

Wales, Midland & South Western Area

Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2013

THIS NEWSLETTER SHOULD BE DISPLAYED FOR THE USE OF ALL MEMBERS

1. THE QUEEN'S NEW YEAR HONOURS LIST 2013

You will be pleased to hear of the following awards to coincide with the New Year Honour's List 2013:

STATE AWARDS

MBE - Mr Donald Mabey – Oxted & Limpsfield, & Seahaven Branches (SE&E)

BEM - Mr Peter Skellon – Musical Director, RAF Association Concert Band (W,M&SW)

The above awards have been achieved through RAF Association nominations, however, we have also been informed that Mrs Margaret Perryman of the Huntingdon Branch (SE&E) has been awarded a BEM for services to the community in Huntingdon, which includes her work for RAFA, but awarded via the public nomination route, and also Mr Douglas Reynolds JP, President of the Twickenham Branch (SE&E), was awarded an MBE for services to the community in Kingston upon Thames, which includes his work for RAFA. Our sincere congratulations go to both.

NATIONAL PRESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATES

Mr Henry "Mick" Bartlett

Mr Edward "Ted" Bates

Mr Bernard "Mike" Fryer

Mr Arthur Fuller

Mrs Brenda Green

Mr Peter & Mrs Margaret Radford

Mr Cyril Richardson

Mrs Alex Watts

Crawley Branch (SE&E)

Aylesford & Malling Branch (SE&E)

Trowbridge Branch (W,M&SW)

Minehead Branch (W.M&SW)

Newcastle Branch (Northern)

(joint certificate) – NW Area HQ (Northern)

Cheltenham Branch (W,M&SW)

RAFA Staff – Eastern Area

Congratulations of course go to all, but especially to those recipients from our Area!

2. FORMATION OF A NEW BRANCH

Great news! Thanks to the efforts of a few in Cornwall, we are pleased to announce the formation of a new Branch to be known as the RAF St Mawgan Branch with effect from 28 January 2013. Our National President recently visited RAF St Mawgan and took great delight in formally opening the Branch and we wish them well for the future. Any current Association member who may be on the Area Roll, especially those living in Cornwall and who wish to be transferred to this new Branch should contact the Exeter Office for advice.

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3. BRANCH CHANGE OF NAME

The Beccles, Southwold & District Branch have now become The Beccles & Southwold Area Branch with effect from 1 December 2012.

4. CHANGES TO STAFF PERSONNEL

Some of you will already know that our colleague, Wendy Robinson, has left the Association to pursue other business interests with her husband. I'm sure you will join us in wishing them much success for the future and we thank Wendy for all her hard work and dedication over the past 10 years. You will also wish to welcome our new colleague, Fran Rowsell, who has taken on the position of Admin Assistant at the Exeter Office. Fran will be working 3 days per week (Monday to Wednesday) and can be contacted by e-mail (fran.rowsell@rafa.org.uk) or by telephone at the Exeter Office (option 4). Fran will be part of the team at Conference in Torquay so if you are going then please introduce your self!

Following much discussion and as part of a wider structural review, we are pleased to announce that a new position on the Area Staff has been established, to be known as the Branch Support Officer. This will be a full time post operating out of the Exeter Office, working closely with the Area Director, to provide advice and support to Branches to aid Membership retention, recruitment and fundraising for the Wings Appeal. We are currently recruiting and will hopefully be in a position to appoint someone in the near future. If you know of anyone who may have an interest in this type of work then please direct them to our website (www.rafa.org.uk) for more information about the role. Many thanks.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Whole Area Membership figures as at 28 January 2013 were as follows:

| Annual All Losses | Life | Full Associate | Total | New Ann/Ass 13 |
|----------------------|------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| 6643 | 5418 | 2542 | 14603 | 35 |
| | | | | 60 |

As ever, Full Branch Membership and Wings Appeal Statistics for 2012 will appear in the Annual Report which will be forwarded to Branches over the next few weeks. We continue to receive some Membership renewals so many thanks. Please get them processed and sent to us as soon as possible. We are aiming, again, to have all the renewals recorded on the RAFA Database by 31 March 2013. This year we shall focus once again on our lapsed members and hope to build on the successes of 2012. Area staff stand ready to discuss any local initiative you may have or need help with.

I understand that Branch Membership Rebates have been paid direct to Branch accounts, based on the strength of the Branch at 31 Dec 2012, calculated at £4.50 for each Ordinary Members and £2.70 for each Full Associate, subject to a minimum payment of £120.

6. WALES, MIDLAND AND SOUTH WESTERN AREA REUNION AND AGM – THE DERWENT HOTEL, TORQUAY – FRIDAY 8 TO SUNDAY 10 MARCH 2013

I am very pleased to report that bookings are looking great in respect of accommodation at our Area AGM and Reunion this coming March and, just as importantly, Branch delegates in

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good number are already on our books. Thanks for your support. We hope you enjoy your weekend!

7. BRANCH AND BRANCH CLUB ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2012

Branches are reminded that in accordance with Standard Branch Regulation 32, Accounts as at 31 December 2012 including a Report from the Auditor or Independent Examiner, for both Branch and Branch Clubs are to be received at Area Headquarters by no later than 31 March 2013. Would Treasurers please help us by preparing their Accounts in the format contained in Chapter 6 (Branch) and 15 (Club) of the RAFA Admin Handbook. Any other layout only leads to confusion – many thanks. Your attention is also drawn to Byelaw 24(1)b which states that a Branch shall be entitled to be represented at a Conference of the Association providing that its audited accounts for the preceding year have been submitted to the Area Director not less than 10 days before the first day of Conference.

8. AREA COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a recent decision by the Trustees at a Central Council Meeting to publish an Executive Summary of the Meeting Minutes, Area Council took a similar decision and you will now be able to find an Executive Summary of the Wales, Midland and South Western Area Council Meeting Minutes of their last Meeting which was held on 14 November 2012, on the Association website by following this link <http://www.rafa.org.uk/What-we-do/News/Member-News-for-December>. Any Branch requiring further detail on any point highlighted should contact the Area Director in the first instance.

9. NEW MEMBERSHIP FORMS

The new membership forms '2013 Edition' are now available from RAFATRAD'. A maximum of 10 Membership Forms can be ordered at any one time. If you require more please contact Griff Griffiths at CHQ on 0116-268 8783 or at len.griffiths@rafa.org.uk. Please ensure all '2012' forms are now destroyed.

10. ANNUAL CONFERENCE - EASTBOURNE – 10 TO 12 MAY 2013

The letter giving details of Conference was despatched to Branch Secretaries in early December by E-mail and hard copy. It is important that the pro forma is returned direct to the Conference Organiser at RAFA Conference, PO Box 316, Leyland PR25 9AX (email margaret.duff@rafa.org.uk) and **not** via Area or CHQ. It is also imperative that it is returned by the due date (Friday 5 April 2013) as in recent years many Branches have not made contact until as late as the week prior to Conference. It is necessary to complete and return the form **even if accommodation has been booked, either direct or through Area HQ** - again in recent years many Delegates have assumed that as they had booked their accommodation there was no need to return the pro forma.

11. RAF ASSOCIATION: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY 2013

RAF Association Members will know that the Repatriation of fallen Service personnel is now done through RAF Brize Norton. There is a Repatriation Centre in the town of Carterton, close to Brize Norton in Oxfordshire. The Mayor of Carterton has approached a number of agencies and charities to assist with the refurbishment of the assembly area for the Repatriation Centre. The current facility (a local social club) is proving too small for families

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and friends of the Soldiers, Marines and Airmen whose bodies are being repatriated, and additional facilities are needed for the representatives of the RAF Association, Royal British Legion and others who lend their support. The building refurbishment and extension will cost £50k and to date there are pledges totalling £20K. The District Council in West Oxfordshire will begin work once the level of pledged monies reaches £30K, and the Mayor is keen to get the project underway as soon as possible. The suggested donation from organisations which can offer support is £5k. If any Branch would like to support this project from their funds, please contact the Area Director in the first instance. Please can any cheques be sent to CHQ Finance for processing. Please also make sure that it is clearly identified on any attached paperwork that the cheque is specifically for this project. Cheques must be made payable to RAFA. Cheques can only be accepted from Branches or members of RAFA.

12. FUNDRAISING CHALLENGES FOR 2013

Please find attached a poster which advertises the 2013 Fundraising Challenges for the season. Also attached is a poster directly aimed towards Skydiving. You may want to consider printing this information and getting it out to local Colleges and Sports Centres, ATC, Scouts etc. Any questions should be directed to Baz Hartevelde at CHQ on 0116-268 8777 or at baz.hartevelde@rafa.org.uk.

13. RAFA CONCERT BAND

Please find enclosed the latest RAFA Concert Band Newssheet. We wish the Band well for 2013 and once again, congratulate Peter Skellon on a most deserved award of the British Empire Medal.

14. ANNUAL SERVICE ST CLEMENT DANES – SUNDAY 14 APRIL 2013

The Annual Service to commemorate formation of the Royal Air Force will be held at St Clement Danes Church the Strand London on Sunday 14 April 2013. Royal Air Forces Association Standard Bearers have been invited to attend the Service. The format is the same as last year with Standard Bearers marching from Lincoln's Inn Field to St Clement Danes Church headed by the RAF Halton Pipe Band. Any Standard Bearers wishing to attend should contact the South East Office Tel: 020 8286 6667 no later than Friday 1 March 2013.

Ticket allocation for the Service as in previous years is on a first come first served basis but unfortunately, only invited guests will be allowed to attend the reception after the Service. Any members wishing to obtain tickets for the Service should contact the South East Office no later than Friday 1 March 2013. The Service will commence at 11.00 hrs.

15. MOBILE EXHIBITION TRAILERS (MET)

This year there will undoubtedly be a large number of events organised by Area and Branches to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Royal Air Forces Association. In addition there are the airshows/events that are organised by outside agencies that CHQ, Areas and Branches would look to attend to promote the Association. You will no doubt be aware that there are two Mobile Exhibition Trailers (MET) at CHQ, both fully equipped to attend various events in support of Areas and Branches. Whilst primarily they attend the large airshow/events, they are available, subject to demand, to support other events throughout the year. We are currently drawing together the 2013 Airshow/event calendar in

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order to allocate the METs fairly and evenly throughout the Country. If you would like to have a MET attend one of your events, subject to availability, or require further information, please make contact with the Area Director in the first instance.

Whilst there will be dates requested that are in great demand (ie. Armed Forces Day and Aug Bank Holiday weekend), the months of April and from mid September to December, are generally available as are some mid-week dates throughout the year. Any requests for the METs should be advised as soon as they are known, ideally by the end of February. Many thanks.

16. CHURCH SERVICE AT BRECON – SATURDAY 6 APRIL 2013

On Saturday 6 April at 1430 hours, the Mid Wales Region are organising a Church Service to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the forming of the RAF Association. This will take place in the Plough Chapel, Brecon. The Service will be conducted by the Reverend Michael Hodgson, Chaplain to Brecon Branch RAFA, and the address will be given by the Reverend Wing Commander Lance Clark MBE. All Branches are welcome to attend. If you intend to come, could you please contact Mike Chappell on 01874-625573 indicating possible numbers attending, and whether you will be parading your standard at the Chapel.

17. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Devon Region Meeting AGM at the Dawlish Branch Club (2.30pm) – 9 February 2013.

Area Council Meeting, Porthcawl & Kenfig Branch Club – 13 February 2013.

Cornwall Region AGM – RBL Club Truro (2pm) – 16 February 2013.

Cancelled Event - RAFA Concert Band is no longer performing at the Armstrong Hall in Thornbury – 23 February 2013 as the organisers have cancelled this Concert.

Northern Region (Midlands) AGM at MOD Stafford – 27 February 2013.

East Glamorgan & Gwent Region Meeting at Treorchy Branch (2pm) – 2 March 2013.

Wiltshire Region Meeting at Swindon RAFA Club (1pm) – 2 March 2013.

Area Conference and Reunion at the Derwent Hotel in Torquay – 8 to 10 March 2013.

Mid Wales Region Meeting at Llanidloes Branch (2pm) – 23 March 2013.

Official RAF Association 70th Anniversary – 1 April 2013.

Area Council Meeting – venue to be confirmed – 10 April 2013.

North Wales Region Meeting at RAF Valley (2pm) – 13 April 2013.

Association Annual Conference at Eastbourne – 10 to 12 May 2013.

Area Council Meeting – venue to be confirmed – 21 August 2013.

Area Council Meeting – venue to be confirmed – 13 November 2013.

Paul Baker – Area Director

Today is the oldest you've ever been, yet the youngest you will ever be, so enjoy the day while it lasts!

Enclosures:

1. Funding Challenges 2013.
2. RAFA Concert Band – News sheet.

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