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COVER PICTURE

22 Typhoon FGR4s formed 'RAF100' over central London on 10 July 2018. They were part of the 103 aircraft flypast to celebrate 100 years of the RAF.
Photo taken by
Corporal Helen Rimmer.
©MOD/Crown.



© Phil Greig

From the editor

The UK reached a happy state of 'peak RAF100' this summer. The flypast on 10 July was as spectacular as promised. Air Mail gives a flavour of it in words and pictures in this issue — and shows the most memorable moment on our cover. But throughout the magazine we also report on the continuing and enthusiastic support by members and hope you enjoy reading about the variety and amount of things we have done to celebrate.

Take care not to throw away the letters and inserts that came with this magazine. It's not 'bump'! One will help you feed back on the proposals for the Association to move to one member, one vote – return it in the reply paid envelope to help Council decide the way forward. Another is a printed catalogue of gifts, clothing, toys, badges and more sold by RAFATRAD Ltd – long-requested by members without internet access. The team is on standby to take your phone orders.

Almost a year after taking over the editorship of the magazine, I would like to know if Air Mail is hitting the spot. Look for the reader satisfaction survey in the centre pages and send it back to me. Alternatively, complete it online. I look forward to hearing your views.

Meanwhile, see the contents page for the smorgasbord of delights for you to read in this issue.

Annie O'Brian
editor@rafatrad.co.uk

Pick of the contents
NEWS

3-15

All the latest news from the Association and the RAF family, including: funding for new mental health projects, new lunch clubs, flying scholarships open for applications, the RAF Museum wants your stories, new supporters and partners, and news from across the RAF and around the Association for the RAF100 celebrations.

About our Association: asking your thoughts on one member one vote, complaints policy updated and why and how to book a place at Conference 2019.

FEATURES

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Four pages of news and pictures from the centenary of the Royal Air Force; covering the RAF's own events as well as local, regional and area celebrations by the RAF Association. Other RAF100 stories can be found in news, Branch news and throughout the magazine.

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Message from the Secretary General

As I write for this last Air Mail in the RAF's centenary year I look back on a wonderful series of events and initiatives during 2018.

I know the last RAF100 events of the year are still to come, but I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have played a part in making sure that the RAF Association delivers the very best it can. This has been a great opportunity to show the RAF and our sister charities what a dedicated and effective organisation we are. Many, many members, branches, volunteers and employees have put in an awful lot of work to make sure everything has run smoothly and successfully - thank you.

Following the decision of Annual Conference, I'd like to encourage you to feed back to us about the proposal to move to one member, one vote. Council wants to know your thoughts and feelings on the subject. So please use the forms included with this Air Mail to have your say.

Meanwhile, Council and the senior management team at headquarters have published the 2030 Strategy and now we are starting to prepare the in-depth strategies for each of the five principal objectives for 2030. These objectives build upon the six themes that Conference agreed on in 2014 as part of the Way Forward document. These are: member engagement, sustaining our membership, representing our members, creating a better perception of the Association, organisational resilience and financial sustainability. Your branch will by now have a printed copy of the 2030 strategy and you can also read it at any time on the Members' Portal.

Currently we are focusing on consolidating our position as the leading welfare provider to the RAF family and what that means for the Association in the future. We are also looking at a medium-term financial plan that provides a good view of our financial position between now and 2022. This work will enable us to identify the parts of our welfare work that we wish to invest in and grow.

We are considering the support we should be providing to the whole range of serving personnel. In today's RAF this could range from an 18 year-old to a 60 year-old as the terms and conditions of service have changed significantly in the last couple of years. Our support and services will need to adapt to reflect this changing demographic and the way personnel serve today; often joining the service, going on to a civilian role and sometimes re-joining - possibly as a reserve. Personnel are also now less likely to live on station, and often rent their home which is starting to have an impact on welfare needs. This, coupled with the needs of the older veteran - for whom we are already providing an extensive range of products and services - all needs to be thought through to identify what our welfare support should be by 2030.

I will keep you updated as plans develop, your continued support is vital to the RAF family, whatever your role within the Association.

Nick Bunting
Secretary General



© Phil Greig.

Association represented at Downing Street

In late May, the Right Honourable Theresa May, Prime Minister, hosted a reception at 10 Downing Street in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the formation of the RAF.

The event also commemorated the service's heritage from the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps and invitations were extended across the three services and the wider Ministry of Defence.



Member Peter Ramrayka sharing the excitement of the evening on Twitter. © P Ramrayka



Red Arrows Hawk on Downing Street. © MOD/Crown

Three RAF veterans attended to represent the RAF Association: Barry Kindred, Harrow Branch, Peter Ramrayka, City of London Branch and Sharon Carver of the WRAF Branch.

The event was made even more exciting by the presence of a Red Arrows Hawk T2 parked just outside the door on Downing Street. 🇺🇰

PM recognises member who really pushes the envelope

Sean Allerton, from Sherburn in West Yorkshire, has been recognised with a Points of Light Award from the Prime Minister.

The Association member is a former RAF Regiment Gunner who has covered almost 2,000 miles in his wheelchair to raise more than £37,000 (including Gift Aid) for the Association, two other RAF charities and 'Elizabeth's Legacy of Hope'. A motorcycle injury left him a tetraplegic and, inspired by the Proclaimers' song '500 Miles', Sean has been completing different challenges to accumulate the distances since 2012.

The Points of Light award recognises outstanding volunteers who are making a change in their community and inspiring others, and is awarded each day.

Sean said: "I'm honoured that I was even put forward but the charities that I support are the ones that deserve the praise. I'm very fortunate ... to support four amazing charities to carry on

their outstanding work. The real people that deserve a mention are all of those that help plan and arrange my events with me. I've been fortunate to get to meet some of the nicest, most sincere, and truly inspiring people, and they have made me want to continue further with my fundraising."

Find out more about the awards or nominate someone you know at: pointsoflight.gov.uk. 🇺🇰

'Basic training' for the Association's Life Vice President, Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller before a three mile push in the rain at RAF Shawbury in October 2016. Sean said: "He got me to join the Association welfare committee during the event. And he did get wet".
© Sean Allerton



One member, one vote?

Further to the letter with this Air Mail from Air Vice-Marshal John Cliffe, Chairman of Council, the Association's Director of Membership, Del Rowlands, talks us through the background and a little more about the process.

Did you know that each branch can send a delegate to Conference who represents the view of all their branch members (which, in some cases, can be hundreds)? Individual members do not have a personal vote. Furthermore, as many branches do not send a delegate, many of our members have no means of influencing decisions that affect the Association's future. At the Association's 2018 Conference held in May, the delegates passed a resolution by 82 per cent that said:

"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 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 Conference 2019."

In other words, each member of the Association would be able to vote directly on Association Council elections, Conference resolutions and any raised issue through a plebiscite (the vote of the membership), rather than being represented by a delegate, or not represented at Conference at all.

To undertake this study on behalf of Council, we are working alongside an independent election provider called Mi-Voice and they will manage the consultation process for us. You have from 2 October through to midnight on 4 November 2018 to express your view. In addition to the article in Air Mail, Mi-Voice will be contacting all of those who had an active membership on 1 September 2018 by email, or where we have no email address, by letter.

Emails will be sent from elections@mi-voice.com so please check your email inbox and junk/spam folder. In addition we are highlighting this important work here, in area newsletters and on the members' portal of the Association website. We have endeavoured to contact every member, but do spread the news; every member's view counts and we want to hear from everyone.

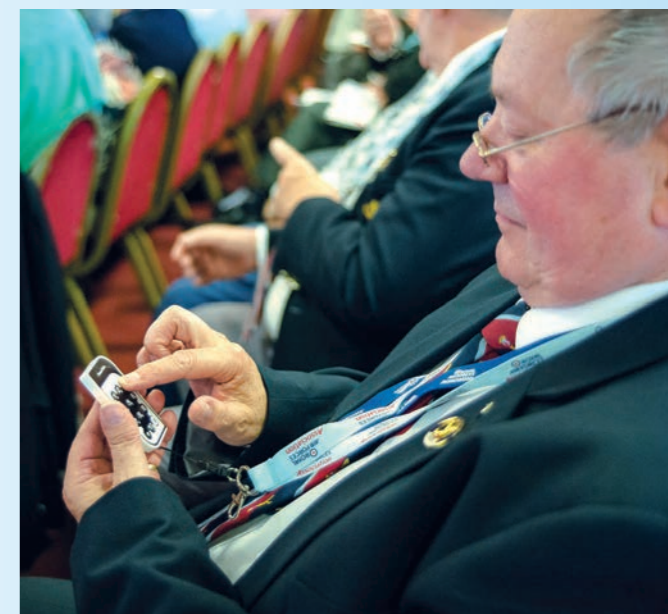
So, you now have an opportunity to tell us what you think and we would be very grateful if you could exercise that opportunity to enable us to inform the 2019 Conference. While members can vote by post, we would encourage you to respond online via the

internet. This will save on expensive postal costs. When responding online please provide your up-to-date email address so we can ensure we have the best and most recent contact for you. If you prefer to use the postal system, please use the slip on the bottom of the letter from the Chairman that came with this Air Mail. Use the freepost envelope provided to send it direct to Mi-Voice. 🇺🇰

To respond online, have your membership number to hand from the letter with this issue or from your membership card, and visit the Mi-Voice website: mi-vote.com/rafa

For technical support, contact Mi-Voice on: +44 (0)2380 763 987, or email support@mi-voice.com

For any other membership enquiries please call the Association on 0800 018 2361.



Currently, branches vote on behalf of their members at Area conferences and at Conference © Heidi Burton



Freedoms: to march with colours flying – and to celebrate RAF100

Midlands

Cannock Chase (573) Branch is to be awarded the highest honour a local community can bestow – Freedom of the town.

Freedom to parade “with drums beating, colours flying and bayonets fixed” is being awarded by Cannock Chase District Council to the branch, formed in 1946, in recognition of its work in the community.

The award is granted to martial units that have a long history of service and earned the trust of their community. The presentation was planned for 29 September (just as Air Mail was rolling off the presses) and will be followed by a church service, parade, civic reception and more. A full report will follow in the January-March issue.

North

A civic ceremony at Durham Cathedral which saw 607 (County of Durham) Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force awarded the Freedom of the City of Durham, was just part of the North East of England Salute to the RAF at 100. Other events in this major celebration on 23 June included the unveiling of a train named Spirit of the Royal Air Force, a service of thanksgiving at Durham Cathedral, at which Association standards were paraded and the RAF Air Cadets performed, as well as parades and receptions. Dignitaries included the Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Mrs Sue Winfield OBE, Assistant Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Mike Wigston, the Mayor of Durham and Association President Air Marshal Sir Baz North.

Home Counties

Meanwhile, on 15 April in Chesham, Bucks, personnel from RAF Halton exercised their right to march after being given Freedom of the town in 2010 – to recognise the station’s service to its local community in times of war and peace. The April 2018 parade was to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the RAF and was attended by 17 members of the Chesham and Amersham Branch. The Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, inspected the parade and spoke to branch members and Branch Standard Bearer John Griffin. ■



Air Marshal Sir Baz North, President of the RAF Association arrives and exchanges smiles with Dave Chappell, Standard Bearer and Chairman of the RAF Association Northern Region © MOD/Crown



Assistant Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal Mike Wigston inspecting RAF Association and ROC Standards © MOD/Crown



The Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, talking to members of the Chesham and Amersham Branch during the inspection of the parade. © Liz Griffin

Team up for prestigious Third Sector Award

The Association has been shortlisted for the ‘Volunteer Team of the Year’ in the 2018 Third Sector Awards. The entry for the award included the work of welfare and branch volunteers across the Association as well as employees.

The volunteering scheme was launched in 2015 and the Association has recruited, trained and deployed more than 1,300 new volunteers. Since 2017, we have recruited more than 300 befrienders and almonised more than £1,966,828 (and 45 pence) in grants for financial support.

Speaking before the awards ceremony, Alyson Hunter, Director of Human Resources and Volunteering, said: “Being shortlisted is already a reward, but – of course – I think the Association deserves to win. The concerted effort from our volunteers and employees and their consistently high energy, outputs and activity has

transformed the demographics of our volunteers and increased numbers by more than 30%. The Association never settles for anything less than a great volunteer and beneficiary experience.”

The Third Sector Award winners were due to be announced on Thursday 20 September, just as Air Mail rolled off the presses.

Watch this space for news of how the team did, or catch up on the Association’s Facebook or Twitter pages. ■



Beer brings good cheer

A loyal micro brewery from East Anglia has raised more than £3,000 for the RAF Association in the last year alone.

Wolf Brewery has been selling casks and bottles of Battle of Britain Ale to raise money exclusively for us for more than five years. John Smith, Sales Manager, said: “We are a family-run business that is proud to support the charity and would like to continue to support the excellent work done by you into the future. The Director’s uncle, Jack Edwards, served in the RAF in WW2, but we are also keen to help fund the support you provide today.”

Five pence from the sale of every bottle and 10 pence from every cask is gifted to the Association and Wolf Brewery also brews Poppy Ale to celebrate Remembrance Day and Wolf Whiskers which supports prostate cancer charities.

“We are very proud of all of our beers,” John continues, “We are particularly pleased that we won the Champion Cask Ale of Great Britain 2018 with our Sirius Dog Star (we are the only working brewery to have won this award twice) and of course we are pleased of the continuing success of Battle Of Britain Ale and the strong links we have with the Association”.

Wolf Brewery beers are available throughout Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire and occasionally throughout the UK as part of guest ale programmes and at beer festivals. They can also sell beer direct from the brewery to the public in containers ranging from 500ml bottles up to 18 gallon casks. Association clubs are also eligible to buy it. ■

wolfbrewery.com or 01953 457775 for further information on the beer, or to find out about their brewery tours.



v100 tandem jumpers ‘land it’

RAF veterans of all ages took part in the v100 jump on 9 August, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the RAF and raise funds for the Association.

Last year, ex-RAF servicewoman and organiser, Donna Cook managed to raise more than £60,000 with a similar fundraising jump spread out across ten locations.

Speaking ahead of the 2018 event, organiser (and RAF veteran) Donna Cook explained why she came up with the idea. She said: “I wanted to dispel the myth of what an RAF veteran is. A lot of women like changing perceptions of this as they are often stopped by the public who don’t know any better and told that they are wearing their medals on the wrong side because they are someone’s wife and they aren’t their own medals.”

Fundraising totals for the v100 event at Hinton airfield are still to be calculated. While they are, a big thank you from the RAF Association goes to Donna and her v100 jumpers for their ongoing support, dedication and bravery. ■





Stranger things – there's a Spitfire in suburbia too!

David Hastings MBE of the Norwich Branch got in touch after seeing 'Tornado in suburbia' pictures in the April Air Mail. He says: "I have a half scale Spitfire in our garden at Salhouse in Norfolk. She was built in 1990 from steel and fibreglass and was originally AB910 Q-JJ as I had links with the Battle Memorial Flight at RAF Coltishall. However just before I retired as a pilot, I achieved a lifetime ambition thanks to Carolyn Grace when I flew in her superb Spitfire ML407. And so of course my Spitfire was repainted as ML407 OU-V.

"She had a refit in 2008 and is still going strong and much admired. As she is on the extended centre line for runway 27 at Norwich International airport we had several enquiries when she first arrived - from pilots who wanted to know how a Spitfire had crashed in our garden!"



Pilots from Norwich International airport wanted to know how a Spitfire had crashed in our garden. ©David Hastings

National Trust & LEGOLAND now in your RAFA Rewards

Offers for English Heritage, Merlin Entertainments and the National Trust have just been announced as part of members' RAFA Rewards.

Whether you want a family day out or a BMW, your Association membership gets you special deals to save you money on essentials and on life's luxuries.

Find RAFA Rewards on the Members' Portal and browse through hundreds of options. If you don't have access to the internet, why not ask if someone at your local branch can help you get connected, or call the Association's contact team on 0800 018 2361.

Deals cover cinemas, spas, gyms, family days out and attractions. Offers from a long list of high street retailers, Forces Cars Direct, and suppliers of household appliances are all on there. And if you are still planning to go away this year, there are deals on package and mini holidays, cottage rental and car hire, currency exchange and more.

Recently Forces Cars Direct have been running offers on BMWs and Skodas, giving great deals for serving personnel. And the offers change frequently throughout the year.



Find deals with English Heritage now in RAFA Rewards – this is their Wrest Park Pavilion. © English Heritage

Newly added to RAFA Rewards – 10% off National Trust gift cards and 47% off at LEGOLAND, Alton Towers and many other Merlin Entertainments attractions.



Let's do lunch

Lunch clubs are all the rage these days – don't you know?! The Big Lottery Fund has just awarded £9,670 to Rothbury House Hotel to test out a Luncheon Club in Northumberland, and the number of diners at Aylesbury and Halton Branch's new club just keep on growing.

The branch started its lunches last winter. Entertainments Chairman, Kevin O'Neill explains: "We were in the middle of a really cold snap and were a bit concerned about some of our members who live alone, particularly after overhearing one lady tell her friend 'I don't bother cooking much these days, it doesn't seem worth it when there is just me on my own.'"

They started providing a free, monthly hot winter warmer lunch for any member who wanted to come along – from beef stew and herby dumplings to Italian and Irish food. On average 36 members attend, with more coming each month. They are joined each time by different groups of 'blue suiters' from RAF Halton, who mix themselves in among the diners and chat away for a couple of hours.

Kevin went on, "It's been such a success that we will continue through the year with menus suitable for each season. We are getting requests to join in from friends of members – and we are happy to coax them into joining the Association – and from other branches nearby. It is a great opportunity to bring everyone together, supporting each other. That's worth all the effort in my book."

Involvement of the serving personnel has spawned another initiative where a small team provide 'Techie Sessions' to help those unsure about using modern IT, tablets and smartphones.

A similar approach is planned at Rothbury House Hotel. Their club, to be launched this autumn, will be aimed at older members of the RAF family (aged 65+) including ex-service personnel and their spouse or partner. The aim is to reduce social isolation at the earliest possible stage; increase engagement in the RAF community; increase health by improving nutrition standards, and increase wellbeing by providing opportunities for beneficiaries to get out of their homes and socialise to develop support networks. The luncheon club will also include a variety of activities and entertainment for beneficiaries to enjoy, including: guest speakers; live music; gentle exercise; quizzes; walks in the extensive grounds; gardening, and outings to local attractions.



A different dish every month. Branch committee members Derf Mockford, with sausages, and Kev O'Neil, with menu, help out at the Aylesbury and Halton Branch lunch club. © MOD/Crown



"I love it here, I come to everything I can. They make me feel so welcome ... and oh, isn't the food just amazing?"

Aylesbury and Halton Branch lunch club member

Serving personnel from RAF Halton chat with diners at the Aylesbury and Halton Branch lunches. Here Chief Technician Steve Mitchell with diners Steve and Rita. © MOD/Crown

Centenary centenarians

Alexander "Sandy" Gerrard turned 100 on 14 September. The centenarian still attends every meeting of his Isle of Man branch and "we don't think it's just for the chips at the end", says Branch Secretary Jane Kelly.

The branch threw a party for Sandy on 10 September to celebrate with his family and friends, and members of the Association. "He's a bright and funny gentleman," continued Jane. "Many of his friends at his care home are also Association members and we know that they get together there for a 'bring a bottle' event on Saturday nights".

Sandy says: "Although my service was largely during wartime, I regard my years in the RAF as one of the happiest and most fulfilling times of my long life."

He joined up in Scotland in June 1939 (three months before war broke out). His first two postings were cancelled, but finally he was posted to Cardington in February 1940.

"I went on to Bridgenorth, followed by RAF Halton, and, after seventeen months, to the Advanced Flying School at Wigtown. By that time I had been made a corporal gunner. My job was to train aircrew and station personnel, with the assistance of Army non-commissioned officers, in the use of weapons.

"I was called before the station commander, with another corporal, and told that the RAF Regiment was about to be formed, and that he was going to put our names forward as officers. I was in the right place at the right time!!"

Sandy was told he looked very young (at 25) to be an officer, and it was another two years before he was finally put through his officer training.

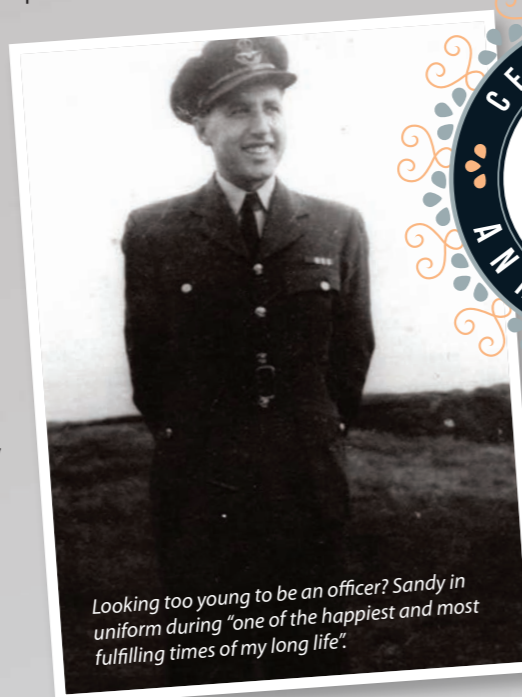
"My first posting as a pilot officer was to Bradwell Bay, Essex, then I was posted to 2804 Squadron at Scunthorpe. This squadron then went under canvas outside Chichester. I was then put on detachment, with a sergeant, to train RAF serving commandos, but to my disappointment I was returned to my base when they went to France."

Sandy finally went to France in September 1944, landing in the Mulberry Harbour and travelling all the way to the Rhine. He went back to the Isle of Man to marry a Wren he had met while stationed there. "After the wedding, I returned to Ghent, then was sent back to Germany, this time reaching the River Elbe, near Stendhal. From our position there we could see all the German civilians fleeing from the advancing Russian troops. "As I was returning to my HQ at Bückeberg down the autobahn, some Yanks were shouting and waving placards telling us that the war was over. This was on 7th May 1945."

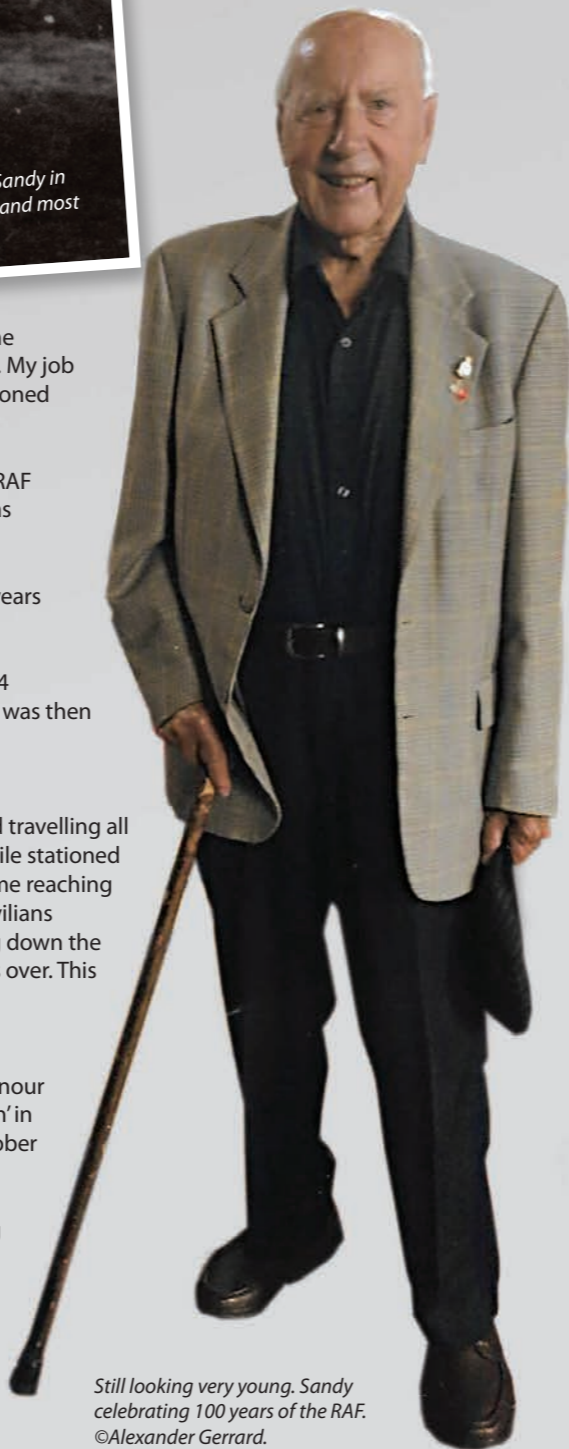
He was then posted to Denmark, escorting technical officers searching factories for information, before moving on to Gatow in Germany. There "my squadron had the honour of being chosen to take part in the famous victory parade along the 'Unter den Linden' in front of Churchill and Eisenhower, an amazing experience." He was demobbed in October 1946 from RAF Warton as a flight lieutenant in the RAF Regiment. ■

Congratulations to Sandy and to all other Association members who are turning 100 during the centenary year of the Royal Air Force.

Special congratulations also go to Robert Huddert of the Frome Branch who celebrated his 103rd birthday on Saturday 11th August.



Looking too young to be an officer? Sandy in uniform during "one of the happiest and most fulfilling times of my long life."



Still looking very young. Sandy celebrating 100 years of the RAF. ©Alexander Gerrard.

Cup of tea m' duck?

Summer fun in Lincoln



Racing for the finish line. ©MOD/Crown

1 August - The RAF100 Duck Race in Lincoln raised nearly £3,000 for the Association and gained coverage on BBC Look North and BBC Radio Lincoln. More than 1,000 ducks were released in to the water from the High Bridge in the city, with keen onlookers cheering them on as they bobbed gently along the River Witham. The three lucky winners won either £200, a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Tour or a tour of the RAF Scampton Heritage Centre. After the race, the ducks were safely retrieved from the water by helpful RAF Air Cadets, who went into the alien environment of boats on water and scooped them all up. Thanks to everyone who donated to and supported the event.



Dramatic start as 1,000 ducks are poured into the River Witham. ©MOD/Crown



BBC Radio interviews Station Officer Geoff Burton against the clatter of cups and the smacking of lips. ©RAF Association

11 and 12 August - the Association was back on the streets of Lincoln to run an enormous 'Brew for the Few' halfway up Lincoln High Street. Sponsored by BBC Radio Lincolnshire, the event served lashings of tea and cake to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the RAF and to raise funds for the RAF Association. Organisers are waiting to hear if this can be classified as the world's largest Brew for the Few. The Brew was part of a city-wide RAF100 and 1940s weekend run by the local council, tourist board, local radio stations, the Arts Council, the RAF, and the RAF Association, as well as Lincolnshire companies, retailers and employers. ■



Marjorie told us of the impact our befriending had on her life, and Bertie her Befriender Bear has helped us raise our profile nationally. ©RAF Association

Pride in what we do

The most effective way to communicate what the RAF Association does is by talking about the impact we've had on the lives of those we've helped. If the Association has helped you and you are happy to share your story with others, we want to hear from you.

Stories about the work of honorary caseworkers like Frank Hemsworth (see page 24) and how we helped John back to better mental health (Jul-Sept Air Mail), help bring to life our work and show the impact we have. They also help us develop partnerships with organisations like Rotary and Alzheimer's Society so we can recruit more volunteers and provide more welfare.

If you'd like to find out more about how you can tell your story, please email marketing@rafa.org.uk or call 0800 018 2361 and ask to speak to someone in the PR team. ■

Record bookings as concert band turns 20

Requests for music support from the RAF Association Concert Band and invitations to appear with other musical groups reached an all time high in 2018.

Engagements in the band's 20th year have included duos, trios, formal dinners, guest nights, RAF Association Token events and concerts. The band also now performs with Military Wives choirs, military bands, at a pop music and a military history festival and at Bristol Airport.

Peter Skellon BEM, Musical Director, said: "We have just hosted 69 Dutch musicians from the Student Wind Orchestra of the University of Twente. Unfortunately we couldn't organise a joint concert with them, but they did use our rehearsal room for the day and, after fish and chips, joined us for our rehearsal. Many friendships were forged."

Still to come this year are Battle of Britain dinners, Songs of Praise, Last Night of the Proms, Association concerts in Teignmouth, Barnstable, and the City of Bristol, Armistice in Taunton and the International Military Tattoo. Service charities such as the Royal British Legion as well as civilian charities have also booked the band.

On 20 October the band will be holding a dinner to celebrate 20 years of fundraising for the Association. Peter considers its success: "It's our ability to entertain our audiences who like pieces such as Battle of Britain and Dambusters. I do include some alternative pieces in the programme, but the format has worked for over 20 years. Why change?"

Further details on booking or joining the band from rafaconcertband.org.uk.

There are currently some vacancies for competent players. ■

Send flowers in red, white and blue

Thanks to a new partnership between the RAF Association and boutique florists, Appleyard London, you can order a special RAF Association-themed bouquet of hand-picked blue hydrangeas mixed with red and white roses. 10% of the sale of each bouquet sold will raise funds for the Association. The luxury service specialises in next day delivery. You can order at appleyardflowers.com/rafa.

Sorry but there are no sales over the telephone. Bouquet prices start at £34.99 and all flowers are sourced from British suppliers where possible. ■

Appleyard London's handpicked bouquets - which raises funds for our welfare work.
© Appleyard London



Helping the RAF Association Token on its tour. © Peter Skellon



Left: Sleek and modern at the Concorde Hangar. © Peter Skellon

Below: Music to visitors' ears at Gloucester Cathedral. © Peter Skellon



RAF Families Federation news

The team that helps get £££s through the Armed Forces Covenant

One of the many ways the Regional Armed Forces Covenant managers at the Families Federation can help the RAF community is through covenant funding advice when completing applications. Earlier this year, one of the covenant managers provided guidance to RAF Northolt and national charity, Family Lives so they could get just over £85,000 in covenant funding, to deliver emotional support and advice to service families.

The Covenant Fund grant of £85,673 will support armed forces families based at and around the unit. Family Lives is a national charity that works to transform the lives of vulnerable and isolated families by delivering emotional support and advice on the phone, online, in the home, in schools and in the community. Project research showed that while many service families negotiate times of stress using their own resources, and others access sufficient support from existing welfare agencies, there is a need to engage struggling families who are 'off the radar' and have not engaged with their local SSAFA team, the HIVE or the unit padre.

Less than six months later the project is up and running. Velma Simeon (pictured) is the new RAF Northolt Families Support Coordinator and has already recruited and begun the training programme for six volunteers to help deliver the project. The Family Lives model fosters independence and enables parents to take control of their lives. The project offers a highly responsive befriending service and provides support to the whole family when needed — at times such as deployment or separation. It helps the family to work through issues and minimise the impact on children and provides emotional support to complement the practical advice and support of the HIVE and community development officer.

The strengths of the Northolt covenant bid rested on the excellent track record of Family Lives in delivering support to families, the strong relationship between RAF Northolt and Family Lives, and the clear explanation within the bid of how the project would engage and support families and meet the covenant fund priorities. ■

Further information:
• raf-ff.org.uk/armed-forces-covenant
• familylives.org.uk



Velma Simeon (left) – funded through the Armed Forces Covenant to run a family support project at RAF Northolt © RAF Families Federation

New gift launched to help deployed parents feel closer to home

The Royal Air Forces Association is helping serving personnel feel more connected to home by launching the Wings Doodle Box.

The boxes are being given to all children who receive a Storybook Wings story from summer until the end of 2018 and are being launched to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the hugely popular reading scheme. The boxes contain a pillow case, wash bag, welcome home banner and cards – to be coloured in using the fabric pens provided and given to the parent as they go away. The box itself can also be coloured in to make it stand out in a parent or carer's bedroom.

Shameera Mandhu, who manages the Storybook Wings project at the Association, said: "Reading a story is still a hugely popular way for children to feel connected to a parent or carer who is working away from home. But we've developed the Wings Doodle Boxes in conjunction with Meg Wickett from the HIVE (community hub) at RAF Benson, so parents can also have little personal touches while they are away - something to make them smile and feel a little closer to home and their family."

"We launched Storybook Wings 10 years ago and it has touched the hearts of more than 2,300 families. It is now supported by 36 stations worldwide from Fylingdales to the Falklands and from Marham to Minhad," Shameera continued. "We have high hopes that the Wings Doodle Boxes will really take flight and do the same."

James, an RAF parent, said: "Prior to deploying to Kabul, I recorded The Gruffalo for my one-year-old daughter through the RAF Association Storybook Wings service. I felt so very reassured and warmed to know that she was able to hear my voice and enjoy our precious time together even in my absence. She thoroughly enjoyed the audio and book combination and I would thoroughly recommend others to use this fantastic service!" ■

If you would like to record a Storybook Wings story and receive a free Wings Doodle Box you can contact your local HIVE, or email StorybookWings@rafa.org.uk.

Colouring in the pillowcase and Doodle Box to make it unique and special.
© RAF Association





It's OK to say you're not OK

"Now we realise it's okay to say we aren't okay – and actually, by talking it through we normally find a happy place much, much quicker"
© RAF Benevolent Fund



"It helped us step through what the issues were and then to help in finding some middle ground to work on" © RAF Benevolent Fund

The RAF Benevolent Fund's (RAFBF) partnership with relationship counselling service Relate has been extended to include RAF veterans and their partners.

The RAFBF's ten year old service offers six free Relate counselling sessions and has been taken up by than 5,000 serving personnel, and the effects have been life-changing. Now the support has been extended to RAF veterans and their partners - and includes additional access to subsidised mediation sessions for couples going through separation or divorce, and family counselling.

Sam and his wife Caroline are one of the many modern families where two families join to become one. They asked Relate for some counselling sessions when they felt new pressures after moving in together, closer to Sam's RAF station.

Caroline said: "After six years of being together, we naturally had to do some adjusting. Sam went on an overseas deployment 10 days after we moved in, which would normally be fine but this was the first time Sam had been away on ops for quite some time. He was still finding his place in his new squadron and was also very preoccupied about what lay ahead and so those 10 days went pretty quickly!"

"Once Sam left, I unpacked both of our homes into one house, with the mindset of having a mutually acceptable layout for when Sam returned, as well as making sure his children felt included in everything.

Sam added: "When talking at home, we both tended to become very defensive especially when talking about our own families and parenting styles, let alone which way the bins should be pointing (yes... it did happen!). By talking 'through' a counsellor, it took away the emotion a little so we could actually learn and understand about each other."

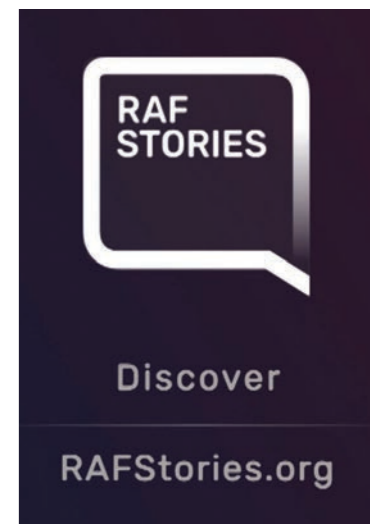
Alison Wyman, Head of Welfare Programmes and Development at the RAFBF said: "As we know only too well, RAF families can face unique challenges and that does not change as service leavers transition into new civilian careers. As well as the Relate service, the fund also has partnerships with Anxiety UK and Cruse Bereavement Care to offer help to those facing anxiety and depression issues or struggling with the loss of a loved one." ■



Association ambassador, Stu Robinson has already contributed his RAF Story.
© Phil Grieg

The Royal Air Force Museum has launched 'RAF Stories', aiming to record hundreds of stories and memories about the Royal Air Force. Currently, more than 200 stories feature in the brand new online collection at rafstories.org, including memories from 13 year-old air cadets, veterans in their 90s and everyone in between. RAF veteran Suzanne Flynn and her daughter Group Captain Emily Flynn, who is serving, are thought to be the first mother and daughter to become chartered engineers. Actress and singer-songwriter Minnie Driver speaks to historian Joshua Levine about her father's role with Bomber Command during the Second World War.

Now the museum is asking for your story. Whether you serve or have served in the RAF, have family stories from relatives who have served or have any connections to, or memories of, the Royal Air Force, they want to hear from you. They are collecting stories about love, death, friendship, bravery, humour, sadness and everything in between. Your stories can now be recorded and submitted from anywhere in the world using their free smart phone app. And you can submit stories on behalf of someone else – perhaps a relative, friend or member of your branch who has a great story but no smart phone or internet access.



The museum has also teamed up with the University of Leicester to film stories from the Leicestershire area. If you live there and would like to have your stories filmed to become part of the 'RAF Stories' collection, please contact rafstories@rafmuseum.org for more information. Filming will start in November 2018.

Find out more at the official website: rafstories.org.

The app can be downloaded free from rafstories.org, Google Play or Apple Store – just search for RAF Stories.

The RAF Museum's RAF Centenary Programme is supported by National Lottery players through the Heritage Lottery Fund. ■

Please note, this initiative is run by the RAF Museum, not the RAF Association. Any questions or feedback should be addressed to them via their RAF Stories website: rafstories.org, or by email: support@rafstories.org

New Mental Health Lite course funded

From October 2018 the RAF Association will train families of serving personnel at RAF Coningsby to spot mental health issues in serving personnel – and each other.

Thanks to a grant of £14,190 from the Mental Health Promotion Fund, the Association will run its Mental Health First Aid Lite course and train 300 partners, spouses and children over 16 to spot symptoms of declining mental health. The project will run from 1 October 2018 until the end of September 2019.

The UK Armed Forces have faced significant challenges over the last two decades, with prolonged campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Research from Spera suggests that these have been more stressful compared to operations twenty years ago and are more dangerous because of counter-insurgency warfare. They are also typically longer, more frequent and with shorter breaks in between - which has a direct impact on the mental health of the person on deployment and those left at home.

Serving personnel can access Mental Health First Aid training (which launched in July 2017 as part of the Ministry of Defence's

Mental Health Strategy). But RAF families will now have access to this training, and will often be the first ones to notice changes in behaviour, and identify mental ill health sooner.

Mental Health First Aid Lite was successfully piloted by the Association at RAF Benson and RAF Valley in 2017, with participants saying they: 'had a better understanding of a variety of issues and the effect they have on the person experiencing them'; 'know the triggers to look out for' and 'it was a very informative course, especially being able to draw on experiences of others'.

The course will be delivered by qualified RAF Association Mental Health First Aid Instructors who have completed a seven-day programme accredited by the Royal Society for Public Health. It gives participants the tools, knowledge and confidence to spot the signs and symptoms of when someone could be suffering with ill-mental health; support them through the difficulties associated with military life and understand and promote the importance of good mental health. ■

Peak of achievement

RAF100 national celebrations in pictures

RAF
100



Her Majesty The Queen presented the new Queen's Colour for the RAF to Colour Bearer, Flying Officer Joseph Sentance of the Queen's Colour Squadron. It will be held at Royal Air Force Northolt. © MOD/Crown



Metropolitan Police estimated between 65,000 and 70,000 watched the celebrations from The Mall. © MOD/Crown



Association President Air Marshal Sir Baz North joined Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier and representatives of the other three main RAF charities to lay a wreath at the RAF Memorial. © MOD/Crown

On 10 July in central London, 100 days after the RAF's official 100th birthday, 1,000 servicemen and women and fifty-five squadron standards formed the RAF100 ceremonial parade. Its route was lined with 300 personnel representing the diverse roles played within the RAF through the generations.

Commanded by Group Captain Anne-Marie Houghton they marched up The Mall before assembling at Buckingham Palace in front of Her Majesty The Queen and the royal party.

Her Majesty presented a new Queen's Colour to the Royal Air Force at a consecration ceremony on Buckingham Palace forecourt. The original Colour was presented in 1951. A rifle salute was also carried out in front of The Queen, for only the third time.

The flypast of 103 aircraft was flown by 200 aircrew from 25 different RAF squadrons, operating to and from 14 military stations and two civilian airfields. As well as the pilots, the events were made possible thanks to hundreds of aircrew, support teams and Air Traffic Controllers across the UK.

The RAF Association played its part, forming a parade of 30 standards outside the morning thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey. Association President, Air Marshal Sir Baz North, earlier laid a wreath at the RAF Memorial on Victoria Embankment alongside the Chief of the Air Staff and representatives of the RAF Benevolent Fund, RAF Charitable Trust and RAF Museum.

The Metropolitan Police estimated that up to 70,000 people watched from The Mall and the surrounding roads and parks and many Londoners stepped out of their offices to look upwards and experience the event.

The Association was also responsible for the RAF100 Appeal collections on 10 July and at events over the summer. Read more about the work of the hundreds of volunteers in London and other cities in our volunteer spotlight on page 36. ■



The parade formed RAF100 in personnel, and matched the Typhoons flying overhead in the same formation (see front cover). © MOD/Crown



Meanwhile, the RAF100 Baton Relay reached RAF Wittering. Cyclists, snowboarders, anglers and archers from almost every sporting club at the Cambridgeshire station ran with their equipment and carried the baton in a special fun-run. © MOD/Crown



The calm before the storm: Association stands on Horseguards Parade ready themselves for enthusiastic shoppers and souvenir hunters. ©RAF Association



RAF Association standards leaving Westminster Abbey © MOD/Crown

The flypast in numbers:

In order of appearance the following 103 aircraft formed the spectacular flypast over Buckingham Palace on 10 July:

3 x Puma HC2	1 x C-17 Globemaster
6 x Chinook HC4	1 x BAE146
2 x Juno H135	1 x Sentinel
1 x Jupiter H145	1 x Voyager
1 x Dakota	1 x Rivet Joint RC-135W
1 x Lancaster	1 x E-3D Sentry
3 x Spitfire	9 x Hawk T1
2 x Hurricane	9 x Hawk T2
3 x Prefect T1	9 x Tornado GR4
3 x Tucano T1	3 x Lightning F35 seen for the first time over London
2 x Shadow R1	22 x Typhoon FGR4
2 x Hercules 3-130J	9 x Hawk T1 (Red Arrows)
1 x A400M Atlas	

Highlights of the Association's RAF100 celebrations



Detail of the display by Leuchars Branch, complete with Spitfire © Malcolm Hodgson.



The display can still be seen behind a number of the Leuchars team and its sponsors. © Malcolm Hodgson.



Civic pride in the RAF in Erewash. © Marion Wells



The Association and the hundredth anniversary of the RAF share the limelight in Kings Lynn. © Guy Walker

Floral tributes bloom

In spite of the unusually hot and dry summer, RAF100 floral displays have been bursting into life across the UK.

The Leuchars Branch worked with local councils and university horticultural departments to plant a large floral tribute in Cupar town centre. The eight month project to raise funds and support for their RAF100 floral display even led to a bronze award at a horticultural show. The display was first grown for the three day Gardening Scotland Show in Edinburgh where they won the award. The 18,500 plants were then moved to the bed at Cupar where it will stay for the rest of the year.

Malcolm Hodgson, branch Wings Appeal Officer, said: "It started as a shopping trip to Cupar. It was hard work but well worthwhile."

Kings Lynn branch started work in 2017 to get approval to plant up two flower beds used by the town to celebrate events from the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. One promotes the RAF Association and the other RAF100. Gary Walker, Branch Secretary said: "The design was agreed in conjunction with ourselves and their head of parks and gardens and took in to account what plants would be available and the best way for them to lay them



Fundraising volunteers in Castle Douglas created this small but perfectly formed display in a railway wheel, and did a street collection, for Armed Forces Day on 30 June 2018.

out. The borough is very supportive of both the Association and RAF Marham."

As part of a year of celebration in Derbyshire, Erewash Branch members and cadets from 2195 (Long Eaton) Squadron Air Cadets were invited to attend the formal opening of a civic floral tribute, outside the council offices in Long Eaton. The event was hosted by the Mayor, Councillor Chris Corbett and the Mayoress, Mrs Linda Corbett. Councillor Corbett payed tribute to all those who have served in the past, are currently serving and have yet to do so. He said Erewash Council is particularly proud of its links with the armed forces, including the veteran community, and was the first council in Derbyshire to sign the Armed Forces Covenant.



The ten embroidered panels of the tapestry on display in Gloucester Cathedral in July. It took 6,000 hours to create. © Ray Bunnage



Close up you can see the photographic quality of the embroidery. © Ray Bunnage

40 embroiderers commemorate Gloucestershire's RAF

A tapestry that was two years in the making and involved 40 embroiderers from around Gloucestershire has been displayed around the county to mark the 100th anniversary of the RAF. As part of the Gloucester Branch's celebrations, RAF100 Project Manager Ray Bunnage commissioned the 10-panel tapestry to show the Royal Flying Corps and RAF stations of the county. The detailed embroidery work also commemorates the women who worked in early aircraft production, stitching fabric to air frames. The tapestry panels are supported on metal and wooden frames, replicating the materials used in early aircraft production. This unique project has been displayed at various locations around Gloucestershire including Gloucester Cathedral over the weekend of 7 and 8 July when the branch commemorated RAF 100 in the city. At the end of its tour it will be housed in the Jet Age Museum, Staverton once the education wing is completed.



On Monday 4 June 2018 the 'Token' was present throughout a commemoration walk led by the President of the Mid Somerset Branch. It travelled from the Cenotaph in Shepton Mallet, via a convivial stop at The George at Croscombe, to the Harry Patch Memorial in Wells.

Token's epic tour continues

The three RAF Association Tokens being relayed around 85 branches and local RAF units in the RAF Association's Wales, Midland and South Western Area to celebrate the RAF's centenary are to be reunited on Saturday 24 November at the Birmingham International Tattoo.

The tokens started their journey on 25 March in Gloucester Reunion and have travelled through the area since, covering hundreds of miles. Their reunification will represent the formation of the RAF and be one of the final celebrations its centenary year. For more detailed information, see branch news on pages 38 to 45.

The Area is also aiming to bring together more than 100 RAF Association standards at the tattoo (the previous best has been 59, in 2015) to provide a fitting final salute to the RAF's centenary year.

Many more RAF100 celebrations are reported in Branch news on pages 38 to 45. ■

Tickets for the International Tattoo at Birmingham Arena:

Reduced price of £16 including booking fee and donation to the Wings Appeal.

Secure your tickets here: <https://rafa.ticketlight.co.uk/>. Further important details about how the e-tickets work are in the August Wales, Midlands and South West Area newsletter (available to all on the Association's Members' Portal).

If you are unable to purchase tickets online then please call Ian Campbell, Branch Support Officer, on 07584 577 064.





From fuelling the Cessna ...

Ryan Cawsey and Karol Kubic refuelling a Cessna at South Warwickshire Flying School in 2017. © RAF Association.

Flying scholarships open - more places for 2019

Ten RAF Association flying scholarships are on offer for 2019 thanks to generous new sponsorship. There is now one 35-hour course and nine 12-hour courses for exceptional young people who want to learn to fly.

Speaking of his involvement in 2018, Cadet Corporal Ben Stephens, who won a 35-hour scholarship and got his private pilot's licence, said: "I can honestly say it's been the most exciting and rewarding experience I've ever had. I'm now in a position to start a career in flying that I would not have been able to do without the scholarship. I will remember and use the skills that I've learnt for the rest of my life, not just from the flying but also the whole process - including the interview and aptitude tests at RAF Cranwell. Thank you so much for everything."

For 2019, new sponsor MBDA will fund three 12-hour courses and join existing sponsors the Aviation Focus Group (which pays for a 12-hour course) and the RAF Association (which contributes for the rest).



Left: Akinme Akingbade, the 100th flying scholar, gets his solo certificate.

Our flying scholarship programme is run annually as a thank you to members of the RAF Air Cadets (RAFAC), which includes the Air Training Corps (ATC) and the Combined Cadet Force (RAF), Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets (GVCAC) and Air Scouts/Air Explorer Scouts for their continuous support to the Association. Applicants must have served at least 12 months with one of these organisations by 1 January 2019.

Applicants must be at least 16 years old on 1 June 2019 and under 20 on 1 January 2020.

Applications open on 1 October 2018 and close on 31 January 2019. Full terms and conditions and application forms can be downloaded from rafa.org.uk/flying-scholarships and rafayouth.org.uk.

If branches are interested in sponsoring the Flying Scholarship programme after 2019, please get in touch with membership@rafa.org.uk.

Log on to the RAF Association website Flying Scholarships page for a video and stories of successful flying scholars.

Far left: Cadet Corporal Ben Stephens in summer 2018 just after his first solo flight. "I'm now in a position to start a career in flying that I would not have been able to do without the scholarship" © South Warwickshire Flying School



... to getting your wings in a Tucano

"I always wanted to be an RAF pilot and had a well thought out plan as to the best way to make it there" says former flying scholar James Wilkinson, pictured here with a Tucano at RAF Linton-on-Ouse. ©MOD/Crown

Flying scholarship kick-started a journey to where I am now

James Wilkinson won a 12-hour flying scholarship with the RAF Association in 2013. He's now a flying officer at RAF Linton-on-Ouse and, in September 2018, got his wings - completing his basic fast jet training on the Tucano. On hold before advanced flying training on the Hawk T2 at RAF Valley, the Halifax Branch member talked to Air Mail about applications, planning and showing you are a rounded person.

"I was an air cadet with 250 (Halifax) Squadron. I initially applied for [an RAF Association] scholarship in 2012. I successfully got to the final stage of selection, but was passed on to the Air League. So I got one of their 12-hour flying scholarships that year with the help of the Association. In 2013, I reapplied to the RAF Association and was lucky enough to receive a 12-hour scholarship that year. I remember being nervous at the time but in hindsight it was quite an enjoyable experience and I made some great friends along the way. Both the Air League and the Association scholarship were undertaken at South Warwickshire Flying School. The year after, I completed the Air Cadet Pilot Scheme which gave me a further 12 hours at Tayside Aviation, Dundee.

"I went on to study Aviation Technology with Pilot Studies at Leeds University. I always knew my end goal was to be a pilot so thought that would be the most sensible route. The university course also gave me 10 free hours of flying tuition at Advanced Flight Training at Sherburn in Elmet. This, combined with the three flying scholarships I had already completed gave me enough hours and experience to successfully achieve my private pilot's licence by

only having to pay for a couple of lessons and the test. Now I am in the RAF I use the pilot's licence to take my family and friends flying between periods of training and I am hoping to add an aerobatics rating to it soon.

"I always wanted to be an RAF pilot and had a well thought out plan as to the best way to make it there, with back up options in case some routes did not work out. The scholarships and subsequently the course at university and joining Yorkshire Universities Air Squadron were a part of my plan to gain as much experience about flying and aviation before applying to join the RAF full time.

"For me [my flying scholarship] kick-started a journey to where I am now. I think the RAF is looking for individuals with a wide range of abilities and experience. Not just in flying, but having some additional knowledge in that area certainly helped me with the application process."

To any air cadets or others who are thinking about applying for a scholarship, James says: "Be proactive! I had undertaken a lot research trying to find out about all the scholarships I could and there are lots out there if you look hard enough. I'd say the reason I was successful in achieving the scholarships is because I had a plan, and I knew how the scholarships would help me in the future. I don't think the screening process is looking for one particular type of person but I'd say ambition was a key attribute of those who got through. Also, get involved in as much sport or music or part time work as you can to show that you're a rounded individual."

This is part of a longer interview with James. Read it in full on rafa.org.uk/getting-your-wings, where you can also find out more about the flying scholarships and how to apply for 2019.

We'll be strengthened by your presence - booking is now open for Conference 2019



A chance for debates and reunions.
© Heidi Burton

An event for you

This is your Conference and your chance to contribute to important debate on the future plans for the Royal Air Forces Association and an excellent opportunity to catch up with friends.

That is easy to reach

Hilton Birmingham Metropole, Birmingham, B40 1PP. Prime central location. Just off the M42. Close to Birmingham International airport (combined monorail and shuttle links) and Birmingham International train station (complimentary shuttle service to the hotel). Large free car park and Blue Badge parking. 790 rooms and 20 accessible rooms. Reduced accommodation rate for Conference delegates.

In a very smart hotel, with lots to do nearby

Heated indoor swimming pool, 24 hour fitness centre. Within walking distance of the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) and Resorts World entertainment and shopping complex.

At a lovely time of year

Friday 10 May to Sunday 12 May 2019

With a busy and interesting schedule

- Business relating to the governance and administration of your Association – including further consideration of one member, one vote
- The chance to come together in friendship and to have an enjoyable time with likeminded people
- Gala dinner evening on the Saturday night
- Sunday Service in the grounds of the Hilton Birmingham Metropole

Bring your friends

You can invite any of your branch members to attend, they do not have to be your branch delegates and if your branch has not been represented in recent years, please do consider attending. It is very important that you have your say. The Association's commitment to being a member-led welfare charity supporting the RAF family will be strengthened by your presence

Conference Registration:

Online - please complete the booking form at rafa.org.uk/annualconference by **19 April 2019**. You can register yourself and any guests who wish to attend. Accommodation needs to be booked separately.

By phone - please contact our reception team on 0116 268 8750 and they will be happy to take your details and make arrangements for your ticket. Accommodation needs to be booked separately. Tickets will be sent electronically (or by other means if you have no internet access) two weeks before the event.

No branch should be deterred from attending Conference because of financial issues:

Pooled fares scheme in operation: All branch delegates are entitled to claim standard rail fare or economy air fare which will be reimbursed accordingly after Conference. All claims are totalled and divided by the number of branches attending, after which each branch is sent an invoice for the amount involved.

Conference expenses: In accordance with Byelaw 27, the reasonable expenses of a branch committee, including those of its members attending meetings and of any delegates from the branch to an Area conference or Conference, may be reimbursed from the branch. If any branch is experiencing financial hardship they should contact their Area director for assistance.

We look forward to seeing you in Birmingham. [A](#)

Booking your accommodation:

All bookings must be made directly with the Hilton Birmingham Metropole on 0121 780 6262. Select option 1 and quote reference number: FSRAF1

The prices are specially negotiated and include your Friday dinner (informal), accommodation (Friday and Saturday night), breakfast, lunches (Saturday and Sunday), a formal dinner (Saturday night), car parking and connection to the venue's wi-fi. In addition, refreshments will be available over the weekend and each bedroom offers an ensuite bathroom, TV, hairdryer, tea/coffee and biscuits.

Single occupancy: £210
(£105 per person, per night full board as above)

Double occupancy: £312
(£78 per person, per night full board as above)

Overseas members can book additional nights at £78 (Single) or £102 (Double occupancy) per night for bed and breakfast.



The lovely surroundings of the Hilton Metropole © Hilton Hotels

On a mission

a caseworker's crusade for thousands of veterans

by Mike Curtis

A 95 year old RAF war hero unexpectedly learns that he, along with thousands of other D-Day veterans, is to be awarded France's highest distinction - the Légion d'honneur.

A caseworker with the Royal Air Forces Association realises later that the veteran – now in a care home – is waiting too long to get his medal, which cannot be awarded posthumously.

So he goes into action to accelerate the bureaucratic processes of two nations. He chases up the British Embassy in Paris, the French Embassy in London, the Ministry of Defence and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. And he gets it sorted!

In June 2014, on the 70th anniversary of D-Day, President Hollande of France unexpectedly announced that the Légion d'honneur would be awarded to all veterans who fought for the liberation of France during the Second World War between 1944 and 1945. About 6,000 applied from around the world, including about 2,400 former British troops.

Squadron Leader Bill Barfoot joined the RAF soon after the war started and trained as a wireless operator with 46 Squadron. A commission followed and he trained as a navigator, joining 296 Squadron in 1943. The squadron had been formed the previous year to concentrate on the glider-towing role. When Bill Barfoot joined, it was operating Armstrong Whitworth Albemarles which it utilised for leaflet raids and tactical bombing before developing its work with gliders.

As part of 38 Group, Special Operations Executive, it flew special forces to France, along with agents and supplies for the French Resistance. Bill told his family of navigating into France, sometimes flying at only 500 feet, to find a field in enemy territory marked only by a few torches. The ammunition was only handed out to foreign agents as they left the aircraft in case they were double agents.

Bill Barfoot was appointed Squadron Navigation Officer with 296 and flew on many missions. The night before the D-Day landings, the squadron flew 'pathfinder' parachutists into Normandy. Then, on the 6th June 1944, their eight Albemarles returned to the invasion front towing Horsa gliders full of troops. Bill also navigated glider-towing aircraft to the Battle of Arnhem and the Rhine crossings.

In the autumn of 1944, 296 Squadron converted to the Halifax. It continued with SOE operations until the end of the war, after which it was involved in transport duties including the repatriation of concentration camp victims.

Bill Barfoot stayed in the RAF after the war and had postings at Middleton St George, Changi in Singapore, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and the Air Ministry. He was Station Commander at RAF Castle Bromwich and ended his service in 1959 at RAF Shawbury, where he ran the Central Navigation School. He then joined the Austin Motor Company at Longbridge near Birmingham, working in sales and training until he retired.

Bill's son Nigel filled in the application form for his father to claim the Légion d'honneur. Six months later, they had heard nothing so Nigel rang his old friend Frank Hemsworth for advice. Frank had also served in the RAF and was a caseworker with the RAF Association and used that status to make some inquiries.

President Hollande's announcement in 2014 had taken the Ministry of Defence in London by surprise. All applications for the medal had to be vetted by the ministry before being passed to the French. It admitted it was short of staff to process the applications. Once they were passed on to Paris, they had to be sent for translation which caused another bottleneck in the process.



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Sir Peter Ricketts (now Lord Ricketts) was the British Ambassador to France in 2015. Replying to a letter from Frank in April of that year, he said that everyone was beginning to make progress on the awarding of the medal. He said the British Embassy would continue to follow this closely, including the progress on the medal for Squadron Leader Barfoot.

Frank sent a letter to Lord Astor of Haver, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry. The reply from his office confirmed that the sheer volume of applications from around the world had led to a 'regrettable' delay in processing them. It added that the French authorities remained conscious of the age of the applicants and the problems it could bring with regards to ill health.

Frank's constituency MP just happened to be David Cameron, the member for Witney and prime minister at the time. Consequently Frank raised the delay with 10 Downing Street whose reply confirmed that the French system for scrutinising the applications, for manufacturing the medals and arranging suitable award ceremonies had been 'swamped'. It said that the more pressing needs of the most aged and more infirm among UK veterans had been prioritised by the Ministry of Defence. The letter was signed by Mr Cameron who sent his personal regards to Bill Barfoot.

The delays in awarding British troops with the Légion d'honneur attracted some publicity in national newspapers. The Daily Telegraph reported that several hundred D-Day veterans had died without receiving the medal. It cannot be awarded posthumously - and the medals would not be sent to the families of those who have died waiting.

With Bill Barfoot still waiting for his medal in September 2015, Association caseworker Frank once again contacted the British Embassy in Paris. In a letter to the military attaché Air Commodore Paul Lyall, Frank conceded he had 'ruffled feathers at all levels' but had been told that the process had gained momentum by his actions. This was encouraging, not least for Bill Barfoot who was then almost 96 and in a Birmingham care home. However, despite the support of Air Commodore Paul Lyall, Sir Peter Ricketts, Lord Astor and the Prime Minister, Bill had still not got his medal. 'What more can I do to free up the logjam?' asked Frank.

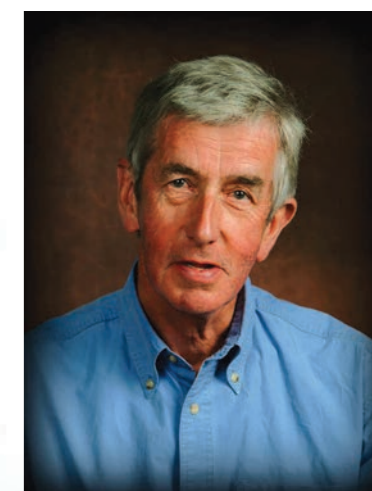
Continued overleaf



Above: Bill Barfoot ready for action. Inset: Bill Barfoot on terra firma.



Main Picture: D-Day photo of an Albemarle taken by Bill during the action.



Association Honorary Caseworker Frank Hemsworth.



A proud moment - at last. The presentation of the honour.

The breakthrough eventually came when the British Embassy identified someone described as 'an unassuming and relatively lowly civil servant in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs'. She had been raised in Normandy and had the strongest respect for the Allied troops and what they did for France. She told the Embassy: 'I know what these men did and I will make sure they receive their medals as soon as possible'. She went out of her way to cut through the red tape and speed things up. When the British Ambassador invited her to the Embassy to congratulate her on her efforts, she had tears in her eyes.

In the end, more than 5,000 of the UK's D-Day veterans got the Légion d'honneur, including Bill Barfoot. His name was in the first 50 authorised by Downing Street. In October 2015, he proudly put on his RAF beret and campaign medals to be presented with the Légion d'honneur in a ceremony near his home in Edgbaston, Birmingham. Robert Mille, the French honorary consul to Birmingham, presented him with the medal watched by around 40 family and friends. Bill died two years later in 2017.

Sir Peter Ricketts later wrote to Frank, expressing delight that Bill had finally got his medal. He added that the Association caseworker's work on behalf of the Barfoots had been 'exemplary'. Air Commodore Lyall, who highlighted the part played by Wing Commander Graham August in the Paris Embassy, also praised the caseworker's campaign. He said: 'It was correct to say that Frank was a thorn in my side that continually reminded me of the issue and forced me to act as quickly as possible. He has gone from being a complete pain to a very good friend. Do not understate his contribution!'

Frank described himself as 'a lowly caseworker' who took on a campaign to speed up the Légion d'honneur process for British veterans. He says being a caseworker with the RAF Association allowed him to take on the challenge. He hopes the campaign inspires other caseworkers to never give up. It took him two years and 'umpteenth phone calls' to ensure Bill Barfoot got his medal before he died.

Frank said: 'Life is about getting the right people together to get the job done. Success can be achieved by constant pressure and the right contacts. There were jobs to do - and they were done'. ■

THE CHEVALIER LEGION D'HONNEUR

The Légion d'honneur (Legion of Honour) is the highest French order of distinction for military and civil merits. It was established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte and has been retained by all the divergent governments and regimes later holding power in France, up to the present.

As an honour, the Légion d'honneur does not include any actual material or financial benefit. However, it is an invaluable source of pride for the recipients and their families and an example of civic service made public.

It can be awarded to any French citizen with no criminal record, who has demonstrated outstanding merits in the service of the nation, in a military or a civilian capacity. Twenty years of activity at least are required to qualify for the medal.

The Légion d'honneur has 93,000 members. Every year a maximum of 2,600 people can be inducted, in a military capacity or as civilians.

Some 320 foreigners can be awarded this honour every year but, unlike French nationals, they are not actual members of the Légion d'honneur.

Source: <http://www.legiondhoneur.fr/en/page/legion-honor-10-questions/406>



King's Lynn Branch President, Wing Commander (Ret'd) Vic Stapley OBE DFC, was also recently awarded the Légion d'honneur by the French Government. The medal was presented to him at the branch RAF100 Dinner by the Mayor of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Mrs Carol Bower. Also present was the Station Commander, RAF Marham, Group Captain Ian Townsend ADC MA.

Trustee Spotlight Mark Neal

Co-opted member of Council. Chair of the Information Committee.

Can you start with a bit about who you are?

I am the third of five children in a family dedicated to service. My brothers and sister served in the Royal Navy, Royal Engineers and police. My mother worked for the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes (NAAFI) and later as a mental health nurse, while my father served with the RAF during WWII in Burma and Japan, before joining the police.

I joined the RAF in October 1978, at 16, as an apprentice electronics technician. I retired in November 2016 as an Air Vice-Marshal and the director responsible for service design within the MOD Information Systems and Services Organisation in Joint Forces Command. My career included Air Defence Ground Environment, large scale change management, for which I was awarded an OBE, information and IT-related roles and command and staff training. I am also a senior Chartered Engineer.

What skills do you bring to the trustee board?

I hope to apply my odd blend of IT, expertise in risk management and transforming operational practices to aid Council as it shapes the Association for success through to 2030 and beyond.

How did you come to be co-opted?

I was co-opted specifically for my experience in managing complex IT programmes and handling information safely and securely within a successful enterprise. I hope to continue Dick Whittingham's excellent work as trustee and chair of the Information Committee. I am honoured to have been invited. It provides me with a unique opportunity to give something back to the RAF family.

What are the challenges you feel the RAF Association faces now and in the future?

The world doesn't sit still and neither can the Association. Our growing membership, and the RAF family we support, already spans five active generations. From baby boomers to millennials, each has its own peculiar needs and aspirations. Simply communicating with such a diverse group can present its challenges, some still preferring face-to-face contact, while others abhor a spoken conversation when you could simply 'Snap' them. I want to take out the 'geek speak', slay a few dragons, and help people to feel empowered in an increasingly digital world.

What are you looking forward to as a trustee of the RAF Association?

I've joined Council at an exciting time with projected growth in membership and welfare output. I believe strongly that digital technologies and modern practices can help the Association to sustain that growth efficiently and effectively and I look forward to championing the power of information to deliver charitable outcomes.

What do you like doing in your free time?

Despite outward appearances, I'm a bit of a gym bunny and can be seen in (the coffee lounge of) my local gym pretty much every other day! I'm also the chairman of the management company for the building where I live and, as a former Victorian schoolhouse, the old building keeps me pretty busy.

Just as I can't give up my RAF connections, I find myself unable to let go of my engineering roots. So, I also do a lot of volunteering for the Institution of Engineering and Technology. And I'm a STEM Ambassador, trying to get the younger generations excited about science, technology, engineering and mathematics. ■



© Heidi Burton

Reuniting Ric



**“Joy, my sweetheart,
I do miss you more than
I can say and I’m longing
to be with you again.
You know that don’t you?”**

*Ric and Joy on honeymoon in Blackpool,
shortly before he was deployed.*

“Joy, my sweetheart, I do miss you more than I can say and I’m longing to be with you again. You know that don’t you?” These were the words of Ric Wilkinson to his new bride Joy, recorded in October 1945 but unheard for decades. And this is how we reunited Joy with Ric’s voice.

A fragile Voices of the Forces message was handed in to Flowerdown House, the RAF Association’s Wings Breaks hotel in Weston-super-Mare, by a member of the public. Discovered in the eaves of an attic during a local house clear out, it was brought to our hotel and eventually to our head office.

We struggled to find a record player that could play the 78rpm* record. There was limited information about the sender, Ric. The audio was so crackly we couldn’t tell who the recipient of the record was and, crucially, how we would ever reunite the record with its rightful owner.

Then we had a breakthrough; we found a musician with a record player that was not only able to play the recording, but also digitally record it so we (and any remaining family) could listen to it again and again. To celebrate, the recording was played in an RAF Association headquarters team meeting. After so many years of silence, the message from Ric to Joy was finally heard again and brought tears to many eyes. We knew we had to try and reunite any living family with the record before it was too late.

The Association got in touch with the BBC’s One Show with all the information we had on the recording, as well as that all important digital recording of it. We were hoping they and their huge audience could give us clues to who might have made the heart-warming personal message. The response and support from their viewers was overwhelming. Within minutes our email and social media inboxes were flooded with thoughts on who Ric might be and #FindRic was ‘go!’

Sadly we discovered that Ric had passed away many years ago. But his wife, Joy – the original recipient of the record - was living a very full life at RMBI Home Cadogan Court in Exeter. Her amazed family got in touch with The One Show. Within days, the Association was heading down to Exeter with a film crew, to bring the record and Joy back together.

Joy was delighted. She revealed it wasn’t the only time that she’d received a postal record from Ric: “He sent one when he was coming home, to tell me which ship he’d be coming home on. But the recording was bad and it started to repeat itself.” The fragility of these records really brings home how precious communication was during and after the Second World War as families tried to keep in touch with their serving loved ones.

She told us that the couple had met at a tuck hatch canteen in Salisbury where Joy was working. Romance blossomed quickly and they were soon engaged to be married, setting a spring date. Then Ric was told that he had embarkation leave and would be deployed very soon. They discussed bringing the wedding forward, with Joy saying Ric had wanted to get married the next Monday, to which she replied: “I can’t make it by Monday, we’ll have to have it Tuesday!” With the help of friends and family the wedding went off without a hitch and they honeymooned in Blackpool before Ric was sent away.

**for our younger members, rpm means revolutions per minute – how fast a record went round on a turntable. We understand the last mass produced 78rpm record was released in the UK around 1959/1960.*



*Joy holding the record for the first time in decades,
after hearing Ric’s voice once again. © RAF Association*

Being apart from her husband after only 21 days of marriage was difficult for Joy and she worried about him while he was away. Through letters and the occasional postal record they were able to keep in touch during his deployment. When Joy found out she would be reunited with the record she had long forgotten she said: “It didn’t upset me at all. It turned my heart a bit - I’ve been without him so long.” Clare Walker, Business Relationship Manager at Joy’s care home said, “That will now bring back memories for Joy for months”.

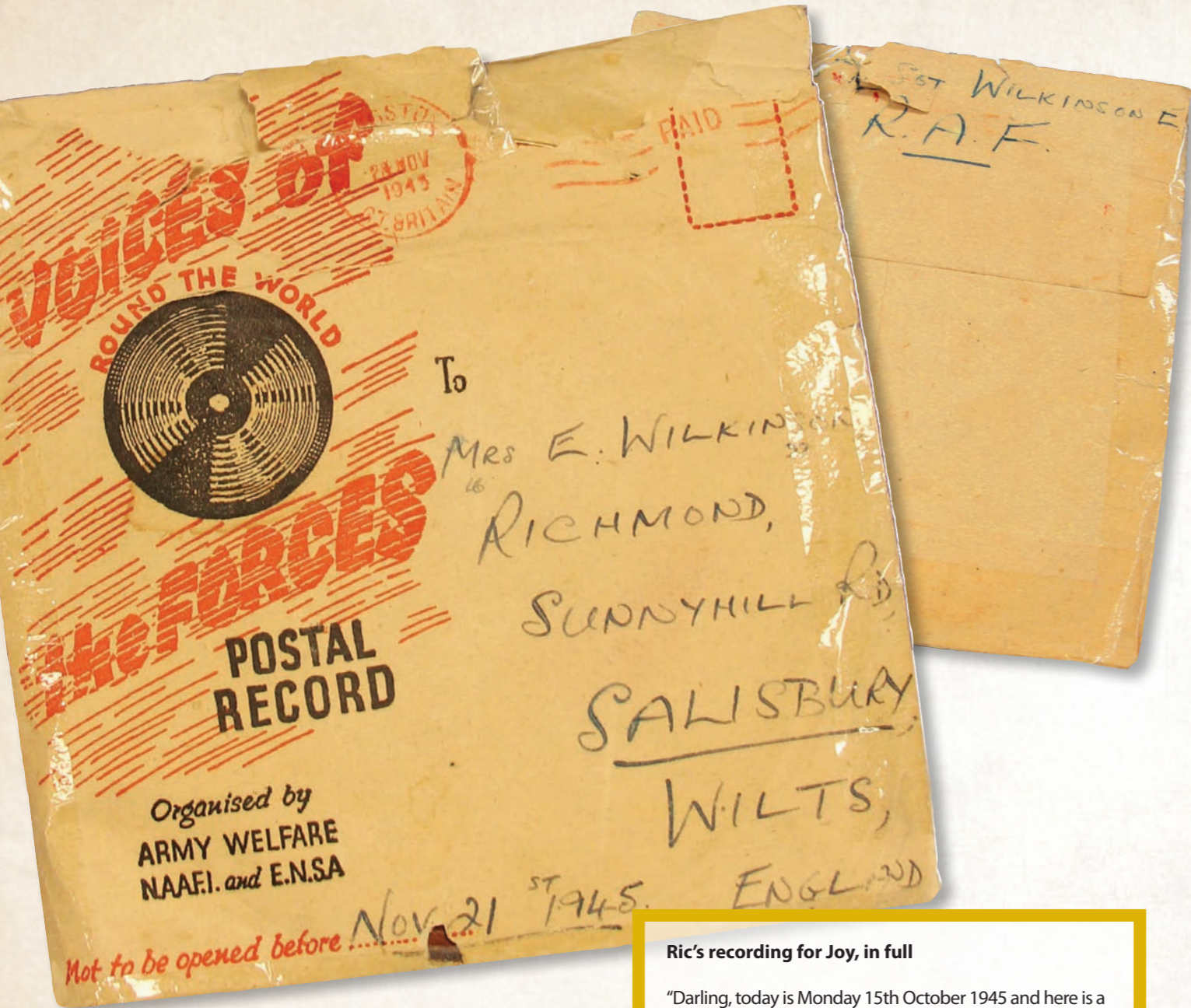
Thank you to The One Show, their viewers and amateur genealogists and our members for being so thorough in their research and so supportive of our efforts to find Ric’s family and bring them and this record back together.

“Put your message on record and send it home” Voices from the Forces in the 30s and 40s.

With today’s smartphones, Skype, Face Time, and personal live streaming it’s hard for younger generations to imagine how out of contact members of the RAF and other armed forces felt when they were deployed overseas for years. Their families at home ached for information about them. Members who served the 1930s and 40s will remember the Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA) Voices of the Forces records which were used by thousands of servicemen to send voice recordings home to their nearest and dearest. The sender would record their special message to loved ones in the specially set up recording rooms at Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes (NAAFI) clubs overseas. Servicemen were given the option of reading from a prepared script or choosing some stock phrases, up to a total of just 180 words – barely more than you can get into a tweet today. The voice was recorded directly onto the disc, before being placed into a special envelope and posted home. The fragile disc, only five inches across and weighing less than half an ounce (around 14 grams) could only be played a maximum of 200 times before the quality degraded.

Now the Association’s welfare team provides a range of different support to help people stay connected, from Storybook Wings recordings to the new Wings Doodle Boxes (see page 13), and from wif-fi on UK stations and bases to our Wings centre and Wings cafés around the UK.

continued



The only written clues we had – an old address and a name using the style of the husband's initial when addressing a wife. The wife's name on the record was obliterated by crackle and scratches. © RAF Association

Please note: while it was wonderful to be able to reunite Joy and her family with the postal record, the RAF Association does not have the capacity to do this with any more artefacts and mementos. If you have a piece of history that you want to find out more about, or to start your own research we would recommend getting in touch with the following places:

National Archives
The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU
020 8876 3444
nationalarchives.gov.uk

Ancestry.com and other genealogy websites or groups.

Ric's recording for Joy, in full

"Darling, today is Monday 15th October 1945 and here is a special message for you from India. I hope this record reaches you before our first wedding anniversary.

"Oh my darling, how I would love to celebrate November 21st with you in Salisbury. Maybe we could visit the back of beyond and then cycle to Heale Bridge by moonlight. Wouldn't it be fun?

"Joy my sweetheart, I do miss you more than I can say and I'm longing to be with you again. You know that don't you? On the anniversary of our D Day, I'll be thinking of you very specially. Those 21 days of heaven were much too short, but they've left us with so many beautiful memories.

"Keep smiling sweetheart. Are you listening? I do love you, goodbye for now. God bless.

"All my love darling, always your own husband,

Ric"



We'd like to know how we are doing. So please could you let us know with this quick and easy survey?

Online: Log on to rafa.org.uk/air-mail-survey, complete and press send.

By post. Please cut this page out of the magazine. Tick the questions. Pop them into a plain envelope and just write "Freepost RAF Association" on the front. You will not need a stamp and it will get to us. (Please do not use the printed reply paid envelope enclosed as that is for your 'One Member, One Vote?' feedback).

1. How satisfied are you with Air Mail?

(Tick one)

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

2. How interested are you in Air Mail's content ?

(Tick one)

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Moderately interested
- Slightly interested
- Not at all interested

3. Which regular sections of Air Mail do you like?

(Tick all that apply)

- Branch News
- Classified Adverts
- Crossword
- Employee Spotlight
- Hotels news
- Welfare news
- Message from the Sectary General
- News from the RAF
- News updates on the Association
- Notices
- Obituaries
- Trustee Spotlight
- Volunteer Spotlight
- World Military Aviation News

4. How relevant are the advertisements in Air Mail to you?

(Tick one)

- Extremely relevant
- Very relevant
- Moderately relevant
- Slightly relevant
- Not at all relevant

continued overleaf

5. Please tick any topic you would be interested in reading in Air Mail

(Tick all that apply)

- Science and Technology
- History
- Health and Fitness
- RAF Sports
- Travel
- Performing Arts and Culture
- Gardening and Wildlife
- Cooking

6. How likely are you to recommend Air Mail to a friend?

(Tick one)

- Very likely
- Likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

7. If there was a competition in each edition would you take part?

(Tick one)

- Yes
- No

8. What would you most enjoy doing?

(Tick two)

- Crossword
- Word search
- Sudoku
- Maths/Logic puzzles
- Image puzzles like 'spot the ball' or 'spot the difference'
- Quiz

9. Please let us know which of the following communications from the RAF Association that you see:

(Tick all that apply)

- A printed newsletter/email from your branch
- An Area email newsletter
- RAF Association supporters' email
- RAF Association Facebook page
- RAF Association Twitter page
- None of the above

10. After reading an Air Mail article have you ever:

(Tick all that apply)

- Logged on to the Members' Portal for further information?
- Found out more about volunteering?
- Signed up for an event – such as Conference or the National Memorial Arboretum annual service?
- Found out more about fundraising?
- Found out more about challenge events?
- Told someone else about any of the above?

11. If you were asked to recall a story you really liked from the latest issue which would it be?

12. Any other comments?

13. It would help us if you could let us know your age?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+

Thank you very much. Now we'll be able to give you and all our readers more of what you like in future.



CHANGES

to Association's complaints policy, and a new code of conduct

A complaint can be a good thing. Vikki Hall, Director of Governance and Risk explains: "Complaints give any organisation the opportunity to identify areas for improvement and can pinpoint areas of risk. Having a robust framework for dealing with them is an essential part of good governance and failing to respond appropriately to complaints can escalate a problem significantly - as we saw in the recent news about Oxfam and Save the Children. Providing multiple routes within the Association for members and employees to raise concerns will help prevent similar crises happening to us."

Earlier in the year, Council approved an update to the Association's complaints policy as part of a planned review. The policy now co-ordinates better with our separate whistleblowing and safeguarding policies. In August, Council approved a code of conduct for Association members and members of council, Area councils, regional committees, branch committees and branch club committees; which is supported by a procedure for responding to cases of misconduct.

The changes in detail of the complaints policy:

- The scope of the policy has been clarified, including the definition of a complaint
- Complaints should now be made within three months of the incident rather than the existing 12 months. This will make them easier to investigate
- All complaints being made under the policy should be clearly marked as "Formal Complaints" and sent in writing to the Secretary General. This will help us to clearly separate a complaint to be dealt with under the policy from informal and lower level "grumbles". Verbal complaints should be followed up in writing and the Association reserves the right to ask an individual to confirm if they want to invoke the formal policy

- There is a more specific procedure in terms of who is responsible for what and timescales
- There is now an additional level of escalation

Section 2 of the revised the complaints policy ("scope of policy") now says that the policy covers an "expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the Association, the service it provides, or the act, omission, behaviour or conduct of any individual associated with the Association".

The new code of conduct and the updated complaints, whistleblowing and safeguarding policies can all be read on the Members' Portal. If you would like to know more but don't have access to the internet or the portal, please call 0800 018 2361 and ask for the Governance and Risk Team.

Complaints about individuals – and the new code of conduct

When a complaint against an employee is upheld, the Association's disciplinary policy can be implemented. Employees are fully aware of the standards of behaviour expected as set out in their contracts of employment, staff handbook and Association policies. Until now there was no equivalent for members of the Association: whether acting in an official Association capacity or as an individual. There were no published standards of conduct, procedures or a range of sanctions to be applied.

Council has now approved the development of procedures to be implemented in the event that a complaint is upheld against a member, together with a code of conduct to provide members with guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from a member of the Association.

These can be read on the Members' Portal or by telephoning 0800 018 2361 and asking for the Governance and Risk Team.

rafaYOUTH turns five

Turning five with prizes and glorious colour

rafaYOUTH celebrated its fifth birthday by offering five members the chance to win a £500 flying lesson. The lucky winners were able to choose any type of lesson – from hot air ballooning to gliding or powered flight.

Set up as an online youth membership scheme for young flying enthusiasts in August 2013, rafaYOUTH now has more than 5,000 members – all aged between 13 and 17. More than 12,548 cadets have passed through its membership in its first five years.

By the end of 2018 the organisation will have given away more than 500 prizes in monthly draws, including iTunes vouchers, skydiving, gliding days and flying lessons. Members get the chance to try all sorts of aerial experiences. "We wanted to mark our fifth birthday with something really special," said Helen Gibson, Youth Community Manager at the Association. "Flying prizes are always highly sought after, and we always look forward to offering them".

rafaYOUTH also promotes the RAF Association annual flying scholarships, helps branches and Association headquarters with countless Wings Appeal collections and, this year, has contributed enormously to behind-the-scenes work for the RAF100 Appeal – sticking hundreds if not thousands of stickers onto collecting buckets and tins and preparing and packing trays and trays of the RAF100 appeal lapel roundels. They have also supported and attended many hundreds of RAF100 events around the country. In July they linked up with Marks and Spencer to pack bags for shoppers and support the company's efforts to raise funds for the RAF100 Appeal.

The Association is now running the Young Challenger Cup for teams of young people who would like to take part in the burgeoning Colour Chaos and Santa Runs. rafaYOUTH members and air cadets helped the Association launch the messy, fun events in 2017, throwing different coloured powders around the runners – and getting filthy themselves in the process.

Helen continued: "The links between branches, rafaYOUTH and cadets has always been strongest when it comes to the Wings Appeal. The young people helped the Association raise more than £131,000 last year in street collections and by organising fundraising events. Having cadets involved as volunteers with the branches not only helps the young people's personal development, but can also be used towards nationally recognised awards like Duke of Edinburgh. And of course, when they reach their 18th birthday, they can join as a full member of the Association, so we are helping to grow the next generation of members."

Looking ahead, rafaYOUTH has been supporting an emerging virtual branch for the Combined Cadet Force under the auspices of the South East and Eastern Region, helping with fundraising ideas and materials and giving advice when asked. Watch this space for more news.

Here's to another successful five years, and Air Mail hopes to be reporting on rafaYOUTH's tenth birthday celebrations in due course. Look out for another anniversary prize draw this coming December. ■



1. Ewa Skotak of 504 (West Nottingham) Squadron ATC and her mother helped with translation for guests from the Polish Air Force at St Paul's Cathedral for our commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.
2. Commanding Officer Flight Lieutenant Mark Bird RAFAC, with 56 (Woolwich) Squadron ATC collecting for RAF100 in London.
3. 558 (Finningley) Squadron ATC take part in the Lincoln Santa Run in 2017.
4. rafaYOUTH members help Association staff prepare RAF100 buckets
5. The Association took young people nominated for their outstanding contribution to rafaYOUTH to visit the Red Arrows' summer training camp in Cyprus.
6. Cadet Warrant Officer Jonathan Mounty of 94 (Feltham) Squadron ATC meeting veterans at St Paul's Cathedral after reading at the Association's commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.
7. 171 (Christchurch) Squadron ATC carry the standard for the Christchurch Branch.

Omagh goodness

A group of air cadets have gone from a standing start to 'world domination' in the Wings Appeal collections. 72 (Omagh) Squadron Air Training Corps bagged two trophies at the 2018 Conference, having never won anything before.

Just a minute after picking up the Sir Douglas Bader Trophy from Association President Air Marshal Sir Baz North, they were all back on stage to shake his hand again and collect the Sir Robert Saundby Trophy.

The group of 27 cadets, from the most westerly of all ATC squadrons based nearly 70 miles from Belfast in one of Northern Ireland's most rural areas, raised £10,747. This was the highest net Wings Appeal amount and also the highest collection per person by air cadets in 2017 at £398 each.

The squadron's Flying Officer Graham Dodds paid to attend Conference as an Association delegate so the squadron could afford to bring two staff and five cadets on the long journey, with help from RAFA – and properly celebrate with them. He said: "We beat squadrons that are much bigger than us.

"We are based in County Tyrone and County Fermanagh. It's very socially disadvantaged. But we've never had one incident and get support from unionists as well as nationalists – we've got good links with all. We've done lots of community outreach to the RAF Association Fermanagh Branch and at other community events."

To raise the money the group did coffee events, 10k walks and seven solid days of bag packing at Tesco before and after school – where the squadron staff did 10 hour shifts to support their cadets.

"We take the cadets flying, to glider school and away to RAF Aldegreve to go on the flight simulator. We also help out at the Port Rush Air Show, on Armed Forces Day and at any Northern Ireland or Scotland events for the Association," Graham continued, "And every year we have 200 people attend a community day in Omagh which we run with the RAF and the RAF Association."

Helen Gibson, Youth Community Manager at the RAF Association, supports 5,000 rafaYOUTH members in air cadet squadrons around the UK. She said "This is the squadron with the second highest proportion of rafaYOUTH members. I am not allowed favourites, but I think they are right to be very proud of what they have achieved."

Chatting at Conference before the trophy presentations, the cadets talked of their achievements, saying it was "astonishing", "gives you good role models" and that what they most needed for successful fundraising was "to be waterproof!" ■



Top: Sir Baz North poses with staff: Flying Officer Graham Dodds, Pilot Officer Conchubhar McHugh and Sergeant Kathy McHugh and with Cadet Flying Sergeant Jack Liggett, Cadet Corporal Rachel Wilson, Cadet Corey Alleyne, Cadet Reuben Palmer and Cadet Andrew Kerr. © Heidi Burton

Middle: Everyone came on stage twice to receive the trophies – this one is the Sir Douglas Bader Trophy. © Heidi Burton

Bottom: 72 (Omagh) Squadron ATC cadets helped out at the Association's celebration of the 100th anniversary of the RAF at the National Memorial Arboretum in May 2018, as wreath bearers and giving out programmes. © Heidi Burton

Huge THANK YOU

to all the RAF100 Appeal volunteer collectors



Snapping a memory of a great day in London.



Veteran, serving and civilian collectors gathering in Stamford.



'Off duty' university air squadron members armed with buckets and smiles in Manchester

"I've never had anyone thank me for my service before. It was quite moving really."

Steve Baber. Collected in Bristol. Served with 32 Squadron RAF Northolt in the 70s, 80s. Detached to 4FTS RAF Valley for three months in the 80s and then worked as an instructor on the Battle Damage Repair Flight at RAF Abingdon.



'Tap and go' card donation points – for people who don't carry cash any more.



"It was fabulous to see so many people walking through the streets wearing the RAF100 pins and roundels on their lapels. The main area of interest was the RAF100 year anniversary, but a lot were interested in my connection with the RAF and talking about their own involvement too." Darren Brook. Collected in York. Served in the RAF from 1983 to 1997 as an electronics engineer in telecommunications and satellite communications.



"People wanted to know about the medals I was wearing. It warmed me that children kept pointing at them and saying how shiny they were." Sergeant Paula Murphy. Collected in York. Association member and RAF Association Liaison Officer.



An unexpected, but very welcome, local escort turned up to drum up support for our RAF100 collectors in Edinburgh.



Thank you to the RAF's Chinook display team for their £600 donation to the Appeal, presented on Horse Guards Parade to Wexford House tenant Jack Cook. Jack had been telling the story of his involvement in Operation Manna in WWII as part of an RAF national media event. Afterwards he was given a tour of the static displays and the cockpit of the Chinook.

Almost 1,400 civilian and serving volunteers have contributed this summer to collect for the RAF100 Appeal.

The RAF Association was responsible for recruiting, training and supporting volunteer fundraisers to be a part of the street collections that ran alongside the RAF's static aircraft tour, the RAF100 parade and flypast in London on 10 July, and at various regional events and venues.

All the money collected over the summer will go to the RAF100 Appeal to be shared between the RAF, RAF Association, RAF Benevolent Fund, RAF Charitable Trust and the RAF Museum. Jo Baker, RAF100 Volunteer Project Co-ordinator says: "We were delighted to find and meet such a wonderful range of people who were passionate about raising money for the cause. We can't thank them enough for their efforts, and know they had a fantastic time while they were volunteering for us."

"They were ten deep, all day, just handing over £20 notes!"

Volunteers on the RAF Association's METs (mobile exhibition trailers) were almost overwhelmed by the interest in merchandise associated with the Association and RAF100. After the first day of the London event, Chris Osborne, Fundraising Events Manager, said: "We had to ask the employees travelling to London to support the street collections the next day to fill their cars and vans with extra stock. We thought before that we had taken more than enough stock for the expected extra interest, but we've never seen anything like that kind of demand before."

"Enormous thanks goes to all our volunteers who put in long shifts selling all kinds of merchandise. Their efforts meant everyone was served, with a smile, and the RAF100 Appeal funds were boosted by very healthy amounts."

Collections happened in:

- Cardiff – Friday 18 May
- Newcastle – Saturday 19 May
- York – Friday 8 June
- Reading – Friday 15 June
- London – Tuesday 10 July
- Bristol – Friday 27 July
- Peterborough – Friday 3 August
- Edinburgh – Friday 17 August
- Birmingham – Saturday 25 August
- Glasgow – Friday 31 August
- Manchester – Friday 14 September

The events in numbers*:

Total volunteers attended up to end of August: **1,152**

Volunteer hours given to end of August: **4,803**

Most fundraising volunteers at a single event: **681 - London, 10 July**

Total cities collected in: **11**

Biggest crowds: **65,000 to 70,000 – The Mall, London, 10 July**

*figures are from the end of August, with one city to go

Thank you also to the Air Cadets who helped us stick labels on hundreds and hundreds of collecting tins and buckets in Birmingham, Bristol, London and York; the RAF Association employees who staffed the fundraising hubs; the Association's partners and sponsors who lent their premises to be hubs in cities across the land - and looked after us all while we were there and all the drivers, money counters and so many more.



Employees and collectors in Cardiff.

All photos © the RAF100 volunteers and/or RAF Association employees.

BRANCH NEWS

including region, area and overseas news



1066 Branch, Bexhill on Sea 1

In July, Bexhill-on-Sea held a weekend Great Gatsby Festival. 1066 Branch and club took this opportunity to advertise itself and collect for the Wings Appeal. The weather was beautiful and the club was open all day. Catering was provided outside by the resident cook and inside there was a selection of real ales, wine and soft drinks. Entertainment was performed by the branch ukulele band. To add to the occasion there was a flypast of the Red Arrows and Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

The picture shows both the branch Chairman Phil Snelgrove and Wings Appeal Organiser Jean Snelgrove enjoying the sunshine.

Aberdeen Branch 2

In July, 12 members and friends from the Aberdeen Branch visited the former airfield of RAF Banff at Boyndie. John Cruickshank VC laid a wreath at the airfield memorial, after which local farmer Jamie Forbes and his sons James and Alistair kindly opened the gates and took the party around the site. The former ops room and control tower are still standing and were visited.

The main east/west runway and perimeter track were driven on and everyone was fascinated by this relatively unknown and short lived, but very important, Flying Training then Coastal Command RAF station, opened in 1943 and closed in 1946.

The branch is indebted to the Forbes family and also to its member William Anderson and his family for arranging the outing.

Amsterdam Branch – Club Limburg 3

Mr Jouke Sipsma (pictured left) was honoured by Brunssum Council and also received a plaque from Squadron Leader Rex Thompson on behalf of the Royal Air Forces Association Amsterdam Branch Club Limburg for his outstanding commitment to keeping alive the memory of the crew of Lancaster R5701, which crashed in the town in October 1952.



Jouke was 13 years-old when the plane crashed and part of it fell in front of his house. He often thought about this as he grew up and wondered frequently about the crew.

When he retired from work in 1989, he began his quest to learn more about the crash and crewmembers. After countless years of dedicated research and lobbying, he organised for a memorial to be unveiled 50 years after the liberation of the town. He attends the annual remembrance service there every October.

Balderton Branch 4

The Lancaster Grange Care Home, Fernwood hosted this year's memorial service in June for those who served at RAF Balderton. As for the last six years, the event was organized by the branch. Standards from three branches – Balderton, Mansfield and Retford – were paraded, and lowered for the last post during the service. More than 20 residents of the care home attended, accompanied by the staff, and the home's deputy manager spoke on behalf of the residents and owners. He reminded those present of the past sacrifices by RAF personnel, and the efforts being made by today's RAF in service of their country. President Mick Scatcherd gave a brief history of the station and the units which had been based there.

Photo shows: Branch Chairman, Nigel Branston leading the parade into position.

Barnsley Branch 5

Barnsley Branch attended the parade in Penistone town centre (pictured) to mark Armed Forces Day in June. The event also celebrated the 100th anniversary of the RAF.



Bedford Branch 6

In its 80th year of supporting the Royal Air Forces Association, the Bedford Branch and branch club have raised more than £1,200 for the Wings Appeal. It reached out to members and thanked the general public for their generous support - once again the branch joined the Bedford River Festival revellers. More than £130,000 has been raised by members and the people of Bedfordshire since the branch began.

The branch has a fantastic museum housed on the premises, dedicated to the Rhodesian Light Infantry and Air Force, as well as a thriving support base. Plans are now afoot to refurbish the club making sure it conforms to current legislation, so the branch and branch club can continue to support the Association for the next 80 years.

Birstall and Batley Branch 7

Pictured: Mitchell Moxlow, Chairman, and Richard Moxlow, Wings Appeal Officer & A.T.C Liaison Officer, raising money for the Wings Appeal in the local Tesco store in Batley. We raised more than £650.

Bodmin Branch 8

The branch welcomed motorcyclists Corporal Marcus Rees-Whybrow and Senior Aircraftman Ian Aherne during their station's RAF100 charity event. They were supported by five other riders who joined them at RAF St Mawgan. After a quick chat, brew and biscuits they continued their journey navigating the entire UK coast.

Marcus and Ian are planning to visit 100 RAF stations past and present, covering over 4,000 miles in 10 days. Averaging 14-hour days on motorcycles is going to take mental strength, fitness and team work. As well as completing 100 stations, they are also incorporating "Land's End to John 'o' Groats", most of the infamous "North Coast 500" and laying a wreath at Capel-Le-Ferne.



Bognor Regis Branch 9

Bognor Regis Branch choir is visiting Krakow from 4 to 7 October. It's a significant trip in RAF100 year, given the remarkable contribution Polish pilots made to winning the Battle of Britain. The choir has gone from strength to strength since 2012, promoting the branch and the Association. Members finance the cost of their Professional Director of Music, Miguel Fernandez and his accompanist, their outfits, transport, hotels, etc., themselves and have performed at local concerts and events as well as in Porto and Prague.

Many of its 550 plus associate members are attracted by the branch's facilities, the choir and our other two musical groups. The extremely popular Skiffle Band performs at Bognor Regis care homes, fetes and private functions. The newly formed RAFA 381 Ukulele Band is growing and will be playing at a 'Brew-for-the-Few' event on 14 November.

Bridport and Lyme Regis Registered Members Group 10

From RAF Centenary real ales brewed by the Stripey Cat Brewery and served in the Tiger Inn pub as part of a fundraising evening, to musical and fundraising events in Bridport and a 'moment of reflection' at St Mary's Church war memorial, there was plenty to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the RAF. Over Easter week, an RAF100 exhibition in Bridport Town Hall drew in hundreds of members of the public to see uniforms, model aircraft, and information about local families who had served in the RAF. Prizes were also given to students from St Mary's CE Primary School for their RAF100 paintings (winning entry pictured).

The branch also received the Trenchard Token as part of the RAF Association Token Relay, shown here at Harbour House Retirement Home where Alan Kinson had given a talk on 100 years of the Royal Air Force and received a cheque on behalf of the group.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the branch, please contact Alan Kidson - oldpompey@gmail.com or 01308 420135.



We welcome all submissions for Branch news, preferably by email to BranchNews@rafatrad.co.uk. Your word count should be around 100 words. Please submit just one accompanying photograph, as a separate jpeg, tiff or gif file and at a size and quality of at least 300dpi. Submissions can also be accepted by Royal Mail to the address on page 2. Unfortunately photographs submitted by post cannot be returned. Due to space limitations, submission does not guarantee inclusion and where there are too many reports for an issue, the editor reserves the right to select the broadest range of news and photos to reflect the geography, people and different activities of the Association.

City of Bristol Branch 11

Dambuster and honoured guest, Squadron Leader Johnny Johnson chatted with air cadets from Bristol and Gloucestershire at an event organised by City of Bristol Branch with members of the Abbey Wood Royal Air Forces Association Committee.

The April celebration was held at the Aerospace Museum on the old Filton airfield to mark the RAF Centenary. President of the Abbey Wood Committee, Air Vice-Marshal Michael Quigley passed the Association's Centenary Token to Air Marshal Sir Ian MacFadyen, President of the City of Bristol Branch.

Thank you to Reflex Camera Club, Bristol, for photos of the event.

Camborne, Redruth and Illogan Branch 12

A Mid-Term Dinner was held at Tehidy Park Golf Club near Camborne in June. Branch members were joined by friends and family to celebrate the centenary of the Royal Air Force. The evening was organised by Social Secretary Mr John Keverne. President, Mr Brian Bentley led members and guests in the RAF Association dedication and silent tribute, before a three course meal. Those who attended have either served, are still serving, are involved with the branch's adopted Air Cadet Squadrons or have closely supported family or friends in the RAF. The evening was a fantastic event with fun and laughter in an atmosphere that truly represented the RAF family at its best.

Costa Blanca Branch 13

On 12 April Costa Blanca Branch hosted the only All Ranks and Civil Dignitaries event to take place in the European Area, in celebration of the centenary of the RAF. A formal dinner and dance for 102 people was organised and hosted by Costa Blanca Branch and took place at the four star La Laguna Hotel and Spa. Members and their partners joined members from Costa Del Sol Branch, North Costa Blanca Branch, and Sud-Ouest France Branch as well as serving RAF personnel based in Spain and retired RAF aircrew from UK. Guest of honor was the British Vice Consul to Spain. The Posh Affair Big Dance Band played and its all members have become associate members of the Association.

Cranwell Branch 14

Members attended the RAF Association Service at the National Arboretum in May followed by an outing to Boundary Mills in Grantham and Wollaton Hall in Nottingham. June saw a visit to Oakham and cruising on Rutland Water. At the end of the month the branch attended the North Kesteven District Council veteran flag raising ceremony and the armed forces evening. A local surgery organised an event linking RAF100 and the 70th anniversary of the NHS and provided a small stall to raise funds and awareness.

July saw the annual BBQ at the farmhouse of two of the committee members. Later in the month there was an outing to the York Sculpture Park and Lotherton Hall near Leeds.

Dover and District Branch 15

The branch hosted the regional annual Association branches' get together lunch and celebrated the centenary of the RAF. 43 members and guests attended from five branches – Dover and District, Faversham, Wye, Headcorn and Herne Bay. Guest speaker was Wing Commander Mark Watson (retired) who gave a short talk on the history of the RAF and the RAF centenary. Singer Rebecca Robinson performed 'and we all had a sing along', and to finish she sang some of Vera Lynn's war time songs, ending with a special rendition of 'I Vow To Thee My Country'. The raffle raised £100 for the Wings Appeal.

And the winner of the October - December branch news photo competition is...

City of Bristol Branch for the image of Squadron Leader Johnny Johnson with air cadets. The branch gets 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.



Eastbourne Branch 16

52 members sat down to celebrate the 100th birthday of the RAF in the company of guest of honour, Deputy Lieutenant of East Sussex Colonel Anthony Lamb MBE VR. The branch standard was marched in to the RAF Marchpast and displayed behind the top table. Short after dinner addresses were given by the branch chairman, the guest of honour, and the branch president.

Left to right in the photo: Mrs K. Marsden, Mr. G. Marsden (Branch President), Colonel Anthony Lamb MBE DV (Deputy Lieutenant East Sussex), Mr. J. D. Smedley (Branch Chairman), Squadron Leader D. Carey and wife and Branch Secretary Mr. Dennis Skinner MBE.

Fareham Branch 17

Supper and skittles - generations of the RAF family came together at The Crofton Pub near Fareham in February to face the challenges of skittles, to enjoy supper and to imbibe a few drinks. Serving members of the Air Traffic Control Centre at RAF Swanwick and members of Fareham Branch drew lots to form four teams. An interesting mix of ages and abilities created a boisterous and competitive spirit. A fun time was had by all and the winning team was totally overwhelmed with their prizes: a bag of 'Skittles' of the chocolate variety. No expense spared in Fareham.

Faversham Branch and Whitstable Branch — joint event 18

Faversham and Whitstable branches celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Royal Air Force at All Saints' Church, Graveney, accompanied by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Kent Air Marshal, Sir Christopher Nichols and Lady Nichols, who were representing the Lord Lieutenant of Kent Viscount De L'Isle, by and local lord mayors, mayors and mayoresses. The guard of honour was led by air cadets from Canterbury. Standard Bearers were from both Royal Air Forces Association and the Air Cadets. The inspection, pictured, was by Air Marshal Sir Christopher and Lady Nichols.

Fraserburgh Branch 19

Branch chairperson Duncan McIntosh and Honorary President Stanley Green MBE took the Wooler Cup to 1383 (Fraserburgh) Squadron ATC to acknowledge the tremendous support the air cadets gave during Wings Appeal collections. Fraserburgh Branch had won the trophy for the highest percentage increase in their Wings Appeal in the Scottish Area in 2017 and had been presented with the cup at the Area conference in Glasgow.



Great Yarmouth Branch 20

The Great Yarmouth branch celebrated RAF 100 in style in May 2018 with a buffet lunch for 50 members and guests at the Burlington Hotel.

The Mayor of Great Yarmouth, Councillor Kerry Robinson-Payne was guest of honour. In her welcome she praised the work of the RAF through the generations and the important work carried out by RAF charities such as the Association. Toasts were given to the hundred years of the RAF and to the branch, region and national RAF Association. Radio Norfolk's Wally Webb, who had been stationed at RAF Coltishall, gave a talk about his memories of life in the RAF, before taking up full time broadcasting.



Haverford West Branch 21

Members of the branch pictured at the Brawdy open day in July. Pictured are Secretary Anne Ansell, President Lee Smailes, and Welfare Officer Ron Ansell. The branch also attended Wings Over Carew Day which included a memorial service for both World Wars.



Hitchin and Letchworth Branch 22

The Hitchin and Letchworth Branch

celebrated Armed Forces Day in style, raising a whopping £485 in aid of the Association on this very hot day — and even landing themselves a spot in the local paper. A massive thanks to Chairman Mrs Lisa Berry and the branch for all of their hard work and RAFALO Warrant Officer Shaun Griffin for organising the event in the town centre. Also RAFALOs Corporal Nicola Bell and Flight Sergeant Andrew Sparrow for providing support to the branch on the day.



Knighthon Branch 23

In August the branch held a special day to celebrate 100 years of the Royal Air Force.

The club in the High Street was open to the public all day and a large van was on the square in the centre of town which gave small Association tokens in appreciation for donations. £243 was raised for the Wings Appeal. The club held a BBQ in the afternoon and an evening sing-along with a grand draw.

Pictured at the van on the square are Station Officer Mike Logue and his wife Susan. Also pictured are Val Hinton, Secretary and Roy Williams, Welfare Officer, Leigh Spicer, Mike Hiles, Treasurer, and Roger Bright, Chairman.

Leigh Branch 24

Branch President Harry Birchall's family organised a Dambusters Flight Experience to celebrate his 90th birthday. Speaking before the flight Harry said: "We'll fly in a four seater Piper at 500 feet over reservoirs, then have a meal, and go to the North East Land, Sea and Air Museum in Sunderland."

Harry was in the RAF from 1946-48 based at Woodvale. He trained as a motor mechanic with SMT before it was disbanded and he moved onto the phones. Once demobbed he went back to driving and delivered silk yarn around the UK.

"I'm delighted; Harry helps us so much with the Wings Appeal collections" said branch committee member, Marion Lawton. Harry added: "It's a day out for me. I like doing it. I get talking to people – and they open their purses. I do anything I can – I even bought a watch and two model aeroplanes from a firm that was advertising them cheap and did a small raffle for branch funds. "I'm thinking about a parachute tandem jump to fundraise in summer 2019. I'm all for it."

Letchworth, Hitchin and District Branch 25

In April the branch celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Royal Air Force. Bringing together many generations in one place, 50 people enjoyed the company of serving RAF personnel from RAF Henlow, RAF Honington and Joint Forces Command Chicksands. Branch members enjoyed hearing about the next generation of the Air Force. Wing Commander Clulo, Station Commander at RAF Henlow, reflected on the 100th anniversary of both the RAF and RAF Henlow, and how important the local community is to an RAF station. Each branch member brought an item that signified their RAF service: including photos badges and caps.



Mansfield Branch 26

Members of the branch spent a very enjoyable day at the RAF Association Centenary Service at the National Memorial Arboretum in May. The branch also took part in the Armed Forces Day celebrations in July in Mansfield Town Centre. These included a parade through the town led by the Mansfield Bugle and Drum Corps and a flypast by the Dakota C-47 of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. Members collected for the Wings Appeal and raised more than £360.

Melton Mowbray Branch 27

An RAF100 celebration dinner at Scalford Hall, Melton Mowbray on Friday 29 June was attended by 40 members of the branch. Association President Air Marshal Sir Baz North attended accompanied by Lady North. He spoke about where the Association is heading and the challenges being faced by all such organisations in this ever-changing world.

Other guests attending were the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Mr Michael Kapur, the Mayor of Melton Mowbray, Councillor Mrs Pru Chandler and Councillor Mrs Elaine Holmes the Mayor's escort, the Senior Town Warden of the Melton Town Estate, Mr John Southerington and the previous Senior Town Warden, Mrs Dinah Hickling.

Toasts were made and thanks were given to the men and women who have served in the Royal Air Force from its formation in 1918 to today.

Moray Branch 28

The branch has been spreading its 'Wings Appeal'. With the closure of Forres, Nairn and Inverness during the last few years, the Moray branch has inherited their areas of fundraising and welfare responsibility, which means its welfare officers can now be on the road for a whole day dealing with a single client.



The photo shows the branch's successful collection at Tesco in Inverness where Chair, Marty Latham (man in Lycra) was pulling in the crowds and putting on the miles on his bike, while Pam, Branch Secretary, serves a customer.

Congratulations also to Marty for his award of a Presidential Certificate in the summer. He sits on the Area council, is also the branch standard bearer and was also an escort to the 2625 (Aux) Squadron standard at Buckingham Palace during the RAF100 celebrations.

Newcastle and Gateshead Branch 29

Newcastle & Gateshead Branch held the third of their major RAF 100 events with a formal dinner for members, RAF personnel and friends. Guest speaker was Group Captain R J Jacob, Station Commander at RAF Boulmer and music was provided by the Backworth Colliery Band. During the evening a presentation was made to Warrant Officer Karen Bowers (pictured with branchy Chairman Mr Collins), who is leaving her post as Station Warrant Officer at RAF Boulmer.

Oxford Branch 30

In May the Oxford Branch joined eight other branches at a celebration dinner in the Shrivenham Officers Mess. The RAF family, old and new, were invited to "celebrate and commemorate the magnificent achievement of 100 years of the RAF together regardless of how many days or years you have served or are serving". Station Commander, Wing Commander Jamie Turnbull hosted the evening and the after dinner speaker, Dr David Jordan, gave a very informative and entertaining talk on "what would Trenchard and Churchill think of the RAF today?".

Left to right in the photo: Branch Secretary Johanna Rustler (studying for a D.Phil in Aviation History at Oxford University), who joined us through the Association's volunteering website, Warrant Officer Steve Guppy MBE, Oxford Branch Chairman, Kath Mulligan.

Peterborough Branch 31

In April the Peterborough Branch hosted a fabulous event to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the RAF at the Ellindon Masonic Centre. It aimed to host '100 for the 100th' and this target was easily reached, with ticket sales only limited by the size of the venue. Among the special guests were dignitaries from the RAF and local civic organisations.

Sir Keith Pearson JP, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, presented Ian McCoan with a certificate marking 60 years of continuous membership of the Association. The evening ended with a superb set of Big Band music by the RAF Wyton Voluntary Band's 'Rhythm in Blue' and wonderful singing from local artist Leenie Jayne.

Peterhead Branch 32

In July eight members of the branch visited the Montrose Air Station Heritage Centre for a very interesting guided tour by one of the volunteers.

Britain's first military air station, Montrose, was founded in 1913 when it was established by No2 Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps, flying BE2s. All WWI pilots trained there, as did those of WWII, until the training was moved abroad. RAF Montrose closed in the 1950s.

All agreed that it was a most enjoyable day, and that the centre was well worth a visit.

Poole Branch 33

On Saturday 14 July, members of Poole Branch, accompanied by cadets and staff from 2391 (Parkstone) ATC, gathered at the Poole War Memorial to welcome the arrival of the Association Token from Christchurch. Guest of honour was the Mayor of Poole, who performed a short handing over ceremony of the Token from Christchurch Branch to Poole Branch.

The Token was paraded through a guard of honour towards the Mayor and Poole Branch Chairman, Mike Davis, who were waiting by the war memorial. The Mayor accepted the Token from the Chairman of Christchurch Branch and then handed it over to Mike Davis.

Republic of Ireland Branch 34

In July a commemorative stone was unveiled at Glasnevin Cemetery to commemorate the memory of Major Edward 'Mick' Mannock VC (85th Squadron). In attendance were the Minister of State for Defence, Officer Commanding Irish Air Corps, and Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier (out of uniform after an airline misplaced his luggage). Branch President, Mr Alan Harrison, laid a wreath on behalf of our members.

In the evening, branch members attended a reception at the British Ambassador's residence to mark the centenary of the RAF. On Saturday we attended the annual Bray Air Show. The stand, staffed by committee members, was one of the busiest on site and members were kept on their feet all day selling memorabilia. We raised a record amount. The Republic of Ireland Branch meets at the National Yacht Club, Dun Laoghaire, on the last Sunday of each month at 12.30 and would warmly welcome any visitors. Phone 087 1 817075.

Shaftesbury Branch 35

Member Christine Di Marino wanted to support the Association and the Royal British Legion. With her support crew of Lisa and Elfed Jones and their daughter Bethany, she walked the trailway from Sturminster Newton to Stourpaine and back again, a total distance of 12 miles.

The branch is very proud of 78 year-young Christine for taking on such a challenge. She has also raised £700 in sponsorship which will be equally shared between to the two charities.

If you have what it takes to conduct similar fundraising activities or would just like to join the family of the branch, please call Elfed Jones on 01747 229126 or via email on elf68@live.co.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.





Solihull Branch 36

The 18 members from the Solihull Branch visited the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight at RAF Coningsby in May. Amongst the displays they saw Spitfires, DC3s, Lancasters Hurricanes, Dehaveiland and Canada DHC-1 Chipmunks. They were then shown a vast array of equipment used by the RAF in the Second World War. The members were later treated to a fly by and flight demonstration, all rounded off with afternoon tea.

For David Peck, newly elected Branch President (pictured), who served in the RAF from 1939-1946, the icing on the cake was to meet Flight Lieutenant Andy Preece who currently serves in his old squadron. The whole group had a very interesting and enjoyable day.

Stafford Branch 37

Dennis Farrier (second left) at a wreath-laying ceremony on Omaha Beach on the 74th anniversary of the D-Day landings — on behalf of the Stafford Branch. This is the only memorial to the RAF in the American sector of Normandy.



Stockton and Thornaby Branch 38

The branch marked the RAF Centenary celebrations on the 1 April with the planting and dedication of an oak tree alongside the Airman's Statue in Thornaby. The Mayor and Mayoress of Thornaby, Councillors Steve and Sylvia Walmsley and the Mayor and Mayoress of Stockton, Councillor Maurice Perry and Mrs Laraine Perry and Denis Grub, President of the branch were involved, watched by representatives of local veterans' organisations who paraded their standards, the cadets of Number 266 (Stockton) Squadron Air Training Corps (pictured folding the RAF Ensign) and members of the public. The plaque was unveiled by Group Captain Andy Cooksley, Officer Commanding Number 90 Signals Unit at RAF Leeming and was blessed by Father Harry Hopkins. Well done one and all!

Sturminster Newton & Gillingham Branch 39

As with the whole of the Association the branch embraced the festivities and thanksgiving for centenary of the Royal Air Force. In April they gathered at a local hotel for a once in a lifetime celebration, and the presentation of a mightily deserved National Presidential Certificate to Susan Stroud; longest serving member, highly motivated and, by far, the most prolific fundraiser. Guest of honour, Area President Air Vice-Marshal, Martin Clark presented Sue with her certificate. Three weeks later, with the RAF ensign flying from the



church tower, an equal number were celebrating and giving thanks in the Parish Church of St Mary in Gillingham with a special, uplifting air-themed service. After a lusty rendition of the National Anthem members retired to the rousing notes of the RAF Quick March!

Sudbury Branch 40

The Sudbury Branch recently held a choral concert with around 150 singers from two choirs, the St Edmundsbury Male Voice Choir and the Leigh Orpheus Male Vice Choir. As a result, from a packed audience, we raised £2,000 for the Wings Appeal. The picture shows the cheque being presented to Group Captain (Retd) Ailsa Gough, Area Director for the South East and Eastern Area by Branch President Air Marshal Sir John Kemball.

Sud-Ouest Branch 41

As all Association members based in France know, the RAF was formed in 1918 in St Omer in northern France. The 100th anniversary was celebrated in London with the magnificent RAF100 flypast over Buckingham Palace. So, in the spirit of aviation excellence, the Sud Ouest France Branch had to have its own flypast and flying competition. Albeit with paper aircraft, all members and their families, friends and colleagues at the recent hog roast held in the Charente Maritime had great fun mimicking the anniversary flypast. The photo shows both good and indifferent efforts. The branch also held the Schneider Trophy Air Race around the Isle of Wight with wooden model seaplanes — both events were great fun and raised monies for the branch.

Tamworth Branch 42

The branch's luncheon to celebrate 100 years of the RAF followed closely on the heels of a similar event celebrating Tamworth Branch's 70th birthday and the Flarepath Club's 44th. Pictured (third from right) is Harry Woodward who served in the RAF in 1938, speaking to the branch's Honorary Welfare Officer, Mae Morris (in red) at the centenary celebration.

Trowbridge and West Wiltshire Branch 43

Branch members visited the Weston-super-Mare Helicopter Museum in June. Also in the picture (with lanyard) is Chris, our museum tour guide, who imparted a great deal of knowledge about the large collection of helicopters and autogyros that were on display. The party first visited the Cadbury Garden Centre for refreshments and retail therapy before going on to Weston-super-Mare for lunch and the afternoon at the museum.

Waddington Branch 44

Members of the branch's monthly ten pin bowling team (pictured) meet to play and put the word to rights over a cup of tea or a fish and chips lunch.

Warwick and Leamington Spa Branch 45

A handshake sealed the transfer of the Association Token from Coventry Branch to Warwick and Leamington Branch this May. It had arrived in a Jaguar XK140 sports car.

The event at All Saints Church in Leamington was supported by branch members and by three adopted Air Cadet Squadrons. Notable guests were the mayors of Leamington, Warwick and Kenilworth and their consorts.

The photograph shows the handshake between Leamington and Warwick Chairman, Mr. Stuart Powney (on the left) and the Coventry Branch Chairman, Mr. David Palmer — a handshake that symbolised not only the friendship between our branches but also the even greater friendship between all Association branches worldwide.

Weston-super-Mare Branch 46

Recently RAFA Weston-super-Mare Club hosted a Ladies Night where all the ladies had to do was dress up, turn up and enjoy being welcomed, seated and waited on all night. The men cooked, served, kept bar and cleared up afterwards and it was a very successful evening.

Wimborne Branch 47

Members have been restoring a memorial stone at former RAF station Tarrant Rushton. A memorial has stood since 1982 and a remembrance service was held there from 1982 to 2014. The branch is restoring the memorial stone and its surrounding area, as flowers and tributes are still regularly left. The branch will reinstate a memorial service from June 2019, the 75th anniversary of the D-Day and Arnhem operations, and would like to hear from any veterans or their families interested in attending. Contact Branch Chairman Eddie Robertson: tkelly9380@aol.com or Robert Seymour: bobseymour55@btinternet.com.

In July the Branch flew the Trenchard Baton from Compton Abbass airfield to Bournemouth International Airport in a DH Chipmunk and a Beagle Pup, thanks to the donation of support and services by the aircraft, pilots, airfields and Bliss Aviation. Picture by Andrew Wright.

Wisbech Branch 48

Mr Tony Kiddle, former 56 Squadron technician, and four colleagues from Wisbech Branch were hosted at RAF Waddington by the RAFALO team.

At the heritage centre they were told the story of RAF Waddington by historian Mr Chris Dean. Tony recalled stories linking his time to 56 Squadron, such as the day he visited to see a downed sergeant pilot. Unfortunately the pilot had been discharged a few hours earlier, but he was informed and came to find Mr Kiddle at work on the flight-line. The squadron still has the silk scarf given to Tony for his kind gesture. Moving to 8 Squadron Flight Lieutenant Tidbury gave the group a walk around of an E3D (pictured) and described the intricacies of working life in the air.



Wittering Branch

On Remembrance Day this year, Sunday 11 November, Wittering village is holding its first ever Remembrance Day Parade for veterans, servicemen, local organisations etc. The village now has a War Memorial in the grounds of All Saints Church, dedicated to the fallen of Wittering village and RAF Wittering. An open air Remembrance Day service and parade will be followed by refreshments. 2018 is a poignant year for the first Wittering Remembrance Day Parade, as it is 100 years since the end of WWI and the RAF being formed; as well as Wittering airfield's recent centenary in 2016. All are welcome. For further information, please contact Tel White: tel_white@btinternet.com or Mal Brown: malbrown61@btinternet.com.

Worthing Branch 49

Mr Les Greenfield, pictured with the High Sheriff of West Sussex Caroline Nicholls DL, has collected for every Wings Week and any public event that needs support for more than 53 years. He has been a brilliant ambassador for the branch including encouraging the local cadet squadron. He was our standard bearer for many years, and is always ready to take over when needed.

This year, Worthing Symphony Orchestra helped celebrate the 100 years of the RAF by hosting a Sunday afternoon concert. Thank you to them for allowing us to be able to fundraise afterwards for the Wings Appeal. 45F (Worthing) Squadron Air Cadets (pictured) helped with the collection at Worthing Assembly Rooms.

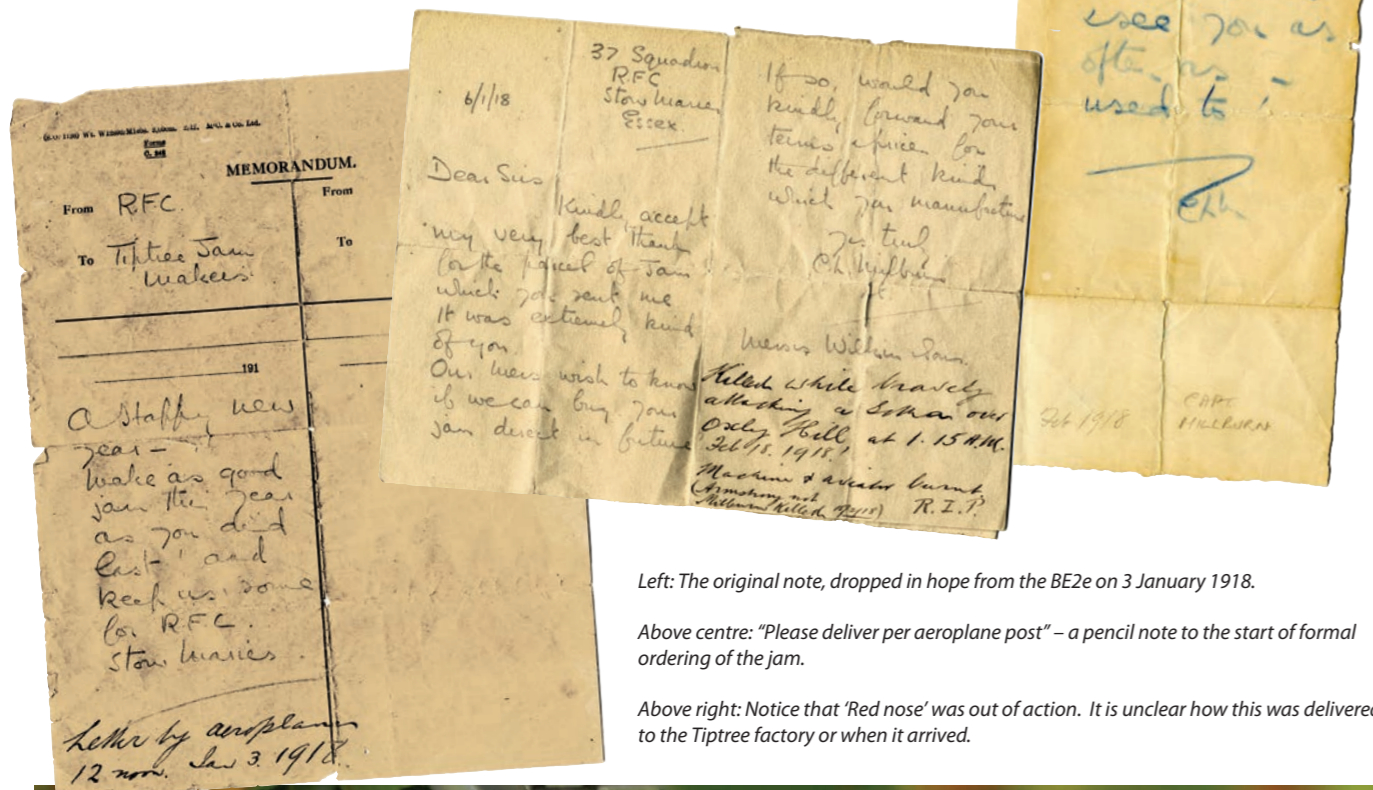
York Branch 50

43 members of the branch celebrated the centenary of the RAF at Middleton's Hotel in Skeldergate, York. As well as talks on the early years of the RAF and the history of RAF Linton-on-Ouse, the branch President talked of improvements to the club structure, successes and challenges ahead. Also in celebration of the centenary, two of the branch's oldest veterans, Maurice Voase and Mac Mathieson were invited to tea at Betty's in York by 72 Squadron RAF Linton-on-Ouse. Mac has since passed away.

As well as raising £1,350 for the Wings Appeal at York railway station in July, the branch was delighted to welcome Mrs Betty Wilson (pictured) and her family to the club. She presented a cheque to Club Chairman Brian Mennell after a collection at the funeral of her late husband, Mr David Wilson. 🇺🇰

Send more jam

On a Sunday morning in January 1918, a BE2e training aircraft with a red nose flew over Tiptree and the Wilkin & Sons Ltd jam factory. From the plane came a brightly-coloured red, yellow, and blue streamer; pulled to the ground by a weight in a pocket. Tucked in with the weight was a hand-written note from Second Lieutenant Milburn of the Royal Flying Corps asking the fruit preservers to send some of their finest jam to the officers' mess at the Stow Maries aerodrome, 16 miles away.



Left: The original note, dropped in hope from the BE2e on 3 January 1918.

Above centre: "Please deliver per aeroplane post" – a pencil note to the start of formal ordering of the jam.

Above right: Notice that 'Red nose' was out of action. It is unclear how this was delivered to the Tiptree factory or when it arrived.



The small and notoriously tricky Little Scarlet strawberries being picked by a team member from HMKM during the 2018 Wilkin & Sons fancy dress Strawberry Race which raised funds for the Association.

All photographs © Wilkin & Sons Ltd of Tiptree

Subsequent orders followed, with the company sending crates of jam and marmalade, and the plane came to be known as 'Red-nose'. There was a brief pause in communication while 'Red-nose' was repaired, following a crash, but shortly afterwards the aircraft returned and the 'send more jam' communication with the pilot resumed. Then came a complete halt in contact. It was later learnt that Second Lieutenant Milburn had been killed in a training accident. It was at Stow Maries that his No 37 Squadron transitioned from the Royal Flying Corps to the Royal Air Force on 1 April 1918, before the aerodrome closed in 1919.



Making jams in copper bottom pans in days gone by. They are still used to make small batches of preserves and preserves.

This story comes from a museum in that very jam factory. Many decades ago the owner, J.S. Wilkin, began collecting the paraphernalia of preserve making and of Essex village life. He carefully stored away pictures, documents and redundant machines. Then, as his business approached its centenary celebrations in 1985, 'Mr. John', as he is known, asked for room to display some of his hoard. Among the exhibits about how village life used to be and how the art of preserve-making has advanced over the years is the Second Lieutenant Milburn's story, and other unexpected tales and links to the RAF.



Tiptree craftsman Arnold Frost has also created special signs for the Association this year.

This October the company is celebrating its RAF links by launching two new products in conjunction with the RAF Association. "We are thrilled to be involved," said Joint Managing Director, Scott Goodfellow. "Our company has a really supportive family ethos and prides itself on its integrity, much like the camaraderie and integrity of the members of the RAF Association. Some of our employees have direct connections with the RAF, and Arnold [Frost], our sign writer, even used to work with the Red Arrows."

"We love that this new link between the charity and the company can take us back to 1918," Scott continued, "and we are very keen to help raise funds for your welfare work."



Teams in RAF fancy dress at the annual Tiptree Little Scarlet Strawberry Race fundraiser.

This summer the company's annual, and hotly contested, strawberry race was RAF-themed. Funds raised from entry fees for teams from local companies were donated to two charities; the RAF Association and Aspire, a spinal injury charity. The teams compete in fancy dress to pick the company's signature Little Scarlet strawberry – a small variety that is notoriously hard to harvest. Prizes were awarded for most strawberries picked (by weight), fastest individual picker, best hat, and best dressed team.

Back in the museum, somewhere near a propeller from a Sopwith Snipe and images of jam making in the company's copper bottomed pans, is another story involving aircraft. In 1916, a Zeppelin was brought down at Great Wigborough just five miles from the factory. The crew, desperate to gain height to enable them to reach the coast, had dumped anything they could overboard – including the airship's log book and a fully loaded machine gun. The factory became surrounded by equipment and local villagers flocked to the scene to retrieve mementos. One young couple even called their daughter – born shortly after the crash – Zeppelina.



The limited edition canister of strawberry jam (£11) marks the factory's link with nearby Stow Maries aerodrome.

From October 2018 Tiptree's ten Essex tea rooms and the RAF Association will be selling two limited edition products (pictured). To order call 0800 081 2631 or visit rafatrad.co.uk.

Tiptree museum:
tiptree.com/index.php/museum

Tiptree tea rooms opening hours from:
tiptree.com

Stow Maries aerodrome information and visits:
stowmaries.org.uk/history



The limited edition trio box of jams (£5.99) celebrates 100 years of the RAF.

Employee Spotlight Alex Watts

Congratulations Alex, 30 years at the Association



July 2018 was a very special milestone in Alex Watts' career. It marked her 30th year of employment with the RAF Association.

Alex is the Deputy Welfare Manager for the Eastern Area, based in Leicester, and says the RAF Association has come a long way since she started all those decades ago as a shorthand typist: "When I first joined we had a membership of approximately 165,000 members, and we managed all of them on a Rolodex system!"

As the charity has evolved, so has her role - as the welfare team deal with more and increasingly complex cases: "People used to come to us in need of a single item. Now they come with a range of welfare needs. We also support a wider proportion of the RAF family, with more serving and younger people asking for our help." In her time at the Association Alex has seen seven chairmen and 10 presidents come and go.

So what has made Alex stay for all these years? She says: "I love the work. I find it so rewarding to go through a welfare case and at the end of it I get to see people move on with their lives. It's knowing that they've been supported through a really difficult time."

Until recently Alex was helping manage the Area's Hemsby chalets, in Norfolk, providing RAF families with much needed seaside breaks. She's really proud of the way the chalets have progressed throughout the years. "Lots of people have really benefitted from those breaks and it's nice to hear back from families who have enjoyed that quality time away."

After 30 years would Alex recommend working for the Association to others? She says definitely: "You feel like you're giving something back to the community. So if people have the interest in the RAF and want to help people then it's ideal."

From all of us at the RAF Association, congratulations and thank you Alex. 🇺🇰

Main image: Alex with Shaun, her husband of 27 years. "We met when he came to re-wire the Association's offices at 117½ Loughborough Road in 1990 and we booked our wedding two weeks after we met."

Left: Back in the days - when 165,000 members' records were held on a Rolodex system.

Far left: Escaping from the office to understand more about life for RAF personnel.

All photos ©Alex Watts

Culture Vultures

Books with links to the Association



"I'll call you Pod"
by Kenneth B Senar

Publisher: Austin MacAuley

Association member Kenneth decided to write down everything he could remember about this particularly fraught period of the Cold War in Germany when he served as part of the 2nd Allied Tactical Air Force. Based on his memories and his log books he "hopes it will give future generations a wider as well as a deeper view of this era".

The dedication page confirms: "100% of author's profits from this book will be donated to the Royal Air Forces Association which does so much good work tending to the welfare of members of the RAF family who are in need."



"Sustaining Air Power -
Royal Air Force Logistics
since 1918"
by Trevor Stone

Publisher: Fonthill

Huntingdon and District Branch member Trevor Stone's book draws on 25 years of original archival research and opens the hangar door on this highly important discipline. He is a former senior logistics officer and supplemented his own experience as a Wing Commander with material from veteran and serving military personnel. The book covers from after WW1 to the RAF's withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014. Dedicated chapters consider the more specialist aspects of logistics such as tactical and expeditionary logistics, fuels and explosives, transport, training, information technology and how the RAF has managed its extensive supply chain.

Cinema and video on demand releases



Hurricane
Certificate 12A

In cinemas and available on digital platforms since 7 September 2018. hurricanefilm.co.uk

HURRICANE tells the true story of the Polish pilots in the Battle of Britain, fighting for their own country, above a foreign land. This relatively unknown story - unique in the history of the Royal Air Force - tells of the Polish fliers who, having been driven across Europe by the Nazi war machine, played a pivotal role in the Allied victory in World War II.

Cast includes: Iwan Rheon (Game of Thrones, Marvel's Inhumans), Milo Gibson (Hacksaw Ridge), Stefanie Martini (Crooked House, Prime Suspect 1973), Krystof Hadek (Under the Skin, Dark Blue World) and Marcin Dorocinski (Pitbull Anthropoid). And one of the last operational Hurricanes in existence.

Over to you

To do a quick review of something you have seen, read, or played, simply answer the questions below and email them to Air Mail. We'd be delighted if you also attach a picture of you with the 'culture' you have reviewed, or just of the 'thing' itself - but it's not essential:

What is the title?

Is it a film, book, computer video game, TV show, DVD, CD?

How many roundels out of five would you give it?



What was the best thing about it? (20 words max)

What was the worst bit? (20 words max)

Was it historically/factually accurate?

Yes / No / I wouldn't know

Would you:

Pay for it again?

Only borrow it?

Bin it?

**Your name and member number
(for publication under the review)**

News from the RAF

by Mike Curtis



The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight performed a flypast at RIAT 2018. © MOD/Crown

The Royal Air Force paid tribute to the past and looked ahead to the future at two major UK air shows this summer.

The reformed 617 Squadron was celebrated at the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) at Fairford with a unique formation flypast of the Lancaster, Tornado and the new Lightning F-35B. With the Lancaster highlighting the 'Dambusters' link, it also commemorated the Tornado's service before it is phased out of service next year. It was the first appearance of the RAF's new F-35B Lightning at the airshow and offered a chance for future generations to see the innovative aircraft.

Wing Commander John Butcher, Officer Commanding 617 Squadron, said: "The weekend commemorated the link between 617 Squadron's origins and its formation for a very unique mission, and its reformation 75 years later for another unique purpose, to introduce the Lightning into service. This was a historic moment for the RAF and for Great Britain."

RIAT saw the arrival of the MQ-9B Protector unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) from the United States. In a historic first, the aircraft flew non-stop from North Dakota to Fairford in a flight that took just over 20 hours, setting the record as the first Medium Altitude Long Endurance Remotely Piloted Air System (RPAS) to transit across the Atlantic. The arrival at Fairford was paired with the announcement that RAF Waddington will be the main operating base for the Protector. 31 Squadron will be the first to be equipped with this latest technology.



The concept model for the next generation jet fighter "Tempest". It was unveiled by Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson when he announced the new national Combat Air Strategy at Farnborough International Air Show in July. ©MOD/Crown

Looking even further ahead, the Tempest aircraft concept was unveiled at the Farnborough Air show. This programme will be developed by BAE Systems, Leonardo, MBDA and Rolls Royce. The aircraft will either be flown traditionally by pilots or as a drone. It will eventually replace the Typhoon. The Ministry of Defence hopes the Tempest will be flying by 2035 alongside the F-35B Lightnings.

Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier said: "Team Tempest demonstrates our commitment in ensuring that we continue to build our capabilities, draw upon our experience and history to bring forward a compelling vision for the next generation fighter jet."

Meanwhile a ceremony has been held to stand up a new UK-Qatar Joint Typhoon squadron. As part of the multi-billion pound contract to supply Qatar with 24 Typhoon aircraft and 9 Hawk T2 aircraft, 12 Squadron will integrate Qatari personnel, including pilots and ground-crew, from 2019. The personnel will be initially based at RAF Coningsby and then in Qatar.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said: "Qatar remains a close and important friend to the UK and it is the only nation with which we have a joint squadron. This requires a level of trust, born from our long-shared history and our commitment to a shared future. Our formidable Typhoon jets will boost the Qatari military's mission to tackle challenges in the Middle East, supporting stability in the region and delivering security at home."

Two Typhoons from 1 (Fighter) Squadron and Saab JAS-39 Gripen jets, flown by the Hungarian Air Force Puma Tactical Fighter Squadron, have conducted bilateral training from Kecskemet Air Base. It was the first time that RAF Typhoons and Hungarian Gripens have trained together in this way, with the aim of strengthening a growing defence relationship between the UK and Hungary.

The Defence Secretary has presented two RAF pilots with 1,000 flying hour certificates after they reached the milestone in the P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft being purchased by the UK. Squadron Leaders Mark Faulds and Ian Tuff reached the achievement as part of their time training in the 'Seedcorn' crew with the United States Navy. This scheme has allowed RAF crews to fly on the American aircraft so they will be well up to speed when the RAF Poseidons start arriving at RAF Lossiemouth in 2020. Meanwhile the RAF has taken delivery of its 20th A400 Atlas transport aircraft as the programme continues to meet key development milestones. Two more will be delivered in the coming years.

The Ministry of Defence has announced that two RAF flying stations are to be closed – RAF Scampton and RAF Linton-on-Ouse. It said the current home of the Red Arrows will be closed and sold off in 2022. The RAF Aerobatic Team will be moved to another airfield. The RAF will withdraw from RAF Linton-on-Ouse in North Yorkshire in 2020. The base is home to the Tucano training aircraft, which the RAF plans to retire from service. It will be replaced by the Beechcraft Texan T1 in the basic fast jet training role which is to be conducted at Valley in the future.

A second Hawk T2 squadron is to form at Valley to provide Advanced Fast Jet Training (AJFT) of Royal Air Force and Royal Navy pilots. Existing IV(AC) Squadron, which has operated from the Anglesey station since 2010, is to be split into two with a reformed 25 (F) Squadron taking on responsibility for the first phase of AJFT. The move has been prompted by the increased demand for fast jet pilots on the front line to fly Typhoons and Lightnings.

A United States flag that travelled to the Moon and back has been gifted to the Royal Air Force by the astronaut who carried it on the Apollo 15 Mission. Colonel Al Worden presented the flag to the RAF on behalf of the USA Pavilion Partnership and Kallman Worldwide at a ceremony at the Farnborough Air Show, marking the partnership of the two nations since the RAF's formation one hundred years ago. The space travelling flag will be put on display in the RAF Museum in London later this year and will form part of a new exhibition. Colonel Worden said: "The flag that we're presenting to the RAF is symbolic of the partnership between the US Air Force and the RAF." 🇺🇸



Top: The A400M Atlas of LXX Squadron at RAF Brize Norton, performing its role demonstration at RIAT 2018 in front of 150,000 visitors.

Above centre: Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson hosted the Amir Of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani at the standing up ceremony of the UK-Qatar Joint Typhoon Squadron on 24th July. ©MOD/Crown



Left: Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier's tweet showing his pleasure at being presented with the Stars and Stripes flag that has been on the moon. ©MOD/Crown

Your membership of the Association gets you a discount on subscriptions to the fortnightly RAF News. 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.

Hotels and housing news

A glorious summer — of trips to Buckingham Palace, parties, carnivals and RAF100 of course



- 1: David Dick holds the RAF100 baton at the Rothbury House reception and Tea on the Terrace celebration.
- 2: The baton's first stop at an Association hotel – here embraced by staff from Richard Peck House.
- 3: In May, the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Lord Buccleuch, visited Dowding House, our sheltered accommodation facility in Moffatt, Scotland. His Grace met tenants who were thrilled to share their stories - including Jean (pictured), a plotter during WWII.
- 4: Continuing their celebrations later in the summer, the Wexford House team and residents held their annual garden party.

In May the RAF100 Baton made its way to Richard Peck House, where hotel guests, employees and invited dignitaries received it and met the volunteers who were taking it on its tour of 100 RAF-related places in the UK. And a week later the baton passed through Rothbury House and Lord Tedder Court on its way to Scotland. Combining its arrival with an extended version of the hotel's annual Tea on the Terrace, guests and employees welcomed the baton and volunteers inside for morning refreshments. Once everyone was refuelled, the baton was off again and visitors from RAF Leeming and RAF Linton-on-Ouse stayed on for Tea on the Terrace – which included a display of Can't Cook Won't Cook, musical accompaniment from the Rothbury Highland Pipe Band and giant outdoor games.

Richard Peck House's summer garden party was a double celebration – for RAF100 and for the hotel's 60th anniversary. Guests included the Mayor and Mayoress of Fylde and members of local branches, with entertainment provided by the Clevellys Writers.

Separately, Richard Peck guests and employees took part in the St Annes Carnival and received a 'highly commended' award for their efforts. The weather was glorious for the day out and the local South Fylde Branch had a stall to raise money for and awareness of the Association.

- 5: Double celebration at Rothbury House.
- 6: The view from the Richard Peck House carnival float – as summer crowds welcome the parade.
- 7: Spirit of the Royal Air Force was formally named before taking Rothbury House residents to the RAF100 celebrations in the north east.
- 8: Arrival - Tony Sebastian-Reed with Leanne Cottrell and Chloe Moore from Flowerdown House.

Air cadets from 290 (Weston-super-Mare) Squadron ATC stopped by at Flowerdown House hotel, to talk to guests. The guests and cadets had a great afternoon sharing stories and laughs.

Rothbury House was also part of the North East of England Salute celebrations. After the naming of the 'Spirit of the Royal Air Force' train ceremony at Newcastle Central railway station, hotel guests boarded and were taken to Durham, where they were greeted with a Spitfire flypast and took part in the North East's major day of celebrations of the RAF's centenary (see more news on page 6)

Invitations to the annual Not Forgotten Association Garden party at Buckingham Palace were extended to various parts of the Association. Guests and employees from Flowerdown House RSVP'd with a 'yes please', and carers Leanne and Chloe supported guest Tony on the long day trip to London. Wexford residents Margaret Hebbertfield, Jack Cook, John Limb and Roger Cheese also set off — from Leicestershire — with Mark Shields, the Association's Head of Care and Housing Services, and Wexford employees Maggie and Mandy Hill. ■

RAF vs Komet

By Chris Goss

The Messerschmitt 163 Komet was the fastest aircraft of the Second World War, and the only rocket-powered fighter plane ever to be used in combat.

The first time a formation of B-17 Flying Fortresses encountered the rocket propelled interceptor fighter, the American crews were concerned it was so fast that they could not be tracked by their turret and waist guns, yet it was not as successful as expected.

It was 16 August 1944, near Brandis Kölleda, and the German pilots claimed the destruction of three B-17s before P-51 Mustangs of the American 370th Fighter Squadron and 359th Fighter Group intervened. Two Komets were also lost – one exploded over Bad Lausick and another was shot down.

Five more kills by Komet pilots were claimed in August and September 1944 and then there would be just two more by March 1945.

By early 1945, encounters with Komets had been almost entirely an American affair but this soon changed.



Prototype Me 163 getting airborne



Me 163 starting up

RAF vs Komets — March 1945

Flight Lieutenant Raymond Raby of 542 Squadron was flying a Spitfire IX on a reconnaissance sortie. The 542 Squadron operations record book takes up the story: "His targets were Bohlen, Moldis, Rosnitz, Chemnitz and Dresden. After covering Bohlen and Moldis, he was intercepted by two Me 163s when over Rositz. He took immediate evasive action and eventually evaded at 6,000 feet. He then climbed up again to 20,000 feet but was forced to abandon rest of sortie due to shortage of fuel."

Nine days later near Leipzig there was more conclusive combat. Oberleutnant Rolf 'Bubi' Glogner of 2./JG 400 Jagdgeschwadr and another unidentified pilot, took off in their Komet shortly after dawn to intercept an approaching Mosquito crewed by American Flying Officer Raymond Hays and Flight Sergeant Morgan Phillips, of the RAF's 544 Squadron. In his book 'Rocket Fighter', Komet

pilot Mano Ziegler reports his view of what happened: "A Mosquito, probably sent to take photographs of the previous night's bombing, was approaching almost at the crack of dawn. It wasn't a clear morning, with large clumps of cloud hanging between heaven and earth but Glogner was soon climbing away like a fiery arrow. He lost sight of the Mosquito and when he reached 14,000 metres he almost decided to give up and return to base when he spotted the Mosquito once more, far below him. The Englishman [sic] did not seem to have noticed the Komet and was flying sedately on, apparently unaware that there was anything else in the sky. Glogner put his aircraft into a dive and overhauled the Mosquito rapidly but just before he could get the intruder in his sights, the Mosquito made a sharp turn and went into a steep dive. Glogner had his hands full, trying to line up the rapidly moving target in his gun sight. He put his nose down sharply, pulled up from a near vertical dive and found himself sitting almost on the Mosquito's tail. After three short bursts, the Mosquito's port engine belched fire and smoke. Large pieces broke away and both crew members baled out..."

But the RAF crew did not bale out and what actually happened is best described by Raymond Hays' Distinguished Flying Cross citation: "This officer was the pilot of an aircraft detailed for a reconnaissance covering the Leipzig area in March 1945. Whilst over the target, two enemy fighters attempted to close in. Pilot Officer Hays took violent evading action and much height was lost. At this stage another enemy aircraft joined the fight. Pilot Officer Hays manoeuvred with great skill and although his aircraft was hit, he succeeded in evading the attackers. The starboard engine had been badly damaged but course was set for home. Later on the return flight the aircraft was attacked by another fighter. Pilot Officer Hays manoeuvred with superb skill. Although the aircraft sustained further damage and the navigator was wounded, this pilot succeeded in evading the fighter. He afterwards flew to a landing ground in Allied territory." Raymond Hays had crash-landed his crippled aircraft in Lille, France and survived the mission.

RAF v Komets — April 1945

The RAF recorded what it believed to be the first air combat success against the Komet – the honour went to an Australian pilot. The unofficial diary of 165 Squadron which had been flying Mustangs from RAF Bentwaters in Suffolk, said: "10.4.45. Escort cover this day for 200 heavies to Leipzig. Another railway station was hit. A Me163 (the little fat basket version of the jet) up from Halle, shot down one bomber above the airfield and prepared to dive for a second attack on the formation."



Cramped cockpit of an Me 163

The daylight raid on Leipzig's Engelsdorf and Mockau railway yards featured 134 Lancasters, 90 Halifaxes and six Mosquitoes, and the 165 Squadron diary wasn't exactly correct about the interception by this lone German fighter. The operations record book for 405 (Vancouver) Squadron Royal Canadian Air Force recorded: "In the target area, immediately following release of target indicators, Lancaster ME315/K was attacked by a Me 163. The attacking aircraft approached from both the rear and above and with one burst, completely shot away the rear turret, rudder... H2S set and mid upper turret". Flight Lieutenant Campbell Mussells and the rest of the Lancaster crew had a fight on their hands, as the citation for the Distinguished Service Order for Mussells shows: "In circumstances of the greatest difficulty, he flew the crippled aircraft back to the UK. After crossing the English coast, he ordered his crew to abandon the aircraft and with the exception of the mid-upper gunner who was seriously wounded, they left by parachute. He flew on to the nearest airfield with his wounded comrade. With the control column lashed back and without the aid of flaps, this officer showed superb skill in bringing the crippled aircraft down safely."

Signals later picked up a transmission to the effect that an Me 163 from I./JG 400, based at Brandis, had shot down a Lancaster at 1802hrs, the exact same time that two bombers from 415 (Swordfish) and 425 (Alouette) Squadrons claimed to have damaged the rocket fighter, but these claims were later disallowed. Oberleutnant Rolf Glogner also claimed a Mosquito this day but this cannot be substantiated. However, despite what a number of the Lancaster gunners thought, they had not shot down the rocket fighter as 165 Squadron diary shows: "Flying Officer Haslope chased him down, reached the calculated speed of 675 mph in a dive from 25,000 feet to 3,000 feet. Firing all the time, he closed right in and actually overtook it, achieving strikes all along the fuselage and wing roots. He claimed one damaged."

Australian John 'Slops' Haslope already had a half kill to his name when he and fellow Australian Flying Officer Doug Eva, shot down a Junkers 88 from a German weather reconnaissance unit 15 miles north of Vannes in France on March 20 1944. His combat report for April 10 1945 shows that this was a far more dramatic event: "I noticed a bomber begin to smoke and something appeared to fly

off it. This resolved itself into a Me 163 which climbed vertically at great speed. I reported the aircraft and dropped my overload tanks and gave chase at full throttle. The Me 163 turned towards me and I had a shot at him in a right hand turn, range about 900 yards and 30 degrees deflection but observed no strikes. The Me 163 then spiralled into a vertical dive which I followed, firing several bursts of about two to three seconds, observing strikes on four occasions on the wing roots and several small pieces came off... I overshot rapidly at 3,000 feet and had to pull up to avoid collision, wrinkling the wings as I did so. The Me 163 continued on down and was observed by Squadron Leader Potocki of 315 Squadron and Flying Officer Wacnik of 306 Squadron to hit the ground and explode at an airfield believed to be either Brandis or Mensdorf."



'Slops' Haslope (left)

John Haslope rejoined Green Section (flying officers Peter Rae and Jock Lewin) both of whom had witnessed strikes on the German rocket, as had Flight Lieutenant Kelly of 64 Squadron, but none of them witnessed the crash. What they had probably seen explode was one of the two bombers lost in this attack — a Halifax from 415 (Swordfish) Squadron or a Lancaster from 433 (Porcupine) Squadron RCAF.

"Slops" survived the war. His claim to fame remains as the only British and Commonwealth pilot to almost shoot down one of these elusive and spectacular German Komets. However, there was one other RAF pilot who is credited with a Komet, but it was in unusual circumstances.

RAF vs Komet on tow – April 1945

On the evening of 14 April Squadron Leader John Shepherd, Commanding Officer of 41 Squadron, led three Spitfires from Twente, Holland on an armed reconnaissance around Bremen. John Shepherds' combat report describes their approach to Nordholz airfield: "Two aircraft were seen taking off. Diving on them I recognised them as a Me 163 being towed by a Me 110. I was closing very rapidly but managed to get in a short burst in on the Me 110, obtaining strikes on port engine and cockpit. The Me 110 went into a left-hand diving turn, turning over onto its back, and crashed into a field bursting into flames. The 163 appeared to break away from the 110 and make a wide left-hand turn, finally diving straight in about three fields away from the Me 110."



John Shepherd seen with 118 Squadron in 1943



Jock Lewin

Messerschmitt Bf 110s were used by JG 400 as tugs for Me 163 training flights and this one was flown by 26 year-old Oberfeldwebel (Warrant Officer) Werner Nelte. He was an experienced fighter pilot with seven kills who had flown with the Me 163 development unit, Erprobungskommando 16. He first flew the Me 163 in May 1944 and in June 1944, needing to ditch in Lake Zwischenahn when the tug aircraft developed engine problems. It would appear that he was now with II./JG 400 which was in the process of moving from Nordholz to Husum. He was apparently in the process of towing a Me 163 to the new airfield when John Shepherd attacked and Nelte was killed in the crash. The pilot of the Me 163 is not known but he survived the enforced landing.

Komet claim – April 1945

There would be just one more encounter when, on 22 April, Komet pilot Oberleutnant Franz Woidich, Commanding Officer of 6./JG 400, claimed an unidentified aircraft believed to have been a Lancaster – his 110th and last kill of the war. 24 year-old Woidich held the Ritterkreuz (Knights Cross) and was a very experienced fighter pilot. 767 aircraft attacked Bremen that day and although two Lancasters were lost and one damaged, no mention was made of the presence of Komets.

The Komet was an incredible if unorthodox fighter. Difficult to handle, even by experienced pilots such as Franz Woidich and Werner Nelte, most aircraft and pilots were lost in accidents as opposed to combat. Although the concept was good, it was another case of 'too little, too late' for the Luftwaffe which is why the RAF rarely encountered them in combat over Germany in 1945. With no fuel and Allied air superiority, most were found abandoned on German airfields at the end of the war — which is why today 10 complete examples can be found in museums around the world. [These include the RAF Museum, Cosford and the National Museum of Flight in East Fortune, Scotland].



Rudi Opitz-chief pilot for bringing the Me 163 into service



The Me 163 cockpit was quite simple

General characteristics

Crew: 1
Length: 5.7 m (18 ft 8 in)
Wingspan: 9.3 m (30 ft 6 in)
Height: 2.5 m (8 ft 2 in)
Wing area: 19.6 m² (211 sq ft)
Empty weight: 1,905 kg (4,200 lb)
Max takeoff weight: 4,309 kg (9,500 lb)
Fuel capacity:

- C-Stoff (fuel) 468 kg (1,032 lb)
- T-Stoff (oxidiser) 1,550 kg (3,420 lb)

Powerplant: 1 × Helmut Walter Kiel Kommandogesellschaft HWK 109-509A-2 bi-propellant liquid-fuelled rocket motor, 14.71 kN (3,307 lbf) thrust maximum ; 980 N (220 lbf) minimum, fully variable

Performance

Flap limiting speed: 300 km/h (190 mph; 160 kn)
Rotate speed at take-off: 280 km/h (170 mph; 150 kn)
Best climbing speed: 700–720 km/h (430–450 mph; 380–390 kn)
Endurance: 7.5 mins powered
Rate of climb: 81 m/s (16,000 ft/min)
Time to altitude: From standing start:

- 2,000 m (6,600 ft) in 1.48 min
- 4,000 m (13,000 ft) in 2.02 min
- 6,000 m (20,000 ft) in 2.27 min
- 8,000 m (26,000 ft) in 2.84 min
- 10,000 m (33,000 ft) in 3.19 min
- 12,000 m (39,000 ft) in 3.45 min

Wing loading: 209 kg/m² (43 lb/sq ft) at maximum take-off weight
Thrust/weight: 0.42 lbf/lb (0.004 kN/kg)

Armament

Guns:
 2 × 30 mm (1.181 in) Rheinmetall Borsig MK 108 cannon with 60 rpg;
 or
 2 × 20 mm (0.787 in) MG 151/20 cannon with 100 rpg

Source: The Warplanes of the Third Reich,
Profile No 225: Messerschmitt Me 163 Komet

World Military News

by J.M. Henderson



French Navy Rafale approaching NAS Oceana, May 18 © J M Henderson



Kawasaki C-2 of the JASDF leaving RIAT 18 © J M Henderson



Prototype Embraer KC-390 in Brazilian Air Force markings at RIAT 18 © J M Henderson



Sikorsky HH-60G of Lakenheath's 56th Rescue Squadron at RIAT 17 © J M Henderson

Bahrain



The Royal Bahraini Air Force has ordered sixteen of the latest Lockheed Martin F-16 Fighting Falcons to add to its existing fleet of older F-16s and Northrop F-5Es. These new aircraft will be the first to come off the new F-16 production line at Greenville, South Carolina.

Additionally, Bahrain may also purchase twelve of the new Bell AH-1Z attack helicopter, again to add to its existing fleet of older models.

Bangladesh



Marshall Aerospace of Cambridge will modify and then maintain over the longer term a pair of ex-Royal Air Force C-130J Hercules for the Bangladesh Air Force. The modification work involves a new medical evacuation fit for these Hercules. These Hercules will add to the older models already in service in Bangladesh.

Croatia



Croatia is to purchase twelve refurbished F-16 fighters from Israel to meet their requirement for a new multi-role fighter. Ten single-seaters and two twin-seaters will be supplied as well as a flight-simulator, ground equipment, infrastructure upgrade, training, spares and weapons. Delivery should commence in 2020 and be completed two years later.

France



The French Navy sent a detachment of twelve Dassault Rafale fighter bombers to the US Naval Air Station at Oceana, Virginia in Apr/May this year for a combined exercise with the US Navy under Exercise Chesapeake 2018. The exercise concluded with an at-sea period aboard the carrier, USS George H W Bush. A French Navy Grumman E-2 Hawkeye deployed to nearby Chambers Field, Norfolk Naval Station, in support of Rafale operations. The French Navy undertook this deployment to maintain proficiency in seaborne operations and to practise operating with an ally whilst their own carrier, the Charles de Gaulle, is in refit.

India



India is considering increasing its order for twenty-two of the latest Apache attack helicopters by another six. Delivery of the initial order is due to commence next year.

Israel



The Israeli Air Force helped celebrate the 70th anniversary of the State of Israel with a major flypast over Tel Aviv and other parts of the country on 19th April. The flypast included examples of most of their operational aircraft including the new F-35A Lightning. Additionally, some foreign aircraft took part, including an RAF Hercules, a Canadian Globemaster and Greek F-16s.

The Israeli Air Force has used their new F-35A Lightnings operationally for the first time in combat missions in the Middle East earlier this year.

Italy



The Italian customs, the Guardia di Finanza, is to receive an ATR 72 for maritime patrol operations. The aircraft will be delivered next year after conversion from the normal passenger configuration. It will join the four smaller ATR 42s already operated in this role. The Italian Air Force already operates another version of the ATR 72 in this role.

Japan



The Japanese Air Force sent one of their new Kawasaki C-2 transport aircraft to The Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in July. It was on static display throughout the show and attracted a lot of interest.

New Zealand



New Zealand has decided to order four Boeing Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft to replace their long-serving fleet of P-3 Orions from 2023. New Zealand is joining a growing number of countries which have opted for this aircraft including Australia and the United Kingdom. No 5 Squadron of the RNZAF will operate the aircraft, moving from Whenuapai to Ohakea with their arrival.

South Korea



South Korea plans to buy at least four Boeing P-8 Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft, the same type that is already on order for the Royal Air Force and other air forces. These new aircraft will, at least initially, be operated alongside the Korean Navy's current fleet of some sixteen Lockheed P-3 Orions.

Portugal



The Portuguese Air Force is likely to become the first export customer for the Brazilian Embraer KC-390 tanker transport. Up to six may be purchased with deliveries starting in 2021.

Turkey



The Turkish Air Force has received its first F-35A Lightning II from a planned total of one hundred aircraft. This makes Turkey the third largest customer after the USA and UK and Turkish companies are also involved in production. This aircraft and the next three will be retained in the United States for some time to train Turkish air and ground crew at Luke AFB, AZ. Thereafter, aircraft will head for Turkey from 2020 onwards subject to current political difficulties being resolved.

UK



Plans to transfer the Army Air Corps' Defender and Islander aircraft, based at Aldergrove in Northern Ireland, to the Royal Air Force from April this year have been postponed for at least the time-being.

USA



As part of the realignment of the US Air Force in Europe, the helicopter rescue squadron that has been based at RAF Lakenheath for the last twelve years, operating Sikorsky H-60 Pave Hawks, has relocated to Aviano Air Base in North East Italy. The move took place in May and June this year.

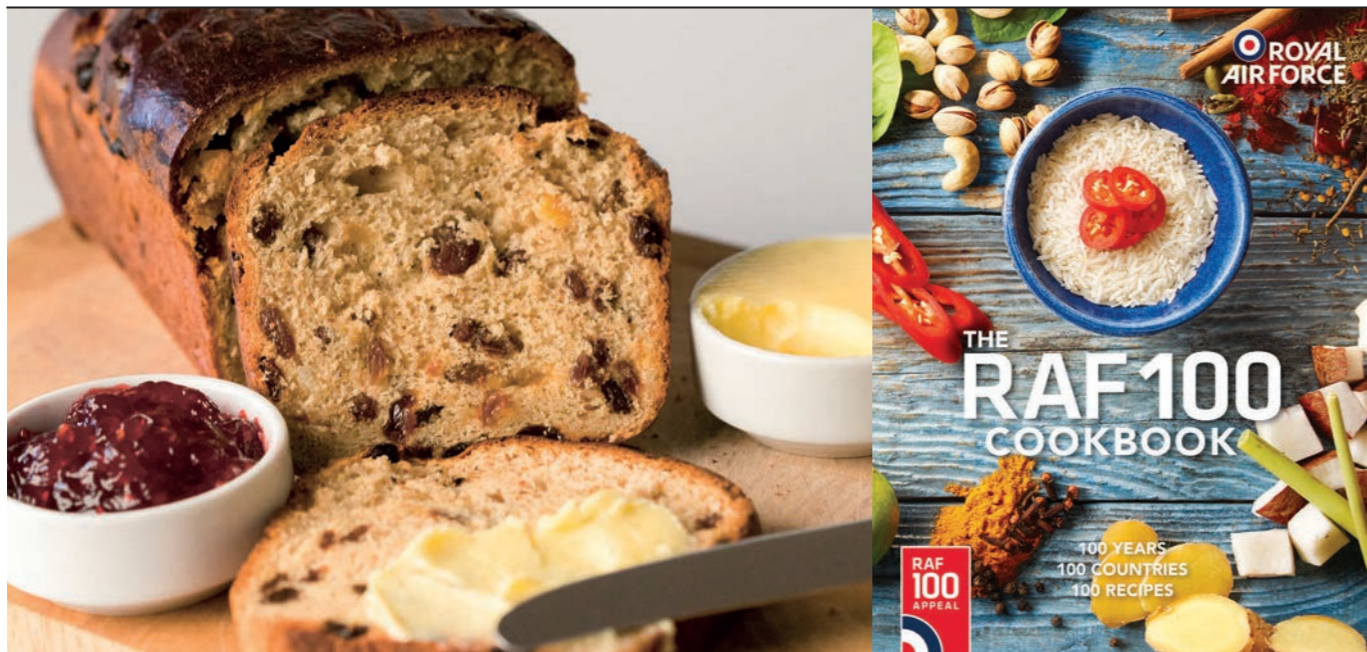
As part of the United States' Atlantic Resolve programme to support their European allies, sixty-one US Army helicopters arrived by sea at Rotterdam in June. The helicopters comprised Sikorsky Blackhawks and Boeing Chinooks from the 4th Combat Aviation Brigade based in Colorado and replaced a similar number of helicopters from the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade from Texas who had been in Europe for nine months. The new arrivals will operate from bases in Germany, Latvia, Poland and Romania.

The US Marine Corps has taken delivery of the first of some two hundred new CH-53K King Stallion heavy-lift helicopters. This is the latest version of this helicopter which has been in Marine service for many years. The Corps has also received the last of their 160 updated versions of the UH-1 Huey, the UH-1Y Venom.

Spring 2018 saw the latest Red Flag – Alaska exercise take place in the United States. The main base used was Eielson AFB near Fairbanks in the centre of the State. The exercise involved the Israeli Air Force and NATO E-3 AWACS as well as the US Air Force, US Navy and US Army. [A](#)



Bell UH-1Y of the US Marine Corps © J M Henderson



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Gosh! Guernésiais gâche

In the last of our recipes from the RAF100 Cookbook we have a baked treat from Guernsey. If you've enjoyed the recipes and histories we've been featuring this centenary year, put the book onto your shopping or Christmas lists. As well as the 100 recipes, you'll also get 100 RAF history stories, from 100 countries. Guernésiais gâche (gâche, pronounced gosh, means cake) is actually a bready Channel Islands treat. Try it warm for high tea or breakfast.

Ingredients

- 175ml full fat milk
- 200g plain flour
- 100g strong wholemeal flour
- Pinch of salt
- 2 sachets (2 x 7g) instant yeast
- 50g light soft brown sugar
- 1 medium egg, beaten
- 150g butter, diced and left at room temperature for 20-30 minutes
- 50g mixed candied peel
- 200g sultanas
- 1 egg yolk to glaze (optional)

Method

- Lightly butter a 1kg loaf tin and line with baking parchment
- Scald the milk (bring just to simmer and then set aside to cool until tepid)
- Sift the flours into a mixing bowl, add salt, yeast and sugar. Mix well
- Once milk is tepid, mix in the beaten egg
- Mix the milk and egg into the dry ingredients. Knead for about five minutes to form a smooth but quite tight dough
- Check the butter is not too soft. It must be kneaded into the dough; if it is too soft it will melt in, making the dough greasy
- Knead the butter into the dough a little at a time, dusting with flour if it becomes too sticky. This process is messy if done by hand (you will need to frequently scrape the dough the worktop back into the mix) but it can be done in a mixer with a kneading hook. Continue until all the butter is incorporated
- Add the mixed peel and sultanas and knead into the dough
- Shape into a neat oblong, place in lined loaf tin, cover with a cloth and leave to prove for two and a half to three hours at room temperature
- Once proved, preheat the oven to 220 degree C, place the loaf in the oven
- After ten minutes lower the temperature to 200 degrees C. Cook for another 45 minutes until risen and golden brown on top
- Brush with beaten egg if desired and return to the oven for five minutes
- Remove from oven. Leave to cook in the tin for 20 minutes, tip out, remove parchment and transfer to wire rack to cool

While you are proving or cooking, read about: The Channel Islands

Before the German occupation of the Channel Islands, they were important for the RAF as a forward operating base, or as a place to retire to between France and England. But they were not well defended, and were soon lost to enemy forces.

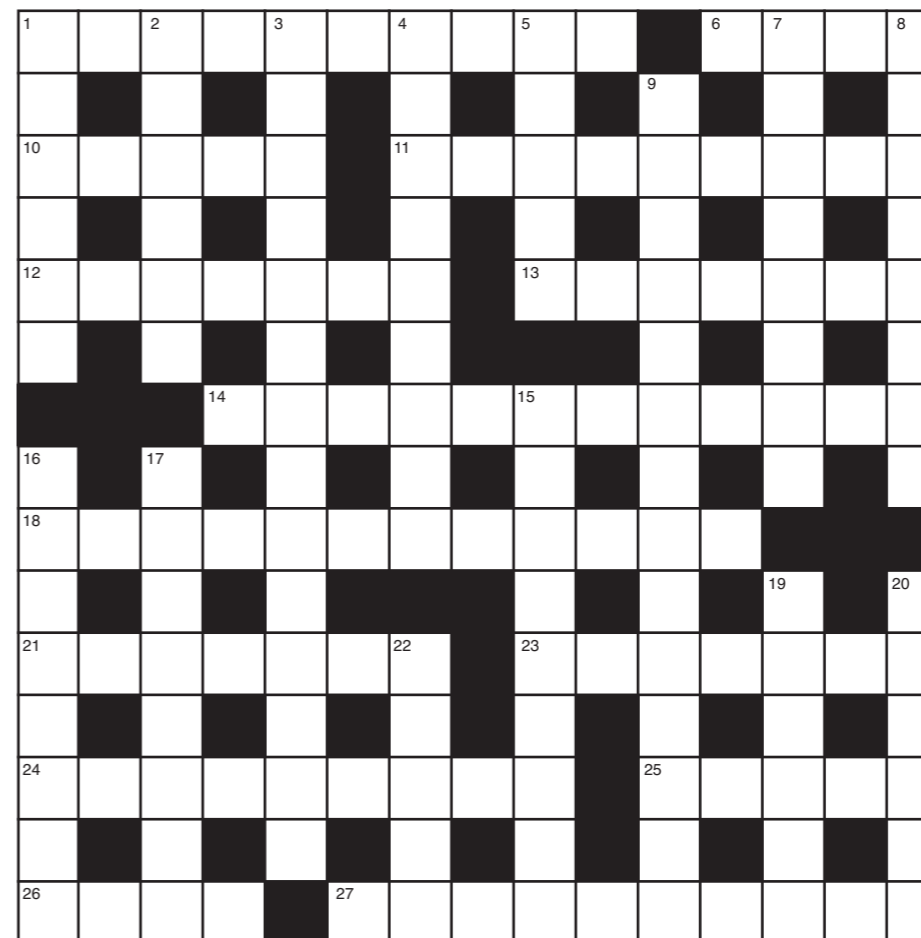
Aircraft associated with the island include 102 Squadron Whitley bombers, and 201 Squadron Nimrod maritime patrols. 201 had strong connections with Guernsey until its disbandment in 2011 and was known as "Guernsey's Own" squadron.



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

Autumn 2018 crossword

by Enigma



Across

- 1 Safety building for ships (10)
- 6 Thanks after attorney gets information (4)
- 10 Reel, for example (5)
- 11 Type of very narrow trousers (9)
- 12 Crazy late charge results in euphoria (7)
- 13 Somehow I dealt with 500 spread out (7)
- 14 Scientific instrument showing waveforms (12)
- 18 Surgical removal of distal remains of the caecum of the intestine (12)
- 21 Perhaps now ram a warship (3-1-3)
- 23 Catch (7)
- 24 Painting relating to inanimate objects (5-4)
- 25 Wait to remain (5)
- 26 Goat provides Roman garment (4)
- 27 Deliberated (10)

Down

- 1 Nine of these were 'dancing' (6)
- 2 Kindly sympathetic (6)
- 3 Carol: the 1st Christmas (3,5,6)
- 4 Table wine (9)
- 5 Upright stall (5)
- 7 The art of flight (8)
- 8 Scottish city made of granite! (8)
- 9 Hot, bright-yellow condiment (7,7)
- 15 Ability to be supple (9)
- 16 Spoil a second rigid monkey (8)
- 17 Rotational aircraft manoeuvre (8)
- 19 RAF missile system ('sword-like') (6)
- 20 Maintain against attack (6)
- 22 Short, large animal! (5)

Solution to this crossword can be found on page 63

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

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

Mr. E Bryant	Huntingdon and District
Mr. T E Lewis	Market Harborough

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Notices

Help

Help to trace Mrs. Jocelyn Ruth Ensley, née Farrar who married RAF officer Peter M. Ensley in Berlin late 1960s. Reply to Sandy Boyle on sandboy48@hotmail.co.uk.

Any information please, or contact with friends or family.
Lockheed Ventura JS915 last flight from RAF Luqa (Malta) 1313 September 1944. The aircraft was serving with 27 Squadron SAAF the following crew were all RAF: Pilot Officer JE Stevens, Observer Pilot Officer AL Jonston, Wireless Operator/ Air Gunner Sergeant A McDonell, Air Gunner Sergeant JD Potter, 1586924 Sergeant William Damen. jpborwick@hotmail.com

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 rafadappassn.org for details of your association.

Hoping to contact John Stainsby, Charles Hughes, Dave Boardman, Roger Britton, Donald Morris, John Yeo and Andy Anderson, my old muckers from RAF Melksham on 01480 462479

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

Reunions

126 Entry Halton Apprentices reunion 5 & 6 October 2018. Details: 126entryhalton.wixsite.com/reunion. Need help finding: Tony Aspinall, Dave Watts, Russ Savage, Russ Siddall, Ian Wilson, Ian Hall, Andy Robinson, Phil Roberts and John Maddox. If you can help please contact: stevenharrisemail@gmail.com

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- One photograph can be published with each notice
- For personal notices only
- Not to be used to promote profit-making ventures (such as renting out private houses, sales of books, etc). Those must be advertised as boxed classifieds or as lineage on our classified advertising pages.
- May be used to promote sales of items where the money raised will be donated to the RAF Association.
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Solution to the Autumn crossword



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