

The Royal Air Forces Association
Wales, Midland & South West
Area Headquarters & South Western Office
RAFA House, Chancel Lane
Pinhoe, Exeter, EX4 8JU
Tel: 01392 462 088
Email: southwestern@rafa.org.uk
www.rafa.org.uk

Wales, Midland & South Western Area Newsletter

September 2017

RAF ST MAWGAN BRANCH – SUMMER 2017 – IT'S NOT ONLY POLDARK IN CORNWALL

Our Branch Members have launched themselves into the Branch to make these last few months a hugely enjoyable and busy time. Support has been tremendous and the social and 'Wings' activity has gone from strength to strength. Starting off with a really interesting trip to the Cornwall War Museum at Davidstow, this day out provided an excellent get-together which included a rare face to face experience with a Doodlebug (Photo 1).



We have been busily collecting for 'Wings' with Supermarket and street collections, as well as having our Stand at the Classic Car Show 'Wheels' in Wadebridge. Despite the Cornish weather, promoting our RAF Association at the Royal Cornwall Show was a big success. Here the principle of the 'RAF Family' was well reflected with Branch members and 'Maggi' our Mascot (photo 2) integrated closely alongside personnel from the RAF St Mawgan Regular and Reserve personnel, RAF Recruiters, the RAF Central Band and local Air Cadets within the 'RAF Village' (photo 3) (a big thank you must go to our Area BSO and Trailer).





Our Branch Vice-Chair Paul Hedge and Standard Bearer Barry Fryett presented the County and Branch Standards at the RAF and Allied Air Forces Monument Service on Plymouth Hoe as an 'opener' to the Armed Forces Day. Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Stephen Hillier was in attendance (Photo 4).

Raffling our RAFA Teddies has proved highly popular and lucrative with, for instance, a Red Arrow Bear being won by a local RAF family and another going to a very young Andrew who spookily picked Andrew the RAF Uniformed Bear! Photo 5 shows Chairman Steve Richards presenting Andrew, to Andrew.



Our Branch 'Veteran Sailing Crew' (Photo 6) were yet again superbly looked after by the amazing Charity 'Turn to Starboard' where they had a fantastic day out sailing on the 90 foot Schooner 'Spirit of Falmouth'.



Branch meetings have also been very diverse and have attracted around 35 to 45 members each month. We were lucky enough to have Air Cadet Josh Goodwin (as an ambassador for the Holocaust Education Trust) give a very challenging talk on his visit to Auschwitz at one meeting and then a paramedic talking on defibrillators at the next meeting.

We were then treated by the RAF Presentation Team who came and gave us their highly professional talk on the RAF today and the 30 minute plus question time showed just how much everyone had been thoroughly engaged. The next meeting was our ever popular quiz night where the Champagne first prize was closely fought and won by the >>>> ; our undercover quiz "training" nights have proved well worth doing as we won the Cornwall RAFA Region Quiz Cup hosted by St Austell Branch.

At the July Branch meeting the outgoing Mayor of Newquay, Carl Leadbetter, presented his Newquay Mayoral Charity cheque for the sum £3,010. The theme of the donation was the local RAF Family. The money will primarily go towards the support of our local RAF veterans but to reflect the RAF Family theme, the younger end of the RAF spectrum was recognised by the Branch in turn presenting £500 of the donation to 781 (Newquay) Squadron Newquay Air Cadets. The Squadron will use the funds to buy urgently needed items of hiking and camping equipment to enable all of the Squadron Cadets to have the chance to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. In Photo 7, Carl presents the Branch Chairman Steve Richards and Vice Chairman Paul Hedge with his Charity donation cheque. Steve is shown also passing on a cheque to Air Cadet Nathan Sherry of 781(Newquay) Squadron, who will be starting the Award programme this year.

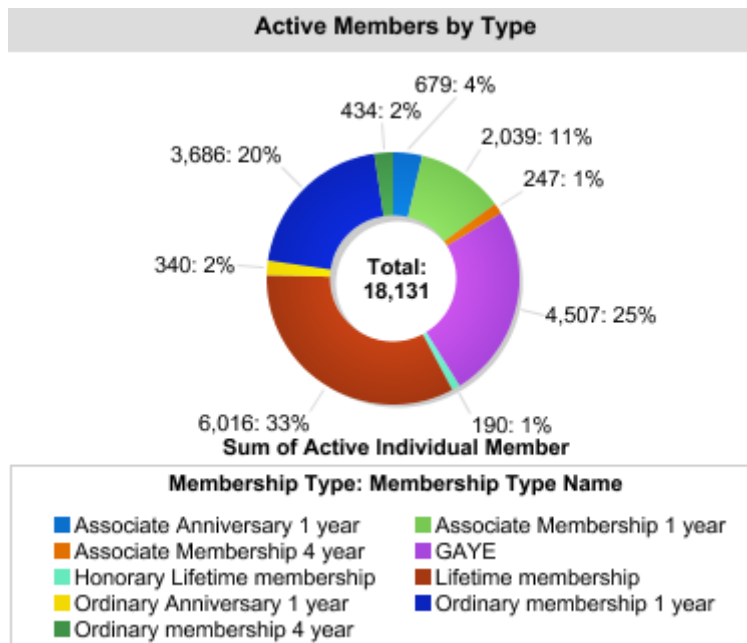


AREA CONFERENCE AND REUNION 2018 – SURELY NOT YET!

Can you believe it! It's already time to start thinking about next year's Area Conference and Reunion which will take place at the Cheltenham Chase Hotel, Brockworth, Gloucester, over the weekend Friday 23 March to Sunday 25 March 2018 and we will come out to you with more detail shortly. Once again Area Council hopes to provide a welcoming, diverse and enjoyable weekend that provides an opportunity to update members, to enjoy reunion and, most importantly next year, set the scene for our RAF100 activities not least to 'release' the Area tokens on their mammoth journey and to unveil a rather special and unique Tapestry that celebrates the Royal Air Force in Gloucestershire. More to follow!

AREA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Whatever you are doing in terms of membership recruitment – please keep doing it because it's working! The Area is drawing ever closer to its original target of 12% net growth by the end of the year and can now boast 18,131 members, with some 2,535 joining us this year. Here's the breakdown of total membership by type.



ROYAL AIR FORCE CENTENARY – RAF100 - UPDATE

On 1 April 2018 the RAF will mark the centenary of its formation as the world's first independent air force. RAF100 activities and events will be taking place across the UK from Autumn 2017 throughout 2018 with the theme of Celebration, Commemoration and Inspiration. The focus will be on enhancing the awareness, understanding and reputation of the RAF and its charities, feeling proud of the RAF's achievements and inspired about its future. The RAF will also target future generations through activities focusing on the subjects of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

The RAF100 website has recently been updated and you can subscribe to a newsletter giving more information on what is happening. You can also submit details of events you are organising that are open for members of the public to attend, for the RAF to consider publicising. Visit <https://www.raf.mod.uk/raf100/submit-your-event/>

You might also want to keep the Area Office updated with your plans.

FLAG RAISING AT NEATH

Mr Denzil Haynes, Area Councillor and Neath Branch Secretary, was recently honoured by being invited to take part in the Neath Flag Raising Ceremony to mark Armed Forces Day along with the Lady Mayor and other dignitaries.



SUGGESTED SAFETY BRIEF AT THE START OF ALL BRANCH/CLUB MEETINGS

Ladies and Gentlemen, before we start with the meeting I wish to remind you of the safety procedures for this room/building:

FIRE

- a. In the event of the fire alarm (state type) sounding, please leave through the nearest designated fire exit (do not return).
- b. The designated fire assembly point for this room/building is:
- c. Please remember to assist the person next/near to you if they have a physical disability.
- d. Please ensure that you have completed the name (attendance) register for today's meeting as this will need to be checked by the fire service at the fire assembly area.

SMOKING

- e. The designated smoking area is:

FIRST AID

- f. The First Aid kit is located:

TELEPHONE

- g. The nearest telephone is located:

AREA WELFARE SEMINARS

Our Area Council is committed to staging annual seminars around the Area so as to give our Welfare Volunteers the opportunity to meet others within the Association and hear the latest information on developments in our welfare work. This year we have chosen the following venues and dates:

- Royal Air Forces Association Branch Club Llandaff & Ely, Riverside Terrace, Ely, Cardiff, CF5 5AS – Wednesday 18 October 2017.
- Nuffield Pavilion, RAF Cosford, Wolverhampton, WV7 3EX – Thursday 26 October 2017.

In past years we have taken this opportunity to discuss more general topics of interest, however, as there is quite a lot happening in welfare at present we have decided that this year the seminars will be geared solely around welfare matters. We are at present putting the Agenda together and this will be finalised and issued to those attending in due course. We hope to engage speakers from other agencies of interest and a representative from Welfare at Headquarters.

As there is not a great amount of time until the first of our Seminars we would really appreciate your help to get this information out as quickly as possible. The next Area Welfare Bulletin will also carry this information. All Members are very welcome but obviously we would like to see as many HWOs/Caseworkers and Befrienders as possible. Please complete and return the enclosed proforma as required, to Area Headquarters, Exeter by Monday 25th September 2017.

We sincerely hope you will support and attend one of these Seminars as we strive to offer an interesting and informative programme.

WINGS APPEAL PRESS RELEASE

We would like to say a huge thank you to all our branches for the tremendous amount of fundraising that has taken place around the Area so far this year. We appreciate the time and effort it takes to arrange a collection, find volunteers to staff it and of course thank everyone afterwards. It is only through the considerable efforts of people like your branch committee, branch members, families and friends that we are able to continue to collect the significant amounts for the Wings Appeal each year.

As we approach Wings Week, when the majority of branch street collections take place, we would like to remind you that the RAF Association PR toolkit resource is available on our website. This includes a guide with help and advice on how to gain maximum publicity for your branch and includes template press releases to publicise Wings Appeal collections.

These resources can be accessed by visiting www.rafa.org.uk/promotion and scrolling down to the PR toolkit section.

Returning Branch Wings Appeal monies

Please have your branch's final Wings monies returned to the Wings Appeal team at Headquarters by **Friday 10 November 2017**. This will enable them to process all 2017 income and close your branch's Wings account for the year in preparation for producing the branch's annual Wings statement. Any monies raised specifically from street collections should be submitted 14 days after the date the collection took place, in order for the Wings Appeal team to make the relevant returns to your local council.

You can return Wings monies by using the Wings Returns (WR) paper packs. Instructions on how to fill these in and return your monies will be sent to your branch Wings Appeal Organiser in their September Wings newsletter.

If you would like any further information on the above then please contact the Wings Appeal team by emailing wings@rafa.org.uk or calling 0116 268 8797 / 8758.

Enclosed with this Newsletter is the applicable insurance document that provides appropriate cover when branches are on Wings Appeal business.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Bodmin Branch will set sail for the annual Wreath Laying at Sea from Padstow Harbour – 2.30pm on Sunday 17 September.
- Battle of Britain Wreath Laying Ceremony on Sunday, 17 September 2017– Teignmouth Promenade at 1100hrs, Armed Force Bike Riders. Afterwards at 1500hrs Wings Appeal Concert at Pavilions Theatre, Teignmouth.

- 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.
- Concert by The Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment – Wednesday 13th December at Millfield School, Concert Hall, Street, Mid-Somerset. Doors open at 7pm, seated by 7.30pm. Tickets £15.00 available from the following; Millfield School 01458-444320, Wells ATC 1955@aircadets.org and Street Tourist Information Centre 01458-447384.
- Plymouth Rfa Members Christmas Lunch at 12.30pm on 16th December at Raffles Club, Ermington Terrace, Mutley, Plymouth.

Debbie Byam
Area Administrator

When nothing is going right, go left...

1. RAFALO Update September 2017.
2. Welfare Seminars – Proforma.
3. Wings Appeal Insurance Document.