

The Royal Air Forces Association
 Wales, Midland & South West
 Area Headquarters & South Western Office
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Wales, Midland & South Western Area

Newsletter

June 2017

WITH GREAT SADNESS – We Will Remember

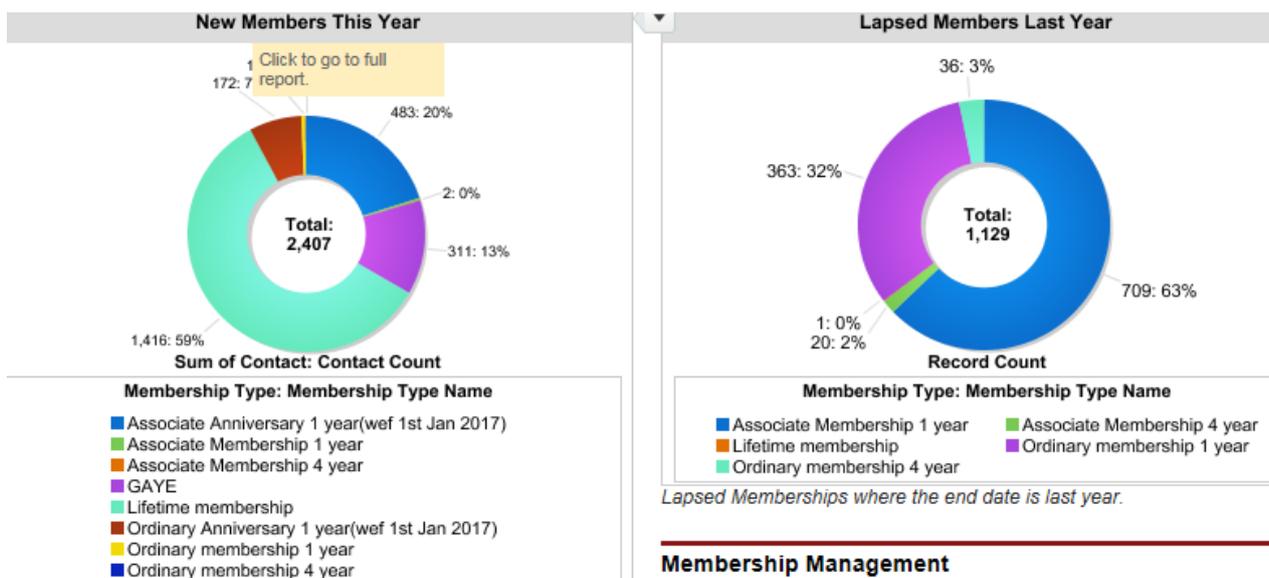
Mr Ray Scantlebury was a Life Vice-President of the Area, having served for many years on the old South West Area Council as Vice-Chairman and Representative to Central Council. Ray devoted his life to the Association and the wider RAF family through his branch, region, area and national activity.

Mr Peter Horstead entertained many RAF veterans as part of the RAF Association Concert Band and will be remembered for his Trombone Solo 'The Acrobat' played in his own particular style, and always having audiences and musicians in fits of laughter.

Our thoughts are with the family and friends of Ray and Peter at this time.

AREA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The month of May has produced good results in terms of new members joining the Association and our general lapsing figures are starting to reduce. Thank you – please keep working hard to find people who will enjoy being part of our family.



Membership Management



BRANCH AND CLUB AGMS – FORM 1056 BRANCH AND CLUB

We still have 6 branches who have not returned their Form1056's, please send them to Debbie Byam in our Exeter Office, by post as a matter of urgency. If you wish to send the form electronically then please contact Debbie before doing so - debbie.byam@rafa.org.uk. Branches are Aberdare, St David's & Solva, Cannock Chase, Kidderminster, Salisbury and Teignmouth.

PERSONAL DATA PRIVACY – BRANCHES AND CLUBS

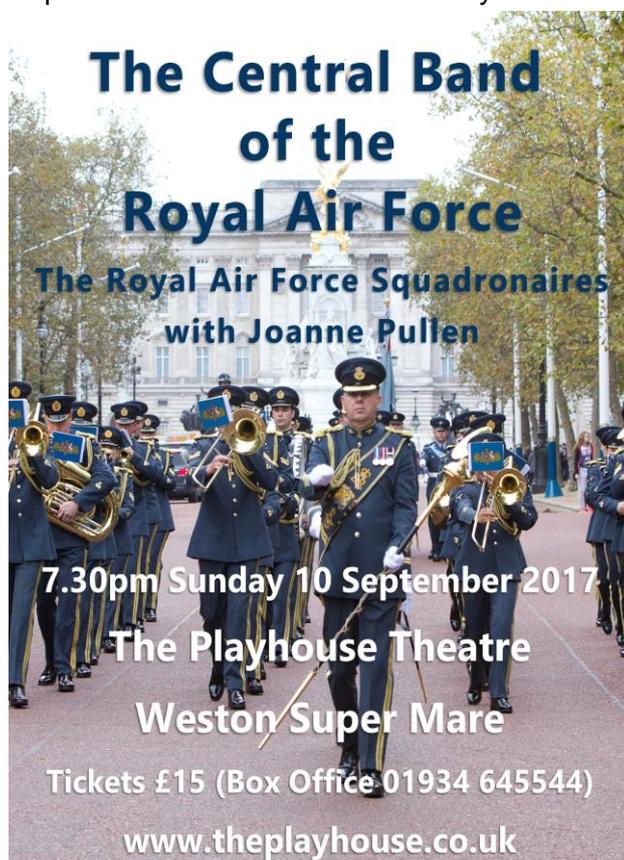
We would request those Branches that have not yet returned their form to do so as soon as possible. There are **25 branches who have not sent in their signed Data Protection form**. We cannot send any branch information out to these branches without the signed returned form. If required, further copies of the form can be found on the Members Log-In Section of the RAF Association website or from the Area Headquarters by e-mail request to debbie.byam@rafa.org.uk.

BEFRIENDING IN YOUR LOCAL AREA

Branch Members who enjoy visiting others who might wish to become a befriender would be most welcome. If you wish to consider please send an email to your local area welfare officer direct - South West – Dr Glenford Bishop, email: glenford.bishop@rafa.org.uk. Wales – Barbara Howells, email: barbara.howells@rafa.org.uk and Midland – Tracey Khan, email: tracey.khan@rafa.org.uk.

ROYAL AIR FORCE BAND RETURNS TO THANK WESTON SUPER MARE

Very much part of the local community for so many years, the former Royal Air Force base at Locking was also the home of the former Western Band of the Royal Air Force. Therefore, with such close links with the town of Weston Super Mare, it was no surprise that when the Band was sent on operational deployment to the First Gulf War in 1991, the people of Weston came together to help and support the wives and families of those left behind, whilst their husbands were deployed at various field hospitals in Saudi Arabia. Sadly, following the disbandment of the Western Band in 1999 and the relocation of musicians to the other established RAF bands at RAF Cranwell and RAF Uxbridge in 1999, Weston Super Mare has seen little of the Royal Air Force bands, but thanks to a former member of the band that is all about to change.



**The Central Band
of the
Royal Air Force**
The Royal Air Force Squadronaires
with Joanne Pullen

7.30pm Sunday 10 September 2017
The Playhouse Theatre
Weston Super Mare

Tickets £15 (Box Office 01934 645544)
www.theplayhouse.co.uk

To rekindle these musical links with the community of years gone by, on Sunday 10th September at the Playhouse Theatre, Royal Air Force music returns to Weston in concert with reputedly the finest military band in the country, the Central Band of the Royal Air Force along with the famous RAF Squadronaires and acclaimed vocalist Joanne Pullen, who, back in the 1990's was also from Weston.

WE WELCOME OUR NEW BRANCH SUPPORT OFFICER – MIKE LOGUE

We are delighted to welcome Mike Logue as a new member of the Area team. Mike has taken up the role of Branch Support Officer covering the Midlands and Mid/North Wales and will be based out of the office at our Wolverhampton Branch HQ. Mike started his military service in 1971 as a British Army Infantry Junior Leader, but quickly saw the light and transferred to the Royal Air Force where he completed a full career, retiring in 2010 as the Station Warrant Officer at RAF Shawbury. Ian Campbell and Mike are currently handing over geographic responsibilities after which Mike will be paying your branch a visit.

IMAGES FROM THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE AT YARNFIELD

With the exception of those where the Area Director appears....there are some cracking images of this year's Annual Conference at Yarnfield in Staffordshire. Please check out this link.

www.flickr.com/photos/rafwingsappeal/sets/72157684286337325

COSFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH ADOPT No 63 (BRIDGNORTH) SQUADRON RAF AIR CADETS

The RAF Air Cadets have always worked closely to support the aims of the Royal Air Forces Association. This includes its principle purpose to support the RAF family in times of need through the RAFA Wings Appeal.

63 (Bridgnorth) Squadron RAF Air Cadets spend several days each year collecting on behalf of the charity through street collections and fund raising events in the Bridgnorth Area. On 5 May this partnership was officially recognised when the Cosford & District Branch adopted the Squadron. This adoption cements the relationship between 63 (Bridgnorth) Squadron and the Cosford & District Branch.

Marilyn (Lyn) Addison, Chairman of the Cosford & District Branch, presented a Certificate of Adoption to Pilot Officer Glen Cadman, Officer Commanding 63 (Bridgnorth) Squadron, at the Squadron Presentation Evening held at the Bridgnorth Rugby Club

Wing Commander Andy Griffin, Officer Commanding West Mercian Wing, was also present on the evening and said, "... this is a great step forward and I know that the Squadron will continue to support RAFA in the years to come, particularly with the Wings Appeal. Our partnership with RAFA is mutually beneficial to all."



Photo shows:

Left: Wing Commander Andy Griffin

Centre: Pilot Officer Glen Cadman

Right: Marilyn (Lyn) Addison

Further details can be obtained from:

Stephen Hucker on:-

(m) 07780 378309

(e) rafacosfordtreasurer@gmail.com

RAF ASSOCIATION CONCERT BAND

Based in Weston-super-Mare, our Concert Band remains extremely busy promoting and providing music support at various events this year. Please take a look at their latest Newsletter, enclosed. Don't forget to consider the Band if you are planning an event next year to mark the RAF centenary!

68 (WESTBURY) SQUADRON PRESENTED WITH THE ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION ADOPTION CERTIFICATE

The Vice Chairman of Trowbridge & West Wiltshire Branch, Squadron Leader Philip Lobb MBE RAF VR(T) (Retired) explained to those present that Trowbridge Branch of The Royal Air Forces Association became Trowbridge & West Wiltshire Branch during 2016. The newly produced Adoption Certificate reflects that change of Branch title. He went on to say that Adoption Certificates are given to those ATC squadrons that work in partnership with their local RAFA Branches providing mutual support and assistance when required.

The presentation of the certificate took place at the Headquarters of 68 (Westbury) Squadron on the evening of the 5th of May. The Certificate of Adoption was presented by Air -Vice Marshal Martin Clark CB RAF (Retired) who is the President of the Trowbridge & West Wiltshire Branch. The Officer Commanding Flight Lieutenant John Gillespie RAF VR (T) accepted the certificate on behalf of 68 (Westbury) Squadron.

Cadets paraded to witness the event. Parents of the cadets, Civilian Committee members and Squadron Staff were also present. It was particularly pleasing that Councillor Gordon King Deputy Mayor of Westbury was able to attend as he was once an Air Cadet at the Westbury Squadron many years ago he said it brought back many pleasant memories and it was most satisfying to witness the growing success of the squadron.

The opportunity was taken by AVM Clark to present certificates to cadets for their recent academic achievements. On completion of the presentations AVM Clark met informally with cadets and their parents to tell them about the Royal Air Force of today and to answer their questions. He also met with the Civilian Committee and Staff and talked to them about the various volunteer roles that they each undertook in support of the unit. He thanked them for their invaluable work which contributed to the success of the squadron training programme.

68 Squadron parade on Wednesday and Friday evenings between 1900 – 2130hrs at the Cadet Centre, West End Road, Westbury, BA13 3JF. The Trowbridge & West Wiltshire Branch of RAFA meet at 1930hrs on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Lovemead House, Roundstone Street, Trowbridge. New members are always welcome to join either of these organisations.

The photograph below shows AVM Clark presenting the Royal Air Forces Association Certificate of Adoption to Flight Lieutenant John Gillespie RAF VR (T) Officer Commanding 68 (Westbury) Squadron.



HIGH SPIRITS, 24 JUNE 2017 – SPITFIRE HERITAGE TRUST JOINS BRITAIN'S BEST 'CLOUD BARS' FOR THE WORLD'S FIRST ROLLING SKY TOAST ON ARMED FORCES DAY

For media passes please email denise@owlpr.co.uk – numbers strictly limited

As a salute to our Armed Forces the Spitfire Heritage Trust will be hosting a rolling toast to the men and women serving in our armed forces. Spitfire Heritage Gin, created by the Trust to celebrate the Spitfire; has joined three of the country's most prestigious, luxury sky-high venues with the world's first celebratory rolling-toast that will soar through the clouds in a sequence, from Liverpool to London.

The toast, presented by personnel from Number 72 Squadron, RAF, will 'domino' through each of the luxury aerial vantage points. The guest list will include VIPs and the media for this unusual event.

Liverpool is the host city for this year's Armed Forces Day. Spitfire Heritage is partnered in the toast by the city's 34th-storey "Panoramic Restaurant" for the toast's 'ignition', while Birmingham's "Marco Pierre White" Restaurant, atop the city's towering Hotel Indigo will see its "in-flight". The final flourish will be a toast, double revolution of the Coca-Cola London Eye before "touch-down".

Liverpool. As a key target the city took more bombs per head of population during WWII than any other. The soaring "Panoramic" offers unparalleled views of land, sea and sky across the city skyline and Denise France representing Spitfire Heritage will join members of Number 72 Squadron there to start the rolling-toast.

David Beaufort-Dysart, General Manager at The Panoramic, said: "The Panoramic is the ultimate vantage point sitting, as it does, commanding views over the Mersey Estuary and across the city skyline. City dwellers and commuters have daily reminders of the impact of WWII as, what is locally known as 'The Bombed out Church', was kept in its ruined state as testament to Liverpool's resilience. We look forward to the toast event."

Birmingham. The stunning "Hotel Indigo" was chosen because of its dominance of the Birmingham skyline. Sarah Hewitt of Spitfire Heritage and members of Number 72 Squadron will be among the guests atop the city that is predominantly the heart and home of the Spitfire. General Manager Julian Hook said: "We are proud to be a part of this occasion. It celebrates our Armed Forces, serving and retired, across all the **four** services and we look forward to toasting them with a quintessential British tiple."

London. The beautiful and iconic Coca-Cola London Eye offers another stunning land, sea and sky vista. Flying over the Thames it offers unparalleled views of the capital's buildings - historic and new – that serves to remind us how we owe their very existence to the efforts of our Armed Forces.

Special guests at the London finalé include immediate family of the Supermarine Spitfire's test pilot Captain Joseph 'Mutt' Summers who took the first flight in the new aircraft in March 1936. Mutt was chief test pilot for Vickers-Supermarine.

Also in the capsule for the toast will be Mrs Joy Lofthouse* one of the last remaining ATA 'girls' – the women pilots of the Air Transport Auxiliary who flew Spitfires unarmed and unescorted in dangerous skies, delivering them to front line RAF Squadrons. Now in her 90s, she still enjoys taking to the air in light aircraft. Joy will be accompanied by David Spencer Evans, Chairman and Ian Hewitt, Vice Chairman of The Spitfire Heritage Trust**

Sunny Jouhal; Coca-Cola London Eye General Manager, said: "We are proud to be taking part in this unique event to celebrate Armed Forces Day in partnership with some of the country's other sky-high landmarks. Our place in, and connection to, London's skyline makes the summit of the London Eye a perfect place to raise a glass to acknowledge our debt to those brave members of the Armed Forces, past and present who defend our freedoms."

It is fitting that the toast will be presented by members of Number 72 Squadron: the Squadron will be celebrating its own centenary just a few days later on the 27th of June with a flypast over every airfield to have been home for the squadron across the UK. The flypast event will include a press occasion at Duxford and further celebrations at the Squadron's Linton-on-Ouse base sponsored by Spitfire Heritage.

The Squadron became a dedicated Spitfire Squadron in 1941, thanks to the people of Lesotho, a small African country that raised more money per head of population than any other country in the Commonwealth – enough to build 24 Spitfires: a whole squadron with some to spare! The Spitfire Heritage Trust paid a tribute to Lesotho late last year, building and shipping out a full-size Spitfire replica which was received by H.M. The King for permanent display at the War Memorial in the capital's central square.

Spitfire Heritage Gin's strapline '**Built to be the Best**'*** is borrowed from the legend of the Spitfire itself. The gin's slogan is '*it's 6 o'clock somewhere in the world Darling*'.

The toast will begin at 5.50pm at The Panoramic, relayed via Hotel Indigo at 5.55pm and finish with the final toast on the rolling Coca-Cola London Eye at 6pm.

*Joy Lofthouse has agreed to attend, subject to her excellent health remaining in good order

**The Spitfire Heritage Trust is supported by Spitfire Heritage Gin. The team at Spitfire Heritage Gin helped the Trust volunteers make the Lesotho tribute possible and work on further projects, including mountain bikes for the children of Lesotho to get to school. Lesotho is the highest country in Africa where the tribute Spitfire now sits.

***Spitfire Heritage Gin was built to be the best, by world champion gin maker, master distiller John Walters for Spitfire Heritage Distillers. It is one of only three single estate, small batch gins in the UK and its botanicals (for an authentic 1930s gin) were chosen to commemorate the ATA Spitfire pilots. Borage (for courage), Rosemary (for remembrance), English Rose Petals (for the flowers of Britain who flew so bravely) and Blood Orange. Other botanicals include star anise, coriander and almonds.

For further information: denise@owlpr.co.uk
0780 118 2252

www.spitfireheritagegin.com
www.spitfireheritagetrust.com

- The Panoramic 34th Floor, West Tower, Brook Street, Liverpool L3 9PJ
- Marco Pierre White, Hotel Indigo, The Cube, 200 Wharfside St, Birmingham B1 1PR
- The Coca-Cola London Eye, Lambeth, London, SE1 7PB

RAFA VOLUNTEERS WEEK

The Royal Air Forces Association is recognising the invaluable contribution of its legions of volunteers to mark Volunteers' Week 2017.

From 1-7 June, the Association will celebrate the contribution of these individuals, as they are sent a special Volunteers' Week thank you card and individual volunteers are highlighted on social media.

21-year-old Cameron is one of the volunteers receiving individual recognition this year as part of the Association's Volunteer Spotlight campaign. Cameron is currently a Survival Equipment Fitter with the RAF and has recently started volunteering as a Fundraising Team Leader for the RAF Association in Inverness.

Representing the Association, these volunteers are integral to the successful implementation of the Association's welfare schemes. Volunteers provide important support for the wider RAF family in their roles as welfare Caseworkers, Befrienders and Fundraisers.

Whether it is 10 minutes a week or a couple of hours per day, all RAF Association volunteers provide a support service to the RAF family by loyally donating some of their precious spare time.

Katharine Montgomery, Volunteer Manager at the RAF Association, said:

"During Volunteers' Week, we are sending cards to all 3,340 people who volunteer their time in support of our charity. Every donation and sacrifice, whether big or small, is truly appreciated not only by the Association but by the whole RAF family.

“We are highlighting and celebrating some of our star volunteers. We would like to thank Cameron for his work as a Fundraising Team Leader and his continued dedication to supporting the important work that we do.”

Roger Galloway, standard bearer and Wings Appeal organiser, RAF Association in Plymouth, said:

“I love volunteering for the Association because it gives me a sense of purpose. I really enjoy being able to provide a service that is important for a wide range of people. Seeing faces light up when they see the events that we have pulled together, at the Battle of Britain service for example, is really satisfying and means a lot. Volunteering for such a good cause means you get a real personal sense of achievement out of it and you really get to make a difference.”

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- East Glamorgan & Gwent Regional meeting in Aberdare RAFA Club (Bethel Street, Aberdare, postcode: CF44 7EP) on Saturday 3 June 2017, starting at 1400 hrs.
- On the 7 June 2017 Bodmin Branch will be having a talk from Kat Bromfield from the Alzheimer's Society. It will be held at the Masons Arms Public House, 5-7 Higher Bore Street, Bodmin. PL31 1JS. Start Time 10.30am. End Time 11.30am. If anyone is travelling into Bodmin we have great deal of road works going on therefore please allow extra travelling time. For any further details please call the pub on 01208 77442.
- Royal Cornwall Show, Wadebridge, Thursday 8, Friday 9 & Saturday 10 June.
- RAF & Allied Air Forces Monument Service, Plymouth Hoe Saturday 24 June.
- Devon Region Meeting at the Exmouth Club – Saturday 15 July at 2.30pm.
- Plymouth Barbican, Boat Trip – Sunday, 23 July 2017, midday until 3pm, boarding at the Barbican Landing Stage, Plymouth, refreshments available.
- Red Arrows Display, Falmouth, Wednesday 9 August.
- Bodmin Branch will set sail for the annual Wreath Laying at Sea from Padstow Harbour – 2.30pm on Sunday 17 September.
- The Falmouth Branch of the RAF Association will be holding a Service of Thanksgiving & Commemoration of the 77th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain at the Falmouth Parish Church of King Charles the Martyr at 1030am on Sunday the 8th of October 2017 - All are welcome to attend.
- Devon Region Meeting at the Plymouth Club – Saturday 21 October at 2.30pm.
- Trowbridge Armed Forces Weekend, 24 and 25 June - RAFA will be in attendance along with various branches of the ATC, all would be welcome.
- North Cornwall Branch - Battle of Britain Service at Kilkhampton Parish Church at 11.00am on Sunday 10th September 2017. All Branches are welcome to attend with their Standards.
- Battle of Britain Service Parade, Minster Church of St Andrews, Royal Parade at 11.15am on Sunday, 17 September 2017 supported by Air Cadets.
- Plymouth Raza Members Christmas Lunch at 12.30pm on 16th December at Raffles Club, Ermington Terrace, Mutley, Plymouth.

Debbie Byam
Area Administrator

Don't wait for the perfect moment, take the moment and make it perfect!

Enclosure:

RAF Association Concert Band Newsletter - May-June 2017.
Plymouth Branch - An Afternoon on the Ocean Waves.