



## WALES, MIDLAND AND SOUTH WESTERN AREA RAFALO NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2014

### 1. MESSAGE FROM THE NEW RAFA MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR (AIR CDRE DAVID PROWSE)

*The following was forwarded to Stn Cdrs and Unit Cdrs:*

After 35 years of service (last week) I am taking up the Membership Director post with RAFA. My purpose in writing is to kick start RAFA's drive to improve the links between RAFA and the serving RAF population to make RAFA more relevant to those in the serving RAF family, especially our junior ranks. To that end, I would be very keen to discover what more RAFA could do for your unit. I would also like to visit as many of you as possible and meet with you, your Execs and your RAFALOs to explore what could be done to improve the connections between RAFA and the RAF. I know many of you already enjoy excellent relationships with your local RAFA branches and clubs and perhaps we could examine where we could also build on those. RAFA's new Secretary General (Nick Bunting) will be writing to station commanders and the SLT in the coming weeks to tell you about RAFA's plans for the future.

In the meantime, I have copied in my RAFA address [david.prowse@rafa.org.uk](mailto:david.prowse@rafa.org.uk) - I very much look forward to hearing your views, positive and otherwise back to that address please!

### 2. UPDATE ON RAFA IT

Sgt Wayne 'Swiggys' Swiggs, one of the RAFALO members of RAFA CC has been working very hard on updating RAFA's IT and thought you would appreciate sight of just some of the work he puts in on our behalf. Below are the edited highlights of Swiggys's 'quick' update ref RAFA IT...

The TCW 90SU Branch portal has gone live (<http://www.tcwand90su.co.uk>) but will be subject to further tweaks in coming weeks. The portal adopts the same look and feel as the main RAFA website as it was designed by the same web design company. The aim is to 'encourage' all Branches to create or migrate to a RAFA led Branch portal. I believe this will undoubtedly improve brand consistency and our professional outlook and outreach. I have been working with CHQ to streamline the proforma needed to facilitate future Branch requests. My current Branch Aphrodite is in the process of requesting a portal via the draft form. Once Aphrodite Branch is live and the process reviewed, RAFA will look to engage/communicate with the Branches. Cost to Branch from flash to bang is circa £400. When you consider the costs of employing a professional web design agency, this is great value for money. I am sure you will have lots of questions about this project I.e. ongoing management, changing the template etc but at this juncture, I would ask you to park them until the project is more mature. I have asked an inordinate amount of questions, outlined a number of strict requirements and I don't want to saturate our excellent staff.

2. Customer Relationship Management system, essentially this project will centralise RAFA's many data silos, streamline processes and provide a very powerful reporting tool for trend analysis and KPI dashboard monitor key areas.

### 3. RAF COSFORD RAFA BRANCH BY CPL GORDON TORRIE

I Joined the RAF in 1999, but it wasn't until I arrived at RAF Leuchars, some 4 years later, that I was introduced to RAFA. I became an active member of the committee acting as both RAFALO and Standard Bearer until I was posted to RAF Cosford in 2012. On arrival at RAF Cosford, I made myself known to Sgt Mick Briggs, the Stn RAFLO, and was voted onto the RAF Cosford RAFA Branch, as their RAFALO.

The RAF Cosford RAFA Branch meets in the Cosford Community Centre, just outside the wire of RAF Cosford and is fortunate to have as our president, Gp Capt Adam Sansom who fully supports our efforts and has attended many social evenings. In the past year we have also affiliated ourselves with 2497 (Cosford) Sqn of the Air Training Corps. The branch provided a trophy, which is to be presented annually to the Cadet who shows the most community spirit.

The Branch committee regularly meets on the first Wednesday of each month to discuss the usual matters and the secretary (Mr Charlie Gordon) disseminates the fall out from these to the branch members prior to our branch meeting on the second Wednesday of the month. This meeting gives the members the opportunity to discuss what came out of the committee meeting. Our social events are well attended and range from a guest speaker, quiz, or visit to a section on camp, with the monthly raffle a must.

Last month saw members and the Standard attend the Battle of Britain Parade both at RAF Cosford and at Tamworth. Various members visited 238 Sqn and followed this up a fish and chips supper, which also saw the branch president and his lady wife. In addition the Branch, with support from the Stn and 2497 (Cosford) Sqn ATC carried out Wings collections in the local area. Finally, we are in the process of finalising arrangements for our Christmas meal.



Branch Members at 238 Sqn



The Branch welcomes 2497 (Cosford) Sqn ATC



Gp Capt Sansom (President) presenting Mrs Sandra Henderson (Chairperson)

#### 4. CONNECT MAGAZINE

Please do not forget to publicise your Unit events by sending a short story and picture to the RAFA Connect Magazine. Email your article to [Emma.Reed@rafa.org.uk](mailto:Emma.Reed@rafa.org.uk).

#### 5. WELFARE TRAINING

Joanne Truscott, Welfare Trg Coord, RAFA CHQ, runs HWO Level 1 and 2 courses and is always looking for volunteers to go on the courses. If you want to become a HWO, you are invited to contact Joanne Tel: 0116 268 8767 | Email: [joanne.truscott@rafa.org.uk](mailto:joanne.truscott@rafa.org.uk).

#### 6. PAYING IN MONEY TO WINGS APPEAL

Please ensure that all monies raised for the Wings Appeal are sent to the RAF Association Fundraising Department by **Fri 14 Nov 14**. The money totals will be used to determine trophy winners.

Wings monies can be returned by BACS transfer using the account details below.

Sort Code: 30-00-02

Account number: 04065404

Reference: 'RAF *Station Name*'

Please put relevant reference on your transfer and send a covering email to [wings@rafa.org.uk](mailto:wings@rafa.org.uk) to let us know your donation has been paid in. We will then be able to track the donation when it hits the Wings Account and assign the money to your station total. We will also confirm back to you once the donation has been safely received. Alternatively, please raise a cheque for the relevant amount made payable to 'RAF Association' and send with a covering letter to:

Peter Brocklehurst  
Wings Appeal  
RAF Association  
117 ½ Loughborough Road  
Leicester  
LE4 5ND

Should you require further information please call Pete Brocklehurst 0116 268 8757 or email [peter.brocklehurst@rafa.org.uk](mailto:peter.brocklehurst@rafa.org.uk). In addition, please ensure the Area RAFALO is copied into this email.

#### 7. STATION ANNUAL REPORTS

This is just a reminder to start thinking about completing your Annual Report, to be signed by the Stn Cdr, for submission to Griff at RAFA HQ by **15 Jan 15**. Please ensure the Area RAFALO is copied into receiving this report.

#### 8. AREA RAFALO MEETING AT RAF SHAWBURY ON THU 27 NOV 14

Just a reminder to let the Area RAFALO know by **Mon 17 Nov 14** whether you can attend the Wales, Midlands and South Western Area RAFALO meeting at RAF Shawbury on Thu 27 Nov 14. It would be nice to see as many Corsham RAFALOs attend this meeting and this meeting will provide the opportunity to formulate ideas about RAFA from each other.

#### 9. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

*Please ensure you inform me of your unit involvement with various events on the Monthly Returns*

Nov 14

Thu 6 Nov – Tamworth RAFA Branch monthly meeting – attended by DMS Whittington RAFALO.

Fri 14 Nov - Wings Appeal Money to RAFA CHQ.  
Wed 19 Nov - Area Council Meeting at Birmingham Sheldon RAFA Branch.  
Thu 27 Nov – Area RAFALO Meeting at RAF Shawbury.  
Fri 28/Sat 29 Nov – Corsham supermarket collecting at Morrisons in Chippenham

#### Dec 14

Thu 4 Dec - RAFALO Familiarisation Day at RAFA HQ in Leicester.  
Fri 5 Dec 14 – Corsham operating a RAFA stall at the Wootton Bassett Christmas Market.

#### Jan 15

15 Jan – Annual Report (signed by the Stn Cdr) to be at 15 Jan 15.

#### Feb 15

Sat 7 Feb – Corsham supermarket collecting at ASDA in Melksham.

#### Mar 15

20-22 Mar - Area Conference in Derwent Hotel, Torquay.

*WO Vince Taylor, Area RAFALO*