

Wales, Midland & South Western Area

# Newsletter

**SEPTEMBER 2014**

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

## 1. MEMBERSHIP

Whole Area Membership figures as at 1 September 2014 were as follows:

Annual	Life	Full Associate	Total	New Ann/Ass 14	Losses Ann/Life/Ass 14
6494	5440	2533	14467	668	1099

Thank you once again for your continued support to help increase our Area membership figures. A very busy Summer Air Show season is about to draw to a close and it is heartening to see that our membership numbers are increasing as a result of direct contact at these Summer events. Thank you for your hard work – we remain ever hopeful of hitting our target.

- Area Membership as at 31 December 2013 – 15,168.
- Area Membership as at 1 September 2014 - 14,467.
- Minimum target by 31 December 2014 - 14,788.
- Still required to achieve minimum target - 321.

## 2. PASSING OF LEN TRIGG DFC – LATE PRESIDENT OF CARDIGAN BRANCH

The following tribute was used as part of Len Trigg's funeral:

Len passed away on 16 July 2014 after a 4 year fight following a series of strokes, bravely borne. He served the Branch well in various capacities following his joining in 1985, ultimately becoming President for many recent years. He was always a source of advice and inspiration, very much a doer and not a looker-on. He was a founder member of the local Aircrew Association and a member of Frenni Lodge in Cardigan. Needless to say he will be greatly missed.

In 1939 Len, at the age of 16, was determined to fly and joined up as soon as he was 17. He was accepted for flying training and 2 weeks later was on his way to Rhodesia where he trained as a Pilot. He was Commissioned as a Pilot Officer in George Town, South Africa and then trained as a Navigator/Observer. He then was sent to Benghazi where he joined 38 Squadron as a Pilot flying Wellingtons in Coastal Command. He and his crew served in North Africa, Crete and Italy. On operations he gained a reputation for great skill and determination when attacking well defended targets. This was very evident when attacking Portolago Bay (a small mountainous island near the Greek mainland), his aircraft was hit by AA fire on its first bombing run and severely damaged. Never the less Len, now a Flying Officer, went on to carry out two more runs, successfully hitting the target. Despite the damage to his aircraft Len fought the situation all the way back to his base and made a successful landing. It is said that his crew subsequently praised him to the hilt saying "HE got us home!" This episode earned him a well-earned DFC which he ultimately received from The King. His Citation ends with these words "At all times this Officer has proved to be an excellent captain showing praiseworthy courage and devotion to duty".

He was posted to Malta for a Commanding Officer's course and to stand by with his Squadron for a posting to the Far East. Neither of these things happened and by now Len had formed a close attachment to Anne, a comely WRN. They got married on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1945 in the Church of Scotland in Valletta where Anne was a member. Len continued flying duties while Anne reached her demob date and returned to UK in February 1946, Len followed in March. He was posted to Forres in Scotland as a test pilot. Eventually he was posted to RAF Mount Batten as Commanding Officer. At the end of his Active Service he served for 3 years in the RAFVR, flying at weekends and a yearly week's stint at Castle Bromwich.

Len then returned to commerce where he joined Desmo (where he was employed in the year before his RAF Service). He eventually became Managing Director of the Company and a Director of other Companies in the Group, ultimately joining the Board. By this time he had two daughters and, eventually, a grandson and a granddaughter. He and Anne enjoyed home life, gardening and caravanning, as well as his Association and Lodge activities with enthusiasm. We all benefited from his presence and feel it is the end of an era.

### **3. FAREWELL TO JACKIE BROAD – AAWO MIDLAND OFFICE**

We bid a very fond farewell to our dear colleague and friend, Jackie Broad, AAWO Midland Office, who has chosen to retire and focus on other activities. Jackie has been an excellent administrator to the Midland Region and latterly Assistant Area Welfare Officer and held in high regard especially by our Midland Region Branches. Good luck Jackie!

This is an ideal opportunity to welcome Jackie's successor! Lynn Fenn has joined the team and is our new Midland AAWO. We wish Lynn every success in her new role and I'm sure you will get an opportunity to meet Lynn in the near future.

### **4. BRANCH CLOSURE**

It is with sadness that we report the formal closure of our Devizes Branch in Wiltshire with effect from 1 September 2014 and we thank the retiring Committee for their professionalism and dignity in closure. Some members have transferred to adjacent Branches and the Area team is working to ensure welfare coverage is not adversely affected.

### **5. RAF ASSOCIATION WINGS GRAND DRAW**

As a new feature of Wings Grand Draw this year we have introduced a brand new facility which will enable you to purchase grand draw tickets from the RAF Association web site.

Simply go to [www.rafa.org.uk/granddraw](http://www.rafa.org.uk/granddraw) click on the red box to purchase grand draw tickets and you can then buy tickets using your credit or debit card. The ticket numbers will be emailed to you shortly after payment is made and your tickets will be entered in to the draw automatically. We hope you like this new way to buy your Wings Grand Draw tickets and good luck in the Draw.

### **6. AREA WELFARE SEMINARS**

Repeat Article. Information has already gone out to Branch Secretaries regarding this year's commitment to our Area Welfare Seminars. If these Seminars are of interest then please make contact with your Branch Secretary to ensure you are included. As you know, our Area Council is committed to staging Seminars so as to give Branches and Members the opportunity to meet others within the Association and hear the latest information on developments in our core business, not least those aspects of our welfare delivery that make us an industry leader. This year we have chosen the following venues and dates:

- The Helicopter Museum, Locking Moor Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS24 8PP – Thursday 2 October 2014.
- RAF Cosford Sports Pavilion, RAF Cosford, Wolverhampton, WV7 3EX – Thursday 16 October 2014.

**STOP PRESS** – The location of the Cosford Seminar has changed and is now likely to be held within the Families Centre and not the Sports Pavilion. We will confirm these details as soon as possible. At the time

of writing, numbers are particularly low for the Cosford Seminar. Please spread the word and get in touch if you plan to attend. We hope to offer to you a worthwhile programme.

## **7. WALES, MIDLAND & SOUTH WESTERN AREA – CONFERENCE AND REUNION 2015**

Time stops for no-one and March 2015 will soon be upon us! Please consider your booking for our Area Conference and Reunion Weekend which is to be held at the Derwent Hotel in Torquay over the weekend 20 to 22 March 2015. Attendance at our last several Conferences has been strong and I sincerely hope we can achieve similar results next year. Those of you who enjoy the weekend will know the Derwent Hotel extremely well. The following prices have been offered:

- Twin/double room based on 2 sharing - £116.00 per person for 2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast, including Sunday lunch.
- Single rooms on a fill-up basis - £116.00 for 2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast, including Sunday lunch. Please note there is a £10 supplement for twins/doubles taken on single occupancy.
- Twin/double room based on 2 sharing for just the Saturday night including the formal Saturday evening Dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch - £64.00 per person.
- Single rooms on a fill-up basis for just the Saturday night including the formal Saturday evening Dinner, Sunday breakfast and lunch - £64.00. Please note there is a £10 supplement for twins/doubles taken on single occupancy.
- You can now begin to make your accommodation bookings direct with the hotel by calling their Private Reservations Department on 01803-400-500 quoting the RAF Association Weekend. A 25% per person deposit will be requested which is non-refundable.

More information will come out in due course.

## **8. RAF ASSOCIATION 'HIGH VALUES' SCHOOLS PROGRAMME 2014**

Between September and Christmas 2014, 350 schools across the UK will be making use of the RAF Associations 'High Values' lesson plans. The idea is to help pupils understand the benefits of working to the highest values that both the RAF and the RAF Association adhere such as Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence. Teachers will download the plans and some short videos to support their teaching of the National Curriculum and to encourage engagement with the local community. Pupils will 'pledge' to undertake volunteering; they may pledge to 'do their best' or to treat others with the respect they deserve. These pledges will be loaded onto the web site and teachers will provide awards to those pupils who can demonstrate they have met their commitments.

During the last quarter of 2014 participating schools will have the chance to request a visit from a RAF or RAF Association representative to reinforce the messages using stories from 'real' lives within the RAF Family. Where it is possible we will be asking Branches and RAFALOs to deliver these visits and we will support them with a full written information pack highlighting the kind of messages we want to get across. By the end of 2014 we will have exposed 70,000 pupils, their schools, teachers and parents to the values of the RAF Association. In the future it is hoped this growing group of informed individuals will provide a much more fertile area for the RAF Association to recruit new supporters, members and donors. Please feel free to contact our Director of Fundraising and Marketing, Michael Bolton, if you have any questions - Tel: 0116 268 8779 | Email: Michael.bolton@rafa.org.uk.

## **9. E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

I would be grateful if Branch Secretaries could encourage those of their members who have e-mail addresses, but do not yet receive the Area Newsletter electronically, to get in touch with the Area Office to ensure we have their e-mail address recorded. Having an e-mail address recorded not only means the member can receive information and correspondence more quickly but would contribute to significant

savings in time, printing and postage. Debbie Byam, Area HQ Administrator, will be happy to receive this information.

## **10. GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE – WESTMINSTER ABBEY GARDENS – 6 NOVEMBER 2014**

We have once again been asked to participate in the above ceremony by the Royal British Legion (RBL). I therefore ask Branches to give this special occasion their best possible support by ordering crosses to be planted by their representatives wherever possible. The South East & Eastern Area will be pleased to arrange for crosses to be planted on behalf of Branches not represented.

Please be advised that all crosses must be planted by 10.00hrs on the day. Gates will open at 0845hrs and close at 10.00hrs. A member of the Royal Family arrives at 10.45hrs and all participants must be in position by 10.00hrs. Staff from the South East and Eastern Area, will be in attendance along with the National Standard Bearer on the day.

*A Badge Cross will cost £10.00 and a Leaf Cross (suitable for use by Branches) will cost £6.09*

Orders, together with the appropriate remittance, made payable to RAFA, should be sent to the South East Office no later than Monday 30 September. South East Office, 3-5 Old Bridge Street, Hampton Wick, Kingston-upon-Thames, KT1 4BU.

## **11. STORYBOOK WINGS LATEST NEWSLETTER**

The latest update from our Storybook Wings initiative is enclosed.

## **12. NEW - WINGS PORTAL!**

The Wings Appeal team is pleased to announce that the Wings Portal is complete and ready for use. It will enable branch committees to complete their Wings Appeal returns online, saving time and getting the branch welfare rebate back quicker.

Full instructions on the use of the system will be available on the portal itself in the form of a video tutorial but in summary:

- One committee member populates the portal with the details of the branch's Wings Appeal return and states whether the branch wishes to claim any expenses or welfare rebate from the monies being submitted.
- The portal then automatically emails another member of the branch committee who logs into the system to check the submission. If the second committee member agrees with the details then they simply click 'Authorise'.
- A Direct Debit authorisation is built into the system so the monies the branch are submitting for the Wings Appeal are collected automatically from the branch account. Any requests for expenses or welfare rebate are paid back to the branch via electronic transfer within 28 days of the submission, with receipts being sent to the branch officials.

All branches are encouraged to register with the portal at their earliest opportunity in order to benefit from the following:

- The ability to fill out Wings returns from home on your PC, Mac or tablet device at a time convenient to committee members.
- The process is simpler with the portal validating and checking the figures as you input them.
- It saves on paperwork and postage as no cheques or paper forms are needed.
- It helps with branch finances as it allows branches to claim for expenses or welfare rebates when submitting Wings monies, rather than waiting until the end of the year.
- It affords better visibility of the branch's Wings Appeal returns as the system allows you to view previous submissions from the current or previous Wings years.

Any members of your branch committee can register with the portal, but the system does require a minimum of two committee members per branch. It is easy to access and register with the Wings Portal.

Simply log in to the members area of the RAF Association website at [www.rafa.org.uk/Account/logon](http://www.rafa.org.uk/Account/logon) and choose 'Wings Portal' from the list on the right hand side of the screen.

#### Wings Appeal paper returns

Not all branch committees will want to submit their Wings returns online. Therefore, the branch Wings Appeal Organiser received a new Wings Returns (WR) pack in their August Wings newsletter. This pack will replace the old Wings Appeal forms which were coded WA1 – WA5. Please do not continue to use these previous 'WA' forms.

The new Wings Returns (WR) pack captures the same information as the previous format but is laid out differently to mirror the layout of the Wings Portal. Instructions on how to fill in the forms are included in the pack. Please relay this information to the branch committee at your earliest opportunity, especially to those involved in the completion of Wings returns.

#### Street collection returns

We are legally required to provide each local authority with a statement of the amount raised in their area through street collections within **one month** of the collection taking place. Please submit your street collection returns either via the Wings Portal or by using the new paper WR packs, to be received by the Wings Appeal team at Leicester no later than 2 weeks after the date of your final collection.

#### Submit Final Wings Returns for 2014

Please have your branch's final Wings monies returned to the Wings Appeal team at Leicester by **Friday 14 November 2014**. This will enable us to process all 2014 income and close your branch's Wings account for the year in preparation for producing the branch's annual Wings statement.

### **13. MALTA INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW – 27/28 SEPTEMBER 2014**

The following information has been received and maybe of interest to members.

'I am writing to inform aviation enthusiasts of the Fleet Air Arm and RAF Association that the 21st Edition of the Malta International Air Show will take place on the 27th - 28th of September 2014 at the airport in Luqa. This year's participants include:- Country Aircraft Display Czech Republic L-159 Alca (x1) Flying C-295M (x1) Static Germany Tornado IDS (x1) Static P-3C Orion (x1) Static Dornier D0 228 (x1) Static Greece F-4E Phantom II (x1) Static Italy Frecce Tricolori MB-339 PAN (x10) Flying AW139 (x1) Static P166C (x1) Static NATO E3A Sentry (x1) Static Poland PZL M28B Bryza (x1) Static Spain Patrulla Aguila C-101 Aviojets (x7) Flying Switzerland F-18C Hornet (x1/x1) Flying/Static Turkey Turkish Stars NF-5 (x8) Flying United Kingdom Red Arrows Hawks T1A (x9) Flying Tucano (x1/x2) Flying/Static Tornado GR.4 Static King Air B200 Static Hawks T1A (x2) Static United States of America L-39ZA (x1) Static. Direct flights are available from the following UK airports: Birmingham, Bournemouth, Bristol, East Midlands, Edinburgh, Leeds Bradford, Liverpool, London (Gatwick), London(Heathrow), London(Luton), London(Stansted), Manchester, Newcastle and Prestwick. So, if anybody is looking for a mini break why not organise to visit the island and during your stay visit other military show cases such as Malta at War Museum and Malta Maritime Museum both in Vittoriosa and Malta Aviation Museum in Ta' Qali on the limits of Attard. For more information for the Air show visit <http://www.maltairshow.com/>.

### **14. GLOUCESTER BRANCH – A FIRST CLASS NEWSLETTER!**

Enclosed with this Newsletter is a really good example of how to engage your Branch members. Well done to our Gloucester Branch for producing a colourful and interesting update. We did approach its author who was more than happy for us to reproduce as a model exemplar!

### **15. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

RAF Cosford Battle of Britain Parade and Service (1130am) – 7 September 2014.

MoD St Athan Battle of Britain Parade and Service (2.30pm) – 7 September 2014.

North Cornwall Branch - Battle of Britain Parade & Service, Kilkhampton Church (11am) - 7 September 2014.

Falmouth Branch Battle of Britain Service, Falmouth Parish Church of King Charles The Martyr (1030am) - 7 September 2014.

Battle of Britain Church Service at Illogan Parish Church, Illogan, Redruth (2pm) – 10 September 2014.

Bodmin Branch – Annual Wreath Laying Service at Sea, departing Padstow Harbour (4pm) – 21 September 2014.

Northern (Midland) Region Meeting at County Council Club Eastgate Street, Stafford (1215pm) – 24 September 2014.

Barry Branch Anniversary Charity Concert featuring Jodi Bird at St Mary's Church, Holton Road, Barry (7.30pm) – 26 September 2014 - please call 07884331853 for tickets.

Area Welfare Seminar – The Helicopter Museum – 2 October 2014.

Area Welfare Seminar – RAF Cosford – 16 October 2014.

East Glamorgan & Gwent Regional Dance at Llandaff & Ely RAFA Club – 17 October 2014.

Mid Wales Region Meeting at Llanidloes (2pm) – 18 October 2014.

Devon Region Meeting at Plymouth Branch HQ (2.30pm) – 25 October 2014.

Northern (Midland) Region Meeting at County Council Club Eastgate Street, Stafford (1215pm) – 29 October 2014.

Cornwall Region Meeting at the Kernow Club, Truro (2pm) – 8 November 2014.

East Glamorgan & Gwent Region Meeting at Penarth Branch (2pm) – 22 November 2014.

Northern (Midland) Region Meeting at County Council Club Eastgate Street, Stafford (1215pm) – 26 November 2014.

North Wales Region Meeting at Llangollen Branch HQ (2pm) – 29 November 2014.

Devon Region AGM at Dawlish RAFA Club (2.30pm) – 7 February 2015.

Area Conference and Reunion at the Derwent Hotel, Torquay

*Paul Baker - Area Director*

***These days I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter. I go somewhere to get something and then wonder what I'm here after.***

Enclosure:

1. Storybook Wings Update.
2. Gloucester Branch Newsletter.