

Wales, Midland & South Western Area

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2013

THIS NEWSLETTER SHOULD BE DISPLAYED FOR THE USE OF ALL MEMBERS

1. THE PASSING OF JIM DAVIS – GLOUCESTER BRANCH

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Jim Davis. Many will recall Jim as an interim Area Director, Area Manager and Welfare Officer for the Midlands before his retirement in 2006. Jim continued to be a very active supporter of all things RAF Association and remained the Gloucester Branch Honorary Welfare Officer and Caseworker to the end. We shall miss Jim's unique greeting 'Good Moaning'! Funeral details are as follows:

Thursday 31 October 2013 at 1pm – The Gloucester Crematorium, Coney Hill Road, Gloucester, GL4 4PA. Any donations in lieu of flowers to Flowerdown House and MacMillan.

2. MEMBERSHIP

Whole Area Membership figures as at 25 October 2013 were as follows:

Annual	Life	Full Associate	Total	New Ann/Ass 13	All Losses
6328	5226	2475	14029	712	1311

The more eagle eyed amongst you may notice that our total area membership figure has stalled somewhat in the last 4 weeks, due obviously to the fact that the rate at which we are attracting new members is broadly the same as our losses. A positive interpretation would be that we at least continue to recruit decent numbers! A reminder regarding renewals and subscriptions! Membership functions from within our Area have now been successfully handed over to CHQ. Please direct any membership renewals, subscriptions or finance related query to Rishi Sheth (rishi.sheth@rafa.org.uk / 0116 2688785), who will be happy to help and assist.

3. BRANCH NAME CHANGE

Please note that with effect from 19 October 2013 our Branch of Camborne and Redruth has formally changed its name to Camborne, Redruth and Illogan.

4. BRANCH STANDARD BEARERS AT THE BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TATTOO!

The numbers of Branch Standard Bearers who have 'signed up' to the Birmingham International Military Tattoo at the NIA on Saturday 30 November and Sunday 1st December has now grown to 50 – excellent stuff! We are extremely grateful and look forward to a super spectacle. More detailed information has been released to Standard Bearers.

Celebrating 70 Years 1943-2013

5. AREA WELFARE SEMINARS

A brief word to say how grateful we are to those who attended our Area Welfare Seminars at Cwmbran and Moseley. Despite fairly low numbers we did manage to engage with 20 or so of our Branches. Thanks for your support and positive feedback. Area Council will consider options and new ideas for 2014 so please watch this space!

6. RAFA YOUTH – THE LATEST UPDATE!

The latest information from rafa YOUTH is hugely encouraging as membership grows to 325 along with 2687 Facebook 'likes'. Ten Cadets are being treated to a VIP Day with the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and the current prize draw is offering 10 pairs of tickets to the Birmingham International Military Tattoo at the end of November, beginning of December. This along with our continuing program of ATC, CCF(RAF), Air Scout/Air Explorer Scout & GVCAC unit visits. If you would like a presentation delivered to your Branch then please contact Helen Gibson, Youth Community Manager, on Tel No: 0116-2688780 or at helen.gibson@rafa.org.uk.

<https://www.facebook.com/rafaYOUTH>
www.rafayouth.org.uk

7. WALES, MIDLAND AND SOUTH WESTERN AREA AGM – DE VERE VILLAGE HOTEL, CARDIFF – SATURDAY 8 MARCH 2014

We are heading back to Wales! I will shortly be writing direct to Branch Chairmen and Secretaries about the 2014 AGM, not only to give some details about the Meeting but also about the whole Reunion Weekend. The Area Council sincerely hope that as many of our Branches as possible will be represented at the AGM and, indeed, will also send their Standard Bearer to take part in the Ceremonial aspects (including the Standard Bearer's Competition). I will send to Secretaries the paperwork to facilitate appointment of a Branch Delegate for the AGM and submission of Resolutions.

You can now begin to make your accommodation bookings direct with the hotel by quoting the following code – RAFA090314. A £25 per person deposit will be requested which is non-refundable. Call on 02920-524300 Option 2. Your costs are as follows:

- Twin/double room based on 2 sharing - £117.95 per person for 2 nights bed and breakfast, Friday evening forked buffet and Saturday evening Dinner.
- Single room - £152.95 for 2 nights bed and breakfast, Friday evening forked buffet and Saturday evening Dinner.
- One twin/double room based on 2 sharing for just the Saturday night including the formal Saturday evening Dinner and Sunday breakfast is £62.50 per person.
- One single room for just the Saturday night including the formal Saturday evening Dinner and Sunday breakfast is £80.00.
- If you wish to come along just for the Saturday evening Dinner, this will be £25 per person. Please let the Exeter Office know if this is your plan as we shall need to keep an eye on additional seats over and above those that have booked for the weekend.

A final note for now. Saturday and Sunday lunch arrangements are not included in this package and you are invited to make your own arrangements with the Restaurant. More information on our Reunion Weekend will follow but please don't hesitate to call the Exeter Office if you have any queries.

8. NOMINATIONS FOR NATIONAL TROPHY COMPETITIONS

I should be pleased to receive nominations, by 10 January 2014, for the Trophy Competitions mentioned below. Full details are given in Chapter 10 of the Association Admin Handbook, and the awards will be made at Annual Conference 2014. These trophies are an important mechanism for us to recognise the efforts of our RAFALOs, serving units and GVCAC.

- **Wally Marriott RAFALO Trophy.** Awarded to the RAFALO judged to have made the most outstanding contribution to the Association.
- **Sir Geoffrey Bromet Trophy.** Awarded to the RAF Unit which has made the most exceptional contribution in support of the Association.
- **The Andrew Humphrey Trophy.** Awarded to the Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets Unit making the greatest sustained effort and overall contribution to Wings Appeal.

9. BRANCH NEWSLETTER COMPETITION

Entries for this Competition must be received at CHQ no later than 31 January 2014. Entries must be printed or duplicated and state how many issues are produced during the year. These conditions must be met prior to consideration by the Judges. I hope that Branches will decide to enter themselves into this competition (I know there are some great examples out there!). Please submit entries via this office.

10. THE CENTRAL BAND OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE - CONCERT

You may be interested to know that our Mid Somerset Branch is once again staging its annual Concert given by the Central Band of the RAF at the Concert Hall, Millfield School on Tuesday 17 December 2013 at 7.30pm. This will be an opportunity to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the RAF Association. Tickets costing £14 are available from the Millfield School Ticket Office on 01458-444320.

11. RAFA CONCERT BAND – A RATHER SPECIAL PERFORMANCE!

Our RAFA Concert Band has been invited to take centre stage at this year's Festival of Remembrance at Colston Hall in Bristol on Sunday 3 November, providing music for the Muster of Standards, a short Concert with a special appearance of Dambuster Jonny Johnston and of course, the Act of Remembrance. The Military Wives Choir will also be performing. Starting at 7pm, you may wish to enquire about tickets for this event at www.colstonhall.org.

12. STORYBOOK WINGS - NEWSLETER

Please find enclosed the latest Storybook Wings Newsletter.

13. BOMBER COMMAND VETERANS - QUESTIONNAIRE

You may be interested in providing some valuable information to Lady Nall of the Lincolnshire Bomber Command Memorial, by way of her questionnaire which is enclosed.

14. RAF ASSOCIATION FLYING SCHOLARSHIPS

The RAF Association Flying Scholarships Scheme is open to members of the ATC, CCF(RAF)) and GVCAC. The five Scholarships provide the overall winning cadet with a course of 35 hours flying training, plus 12 hours each for four runners-up. They are provided as a thank you to the cadets for their tremendous support each year, especially fundraising for the Wings Appeal and to encourage their continued interest in aviation.

Many Branches have links with Air Cadet Squadrons/Units and it would be appreciated if Branch members could make as many Cadets and ACO staff as possible aware of the Flying Scholarships and encourage appropriate unit staff to recommend suitable candidates. Applicants can, of course, also be nominated by a RAF Association Branch.

Application Forms + Terms & Conditions are available for downloading from the Association's website www.rafa.org.uk, following the Air Cadet link, or by post from Stuart Haigh (Membership Support Officer) at the RAF Association, CHQ, 117½ Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5ND, by calling 0116 268 8762, or by email to stuart.haigh@rafa.org.uk.

The closing date for applications is no later than 31st January, 2014.

15. RAF ASSOCIATION CENTRAL COUNCIL AND ANNUAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS - 2014

I would urge our Branches to bring to the attention of Committees the enclosed information regarding RAF Association Central Council and Annual Conference Committee Elections for 2014, with a deadline for response of 18 November 2013.

16. WINGS APPEAL RETURNS

Repeat Article. Branches are reminded that monies from Wings Appeal street collections should be returned to the Wings Appeal office at CHQ with the appropriate forms within 14 days of the collections taking place. All other monies for Wings Appeal 2013 should be returned by Friday 15th November. Final monies should be accompanied by the Wings Appeal financial forms including the blue form (WA5) which was sent out to Wings Appeal Organisers in their Summer Newsletter. If your Branch pays Wings Appeal monies by BACS transfer please note the account details are Sort Code 30-00-02, Account number 04065404. When paying via this method please put the reference on the transfer in the format of '*Branch Name Wings*' and send your paperwork to CHQ. If you have any questions, please contact the Wings Appeal team on 0116 268 8758 / 8757.

17. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Cornwall Region Meeting at RBL Truro (2pm) – 2 November 2013.
Devon Region Meeting at Exmouth RAFA (2.30pm) – 16 November 2013.
Area Council Meeting at Brecon Branch Club – 21 November 2013.
Northern (Midlands) Region Meeting at Staffs County Council Club (12.15pm) – 27 November 2013.
North Wales Region Meeting at Llangollen Branch (2pm) – 30 November 2013.
East Glamorgan & Gwent Region Meeting at Barry Branch (2pm) – 7 December 2013.
Devon Region AGM at Dawlish Branch Club (2.30pm) – 1 February 2014.
Northern (Midlands) Region AGM at Staff County Council Club (12.15pm) – 26 February 2014.
Somerset Region AGM at Taunton Deane Branch Club – 1 March 2014.
Area AGM and Reunion Weekend at The De Vere Village Hotel, Cardiff – 8 March 2014.
Mid Wales Region Meeting at Towyn & Aberdovey Branch – 22 March 2014.
North Wales Region Meeting at Anglesey Branch (2pm) – 12 April 2014.
Somerset Region Meeting at Taunton Deane Branch Club – 5 July 2014.

Paul Baker – Area Director

If it's true that we are here to help others, what are the others doing here?

Enclosures:

1. Storybook Wings Newsletter.
2. Bomber Command Veterans Questionnaire.
3. RAF Association Central Council and Annual Conference Committee Elections 2014.