



Wales, Midland & South Western Area

Newsletter

DEC 13/JAN 14

THIS NEWSLETTER SHOULD BE DISPLAYED FOR THE USE OF ALL MEMBERS

1. MEMBERSHIP

Whole Area Membership figures as at 29 November 2013 were as follows:

Annual	Life	Full Associate	Total	New Ann/Ass 13	All Losses
6367	5195	2523	14085	812	1331

Our overall decline in Area membership figures at the end of 2013 is likely to be 3.2% which is only just down on last year's performance. Nonetheless, we would like to thank those Branches and individuals who have shown determination and a commitment to keep their Branch numbers in place.

I do hope that by the time you read this Newsletter you have already taken some action to renew your annual membership and I would take this opportunity to remind you that all renewal action is now handled by our colleagues at CHQ. Please ensure you are communicating with Mr Rishi Sheth in the CHQ Membership Department. Rishi can be contacted as follows:

- Mr Rishi Sheth, Membership Administrator, RAF Association Central Headquarters, 117½ Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5ND. Tel No: 0116-268-8785 or by e-mail rishi.sheth@rafa.org.uk.

2. A WORD OF THANKS FROM MARIE SLUGOCKA

Marie Slugoeka and her son, Anthony, would like to express their sincere gratitude to all who kindly wrote offering sympathies and condolence at the passing of their beloved Jim Davis,. The Area Standard was paraded alongside the Gloucester Branch Standard and the Service was graced by several members of the Association.

3. AREA AGM AND REUNION – ANOTHER CALL TO BRANCHES

We very much hope that you will be able to join other guests and members for our next Area AGM and Reunion which is due to take place at the De Vere Village Hotel on the outskirts of Cardiff over the weekend 7 – 9 March 2014, where a varied and lively programme awaits! This will hopefully give you an opportunity to catch up on Association business, to discuss our future challenges and, just as importantly, meet old friends and socialise. The Hotel is taking bookings with the following code: RAFA090314. Please call on 02920-524300 Option 2.

Celebrating 70 Years 1943-2013

4. rafa YOUTH UPDATE

Current membership stands just short of 500! A HUGE thank you to all of the RAF Association Branches for their increasing support around the UK, their support either by contacting and visiting local units and either spreading the word or thanking cadets for their hard work by sponsoring a few memberships for each unit! As we write, this weekend 10 rafa YOUTH members along with a friend/parent/guardian are off to the Birmingham Military Tattoo. Our next prize draws supported by Edinburgh, Lothians & Borders Branch are for three slots of £300 of flying and three One Day Mini Gliding courses.

If you haven't 'liked' us on Facebook already you can find the rafa YOUTH page at www.facebook.com/RAFAYOUTH. For more information on how your branch can get involved please contact Helen Gibson the Youth Community Manager by email: helen.gibson@rafa.org.uk or by telephone on: 0116 268 8789.

5. THE RAF ASSOCIATION FLYING SCHOLARSHIPS

The 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.

6. BRANCH AND CLUB AGMS – FORM 1056A/B

Enclosed for Branch Secretaries is a copy of F1056A and B for completion following AGMs. We would greatly appreciate your assistance in ensuring that full details of incumbents are entered on these forms, including the Membership Number please, so that we can ensure full and accurate recording on the database. You will see a subtle change in that we would be grateful for an e-mail address where appropriate. If the size of the boxes causes you a problem then please provide the information on an attached sheet. We also ask that bank details are entered for checking purposes here and at the Centre.

Secretaries will note that the F1056A has provision for full names to be entered. The Charity Commission insists on these details on the Branch Charity Trustee Form which is part of the Annual Update – these are not available to the public. These forms should be returned to us as soon as possible after your AGM, together with a copy of your Branch/Club Audited Accounts for 2013 please – see item 4 below. As well as being a requirement of the Association, the detail from these accounts is required when completing Charity Commission updates.

7. BRANCH AND BRANCH CLUB ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2013

Branches are reminded that in accordance with Standard Branch Regulation 32, Accounts as at 31 December 2013, including a Report from the Auditor or Independent Examiner, for both Branch and Branch Clubs are to be received at Area Headquarters by 31 March 2014. Would Treasurers

please help us by preparing their accounts in the format contained in Chapter 8 (Branch) and 15 (Club) of the RAFA Admin Handbook, any other layout leads to confusion – many thanks. Your attention is also drawn to Byelaw 24(1) 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. Please call if you have any questions!

8. CONGRATULATIONS TO MR DENZIL HAYNES MBE

You may recall Denzil Haynes, Neath Branch and Area Councillor, was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for 2014. Denzil and his family recently travelled to Windsor Castle to receive his medal, unsure of whom he would meet and was overjoyed to be received by Her Majesty. Many congratulations Denzil!



9. A REMINDER TO BRANCHES – FIRST CONTACT WITH NEW SERVING MEMBERS

There is currently much debate centred round how to increase our membership recruitment and strengthen the branch-based network. The Association is working hard in this area, not least to recruit new serving RAF members at Cranwell, Halton and Honington (being the 3 current points of entry) and encourage new members into their local Branches. Recognising that Initial Officer and Recruit Training will be followed by further phases of training and relocation, personnel are tending to add themselves to the Area or HQ Roll. This does not necessarily support Branches, so we will continue to encourage serving personnel to become members of their 'home' Branch and in so doing ask them if we can approach their wider family members. Please, when you receive membership notifications, do all you can to make that first contact with the new serving RAF member a positive experience so that when they disappear back to the RAF they may encourage their wider family. As we pick up new serving members from the recruiting points we shall endeavour to notify the appropriate Branches. A transient RAF community is sometimes tricky to follow!

10. RAFA CONCERT BAND – LATEST UPDATE

Please find enclosed the latest update from our RAFA Concert Band where you'll see they've been extremely busy again including an outstanding performance at the Colston Hall in Bristol as part of the Festival of Remembrance. Thank you to Peter, Pauline, her team and all the musicians. Keep blowing.....

11. BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TATTOO

“On behalf of the Area Council I would like to congratulate our Area Director and his outstanding team, for pulling together an excellent Association contribution to the Annual Military Tattoo at the Birmingham NIA. The event took place on the 30th November and the 1st December and spectacularly raised the profile of the Association as we received numerous mentions throughout the evening, participated in a dedicated ‘spot’ along with the RAF Regiment Band, and on three occasions our Standards turned the arena floor a nice shade of RAFA blue. Our Concert Band performed admirably in the concourse before the show and during the interval, to the enjoyment of all. Along with the presence of the MET in the centre of Birmingham over the weekend the Royal Air Forces Association certainly hit Birmingham, and celebrated its 70th Anniversary in style. None of this would have happened, however, without the work of Paul and his dedicated team, so our grateful thanks to them all. Finally, what made the visual impact was the parade of Standards, and Council thank all the Branches who participated, and especially the Standard Bearers, who after a very short rehearsal period represented themselves, their Branches, the Area and the Association in the finest traditions of the Service. Well done to them all, congratulations and thank you”.

John Tisbury
Area Chairman



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

Repeat Article! 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.

13. ST CLEMENT DANE'S 2014

The Annual Service to commemorate formation of the Royal Air Force will be held at St Clement Danes Church, Strand, London on Sunday 6th April 2014.

RAF Association Standard Bearers have been invited to attend the Service. The format will be the same as this 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 Naz Angha in the South East Office, Tel: 020 8286 6667 or by e-mail to naz.angha@rafa.org.uk no later than Friday 21st February 2014. 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 Naz no later than Friday 21st February 2014. The Service will commence at 11.00 hrs.

14. ANNUAL CONFERENCE BLACKPOOL – 16 TO 18 MAY 2014

The letter giving details of Conference will be despatched to Branch Secretaries during early December, By E-mail or hard copy (where required). It is important that the pro forma is returned direct to the Conference Organiser (Seb Hargreaves) at CHQ, 117½ Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5ND (seb.hargreaves@rafa.org.uk) and **not** via Area offices. It is also imperative that it is returned by the due date (Friday 11 April 2014). 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. Many thanks.

15. STORYBOOK WINGS - NEWSLETTER

Please find enclosed the latest Storybook Wings Newsletter.

16. RAF ASSOCIATION NEW LOGO

A gentle reminder that from 1 January 2014 the new logo should be used across all RAF Association material. These can be downloaded by going to the member area on www.rafa.org.uk. There are also letterheads and compliment slips available here for you to download. If you have any problems then please call.

Glenford, Sandy, Jim, Debbie, Tracey, Jackie, Barbara, Andrew and Paul wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous and healthy New Year! Where did 2013 go?



17. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

East Glamorgan & Gwent Region Meeting at Barry Branch (2pm) – 7 December 2013.
Devon Region AGM at Dawlish Branch Club (2.30pm) – 1 February 2014.
Cornwall Region AGM at the Kernow Club, Truro (1.30pm) – 22 February 2014.
Northern (Midlands) Region AGM at Staff County Council Club (12.15pm) – 26 February 2014.
Somerset Region AGM at Taunton Deane Branch Club (2pm) – 1 March 2014.
Wiltshire Region AGM at Swindon Branch Club (1pm) – 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 City of Bristol Branch Club (2pm) – 5 July 2014.

Paul Baker – Area Director

War does not determine who is right – only who is left.

Enclosures:

1. F1056A and B.
2. RAFA Concert Band – Latest Newsletter.
3. Storybook Wings Newsletter.