

## Wales, Midland & South Western Area

# Newsletter

**JULY 2015**

**THIS NEWSLETTER SHOULD BE DISPLAYED FOR THE USE OF ALL MEMBERS**

***PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP – AND – DON'T FORGET TO SIGN UP FOR THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN EVENTS***

### **1. QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST 2015**

The following were awarded National Honours in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2015.

British Empire Medal

Mrs Jean Calway

City of Bristol Branch

To coincide with the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2014, the following have been awarded National Presidential Certificates.

Mr Geoff Bridgman  
Mr John Duke  
Mr Mick Flory  
Mr Roy Lobley BEM  
Mr Howard Provis  
Mrs Mae Morris

Calne & District Branch  
Chepstow & District Branch  
Teignmouth Branch  
Swindon Branch  
Barry Branch  
Tamworth Branch

Our congratulations go to all recipients.

### **2. BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMBERSHIP TARGET – EVERYONE SCRAMBLE!**

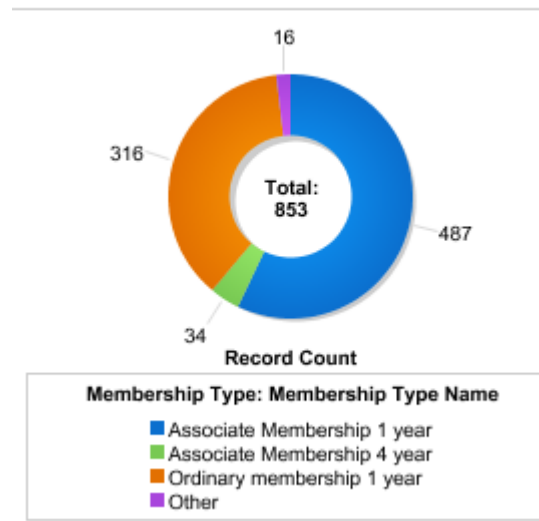
For the first time in 30 years our membership total could actually increase this year.

We have had a great renewals season and have also recruited 2,600 new members since January. As at 30 June membership of the Association stood at 59,551 and while this is a great achievement we'd like to push a bit harder and match last year's figure of 61,300 by Battle of Britain Day on 15 September.

Don't forget we can all play our part to recruit new members by having the confidence to ask those who we come into contact with on a daily basis. What are your tips for recruiting – make sure you share your ideas. The Area Director has a bunch of civvie mates popping round for a BBQ soon, at which application forms will be strategically positioned between the chicken and burgers!

This is the Area lapsing figure we are trying to drive down.

## Lapsed Members Expired 2014



The recent Armed Forces Day weekend activity clearly had a very positive effect on our total membership numbers with 177 new individuals coming on board. In addition the team at Leicester signed up over 70 new members from RAF Halton. Thank you to all those Branches who are helping to make this happen.

### 3. JOHN O'REILLY RECEIVING HIS NATIONAL PRESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATE

Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller, National President, was pleased to attend a rather special meeting at Trowbridge where he took great delight in presenting John O'Reilly with a National Presidential Certificate in recognition of his dedicated service as a Welfare Officer. The Branch Chairman, Mr Peter Ford, read the citation to a large gathering and reminded everyone of the excellent work John has carried out on behalf of the Association. A first class ambassador – well done John!



### 4. CHOCS AWAY WITH THE WICKEDLY WELSH CHOCOLATE COMPANY!

Here's a new initiative we've been working on in the Area and the following article appeared recently in the Wales Online publication.

The 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain is to be marked with a new range of chocolates by Wickedly Welsh in conjunction with the Royal Air Forces Association. Chocolate manufacturer Wickedly Welsh, based in Pembrokeshire, is set to launch a commemorative chocolate bar to mark the anniversary of the

Battle of Britain. The range comes in partnership with the Royal Air Forces Association, a registered charity that provides welfare support to the RAF family. The range will see bars launched with British flavours such as 'Tea and Biscuits' and 'Rhubarb Crumble and Custard' as well as gift boxes with both nostalgic and fun flavours such as Strawberries and Cream, Salted Caramel and Raspberry with Vodka.

The chocolates will be available in Wickedly Welsh's factory shop, based on the Withybush Industrial estate, Haverfordwest, as well as via the factory's online store. The West Wales company was launched by husband and wife duo Mark and Karen Owen. Mark Owen, chief taster and chocaholic at Wickedly Welsh Chocolate, said: "It's great to be able to launch this chocolate range in association with the RAF Association. "It's the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain this year and we have friends currently serving in the RAF so it's an honour to be chosen to commemorate this with them.

"We really feel passionate about doing something to help and to highlight the amazing men and women of the RAF both past and present. It's also a chance for us to have some real fun with some fantastic British flavours. "Proceeds will benefit the Association, so we really do hope members of the public get behind this and support the charity."

Paul Baker, the Director of the Wales, Midland and South Western Area, said: "We're very grateful to the Wickedly Welsh Chocolate Company for choosing the Association as the recipient of donations from the sale of this exciting new range of flavours. I don't know many people who don't like chocolate, so this is a great way to enjoy a treat while raising money to help us support members of the RAF family when they need us."



## 5. PRESENTATION OF ALAN POOLE'S NATIONAL PRESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATE

On 1 June the National President, Sir Dusty Miller, visited the Shrewsbury and District Branch to present the late Alan Poole's National Presidential Certificate to AI's widow Tricia. At an emotional event, Sir Dusty recalled the outstanding work that Alan had done in the furtherance of the Association's welfare work both practically as a Caseworker and in his involvement on Central Council where he was the lead member for Welfare. Tricia was supported by her children Richard and Sarah and family members at the event, and by a large turnout of Branch members. The photograph shows Sir Dusty and Tricia with family members.





## 6. VOLUNTEERING UPDATE

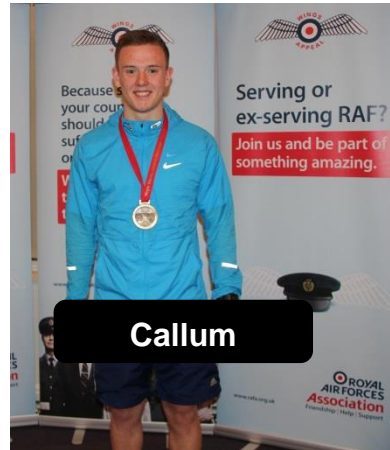
Here's an update from Katherine Montgomery.

This month I'd like to talk about young volunteers.

From the wonderful Cadets that support us in Branch at Air Shows, to the inspiring Callum Reidie (featured at Conference) who gave his time to run the London fundraise for us: volunteers for the Association are all from different backgrounds and with different offer to help the lives of people in the RAF family.



In addition to we can support our volunteers and well as attract new Association, we working on ways to welcome more young volunteers to join and support us. Whether it is a young serving member of the RAF or a proactive and energetic volunteer from a local college, with no RAF links: young people need to be encouraged to help us in any way that they can offer.



fundraising and Annual Marathon and ages, as well as experiences to

working on ways existing Branches, as volunteers to the have been

### How can we help them support us?

Research by the Charities Aid Foundation has shown that young volunteers prefer to donate their time, rather than money to charities and that there was a slightly higher percentage of those aged 15-19 volunteering in 2013, than there were in the age 50+ age group.

If we can provide younger volunteers with a good experience in the activities they support, as well as support and guidance from more experienced volunteers, there is every chance they will come back again and support us. A young person provided with appropriate training, a good experience and some form of recognition (even just a verbal 'thank you') will also tell more of their friends about it and there is every possibility that they could join us as well.

There are so many ways we can involve the nation's next generations. They will provide the continuity for the RAF Association, so let's train and support them now to become our leaders of the future. We can involve them in our Wings Appeal collections and help support and guide them if they would like to learn more about the Association and how they can help. Thank you for your help. [volunteers@rafa.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@rafa.org.uk)

## 7. VEHICLE ARRIVES AT FLOWERDOWN



The Area Director, members of Council and representatives of Dudley Branch joined with Flowerdown Staff to celebrate the arrival of a brand new specially adapted vehicle. The Dudley Branch was one of over 40 Area Branches that made significant financial contributions towards its purchase so that guests can get out and about during their stay at Flowerdown. A huge thank you to all those that helped out!

## 8. KEY EVENTS COMING UP

There are several events rapidly approaching and we would be grateful for your support at as many as possible. Here goes:

First up is a Concert at **Wells Cathedral on Friday 21 August** starting at 7.30pm. This very special event will mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Britain with a performance by the RAF Association Concert Band accompanied by the Cheddar Male Choir. Tickets are now on sale with proceeds going to Wings Appeal. Maybe your Branch can muster a full minibus or coach! Please see further details on the enclosed poster. See you there!

Next up is a fabulous opportunity to commemorate the Battle of Britain once again with a Service at **Truro Cathedral on Sunday 13 September**. You'll see from the information enclosed with this Newsletter, we are looking to take up all 150 seats that have been allocated to the Association and, just as importantly, get as many Branch Standards on show as possible. Please take a moment to consider the details and get back to us as instructed.

Third up....The Service at **St Paul's Cathedral at 11am on Tuesday 15 September** is open to all RAF Association members and tickets are also being made available to the public. You can register your interest in attending the service at St Paul's on the webpage or by writing to the addresses below. The closing date for applications is Monday 20 July and names and contact details are required for each individual that wishes to attend. Due to security on the day, only those with tickets will be admitted to St Paul's. Further information will then be sent out in August.

We are hoping for a good turnout of Branch Standards and are inviting Branch Standard Bearers to participate in this event. Any Standard Bearers who wish to be involved should contact Mick Larkman, Branch Support Officer at [mick.larkman@rafa.org.uk](mailto:mick.larkman@rafa.org.uk) or call 0208 286 6667.

The RAF Association continues to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Britain. A concert was held at Durham Cathedral at the beginning of June with The Band of the Royal Air Force College and guest vocalist Heather Marie which went down very well with all those that attended.

The Battle of Britain webpages are now live at [www.rafa.org.uk/battleofbritain](http://www.rafa.org.uk/battleofbritain) and here you can find more information about Battle of Britain commemorative events around the country and stories from those that remember this important time in history.

Any other queries can be directed to Kate on 0116 268 8796, [battleofbritain@rafa.org.uk](mailto:battleofbritain@rafa.org.uk) or by post to:

Battle of Britain Commemorations  
RAF Association  
117 ½ Loughborough Road  
Leicester  
LE4 5ND

Next up.....we've received the following information – somewhat late.

### **National VJ Day 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorations Saturday 15 August 2015: London**

A national programme of commemorative events will be held in London on Saturday 15 August in order to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VJ Day and to recognise all those who served the Crown in the Far East during WW2.

As with the recent VE Day 70 Commemorations, the Legion is honoured once more to be playing a key role alongside the Ministry of Defence in the planning and delivery of this activity; and we are keen to ensure that as many veterans from this campaign are given the opportunity to take part.

The programme of events will be as follows:

### **Saturday 15 August**

- 14:00            A Drumhead Service and Flypast on Horse Guards Parade.  
*NB: This element of the commemorations will also be open to the direct descendants of veterans who are no longer living or who are unable to attend in person.*
- 15:00            Veterans' parade down Whitehall.
- 15:30            Afternoon reception for veterans and VIP guests at College Gardens, Westminster Abbey hosted by The Royal British Legion.
- 18:00            Close.

In terms of eligibility to attend these commemorations, the requirement is that all veterans are Burma Star or Pacific Star holders. Widows of those who held this military decoration are also eligible to attend. Veterans will be able to bring along a direct family member and also a carer if needed, and widows will be able to bring along one guest or carer.

We also acknowledge, however, that some veterans are regrettably no longer with us, or others are unable to make the journey to London in person to attend the commemorations. For those who fall into this category, we are also offering the opportunity for one of their direct descendants to attend a key element of the VJ 70 commemorations on their behalf; the Drumhead Service which will take place from 14:00 – 14:30 on Horse Guards Parade.

Any help you are able to offer in order for us to establish contact with these very special target audiences would be much appreciated. As with VE Day 70, all those wishing to attend will be required to complete an accreditation and security clearance process. However, in an attempt to keep this process as simple and straightforward as possible, we are offering the option of either an e-mail or postal application process. For those who would prefer to complete a postal application, I have enclosed a supply of covering letters and accreditation forms that I hope you can distribute among your immediate community as appropriate.

There are two versions of the form:

1. Accreditation for Veterans and Widows (*To attend full programme of events including the Drumhead Service, Parade and Afternoon Reception*)
2. Accreditation for Direct Descendants (*To attend Drumhead Service only*).

Further supplies of accreditation forms can be provided as necessary, or downloaded via the following link:  
[www.britishlegion.org.uk/vjdayvets](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/vjdayvets).

There will also be a facility to claim a financial contribution towards travel expenses. This contribution will be available for veterans, spouses (if applicable) and one guest/ carer. Or, for widows, plus one guest/ carer. Further details for how to claim this will be provided directly once accreditation has been successfully submitted and confirmation received.

The closing date for all applications is Friday 17 July. We expect all submissions to be approved – with accreditation confirmation, joining instructions and pass collection details provided to all confirmed guests – no later than 24 July.

We do hope that you are able to help us bring this programme of commemoration to the attention of as many qualifying veterans and their families as possible so that they may have an opportunity to attend. Should you have any further queries relating to this event, please don't hesitate to contact the VJ Day 70 Events team on 0203 053 7015 or email [vjday70@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:vjday70@britishlegion.org.uk).

And finally.....

**Battle of Britain Service Westminster Abbey –  
Sunday 20th September 2015**

As is customary the Association has been allocated a quantity of admission tickets for the Battle of Britain Service at Westminster Abbey. Twenty (20) Branch Standard Bearers are invited to form a Lining Party. Applications for admission tickets and Standard Bearers wishing to attend are to contact Naz Angha at South East Office Tel: 020 8286 6667 no later than **Monday the 17th August**.

**Cenotaph Ceremony - London - 8th November 2015**

The Royal British Legion, on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, will be organizing the ex-service contingents attending the Parade and Service at the Cenotaph, Whitehall, on Remembrance Day, 8th November 2015. **Civilians are not permitted to parade in the Ex-Service columns.**

A representative of the Scotland & Northern Ireland Area will lay this year the Association's wreath; Stewards will also be positioned at the Cenotaph to lay wreaths on behalf of the detachments as they march past.

Contingents will assemble and disperse at Horse Guards Parade

Due to the number of personnel on parade the overall length of the march past has increased and I would ask you to ensure that your members are aware of the physical demands of standing in Whitehall for at least 1 hour and then marching for a distance of 1.5 miles, possibly in inclement weather. We have been asked to remind all on parade to help to ensure that behaviour and dress standards match the dignity of the occasion. There have been a few rather regrettable lapses that have offended the majority of those marching and the general public. In view of the current security arrangements, only holders of admission tickets will be allowed to join the parade. All participants are liable to a security search on the day.

The South East Office will be administering the ticket allocation for the event this year. Naz Angha would therefore be grateful to receive applications for tickets at your earliest convenience. Contact details: Naz Angha, RAFA South East Office, 3-5 Old Bridge Street, Hampton Wick, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 4BU Tel: 020 8286 6667 E-mail: [naz.angha@rafa.org.uk](mailto:naz.angha@rafa.org.uk)

**The closing date for receipt of applications for tickets at the South East Office is Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August**

**9. BRANCH AND BRANCH CLUB ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2014**

Thank you once again to those Branches who responded by sending in their Branch and Branch Club Annual Accounts for 2014. The outstanding list has shrunk further and the Area Director will speak directly to the following 6 Branches for whom Annual Accounts have not been received.

Barnstaple & N.Devon Branch	Haverfordwest Branch
Chepstow & District Branch	Sherborne Branch and Club
Evesham Branch	Yeovil & District Branch

**10. OUR TEAM AT MOD ABBEY WOOD – READY TO TEE OFF ON 2 SEPTEMBER!**

MOD Abbey Wood is currently a hive of RAF Association activity which now includes a super charity golf day in aid of Wings Appeal. Please consider supporting this event and take a look at the enclosed poster!

**11. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

- Northern (Midland) Region Meetings at the County Council Club Eastgate Street, Stafford (1215pm) – 29 July, 30 September, 28 October, 25 November.

- Mid Wales Region Meetings at Cardigan on 8 July, Brecon on 24 October, Tywyn on 26 March 2016 all starting at 2pm.
- North Wales Region Meeting at RAF Valley on 15 August, Wrexham RAFA Branch HQ on 21 November and Llangollen RAFA Club on 9 April 2016 – all starting at 2pm.
- East Glamorgan & Gwent Regional Meeting (2pm) Bargoed Blackwood Branch HQ – Sat 15 August 2015.
- RAF Association Concert Band performing at Wells Cathedral (7.30pm) – 21 August 2015.
- Falmouth Branch will be holding a Battle of Britain 75th Anniversary Service at the Falmouth Parish Church of King Charles the Martyr at 1030am on the 6th of September 2015, followed by an unveiling Ceremony at the Falmouth Water Sports Centre of a Monument dedicated to the RAF 1102 Marine Craft Unit and Coastal Command Flying Boat Squadrons 209 & 240.
- Wreath Laying at Sea. Bodmin Branch will be holding their annual Wreath Laying ceremony at sea on the 6 September 2015, assembling on the Quay at Padstow at 1315hrs for sailing at 1345 hrs. For further details contact Parade Co-ordinator Peter Marlow at [whippet258@btinternet.com](mailto:whippet258@btinternet.com) or 01208 76373.
- Ellesmere Branch Garden Party and BBQ in aid of Wings Appeal at Nesscliffe Three Pidgeons Hotel/Pub – (1.30pm to 6pm) 12 September.
- Barnstaple & North Devon Branch and North Cornwall Branch Battle of Britain, VE and VJ Parade at Kilkhampton Church on 20 September 2015. Muster Parade 10.30 March to a Church Service at 11.00 hrs.

Please contact the Exeter Office if there are significant events/dates you would like promulgated that maybe of interest to the wider membership. Many thanks.

**Paul Baker – Area Director**

***A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. On my desk, I have a work station.***

Enclosures:

1. Wells Cathedral Concert Poster – 21 August 2015.
2. Truro Cathedral Service of Commemoration – 13 September 2015.
3. National VJ Day Commemorations – 15 August 2015 - Accreditation Form Version 1.
4. National VJ Day Commemorations – 15 August 2015 - Accreditation Form Version 2.
5. MOD Abbey Wood Charity Golf Day – 2 September 2015.