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Wales, Midland & South Western Area

**JUNE 2016**

# Newsletter

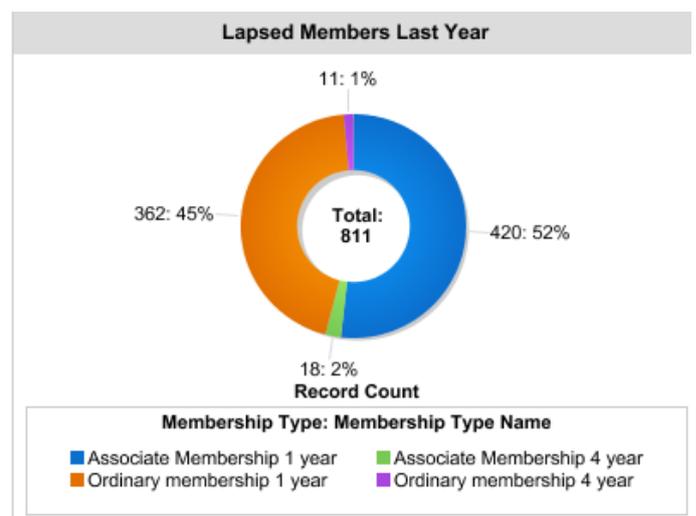
*The Exeter Office will be sending out a branch 'lapsed' list shortly – to help you stay in touch with those who might need your help.*

## 1. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Progress - more new members and fewer lapsed! Thank you so much for your creativity in finding new ways to attract people to our fabulous Association. Facebook and other social media platforms seem to work very well, but, actually, a face-to-face conversation can demonstrate your passion for our organisation just as well.

In respect of Data Protection Agreement forms we are nearly there with just a handful of Branches to come on board. Are you one of them? Please give Debbie a call at the Exeter Office if you are unsure.

In the last Newsletter we suggested the area lapsed total would soon be less than that of new joiners – it's getting closer!



## 2. VOLUNTEERING UPDATE FROM THE CENTRE



It's Volunteers' Week this month (1-12 June) and we are excited to be celebrating the work of our members and those that volunteer their time to the Association, throughout the period. Thank you for everything you do to support the RAF family and to make the Association so special.

We have been speaking to a number of you who volunteer and are featuring some interviews on our website, during the week. In addition, a special video to mark Volunteers' Week is available at [www.rafa.org.uk/volvid](http://www.rafa.org.uk/volvid)



As mentioned in previous Area Newsletters, we are going to be sending a special thank you card and pin to all those who volunteer, so please keep an eye out for this and let us know if you do not receive yours by 12 June, so we may send one to you.

### Annual Conference

We were delighted to meet a large number of our members at the Annual Conference in Blackpool and to hear about the varied and interesting roles they volunteer in.

The resounding response when speaking to members was that comradeship was something present in all the activities they undertake. There was a lot of enthusiasm for our new befriending service, which will help to bridge the gap between isolated members of the RAF family and with many of you who are keen to help us provide an end to loneliness.

Please do get in touch with the team if you would like to tell us what you are doing in your Branch this month or ask us a question. We enjoy the chance to speak to our volunteers and hear what they have been undertaking for the charity or how we can improve things for them.

Email [volunteers@rafa.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@rafa.org.uk) or call 0116 266 5224 for more information.

## 3. RAFALO UPDATE

The latest RAFALO update on today's Royal Air Force is enclosed with this Newsletter.

## 4. PROMOTING YOUR BRANCH

Hot off the Press! You may be interested to know the Association can now offer a print on demand service and free websites that will help your branch attract new members and keep in touch. Here's some detail:

# Promote your Branch

with our fully editable print and signage templates



We have made it easier for you to promote your Branch and the work of the Association with our new, fully editable, print and signage templates.

We have created templates for posters, pull-up banners, roadside banners and postcards

All major activities are covered including:

- Membership
- Wings Appeal
- Merchandise sales
- Event promotion
- Volunteering
- Welfare
- Stationery

Simply pick your template, edit the text and either save it to print yourself or choose to have it printed by our printers\*.

Get started at [rafa.org.uk/promotion](http://rafa.org.uk/promotion)

Or contact the marketing team for more information 0116 268 8787 [marketing@rafa.org.uk](mailto:marketing@rafa.org.uk)

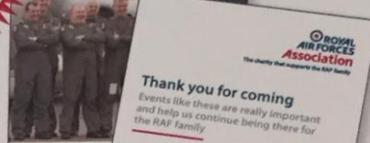


Patron: Her Majesty The Queen  
Registered Charity (225846 (England & Wales), SC032973 (Scotland))

**ROYAL AIR FORCES Association**  
The charity that supports the RAF family



Feel part of the old team again  
Please become a member of the RAF Association and help us do even more for our RAF family



Thank you for coming  
Events like these are really important and help us continue being there for the RAF family



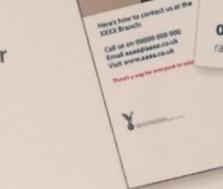
We're the XXXX Branch of the Association  
Ask us about becoming a member  
Call us on 00000 00000  
Email [aaaa@aaaa.co.uk](mailto:aaaa@aaaa.co.uk)  
Visit [www.aaaa.co.uk](http://www.aaaa.co.uk)



For information on our other events here's how to contact us at the XXXX Branch.  
Call us on 00000 000 000  
Email [aaaa@aaaa.co.uk](mailto:aaaa@aaaa.co.uk)  
Visit [www.aaaa.co.uk](http://www.aaaa.co.uk)



You can make a difference  
Volunteer as a family member and help us raise money for those who serve our country



Here's how to contact us at the XXXX Branch.  
Call us on 00000 000 000  
Email [aaaa@aaaa.co.uk](mailto:aaaa@aaaa.co.uk)  
Visit [www.aaaa.co.uk](http://www.aaaa.co.uk)

Copy to go here  
Copy to go here

0800 018 2361  
[rafa.org.uk](http://rafa.org.uk) [hello@rafa.org.uk](mailto:hello@rafa.org.uk)

**ROYAL AIR FORCES Association**  
The charity that supports the RAF family

\*There is a charge for having signage produced by our suppliers

# Get a FREE website

We are now offering  
your branch its own  
free of charge website

- Publish your latest news
- Promote your events
- Add a picture gallery
- Share documents
- Link to your social media pages

To get your website up and running,  
all we need are some basic details about  
your Branch and a suitable picture.

If you are interested Dev, who works in the  
marketing team, will be happy to help:

dev.valand@rafa.org.uk  
0116 268 8772



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen  
Registered Charity 20688 (England & Wales), SC037873 (Scotland)

**ROYAL  
AIR FORCES  
Association**  
The charity that supports the RAF family



## 5. TALKING AIR MAIL GOES DIGITAL

Talking Air Mail is another way in which the RAF Association keeps members in touch with the RAF family. To improve the sound quality, while embracing newer technology, Talking Air Mail has moved from CDs and cassettes to mp3 players.

We have been inundated with a hugely positive response from the volunteers who were able to make the visits to deliver the mp3 players. They demonstrated a great amount of flexibility and commitment to fulfil the task of distribution and we were delighted that so many were keen to help the Association in this way.

Volunteer, Shaun Griffin said: "I delivered the excellent Air Mail reader today to Mr Swales. He was delighted with the reader and despite his poor eye sight is fit and well. He described the player as easy to use and great sound quality and he considered himself lucky to have been sent it."

Several of those receiving their new mp3 player were identified as having a need and a desire to be linked with one of our new befrienders, enabling them to take advantage of our new service to combat loneliness.

It was reassuring to note that none of the players were rejected by users despite some only ever being used to cassette players – we expected a few users to find the new technology daunting but everyone saw the additional benefits of adopting it.

Five more members have asked to be added to the distribution list for Talking Air Mail knowing that they will find it a much easier way of keeping up to date with news from the Association.

We hope our beneficiaries will notice the improved sound and also enjoy the added benefits of having access to the huge range of additional material now available to them, free of charge, from the Royal National Institute of Blind People.

If you know of any member who would like to receive Talking Air Mail, they can contact [talking.airmail@rafa.org.uk](mailto:talking.airmail@rafa.org.uk) or call Lisa on 01780 783645.



## 6. CENOTAPH CEREMONY – LONDON – 13 NOVEMBER 2016

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, 13th November 2016.

The MOD, COBSEO and RBL have agreed priorities for the allocation of tickets, these priorities are:

1. Veterans with campaign medals.
2. Civilians deployed on operations.
3. Veterans with no campaign medals.
4. Bereaved spouses/civil partners (not children).
5. Veteran association representatives if not represented above.
6. Representatives of the military charities.

This year a representative of the Northern Area will lay 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. Carers who accompany disabled veterans but who are

themselves not qualified to march, will remain on Horse Guards Parade and will be hosted by the Legion for the duration of the ceremony. A small number of wheelchairs will be available on request for the use of Veterans who might struggle to maintain the pace of the March Past. This resource is finite and will be allocated according to demand on the day.

Due to heightened security measures all those allocated tickets will need to carry a form of photo ID on the day together with a document showing proof of address for access to Horse Guards Parade via the manned police entry points. The Metropolitan Police will need to conduct individual security checks on all participants. Basic personal information will need to be provided when applying for tickets for each applicant: This consists of:

- Title/Rank, First Name (This must be the name on photo ID), Last Name, Date of Birth, Place of Birth, First Line of Address, Town, Postcode, Service Number (where applicable).

In view of the current security arrangements, only holders of admission tickets will be allowed to join the parade. A ticket allocated to an individual is not transferable. All participants are liable to a security search on the day.

The South East & Eastern Area Headquarters will be administering the ticket allocation for the event this year. We would therefore be grateful to receive applications for tickets, together with the required information above, at your earliest convenience. Contact details: RAFA South East & Eastern Area, 117½ Loughborough Road Leicester, LE4 5ND or E-mail: [eastern@rafa.org.uk](mailto:eastern@rafa.org.uk)

The closing date for receipt of applications for tickets is Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August

## 7. DEBBIE BYAM – AREA ADMINISTRATOR

Our Area Administrator, Debbie Byam, is a vital member of the team, who, amongst a range of other tasks, is the person to ask if you need help with membership related issues. Maybe there's a change of address or someone has passed away, or a query about tracking a lapsed member; Debbie will help. Similarly if you've got some information you wish to get to your branch members who are not on e-mail, Debbie will happily do the admin/postage and back-charge costs to the branch appropriately. The only issue that Area cannot deal with directly is finance related membership which needs to go to the membership team at CHQ (subscriptions, renewals etc). Debbie is contactable at Exeter on 01392-462088 option 4 or at [debbie.byam@rafa.org.uk](mailto:debbie.byam@rafa.org.uk).



## 8. WINGS APPEAL WORKSHOPS

**Repeat Article.** A couple of Wings Appeal workshops will be held throughout the Area in July and delivered by the fundraising team at Leicester. These sessions will cover a variety of topics and give the Wings Appeal Organisers from different branches the chance to come together to share ideas, receive

updates on new initiatives while feeding back and making suggestions on how the central team can improve the support you receive. The workshops will be taking place at the following locations:

- Weds 13 July – Wolverhampton Branch Club.
- Thurs 14 July – City of Bristol Branch Club.

The days will run from 10.00am until 2.30pm with refreshments being provided during the day. Previous events have proved a great success at putting Wings Organisers from surrounding branches in touch. The session will also reaffirm what you and your branch do and how to approach fundraising in the best possible way to make your campaigns even more successful.

If you'd like to be involved then please get confirmation of attendance in by Wednesday 6 July to ensure the day is set up correctly to cater for all needs. Full details will be sent to Branch Wings Appeal Organisers but if you have any questions or would like to confirm attendance please email [wings@rafa.org.uk](mailto:wings@rafa.org.uk) or call Molly Henson in the Wings Appeal office on 0116 268 8797. Thanks.

## 9. CELEBRATE HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN'S 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY WITH A BREW FOR THE FEW

**Repeat Article.** If your Branch is wondering how to mark Her Majesty The Queen's 90th birthday, this summer you may like to consider celebrating by arranging a 'Brew for the Few' tea party. Guests simply make a donation in return for a much-needed cup of tea or delicious slice of cake whilst recognising this milestone in our Monarch's distinguished life.

Why not hold a celebration at your Branch meeting place, at work or ask your local mayor to hold one in their chambers? Perhaps you or others within your Branch have links to local sports clubs, colleges or businesses where an event could be held. Brew for the Few parties can be large or small, with them all helping to raise funds and awareness for the Wings Appeal. This year offers a great way to celebrate Her Majesty's birthday.

A 'Brew for the Few' pack detailing how to organise your event and containing posters, invitations and hints and tips can be downloaded from [www.rafa.org.uk/brew](http://www.rafa.org.uk/brew). Alternatively, a hard copy pack is available to be ordered through RAFATRAD. Your Branch Wings Appeal Organiser will have been sent details in their April Wings Appeal newsletter. If you have any questions please contact Ian Wright in the Wings Appeal office by emailing [wings@rafa.org.uk](mailto:wings@rafa.org.uk) or calling 0116 268 8758.



## 10. A MESSAGE FROM OUR TROWBRIDGE AND WEST WILTSHIRE BRANCH

Trowbridge Branch has recently changed its name to Trowbridge and West Wiltshire to reflect the fact that a couple of branches in the local area have recently closed. Because of the change of name we have made arrangements for a new Standard which will be dedicated at the Battle of Britain Parade on the 18 September. If there are any members in the vicinity who are not currently affiliated to a branch – and would like to be – they are very welcome to join us at Trowbridge. We meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month at Lovemead House, Trowbridge at 1930hrs. We have quite a lively time and we also have many social functions. For further information please contact the Secretary Mike Sale on either [mike.sale@btconnect.com](mailto:mike.sale@btconnect.com) or 01985 216963.

## 11. BRANCH ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2015

Just a gentle reminder that the Exeter Area Office has yet to see a copy of approved accounts for 2015 for the following Branches and would be grateful for your assistance. The Area Director is named as the Charity Commission's formal correspondent in respect of annual returns for around 50% of our Branches, so it is hugely helpful that copies are despatched to Exeter immediately following Branch AGMs. Thanks for your help; any concerns – please don't hesitate to call.

- Bargoed Blackwood, Bromsgrove & Redditch, Burnham-on-Sea, Camborne Redruth & Illogan, Cannock Chase, Chepstow & District, Frome, Gloucester, Haverfordwest, Kidderminster, Market Drayton, Melksham, Penzance, Pontardawe & District, Solihull, Stourbridge, Trowbridge (now Trowbridge & West Wilts), Truro, West Bromwich, Worcester & District.

## 12. IMAGES FROM OUR AREA CONFERENCE AT THE CHELTENHAM CHASE HOTEL

Apologies for taking a little while to get these images to you of our Area Annual Conference and Reunion Weekend at the Cheltenham Chase Hotel in March. We can't print them – there's too many – but you are very welcome to open these links and reminisce or even download at your leisure. [HERE](#) and [HERE](#)

## 13. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY (we look forward to seeing you out there amongst all those potential new members!).

- The Trebah Military Day will be held on Sunday the 5 June 2016 at Trebah Gardens Nr Mawnan Smith, gates open at 10.00 am.
- Royal Cornwall Show – 9 to 11 June 2016.
- Torbay Airshow on Paignton Green – 11 June 2016.
- Throckmorton Airshow – 11 June 2016.
- Sunday 12th June. Service to commemorate the 90th Birthday of Queen Elizabeth 2nd. This will be held at 1100hrs at St Marys Church, Bridport. Standard Bearers will take post at the West door at 1045hrs.
- Weston Air Festival (Weston-super-Mare) – 18 and 19 June 2016.
- Bob Jones Memorial Airshow Welshpool – 19 June 2016.
- RAF Association Concert Band performing at the Tropicana in Weston-super-Mare – 6pm on Sun 19 June 2016.
- RAF & Allied Air Forces Monument Service will be held on Plymouth Hoe on Saturday 25 June 2016 at 9.30am.
- Wiltshire Armed Forces Day & Veteran's Weekend – 25 and 26 June 2016.
- Friday 1st July. Short Act of Remembrance to mark the beginning of the Battle of the Somme. This will be at the St Marys Church, Bridport, Cenotaph at 0715hrs. Standard Bearers to be in position at 0710hrs.
- RNAS Yeovilton Air Day – 2 July 2016.
- Wales International Airshow Swansea – 2 and 3 July 2016.
- Sunday 3rd July. Service to commemorate the Battle of the Somme. This will be at St Marys Church at 1100hrs. Standard Bearers will take position at the West door by 1045hrs.
- Bristol Harbour Festival – 16 and 17 July.
- Calne Motorbike Show – 23 July 2016.
- RNAS Culdrose Air Day 28 July 2016.
- Leek Show – 30 July 2016.
- Red Arrows display - Falmouth Wednesday 10 August 2016 at 6 30pm.
- Weymouth Carnival – 16 and 17 August 2016.
- Bournemouth Airshow – 18 to 21 August 2016.
- East Glamorgan & Gwent Region Meeting at Llandaff & Ely Branch Club HQ – 2pm, Sat 20 August 2016.
- Mid-Somerset Sow – 21 August 2016.
- The Falmouth Branch Battle of Britain Service will be held at the Falmouth Parish Church of King Charles The Martyr on Sunday 4 September 2016 at 10.30am.

- RAF Cosford Battle of Britain Parade and Service - Sun 11 September 2016.
- MoD St Athan Battle of Britain Parade and Service – Sun 11 September 2016.
- Wreath Laying Service at Sea on Sunday 11 September (date change from 25 Sep) sailing from Padstow Harbour at 11.30am (organised through our Bodmin Branch – this is a unique Service. Real flowers please as part of any wreath).
- RAF Cosford Battle of Britain Parade and Service – Sunday 11 September 2016 (Area Office will be providing details shortly).
- Wolverhampton & District Branch Battle of Britain Parade and Service – Sun 18 September 2016.

***Paul Baker – Area Director***

***Eventually all the pieces fall into place. Until then, laugh at the confusion, live for the moment and know that everything happens for a reason...happy June.***

Enclosure:

1. Latest RAFALO Update.