



# ROYAL AIR FORCE REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

[www.rafregt.org.uk](http://www.rafregt.org.uk)

## BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

### APPEAL "GOODIES" FOR THE MILITARY WARD

Page 2

### MINUTES OF NEC MEETING SATURDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY

Page 2

### NEWS OF THE RAF REGIMENT

Page 9

### NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM UPDATE

Page 14

### OBITUARY AIR VICE MARSHAL D A POCOCK CBE

Page 11

<b>Branch Appeal – Goodies for Military Ward</b>	Page 2
<i>Another £105.00 From Norfolk Branch</i>	Page 2
<b>Minutes of NEC Meeting Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July</b>	Page 2
1. <i>Introduction and Apologies</i>	Page 2
2. <i>Minutes</i>	Page 2
3. <i>Matters Arising</i>	Page 2
4. <i>Postal Ballot</i>	Page 3
5. <i>Audit Report</i>	Page 3
6. <i>Budget 2009-2010 and Future Forecast</i>	Page 3
7. <i>Feedback on SOPs and Amends to C&amp;Rs</i>	Page 4
8. <i>Website</i>	Page 4
9. <i>Trading Activities</i>	Page 4
10. <i>Vice Chair Nominations and Elections</i>	Page 5
11. <i>Ceremonial Feedback and Briefing</i>	Page 5
12. <i>AGM Agenda</i>	Page 5
13. <i>AOB</i>	Page 6
<i>Annex "A" Draft Budget</i>	Page 8
<i>Notes on Expenditure</i>	Page 8
Newsletter Subscriptions	Page 8
<b>News of the RAF Regiment</b>	Page 9
<i>Death Notices</i>	Page 9
<i>Former Corporal Frank North GM</i>	Page 9
<i>General Notices</i>	Page 9
<i>Comm Painting – Battle of Al Waki</i>	Page 9
<i>50<sup>th</sup> Ann of Church of St Clement Danes</i>	Page 9
<i>Letters to Operationally Deployed Units</i>	Page 10
<i>Service for Fallen Regt Personnel</i>	Page 10
<i>Corps Diary Dates</i>	Page 10
From the Branch Secretary	Page 10
<i>3 FP Wing to Return From Afghanistan</i>	Page 10
<i>Obituary Air Vice Marshal D A Pocock CBE</i>	Page 11
<i>A Photograph AVM Pocock As CG</i>	Page 12
<i>E-mail From Hughie Cooper</i>	Page 12
<i>Gunners Continuing Service in War Zones</i>	Page 13
<i>Felixstowe to Honour RAF Honington</i>	Page 14
<b>National Memorial Arboretum Update</b>	Page 14
<i>Showman's Guild Comm.s Fallen Comrades</i>	Page 14
<i>Future Events at the NMA</i>	Page 15
Branch Appeal Reminder	Page 15
Dates For Your Diary	Page 16
Birmingham Branch Committee	Page 16



## 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: 231  
SEPTEMBER 2008**

# THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH NEWSLETTER

## NUMBER 231 SEPTEMBER 2008

Dear Readers.

### Branch Appeal

#### 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 regularly sending "goodies" to the lads in Selly Oak Hospital.

Through Roy Thomas and Ralph Dean we have regular contact every month with the military ward nursing staff. At each visit they are asked for their next request so we have a continuing need for regular donations. 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.

Last month the Norfolk Branch contributed a magnificent £200.00 to the Appeal. This month they have contributed another £105.00 to the Appeal. This makes £305.00 that the Norfolk Branch has given to our Appeal and it is beginning to put Birmingham Branch contributions into the shade. We need more from you lads to keep up with the Norfolk Branch 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" for we would like you all to consider supporting this appeal.

Colin Clarke the Secretary of the Norfolk Branch has written another letter to me regarding their £105.00 donation and it he says;

"Dear Malcolm. Further to my letter of 6<sup>th</sup> July, I am pleased to tell you that I have sent a further cheque from the Norfolk Branch to Tom Magee for £105.00. This is as a result of a donation from a Norfolk Branch member and a very generous donation from a lady member of Oulton Broad Art circle.

The lady was unable to attend the recent Painting Evening at our home, but when she heard we had had a "whip round" for the troops, she kindly sent a substantial sum. Everyone is sorry that our men and women are in hospital but are pleased that they can help by providing some comforts. Best wishes. Colin Clarke, Branch Secretary".

\*\*\*\*\*

Now here are the Minutes of the last National Executive Committee meeting held on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July in the 34 Squadron Conference Room at RAF Leeming.

#### NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEETING SATURDAY 19<sup>th</sup> JULY 2008 MINUTES

#### 1. Intro and apologies

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. and conducted the dedication in the absence of Rev Downie. The Chairman explained the Chaplain's absence was due to a sudden illness from which he was making a slow recovery.

#### 2. Minutes

It was noted that the percentages stated in item 10 of the minutes of the January 2008 meeting were in error and that the correct percentage should be 70% to a principal charity and 30% to the RAF Regiment Fund. This was accepted.

#### 3. Matters arising

##### a) Lapel Pins

The Chairman noted that the production of lapel pins which were now on offer to the Association and recorded a vote of thanks for the quality and hard work in producing them.

##### b) Mileage Rate

The January meeting had proposed a vote on mileage rate being raised from the current 25p per mile to 40p per mile. Other formulas were discussed but found to be too unwieldy. After discussion, in which it was demonstrated that actual costs had risen by more than 60% since the last meeting, it was proposed that the

mileage rate for official travel to NEC would be raised to 40p per mile. This was carried unanimously and would be effective immediately.

c) **Parade Marshal**

The Chairman reported that QCS were more than happy for the Association to keep its own Parade Marshal at the Cenotaph as it prevented serving NCOs being dictated to by the Guards' RSM.

d) **Promotional Video.** The Chairman reported that he had tried to contact Black Cat video on a number of occasions. He had not received a reply and therefore recommended that no further action be taken on this. Approved

e) **Association Trophies**

The Chairman reported that after the last meeting he had managed to procure two silver trophies for the Association to present to the Depot for NCO courses. One of these trophies belonged to his family and he wished to donate it to the Association. He had procured the other at a reasonable price. The cost of the second trophy together with two silver-mounted plinths was £188. Engraving of a high standard would be additional but he did not expect that to exceed £20.00 per cup. The NEC approved the expenditure. SBM proposed that the two cups be designated the RAF Regiment Association Telic and Herrick Trophies, Telic and Herrick being the operation names for the Corps' deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan respectively. Approved.

After discussion as to how individuals who had been awarded the cup would be recorded, it was agreed that a book of awardees would be purchased for each trophy at a cost of up to £50 per book – approved. Additionally, a certificate would be awarded to each recipient of the Trophies.

f) **Charitable Donations**

Having taken the decision to split the proceeds from the AGM raffle between 2 charities (see para 2 above), the NEC had to decide its principal charity for the year. There were 2 nominations:- Combat Stress and the Heart Foundation. Voting was Combat Stress – 13, Heart Foundation 1.

The Charity Combat Stress would therefore be the Association's principal charity for the year 2008/ 2009.

#### 4. **Postal Ballot**

In the absence of Martin Hooker, the Chairman reported that the vote on whether postal ballots or AGM votes should be the accepted means of electing National Officials had been undertaken at RAF Honington. The result of the vote was as follows:-

Votes Cast	537
Invalid Votes	<u>15</u>
Valid Votes	<u>522</u>
For Postal Vote	292
For AGM vote	130

Contested elections of National Officials would therefore continue to be carried out annually by postal vote.

#### 5. **Audit Report**

The Treasurer presented the report of the annual audit of the Association's accounts by Needham Chipchase Manners and Co of Richmond. The report was healthy with an opening balance (in current, deposit and savings accounts) of £51,007 and a closing balance of £53,970. Whilst most of the increase was attributable to a £2,000 gift/bequest, prudent management of the finances had offset extra expenditure on the membership cards and the Flash to be well within our forecast and actual budget income. The Chairman proposed that the Audit be accepted and recommended to the AGM; this was carried unanimously.

#### 6. **Budget 2008 / 09 and future forecast**

The NEC noted the current budget and accepted that the increase in mileage rate (Para 3b above) would result in extra expenditure under the Travel heading. The Chairman presented the draft budget for 2009/10. This was presented slightly differently from previous budgets, so as to align budget headings with the accountant's treatment of expenditure (notably to include the printing and distribution of the Flash under one heading) and with more detailed cost headings to improve transparency.

**Note:** The draft 2009/10 budget is attached at Annex A. (See Page 8).

## 7. **Feedback on SOP's and amendments to C&R's**

The Chairman first presented the proposed amendments to the C&R's. The proposed Rule 53 amendment was accepted for presentation to the AGM but Rule 54 was further amended when the words "*the Chairman declares..*" were changed to "*the National Officials conclude*".

With regard to Rule 57, a further amendment, proposed by Jean Yule for clarification, was incorporated into the proposal and the amended amendment was carried unanimously.

With regard to the updated SOP's, the Chairman reminded the NEC that SOP's had been adopted in June 2006 and provided a framework by which the Association could be managed with transparency and accountability and demonstrated the probity of our organisation and intention to exercise best practice. While some believed that there was not enough mention of the National Treasurer (although the SOP 3 - Financial Standing orders was almost exclusively written for the Treasurer) it soon became clear that not all delegates had the same full version of the SOP's which had been sent out in April. The Chairman terminated discussion on this item.

It was agreed to send full copies of the SOPs to Branch Secretaries as soon as possible with further amendments, and the matter brought to the next meeting of the NEC.

## 8. **Website**

The Chairman reported on the latest (June 2008) statistics for the Association's official website ([www.rafregt.org.uk](http://www.rafregt.org.uk)). It had been visited by 1,234 individuals in June, with a total of 2,740 visits (an average of 90 per day), with each visit accessing on average 7 pages, with the Photo gallery especially popular. The website now had direct linkage into Wikipedia.

The statistics revealed that, where there was a clear link to [www.rafregt.org.uk](http://www.rafregt.org.uk)

from other RAF Regiment-related sites (such as that of Glen Beavis – [www.rafregiment.net](http://www.rafregiment.net)), a good number of "click-throughs" took place. While there was no problem with other RAF Regiment-related sites, it had to be clear that they were private sites and they had to provide a clear link to the official Association website – as demonstrated by Glen Beavis. Tom Feeley agreed that his site still did not provide this distinction from the Association's site, nor a link to it, and undertook to have this changed within three months. Jean Yule undertook to arrange for the Cambridge Branch website to be updated since it was out of date and was still headed "Association of the RAF Regiment". Branches would be urged to contact Gordon Diffey about branch information. The Secretary would publish in due course the contact details of Gordon Diffey and Glen Beavis the webmaster.

## 9. **Trading Activities**

The Secretary reported that there was some concern over the provision of merchandise from the Regiment Shop. The delays between ordering and delivery were getting longer with a number of members giving specific examples. It was apparent that the present arrangement was not satisfying our members and an alternative should be looked at. The Association's own entrepreneurs probably had better contacts among suppliers anyway and were more aware of our members' requirements. The Secretary therefore proposed that we start a pilot project to trade for ourselves, building on the experience of a number of branches, but based on the Association website. It was felt that we could start in a small way but have electronic ordering through the website. While, initially, it would not be electronic billing, this may be a possibility later. It was hoped that we could source a good supply of merchandise by the 2008 Reunion and that would include the popular Christmas cards (perhaps smaller than those of 2007). It was proposed by the Secretary WE and seconded by Steve Horton that the Treasurer be given access

of up to £250 from reserves to source a start up trading enterprise which would deal in RAF Regiment accessories. This was approved unanimously.

## 10. Vice Chair Nominations and Elections Process

The Chairman reported that, because of the time constraints, he had had to publicise the Vice Chairman's election in the Flash – along with the voting forms. There were two candidates Jeff Stevenson and Tom Renshaw. The NEC agreed to form an Elections Sub-Committee (ESC) to count the votes. The NEC accepted Martin Hooker's offer to chair the ESC and be the Returning Officer. The NEC needed to nominate two other members to act as scrutiners. Because of the distance involved, the NEC felt that it should approach the Norfolk and Suffolk (Felixstowe) Branches each to provide a member for this task. This was approved. It was reiterated that only fully paid up members of the Association were allowed to vote and the Membership Secretary's lists of paid up membership would be the final arbiter; Branch Secretaries should ensure that their members' details were as up to date as possible. There were some questions from the members over the issue of serial numbers on voting slips. It was agreed that, as long as the Branch (or HQ Roll) was clearly shown on the voting form, a Branch serial number was desirable, but not essential.

## 11. Ceremonial Feedback and Briefing

### a) **RAF Regiment Chapel Catterick 11<sup>th</sup> May 2008.**

The Chairman congratulated the Catterick Branch again on their hard work in putting on the occasion. The Chapel dedication was well attended with the CG and his wife in attendance, as well as a long-standing friend of the Corps, Baroness Harris of Richmond. The cost to the Association of £140 for the refreshments was very reasonable and the grant was unanimously approved. Next year's service was scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2009. The Chairman reminded the NEC

that it was hoped that this could include the laying up of the National Standard of the Comrades Association and possibly other standards (see AOB). The Catterick Branch was in contact with the Parochial Church Council to obtain the necessary permissions.

- b) **Tower of London 18<sup>th</sup> May.** The Chairman passed on his thanks to Sam Naylor of the Uxbridge branch for a very successful event. It had been a splendid service with an excellent choir and the liquid repast in the Warders Club facilitated by our own Bob Loughlin was outstanding as ever. He had written to the Chaplain and the Chief Yeoman to express our thanks and had made donations to each. The NEC retrospectively approved the grants of £50 to the Chapel Royal and £25 to the Yeomen Warder's Club for their charitable appeal.
- c) **NMA 28<sup>th</sup> June.** The Chairman again congratulated the Memorial Maintenance Team (members of the Birmingham Branch) for the preparation of the RAF Regiment Memorial Garden. The CG had commented that it looked better than ever and was a credit to the team. The NEC was also delighted with the arrangements made for 40 Trainee Gunners to be on parade who had greatly added to the occasion.
- d) **Queen's Colour Presentation 11<sup>th</sup> July.** The Chairman reported on the occasion and passed on the comments of Air Cdre M S Witherow RAF (Rtd) that he had not witnessed a better parade in all his RAF service or since. There had been 754 airmen and women on parade and the event had been televised. One Association member - FS "Chick" Childs and his wife - had been presented to the Queen. Chick Childs, of the Bristol and Bath Branch, was an original Ground Gunner (and had designed the Ground Gunners badge) and had a long and distinguished service in the Corps.

## 12. AGM Agenda

Taken after AOB, it was agreed that the AGM agenda would be:  
 Commemoration and Dedication -  
 Chaplain

Chairman's welcome - Chairman  
 Election of Vice Chairman - Martin Hooker  
 Secretary's Report - Secretary  
 Treasurer's Report - Treasurer  
 NEC Report - Chairman  
 Amendment to C&Rs - Chairman  
 Spring/Summer Social Reunion - Chairman  
 Diary of Events - Secretary  
 Any Other Business (previously advised) - Chairman  
 President's Address - President

### 13. AOB

- a) **National Standard.** The Chairman reported that there was a proposal from the London and SE Area that the existing National Standard of the Association be replaced. The National Standard Bearer John Smart explained that it had been purchased in 1990/91 and was now very faded. It would cost in the region of £800 to replace it but formal quotes would have to be obtained. This cost would include the standard and the carrier and gauntlets. It was agreed that we should seek a distinctive finial on top of the pike for the National Standard (rather than the normal "spear-point" finial) and that the blue sash currently worn by the Standard Bearer should continue to designate the National Standard. In addition, we would embellish the carrier with the crossed rifles. It was unanimously approved that the cost be taken from reserves once three quotes were obtained and scrutinised by the NEC. The National Standard Bearer reminded the NEC that the original standard had been purchased by Colin Hope and presented to the Association. Colin was still a member of the organisation and he should be advised as to the NEC's decision. He then raised the subject of parading the National Standard at funerals of those airmen KIA. It was agreed that the National Standard would be acceptable at such funerals, subject to a request from the family and the availability of the Standard.
- b) **Future of the Association.** The Chairman reported that he had received a paper from John Foden of the Notts and Derby Branch

which discussed the challenges that the Association faced as an ageing organisation and proposed a number of remedies. He also reported that the Canadian Chapter had put specific work into their report on the same subject. He felt it was time for a formal study of the forward strategy for the Association and proposed the formation of a small 3-person working group – the Way Ahead Working Group (WAWG) - to address this issue and report to the NEC. The WAWG's remit would be:-

- To consider how to develop the Association
- To increase membership
- To attract younger members
- To ensure the long term future of the Association

The WAWG would report to the NEC it was agreed that voting members of the NEC should not be members, though there was merit in the chair being a NEC member. After considerable discussion on the chair of the WAWG, it was proposed that the Membership Secretary Frank Xavier should chair the WAWG and that he should choose his own group members, to be ratified by the National Officials. This was agreed. Reporting date back for the report was likely to be July 2009.

- c) **Life Members.** C&R's clearly stated that any new life members of the Association had to be approved by the NEC and then in exceptional circumstances (para 17). However, there was confusion over existing life members of previous organisation (also para 17) and whether they would be required to pay Association subscriptions. After much discussion, it was agreed that the arrangements used by Branches for renewal as at 1 April 2008 should apply in the future.
- d) **Al Waqi Painting.** A Corps painting to commemorate the battle of Al Waqi in Iraq had been commissioned. The cost was in the region of £7,500, and some £5,000 remained outstanding. However, fundraising was underway and, while the Association could make a substantial contribution, it would not be appropriate to make such a large donation as to deny

other individuals, organisations and units the opportunity to be involved. It was proposed that £500 be donated to the painting fund and that the Association would undertake to underwrite any shortfall on the appeal. The Chairman would negotiate this with Martin Hooker. This was approved unanimously

- e) **2008 Reunion.** Fred Ringham submitted a written report to the effect that we already had 189 members booked for the Reunion. His visit to the venue had seen that we would have our own dining room and entertainment with reduced prices on the drinks. The Battle of Britain Memorial would provide a splendid location for the Muster Parade.

The Chairman announced that the CG had arranged for the new Queen's Colour to be paraded at the muster parade. It was also reported that the local branch of the RBL had asked permission to parade with us and this was agreed. Last year the Sussex Branch had been responsible for running the raffle and the Chairman asked for a volunteer branch for this year. The Lincolnshire Branch has confirmed that it will arrange the raffle.

- f) **Spring/Summer Reunion.** Fred Ringham has made tentative arrangements to book places at a venue for a Spring Reunion in March 2009. However, while he should be thanked for this initiative, it was agreed that time was too short to ensure its success and that the matter should be raised at the AGM Reunion and through the next edition of the Flash, for the Spring/Summer of 2010.

- g) **Remembrance Programme.** The Chairman reported that he had made arrangements for the Association National Standard to be paraded at the Albert Hall in the annual Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall on 8<sup>th</sup> November. Tom Feeley reported on the Garden of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November and agreed to act as co-ordinator for the Association's presence at the Cenotaph on 9<sup>th</sup> November. He had been advised by the RBL that traffic and road work issues might affect the process of the parade to some extent.

Tickets for the event should be through TF.

- h) **Membership Issues.** Membership Issues. The Membership Secretary reported that he was not confident that he was getting all the information on the membership picture. We had gained 41 new members this year but he was not happy with the robustness of the data that he had. He was pursuing and designing a Universal Notification Form for Branch Secretaries that would cater for every eventuality. This form would be both an on line document and a hard-copy form. He also reported that the information we had on members was barely more than name and address. He was exploring other organisations like RAFA for the software to enable this. He will be contacting all Branch Secretaries with the data that he holds for their Branch members and asking them to confirm or update it

- i) **Flash and Communications.** The Chairman reminded the meeting that while four editions of the Flash each year was an aspiration, we could only produce four Flashes a year if we received input from Branches and individual members. The level of input for the latest Flash was the lowest yet. He felt that the point must be understood by Branch Secretaries for them to put to their members. He also proposed that a "mini Flash" should be instituted in the form of emails from National Officials to Branch Secretaries for material that could not wait for the Flash magazine, to supplement the material circulated through the Corps Parish Notices sent out by MH. Branches wishing information to be passed to the Association at large must submit it to National Officials to be published in this way. Similarly, National Officials had not been aware of the tours of the Corps Demonstration Team in the past, but this was the sort of information suitable for dissemination by this means. He urged Branch Secs to communicate with National Officials and not wait until the NEC or Area meetings

- j) **Canadian Chapter.** The Canadian Chapter had been in contact with the Chairman, seeking to formalise its

relationship with the Association. Para 19 of the C&Rs stated that overseas Chapters should be autonomous, but should make a negotiated annual contribution. Such negotiations had not, so far, taken place. Individual members of the Association living overseas (eg Australia) contributed at the HQ Roll rate of £10 per year and it was agreed that the Canadian Chapter's negotiated annual contribution should be on the basis of £10 per member. It was agreed that the Chairman would contact the Canadian Chapter to this effect.

- k) **Rock Ape Ale.** The Chairman drew members attention to the II Sqn Airborne Rock Ape Ale for Help the Heroes Fund on the Association Website
- l) **Alrewas.** Barry Brentnall informed the NEC that, contrary to what had been previously reported, there were at least 6 commemorative plaques at the RAF Regiment Memorial Garden and proposed that, while it was not possible to commemorate all those killed in action, it would be possible to do so for those KIA since the erection of the RAF Regiment Memorial. The Chairman agreed to investigate what could be achieved and report to the next NEC meeting.
- m) **Op Banner Memorial.** The Chairman drew the NEC's attention to the Op Banner Memorial Service to be held in St Paul's Cathedral on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2008. This would be the subject of a miniFLASH.

There was no other business and the next meeting will be held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2009, at RAF Waddington. The Chairman then closed the meeting at 1645 hours.

## Annex A.

### Draft Budget for 1 April 2009 - 31 March 2010

#### Estimated Income

Subscriptions	£12,000.00
Invested Income	£1,500.00
Raffles	£1,200.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£14,700.00</b>

#### Estimated Expenditure

Accommodation and Meals	£700.00
Audit Costs	£120.00
Donations	£1,500.00

Flash Magazine	£5,300.00
Gaming Licence	£25.00
Insurance	£550.00
IT Equipment and Materials	£500.00
Membership Cards	£300.00
Memorials	£350.00
NMA	£400.00
Commemorations	
Office Expenditure	£150.00
Publications	£500.00
Recruiting Material	£300.00
Reunion Costs	£100.00
Travel	£3,500.00
Web Site	£350.00
Contingencies	£55.00
(Balancing Figure)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£14,700.00</b>

### Notes on expenditure

- "Accommodation & meals" is for 2 NEC meetings. Based on 2008 figure + 20%
- "Audit costs" based on 2008 figure + 20%
- "Donations" based on 2008 expenditure + 50%
- "Flash magazine" is for printing and distribution of 3 editions in 2009/10
- "Gaming Licence" based on 2008 figure + 25%
- "Insurance" is for annual insurances based on 2008 figure + 10% increase.
- "IT equipment and materials" is for purchase of essential IT equipment & materials. Based on 2008 expenditure
- "Membership cards" is for printing of 2010/11 stickers for membership cards.
- "Memorials" allows for Association support of memorials of RAF Regiment personnel KIA.
- "NMA celebrations" allows for arrangements for annual commemoration at NMA Alrewas. Presumes a contribution from the RAF Regiment Fund.
- "Office expenditure" allows for office postage, stationery, telephone etc.
- "Publications" allows for inserts into national commemorative publications. Shared with RAF Regiment Fund.
- "Recruiting material" is for production of centralised display material and information sheets.

14. **"Reunion costs"** is for central costs such as staff gratuity.
15. **"Travel"** is for 2 NEC meetings. Based on 2008 figure + 40% (due to increase mileage rate)
16. **"Web site"** is for running costs of, and improvements to, the website.

### **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:**

**FRANK NORTH GM.** Former RAuxAF Cpl Frank Robert NORTH, GM, born 9 Nov 14, died on 7 Aug 08, aged 93. He enlisted on 7 Sep 40 as a nursing orderly, serving at RAF Yatesbury, Hornchurch (and then on 611 Sqn) and RAF Biggin Hill, before his posting to 2806 Sqn RAF Regt in 1943. In Aug 43, at Lympne in Kent, four soldiers on a trg exercise unwittingly entered an unmarked minefield; three were killed instantly and the fourth was seriously injured.

Together with two other medical orderlies, Cpl North went to the scene and waded across the Hythe Canal before passing through barbed wire into the minefield. They penetrated about 16 ft into the minefield and administered first aid to the injured soldier, before recovering him to safety. For their actions, HM King George VI awarded all three with the GM at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace in Dec 46, six months after Cpl North was demobilised.

The funeral was held on Mon 18 Aug at 12.00 in All Saints Parish Church, Walton-on-Naze, Essex, followed by the cremation at 13.15 at Weeley Crematorium. The daughters welcomed everyone to the service and afterwards

for refreshments. Letters of condolence may be sent to Mrs Pauline Lovell, c/o 35 Havencroft Court, North Street, Walton On Naze, Essex, CO14 8PS. The Corps extends its sincere condolences to the family.

**FAWCETT DOUGLAS.** Former RAF Regt gnr Douglas FAWCETT, born 22 Mar 29, died on 16 Aug 08 aged 79. He enlisted in 1946 and served at RAF Newton, RAF Church Fenton and on the RAF Regt's Demonstration Flt, before being demobilised in 1952. The funeral was held at Parkwood Crematorium, Park Rd, Elland, at 1130 on the 27 Aug 08. Family Flowers only were requested but donations - if desired - may be sent to RAFA via Melia's Funeral Services, 64 Gibbet St, Halifax, HX1 5BP. Tel: 01422 354453. No further details are known. His wife, Irene, and three children, to whom the Corps extends its sincere condolences, survive him.

#### **GENERAL NOTICES:**

##### **Presentation**

##### **RAF Regt Commemorative Painting - 'THE BATTLE OF AL WAKI - 2007'**

You will no doubt be aware of the ferocious fire fight involving No1 Squadron RAF Regiment and Iraqi militant forces in Al Waki Market, Basra, in July 2007. Sadly, LAC Martin Beard was Killed in Action, but the Corps acquitted itself magnificently despite overwhelming odds. The action was, of course, recognized subsequently by the award of a Military Cross to Corporal David Hayden and a Mention in Despatches to Senior Aircraftman Ben Wharton. The Commandant General has agreed that this notable engagement should be commemorated and recorded for future generations of the Corps.

We have duly approached Mr Stuart Brown, an outstanding artist who specializes in military subjects and is best known for his Special Forces subjects. He has also undertaken commissions for the Jordanian Royal Family. His high quality, dynamic style promises us a truly impressive piece of fine art of which we can all be proud.

Indeed, even the preliminary sketches provided by Mr Brown are quite superb. The total cost for the oil painting and some 600 limited-edition prints, will be around £7,750; the prints will of course provide a subsequent source of revenue for the RAF Regiment Fund.

To secure the sum required to commission the piece, I ask you, on behalf of the Commandant General, to consider making personal or unit/branch contributions. Cheques may be made payable to 'RAF Regiment Fund', and sent to: *Al Waki Painting, c/o The RAF Regiment Secretary, RAF Honington, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP31 1EE.*

It is intended that the painting will be unveiled sometime in Sep/Oct 08 and that the prints will be available in good time for Christmas! We have an opportunity to acquire a fitting and dynamic commemoration, of outstanding quality, that will pay tribute not only to this specific engagement, but to all the members of our Corps who continue to serve their country so magnificently and with such regularity on operations. Donations to date have been fairly slow; we do hope that you will feel able to support this exciting and worthwhile project.

#### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of the RAF Church of St Clement Danes - 15 Oct 08.**

A Service of Thanksgiving will be held at St Clement Danes RAF Church in London on Wed 15 Oct 08. Details will be issued as and when known.

#### **Letters to Operationally Deployed Units in Iraq and Afghanistan**

Many subscribers and Assoc members have requested the mailing address of the RAF Regt Sqns deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, so that letters and 'goody bags' can be sent. Correspondence may be sent to: -

For Iraq: Res RAF Regt Fd Sqn, Basra COB, OP TELIC, BFPO 641 –

For Afghanistan: Res RAF Regt Fd Sqn, Kandahar Air Station, OP HERRICK, BFPO 772. Items may also be sent to the Regt staffs on the Force Protection Wing HQs (FP Wg HQ), at the same addresses.

#### **Thanksgiving Service to Commemorate SACs Livingstone and Thompson of 3 Sqn RAF Regt**

A Service of Thanksgiving will be held to commemorate the lives of SAC Gnr Livingstone and Thompson of 3 Sqn RAF Regt and 504 Sqn RAux AF respectively, who were Killed in Action in Afghanistan on 13 Apr 08. It will be held on Tue 25 Nov 27 Nov 08 at Peterborough Cathedral, between 1430-1530. Further details will be announced once 3 Sqn have returned from operations. Maximum Corps attendance will be encouraged.

#### **CORPS DIARY DATES:**

##### **(Updated - not exhaustive - contributions welcome)**

19-21 Sep 08 - WOs & SNCOs Assoc Reunion - RAF Honington.

21 Sep 08 - Battle of Britain Parade, Bury St Edmunds (RAF Regt on parade)

25-27 Sep 08 - RAF Regt-USAF SF Exchange Reunion Weekend - Berkshire.

26 Sep 08 - Freedom of Felixstowe Parade (RAF Regt parade)

3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Oct 08 - RAF Regt Assoc 2008 Reunion and AGM.

15 Oct 08 - 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St Clement Danes' Church of the RAF, London.

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.

27 Nov 08 – Thanksgiving Service – 3 Sqn RAF Regt KIA – Peterborough Cathedral

01 Dec 08 - Centurion Journal No26 - Contributions Due Date.

6 Feb 09 - Officers' Corps Formation Dinner - RAF Honington

10 May 09 – Annual RAF Regt Chapel Commemoration – Catterick Village

28 Jun 09 - RAF Regt Memorial Commemoration - NMA Alrewas (Veterans Week).

#### **From the Branch Secretary**

##### **3 RAF Force Protection Wing to return from 6 months in the Middle East**

3 RAF Force Protection Wing returned from a 6-month tour of duty on operations in Basra on Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2008 where they have been defending the Contingency Operating Base (COB). All personnel were looking forward to a happy reunion with their families and loved ones and some well deserved leave prior to returning to work either at Royal Air Force Marham, Royal Air Force Honington, or (in the case of the 2620 Squadron Royal Air Force Auxiliary Regiment personnel) with their civilian employers. Families of the returning personnel

gathered in the RAF Marham Chaplaincy Centre at approximately 14:00 hours for a short outside ceremony during which returning personnel were awarded with Operational Service Medals (OP TELIC) by the Station Commander, Group Captain Colin Basnett ADC MA RAF. The families of those returning were then re-united with their loved-ones.

Number 3 Force Protection Wing is an organisation that consists of a small Headquarters, a regular Royal Air Force Regiment Squadron (II Squadron Royal Air Force Regiment – the Royal Air Force Regiment Parachute capable Squadron) and an Auxiliary Royal Air Force Regiment Squadron (2620 (County of Norfolk) Royal Auxiliary Air Force Regiment Squadron). The organisation undertakes the full spectrum of force protection activities. These are activities designed to ensure that air operations can be carried out from deployed locations in countries with ongoing conflicts such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Number 3 Royal Air Force, Force Protection Wing Headquarters provides a command, control and planning function that advises deployed Royal Air Force elements such as fast jet, helicopter and transport aircraft detachments. As part of its command function, the Wing utilises its subordinate units to patrol the area surrounding an airbase to ensure that enemy forces such as terrorists or insurgents do not have the opportunity to disrupt air operations.

2620 Squadron, as an auxiliary Squadron, with personnel recruited from the Norfolk area is an essential element of the Wing, providing high quality Reservists serving as Royal Air Force Regiment Gunners to reinforce the regular Squadron: II Squadron Royal Air Force Regiment.

They have had an extremely challenging and exciting detachment and have been engaged in vehicle, foot and helicopter patrols in the rural and rural/urban area around the COB, often in temperatures exceeding 45 Celsius. In addition to patrol activity, they have been actively supporting the local population, undertaking a number of hearts and minds projects and have been active in mentoring and training elements of the Iraqi Security Forces.

\*\*\*\*\*

Sadly, on page 6 of last month's newsletter, you will have read of the death of Air Vice Marshal Donald Pocock. Through the RAF Regiment Association, I and many others were

privileged to know him and he will be sadly missed by all of us. The following Obituary was published last month in the Telegraph on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August.

## **Commandant-General of the RAF Regiment who cut his teeth in action in the Western Desert, Italy and Aden**

Air Vice Marshal Donald Pocock who has died aged 88, was one of the founder members of the RAF Regiment on its formation in 1942 and the first full-career officer of the Corps to become its Commandant-General. Pocock was commissioned in July 1941 and left for the Middle East where he established a school at Amman, in Transjordan, to train Ground Gunners.

On the formation of the RAF Regiment on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1942 he was automatically transferred to that Corps and soon afterwards left for the Western Desert, with responsibility for the ground and low-level air defence of a forward fighter wing. In April 1943, at Castel Benito, he formed one of the new RAF Regiment squadrons (No 2932) in the light anti-aircraft role and commanded it for the rest of the war.

Following the Axis defeat in Tunisia in May 1943 Pocock and his squadron were redeployed to Syria as part of Operation Turpitude, a move intended to divert German attention and to help persuade Turkey to declare for the Allies. The success of the Normandy landings in June 1944 led to the abandonment of Turpitude and No 2932 was sent to Italy to provide air defence at the major airfields of Foggia and Bari.

In October Pocock took his squadron to Vis, an island off the coast of Yugoslavia, to provide air defence for the RAF's base and Tito's rear partisan HQ established there. Almost immediately the squadron was incorporated into a joint raiding group of Army, Royal Marines and RAF Regiment commandos which operated from Vis against enemy forces on the Yugoslav mainland. These raiders inflicted many casualties on the enemy. Pocock's squadron also provided boarding parties in naval vessels engaged against enemy shipping in the Adriatic, their role being to capture as many enemy sailors as possible for interrogation.

After the German capitulation the squadron moved to Austria for occupational and

disarmament duties. On promotion to Wing Commander Pocock took command of No 1328 Wing. When this disbanded in March 1946 he was posted to Aden to raise and command a new wing (battalion equivalent) of Aden Protectorate Levies (APL), an indigenous land-fighting force.

When the Palestine Mandate ended and war broke out in 1947, centuries of co-existence between Arabs and Jews in the Yemen and neighbouring territories came to an end. The indigenous police could not contain rioting in Aden Colony, and Pocock's wing was called in from the hinterland, with other APL units, to restore order. It was unprecedented for the tribal Levies to be deployed in the colony, but whilst some Levy units mutinied and attacked the Jews, Pocock succeeded in maintaining discipline among his troops.

A distinguished civilian eyewitness described his immense relief at the sight of Pocock's powerful, commanding figure dominating a chaotic scene and bringing order to it. As a result, casualties were minimised. With RAF Regiment reinforcements sent from Egypt, the ring was held and the APL returned to their up-country garrisons. Pocock finally returned to Britain in 1948 after seven unbroken years overseas, much of it on active service.

Donald Arthur Pocock was born in London on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1920 and educated at Crouch End School. As a youth he devoted most of his spare time to the Territorial Cadet Force (later Army Cadet Force) and rose steadily through the ranks, eventually being commissioned as a cadet officer. In July 1940 he enlisted in the RAF as a Ground Gunner, but was very quickly identified as officer material.

On his return from overseas Pocock served at HQ Transport Command identifying methods to make RAF Regiment units "air portable". He attended the RAF Staff College before a succession of staff and command appointments in British and Nato HQs at home and overseas, including Cyprus and, during the Confrontation in Indonesia, in HQ Far East Air Force, Singapore.

Shortly before this latter post, in 1965, he had led a working party at joint RAF/USAF talks in Washington to discuss possible RAF Regiment assistance to the USAF, which was suffering severe damage to its air assets on the ground in Vietnam. The talks resulted in a successful

officer exchange programme which has continued uninterrupted to this day.

Pocock commanded the RAF Regiment Depot at Catterick and was an aide-de-camp to the Queen from 1967 to 1970. He was then promoted to Air Commodore and appointed to the MoD as Director of Ground Defence. Two years later he assumed the top job in the Regiment, a post he held for three years. During this five-year period, the force had significant changes and developments many of which formed the foundation of today's capabilities. A feature of the period was an increasing awareness of the need to bolster the defences of operational airfields and key installations against the air and ground threat posed by the forces of the Warsaw Pact. This crucial role fell to the RAF Regiment field and air defence squadrons.

Pocock was at the centre of plans to expand the force to meet this essential requirement, which involved the creation of new field squadrons and the introduction, in 1971, of the highly capable and successful British-built Rapier short-range air defence missile system. With the potential air threat likely to be from low-flying aircraft, the RAF Regiment-manned Rapier squadrons became a key component of the air defence system at RAF airfields in Germany and the United Kingdom.

Pocock's time as the Commandant-General was often difficult. As he strove to improve the RAF Regiment's capabilities, he also had to contend with defence cuts and redundancy schemes initiated by Harold Wilson's government. However, his strong and forceful leadership



ensured that the Regiment remained a crucial part of the RAF's wide-ranging operational capability.

He took particular pride in having brought the Regiment into the missile era.

He retired from the RAF in 1975. He was appointed OBE in 1957 and CBE in 1975.

A dynamic and charismatic leader, Pocock's enduring legacy to the RAF was his absolute belief in the indispensability of organic local defence of air resources, an approach greatly influenced by his service during the Western Desert campaign; it is a doctrine which the parent RAF has reviewed regularly over the past 66 years, always to return to the same conclusion.

After retiring from the RAF, Pocock joined the British Aircraft Corporation Guided Weapons Division as air defence adviser. He was subsequently appointed General Manager for a large contract to supply and support the sale of the Rapier missile system to Iran, where he remained until the 1979 revolution that deposed the Shah. He then became director of the British Metallurgical Plant Constructor's Association. He finally retired in 1986 and took up voluntary appointments with the RAF Association and St John Ambulance. He was chairman of the League of RAF Regiment Associations. Donald Pocock died on July 30. He married, in 1947, Dorothy Griffiths. She died in 2006, and he is survived by their two sons and three daughters.

\*\*\*\*\*

I received the following e-mail from Hughie Cooper recalling his service with AVM Pocock when he was Hughie's Squadron Commander many years ago. It was when 20 Squadron was on exercise on the island of Sylt as a part of the British Army of the Rhine in 1950.

"Hi there Malcolm. I thought you might be interested in the following cartoon concerning AVM Pocock when he was our Squadron Commander all those years ago, which I am sure you have seen before as I took it from a magazine some years ago. My first contact with him was just after he joined our Squadron, when I was on a charge and he said he could not give me sufficient punishment and remanded me to the Station Commander. This in fact did me a good turn as I only got five days jankers as our own adjutant came and defended me!!!! My last contact was when he signed my discharge papers a year later. Hughie Cooper".

\*\*\*\*\*

Yes I have seen the cartoon before but sadly, I cannot seem to be able to copy and paste it into this newsletter so I'll tell you all about it. It is one of a series headed "Yes – It Really

Happened" but I cannot recall who produced them. No doubt someone will tell me. The cartoon features Pocock telling another officer the following.

"Over there, the causeway to Hamburg – keep the men away, across there Westland, the capital – keep the men away and here, Sylt Nudist Beach – FOR GOD'S SAKE – KEEP THE MEN AWAY".

### **Gunners continuing service in war zones Published in the Eastern Daily Press on 13<sup>th</sup> August by Ben Kendall**

One East Anglian RAF Regiment squadron said goodbye as another was welcomed home yesterday as the region's "revolving door" supply of troops to the war zones of Iraq and Afghanistan continued. RAF Honington's 1 Squadron held its final parade before departing on an operational tour to Kandahar, Afghanistan. Later in the day 3 RAF Force Protection Wing returned to RAF Marham from a six-month tour in Basra, Iraq. Both deployments by the RAF Regiment are vital as they provide protection to airbases and support for air operations. Group Capt Russ La Forte, station commander at Honington, admitted the RAF Regiment faces an unprecedented demand on its resources, with at least one squadron from Honington alone on tour at all times. He said:

"It is true to say we have something of a revolving door situation. For example 1 Squadron has barely been back from Iraq for 12 months and they are already returning to conflict, this time in Afghanistan. A lot of our men are accumulating a huge amount of operational experience in very challenging circumstances. But if you ask any service man or woman what the worst part of their job is, they'll say it's the boredom when they're not active. They are doing what they joined up for and are glad to be doing their bit. However it inevitably places a strain on both them and their family and, while they are away, it is important that we play an almost parental role to make sure their loved ones have the support they need."

Flt Sgt Robert Williams will be among the troops deployed to Kandahar. "The hardest part will be adapting to the climate and the terrain," he said. "But also we have a role to play in winning the hearts and minds of locals and that brings with it certain cultural sensitivities."

The parade also saw the squadron awarded a trophy after they were selected as the

outstanding RAF Regiment field squadron of 2007. This recognised their work during last year's tour of Iraq where, Group Capt La Forte said, they faced a "relentless and determined enemy" and showed great courage in the face of some of the most vicious fighting since the second world war. Meanwhile at RAF Marham there were tears of joy as servicemen were reunited with their families, in some cases for the first time in five months. The wing, made up of regulars and reservists from Norfolk's 2620 Auxiliary Squadron, was awarded with Operation Telic medals for their part in protecting the vital airbase at Basra. Among them was senior aircraftsman Andy Stephenson, who normally works in the post room at Norwich City Council. He was reunited with his wife, four-year-old son and 18-month-old daughter. He said:

"I've previously served in Kuwait so had a rough idea what to expect. But this was the most intense experience I have had so far. It is a great feeling to be back with my family and I am just looking forward to spending time with them and getting back to my normal life." Senior aircraftsman Christopher Graver, from King's Lynn, added: "When you're out there you try to stay focussed on the task at hand, but the thought of seeing your friends and family again keeps you going."

The men will now enjoy leave before returning to duties at Marham or, in the case of reservists, their civilian jobs. Members of 3 RAF Force Protection Wing were praised for their excellent service in gruelling conditions as they returned to RAF Marham. Station commander Group Capt Colin Basnett revealed they had toiled in temperatures which often exceeded 50 degrees centigrade whilst frequently under enemy bombardment and facing the threat of terrorists and insurgents. This included vehicle, foot and helicopter patrols in rural and urban areas and winning the support of the local population by carrying out humanitarian work.

Group Capt Basnett said: "It is hard to put into words how hard it is to do anything at all in those conditions, let alone patrolling in full body armour." He explained how the wing took part in the full spectrum of protection activities - from commanding jet, helicopter and transport aircraft detachments to patrolling base perimeters - which allows the RAF to carry out crucial air operations. Without your activity in the region, everything we

have fought so hard to achieve in the past would have been for nothing," he told the men.

Wing commander Phil Lester said this tour had been particularly pleasing as, when the Iraq war began in 2003, the aim had been to return liberty to the Iraqis. This was the first tour since Iraqis took charge of their own protection in Basra. Squadron leader Jonathan White, from 2620 squadron, said all his men had been well prepared, but the contrast between a theatre of war and civilian life was always a shock to the system for those on their first tour.

### **RAF troops leave Scots base for six-month tour in Iraq**

On 18<sup>th</sup> August, more than 200 troops from the RAF Regiment flew out from their home base at RAF Lossiemouth in Moray, bound for Iraq where they will help guard the international airport at Basra. The RAF's 5 Force Protection Wing, which comprises the Wing Headquarters of 51 Squadron, the RAF Regiment, and 2622 (Highland) Squadron, the Royal Auxiliary Air Force Regiment, are being deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Telic. Many of the troops involved in the Iraq deployment returned from Afghanistan in September of last year. The deployment comes at the end of an intensive 6 month pre deployment training period, which culminated in a final battlefield exercise, held in June of this year. The exercise allowed the troops to put into practice all the skills that they had learnt over the training period, using some of the equipment that they will be using whilst deployed in Iraq. Wing Commander Derek Read, the commanding officer of the protection wing, said that, in addition to guarding Basra international airport, the members of the RAF Regiment would be patrolling the countryside around the base and protecting the air assets and personnel. He said: "I don't think any of us look forward to leaving our families behind, particularly when it is for six months, but we have a job to do."

Flight Lieutenant Michael McGregor, the commander of the regiment's C Flight, said: "It is quite an exciting time - having been there several times before as many of the guys in the squadron have - to see how things have changed and, hopefully, as we hand power back to the Iraqi forces and Iraqi government we can see that we have made a change."

### **Felixstow to Honour RAF Honington**

A major event in Felixstowe this autumn will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the RAF being granted the freedom of the town. The freedom will be exercised by 15 Squadron RAF Regiment from RAF Honington will exercise its right to march through the resort with bayonets fixed, colours flying, drums beating and bands playing - accompanied by the Central Band of the Royal Air Force. The Freedom Parade between the Spa Pavilion and the leisure centre and a Sunset Ceremony next to the Town Hall gardens will be the highlights of the special day on 26<sup>th</sup> September. A flypast by an RAF aircraft is planned to take place at 6pm. Everyone is invited to watch the ceremony and the march past between 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm from Undercliff Road West or the promenade or Wolsey Gardens.

## **NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM (NMA) UPDATE**

Over 83,000 visitors came during the months of May and June this year. That's over 300% up on the same period last year. The NMA is expecting around 300,000 visitors for the whole year compared with 78,000 in 2007. The Arboretum has a lot to offer both young and old. Go for a day out to enjoy the peace and tranquillity, the trees, the memorials, the history, the sense of national pride. Have lunch or drinks in the Harbour Restaurant - find all sorts of gifts and memorabilia in our shop - above all enjoy the experience. The staff and volunteers of the National Memorial Arboretum look forward to welcoming you.

### **Showmen's Guild Commemorated Fallen Comrades with unique carousel horse memorial**

On 18<sup>th</sup> August, The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain, the representative body of travelling funfair workers that was established in 1889, unveiled and dedicated a unique memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum. A seven foot high carousel horse and engraved plinth will serve as a lasting monument to the military service of the Guild's members, in particular those that gave their lives. Jimmy Williams, president of the Showman's Guild, said: "We are very proud of our old soldiers and take every opportunity to remember the sacrifices they made. We have a column of veterans marching at the Cenotaph every November and now this memorial is set to be a very tangible expression of the high regard in which we hold them. The carousel horse is very

striking in the context of the National Memorial Arboretum. We feel it's important for visitors to appreciate that members of this ancient Guild gave their lives, alongside many others, to ensure the freedom we all enjoy today." The service of dedication was conducted by the Guild's padre, Rev. Stanley Townsend and guests included: Brian Jenkins, MP for Tamworth; Bill Oler, MP for Nuneaton; Councilor Terry Dix, Chairman of Staffordshire County Council; Councilor Marion Haywood, Chairman of Warwickshire County Council; Councilor John Wilks, Chairman of Lichfield District Council and Councilor David Smith, Leader of Lichfield District Council.

### **Future Events at the NMA**

#### **Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> 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.

The 317 Mechanical Transport Squadron Association. Tree planting to commemorate those who lost their lives serving with the Supply & Transport Columns. At 12:00 noon. Contact: Mr Knight on 01788 337887.

Remembrance event - HMT Lancastria. Chapel service at 14.00 hours.

#### **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

Nene Valley Harley Owners Group. The first ever Ride to the Wall event in the UK - dedicated to troops that have died on duty since World War II - has been set for Saturday 11th October at the Armed Forces Memorial. You can find more information along with the application form at the event's website: <[www.rttw.co.uk](http://www.rttw.co.uk)>.

#### **Saturday, 18th October 2008**

Remembrance event for the Merchant Navy Association & Merchant Navy Welfare Board. A Service in the Chapel at 12.30 p.m. to commemorate 10th anniversary of memorial and 5th anniversary of stone.

#### **Saturday, 8th November 2008**

Remembrance event for 49 Inkerman Battery Royal Artillery. Service on Armed Forces Memorial. For further information contact NMA - Tel: 01283 792 333.

#### **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

Remembrance Sunday / Day Service. For further information contact NMA - Tel: 01283 792 333.

Royal Signals Corps Memorial within the NMA on the afternoon of Remembrance Sunday 2008, to mark the end of the TA 100 events. For further information contact NMA - Tel: 01283 792 333.

**Tuesday, 11th November 2008**

Remembrance event for Armistice Day at the Armed Forces Memorial. For further information contact NMA - Tel: 01283 792 333.

**2009**

Tuesday, 27th January, 2009.  
Remembrance event - Holocaust Memorial Day.  
More focus on education. For further information contact NMA - Tel: 01283 792 333.

**BRANCH APPEAL REMINDER**

Please remember the appeal your Branch Committee has set up for as we are now regularly sending "goodies" to the lads in the Military Ward at Selly Oak Hospital and 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*

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES



16

Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> October	2008	Merchant Navy Day	Sat 29 <sup>th</sup> -Sun 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov	2008	Birmingham Int Tattoo
<b>Fri 3<sup>rd</sup>-Mon 6<sup>th</sup> Oct</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>Reunion &amp; AGM</b>	Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> November	2008	St Andrew's Day
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> October	2008	Branch Night	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> December	08	Branch Night
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> October	2008	Battle of Trafalgar Day	Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> January	2009	Branch Night
Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> November	2008	Midlands Fest.1 of Rem	<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>67<sup>th</sup> Ann RAF Regiment</b>
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	2008	B'ham Poppy Ball	Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> February	2009	Subscriptions Due
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> November	2008	Rem Sunday	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	09	Branch Night
<b>Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>Remembrance Day</b>	Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> March	2009	St David's Day
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> November	08	Branch Night	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	2009	Branch Night
			Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	2009	St Patrick's Day
			Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> – Mon 30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	09	Battle For Meiktila
			<b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>Branch Reded of Mem.l</b>
			Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> April	2009	Branch Night
			Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April	2009	St George's Day
			Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> April	2009	ANZAC Day Serv & Par
			Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> May	2009	Reded of Regiment Chapel
			Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	2009	Branch Night

## 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

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS PHOTOCOPIED AND BOUND BY KIND  
PERMISSION OF WRAGGE AND CO SOLICITORS**