and bring to a boil.
- Heat the remaining 1 tbsp of ghee, oil or niter kibbeh in a frying pan and brown the chicken pieces. Add the chicken to the casserole, turn down the heat, cover and simmer for around 45 minutes. Then remove the lid and simmer until the liquid has thickened slightly.

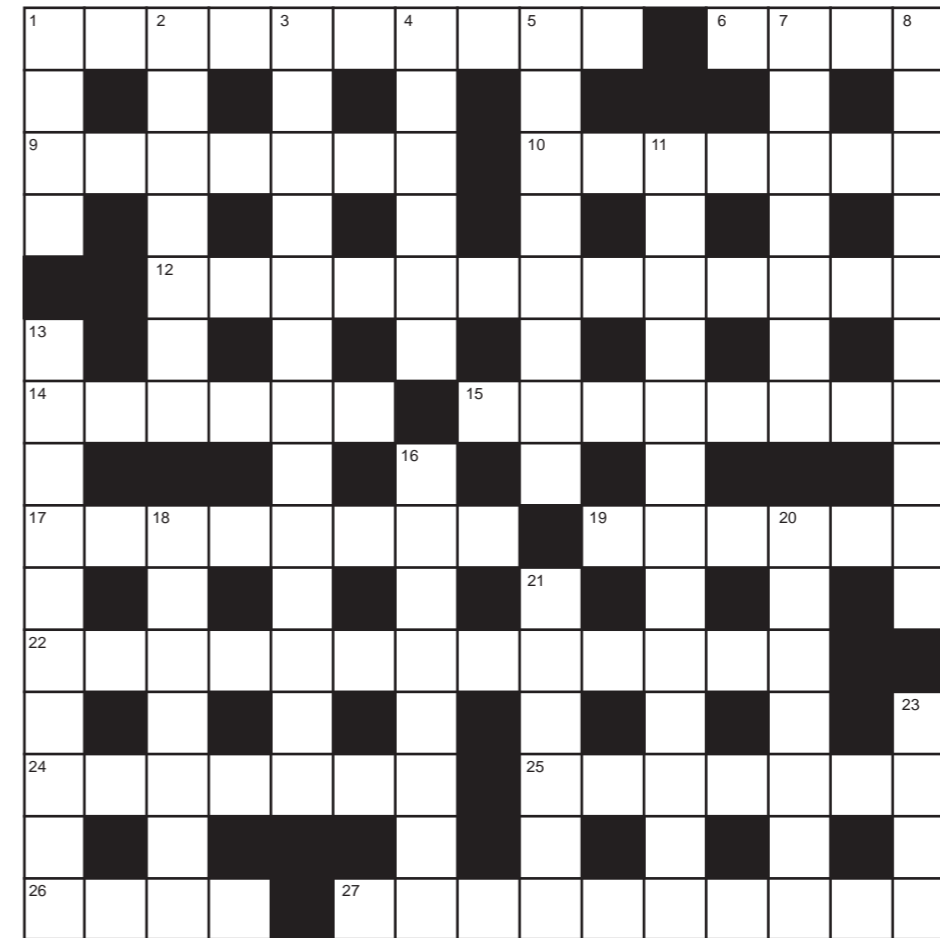
To finish

- Adding salt and black pepper to taste and stir in the remaining lime juice.
- Hard boil the eggs (around 8 minutes). Peel and quarter them and arrange on a serving dish with the chicken before ladling the sauce over.



Summer 2018 crossword

by Enigma



Across

- 1 Rotary aircraft (10)
- 6 Profound river power (4)
- 9 Beginning of Name, for instance (7)
- 10 Teach Cate, due a change (7)
- 12 Right to the present time (2,2,3,6)
- 14 A Roman salad! (6)
- 15 Distil Benedictine liqueur containing hydrocarbon (8)
- 17 Unlucky for some (8)
- 19 It causes vomiting (6)
- 22 The production of flowers (13)
- 24 1000 hesitate to become more dignified (7)
- 25 Tempted (7)
- 26 Want starting now (early evening/dusk) (4)
- 27 Inconsiderate (10)

Down

- 1 Capital cover for hospital broadcast (4)
- 2 Free time (7)
- 3 'Gunman' actor with 'no name!' (5,8)
- 4 Captains for 1 ac (6)
- 5 I, O, U for example (8)
- 7 A rubbing out of time for certain (7)
- 8 Priority (10)
- 11 Not lit up (13)
- 13 Firearm that may fire all over the place (7-3)
- 16 Practise play (8)
- 18 Fill with air (7)
- 20 Cartel mixed Eastern molasses (7)
- 21 Skin disease caused by Eastern Caribbean maze confusion (6)
- 23 More than an even wager (4)

Solution to this crossword can be found on page 62

anagrams • samarang • naga arms • anam rags • nama rags • aram sang • masan gar • mara sang • aram snag • anagrams • samarang • naga arms • anam rags • nama rags • aram sang • masan gar • mara sang • aram snag • anagrams • samarang • naga arms • anam rags • nama rags • aram sang • masan gar • mara sang • aram snag • anagrams • samarang

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

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| Mr C Acton | Wrekin and Wellington | Mr P J Dinsdale | Swindon | Mrs P Jones | Tywyn and Aberdovey |
| Mr D Adams | Whitstable and Tanker | Mr W Dixon | South East and Eastern Area HQ | Mr H T Jones | Wales, Midland and South Western Area HQ |
| Mrs M B Adams | Woodbridge | Mr R Dobinson | Eastbourne | Miss P A Kemp | South East and Eastern Area HQ |
| Mrs E J Alexander | South East and Eastern Area HQ | Mr B G Drake | Thornton Cleveleys | Mr B A Kennerley | Erewash |
| Mr D Allen | Brighton and Hove | Mr J Edge | Birkenhead | Mr D Kenyon | Cape Town |
| Mr H T Ancrum | Kenley and Caterham | Mr L W Edwards | Swindon | Mr S J Killick | 1066 |
| Mr H Baldock | Poole | Mr J E Ellerby | Poole | Mr L J King | Wales, Midland and Eastern Area HQ |
| Mr W Barker | Bangor | Mr R Elliott | Wales, Midland and South Western Area HQ | Mr B King | Yaxley and District |
| Mr G C Baxter | Chesham and Amersham | Mr A E Evans | Wales, Midland and South Western Area HQ | Mr T L Landsbury | Mablethorpe and Sutton |
| Mr R Baxter | St Neots | Mrs A Ezekiel | Lincoln | Mr J Langford | South East and Eastern Area HQ |
| Mrs I E Beadle | Orpington | Mr G Farrell | Sale | Mrs M Lea | Fleet |
| Mr J Bee | Penrith | Mrs M Fell | Downpatrick | Mr A T Leddra | Romford |
| Mrs E Beer | Dover and District | Mr D Fletcher | Wyndham | Mr R Lee | Birstall (Leics) |
| Mr J Bethell | Bradford and District | Mr F S Flood | Whitstable and Tanker | Mr C Lee | Bromsgrove and Redditch |
| Mr B W Beverage | Thornton Cleveleys | Mr W J Forster | Cranwell | Mr D Levitt | Dunstable |
| Mr W Bibby | Taunton Deane | Mr D Francis | South East and Eastern Area HQ | Mr E A Lindsel | Cambridge |
| Reverend D Bishop | Aylesford and Malling | Mr B Furness BEM | Fareham | Mr J F Loader | Hexham |
| Mr G Blanshard | Hull | Mr P Gibbons | Erewash | Mr R O Lowson | Carlisle and District |
| Mrs J E Bowen | Fareham | Mr G W Godfrey | Cardigan RMG | Mr T C Mann | Basildon |
| Mr K Bowley | Market Harborough | Mr P Gordon | Haywards Heath | Mr G Marcellis | RAF St Mawgan |
| Mr L R Bradley | Huyton with Roby and Liverpool | Mr A Gorton | Blackhall | Mr J Mason | Fleet |
| Mr V Brocklesby | Hull | Mr R H Gregor | Biggin Hill | Mr R Mason | Harrow District |
| Mr V M Brodie | Watton RMG | Mr D Greig | Kenley and Caterham | Mr K Maycock | Rugby and District |
| Mr M Buck | Dunkeswell and Honiton RMG | Mr W J Greig | Leuchars | Miss P E McConnell | Honiton RMG |
| Mr M Bulley | Carterton and Brize | Mrs K Gross | Thurrock | Mr G C McConnell | Leicester |
| Mr E Cade | Waddington | Mr D E Gunner MBE | Alnwick | Mr C McCormick | Cheltenham |
| Mr G Callon | Huyton with Roby and Liverpool | Mr H B Hackwood | Leamington and Warwick | Mr A McEwen | Cheltenham |
| Mr S Cator | Market Harborough | Mrs M Hamilton | WRAF | Squadron Leader A McIlwraith | Moray |
| Mr E K Chandler | Huntingdon and District | Mr W Hawes | Tamworth | Mr G M McIntosh | Nairn RMG |
| Mr D P Clifford | 1066 | Mr M Healy | York | Mr A Mead | Overseas Area HQ |
| Mr L Climo | Lincoln | Mr H W Hearn | 1066 | Mrs M Millar | East Kilbride |
| Mr D Clough | Ryedale | Mrs M L Hewitt | Hull | Mr R Millard | Melbourne |
| Wing Commander H Cobb DSO DFC AFC | Sud-Ouest | Mr R Hilfiker | Swiss | Mrs C J Miller | Thirsk |
| Mrs P Cobbing | Bognor Regis | Mrs S Histed | Dursley and South Gloucestershire | Mr S Mitchell | Taunton Deane |
| Mr D H Colbourne | Evesham | Mr R Holden | Leigh | Mrs A G Morley | Rutland |
| Mr J H V Cook | Newmarket RMG | Mr F Holman | Walton and Weyb and District | Mr D Nash | Leamington and Warwick |
| Mr C A Couch | Sturminster and Gill | Mr J Houghton | Preston | Mr P Needham | Wythenshawe |
| Mr P J Cox | Sheffield | Mr N James | Bargoed and Blackwood | Mr B J Norris | Wales, Midland and South Western Area HQ |
| Mr J Cracknell | St Neots | Mr G Jarvis | Cranbrook and Hawk | Mrs E H O'Donoghue | Lincoln |
| Mr C Critchett | Kings Lynn and District | Mr R M Jarvis | Aylesbury and Halton | Miss D P O'Farrell | Dunfermline and Stirling |
| Mr J Curtis | 1066 | Mr K H Johnson | Tamworth | Mr N Page | Solihull |
| Mr E Curtis | Abbots and Kings Langley | Mr J Jolliffe | Walton, Weybridge and District | Mr S Parker | Stanley |
| Mr J Cuthbertson | Ayr and Prestwick | Mr A F Jones | Wales, Midland and South Western Area HQ | Mr H Parker | Formby |
| Mrs M Cutler | Littlehampton | Mr W Jones | Christchurch | Mr G Parmenter | Aylesford and Malling |
| Mr K W Davies | Christchurch | | | Mrs E Pike MBE | Hertford and District |
| Mr L Davis | Oxford and District | | | | |
| Mr G Delves | Morecambe and Lancaster | | | | |

Squadron Leader Anthony Pilkington

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Ile-de-France |
| Mr M D Piper | Headcorn |
| Mr N Piper | Eastbourne |
| Mr P Pleace | Exmouth |
| Mr D Ponsonby | Uxbridge |
| Mr C Pritchard | Chelmsford |
| Mr A H B Rawlinson | Dunstable |
| Mr B Richards | Aberdeen |
| Mr R Richardson | Huntingdon and District |
| Mr E Ridgway | Bletchley (MK) |
| Mr G Roberts | Exmouth |
| Mrs K M Robinson | Thornton Cleveleys |
| Mr S Robinson | Republic of Ireland |
| Mr D Rogers | Weymouth and Portland |
| Mr J Edward Rose | Clacton-On-Sea |
| Mrs A Rowe | Sherborne |
| Mr P E Russell | Worcester and District |
| Mr W L Ruth | Aylesford and Malling |
| Mr P J Ryan | Norwich |
| Mr L Ryder | Haywards Heath |
| Mr G V Sale | South East and Eastern Area HQ |
| Mr J A Scott | Dunstable |
| Mr R Scrase | Orpington |
| Mr W J M Scullion | Camberley and District |
| Mr K R Seamon | Hertford and District |
| Mr D E Sharpe | South East and Eastern Area HQ |
| Mr F S Simpson | Erewash |
| Mr C Slater | Wakefield |
| Mr C Slessor | Fraserburgh |
| Mr A Smith | East Kilbride |
| Mr I R C Smith | Orpington |
| Mr R Snell | Frinton and Walton |
| Air Commodore Brian N J Speed | Bletchley (MK) |
| Mr A Spicer | Windsor and Eton |
| Mr D Sprake BEM | Swiss |
| Mr R Stevens | Aylesford and Malling |

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Mr M L Tallentire | Hartlepool |
| Mr R Tappenden | Cranbrook and Hawk |
| Mr E Tapson | Birmingham and Sheldon |
| Mr E Taylor | Chingford |
| Mr A Edward Taylor | Wolverhampton and District |
| Mr D Taylor | Newark |
| Mr T Thomas | Romford |
| Mr M Thompson | Wrexham |
| Mrs N I Traynor | Morecambe and Lancaster |
| Mr G Todd | Hull |
| Mr D G Turner | Thornton Cleveleys |
| Mrs F M Tyler | Armourers |
| Mr T Waller | Hull |
| Mr C Ward | Darlington |
| Mrs R Wareing | Thornton Cleveleys |
| Mr J Watkins | Coningsby and District |
| Mr A Watson | Braunstone |
| Mr J Wheatley | Northampton and District |
| Mr I White | Camberley and District |
| Mr O Whittaker | Hertford and District |
| Mr N Wilkins | Headcorn |
| Mr G Williams | Pontardawe and District |
| Mr C Wilson | Tamworth |
| Mr D Wilson | City of Bristol |
| Mr D M Wilson | York |
| Mr L J Wilson | Kenley and Caterham |
| Mr R Winward | Morecambe and Lancaster |
| Mr H Yates | Bromsgrove and Redditch |
| Mr A L Yates | Ryedale |
| Mr R Young | Haywards Heath |

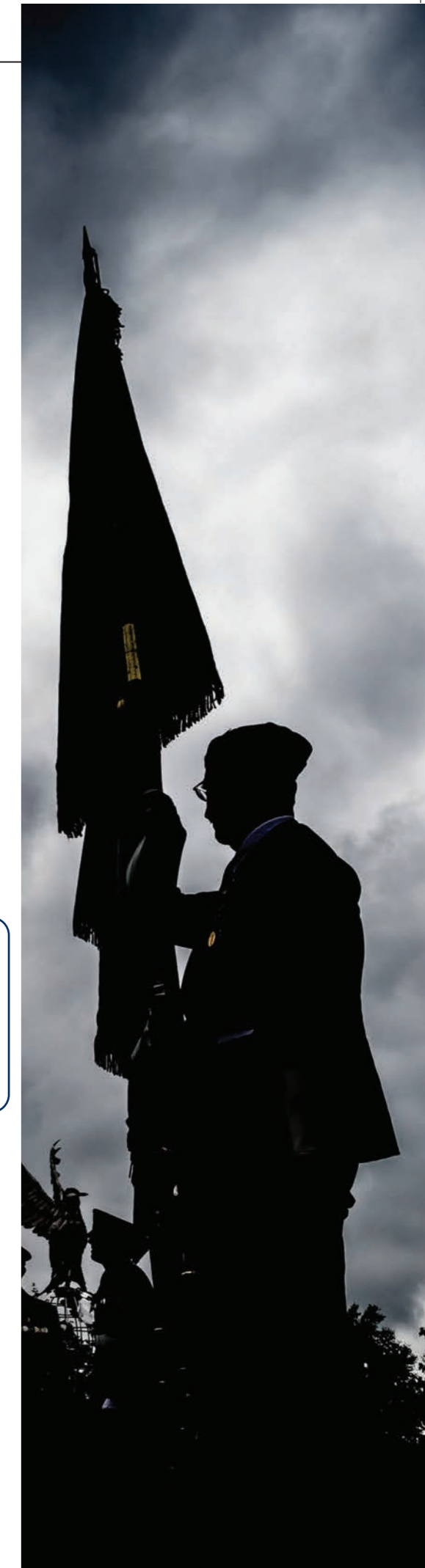
We specially remember those who had reached or passed their 100th birthday:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Squadron Leader Victor Linthune DFC | Jersey |
| Mr William Lucas | Haywards Heath |
| Mr Richard Stephens | Haverfordwest |

Please note: Air Mail cannot accept any obituary notifications direct. They must be notified to the member's branch or area office. Alternatively, call our contact team on 0800 018 2361.

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Notices

Help

Hi Stirling Brown.

This is your Mum, would you like to get in contact please? I'm at the same place as always. Love Mum

Old Colleagues

RAF Administrative Apprentice Association. Did you train as an apprentice supplier or clerk at either RAF Ruislip, St Athan, Bircham Newton, Halton or Hereford? Please contact www.rafadappassn.org for details of your association.

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Reunions

RAF Photographers Association.

Reunion 13th October 2018. National Service, Boy Entrant or Direct Entry, WAAF, WRAF or RAF, all welcome. Details www.rafpa.org.uk or from Gerry Linstead – secretary@rafpa.org.uk - 01366 380143

RAF Gutersloh Air Traffic Control & Operations(1945-2013).

Reunion 19th-20th October 2018. Contact Paul Thompson, lea49mill@ntlworld.com or mobile 0795 155 0149.

RAF Heany Association.

9-11 September, Park Inn Hotel, Northampton - 26th Annual Reunion. All who served at, or who have a family connection with any RAF station in the former Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and their guests are welcome. Contact the Hon. Secretary, Mrs Mary Sinkler, on 01780 763999

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Solution to the Summer crossword



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | S | E | L | D | R | A | G | E | R | D | E | E | N |
| D | L | E | M | S | T | U | | | | | | | |
| D | E | C | I | N | E | R | D | E | R | A | N | A | G |
| Q | A | V | Z | A | O | L | R | | | | | | |
| | E | C | N | E | C | S | E | R | O | L | F | F | E |
| E | R | I | E | H | W | N | T | | | | | | |
| C | I | T | E | M | E | N | E | T | E | R | I | H | T |
| N | U | S | R | S | A | | | | | | | | |
| E | N | E | B | L | I | T | S | A | R | S | A | E | C |
| R | R | L | N | S | E | R | S | | | | | | |
| E | T | U | N | I | M | E | H | T | O | P | U | | |
| F | S | N | M | O | N | S | R | | | | | | |
| E | A | T | C | U | D | E | L | A | I | T | I | N | I |
| R | R | L | I | L | E | A | | | | | | | |
| P | E | D | R | E | T | O | P | C | I | L | E | H | E |

- Across:**
- 1 Helicopter
 - 2 Deep
 - 3 Clint Eastwood
 - 4 Pilots
 - 5 Elements
 - 6 Deep
 - 7 Erasure
 - 8 Preference
 - 9 Initial
 - 10 Educate
 - 11 Unilluminated
 - 12 Up to the minute,
 - 13 Scatter-gun
 - 14 Caesar
 - 15 Stillbene
 - 16 Rehearse
 - 17 Thirteen
 - 18 Inflation
 - 19 Emetic
 - 20 Treacle
 - 21 Eczema
 - 22 Efflorescence
 - 23 Odds
 - 24 Grandeur
 - 25 Enticed
 - 26 Need
 - 27 Regardless

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For more information, please contact:
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 Tel: 01992 442608
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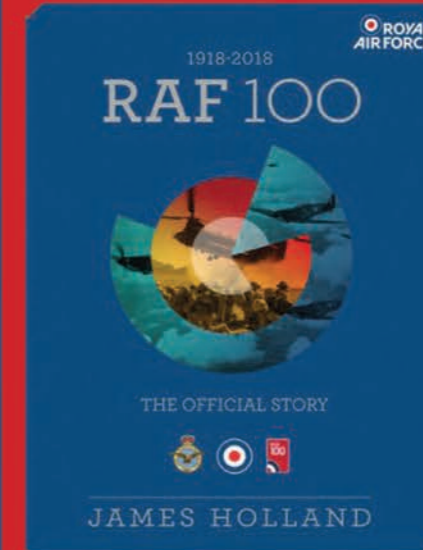
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