May 2019

ROYAL Wales, Midland and South Western 4ssociat **Area Newsletter** The charity that supports the RAF family



Marathon effort in London!

We are really pleased to report that the RAF Association presence at the London Marathon was a great success! With 18 Association runners, and an additional seven own space runners, they have raised over £21,000 already, with more fundraising and donations expected. Team RAFA went down to London and cheered, danced and supported the runners on their way, and greeted them afterwards with a massage, some food and a shower at the RAF Club. Runners told the Association about their motivations for running their fabulous memories made, and the amazing time they had at the event.

We are now accepting applications for consideration the London Marathon in 2020 and if you would like more details, please email challenges@rafa.org.uk

Branch development workshops

Branch development workshops are coming up again this year and we would like all branches to attend, especially if you could not make it last year.

We will be covering governance, charity law, finance and other important Association topics.

The first will take place at the Wimborne Branch Club on the 20 June and we shall be writing to adjacent branches.

Other days and venues will be announced

Please contact Paul Baker to confirm your attendance.

Paul.baker@rafa.org.uk or 01392 341392

AREA **MEMBERSHIP** 18,300

BRANCHES 81

RMGs 10

CLUBS 21

AREA LAPSED MEMBERS 835

Recognition for an outstanding RAFALO

Sir Simon Bollom, CEO of MOD Abbey Wood is pictured presenting Fiona McGregor with an RAF100 commendation from the Chief of the Air Staff.

This was awarded in recognition of her exceptional service given to the Royal Air Force in support of RAF100 in 2018.

Fiona has actively supported military people at Abbey Wood not least because she is the resettlement clerk in the JSAU. But many are also unaware of the amount of charity work she performs as the unit's representative for the Royal Air Forces Association, organising with the committee a Brew for the Few, Families Days and charity collections that take place over the course of the year.

These have raised literally thousands, over $\pm 11k$ in three years, and has contributed so much to the important fabric of the life for our people.

Fiona also assisted with the organising of the RAF100 events that were held at the Aerospace Museum in Bristol and is a proud member of the Association. As RAFALO she also provides invaluable assistance to our Weston-Super-Mare and City of Bristol branches by offering support and guidance along with the Area team and her RAFALO committee.

She has been an absolute inspiration to everyone, keep up the great work Fiona.



Growing our membership for 2019/20

The AGM season has now concluded. It is time to think about membership and organising your membership recruitment events;

- Please send in your 1056/1056A to your BSO ASAP.
- Have you submitted your branch online annual online return to the charity commission?
- Have committee members read the Governance Handbook?
- Have they signed the declaration of good character forms?

Membership renewals

If your branch members have not yet received their renewal letters or membership cards, please contact <u>membership@rafa.org.uk</u> and copy in your BSO.

Please remember that not every member renews at the same time.

Change of address for Mike Logue

Mike has now moved from the Wolverhampton Branch Club to RAF Shawbury. Please make a note of his amended contact details below.

RAF Shawbury, Shrewsbury, SY4 4DZ 01939 250351 Ext 7394 or 07776392899 mike.logue@rafa.org.uk



RAFA YOUTH

rafaYOUTH is the RAF Association's exciting online youth membership scheme for young flying enthusiasts who are into aviation, aircraft and adventure.

If you're aged between 12-17 you can become a youth member of the RAF Association, the charity that provides vital welfare support for serving and former-serving RAF personnel and their families.

With your membership you'll get:

- the opportunity to enter every free prize draw
- reduced or free entry to aviation events
- a free exclusive wristb and the opportunity to be nominated for the Cyprus Award

For more info please visit **rafayouth.org.uk**



Alcock and Brown Historical Exhibition

As part of the centenary of Alcock and Brown's pioneering flight across the Atlantic on the 14/15 June 1919, the RAF are planning a range of things and some of these will happen in Swansea. Recognising that Brown had very strong links with Swansea in his adult life, working in Swansea for Vickers aircraft company, living in the city, and also being the first Officer Commanding of the Swansea Air Cadet Sqn.

Brown's son was also born in Swansea, went to the then Gowerton Grammar School, then became an RAF Pilot but was tragically killed flying his Mosquito aircraft on D-Day in June 1944.

In terms of what the RAF have planned for Swansea, we have an Alcock and Brown RAF / and Air Cadet parade on the Wales Airshow weekend on 7 July, but the bit I wanted to highlight now is the planned RAF Historical Exhibition. This has been created by the RAF's Air Historical Branch and is a bilingual exhibition of the amazing flight that these two individuals made 100 years ago. It also has some history of Brown Junior too, saying something about his local connections and the story of D-Day in a small, but poignant way.

The RAF Historical Exhibition will be situated in the Swansea Museum in its main display room. It will open on Tue 11 Jun and will be staffed by RAF personnel and 215 Sqn Cadets during the week 11-14 Jun inclusive (centenary day is 14/15 Jun). After that, the exhibition will stay in the Swansea Museum for a couple of months and be looked after by museum staff, so it will still be available to view until mid-September. It will open to members of the public free of charge. The Alcock and Brown story is fascinating, in terms of human endeavour and achievement, together with aspects regarding the aircraft technology for the flight and how they actually navigated their way across the Atlantic at what was a very primitive time for the science of navigation. I hope the exhibition will be popular and will promote much civic pride locally.

As well as the RAF Exhibition, 215 Sqn RAF Air Cadets are also bringing A&B items to display, including a Vickers Vimy model they have built. The Swansea Museum also have a number of RAF display items from WW2 that they are going to display with us.

Air Cdre Dai Williams – Air Officer Wales

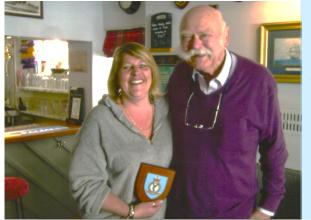
News from around the Area

Cosham and Chippenham

Members of the Corsham and Chippenham Branch were fortunate to spend an evening at the Wiltshire Crime and Communications Centre (CCC) at Devizes on the 9 April.

Claire Baines supported by Sarah Hodder, from Call Handling, who was to host the visit to the CCC and who had arranged a special presentation on the development, deployment and operations of the Wiltshire Police Force drone capability, met the twelve members at the Centre.





Lord Nelson is honoured in Bridport

RAF Association member Bob Bickers presents an Association plaque to Camille Hilton, landlord of the Lord Nelson pub in Bridport in appreciation of hosting members monthly meetings at the pub for the last two years.

For Bridport and Lyme Regis branch contact Alan Kidson 01308 420135 or Bill Davies 01308 281200. Meetings are every second Tuesday at 1800 at the Lord Nelson.

RAF100 tapestry showcase

Have you considered a branch outing to the Jet Age Museum at Gloucestershire Airport? Between June and October this year the RAFA Gloucestershire RAF100 commemorative tapestry will be displayed along with details of all of the RFC/RAF stations of Gloucestershire. The museum has a small cafe and the Aviator Restaurant is only a short distance away. You can get a personal tour around the museum from Ray Bunnage on 01452 415064 <u>rafagloucester@gmail.com</u>



Cornwall region quiz

The County of Cornwall regional quiz took place this month and was attended by local branches at the Mount Charles Social Club and quiz master for the night was our own Alan Goudge.

The winners on the night were the Falmouth Branch with Camborne, Redruth and Illogan Branch as runners up.



Please send all branch news articles to Ian Campbell (BSO) ian.campbell@rafa.org.uk

News from our RAF Association Liaison Officers

MoD Abbey Wood

The team over at MoD Abbey Wood have been cracking on and raising money for the Wings Appeal by holding their own Brew for the Few. Pictured is Flt Lt Steve Jones holding one of the 2019 Warrant Officer ducks.

Over the next few months they will continue their work with the Association and attending their two annual family's days where they raise Wings funds and pass onto their adopted branch.





RAF Cosford

The RAFALO team at RAF Cosford got into the Easter spirit this year and held a raffle to raise money for the Association.

The team did an egg-cellent job and raised £248.55!

The Area RAFALO

In order for the RAFALO community to provide the support you all truly deserve I would like to take this opportunity to offer you my ear.

It is vital to the Association and to me that engagement with local branches remains resolute. Therefore, I would be most grateful if you have the necessity for any assistance from the Service, either during Wings Appeal or just to chat with your members, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

If you have an active RAFALO already then fantastic, but if you don't, please contact me or your BSO in the first instance, so we can organise a visit.

I am enormously grateful for your time and consideration and I look forward to working more closely with your branch this year and in the future.



FS Dean Atkinson

Military network: 95561 4958 Telephone: 01902 704958 Email: dean.atkinson275@mod.uk or dean.atkinson684@btinternet.com

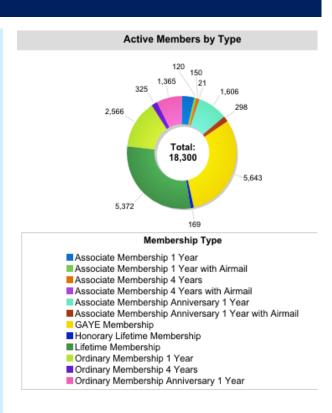
Dean

Membership Matters

Here's our latest membership status.

Let's keep growing the area - if each branch can increase its membership base by ten per cent, then we will be on target to achieve our aim.

The more members you have the larger your rebate and the more support you can get for fundraising and events.

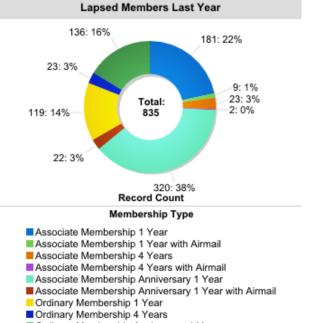


This 'doughnut' represents our biggest challenge – lapsed members.

If we can work to drive this number down together, then we will be doing exceptionally well.

So how can we reduce this number?

- Keep in regular contact with all of your members via letters, emails, social media and in person
- Request membership lists from Gary Larsen to make sure you regularly know what is happening with your members
- Keep meetings relaxed and enjoyable to harness your members' interest in the work of the branch and the wider Association



Your Area Council 2019-22

Air Vice-Marshal Martin Clark – Area President

Branches are covered by our Area Councillors as below.

John Tisbury Area Chairman

- Birmingham Moseley
- Birmingham Sheldon
- Bromsgrove & Redditch
- Coventry
- Dudley
- Leamington Spa and Warwick
- Rugby and District
- Solihull
- West Bromwich
- Gloucester
- Kidderminster
- Stourbridge (RMG)

Michael Revell

- Cosford and District
- Ellesmere
- Market Drayton
- Newcastle under Lyme
- Shrewsbury and District
- Stafford
- Stone
- Tamworth
- Wrekin and Wellington

Roy Lobley Area Vice-Chairman

- Burnham on Sea
- Calne and District
- City of Bristol
- Corsham and Chippenham
- Frome
- Melksham
- Mid Somerset
- Swindon
- Trowbridge and West Wiltshire
- Weston-Super-Mare
- Yeovil
- RAF Association Concert Band (RMG)
- Salisbury (RMG)
- Warminster (RMG)

John Williams

- Anglesey
- Brecon
- Knighton and District
- Llangollen
- Llanidloes
- Rhyl and Abergele
- Towyn and Aberdovey
- Cardigan (RMG)
- Llandudno (RMG)

Administered through Area Office

- Haverfordwest
- Neath
- Pontardawe and District
- Porthcawl and Kenfig Hill
- Swansea and District
- St Davids and Solva
- RAF Reserves Virtual Branch
- WRAF Virtual Branch

Steve Colhoun

- Barnstaple and North Devon
- Bodmin
- Camborne, Redruth and Illogan

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- Dawlish
- Exmouth
- Falmouth
- North Cornwall
- Penzance
- Plymouth
- RAF St Mawgan
- Sailing
- St Austel
- Torquay
- Truro

Lyn Addison

- Cannock Chase
- Cheltenham
- Dursley and South Gloucestershire
- Evesham
- Leek
- North Cotswolds
- Wolverhampton and District
- Worcester and District

Howard Provis

- Aberdare
- Bargoed and Blackwood
- Barry
- Cwmbran
- Llandaff and Ely
- Penarth
- Treorchy
- Chepstow and District (RMG)

Jon Tomlin

- Christchurch
- Poole
- Shaftesbury
- Sherborne

(RMG)

- Sturminster Newton and Giilingham
- Weymouth and PortlandWimborne

Illminster and Chard (RMG)

Dunkeswell (AC) and Honiton

Bridport and Lyme Regis (RMG)

Dates for your diary

Area

- D-Day Concert (Redgrave Theatre, Bristol) 2 June
- RAF Salon Orchestra (Royal Cornwall Show) 6 to 8 June
- Plymouth Armed Forces Day with service at the RAF and Allied Air Forces monument - 29 June (0930hrs)
- Swindon Battle of Britain Ball (Marriott Hotel, Swindon) 7 September (1900hrs) contact <u>rafaswindon@yahoo.com</u> for tickets
- Tribute at Sea (Bodmin) Sunday 22 September

National

- Gloucester Tall Ships (Gloucester Quays) 25 to 28 May
- Cosford Air Show (RAF Cosford) 9 June
- RAF Association Remembrance Garden Service (National Memorial Arboretum) – 14 June
- Weston Air Festival (Weston-Super-Mare) 22 to 23 June
- National Armed Forces Day (Salisbury) 29 June
- Armed Forces Weekend (National Memorial Arboretum) 29 to 30 June
- Wales Air Show (Swansea Bay) 6 to 7 July
- Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) (RAF Fairford) 19 to 21 July

The RAF Association Concert Band

Bank Holiday coming up soon! However, the musicians are all primed for the forthcoming sorties. We are especially looking for competent players on Trombone & Percussion. Other instrumentalists may also apply. No subscriptions to pay, we just require your talent, to meet the diverse programme of engagements planned. Further details about and how to join the Band please ring 07939 424041 or contact the Musical Director: Peter Skellon - <u>peterskellon@btinternet.com</u>

Please visit the band at - rafaconcertband.org.uk

Annual Conference 2019

For those that were unable to attend this year's Annual Conference in Birmingham, you can watch the presentations and resolutions here <u>rafa.org.uk/annual-conference-2019</u>

Newsletter attachments

- Area team contact list
- Volunteer Coordinator update
- City of Bristol Branch veterans lunch





A quick reminder that you can call the team direct:

- Paul Baker (Area Director) 01392 341392 or 07796887195. Paul.baker@rafa.org.uk
- Gary Larsen (Area Administrator) 01392 462088. Gary.larsen@rafa.org.uk
- Lucie Paddison (Volunteer Coordinator) 07775959376. Lucie.paddison@rafa.org.uk

Branch Support Officers

- Alan Goudge (BSO South West) 01392 341390 or 07827962766. Alan.goudge@rafa.org.uk
- Ian Campbell (BSO Central) 01793 967019 or 07584577064. Ian.campbell@rafa.org.uk
- Mike Logue (BSO Mids and Mid/North Wales) 01939 250351 Ext 7394 or 07776392899.
 Mike.logue@rafa.org.uk

Wales Welfare Team

- Barbara Howells (Area Welfare Manager Wales) 01495 368341. Barbara.howells@rafa.org.uk
- Andrew Carter (Deputy Area Welfare Manager Wales) 01495 368342. Andrew.carter@rafa.org.uk
- Stacey Edwards (Welfare Administrator Wales) 01495 368343. Stacey.edwards@rafa.org.uk

Midlands Welfare Team

- Tracey Khan (Area Welfare Manager Midlands) 0121 449 9356. Tracey.khan@rafa.org.uk
- Audrey Huggins (Welfare Administrator Midlands) 0121 449 9356. Audrey.huggins@rafa.org.uk

South Western Welfare Team

- Glenford Bishop (Area Welfare Manager South West) 01392 341395. Glenford.bishop@rafa.org.uk
- Sally Hall (Deputy Area Welfare Manager South West) 01392 341393. Sally.hall@rafa.org.uk
- Gary Larsen (Deputy Area Welfare Manager South West) 01392 341393. Gary.larsen@rafa.org.uk



Lucie Paddison, Area Volunteer Coordinator, Wales, Midland and South Western Area



Welfare is at the absolute heart of the Royal Air Forces Association - our reason for existing is as a member-led welfare charity. By association, everyone in the organisation from fundraiser to member to welfare officer or caseworker is a part of the welfare chain.

Our Area Welfare Managers regularly update the Volunteering Team on the need for new volunteers in their areas and we are then tasked with recruiting those volunteers through a number of volunteering forums as well as by approaching local groups and organisations that might help.

Below is a list of all the current volunteering roles we are advertising and the up-to-date list can always be found at <u>rafa.org.uk/volunteer/search</u>. If you would like to volunteer your time or find out more about any of our roles, please contact me on <u>volunteers@rafa.org.uk</u> or call 07775 959376.

RAFA Area	Role vacancy required	Location of role	
Midlands	Caseworker Birmingham (Dudley and West Bi		
Midlands	Befriender	Coventry	
Midlands	Befriender	Gloucester	
Midlands	Befriender Hereford		
Midlands	Caseworker	Kidderminster	
Midlands	Befriender	Leamington Spa	
Midlands	Befriender	Market Drayton	
Midlands	Befriender	Rubery, Birmingham	
Midlands	Befriender	Stoke on Trent	
Midlands	Befriender	Tamworth	
Midlands	Befriender	Walsall	
Midlands	Caseworker	Wolverhampton	
Midlands	Befriender Worcester		
South West	Befriender Bournemouth		
South West	Befriender	Bristol	
South West	Branch Volunteer	Bristol	
South West	Befriender	Falmouth	
South West	Befriender St Austell		
South West	Befriender	r Swindon	
South West	Branch Volunteer Swindon		
South West	Branch Volunteer	Wimborne	
Wales	Befriender	Aberystwyth	
Wales	Caseworker Aberystwyth		
Wales	Caseworker Anglesey		
Wales	Caseworker	Brecon	
Wales	Befriender	Builth Wells	
Wales	Befriender	Cardigan	
Wales	Caseworker	Cardigan	
Wales	Befriender	Carmarthen	
Wales	Befriender	Gwent	

Wales	Befriender	Llandudno	
Wales	Caseworker	Llandudno	
Wales	Befriender	Newport	
Wales	Caseworker	Pembrokeshire	
Wales	Befriender	Rhondda Cynon Taf	
Wales	Caseworker	Wrexham	

Volunteer Role	Vacancy Status - <u>Wales Area</u>	Vacancy Status - <u>Midland</u> <u>Area</u>	Vacancy Status - <u>South</u> <u>Western Area</u>
Befriender	12 current vacancies 2 filled in 2019	6 current vacancies 6 filled in 2019	2 current vacancies 4 filled in 2019
Caseworker	8 current vacancies 1 filled in 2019	3 current vacancies 2 filled in 2019	4 current vacancies 2 filled in 2019 (1 previously "filled" vacancy reopened as volunteer delayed due to medical condition)
Branch Volunteers	0 current vacancies	0 current vacancies	1 vacancies at City of Bristol Branch (since June 2018) 3 vacancies at Swindon Branch (since Oct 2018)
	0 placed 2019	0 placed 2019	1 volunteer interest with Swindon Branch (placed volunteer & branch in contact)

Summary of recent recruitment activities that the Volunteering Team has undertaken for all current vacancies	Contact made with several council Armed Forces Champions to discuss promotion of vacancies. Continuation of poster campaigns to local areas. Continuation of posting to local Volunteer Centres and Freegle sites for all new vacancies. Continuation of targeting of different local groups/organisations for longstanding welfare vacancies	
	To view gmap of all current WMSW Area vacancies, click here	

POIGNANT GATHERING TO TAKE PLACE AT STONE MEMORIAL TO MARK FORMER DORSET AIRFIELD'S VITAL ROLE IN D-DAY, 1944.



Tarrant Rushton Airfield Marking the 75th anniversary of its part in D-Day 1944

A poignant commemoration marking the 75th anniversary of a former Dorset airfield's vital role in the historic D-Day invasion of occupied Europe in June 1944, is to take place where three waves of Halifax bombers took off – towing wooden gliders carrying soldiers bound for Normandy.

The gathering to remember and honour those people who flew from, and served at, the Royal Air Force station at Tarrant Rushton takes place close to the site of the former airfield's main gate on Sunday, 2 June 2019, from 2pm.

The commemoration venue is the former airfield's stone memorial at 'Windy Corner' on the road to Witchampton – at postcode DT11 8SB – in the shadow of a black wartime aircraft hangar. The first British troops to land in Normandy in the first few minutes of D-Day, Tuesday, 6 June, 1944, flew in six Horsa gliders from Tarrant Rushton late on Monday, 5 June, 1944, to seize a vital bridge, near Caen, later named 'Pegasus Bridge' in honour of the Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry troops.

D-Day, 1944, saw two major lifts of Halifax bombers towing troop-carrying Horsa and the tankcarrying Hamilcar gliders bound for Normandy – 26 Halifaxes and their gliders taking off in the early hours of Tuesday, 6 June, 1944, with another 32 Halifaxes and gliders taking off in the early evening of D-Day.

With the coming of peace, Tarrant Rushton airfield became the home to pioneering aviation research and manufacturing company Flight Refuelling in 1947, the company leaving the airfield in 1980 after which demolition followed. Flight Refuelling later became Cobham PLC which is based in nearby Wimborne.

The Tarrant Rushton airfield D-Day 75th anniversary commemoration on the afternoon of Sunday, 2 June 2019, is being organised by the Wimborne branch of the Royal Air Forces Association in Dorset.

Branch chairman Eddie Robertson said: "Royal Air Force, Glider Pilot Regiment and Army veterans, former Flight Refuelling airfield staff, their families, friends and anyone with an affinity with the former airfield – and its remarkable history across almost 40 years – are invited to attend and bring chairs.

"Tarrant Rushton airfield has a remarkable and important history in times of both war and peace. The courage of its Halifax aircrews, glider pilots and airborne troops should be remembered and commemorated. The bravery and sacrifice of the men who failed to return after flying from the airfield should never be forgotten," he added.

Opening in May 1943, Tarrant Rushton airfield was built to train bomber and glider pilots for the D-Day, Arnhem and Rhine Crossing operations as well as the dropping of secret agents from the Special

Operations Executive in occupied Europe, from southern France to the Low Countries and Norway.

Flying as low as 60 feet to avoid radar and German night fighters, Halifax crews from Tarrant Rushton also took the Allies' secret war of subversive supply, troops and arms dropping in darkness deep into occupied Europe and Scandinavia.

Mr Robertson explained: "Between April 1944, and May 1945, Tarrant Rushton's No. 298 and No. 644 Squadrons flew 2,284 missions into occupied Europe, from southern France up to Norway. "Twenty-seven Halifax bombers were shot down and more than 160 aircrew lost their lives – British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealanders and men from other Commonwealth countries. Also killed were glider pilots, airborne troops and the Special Operations Executive secret agents dropped behind enemy lines," he added.

The former Tarrant Rushton airfield is now a huge windswept 300-acre field of waving corn under the shadow of Badbury Rings between Wimborne and Blandford.

Back in 1944, the hill-top airfield above the village of Tarrant Rushton was one of the Royal Air Force's most important airfields in the secret war against the stranglehold on mainland Europe and home to 3,000 men and women from across the country and the Commonwealth.

All that remains now is a small strip of the main concrete runway, two black aircraft hangars put to agricultural and business use as well as the perimeter track once used for taxiing bombers and gliders but now a public footpath.

With its three large runways in the shape of an 'A', four large hangars and 300 buildings, Tarrant Rushton was built by Wimpey and took just eight months to complete at a cost of £1 million, more than £30 million in today's money.

In the poignant words of a 1944 glider pilot, the late Bernard Halsall: "Tarrant Rushton was our home. It was the base from which we flew and hopefully returned. It became the centre of our lives. I'm sure its memory is held in high regard by all those who were privileged to serve there."

For more information – or to register interest in attending – call John Nicholson on 01202 882895 or email rafa.wimborne@gmail.com. The Tarrant Rushton airfield memorial postcode is DT11 8SB.



CITY OF BRISTOL BRANCH VETERANS' LUNCH

TO BE HELD ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH STARTING AT

12pm WEDNESDAY 12TH JUNE 2019

VETERANS OF ALL MILITARY SERVICES WELCOME

TWO COURSE FIXED MENU £6 PER PERSON VEGETARIAN OPTION AVAILABLE

TO TAKE PLACE AT:

CITY OF BRISTOL RAFA CLUB CARLTON HOUSE 38 EASTFIELD WESTBURY-ON-TRYM BRISTOL BS9 4BE

For further Information call Tony Peters on 07971 242845



This event is being held in association with:





www.rafa.org.uk/bristol