



ROYAL AIR FORCE REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

www.rafregt.org.uk

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

Birmingham Branch Birthdays	Page 2
Branch Appeal – Goodies for the Military Ward	Page 2
From the Branch Secretary	Page 2
<i>Death Notices</i>	Page 2
Fred Ringham	Page 2
<i>RAF Regiment Fund Contributions</i>	Page 3
<i>Warrant Officer Charles Marshall MSM</i>	Page 4
<i>21st Anniversary of Birmingham Branch</i>	Page 4
<i>A New Associate Member – John Casley</i>	Page 4
<i>RAF Regiment and the Battle of Casino</i>	Page 5
<i>From Jack Stapleton</i>	Page 5
<i>492 (Solihull) Squadron ATC</i>	Page 5
RAF Cosford Air Show	Page 6
<i>Road Chaos at Air Show</i>	Page 6
<i>RAF Regiment Books</i>	Page 6
<i>Another Book Added “The Edges of War”</i>	Page 6
National Memorial Arboretum Update	Page 7
<i>Burhill Pedal Power Delivers Club Cars</i>	Page 8
<i>Duke and Duchess of Gloucester at NMA</i>	Page 8
<i>Future Events at NMA</i>	Page 8
<i>MoD to Consider New Rebab Centre</i>	Page 9
<i>15 Squadron Homecoming Newsletter</i>	Page 10
<i>Section 1 Foreword by Officer Comm.g</i>	Page 10
<i>Section 2 A Flight on Tour</i>	Page 10
<i>Section 3 B Flight on Tour</i>	Page 11
<i>Section 4 C Flight on Tour</i>	Page 11
<i>Section 5 Sniper Section</i>	Page 12
<i>Section 6 Weapons Support Flight</i>	Page 13
News of the RAF Regiment	Page 14
<i>Death Notices</i>	Page 14
<i>Bill Aucutt</i>	Page 14
<i>John Duffy</i>	Page 17
<i>Fred Ringham</i>	Page 14
<i>Peter Weekes</i>	Page 14
<i>General Notices</i>	Page 15
<i>RAF Regiment Fund and Shop Queries</i>	Page 15
<i>NCO Leadership Award 2009</i>	Page 15
<i>New Standard for 63 Squadron</i>	Page 15
<i>Queen’s Birthday Honours</i>	Page 15
<i>Corps Diary Dates</i>	Page 15
Dates for Your Diary	Page 16

**GOODIES FOR THE
MILITARY WARD** Page 2

**DEATH OF FRED
RINGHAM** Page 2

**RAF COSFORD AIR
SHOW** Page 6

**NATIONAL MEMORIAL
ARBORETUM UPDATE** Page 7

**NEWS OF THE RAF
REGIMENT** Page 14



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: 241
JULY 2009**

THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 241 JULY 2009

Dear Readers.

BRANCH BIRTHDAYS

A very Happy Birthday to the following Birmingham Branch members whose birthdays are this month, may you all have many more of them.

- 1st July **Terry Moyle** Tredegar Gwent
- 5th July **Peter Collier** Burton on Trent Staffs
- 5th July **John Goodwin** Nuneaton Warwickshire
- 10th July **Trevor Gardiner** Hinckley Leics
- 16th July **Jock Melville** Coleshill Warwickshire
- 16th July **Jack Stapleton** Cardiff South Wales
- 26th July **Ken Wadey** Dersingham Norfolk
- 27th July **Terence Willetts** Birmingham West M
- 30th July **Victor Pearson** Ellesmere Shropshire

Branch Appeal

Goodies for the Military Ward

It is most important that we 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. With your help, we can continue to provide these small comforts and any other items that the Military Ward staff ask us for. We can never get enough goodies for the lads, so in the mean time, your continued support is appreciated for we need more money. If any of you would like to contribute items to this appeal, you can either take them directly to Ward S4, Selly Oak Hospital and ask for Warrant Officer A (Alan) Wanbon RAF, or post them to him at Patient Support Services, RCDM, Ward S4, Selly Oak Hospital, Raddlebarn Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6JD. Alan can also be contacted on 07795 801276.

FROM THE BRANCH SECRETARY

DEATH NOTICES:

Fred Ringham. Former Corporal Fred Ringham. Sadly, at 10.30 a.m. on the morning of 11th June, after a short illness, Fred Ringham passed away. The Birmingham Branch has lost a much loved and valued friend and colleague who will be difficult, if not impossible, to replace.

The funeral was held at 11.45 a. m. last month on 22nd June at Kingswood Unitarian Meeting House Chapel, Packhorse Lane, Hollywood, Birmingham.

Family flowers only were requested but donations may be made to Cancer research (UK) if desired. Edith can be contacted at 76 Lowbrook Lane, Tidbury Green, Solihull B90 1QS. The Chapel was packed with standing room only and an overspill outside. Five Standards were on parade; the RAF Regiment Association National Standard paraded by the National Standard Bearer John Smart; the Birmingham Branch Standard paraded by Roy Thomas, as our regular Standard Bearer John Docker is in hospital; the Lincoln Branch Standard paraded by Tom Monteith; who also acted as Standard Marshal; Moseley Branch RAF Association Standard paraded by Doug Tapsell and the Solihull Branch RAF Association Standard was paraded by George Bagnall and a wonderful job they all did too.

The Standards paraded at both sides of the entrance to the Chapel and the remainder of the pathway was lined by an ex-service Guard of Honour, headed by the Association Chairman Steven Brereton Martin. The Association Vice-Chairman acted as Guard of Honour Marshal. The Standards led the funeral cortege into the Chapel and then the congregation entered, followed by the Guard of Honour. A very moving service then followed with tributes to Fred by the Chaplain and by Fred's daughter Nannette who completed her tribute to her father with the words of Rudyard Kipling's poem "If". Three hymns were chosen to accompany the Service and they were; "Amazing Grace; "Love Divine" and "Jerusalem".

After the Chapel Service, the ex-service Guard of Honour lined up again outside the Chapel as the funeral cortege led by the Standard Bearers, made their way down to the churchyard for a simple committal service. Everyone was invited afterwards to the Windermere United Services Club for light refreshments and so we said our farewells to a much loved friend and colleague. Fred will be sadly missed in the Birmingham Branch in particular and in the Association in General. Fred's first wife Rose tragically pre-deceased him but he will be sadly missed by his wife Edith, to whom we extend our

sincere condolences and his children from his previous marriage, son Nigel and daughter Nannette and their families. Edith would like to thank everyone for the cards, telephone calls and letters she has received expressing their sadness at the news. She would have liked to respond to them all personally but there are just too many.

Fred was born on 31st March 1934 and after his apprenticeship in the building trade was completed, enlisted at the age of twenty-one on 11th July 1955. He was kitted out at RAF Cardington before being posted to RAF West Kirby for his Basic Training. Later in 1955, he was posted to RAF Catterick for his Regiment Training and then to RAF Watchet onto a Junior NCOs course. In 1955 he was then posted as a Corporal to RAF Hednesford as a Recruit Basic Training Instructor. In 1956 he was posted to RAF Kinloss as an Instructor taking the permanent staff on refresher courses until his discharge on 10th July 1957. Having served a carpentry apprenticeship in the building trade, he then returned to the building trade, worked for several employers notably Barratt Developments and J J Gallagher. He finished his career as a Site Agent specialising in large construction work such as office blocks, schools, factories, warehouses etc.

Fred was very well thought of as an employee – members of the Gallagher family attended at Fred's funeral - and even in his retirement he continued his links with his former employers. This later enabled him to obtain a great deal of help in obtaining equipment for the Memorial Garden. For all of those that knew him, Fred was a real stalwart of the Birmingham Branch and of the Association. He joined the Birmingham Branch on 28th June 2000 and right from the very beginning, he became involved in the affairs of the Branch, particularly with the development of the RAF Regiment Memorial Garden.

Builders use flagpoles and flags to advertise their sites don't they so as a former Site Agent and with his civil engineering contacts, in February 2001 he obtained and donated the first flagpole for the Garden and assisted in erecting it. The following month he obtained the second flagpole and again assisted in erecting it. In the same month, I was discussing with him, the terrible state of the muddy approach road from the Chapel to the RAF Regiment Memorial Garden

that was inches deep in mud and without wellington boots, almost totally impassible in wet weather for the guests that we expected to attend the Dedication of the Memorial the following month. As at that time, we were able to do anything we wanted to at the NMA, always providing of course that it was for the good of the NMA, and with the Dedication of the Memorial rapidly approaching, we decided to resurface the muddy approach road and in discussing the situation with Fred, I well remember him educating me in the technique of amateurs economically surfacing the approach road as cheaply as possible as he told me with great authority that we needed a load of scalpings.

As at that time, the only scalpings that I had heard of was in my boyhood when reading cowboy and Indian books so I asked him for an explanation. He then told me that scalpings was the trade name for the recycled tarmac that had been scraped off major roads and motorways before resurfacing with new tarmac could take place. So with his knowledge of the materials required, he and I approached the Quarry Manager of Redland (now Lafarge) Aggregates at the quarry adjacent to the NMA, and asked for their assistance in obtaining a quantity of the recycled tarmac that fortunately, was already stockpiled at the quarry.

We negotiated a good price for several loads and generously, the Quarry Manager agreed to deliver the recycled tarmac free of charge. Thanks to Fred's knowledge of civil engineering and with a lot of hard work, we were able to surface the approach road with a hard standing that would have done credit to an aircraft runway and so, we were able all keep all our guests feet out of the inches deep mud that had previously covered the approach road. Everyone involved at the NMA including Commander David Childs was delighted with our efforts.

Since then, Fred has been a willing volunteer in maintaining and improving the Garden, regularly making a seventy-mile return journey each time with no thought of reward or payment of expenses and as I said above, he will be sadly missed in the Birmingham Branch in particular and in the Association in General.

RAF Regiment Fund Contributions

Those of you that are members of the RAF Regiment fund will have received a letter from dfc Debit Finance Collections plc and at first glance,

printed as it was on cheap paper and in black and white, it may have seemed to you that it was a bit dodgy, a typical letter from an underhand crooked scam merchant. It certainly did to me until I read it through again. But not so, it is a genuine letter from a company selected to manage the direct debit collection of RAF Regiment Fund contributions as the following communication from the Association Chairman Group Captain Steven Brereton Martin. "For some time the RAF Regiment Fund has been unable to collect membership subscriptions from members by the direct debit route because of problems in computer software. These problems now appear to be resolved and the Fund has appointed a firm called Debit Finance Collections Plc to sort out the uncollected subscriptions of the past year or so and to effect properly-regulated direct debit payments from members.

RAF Regiment Fund members may well shortly receive, or have recently received, a letter from this firm to tell them that a year's subscription will be drawn from their accounts via direct debit, as well as a ½ year's subscription to align annual subscription collection with the Fund's accounting period. Following this process, the routine annual subscription date will be 1 April each year.

The name of the appointed firm can be miss-read and might have alarmed some members. The Fund wishes to assure members that the firm has been properly appointed and that letters received from this firm relating to the direct debit withdrawals in the name of the RAF Regiment Fund are genuine. Yours sincerely, Steven Brereton Martin.

Warrant Officer Charles Marshall MSM

An outstanding gunner, mountain rescue member and community fund-raiser, WO Charlie Marshall was among a number of RAF service personnel honoured in the Queen's birthday honours. The RAF Regiment gunner at Kinloss was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for his outstanding service in 24 years in the RAF.

WO Marshall has a wealth of experience in areas including Iraq and Northern Ireland and deployed to East Timor as part of a peace-keeping force. He also spent three years on exchange with the Royal Marines. He has been a member of the RAF Mountain Rescue Team for 19 years, including one year as a permanent staff member. This duty has taken him away from home and

work, at very short notice on occasions to some of the most inhospitable areas of the UK. He has also raised over £60,000 for a range of charities and local requirements, and fund-raising events have included horse racing nights in Baghdad, 50-mile runs up the summit of Cairngorm and swimming the Moray Firth. Group Captain Robbie Noel, the station commander at RAF Kinloss, said: "Flight Sergeant Marshall is an exceptional individual with a voracious appetite for challenge and a constant desire to improve the lot of both the RAF and local communities. These qualities have led to a professional performance that is an inspiration to all staff."

21st Anniversary of Birmingham Branch

Do you know that on the 16th of last June, the Birmingham Branch became of age for it reached its 21st birthday? On 16th June 1988, who would have thought that we would still be going strong twenty-one years later? At the meeting that day when the Branch was formed, there were seventeen ex-members of the RAF Regiment present who became the seventeen Founder Members of the Birmingham Branch. Of that seventeen, eleven of them have sadly passed on to that great squadron in the sky, two have become members of other branches, one has left the Branch and three of us are still members of the Branch.

The five members of the first Branch Committee to be elected were Dave Ball, Chairman; Malcolm Baldwin, Secretary; Dick Lane, Treasurer; Graham Garvey, Committeeman and Jack Ellis, Committeeman. Of those five, only two of us are still here, Graham Garvey and me. When we were first formed, such was the enthusiasm for the very first all-ranks RAF Regiment Association that our numbers rapidly grew until our branch meetings filled the Mountbatten Room at the Nautical Club; and that room holds two hundred and twenty. We reached our peak in 1999 and since then, due to the increasing age of our members and the inevitable loss of membership that is now occurring with sad regularity, Branch membership is declining.

However, on the bright side, although we have difficulty in getting members out to attend meetings and functions, as well as being the oldest branch in the Association, we are still the largest branch too. It does however, highlight the need to recruit younger members, for at our current rate of

decline, in about ten years or so we shall vanish into the mists of time altogether.

NEW MEMBER

We welcome Ronald (Known as John) Casley of Plymouth Devon as an Associate Member. John served in the Army in the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment but as he said in his letter to me, his reason for wishing to join was as follows. In February 1980, his son joined the RAF Regiment and during his Basic Training at RAF Swindon, sadly he collapsed and died at seventeen years of age unexpectedly from an unusual and relatively unknown virus.

Shortly afterwards, John and his wife decided to do what they could to honour their son's memory, so they both joined the Plymouth and District Federation of Ex-Services Association in Plymouth to assist in doing whatever they could to help others in the ex-RAF community. John has decided to join us as well and so we welcome him and hope that he has a long and happy association with us.

RAF Regiment and the Battle of Casino

One of our members Jack Stapleton was invited last year to accompany a RAF Regiment officer's study group in September 2008 on what is called a "Staff Ride". This one was to Casino in Italy, to study the Battle of Casino. The group was also accompanied by the official RAF Regiment Historian Dr Nigel Warwick as the Subject Matter Expert. Dr Warwick subsequently wrote an article about the battle for the last Centurion magazine.

Jack was in 2788 Squadron when the Squadron took part in the battle and as a veteran of that battle his experiences were to be drawn on in the group's study of the battle. At the time of the invite, Jack was the only one of several members of the Birmingham Branch who were veterans of the battle, who was fit to go with the group but unfortunately, as the time drew nearer, Jack had to go into hospital and was therefore unable to take part in the study group.

When he saw the article in the last Centurion, Jack wrote the following letter to me for as he says in his letter, the article brought back so many memories. The article in Centurion on page 46 is headed "The Inferno Bowl and Colle Belvedere". Sub-headed "The RAF Regiment at the Battle of Casino" and very interesting it is too.

From Jack Stapleton

Hi Malcolm. I was delighted to read the story in Centurion for as you know, I was a member of 2788 Squadron and took part in the Casino battle. With my fading memory, the story revived a lot of old memories. I was going to Casino with the group of RAF Regiment personnel and Dr Warwick last September and was very much looking forward to it but unfortunately, my aging body decided I was wanted elsewhere, i.e., hospital so I missed out. I am proud to say I was a member of a mortar team that did some good work in that battle.

I remember the Inferno Bowl very well for we lost our pal Brian Athens there from flying shrapnel and several others were injured too. I also remember the trek to our positions in the Belvedere area. Please thank Dr Warwick and Centurion for bringing back those memories for me. My regards to all my fellow Rock Apes and good health to you all. Regards, Jack Stapleton. RAF Number 1400213 (we never forget it do we).

492 (Solihull) Air Training Squadron

Our Adopted ATC Squadron

The Air Cadet Organisation and especially 492 (Solihull) Squadron recently recognised one of its long standing Civilian Committee members, Wing Commander Vic Sayfritz. Born on the 3rd December 1922, he took up his first commission with the RAF on the 14th July 1944 rising through the ranks to become Wing Commander on the 1st January 1963. His career with the RAF included serving in the United Arab Emirates, Northern Ireland and time at the Central Flying School as an instructor.

Rumour has it that in the days before Health & Safety, overloading of aircraft was not uncommon. On one occasion an aircraft laden with sacks of coal was deemed too heavy for its brakes to cope with the landing. It was therefore necessary to jettison some of the payload – unfortunately one sack reportedly went through an officer's roof. Vic maintains it was not him personally who dropped it during this early example of door to door delivery.

Vic has been a consistent and loyal supporter of the Air Cadet Organisation and in particular his promotion of 492. At 492 Squadron's headquarters in Shirley, Officer Commanding Warwickshire & Birmingham Wing ATC, Wing Commander Ladwa presented a Regional Commandant's Certificate of Merit in recognition and appreciation of meritorious

service. A great number of 492's cadets, staff, Civilian Committee, former Commanding Officers and representatives from Solihull RAFA attended the ceremony. Wing Commander Sayfritz retired from the RAF on the 18th March 1977 but has retained his connections through his active involvement with the Royal Air Force Association in Solihull. He joined the Civilian Committee of 492 Air Training Corps as the RAFA representative in 1987 and has served with no less than nine squadron commanders and three Civilian Committee Chairman.



RAF Cosford Air Show

For the first time in something like fifteen years, I was not at the show this year but as our exhibition stand was in the capable hands of Tom Magee the Branch Treasurer and Roy Thomas, one of our Military Ward Liaison Officers, and they did a great job for our Branch too. As Roy said to me in an e-mail the following day, what a great day it was. Fortunately (see the following article) the drive to Cosford was no problem as he left early at 06.10 hours, he there at 06.45 hours with Tom arriving at about 07.15 hours. They set up the stall and had no problem with the new canopy and were ready to do business by approximately 08.00 hours.

The pitch was a good one as it was a fairly short walk to the toilets and just down from the Regiment's Rapier museum pieces, but best of all was he view. Although they couldn't see the actual runway, they had full view of all the takeoffs as they left the tarmac. They had plenty of visitors to the stall, actually selling a few items including some from Roy's white elephant box. We have a possible future recruit from Stafford

who was younger than Roy and he thinks from 58 Squadron. Tom had Roy's newsletter that he gave him for reading material and contact information.

Many thanks for your report Roy and yes, I have the contact details of the possible new recruit and have written to him accordingly.

Road chaos at air show

A record-breaking 58,000-strong crowd brought chaos to roads around the Cosford Air Show, forcing overwhelmed organisers to enforce a 'walking-only' policy. Some ticket-holders queued for up to four hours to reach RAF Cosford, only to be told there was nowhere for them to park and they would have to walk.

Trains were filled to capacity and passengers told there was no guarantee they would be able to board services home due to unprecedented numbers of visitors. Police declared the car parks full at 1pm yesterday, before announcing the site was only accessible by foot. The Red Arrows, a Vulcan bomber and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight were star attractions.

Marketing co-ordinator John Francis said he had never seen such crowds in 31 years. He said a traffic plan had been put in place for 50,000 visitors – which failed when an extra 8,000 turned up. "It's usually around 50,000 and we can deal with that but when another 8,000 turn up that's another 2,000-3,000 cars. It's overwhelmed us really. The traffic plan cannot be changed for we've only got two entrances. We've been doing this for a long time and we have perfected the traffic plan. There's nothing else we can do, if people come and are prepared to pay we can't turn them away."

Lots of people gave up and parked on verges and set up barbecues and picnics. Fortunately, our lads have to get there early to set up the display and so missed the heavy traffic. Two members of my family were able to get there later in the day but another member of the family gave up and came back home to spend what was left of the day in the garden after four hours of queuing in traffic that was absolutely gridlocked.

RAF Regiment Books

I am often asked for information about books about the RAF Regiment. The following list is of the books that I know of that I am regularly adding to. If anyone knows of any other books about the RAF Regiment, please let me know. As a result of this column, Eric Papps

Secretary of the Gloucester Branch, has told me of yet another book about the RAF Regiment that I was unaware of. It is "The Edges of War" by Tim Hillyar, published in 1992. Eric has very kindly given me a copy of this book and I really appreciate this generous gesture. The book (see below) is dedicated to the late Dick Speight and his wife Denise, who is Secretary of the NE London Branch, for their enthusiastic encouragement to publish this story.

"Khaki and Blue" the early ground defence of the RAF in WW2 by Colonel Ronald Sherbrooke-Walker TD DL. Published in **1952** by The Saint Catherine Press Ltd. Now out of print. No ISBN.

"A Short History of the RAF Regiment" from 1942 to 1970 with a brief account of the approach to the problems of airfield defence in the RAF from 1918 to 1942 by Kingsley M Oliver. Printed by Thanet Printing Works in **1969**. No ISBN Number and now out of print.

"The Battle of the Airfields 1st January 1945" by Norman L Franks. About "Operation Bodenplatte" when the Germans attempted to destroy the advanced Allied Airfields. First published in **1982**. ISBN 1 898697 15 9. Republished by Grub Street in **1994** in an updated version.

"The Edges of War" An RAF Regiment Story by Tim Hillyar. About 2804 Armoured Car Squadron, from landing in France at the end of June 1944, through the fighting in Europe to the British Victory Parade in Berlin on 21st July 1945. Privately published by Tim Hillyar. I have no contact details.

"The Blue and Khaki Hunters" Privately published in a Limited Edition of 500 copies in **1993** by D F Sampson through Newton Publishers. ISBN 1-872308-34-1. Can be obtained directly from Mr D F Sampson, 17 Shelley Close, Highcliffe on Sea, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 4HW. Telephone number 01425 279206.

"Below the Bottom Rung" the RAF Regiment in Palestine by Edward Grocott. Published in **1996** by J and K H Publishing. ISBN 1 900511 57 6.

"Through Adversity" the History of the RAF Regiment 1942 - 1992 by Kingsley M Oliver. Published in **1997** by Forces and Corporate Publishing Ltd. ISBN 0 9529597 0 4.

"In Adversity" Exploits of Gallantry and Awards to the RAF Regiment and its Associated Forces 1921 - 12995 by Nicholas G Tucker. Published

in **1997** by Jade Publishing Limited. ISBN 1-900734-08-7.

"The RAF Regiment" History, Colours, uniforms and Equipment of the RAF Regiment. Edited by Stuart Asquith. Published in **2000** by Nexus Special Interests Ltd. Book Number 001772. Foreword by Air Commodore R C Moore, MBE, RAF, Commandant General, RAF Regiment. But now out of print.

"The RAF Regiment at War" 1942 - 1946 by Kingsley M Oliver. Published in **2002** by Pen and Sword Books Limited. ISBN 0-85052-852-6.

"On the Road to Mandalay" featuring the life of the author Randle Manwaring focussing particularly on his time with the RAF Regiment in the Burma Campaign. Published in **2006** by Pen and Sword Books Limited. ISBN 1844154971.

"Constant Vigilance" the RAF Regiment in the Burma Campaign by Nigel W M Warwick. Published in **2007** by Pen and Sword Books Limited. ISBN: 9781844155002.

"Joint Force Harrier" by Commander Adrian Orchard, with James Barrington. The true story of a Royal Navy Fighter squadron at war. Published in 2008 by Penguin Books and Micael Joseph. ISBN 9780718153991.

If anyone knows of any other books, please let me know.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM (NMA) UPDATE

Lafarge Aggregates and the National Memorial Arboretum have scooped the top national award for land restoration. Presented by the Mineral Products Association (MPA) in London, the accolade celebrates the environmental, social and economic benefits resulting from the development of the Arboretum on the site of one of Lafarge's former sand and gravel quarries. The Arboretum, which recently unveiled plans that will see it transformed into a world-class centre for remembrance, honours the fallen, recognises sacrifice and fosters pride in the country. Ecology and the environment have been at the forefront of the site's development, with more than 50,000 trees having been planted to create beautiful wooded parkland. With the support of Lafarge, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, and the Royal British Legion, the Arboretum has created a rich tapestry of lakes, ponds, river habitats, grassland, reed beds and wetland. This, coupled with hedge laying and the building of an otter holt, has promoted wildlife to the extent that

a vast array of species are now flourishing on the 150 acre site.

Robert Whetstone, managing director of Lafarge Aggregates and a trustee of the Arboretum, said: "The Alrewas site has been restored into a beautiful, historic and peaceful place of growing international importance. It has come to mean a great deal, both to the Nation and personally to every one of the 300,000 visitors it now attracts every year." Charlie Bagot Jewitt, chief executive of the National Memorial Arboretum, said: "Extensive collaboration between many organisations has seen this amazing place rise from the base of a former gravel pit. Our visitors marvel constantly at how much has been achieved in the eight years since we opened and this high profile external recognition is wonderful."

Burhill pedal power delivers Club Cars for National Memorial Arboretum

A group of golf industry professionals, led by Burhill Golf & Leisure Chief Executive Colin Mayes, has presented the National Memorial Arboretum with four new Club Car vehicles, bought with money raised on a 140-mile cycle ride. Mayes, along with Burhill colleagues David Cook and Andy Owen, were part of the eight-strong team who completed the coast-to-coast cycle ride in August of last year, which started in Whitehaven and ended in Tynemouth.

Between them they raised more than £23,000 to purchase two four-seater Club Cars to transport elderly and infirm relatives around the 150-acre arboretum site, in Staffordshire. The money was also used to purchase an ambulance unit and four-wheel drive maintenance vehicle.

Joining the Burhill team were other golf industry professionals Kevin Hart (Club Car) Andy Brown (Toro), Christian Grisard van Roey (Toro), Bruce Glasco (Troon Golf) and golf course designer Jonathan Gaunt. The group cycled west to east along the route of Hadrian's Wall, and completed the journey in two-and-a-half days. Colin Mayes said: "The new Club Cars will allow people visiting the arboretum to manoeuvre around the site much easier. We are all extremely proud to see that the hard work and determination everyone on the cycle ride showed has paid off."

**Duke and Duchess of Gloucester at
National Memorial Arboretum
20th June 2009**

On Saturday 20th June 2009, at a poignant annual event held within the walls of the Armed Forces Memorial, the recently engraved names of the 66 servicemen and women who lost their lives on duty during 2008 were dedicated. Prince Richard, the Duke of Gloucester and Birgitte, the Duchess of Gloucester, joined families at the dedication of the names of the 66 men and women of the UK Armed Forces killed in 2008. Bereaved families were joined at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire by Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester who were representing Her Majesty the Queen. The Duke and Duchess have visited UK Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan on several occasions. Defence Minister, Baroness Ann Taylor, represented the Government. Baroness Taylor said: "The names of those 66 servicemen and women that gave their lives in 2008 have been carved in stone at the Armed Forces Memorial in a fitting tribute to their bravery and heroism. Their names will endure so that they can always be remembered." During the service the 66 names (see below) were read aloud by Major General Garry Robison (Royal Navy and Royal Marines), Lieutenant General Bill Rollo (Army) and Air Marshall Simon Bryant (RAF). The Royal Party, Baroness Taylor and the families then laid wreaths next to the recently engraved names.

The service was led by former Bishop to the Armed Forces, The Right Reverend John Kirkham assisted by Chaplain General (Land Forces), the Venerable Stephen Robbins and Honorary Chaplain to the Arboretum, the Reverend Simon Lumby.

Future Events at the NMA

Sunday 19th July 2009

Allied Special Forces, Mirbat Day. Dedication of Memorial to Battle of Mirbat in 1972. To honour those who fought and those who lost their lives from 22 Special Air Service Regiment and the Sultan's Armed Forces consisting of the Dhofar Gendarmerie, Omani Artillery and Omani Firqat Forces on the 19th July 1972 at Mirbat, Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman. At 12.30 p.m. at the Allied Special Forces Grove. For further information contact Mike Colton on 07929 118598 or <mikecolton@hotmail.org.uk>.

Monday 27th July 2009

British Korean Veterans' Association Annual Service of Commemoration and Parade at 11.30 a.m. in the Leonard Cheshire Amphitheatre

and BKVA Garden. For further information contact Mr. Frank on 01457 793699 or email <frank.ellison@btinternet.com>.

Saturday 1st August 2009

A memorial is to be unveiled at 2.00 p.m. at a ceremony in the Ulster Ash Grove to honour dog handlers and their dogs that were killed in Northern Ireland while working with the Army Dog Handlers Unit. The Red Paw, a tiny badge, is worn by dog handlers alongside their regimental badge when working as part of the Army Dog Unit, Northern Ireland. For more details, contact Eddie or Cath Shinton on 01584 891449 or log on to <mwww.armydogunit-ni.co.uk>.

Saturday 15th August 2009

Malayan Volunteers Group. A short memorial service to commemorate 64th anniversary of VJ Day will be held at 12.00 noon at the Malayan Volunteers plot. For further information contact Mrs R Fell on 01297 33045 or <dinraf-millbrook@tiscali.co.uk>. Or log onto www.malayanvolunteersgroup.org.uk.

Sunday 23rd August 2009

Royal Naval Patrol Service. A Service of dedication for new memorial with a parade at 11.00 am and a service at 11.30 a.m. For further information contact John Hodge on 0121 308 4596 or email <hodge2tp@btinternet.com>.

Saturday 5th September 2009

Brotherhood of Greek Mainland Veterans 1940/41. An Annual Service of Remembrance at 11.30 a.m. at the Greek plot. For further information contact Frank J Gill, Reunion Organiser on 0151 924 2712.

Saturday 12th September 2009

Northern Ireland Veterans' Association. Annual service of remembrance, with drumhead, followed by parade to Ulster Ash Grove. At 1.30 a.m. a Service in the Leonard Cheshire Amphitheatre Open to all. Standards welcomed but advance notice of participation appreciated. Contact Alan Preston <service2009@nivets.org.uk> or PO Box 9004, Leicester LE21 4BL.

Saturday 26th September 2009

An event to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the final flights of "Operation Plainfare" the Berlin Airlift. More information is available by visiting www.veterans-uk.info or telephoning 0800 1692277.

Saturday 10th October 2009

The annual Ride to the Wall to remember all the troops that have died on duty since World War II. The Inaugural Ride which took place last October, saw more than 2,500 motorcyclists ride together to the National Memorial Arboretum. Several improvements are planned for this year's event which is on the 10th October 2009. Because of the vast numbers involved, a new assembly point has been chosen - Drayton Manor, Tamworth, Staffs, B78 3TW - about 15 miles from the National Memorial Arboretum. The Manor has improved parking space and facilities and overnight camping is also available. There will also be an RAF Spitfire flypast following the service. For further information please contact: Martin Dickinson, Founder, Chairman RTTW Organising Committee by email at martindickinson@aol.com or by telephone on 07740871983.

MoD to Consider New Rehab Centre

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is launching a study to assess proposals for a new centre of excellence in rehabilitation to ensure that the care of injured service personnel remains state-of-the-art for decades to come. A private benefactor has agreed to fund a year-long feasibility study to establish costs and implications for a National Rehabilitation Centre that might be built in the Midlands in approximately 10 years time.

The new national centre would improve even further on the current and planned facilities at the Defence Military Rehabilitation Centre, Headley Court. The study will explore the possibility of creating a facility which can be a truly national centre for excellence for both military and civilian rehabilitation, with a defence capability at its heart. Other Government Departments, the NHS and charities will all be consulted in the study process. Decisions on whether to proceed with constructing a new centre will only be made upon completion of this study. Veterans' Minister Kevan Jones said:

"Our injured personnel receive first rate treatment at Headley Court and our other rehabilitation facilities. It is a testament to the skill and professionalism of our medical staff that more and more personnel injured in conflict are now recovering to the extent that they can return to the front line. Our ongoing commitment to rehabilitation has been shown by continuing investment to improve facilities at Headley Court,

and the generous contributions of charities such as Help for Heroes.

This study into a possible new National Rehabilitation Centre with a defence facility at its core is a fantastic opportunity to assess how we can ensure that the quality of our rehabilitation services is maintained for years to come. We are very grateful for the private funding into this important study to benefit our injured personnel”.

The Midlands have been identified as the preferred setting for a new centre, which - like Headley Court - would be located in a suitable setting for physical and psychological rehabilitation. It would bring rehabilitation services closer to other key military medical facilities, such as the new military ward under construction at the new Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham due to open in June 2010. The Midlands, with its many transport links, would also be more accessible to patients and their families who come from across the UK.

15 Squadron Homecoming Newsletter

I have now received the last edition of the 15 Squadron on Tour newsletter with all the news from Honington, Iraq and Afghanistan. As with the previous newsletters it is very well illustrated and in sections as follows.

- Section 1: Foreword by the OC 15 Squadron
- Section 2: A Flight
- Section 3: B Flight
- Section 4: C Flight
- Section 5: Sniper Section
- Section 6: Support Weapons Flight

As it is the Homecoming Edition (they arrived home last month) there is no Home Front Section.

Section 1

Foreword by the OC 15 Squadron

May I welcome everyone to this last copy of the 15 Squadron RAF Regiment Newsletter that records the last few weeks of the Op Telic deployment as well as the last few words from Support Weapons Flight at Camp Bastion. Most of you will know that the majority of the Squadron has now made its way back to Honington with a fairly big press jamboree in E Hanger on 27th May – it would appear that I owe several slabs of beer for my own appearances in newspapers on the following day, although

Sergeant Cooke and Corporal Smythe owe a fair bit too.

I am conscious that lots of the lads had already come home, or in the case of the Service Support personnel were still deployed in Iraq and Kuwait and although we were in the limelight, the press coverage also recognised the sterling service of everyone involved in our deployment to Iraq as well as all the other squadrons who preceded us. I cannot forget the Rear Party either, Dougy for producing these newsletters and Flight Sergeant Gary Pratt who held it all together in our absence.

Equally of course, Support Weapons Flight are still at Camp Bastion and their article gives a few clues about how challenging this new operational deployment has been – we hope to see them all home at the end of June and as few of us will be travelling to Cyprus to oversee their decompression. It will feel quite strange having everyone all together at last!! As ever life goes on and it is great news that all eleven personnel we sent on Further Training for promotion to Corporal have already passed Phase One and are well into the final phase – good luck lads! Thank you all for your support during our deployment and I hope that these newsletters have gone some way to giving you an idea of what the lads have got up to.

Section 2

A Flight on Tour

To the delight of most of A Flight, we got rid of the Bulldogs towards the end of April and moved on to Mastiffs, re-rolling as a rifle flight. It didn't take long for the members of Bass's multiple to get used to the “air con” and “comfort” in the back of the Mastiffs.

On 1st May we lost four Black Dagger patrols, just leaving the Squadron to cover Tesseral North and South, which gave the lads a little bit more spare time for Operation Massive and Bronze. Slowly and surely people began to filter home, leaving the Squadron with thirty personnel in Basrah. A few of the fast patrols, the remaining A Flight lads dropped off useful items and comfort items to the locals to get rid of the spare kit who repaid us in their own way with tea and bread. The last ever patrol done by British Forces and us in Iraq was on 24th May till 25th May where we had a combat camera team with us to film the patrol because of the high interest from the media because of the British Forces pulling out of Iraq. Eventually we pulled out and handed

all our kit in and had clearance to leave Iraq. We then had a long flight to Cyprus, via Baghdad and Kuwait. In Cyprus we enjoyed relaxing on the beach, having a few beers and BBQ and watching a comedian take the Mick out of everyone. The lads weren't too impressed with the early start the next morning due to hangovers and lack of sleep. We got back to Brize Norton to look forward to a four-hour coach journey to Honington. Stepping off the coach we were met by friends and family and members of the press who filmed, interviewed and took pictures of our homecoming. Corporal Smythe, his wife and baby son were on BBC news and some lads caught glimpses of themselves on various news channels. We then enjoyed a relaxing week at home before going back to work the following week waiting to go on leave and some of us, to a holiday in Magaluf. A Flight now consists of just ten members as all the Auxiliaries and Force Protection (FP) lads have gone back to what they were doing before they joined the Squadron. We are all happy to be home safe and sound and looking forward to preparing for our next tour and future challenges (with no Bulldogs involved hopefully!!!).

Section 3

B Flight on Tour

As another picturesque sunrise appeared over the Squadron compound, the sudden blare of a vehicle horn from the wandering elbow of a sleeping Gunner caused bodies to stir all around. Someone stumbled from the back of a Land Rover, another two from the top of armoured fighting vehicles, others rolled off the shelves in the troop shelter and gun racks in the armoury. B Flight had awoken for another early morning patrol.

The scope of operations on Telic 13 evolved with the departure of British Forces from Iraq and the Contingency operating Base Basrah. For many other units, the tempo of operations dropped as the withdrawal took place. However, for 15 Squadron RAF Regiment, the diversity of roles increased dramatically. Numerous assets were used for these tasks, such as the Marlin helicopter to provide an air platform from which to rapidly deploy an overt ground force. Also, the assault craft of the 20th Armoured Brigade allowed for patrolling the eastern canal system and its many tributaries. Armoured vehicles such as Bulldogs and Mastiffs were used to establish a presence on the ground and act as mobility

support to the dismounted troops as they moved throughout Basrah. As with work comes play and often B Flight would be found playing against locally employed civilians on the football pitch, and ore often than not enjoying a well deserved rest in the sunshine. Moral endured anything that was thrown in its way resulting in for many, an enjoyable first tour. After decompression in Cyprus following a "roundabout" journey home, all returned safe to loved ones. The Squadron and B Flight are both looking forward to the future with promotion and career course, and adventurous training but predominantly new goals and ambitions that will see them remain with this highly skilled and dedicated field squadron. SAC Taylor. B Flight 15 Squadron, Per Ardua.

Section 4

C Flight on Tour

Today we went on a patrol in one of the many nearby villages east of the COB. It was a day like most others, bright, sunny and really hot! The afternoon started with the troops loading up themselves with their kit into the back of the Bulldog tanks at Trenchard Lines. Today's patrol was slightly different as we had two US Rangers with us, replacing two lads off our Section (2 Section, C Flight).

We then set off on an hour long journey to the drop off point located on the other side of the river. Here we got out, kitted up and then began the foot patrol. We met several fishermen and water buffalo farmers in the early hours of the patrol. All of them were very polite and happy to see us, but at the same time sad to hear that we were leaving soon. I had a really interesting conversation with one of the locals called Hammed. He spoke good English as he studies it at college here. He was helping to build new houses by the riverside with his mates. After having a good conversation and a drink of juice from the local shop, we then continued on.

It was only fifteen minutes later, we came across a football pitch where there were some kids playing football. After the go-ahead from the boss, we approached them and challenged them to a game. The game only lasted about ten minutes but was very good fun for both the people and us. It wasn't very long before a large audience had gathered, all cheering and clapping. Disappointingly we lost 2 - 0 but it isn't easy kicking a ball around wearing body armour at the same time. There was a very special atmosphere

during the game. It must have been something for everyone to see lay down our weapons and play football as if we were back home. I think this just shows to the people of Iraq and of the British Forces just how much it has really changed over the years since we arrived here. Now the game was over, sadly we had to say goodbye and move on. Now we were focussing on getting to the pickup point further down the river. After treading through boggy marsh, trying very hard not to get our feet wet we finally reached our location. It wasn't a long wait when five boats of the British Army Boat Troop came down and picked us up. Unfortunately, the water was too shallow so we had to walk out to the boats getting our feet stinking wet.

Shortly we reached the forward Operating Base (FOB) Oxford. It was here we had a quick brew and chat about the patrol before being picked up by a Merlin helicopter and safely brought back to the Contingency Operating Base (COB) for some well-earned scran. On a red-hot evening in late May, a C Flight multiple commanded by Flying Officer Griffin, received orders for the last patrol in Basrah by both the RAF Regiment and British Forces. We were going to conduct a mobile and foot patrol through one of the local villages north of the airfield called Al Khora, commonly known among the Squadron as Sword.

Attached to us was a combat camera team who would document the last patrol for posterity. Immediately after orders, the lads prepared the weapons, ammunition, and ensured the vehicles were running smoothly before mounting into our Snatch and WMIKs and making our way to Hadrian's Wall, a gate leading out from the north of the camp. One we reached the village and started patrolling, the locals came up to us and asked for footballs, chocolate and pens as they had hundreds of times before. If we had anything to give to the children we would have done but on an earlier patrol we had dropped off the last of our bedding and blankets, leaving us with nothing more to give. It was amazing to see that giving the locals something as simple made such a difference to their quality of life. The Iraqi people already knew that we would soon be leaving so they came up to the patrol shouting "Britannia good" sticking their thumbs in the air and smiling whilst the patrol commander met the village

elders and the vehicles provided cover watch of the foot patrol.

Once the Flight Commander had spoken with the elders, we mounted back up in the vehicles and cattles on with the rest of the mobile patrol, dominating the vast open desert north of the COB. As the last light of the day started to recede, we changed our weapon sights over to enable us to get a good clear look at the ground despite the darkness. On our way back to the camp, we stopped at a local Southern Oil Police checkpoint guarding the vital oil pipelines running through the desert. Flying Officer Giffin had a chat with the guards manning the checkpoint who were very happy to see us, offering us cups of very sweet chai (tea). It wasn't very nice to drink but we obliged to be polite. On return to camp the lads cracked straight into de-kitting the vehicles, handing in weapons, sorting out our body armour and re-clipping ammunition – every round had to be accounted for. Some of the lads didn't sleep until they were firmly on the 'plane to Cyprus.

A day later things couldn't have been more different. We found ourselves sunning it up on a relatively warm (30° C compared to Iraq's 55° C) beach in Cyprus, where we were able to relax, do a bit of water sports and play volleyball before retreating to bloodhound camp for a BBQ and some well-deserved cans of ice cold beer.

When I compare Iraq now to how it was back in 2003, so many things have changed; the locals are able to move around freely, feeling much more secure and with hope for the future. Most gratifyingly of all is that they clearly appreciate the hard work and effort that the RAF Regiment and British Forces have done.

Section 5

Sniper Section

Over the past month the Sniper Section has been conducting covert ops and patrols to counteract the IED threat and the increased IED threat to forces operating in our AO. To get into position, A Flight's Bulldog crews have dropped us off with B or C Flight providing us with a dalton team enabling the patrol to move through vulnerable points safely. For more covert insertion into areas usually inaccessible by Bulldog vehicles, we have been heli-lifted by Merlin crews from the COB to FOB Oxford, allowing us to move by boat along the waterways to our op locations. Due to two members of our Section returning to the UK earlier this month to

begin their FT 1, the Sniper Section now has only five personnel. Having to carry heavy comms kit and a LMG for fire support along with the 0.338 rifles we have had attachees from the flights and Americans from units serving here in Basrah.

This has allowed many members of the flights, mainly new LACs, to get a feel for what the Sniper Section does and gain some valuable experience. From the American side it is a good opportunity for them to get off camp and begin to familiarise themselves with the local area, as well as a good chance for all of us to swap some kit!

Most patrols have been conducted at night with us leaving just on or before last light. The ops we have been conducting have allowed us to get to know the pattern of life from the movements of fishermen along the waterways, to flow of traffic and movements of Iraqi police/army who usually act very differently when they know they are being watched. We can then use this gathered information to spot unusual or suspicious activity in the presence of the abnormal or absence of the normal. So far the AO has remained quiet but we are continuing to be alert and conduct patrols in the best professional manner of the RAF Regiment as the evidence is there, although not in recent rocket attacks, that insurgent forces are still targeting patrols with roadside IEDs.

Many ops have been set in a variety of locations and is often an enjoyable experience getting to them. On a recent patrol, monitoring the waterways for possible movements of personnel and/or equipment being moved into the AO, our patrol had to borrow a small fishing canoe to cross a waterway. Setting an op in the south has allowed us to climb onto and under a still used railway bridge over Shatt Al Basrah waterway giving those on rest a shock when the one train a day passed over and a few cautious patrol members on the climb up and down. Although tough moving kits into position down a twelve-foot drop it was well worth it as the Observation Post (OP) gave us excellent views over our target area.

Section 6

Weapons Support Flight

The tour continues for Support Weapons with the days getting hotter and Sergeant Harrison's runs getting longer. We finally moved into our permanent accommodation within Normandy Lines, only to find that instead of four

tents between twenty-eight men, we were restricted to three. The three Rifle Sections took a tent each, with the snipers and HQ spreading themselves where they could. Compared to the transit accommodation at Bastion, we now find ourselves in hard routine. The shower blocks are a swift 100-metre walk and cold water is becoming an issue to get hold of as none of the tents have fridges. The lads have however managed to build a chill out area. With some Hesco and mattresses they built some sofas and fashioned a shade out of an old parachute. We now find our accommodation has one of the best lounge areas in Bastion. When the commanders took the time to go out on patrol with Normandy Company, the rest of the lads topped up their tans and conducted training. The lads have taken advantage of a little spare time to start their gym training sessions by hitting the weights in the gym. We now have an average of four different training supplements being used by the lads and would be good advertising for "Maxi Muscle" even Sergeant "Wurz" Harrison is on the strawberry shakes.

Our first week in routine found the sections going on Tesseral patrols and acting as the Quick Reaction Force (QRF). Luckily, vehicle serviceability is improving and we have taken receipt of the new Panther vehicle. The week ahead sees us moving on from Tesseral patrolling to; Main Entry Point duties, QRF and Immediate Reaction Team (IRT) and a small number of the lads on sangar guard duty. We found out today that 34 Squadron RAF Regiment will be taking over in late June and our freight for the return journey was sorted out today already two and a half weeks into the tour, thanks to the professionals of the RAF.

The Flight is now becoming accustomed to the scorching heat and the lack of cold water, but morale stays on a surprisingly high level. The week has been full of good old Regiment "staggering on". The sections have rotated through manning the sangars at the Main Entry Point (MEP) onto Bastion and being part of the Quick Reaction Force (QRF). The lads went through a 24-hour period of each tasking with the MEP being the more demanding of the two. Standing on the gate of 24 hours in all their kit throughout the daytime heat took it out of them.

We have now moved into the more demanding week in the cycle, with 24 to 48 hour

patrols going out into the Area of Responsibility on foot and by vehicle. The first patrol of the week found one and a half of two section team up to go on the ground along with a sniper pair. They were lucky enough to have OC Support Weapons, flight Lieutenant Baldwin and Sergeant Harrison take command of the tasking and head out onto the ground for 24 hours. We headed out into the Afghanistan heat at mid-day in two vectors and two WIMIKs. Sergeant Harrison's WIMIK driven by myself lead the way and was easily identified as it was the one with the cot-bed, blanket and pillow hanging from it!! (Not belonging to me). We made our way into the Central Wadi where we carried out snap Vehicle Control Points (VCPs) and searched unsuspecting local drivers and their vehicles. We continued our patrol into the more built-up areas where we talked to the local people with the use of our interpreter. We carried on patrolling, gathering information until we found a nice secluded area where we stopped for the night.

Our admin began to pay off (mine especially) when lads tried to get their heads down between staggings and everyone tried to find somewhere comfortable to sleep. Sergeant Harrison took the brunt of the Mickey taking for bringing a bed on patrol, got the last laugh when he managed to get an undisturbed sleep. For the rest of us, trying to find comfort in drivers seats and rocky desert floors, proved to be more entertainment for the insects of the night rather than ourselves.

At first light we packed up and made our way of the Wadi, with tired eyes, insect bites and sore backs! The patrol had to be cut short when Corporal Owen's WIMIK decided to give up patrolling. With a broken drive shaft on the WIMIK and the Vector losing around seven litres of engine coolant, the boss decided things would be better if we made our way back to Bastion, much to our delight. We returned after 20 hours on the ground and never knew what was hanging out more, the lads or the vehicles! We continue to keep our chins up and we all look forward to returning home at the end of June. Per Ardua. Corporal "Donny" Donaldson.

Well done lads welcome back safely home and many thanks for your efforts both in theatre and in sending all the news back home.

NEWS OF THE RAF REGIMENT



**FROM THE RAF REGIMENT SECRETARY
DEATH NOTICES:**

AUCUTT BILL. Former RAF Regt Flt Lt William (Bill) AUCUTT died on 7 Nov 07. Served from 1942 to 1950 in Malaya and at RAF South Cerney. Notification just received and no further details are known. He is survived by his wife, Mrs Aucutt, of 27 Cleevemont, Evesham Road, Cheltenham, Gloucester, GL52 3JT, to whom the Corps extends its belated but sincere condolences.

DUFFY JOHN. Former RAF Regt WO John Joseph Duffy, born 8 Dec 29, died on 31 May 09 aged 79. No Service details are known at this time. The funeral has taken place, and a Memorial Service took place at 11.00 on Fri 19 Jun 09 at St Theresa's Church, Harris Street, Darlington, Co Durham. He is survived by his wife, Mrs Dorothy Duffy of 20 Grendon Gdns, Middleton-St-George, Darlington, Co Durham DL2 1HS, to whom the Corps extends its sincere condolences.

RINGHAM FRED. Former RAF Regt Cpl Frederick (Fred) Ringham, born 31 Mar 34, died on 11 Jun 09, aged 75. He enlisted as a National Serviceman on 11 Jul 55 at RAF Cardington before being posted to RAF West Kirby for his Basic Training. Later that year he moved to RAF Catterick for his Regt training and then to RAF Watchet on a JNCOs course. On completion of the course and promotion to Cpl, he was posted to RAF Hednesford as a Recruit Basic Training Instructor. He completed his service at RAF Kinloss as an Instructor taking the permanent staff on refresher courses until his discharge on 10 Jul 57.

Having served his apprenticeship, he returned to the building trade, worked for several employers, finishing his career as a Site Agent for Barretts the Builders, specialising in large construction work such as schools, factories, warehouses etc. In later years, he was an active member of the Birmingham Branch of the RAF Regt Assoc and organized the Assoc's Annual Reunions. The funeral was held at 11.45 on Mon 22 Jun 09 at Kingswood Chapel, Packhorse Lane, Hollywood, Birmingham. Family flowers only

were requested but donations may be made to Cancer research (UK) if desired. He is survived by his wife, Mrs Edith Ringham, of 76 Lowbrook Lane, Tidbury Green, Solihull B90 1QS, to whom the Corps extends its sincere condolences.

WEEKES PETER. Former RAF Regt gnr Peter Weekes, born in 1945, died on 8 Jun 09 aged 64. He enlisted in 1967 and served on II Sqn RAF Regt from then until 1970, with operational detachments to Salalah and N Ireland. No further Service details are known at this time. The funeral took place at 13.00 on Wed 17 Jun 09 at St Mary's Church, Credenhill, Hereford. Family flowers only were requested but donations may be made to the Help4Heroes charity in his name. He is survived by his wife, Mrs Rosie Weekes, of 87 Ecroyd Park, Credenhill, Hereford, HR4 7EN, to whom the Corps extends its sincere condolences.

GENERAL NOTICES:

RAFR REGT FUND AND SHOP QUERIES

If you have any queries on the RAF Regt Fund or the Shop, please direct them to the responsible individual, namely:

- Officer in Charge RAF Regt Fund: Sqn Ldr Mick Donoghue - 01359 237812 (for policy issues)
- Fund Secretary: Flt Lt Monaghan-Welsh on (for general Fund and grant issues)
- Fund Treasurer: Fg Off Ben Alcock on 01359 237755 (for finance issues)
- Fund Membership Sec: Flt Lt Jamie Milnes on 01359 237077 (for all membership and Subscription issues)
- Officer in Charge RAF Regt Shop: Flt Lt 'Hutch' Hutchinson on 01359 23 7171 (for shop issues)

Direct Email addresses will be issued shortly. RAF Regt Assoc Branch Secs are asked to publicise these details in their respective Newsletters. Please do not send queries to the RAF Regt Sec any more.

AWARD OF THE NCO LEADERSHIP AWARD FOR 2009

The Worshipful Company of Security Professionals (WCoSP), to which the RAF Regt is affiliated, presents an annual award to recognize outstanding leadership by an NCO of the RAF Regt. The winner for 2009 is Cpl Peter Wallis-Eade of the Special Forces Support Group, and the trophy was duly presented at the Annual WCoSP Master's Installation Lunch, held at Drapers' Hall in the City of London on 9 Jun 09. Cpl Wallis-Eade, accompanied by his fiancée,

Michele, received a standing ovation from the 300+ distinguished guests following the reading of the most impressive citation.

NEW STANDARD FOR 63 SQN RAF REGT

A new Standard will be presented to 63 Sqn RAF Regt later this year, following the Sqn's return from operations in Afghanistan. The provisional presentation date is 26 Nov 09 but is subject to confirmation. Further details will be issued as and when known.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS - 2009

The following Corps personnel received National Honours in the 2009 QBH List announced on 13 Jun 09:

- Air Cdre R La Forte – CBE.
- Wg Cdr P Holland – MBE.
- Wg Cdr D Tait – MBE.
- WO C G Marshall – MSM
- FS A Robertson – QVRM

The following Corps personnel were awarded RAF Commanders' Commendations in conjunction with the QBH List:

- Sqn Ldr D Merrick – AOCinCs – HQ 2 Gp.
- FS R W Snowden – AOCs – 4001 Flt, RAF Honington.
- FS D Johnson – AOCs – RAF Honington
- A/Sgt C J Perrio-Stone – AOCs – 15 Sqn RAF Regt, RAF Honington.
- Cpl A C Austen – AOCs – RAF Northolt/Uxbridge.
- Cpl H D Thomas – AOCs – 2620 Sqn RAuxAF Regt, RAF Marham.
- RAF Honington Team Commendation: 1 Sqn RAF Regt Rear Party.

CORPS DIARY DATES:

- 18 Jul 09 - RAF Regt Assoc NEC Mtg (RAF Scampton)
- 9 Sep 09 - RAF Regt Golf Society match v Royal Signals (Mentmore GC)
- 30 Sep 09 - RAF Regt Golf Society 4-Way Match & AGM (Greatham Valley Golf Club)
- 2-4 Oct 09 - RAF Regt Assoc AGM and Reunion (Coventry)
- 15-16 Oct 09 - RAF Armd Car Assoc Autumn Reunion (Derby) - Note date change.
- 30 Oct 09 - RAF Regt Officers' Dinner Club Annual Dinner (Def CBRN Centre, Winterbourne Gunner)
- 8 Nov 09 - Remembrance Day (Cenotaph, London, and Nationwide)
- 11 Nov 09 - Armistice Day (Cenotaph, London, Nationwide)

26 Nov 09 - Presentation of new Standard to 63 Sqn RAF Regt (details not yet known).

15 Dec 09 - Centurion Journal No28 contributions due.

5 Feb 10 - Handover-Takeover of CG RAF Regt appointment.

5 Feb 10 - Officers' Corps Formation Dinner (RAF Honington).

18-21 May 10 - Regt-USAF Exchange Offrs 'British Invasion III (Washington DC)

11 Jun 10 - RAF Regt Officers' Dinner Club Reception (House of Lords) - incl Palace of Westminster Tour.

Well that's all for now, keep smiling if you can.

Malcolm

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES



16

Thursday 13 th August	2009	Branch Night	Thursday 12 th Nov	2009	Branch Night
Thursday 10 th September	09	Branch Night	Saturday 14 th Nov	2009	B'ham Poppy Ball
Fri 2 nd – Mon 5 th Oct	2009	Ass.n Autumn Reunion	Sat 28 th -Sun 29 th Nov	2009	B'ham Int Tattoo NIA
Sunday 4 th October	2009	Merchant Navy Day	Monday 30 th November	09	St Andrew's Day
Thursday 8 th October	2009	Branch Night	Thursday 10 th December	09	Branch Night
Wednesday 21 st Oct	2009	Battle of Trafalgar Day	Thursday 14 th January	2010	Branch Night
Sunday 1 st November	2009	Midlands Fest of Rem.	Monday 1 st February	2010	68 th Ann RAF Regiment
Sunday 8 th Nov	2009	Remembrance Sunday	Monday 1 st February	2010	Branch Service at NMA
Wednesday 11 th Nov	2009	Remembrance Day	Thursday 11 th February	2010	68 th Ann RAF Regiment
			Thursday 11 th February	2010	Branch Night and AGM
			Thursday 11 th February	2010	Branch Subs Due
			Monday 1 st March	2010	St David's Day
			Thursday 11 th March	2010	Branch Night
			Wednesday 17 th March	2010	St Patrick's Day
			15 th - 30 th March	2010	65 th Ann Battle of Meiktila
			Thursday 8 th April	2010	Branch Night
			Friday 23 rd April	2010	St George's Day

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

RIP

We Will

Remember Him

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
legionaire480@msn.com

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**