



ROYAL AIR FORCE REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

www.rafregt.org.uk

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

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The Best of the Best

**The Best Fighters in the RAF
Operate on the Ground**

**The Royal Air Force Regiment.
Ground-based specialists,
protecting RAF assets from
enemy attack.**

**NEWSLETTER NO: 228
JUNE 2008**

THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 228 JUNE 2008

Dear Readers.

Branch Appeal Number 1 Goodies for the Military Ward

It is most important that remember the dangers that our young men and women serving on operations are all facing, so please remember the appeal your Branch Committee have set up. We are now sending "goodies" to the lads in Selly Oak Hospital. Through Ralph Dean and Roy Thomas, we have made contact with the military ward nursing staff and at their request we have already supplied them with thirty shaving mirrors. (Not fifty as I said in last month's newsletter). It seems that the lads often arrive in the military ward with very little kit and this includes shaving mirrors. Apparently they have been borrowing the nurses powder compacts to use their mirrors to shave with so this was something of a priority. The shaving mirrors were supplied to us at a substantial discount by Bodylines of 1135 Warwick Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham and we are very grateful to them.

Now we have a firm contact with the nursing staff at Selly Oak, they will give us a new list of "goodies" required every month, so we have a continuing need for donations. Their next request was for waterproof protectors for casts and dressings for - full/half, arm, finger and elbow; full leg and below the knee. We are going to supply these and Ralph and Roy have obtained a quantity of two off of each in average sizes for £127.45 so the Military Ward will have them before my next newsletter goes out. The Military Ward staff are very grateful for our efforts and have shown their appreciation with the following card given to Ralph and Roy.

**To Mr Dean and the Birmingham Branch,
RAF Regiment Association**

Much appreciation is expressed to all for the kind purchase and donation of hand-held shaving mirrors for the military casualties on Ward S4 Selly Oak Hospital. These mirrors have given the lads some independence in their care and have enabled them to become particular in their grooming and their recovery.

Many thanks for your consideration to our needs. Major C Birkby, QARANC SN Ward S4.

Now not only are we now receiving donations from Birmingham Branch members, we have also received a £50.00 donation from the Sussex Branch. Our grateful thanks to you all but we need more, so come on lads, just remember what the lads in the Military Ward have done for all of us and so see what you can do and as we often say, "dig deep and die happy".

We have already voted to give a Branch donation of £200.00 this year, to be given in four blocks of £50.00 each and we would like you all to consider supporting this appeal. If any of you would like to contribute items to this appeal, you can either take them directly to Selly Oak Hospital and ask for Major Andy Maine, or post them in a parcel to Major A Maine RLC, RCDM Ward S4, Selly Oak Hospital, Raddlebarn Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6JD.

If anyone would like to contribute financially to this appeal, please send a cheque to the Branch Treasurer Tom Magee, made out to the Birmingham Branch – Military Ward Appeal.

Branch Appeal Number 2 Membership of the RAF Regiment fund

In Branch Appeal Number 1, I said that Appeal No 1 is most important. Well this Appeal No 2 is also most important. I must admit that I do not understand why I need to make this appeal for we are all ex-Rocks with a tremendous pride in our Regiment and its achievements, so why do the majority of us not properly support it by joining the RAF Regiment Fund?

Why on earth would you not wish to join the RAF Regiment Fund then, is it the old chestnut what's in for me? Well the RAF Regiment Fund exists to support the preservation of the good name, history and traditions of the Corps and also to support member's activities, and that is something that we should all be interested in, that's why. As John F Kennedy said in his Inaugural Speech on Friday 20th January 1961, when he had just been elected as President

of the USA, “ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country”. You too should be asking not what the RAF Regiment Fund can do for you but what you can do to forward the interests of the RAF Regiment. But to answer what can the RAF Regiment Fund do for you, the answer is plain.

As a member of the RAF Regiment Fund, you get posted to your home two copies each year of “Centurion”, the Journal of the RAF Regiment. To quote the RAF Regiment Secretary in his Editorial Column in the Spring 2008 Issue Number 24 of “Centurion”: “Centurion is fast gaining a reputation in UK military and publishing circles as one of the best regimental journals, but it didn’t just happen and it will need constant support and nurturing if it is to flourish”.

As a member of the Fund I can vouch for the excellence of “Centurion” and if as I assume, you are interested in the activities of our Corps, there is no better way of keeping up to date with what the lads are doing than reading the “Centurion”. In the past, I have written many articles about the RAF Regiment Fund and asked all of you to consider joining it but not many of you have and I am at a loss to understand why not. I know that there is a cost involved but when you consider what you get for the cost - £12.00 per year – it is still difficult to understand.

Again as the RAF Regiment Secretary quoted in his Editorial, “Yet only a minority of the serving members subscribe to it and – assuming that there are probably 15-20,000 surviving ex-Rocks around the globe, I have to ask why more haven’t joined? Unlike many Army regiments, we don’t demand membership, but why would someone not wish to support their Corps Fund?”

So go on, give it some thought and then come up with the solution – please join the RAF Regiment Fund and do some good for the serving lads and for the Association too for if possible, the Fund support members of the RAF Regiment Association as well – for example, when the Birmingham Branch was collecting money to pay for the RAF Regiment Memorial and Garden, the RAF Regiment Fund donated £1,000.

And just to give you a flavour of what you will get from “Centurion”, here’s a description of the contents of the latest issue. Each of the articles is a full length article and all are printed on glossy paper. The magazine itself is 3/8” thick

– or if you prefer, 9 mm thick. What more could you want from a magazine?

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And just to finish off this article about "Centurion", there is some information in it that you will not find anywhere else. I have published articles about the new book of the history of the RAF Regiment "Constant Vigilance" - The RAF Regt in the Burma Campaign by Dr Nigel Warwick and in my News of the RAF Regiment Column in every newsletter, the RAF Regiment Secretary's input includes a section headed General Notices. And in this section every month, information about this book is also published. But - I did not know that this book marked the first – or Volume 1 - in a series of similar volumes aimed at covering the Corps' short but rich history.

Dr Warwick is currently working on Volume 2, the History of the RAF Armoured Cars and preparations are well under way for Volume 3, the History of the RAF Regiment in the European theatre in World War Two. Volume 4 will probably cover the Mediterranean theatre. It takes a herculean effort to compile and then publish these volumes and it also costs about

£6,000 just to get a publisher to take each one on. Without the sterling and sustained efforts of people like Group Captain Kingsley Oliver and now Dr Nigel Warwick, we probably would not have any of them.

Did you know any of this? I didn't and without "Centurion" I still would not know so there you are, apart from keeping you up-to-date with what the lads are currently getting up to; it also gives you lots of other Regiment information too. And at the bottom of page 17, there is a great shot of the Crest on top of the Birmingham Branch Standard Pole, so we sometimes get featured too. The Fund also supports many of the challenges that the serving lads go in for, and that all helps towards maintaining our Corps tremendous reputation in HM Armed Forces but it need us all to do our bit.

So if any of you would now like to join the RAF Regiment Fund then give me a call and I will get you an Application Form and post it to you. Due to greatly increased postage and other costs, it has just gone up from £10.00 per year to £12.00 per year but it is still a great bargain. You will have to complete a Direct Debit Form and send it off to the Fund Secretary and it will be as easy as that.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

This month 16th June was the 20th Anniversary of the Birmingham Branch and to mark this momentous occasion, here are a few notable dates of events in the life of our Branch. Many of you will remember them, especially our nineteen Founder Members.

**WE WERE INVOLVED IN FORMING THE
FIRST RAF REGIMENT (COMRADES)
ASSOCIATION** 19th December 1987

THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH FORMED
16th June 1988

(And we also became the first Branch in the RAF
Regiment (Comrades) Association)

**WE ORGANISED THE FIRST REUNION
AND AGM WEEKEND AT THE DE VERE
HOTEL, COVENTRY**

17th – 19th March 1989

**WE WERE INVOLVED IN FORMING THE
FIRST RAF REGIMENT ASSOCIATION**

1st February 1990

**WE ORGANISED THE SECOND REUNION
AND AGM WEEKEND AT THE DE VERE
HOTEL, COVENTRY**

16th – 18th March 1990

**WE TRANSFERRED INTO THE NEW RAF
REGIMENT ASSOCIATION**

1st May 1990

(And also became the first Branch in the RAF
Regiment Association)

**WE WERE FIRST BRANCH TO OBTAIN A
STANDARD**

14th June 1990

**WE WERE SUCCESSFUL AT RAF
BARHAM IN GETTING THE THEN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF REGIMENT TO
ORGANISE SENIOR NCOs AS PARADE
MARSHALS FROM 1991 ONWARDS FOR
LONDON REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE**

4th November 1990

**WE ORGANISED EX-RAF REGIMENT
MEMBERS TO MARCH AT REAR OF RAF
COLUMN STEPPING OFF LATE TO FORM
SEPARATE EX-RAF REGIMENT COLUMN**

11th November 1990

**OURS WAS THE FIRST BRANCH
STANDARD TO BE DEDICATED - AT
BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL**

19th May 1991

**WE HAD THE FIRST LONDON
REMEMBRANCE PARADE TO HAVE
SNCOs AS PARADE MARSHALS WITH
SEPARATE EX-RAF REGIMENT COLUMN**

10th November 1991

**GALA REUNION WEEKEND AT GRAND
HOTEL BIRMINGHAM TO CELEBRATE
THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF REGIMENT**

24th – 26th January 1992

**WE PRESENTED A BOFORS GUN
PAINTING TO AIR COMMODORE
MITCHELL AT THE GRAND HOTEL**

25th January 1992

**BEATING RETREAT CEREMONY TO
CELEBRATE 50TH ANNIVERSARY
ORGANISED BY TED CAINE AT CASTLE
GREEN HEREFORD**

17th June 1992

**RAF REGIMENT DISPLAY ORGANISED
AND SET UP BY TED CAINE AT RAF
MUSEUM COSFORD**

January – March 1993

**THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH ANNUAL
DINNER DANCE HAD THE CURRENT AND
TWO PAST CGS PRESENT**

October 1996

**WE SET UP THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH
RAF REGIMENT MEMORIAL GARDEN
APPEAL FUND**

20th July 1998

**RAF REGIMENT MEMORIAL AND
GARDEN WAS PURCHASED**

15th January 1999

**THE MEMORIAL ERECTED IN GARDEN
TOGETHER WITH TWO FLAGPOLES
DONATED BY BIRMINGHAM BRANCH**

February 2001

**THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH
ORGANISED THE PROFESSIONAL
LAYING OF SLABS LAID IN THE FORM
OF A TEE**

March 2001

**WE ORGANISED THE DEDICATION OF
THE RAF REGIMENT MEMORIAL**

5th April 2001

**TO COMMEMORATE THE NEW
ASSOCIATION THE BIRMINGHAM
BRANCH PRESENTED CARVED OAK
CROSSED RIFLES AND RAF REGIMENT
FLASH TO THE RAF REGIMENT
MUSEUM**

1st April 2006

**PRESENTATION OF CARVED OAK RAF
REGIMENT CREST TO THE RAF
REGIMENT MUSEUM**

September 2006

No doubt there will be many more that I
have missed out that you may remember. Let me
know if I have missed out anything significant but
they must be related to the achievements of the
Birmingham Branch.

BRANCH SUBSCRIPTIONS

Association subscriptions should have
been paid up on 1st February so after three months
of reminders, eight non-payers have now been
removed from the Branch Roll of Members and
from the Association.

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

I have a list of members of other branches who have asked to receive Birmingham Branch newsletters. The Subscription for this service is now £7.00 per year. If any non-member of the Birmingham Branch would like to receive our newsletters, please send a cheque for £7.00 as above, to the Branch Treasurer Tom Magee.

NEWS OF THE RAF REGIMENT



FROM THE RAF REGIMENT SECRETARY

General: The following Parish Notices are provided for your information and interest.

DEATH NOTICES:

O'DWYER-RUSSELL. Former RAF Regt Wg Cdr John David O'Dwyer-Russell OBE, born 31 Aug 30, died on 26 Apr 08, aged 77, after a long illness. He was commissioned on 31 Aug 50 and promoted to Wg Comdr on 1 Jan 73. He commanded, among others, II Sqn RAF Regt at RAF Colerne and 5 Wg RAF Regt at RAF Wittering. He retired on 31 Aug 85.

The funeral was held at the RC Church of St Thomas More, Mount Pleasant, Hartley-Wintney, at 14.00 on Tue 6 May 08. A reception was held afterwards at the adjacent Cricket Club Pavilion, to which all were invited. Family flowers only were requested, but donations may be made to Cancer Relief (UK) via the Funeral Directors, A W Goddard Ltd, Kent Road, Fleet (tel 01252 616431). Letters may be sent to his widow, Mrs Pru O'Dwyer-Russell at 31 Springfield Avenue, Hartley Whitney, Hants RG27 8SF. The Corps extends its sincere condolences to the family.

PEARSON. Former RAF Regt Cpl, Arthur ('Chum') Pearson, born 18 Apr 36, died on 22 Apr 08 aged 72. He served between 1954-58 on 28 (LAA) Sqn RAF Regt at Fazburg and at RAF Guetersloh, West Germany. He was a member of the Cambridgeshire Branch of the RAF Regt Assoc. The private funeral took place in Wales on 28 Apr. A memorial Service was held at 14.30 on 8 May 08 at St Mary's Parish Church in Eaton Socon, in St Neots, Cambridgeshire, with a reception afterwards in

the White Horse public house. His wife, Shirley, who may be reached at 5 Pwllmarl, Drafach-Velinder, Llandysuly, Carmarthen, SA44 5YN, survives him.

WALKER. Former RAF Regt Gnr Ralph Walker died recently. He served from 1946-56 on, among others, 59 (Rifle) Sqn RAF Regt at RAF Vahn, 17 (LAA) Sqn RAF Regt at Celle and also in Egypt. He was a keen supporter of the Tyne & Wear Branch of the RAF Regt Assoc. No further details are known at this time. The funeral was held at Sunderland Crematorium, Chester Rd, Sunderland, on Tue 6 May at 13.30. Family flowers only were requested but donations may be made to the RAF Benevolent Fund via the funeral director, Alan Duckworth, who is contactable on 0191 567 2705. The Corps extends its sincere condolences to the family.

OLIVER. Former Gnd Gnr and RAF Regt Gnr Walter Oliver, born 20 Jun 16, died on 27 Mar 08 aged 91. He enlisted in May 40 and served with 2741 Sqn RAF Regt at RAF Manston and in Egypt, Palestine Sicily, Algiers, Belgium and Germany. He was demobilized in 1946 and was a founder member of the Norfolk Branch of the RAF Regt Assoc. The funeral was held on 14 Apr 08. No further details are available. He is survived by his wife, Mary, who may be contacted at The Chalet, Cart Gap, Happisburgh, Norfolk, NR12 0QL. The Corps extends its sincere condolences to the family.

HUDSON. Former Gnd Gnr and RAF Regt Gnr Edward Herbert Hudson has died. He served between 1941-46 in India, Burma and Japan. The funeral was held at Barrow Church on 9 May. No further details are known at this time. The Corps extends its sincere condolences to the surviving family.

GENERAL NOTICES:

Move of Air Historical Branch

The AHB has moved from RAF Bentley Priory to RAF Northolt. The new address is: AHB (RAF), Bldg 824, RAF Northolt, West End Road, Ruislip, Middx HA4 6NG. The AHB may be telephoned at RAF Northolt on 020 8833 8163.

Move of RAF Personnel Records Branch

The former RAF Personnel Management Agency at RAF Innsworth no longer exists. Those wishing to obtain personal records of serving or former members of the RAF should contact: RAF Disclosures, Rm 221b, Trenchard Hall, RAF Cranwell, Sleaford, Lincs, NG34 8HB.

The BT tel no is 01400 26, followed by one of the following extension nos: Data Protection Act Cell (for one's own personal records): Extn 8172 or 8173 or 8174. For Third Party enquiries: Officers - Extn 8159, Airmen Extns 8163 or 8168 or 8162. Please note that a £30 administrative fee may be charged for personal records in certain circumstances. Those requiring records for obituary purposes will normally be given a précis of the Service Record for which there is no charge at present.

Appeal for Historical Photographs – Humber Armoured Cars post-WWII

There is a need for a series of 1 Sqn RAF Regt Humber Armoured Car photographs in the post-WWII period for the forthcoming RAF Regt-sponsored RAF Armoured Cars history book. If anyone has such copies, the Regt Sec would appreciate their loan for copying. They will of course be returned.

Responses to Letters etc

The volume of hard-copy mail to the Regt Sec has increased significantly of late and he is well behind in responding to letters. Additionally, many writers fail to include their names and addresses, which makes for some difficulty in replying! If possible, please use Email wherever possible. Please note that we do not hold personal details in the RAF Regt Museum archives; you will need to contact the RAF Personnel Management Agency at RAF High Wycombe, the RAF Air Historical Branch (moving soon to RAF Northolt or the Public Records Office at Kew.

RAF Regt Fund Membership

The Fund membership stands at around 1600, which is significantly less than the number of both Serving and Retired members. The Fund is established to support the preservation of the good name, history and traditions of the Corps, and also to support members' activities. The Fund Committee's mission in 2008 is to have every member recruit another member. Please help YOUR FUND to achieve its aims for the Corps. If you are not a member already, why not contact your unit representative (if you are still serving) or the RAF Regt Fund Sec (Flt Lt Andy Gaskell) or the RAF Regiment Secretary at Honington for a membership form. Membership brings with it the annual subscription for the 6-monthly Centurion journal, rated as one of the best Regimental journals in the British Services.

Change of RAF Regt Fund Subscription Rates – Year 2008-9

The RAF Regt Fund Committee voted, at the Fund's AGM on 19 Mar, to increase the annual Basic Membership Subscription from £10 to £12, while the Enhanced Membership Subscription (for serving offrs) will be increased from £15 to £18. This is the first and only increase to the subscription rates since its inception in 1996 and is caused in the main by the steady and significant increase in Centurion production and distribution costs over the past 5 years. The increase for new members took effect on 1 May 08 and, for existing members, the increase will be implemented at the annual Direct Debit run in Sep 08. Please do not use the old (2008-1) form. New forms are available from the Regt Sec or the Fund Sec (Flt Lt Gaskell) at RAF Honington, or Unit Fund Reps. Assoc Branches should request the new form (2008-2) from the Regt Sec. (CPN 48)

New Queen's Colour for RAF Regiment - 11 Jul 08

Both The Royal Air Force and the RAF Regiment will receive their new Colours at the Royal International Air Tattoo, Fairford, on 11 July 2008. The Corps 'family' will be most welcome, but attendance requirements will not be issued until much nearer the event.

Airfield Construction Branch/RAF Regt 50th Anniversary in Akrotiri Celebrations – 2008:

The ACB Assoc is celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the arrival in Cyprus of 5001 Sqn Airfield Construction and the RAD Regt sqns, on 10 Sep 08. The main function will be in conjunction with the 2008 Wings Appeal Garden Party at the residence of CBF Cyprus, AVM and Mrs R Lacey. It will be a joint function with Apollo Branch Paphos. Any RAF Regt people interested in joining the ACB Assoc event would be more than welcome; they are also offering a trip down 'Memory Lane' around RAF Akrotiri, for a small donation to Wings Appeal. Contact the ACB Assoc by filling in the Visit to Akrotiri form on their website www.rafacyprus.co.uk or contact Gordon Boam at gordonb@cytanet.com.cy. Tel 0035 7253 22905.

Operation BANNER (Northern Ireland) Commemoration - 10 SEP 08

It is proposed to hold a Commemorative Service to mark the end of the Forces' commitment to Operation BANNER in St Paul's

Cathedral on Wed 10 Sep 08. Confirmation and further details are awaited.

New Regt History Book - 'Constant Vigilance'.

A new Corps history - 'Constant Vigilance - The RAF Regt in the Burma Campaign' by Dr Nigel Warwick, has been published with a cover price of £25.0. However, the RAF Regt Fund can supply a copy for £20 + P&P. The book has been critically reviewed and is undoubtedly a 'good read' and a 'must' for every Corpsman's bookshelf. The RAF Regt Shop has copies for sale NOW. It is also available on-line at Amazon.com at a competitive price (but more than the Shop with P&P) and the Fund will benefit from all sales, irrespective of where bought.

Regimental Cufflinks:

A new range of quality Silver-Gilt Cufflinks is now available. Made by Collins & Sons, the Crown Jewellers, they are in Sterling Silver Gilt (i.e. hard gold-plated). They have a chain link fitting with an engravable oval disc. The Special Introductory Price is £47.50 a pair, plus £4.50 P&P& Ins (Special Delivery) within the UK/BFPO. Overseas/Rest of World P&P&Ins will be £8.50. All profits will go to the RAF Regt Museum Refurbishment Fund. A 9ct Gold version will also be available on Special Order (POA, between £240 and £420 depending on fitting). Those requiring further details and an order form should contact the Regt Sec.

Regimental Blazer Buttons:

The RAF Regt Museum is proud to offer for sale sets of exceptionally high quality Regimental Blazer Buttons, also made by the G E Collins & Sons Ltd, the Crown Jeweller. The finish of the buttons is known as 'Dead Gilt & Burnished', which means they are gilded in a matt finish and the highlights are then polished by hand to give a bright polished finish; hence there are two differing and subtle contrasts on the button.

A suitably high quality case is also supplied. A 6+8 button set will cost £67.00 plus £4.50 UK Special Delivery P&P&Ins (per set). Overseas (Europe and Rest-of-World) addresses will incur a P&P&Ins charge of £8.50. If you are interested in obtaining a set or just more details (incl photo and order form), please contact - ideally by Email - the RAF Regt Sec. Two 6+6 sets (£62.50 + £4.50 P&P&Ins) are still available but will not be repeated. The High Street retail value would be at least twice the cost and they are

not to be confused with cheaper versions currently available. Latest tranche now in stock!

Corps Diary Dates: (Updated - not exhaustive - contributions welcome)

- 28 Jun 08 - RAF Regt Memorial Re-Dedication - NMA Alrewas (Veterans Week)
- 11 Jul 08 - Presentation of new RAF Regt Queen's Colour - RIAT, Fairford
- 10 Sep 08 - Op BANNER Commemoration - St Paul's Cathedral, London (Provisional)
- 19-21 Sep 08 - WOs & SNCOs Assoc Reunion
- 25-27 Sep 08 RAF Regt-USAF SF Exchange Reunion Weekend – Berkshire
- 3rd – 6th Oct 08 - RAF Regt Assoc 2008 Reunion and AGM.
- 17-20 Oct 08 - RAF Armoured Car Assoc Autumn Reunion - Derby.
- 31 Oct 08 - RAF Regt Offrs' Dinner Club's Annual Dinner - The Guest Speaker will be Col Bob Stewart of Cheshire Regt, Bosnia and now TV fame. The venue - Midland Hotel in Derby - is excellent and it promises to be a super evening
- 06 Nov 08 - Garden of Remembrance - Westminster Abbey
- 09 Nov 08 - Remembrance Sunday - Cenotaph, London and nationwide.
- 01 Dec 08 - Centurion Journal No26 - Contributions Due Date.
- 6 Feb 09 - Officers' Corps Formation Dinner - RAF Honington

From the Branch Secretary

Funeral held for veteran airman

The funeral of the oldest British serviceman to be killed in Afghanistan has been held in Nottinghamshire. Gary Thompson, 51, of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, and Graham Livingstone, 23, of the Royal Air Force Regiment, died in a bomb blast. The service for Senior Aircraftman Thompson was held at St Jude's Church in Mapperley and was preceded by a flypast by an RAF Harrier jet. SAC Thompson, from Nottingham, leaves a wife, Jacqui, and five daughters. His eldest daughter, 24-year-old Laurie, told mourners at the funeral:

"I am sure that my sisters would agree with me when I say that we would not be the women we are today without his love and encouragement, and we are all so proud to say that he was our dad. He hugged me every time we said goodbye and you could see it in his eyes how much he loved each and every one of us. It is

with utter disbelief and sadness that my dad will not be coming home but I know he will be with the ones he loves right now and always will be."

At the end of the service, mourners applauded after the Rev Stephen Silvester, who performed SAC Thompson's marriage to his wife at the same church, spoke of his daughters' courage. "I think the girls should be very proud of themselves and I think everyone should give them a round of applause for how brave they have been." SAC Thompson joined the RAF in 1973 and was based at RAF Cottesmore in Leicestershire, but left four years later to pursue a career in business. He became managing director of Sherwood Ducting Ltd in Nottingham.

In 2005 he became a reservist, serving as a gunner and later a mortar man in the Royal Auxiliary Air Force. He then joined No 504 (County of Nottingham) Squadron. He and SAC Livingstone, from Glasgow, were killed when the roadside bomb exploded near Kandahar Airfield on 13 April. Two other personnel were injured in the attack. SAC Livingstone leaves a young son.

The men had been taking part in a security patrol in Daman District, when the general purpose Land Rover they were travelling in was hit. The deaths brought the number of UK service personnel killed in Afghanistan to 93.

Respects paid to dead serviceman

More than 400 people attended the funeral of a Scottish serviceman who was killed in Afghanistan. Graham Livingstone, 23, of the Royal Air Force Regiment, died with a colleague in an explosion near Kandahar airfield on 13 April. The senior Aircraftsman from Glasgow was taking part in a security patrol when his vehicle hit a roadside device. Family, friends and service personnel paid their respects at Our Lady & St John's Church in North Lanarkshire.



Aircraftsman Livingstone's colleagues formed a guard of honour as his coffin was carried

into the church in Blackwood. The congregation heard how the avid Celtic fan had joined the RAF in 2004, having previously served in the Marines. During his time in 3 Squadron RAF regiment he completed tours of duty in Iraq and was deployed to Afghanistan two months ago.

Members of the gunner's own squadron gave readings and Squadron Leader Richard Langley delivered the eulogy. The gunner's coffin emerged from the church draped in a Union flag with a ceremonial cap on top. As the congregation emerged, there was a fly-past by a Harrier jet. A piper played as members of the Queen's Colours Squadron, 63 Squadron RAF Regiment, formed a guard of honour and carried the coffin to the waiting hearse. The gunner is survived by his mother Rosemary O'Neill, his father Robert Livingstone, a brother, a sister and his toddler son.

Those of us who served in the early 1950s will remember being asked to volunteer for a two-week period carrying out research into the common cold at the Porton Down Research Centre. I was fortunate in that I didn't want anyone experimenting on me and I didn't volunteer and for the same reason, I don't know anyone else who did either. Time has proved how fortunate we were to hold that opinion as the following news story illustrates.

Memorial for Porton Down victims

Victims of experiments at the Porton Down research centre have been honoured during a service at Staffordshire's National Memorial Arboretum. A plaque and a tree have been unveiled at the arboretum, in Alrewas, in recognition of Cold War veterans.

The arboretum approved the dedication after a request by the Porton Down Veterans Support Group. It comes three months after the government agreed to compensate 360 men who underwent nerve agent tests. Peter Sammons, from Rugby, was one serviceman exposed to sarin. He said he was subjected to a number of experiments while unconscious and awoke in a catatonic state. "Nobody seemed to be bothered about the condition I was in," he said.

In January, defence minister Derek Twigg announced the government was awarding a £3m settlement to the veterans and issued an apology for the medical trials. It ended a long-running legal dispute between the government and the

servicemen. Andrew Baud, arboretum spokesman, said the tree was planted to mark the conclusion of the veterans' campaign. "Some of them have passed away and some are still suffering the ill-effects," he said. We're incredibly proud to have their memorial here."

He said 130 different groups had stone memorials at the site and that even more had trees planted in dedication. Between 1939 and 1989, hundreds of servicemen took part in experiments at Porton Down, in Wiltshire. Many were given forms of the sarin nerve agent and some were told they were merely helping to find a cure for the common cold. The history of the tests was highlighted during an inquest into the death of Ronald Maddison, a 20-year-old aircraftman from County Durham. In 1953, he volunteered to take part in what he believed to be a trial for a cold cure, but died within an hour of having sarin dabbed on his arm. The Ministry of Defence eventually paid £100,000 in compensation to Mr Maddison's family, but only after mounting an unsuccessful legal challenge against the 2004 inquest verdict which ruled he had been unlawfully killed.

The following article by Simon Williams was published in the 25th April edition of RAF News.

They went to change lives

Member of 3 Squadron RAF Regiment have vowed to stand firm in Afghanistan following the deaths of SAC Graham Livingstone and reservist Gary Thompson after their vehicle was destroyed by a roadside bomb during a patrol at Kandahar Airfield. They were given emergency treatment at the scene and transferred to the nearby Kandahar field hospital where they both later died of injuries. Two other servicemen were injured in the blast. Tributes to the RAF Regiment men have poured in after the incident, which takes the UK Forces death toll in Afghanistan to ninety-three since operations began in 2001.

At 51 SAC Thompson, dubbed Tommo, is the oldest member of the coalition forces to have died in the conflict. The father of five daughters,

he was driven to improve life for women and children living under the hardline Taliban regime, his family said. He joined 504 Squadron, RAuxAF Regiment in 2005 and was deployed to Kandahar with 3 Squadron in February this year.

SAC Graham Livingstone, known as Livi by his pals, joined the Marines in 2003 and transferred to the RAF Regiment a year later. The 23-year old served on a tour on Operation Telic in 2006 before being posted to Kandahar with the Squadron in 2008. Paying tribute to his men, 3 Squadron Officer Commanding Squadron Leader Richard Langley said:-

"The tragic loss of Tommo and Livi is a tragic blow to all who knew, trained and fought alongside them. The professionalism and humour they brought to the Squadron was immeasurable. We will honour their memory by standing resolute in our duty in Afghanistan in the manner they embodied with determination and pride".

Reservist Gary worked as a Managing Director in Sherwood, Nottinghamshire. His wife Jaquie aged 42 said:- "On Saturday we had been on the 'phone to each other for ages. He wanted to know all the news from home. He was missing his family. He had so many pictures of me and the girls next to his bed. He couldn't get enough of them. He wanted to make a difference in Afghanistan, particularly for the women and children there. He was so proud of being in the RAF. Gary was more than our hero, he was the rock and foundation of our family. Words cannot express how much he was loved and how proud of him we are".

With a tour of Afghanistan already under his belt, Graham Livingstone was an operationally experienced Gunner who was well known in the Squadron for his humour and ability to brighten up life on the Support Weapons Flight. Commanding Officer 1 Force Protection Wing, Wing Commander Scott Miller said:- SAC Graham Livingstone was immensely popular. His fine sense of humour and positive character played a key role in maintaining the morale of his colleagues while facing the dangerous and challenging, but vital mission in defence of Kandahar Airfield. Graham was the sort of Gunner who, with high professional skill and deep determination, sought to keep others safe, irrespective of the personal cost. He invariably put the need of his friends and colleagues first. He will be sorely missed".

51 SQUADRON RAF REGIMENT

51 Squadron, RAF Regiment supported by 2622 Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force Regiment, will go to Iraq in the autumn under the command of Number 5 Force Protection Wing. RAF Lossiemouth Station Commander, Group Captain Monkman said: "This is an extremely busy year for RAF Lossiemouth and its personnel, not only for those going away, but for the station personnel who have to ensure everyone is prepped and ready to go and then cover their absence, as well as provide support to those families and friends left behind. It requires a great deal of effort from the whole team and I know everyone is working very hard to make sure everything is done in time."

The next article almost had me "spitting feathers". You all know my opinion of politicians and by coincidence, above this article published in the online Scotsman on Wednesday 21st May, there was a Sony advert for a reverse auction headed – "How Low Can You Go". It's politicians that start the wars the our servicemen and women have to go and sort out and to have a politician criticising troops carrying out training to prepare to go out and fight a real shooting war, is about as low as you can go. But then again, what do our current politicians know about war 'cos almost none of them have ever put on Her Majesty's uniform and been called upon to put their shabby lives at risk.

RAF Regiment accused of sparking 'wildlife crime'

A military exercise has caused a major heath fire which is believed to have killed red grouse and merlin and destroyed nests on a site where the Scottish Government hopes to extend environmental protection. A RAF Regiment squadron was on manoeuvres at the Cape Wrath range, near Durness in Sutherland, when tracer bullets caused the blaze, and about two miles of heath land was burned in the fire. Highlands and Islands SNP MSP Rob Gibson said: "To me and others this incident is nothing short of wildlife crime. It may have escaped the attention of the MoD but there has been a prolonged dry spell. To go around shooting tracer bullets is stupid."

The MoD confirmed the training exercise caused the fire. A spokesman said: "The RAF Regiment was training in the area when tracers

from their weapons accidentally started a fire over 1km from where they were." The MoD also said that: "Anyone who knows anything about military training understands that great care is taken to consult and work closely with local communities, and ensure protection on both MoD and private land. The proof of this is the fact that wildlife and flora continue to flourish and be protected on military training areas. There is currently no threat to people, homes or bird populations. There are no livestock on the land. The Armed Forces do not train irresponsibly, anyone who knows about military training understands that great care is taken to consult and work closely with local communities, and ensure protection on both MoD and private land. The proof of this is the fact that wildlife and flora continue to flourish and be protected on military training areas, often thanks to Armed Force wildlife and conservation teams across Scotland and the rest of the UK."

Does Rob Gibson think that our troops should not fire real bullets at all? Perhaps he's been watching too many "Dad's Army" episodes where the Home Guard troops were being taught to shout "Bang Bang" instead of firing real bullets. Is that what he thinks they should do? He should get a life.

On page 8 of last May's newsletter, I published a long article about recruitment into the RAF Regiment. The following article is also about recruitment into the RAF Regiment but with a better appeal to the young lads of today. It was published in the Sun by their Chief Reporter John Kay on Wednesday 14th May.

Roger and In

RAF top brass are sending out condoms to 20,000 young men in a recruitment drive. They are mounted on cards with the slogan: "Apply to weapon when on manoeuvres." As well as their intended purpose, potential recruits to the RAF Regiment are told how a non-lubricated condom can be used by troops on operations to carry water, stop bleeding and prevent sand jamming a weapon.

The cards also invite interested men to road shows around the country to learn how the crack infantry regiment defends air bases. The campaign to "raise the regiment's profile" was commissioned by the Central Office of Information – the Government's communications

agency. The COI's Emily White said: "We felt the condom would appeal to the target audience and hopefully encourage them to think about the RAF Regiment in a different way rather than just at face value." The RAF Regiment has recently served in Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone. The Ministry of Defence told The Sun: "We seek fit, enthusiastic young men and the advert aims to stimulate a response through humour. "We were able to demonstrate that in operational situations everyday things can be used in a variety of ways."

RAF REGIMENT PENNANTS

Through the contacts that Branch member Ralph Dean has made, we have now obtained a small quantity of high quality RAF Regiment Pennants in full colour. These are similar to pennants used by several other organisations such as Rotary and Inner Wheel. Our pennants are approximately A4 in size with an additional gold tasseled fringe. In the centre is a large RAF Regiment Badge with maroon and blue stripes in the background the same as those on the RAF Regiment tie. The cost of these pennants is £25.00 each.

If anyone would like to buy one of these pennants, please contact the Branch Treasurer Tom Magee. At the Tower of London Parade on Sunday 18th May, twenty-two members of the Branch and their ladies attended and afterwards as is usual, everyone was entertained in the Yeoman's Mess. One of these pennants was presented to the Chief Yeoman Warder John Keohane for display in the Mess. The Mess already has a most amazing display of military memorabilia and our pennant must surely add to this.

RAF REGIMENT PROPERTY BOOKLET

The RAF Regiment Secretary has e-mailed to me a marvelous 28-page RAF Regiment Property booklet. It's all in colour so it would be too expensive for me to print off and send you all a copy but it is well worth seeing. I've e-mailed a copy to all Birmingham Branch members that I have an e-mail address for.

If anyone else would like to have a copy and can let me have an e-mail contact address too, I'll e-mail it to you as well. The RAF Regiment Fund maintains over 650 items of Regimental Property on behalf of the Corps. This booklet

contains information on the most significant items that the Fund holds.

The first item to be shown is a full colour picture of the painting of HM The Queen, Air Commodore-in-Chief, Royal Air Force Regiment. The portrait was commissioned by the Officers of the RAF Regiment to commemorate the Regiment's 25th Anniversary and is hung in the entrance hall of the Officer's Mess at RAF Honington. It contains photographs of all the Regimental silver of course, seven paintings, four presentation swords, trophies and many other items.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM (NMA) UPDATE

Visitor numbers have continued to exceed expectations and were 11,852 for January and 15,432 for February, well above even those predicted. And with the additional money being spent on the infrastructure, even regular visitors will see great improvements in the site. For example, roads have been laid with new tarmac and white edging stones laid flush with the edges to improve the appearance without impeding wheelchairs etc.

There has been excellent feedback including one letter from a serving Colonel which read '...and what a pleasure it was to meet so many dedicated members of staff (and he included volunteers in this) who were all, to a man and women, welcoming, helpful, happy and clearly enjoying what they were about. If only the rest of the UK was run on such lines!'

The NMA are still working very hard in collaboration with the British Legion, The Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces Memorial Trust to place both the Armed Forces Memorial and the National Memorial Arboretum on a sound financial and future footing.

This will almost certainly result in a full 'restructure' of the Arboretum, of which changes to the Friends and Volunteer's organisation are a part. Exciting times indeed and all with a programme of functions and events that looks as busy as last year and a huge number of coaches and tours booked too!

New hourly bus route to link National Memorial Arboretum with Birmingham and Burton

Following requests for a regular bus link to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas,

Arriva Midlands is pleased to announce the introduction of a regular hourly bus link to the Arboretum on Monday to Saturday. There will be a Sunday service too! The new links commenced on Sunday 27th April 2008. Arriva Midlands has taken the opportunity to reintroduce route 112 running up to every 60 minutes daytime Monday to Saturday. Buses will commence at Burton Railway Station – ideal for customers making connections to and from the Cross Country Rail Network – buses will call into Burton on Trent, New Street, Branston, Barton under Needwood, Alrewas, National Memorial Arboretum, Lichfield, Hill Hook, Sutton Coldfield, Erdington and Birmingham.

On Sunday's route 7E running between Burton on Trent and Lichfield via Branston, Barton, Yoxall, Alrewas and Fradley will call at the Arboretum. Keith Myatt, communication manager for Arriva Midlands, said:

“We have listened to feedback from our customers who have requested a direct link into the Arboretum and are pleased to be able to now make their requests possible. We have welcomed the opportunity to provide the link for those wishing to visit the living tribute to the war-time generations of the twentieth century in such a way that it would be a gift in their memory for future generations to reflect upon and enjoy. Customers wishing to find out more information can call our customer service team on 0844 800 44 11.”

Charlie Bagot Jewitt, chief executive of the National Memorial Arboretum, said: “There have been no permanent public transport links to the Arboretum since it opened, but following the opening of the Armed Forces Memorial last October, demand for a bus and train service has really peaked. With visitor numbers set to reach or exceed 220,000 this year, we're sure that Arriva's new service will prove very popular.”

Timetables will be available at the NMA and for further information, please contact Keith Myatt, communications manager, Arriva Midlands, on 0116 264 0400, or corporate communications, Arriva plc on 0191 520 4106.

For media enquiries outside normal office hours, Arriva can be contacted via its media pager service on 0762 392 0615. For the National Memorial Arboretum, please call Andrew Baud of Tala PR, on 07775 715775.

Project to Attract Wildlife

A project aimed at creating natural havens for wildlife such as brown owls and kingfishers has been launched at Staffordshire's National Memorial Arboretum. The arboretum's position at the confluence of the Tame and Trent rivers makes it an important habitat for wetland wildlife and other species. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has teamed up with the arboretum to create habitats for a variety of creatures, funded by a grant from the National Forest Company. Nick Mott, a senior ecologist with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, explained that the Trust has dug out a number of pools and ditches at the site to house birds, mammals, insects and amphibians. “Otters, barn owls, kingfishers and brown hares all visit the site frequently,” he said. “Our aim is to provide extra habitats for these and to attract others.

We have excavated a number of ponds, pools and areas where reed beds will grow in time.” Mr Mott explained that the initial work made up phase one of the project with further work scheduled to take place in late summer.

We are expecting a good response from frogs, toads, harvest mice, dragonflies, snipes and otters,” he added. “It is even possible that the rare and elusive water vole will put in an appearance in future.”

Charlie Bagot Jewitt, chief executive of the National Memorial Arboretum, said he is delighted with the project. “We have some fascinating flora and fauna here and have regular sightings of otters, brown hares, kingfishers and barn owls,” he said.

He added: “a good proportion of our visitors come specifically to explore the wildlife within the arboretum. The improvement of our wetland area will create additional habitats, and we hope for an even greater diversity of species on the site in the future.”

Future Events at the NMA

Thursday 27th June 2008

Veterans Awareness Day. For further information contact NMA - Tel: 01283 792 333.

Sunday 29th June 2008

National Service Veterans Day – annual service and parade. For further information contact NMA - Tel: 01283 792 333.

Saturday 5th July 2008

Royal Artillery Association. Remembrance event - Annual Service. For

further information contact NMA - Tel: 01283 792 333.

Sunday 27th July 2008

British Korean Veterans' Association, Annual Service of Remembrance. The Volunteer Band of the Lancashire Artillery supplemented by musicians from the Lancashire Regiment in attendance. Details to be confirmed later.

Saturday 30th August 2008

The Brotherhood of Veterans of the Greek Campaigns 1939-1945. Annual Service of Remembrance at 11.30 am on site. Contact: Mr Frank Gill - Tel: 0151 924 2712.

Saturday 13th September 2008

TA100 Armed Forces Memorial Parade and Service. The Royal British Legion and Regimental Association Standard and Guidon Bearers. Members of the public are welcome to watch the event. Time: 12.30 pm for 2.00 pm Contact: Mr Bob Rankin - Tel: 01782 444246.

Sunday 14th September 2008

Ton Class Association. Ceremony to unveil plaque to founder-President, Vice Admiral Sir John Cox KCB. Time: 11.45 am for 12.00 noon. Venue: Ton Class Memorial Contact: Mr P Down Tel: 01449 721 235.

Saturday, 27th September 2008

HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association Chapel service and on-site dedication ceremony for tree and new plinth. Time: 11.15 am. Venue: Millennium Chapel and on-site at the Royal Naval Review. Contact: Mr. John Truscott - Tel: 02392 431150.

CORRESPONDENCE

Farewell to Albert Worton

By John Docker, Branch Standard Bearer

Friday 18th April 2008 was a very sad day for the Birmingham Branch for we said goodbye to our very dear friend and colleague Albert Worton. He was dearly loved by us all and will be sadly missed. What a lovely man he was, such a character, nothing was too much trouble for him and always with a smile and a joke. It was amazing what he could do with bits of scrap metal and wood.

The models that he made for us, the solid brass Crest for the top of our Standard pole, an amalgam of the Crossed Rifles and the City of Birmingham Crest; and the base for the Standard, he could turn his hand to making almost anything.

Thinking about it, I knew there was a

reason for Albert leaving us for I have it on good authority that they needed someone upstairs to keep the signs for the angels in good repair, for after so many years they were getting a bit rusty. Who better than "Our Albert" God bless him.

The Service was held at the English Martyr's RC Church, Oldbury Road, Rowley Regis, at 10.45 a.m. and there were five Branch members in attendance. Those present were our Chairman Ron Sharp together with his lady, Fred and Edith Ringham, Cliff and Ida Sutor, Roy Thomas and myself. It was the first Roman Catholic church that I have been to that allowed the Standard into the church. It was a packed congregation and we sang three hymns.

The first was "Amazing Grace", then "How Sweet Thou Art" and we finished with "When You Are Always Close to Me". As I was the Standard Bearer, the priest called me forward while he was blessing the coffin with Holy Water and incense. I then led the coffin out to the waiting hearse. Ron, Fred, Cliff and Roy then formed a Guard of Honour outside. It was very moving. Due to heavy traffic and a series of adverse traffic lights, we were late arriving at Quinton Cemetery and on arrival we had to drive around roughly half of the cemetery to the graveside. I didn't know the cemetery was so big. After the interment, Ron laid the Birmingham Branch wreath and Fred laid a Gloucestershire wreath which was a nice surprise.

It was so windy that I was unable to keep the Standard in the Carry position for I was nearly blown over whilst attempting to do so. However, after the coffin was lowered I was able to dip the Standard whilst I repeated the Legion prayer. I must have done a decent job for Albert's daughter Pat thanked me for a good job well done. She said "Albert would have been very proud". That made me feel a whole lot better. Afterwards we all made our way back to the church hall for refreshments bringing an end to a very sad day. Per Ardua. John.

In addition to the above tribute, "Mick" Warren has sent me the following letter.

"Dear Malcolm. I have only just heard of the sad death of "Our Albert", what a blow. I treasured the many times that I spoke with him and am grateful for all he did for the Branch and indeed, to the whole of the Association. I attach my personal citation in memory of Albert for you

to use as you may think fit, my respects to you all and a great thank you for knowing a truly great comrade. "Mick" Warren.

Sergeant A Worton

It is with great pride tinged with sadness that I note the passing of a fine member of the Royal Air Force Regiment and its Association. Albert contributed in many ways to the early success of the Association and with this we should all remember his valuable service in North Africa, Italy and the Middle East. He fought well, he lived well and was liked by all that were fortunate enough to be able to call him a friend.

I certainly am most grateful to call him a friend and a great comrade-in-arms. He was the salt of our Corps and we shall miss him. In true remembrance, Mick Warren Sqd Ldr (Rtd).

St George's Day Service and Parade

By John Docker Branch Standard Bearer

On Sunday 20th April 2008 the Annual St George's Day Service and Parade were held at St Paul's Church in the Jewellery Quarter. It was very well supported and the church was packed with ex-service veterans, members of the Royal society of St George, families and friends. Ann Permain, the Civilian Chairman of the Wing Civilian Committee organised a Flight of very well turned out ATC Cadets from 493 and 487 Squadrons, Air Training Corps, my old squadrons, who carried out a grand job as ushers; and receiving the Standards and placing them in position on either side of the altar. Twenty-five Standards were paraded which was great. Royal Marine Cadets were also in attendance assisting with the wreath laying.

The Standard Bearers lined up outside the church entrance to welcome the Lady Mayoress of Birmingham as the Lord Mayor himself had to keep a previous St George's Day appointment in Solihull. Then the Standard Bearers were marched in to the altar. The event is organised by the Birmingham Federation of Ex-Service Associations and so a very moving Service was conducted by the new Vicar of St Paul's the Reverend Mary Gilbert, assisted by Canon Roger Scott who not only is our very own Branch Padre, he is also the Federation Padre too. Roger also gave the Address.

After the Service we received our Standards back and marched out of the church to

the Memorial where the wreath laying ceremony took place. Wreaths were laid by serving officers from all three services. It was a very wet morning so for the playing of the Last Post, we had to carry out a very wet Dip. After Reveille was played, the Lady Mayoress thanked all the Standard Bearers for a great turnout on such a miserable day. The Reverend Mary gave us all a blessing and then, at 12.30 p.m. we were dismissed with another job very well done. Per Ardua. John.

NEW MEMBERS

David Kelly of Chesterfield

We welcome David Kelly of Chesterfield. David enlisted on 14th August 1947 and after his Basic Training at RAF Catterick he was posted to 16 LAA Squadron at RAF Watchet, where in 1950 he was promoted to Corporal. He was then posted to 62 Rifle Squadron at El Hamra, Egypt and served with that Squadron at RAF Ismailia and RAF Shalufa. In 1952 he was posted back to the UK to serve with 48 Rifle Squadron at RAF Chivenor where he completed his service and was discharged on 6th March 1953. We welcome him and hope that he has a long and happy association with us.

A FUND RAISING EVENT IN AID OF "HELP FOR HEROES"

The family of Corporal Matthew Caulwell who was killed in Iraq on Thursday 19 July 2007, are holding a fundraising night in Matthew's memory at Tally Ho! (where Matthew's wake was held). All monies raised will be given to the "Help For Heroes Fund". "Help for Heroes" was launched on 1st October 2007 to do something practical for the brave men and women of our Armed Forces who have been wounded while serving in the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is a chance to show that we care, appreciate and support all our servicemen and women. The event which will be on Saturday 21st June, will involve a live band, a DJ, a fund casino and an auction. The tickets are £10 each including a basket meal. Children under 14 years of age are free and meals for them can be purchased on the night for £2.50. The contact e-mail address is <judy_caulwell@msn.com>. For a telephone contact please call me.

Please remember the appeal your Branch Committee have set up for as we are now

regularly sending “goodies” to the lads in the Military Ward at Selly Oak Hospital, we need all the money that we can get. If anyone would like further information or can help in any way, please call me. Well that’s all for now, look after yourselves and keep smiling.

Malcolm B

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES



16

Thursday 9th October 2008 Branch Night
 Tuesday 21st October 2008 Battle of Trafalgar Day
 Saturday 1st November 2008 Midlands Festival of Rem
 Sunday 2nd November 2008 B'ham Poppy Ball
Sunday 9th November 2008 Remembrance Sunday
 Tuesday 11th November 08 Remembrance Day
 Thursday 13th November 08 Branch Night
 Sat 29th-Sun 30th Nov 2008 Birmingham Int Tattoo
 Sunday 30th November 2008 St Andrew's Day
 Thursday 11th December 08 Branch Night
 Thursday 8th January 2009 Branch Night
Sunday 1st February 2009 67th Ann RAF Regiment
 Sunday 1st February 2009 Subscriptions Due
 Thursday 12th February 09 Branch Night
 Sunday 1st March 2009 St David's Day
 Tuesday 17th March 2009 St Patrick's Day
 Sun 15th – Mon 30th Mar 09 Battle For Meiktila

Saturday 28th June 2008 Ded.n Mem at NMA
 Sunday 29th June 2008 National Service Day
Friday 11th July 2008 New Queen's Colour
 Thursday 10th July 2008 Branch Night
 Thursday 10th August 2008 Branch Night
 Thursday 11th Sept 2008 Branch Night
 Monday 15th September 08 Battle of Britain Day
 Sunday 5th October 2008 Merchant Navy Day
Fri 3rd-Mon 6th Oct 2008 Reunion & AGM

CHAIRMAN & MMTLdr

Ron Sharp
 46 Lightwood Road
 Yoxall, Burton on Trent
 Staffordshire DE13 8QE
 Tel No: 01543 472411
 r.sharpe@homecall.co.uk

SECRETARY

Malcolm A Baldwin
 61 Pear Tree Crescent
 Solihull Lodge, Shirley
 Solihull, B90 1LE
 Tel: 0121 608 3791
 Baldwinmalc@blueyonder.co.uk

TREASURER

Tom Magee
 11 Pavilion Avenue
 Smethwick, Warley
 West Midlands, B67 6LA
 Tel: 0121 429 5635 e-mail
 rockape2005@tiscali.co.uk

VICE-CHAIRMAN AND PROPERTY AUDITOR

Fred Ringham
 76 Lowbrook Lane
 Tidbury Green
 Solihull
 West Midlands B90 1QS
 Tel: 01564 824 221

MINUTE SECRETARY

Ken Bridgwood
 29 Claverdon Drive
 Great Barr
 Birmingham
 West Midlands, B45 5HR
 Tel: 0121 357 4242
 Kenbridgwood@aol.com

WELFARE OFF/STD B

John Docker
 151 Calder Drive
 Walmley
 Sutton Coldfield
 West Midlands
 B76 1GG
 Tel: 0121 351 5580

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER/SOCIAL SEC

Michael Beard
 21 Abingdon Road
 Bloxwich, Walsall
 West Midlands
 WS3 2SX
 Tel: 01922 491453

BRANCH QUARTERMASTER

Tom Magee
 11 Pavilion Avenue
 Smethwick, Warley
 West Midlands, B67 6LA
 Tel: 0121 429 5635 e-mail
 rockape2005@tiscali.co.uk

RESEARCH CO-ORD/ LINK-UP DATA BASE

Hughie Cooper
 11 Sandringham Close
 Baswich Lane
 Stafford, ST17 0AB
 Tel: 01785 242269
 loz@monarchs.freeserve.co.uk

PRESIDENT

Peter Swash
 'Mdina' Rowney Green Lane
 Rowney Green
 Redditch
 Worcestershire, B48 7QF
 Tel No: 01527 60870
 peter.swash1@btinternet.com

VICE-PRESIDENT AND RBL LIAISON OFFICER

Dave Gooding
 31 Queen Elizabeth Road
 Rubery, Rednal
 Birmingham, B45 0NE
 Tel: 0121 604 4637
 legionaire@blueyonder.co.uk

FINANCIAL AUDITORS

Trevor and Joan Round
 45 Sandfields Road
 Sedgley
 Dudley
 West Midlands
 DY3 3LB
 Tel: 01902 672597