



ROYAL AIR FORCE REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

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The Best of the Best

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

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

**NEWSLETTER NO: 213
MARCH 2007**

THE BIRMINGHAM BRANCH NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 212 MARCH 2007

Dear Readers.

A NEW STAR AND GARTER HOME IN SOLIHULL

A new Star and Garter Home is currently being built in Solihull. I am delighted to be able to tell you this but also, in researching this article, I was also delighted to find that Lucas Aerospace factories in the south, were longstanding supporters of the Star & Garter Homes.

Both Valerie and I spent most of our working lives in Lucas Midlands factories. Sadly, the Lucas Group is no longer with us having been bought up by American companies, split up, some sold on, some retained until there is very little left of what was the Lucas Group. However, I have no doubt that by whatever name the factories are now known, they will still continue their support.

The Royal Star & Garter Homes have strong military links and traditions that make them a special place to live where comradeship, among the residents, staff, volunteers and others who support them, is uppermost. They believe in providing the highest possible level of care, tailored to each individual's needs and wishes, to ensure that all their residents are able to lead as independent a life as possible.

The Royal Star & Garter Charity currently has a facility in Richmond, Surrey that was established in 1916. In the 21st century, the needs of residents have changed and the Charity is in the process of implementing plans to respond to that change. They are therefore due to move out of the current building in 2009 to a new purpose built, state-of-the-art home in south west London. The Charity is also establishing Royal Star & Garter Homes in different parts of the country where there is an identified need for care provision, so that as many ex-Service men and women as possible can benefit from the Charity's special brand of care in a wider choice of locations.

New Home in Solihull

As a result, the Charity is currently in the process of building a second home in Solihull, which is due to open in 2008. Each of the new homes will also incorporate a specially designed

and staffed unit to accommodate people with dementia, an area of urgent need.

In December 2005 they were delighted to hear that they had been selected as the preferred developer, along with Barratt Homes, for a prime site in Solihull, the West Midlands. The green field site is in a pleasant residential area, close to all amenities and is easily accessible from the town centre.

The West Midlands is an ideal area for a Royal Star & Garter Home, as it boasts a large ex-Service population. The Charity's research also identified a gap in provision for the elderly in the area. The land in Solihull was put up for sale by the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and already had outline planning permission for a Care Home.

Full planning permission was granted in June 2006, building work commenced in March 2007 and will be completed by the summer of 2008 when it is hoped to open the Home to its first residents.

Highlights of Royal Star & Garter Homes

- Warm and friendly atmosphere
- Spirit of comradeship coupled with strong military links
- 24-hour nursing care
- Excellent specialist facilities
- Extensive range of activities and outings
- On site physiotherapy, speech & language therapy and occupational therapy
- Residents' bar and café
- Library and hairdressing salon
- Visiting chiropodist, optician, dental hygienist and dietician
- Beautiful gardens

History

The Royal Star & Garter Home was established as an independent charity in 1916 to care for the severely disabled young men returning from the battlegrounds of the First World War. It was Queen Mary who first expressed concern for the future of these young

men, and Her Majesty charged the British Red Cross Society with the task of finding a "permanent haven" for them.

The Auctioneers and Estate Agents Institute purchased the old Star & Garter hotel on Richmond Hill and handed the deeds to Queen Mary who, in turn, entrusted the building to the British Red Cross.

The Royal Star & Garter Home has had a long and rich history since that time but has always remained true to its philosophy that "there is no such thing as a hopeless case" and all the residents, now and then, are cared for with support and therapy. The first 65 residents admitted in 1916 were an average age of 22. Some were able to return home while others were helped to live fulfilled lives for many years.

A new purpose built home was specially designed by Sir Edwin Cooper and funded by the British Women's Hospital Committee under the auspices of Queen Mary. It was Her Majesty, along with King George V who opened the new home in July 1924. The Charity has continued to benefit from its royal links and has operated within this same magnificent building on top of Richmond Hill since that time.

There was once also a Star & Garter home in Sandgate, Kent, funded by the British Red Cross and again designed by Sir Edwin Cooper and known as the 'seaside branch'. The Star & Garter at Sandgate had extensive grounds where residents kept chickens and even donkeys that were sometimes used to pull wheelchairs up the hill from the village! However, with the advent of War in 1940, it was felt prudent to move residents back to Richmond.

The Second World War brought more young men into the Richmond Home and a special paraplegic ward was set up under the direction of Dr Ludwig Guttman founder of Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Dr Guttman's pioneering techniques aimed to get patients moving, working and playing sports again. The first "Paraplegic Games" in 1948 included an archery competition between teams from the Star & Garter and Stoke Mandeville. The Star & Garter is proud to have won that year and again in 1949!

The Home's workshops were a hive of activity in the 1950s where residents produced clocks, did watch and clock repairs, sock making, rug making, toy making and so on. The 'Lest We Forget' and 'Not Forgotten' associations continued to provide entertainment and outings, as

they had done since the 1920's, and companies such as Lucas Aerospace, then known as Rotax, set up benevolent funds to assist the residents.

From the early days, the Charity has enjoyed strong royal links. Following the death of Queen Mary, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth became Patron in 1953 and HRH Princess Alexandra, has been the Charity's President since 1964. The Richmond Home has also seen many Royal visits right from the early days - Her Majesty The Queen and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, The Prince of Wales and HRH Princess Alexandra to name but a few.

Other distinguished supporters from the past have included Montgomery, Eisenhower, Douglas Bader, and still to this day, Dame Vera Lynn. More recent support has come from Simon Weston OBE, and well known faces from the worlds of politics and entertainment.

As an independent charity, they rely heavily on donations and fundraising activity to maintain the high standards of care. They enjoy strong support from both the current armed forces and ex-Service organisations. They also have a number of support groups in different parts of the country and they run events for younger people and families. New supporters are however always needed if they are to fulfil all our future plans and ensure the Charity will always be here to care for disabled ex-Service people.

St George's Day

St. George is the patron saint of England! His emblem, a red cross on a white background, is the flag of England! Adopted by Richard the Lion heart it was brought to England in the 12th century. St. George's Day is on April 23rd, so, in a sense, this is England's National Day but unlike other countries, England does not have a celebration to mark this occasion. St George's Day, April 23rd, ought to be a day of celebration up and down the country with street parties, dinners, special sporting events and most important of all - an English national holiday.

THE BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING LAST MONTH

The Branch Annual General Meeting was held last month and due to the bad weather, a week later than usual unfortunately. The weather was also the reason why last month's newsletters were put into the post four days later than normal.

As is usual in our Branch, the three

executive office positions of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer are each elected in turn, for three years.

This year, it was the Branch Chairman's position that was due for election to the office and at the Election of Officers, there was one major change to the Branch Committee. After discussions that I had previously had with the Branch chairman Dave Gooding, regarding changes in his responsibilities, Dave had decided not to stand again for election as our Branch Chairman and the Vice-Chairman Ron Sharp was therefore elected as Chairman of the Branch.

In recognition of Dave's services to the Branch, he was elected for a three-year period as our first Vice-President. Due to Dave's other positions in the Royal British Legion, he will also hold the office of RBL Advice and Liaison Officer. To fill the vacant office of Vice-Chairman, Fred Ringham was elected to that office. All the other officers had agreed to stand again and they were all were again elected to their various offices. The Branch Committee for 2007 is therefore as follows.

PRESIDENT	Peter Swash
VICE-PRESIDENT	Dave Gooding
CHAIRMAN	Ron Sharp
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Fred Ringham
SECRETARY	Malcolm Baldwin
TREASURER	Tom Magee
MINUTE SECRETARY	Ken Bridgwood
BRANCH QM	Tom Magee
WELFARE OFFICER	John Docker
PRO/SOCIAL SEC.	Michael Beard
PROPERTY AUDITOR	Fred Ringham
RESEARCH CO-ORD	Hughie Cooper
FINANCIAL AUDITORS	Trevor & Joan Round

In addition, our new Chairman Ron Sharp will retain his position as the RAF Regiment Memorial Garden Maintenance Team Leader. In recognition of Dave Gooding's long service to the Branch, he was presented with a pewter tankard engraved with the RAF Regiment badge.

Our thanks to all the Branch Officers for again putting themselves forward to serve the Birmingham Branch in their various offices. The new Branch Chairman Ron Sharp, paid this tribute to the retiring Chairman.

"On behalf of everyone in the Branch, I would like to say thank you to Dave for all the hard work that he has put in over the years. Not only as our Chairman but also in serving on the

National Committee and representing the Birmingham Branch on so many occasions". The presentation to Dave, to mark his years as our Chairman, was made at the March Branch Meeting.

BRANCH SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please remember that your Branch Subscriptions were due on 1st February and also, please remember that this year, your total subscription is £15.00. That is £10.00 Association Subscription and £5.00 Branch Subscription. If you have not yet paid, please make your cheque out to The Birmingham Branch, RAF Regiment Association and send them to **THE BRANCH TREASURER** Tom Magee and **NOT** to me.

Chasing up late payers is a time consuming job and adds to my workload and to the workload of the Branch Treasurer. My sincere thanks to those members who have already paid up.

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

I have a list of members of other branches and other readers who have asked to receive Birmingham Branch newsletters. The Subscription for this service is £6.00 per year.

So would those other branch members and others who have asked to be put onto the Circulation List for Birmingham Branch newsletters and wish to continue receiving the newsletters, please send a cheque for £6.00 as above, to **THE BRANCH TREASURER** Tom Magee and **NOT** to me.

Those of you that have not yet paid their Newsletter Subscription are now out of date. In order to continue receiving the newsletters; please pay your Subscription **immediately**, as I will **NOT** be chasing up late payers – I shall just remove names and addresses from the Circulation List at the **END OF THIS MONTH**.

ASSOCIATION RE-UNION 2007

FRIDAY 5TH – MONDAY 8TH OCTOBER

At The Norbreck Castle Hotel, Queen's Promenade, Blackpool, Lancashire FY2 9AA.

Tel: 01253 352341

The 2007 Re-union and Annual General Meeting will be held over the weekend Friday 5th to Monday 8th October 2007, at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool at £139.00 each. Rooms will be available from 3.00 p.m. on the day of arrival. The outline arrangements are:-

Friday Evening Dinner with entertainment
 Saturday – coach trips out can be organised
 Saturday Morning AGM – 10.00 a.m. – 12.01 p.m
 Saturday Evening Gala Dinner
 Sunday – coach trips can be organised
 Sunday Evening Dinner – followed by coach trip
 to see Blackpool Lights

The Norbreck Castle Hotel

Overlooking the Irish Sea on Blackpool's North Shore sea front, the Norbreck Castle Hotel is perfectly situated for holidays, short breaks and weekend visits to Blackpool. Totally refurbished for 2005, the hotel has 363 en-suite bedrooms, many with sea views.



The Norbreck Castle is an ideal family hotel that can provide plenty of entertainment for children - the exclusive 36-seater hotel cinema plays children's films and cartoons.

The hotel has a leisure club, with free entrance to the indoor heated pool with a splash pool for the very young, a steam room, a sauna and a whirlpool Jacuzzi. There are also several beauty treatment rooms as well as a fully equipped gymnasium, with state of the art equipment (payable on site). It is the biggest and largest conference/ exhibition and hotel centre in the North of England

Blackpool Centre

With around seven miles of fun packed coastline, Blackpool is the entertainment capital of Europe, and home to the world famous Blackpool Tower with its ballroom, circus, adventure play centre, aquarium and ride to the top of the tower.

The tower also contains the nerve-racking Walk of Faith - a glass floor, 380 feet above the ground that allows an unrestricted view

of the street below. The town centre also hosts a variety of well known shops.

It was the Victorians who developed Blackpool into a mega-resort, and in the early twentieth century they flocked here in their thousands to enjoy the fantastic combination of sun, sand and sea.

NEWS OF THE RAF REGIMENT



FROM THE RAF REGIMENT SECRETARY

Gentlemen. Following the unveiling at the Formation Dinner last night of the Corps' latest piece of silverware - Gunner 2007 - to mark our 65th Anniversary, I have much pleasure in providing a photograph of the subject piece. I hope you like it. It really is stunning and a piece that you need to look at for some time to take in all the detail. Quite the best in this respect that I have ever seen.



We are still collecting money; it will be more expensive than we first thought - no surprises there I suppose, but we did improve on certain aspects. The wooden base was replaced with Italian Marble and the wall is high-grade Pilkington glass for example. It weighs in at 30lbs (13 Kgs), so not a lightweight in any respect!

It was, of course, contributed to by present and former members of the Corps and, on behalf of the CG, I would like to extend my thanks and sincere appreciation to all those that contributed to this stunning piece of artwork. Individual donations ranged from £5 to £1,500.

The final cost will be in the region of £12,000, but its true commercial value is in excess of £20,000, owing to the generosity of the makers, Messrs G Collins and Sons, Jeweller to the Queen. Gunner 2007 drew universal praise and admiration from those at the Dinner and the quality of the work has to be seen to be believed.

We will do our best to ensure that 'Gunner 2007' is seen by as many Corps members as possible over the coming months, but hopefully the photo will satisfy the immediate curiosity. Gunner 2007 will be made available for major Corps-related events, such as the Association AGM next October.

Please disseminate the message and the photograph as you deem fit. It has been sent separately to the serving Corps members.

General:

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

Death Notices:

- **WO Stephen Flynn MBE** Died 31 Jan 07. Funeral service at Blackwell Crematorium, Darlington at 1545 hr Thu 8 Feb. Floral tributes to: Mr John Blenkiron, Victoria House, 21 Queens Road, Richmond, N Yorks. Tel 01748 850033. (POC: Mr Joe Ferry, 01642 881780)
- **WO Stan Wiseman.** Died 29 Jan 07. Funeral service at West Crematorium, Ipswich, Suffolk at 1100 hrs Mon 12 Feb. Floral tributes to East of England Cooperative Society Funeral Services, 213 High Street, Waltham, Felixstowe (Tel 01394 670100). POC is Mr Bob Coburn, Tel 01394 274120.

RAF GBAD Force Disbandment Parade - 31 May 07:

The formal Disbandment Parade of the RAF GBAD Force, scheduled to take place at RAF Honington on Thu 31 May, has been cancelled. Regrettably, operational and training commitments for the remaining two GBAD squadrons are now such that there is insufficient time to prepare for and execute such an event. There is currently no plan to hold an alternative public disbandment event. (See the next announcement).

RAF GBAD Force Disbandment Parade (Updated) :

CPN #16 erroneously reported that the formal Disbandment Parade of the RAF GBAD Force, scheduled to take place at RAF Honington on Thu 31 May, had been cancelled; the announcement caused much consternation among the Corps' Rapier community, both serving and retired.

The announcement was subsequently retracted and a suitable event to mark the demise of the GBAD Force is being staffed. However, alternative arrangements have yet to be announced.

New Corps Silver Statue.

The new Silver statue - entitled Gunner 2007 - commissioned by the Corps to celebrate its 65th Anniversary, was unveiled at a Corps 65th Anniversary Formation Dinner held at RAF Honington on 1 Feb 07.

It will be shown to as many RAF Regiment people as possible over the coming months and will be made available for display at major Corps-related events.

A photograph will be found in the forthcoming Centurion journal. The fund for its purchase is still open for donations. Cheques should be made payable to the 'RAF Regt Fund (Silver)' and sent to the RAF Regiment Secretary.

Memorial Service:

The Memorial Service for Tommy Garnett, former RAF Regt sqn ldr (WWII in Burma) and distinguished Master of Marlborough and Headmaster of Geelong Grammar School, will take place in Marlborough College Chapel at 1500 on Fri 2 Mar 07. A tribute to this officer will be found in the forthcoming Centurion journal.

Applications for RAF Regt Fund Membership:

A new form required for joining the RAF Regt Fund was issued recently but we are experiencing major problems with the new

civilian bank account and the actioning of Direct Debits (DDs).

Unfortunately, all the most recent DDs (since Nov 06) submitted will have to be re-processed. Until the bank problems are overcome, new membership applications will have to be deferred. It is hoped to issue new Application Forms and DD Mandates shortly.

Until then, Fund Representatives and RAF Regt Assoc Branch Secretaries are asked to destroy any current forms held and to ask applicants to await the new form.

II Sqn Reunion - 28 Apr 07:

The annual II Sqn RAF Regt Reunion will be held at the Constitution Club, High St, Colerne, Wilts, SN14 8DB, on Sat 28 Apr 07, starting at 1930 hrs. Please contact the organiser, Chris Fiddes for details. Email: chrisfiddes@rockapetwo.fsnet.co.uk ; Tel 01761 472587. Alternatively, contact Steve Coupe on 01522 788043.

Annual Re-Dedication of the RAF Regt Chapel – Sun 13 May 07

The annual re-dedication of the RAF Regt Chapel at St Anne's Church, Catterick Village, will take place on Sun 13 May 07. The pattern of previous years will be followed with the rededication forming part of the regular service that will commence at 10.45 am.

Association Standard bearers should assemble at the Church by 10.15 am for briefing etc. Subject to the approval of CO 5 Regt RA, there will be a march-past in front of the RHQ in Marne Barracks (Formerly SHQ RAF Catterick). It is hoped that the Reviewing Officer will be the CG, Air Cdre Abbott.

A short memorial service - conducted by the Association Chaplain, the Rev Willie Downie - will then be held at the trees planted to commemorate the gnr's killed in Holland by the IRA in the 1980s. The event will then finish with a social gathering in the NAAFI (formerly the Centurion Club) and, hopefully, a short address by the CG.

Those requiring vehicle access to Marne Barracks and those requiring a buffet lunch (cost in the region of £5), should contact the Catterick Branch Secretary, Derek James, at (BT) 01848 832025, Email: <dtjames@tiscali.co.uk>. Further details will be published by the RAF Regt Assoc and in these Corps Parish Notices.

63 Sqn 'Black Eagle' Reunion - 26 May 07:

Arrangements for the first 63 Sqn 'Black Eagle' Reunion are well advanced. It will be held at the Union Jack Club in London on Sat 26 May, starting in the late afternoon with a meet-and-greet. A formal dinner will be held there from 1900-2300 and the cost, including the 4-course meal, should not exceed £33.50. Accommodation will be the individuals responsibility, but accommodation at the UJ Club may be reserved on (BT) 0202 792 84814 or via Email on the website at www.ujclub.co.uk. Please contact the organiser - FS Alan Wanbon, FS GDT at RAF Honington, tel (BT) 01359 237607 and Email at wanbons@aol.com - for more details and the 'admin order'.

Falklands 25th Anniversary - 17 June 07:

The principle celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict in 1982 will be held in London at Horse Guards parade on Sun 17 Jun 07. Priority for participation in a march-past and Drum Head Service will be given to actual Falklands Conflict veterans' (ie holders of the South Atlantic Medal 1982) and the relatives of those who did not survive. More details and applications for attendance are available from the MOD Veterans' Agency or the SAMA 82 websites (www.falklands25.com). This will be a major media event and the Corps will be participating through the representation of the Regt units who participated in the conflict.

Details will also be found in the next Centurion journal and in the RAF Regt Assoc's recently issued 'The Flash' magazine. However, to avoid unnecessary work, please do not apply unless you meet the criteria for attendance.

Successful applicants will be notified by 30 Apr 07. However, please note that, on the day, QCS will be mounting guard at Buckingham Palace. While participation in the events on Horse Guards Parade may not be open to everyone, there will be ample opportunity for the Regt Family to show support on the streets of London and at the Palace.

II Sqn RAF Regt 85th Anniversary Celebration - 21 Jun 07:

II Sqn RAF Regt will celebrate its 85th Anniversary of its formation in 1922 on Thur 21 Jun at RAF Honington. Further details will be announced in due course.

National Veterans' Day and RAF Regt Memorial Re-Dedication - 27/28 Jun 07:

National Veterans' Day will be celebrated in 2007 on Wed 27 Jun. The Corps' focus,

however, will be at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) at Alrewas in Staffordshire on the following day, Thu 28 Jun.

The Corps will re-dedicate the RAF Regt Memorial with a Service in the NMA Chapel, followed by a simple re-dedication service at the Memorial itself. The CG, a QCS contingent and a trumpeter from the RAF Regiment Band will participate.

Refreshments should be available from 1000 and a formal Service of Remembrance will commence in the Chapel at 1100. This will be followed with the re-dedication of the RAF Regiment Memorial. Lunch will be available afterwards on a pay-as-you-dine basis in the Arbor Restaurant.

Regimental Blazer Buttons:

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

A suitably high quality case is also supplied. Cost for a 6+6 button set is £62.50 plus £4.00 UK Special Delivery Registered P&P (per set).

A 6+8 button set is £67.00 plus £4.00 UK Special Delivery Registered P&P (per set). Overseas (Europe and Rest-of-World) addresses will incur a P&P&Ins charge of £8.50).

If you are interested in obtaining a set or just more details (incl photo and order form), please contact - ideally by Email - the RAF Regt Sec. The initial offering is limited to just 50 sets. A further order is likely to be made at a later date once sales are evaluated but these prices cannot be guaranteed in the future. The High Street retail value would be at least twice the cost and they are not to be confused with cheaper versions currently available. Matching cuff-links should be available in the near future.

Centurion Journal:

It is intended to issue the next Centurion journal in the first week of Mar 07.

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

- 14-15 Apr 07 - RAF Armoured Car Company Assoc Spring Reunion - Derby.

- 28 Apr 07 - II Sqn Annual Reunion - Colerne.
- 11 May 07 - RAF Regt Offrs' Dinner Club Reception - London. 13 May 07 - Re-dedication of RAF Regt Chapel - St Anne's Church, Catterick.
- 26 May 07 - 63 Sqn RAF Regt 'Black Eagle' Reunion - Union Jack Club, London.
- 14 Jun 07 - Falklands 25th Anniversary Commemoration - Falkland Islands
- 17 Jun 07 - Falklands 25th Anniversary Commemoration - London, Horse Guards Parade.
- 1 Jun 07 - Centurion journal No23 Contributions Due Date.
- 27 Jun 07 - National Veterans' Day - nation wide and at National Memorial Arboretum.
- 28 Jun 07 - Corps 65th Anniversary Commemoration - National Memorial Arboretum.
- 21-23 Sep 07 - WOs & SNCOs Assoc Reunion weekend (Note. Date amended from earlier Notice).
- 6-7 Oct 07 - RAF Regt Assoc Reunion Weekend and AGM - Blackpool.
- 13-14 Oct 07 - RAF Armoured Car Company Assoc Autumn Reunion - Derby.
- tbd Nov 07 - Falklands 25th Anniversary Pilgrimage - Falkland Islands.
- 09 Nov 07 - RAF Regt Offrs Dinner Club



Annual Dinner - Derby.

- 11 Nov 07 - Armistice and Remembrance Day Sunday - nationwide.
- 01 Dec 07 - Centurion journal No24 Contributions Due Date.

FROM THE BRANCH SECRETARY

In last January's newsletter on page 15 in the last paragraph in an article headed, "Birmingham Branch Solid Oak Carvings" I said the following. "In addition, Chris has now completed another item that, for reasons that will become apparent to you in due course, I will tell you all about in next month's newsletter". My reason will now become apparent.

Some time ago, the Association Secretary Bill Espie telephoned me. He wanted to know if my woodcarver friend Chris Steel could carve a presentation gift for the Commandant General, to be presented to him by the Association, mark his retirement from the RAF Regiment. Chris of course agreed and carved a set of mounted Crossed Rifles as shown below. I understand that a brass plated recording the details of the gift was to be fitted in-between the rifle butts.

The CG was presented with his gift by the Chairman of the Association Steven Brereton Martin, at the 65th Anniversary Corps Dinner held at RAF Honington on the evening of 1st February. After the event, the Chairman sent the following e-mail to me.

"Dear Malcolm. You may wish to be aware that I attended the 65th Anniversary Corps Dinner at Honington on the evening of Thursday 1st February 2007 as Chairman of the Association. The evening also saw the dining-out of Air Commodore Peter Drissell and I took the opportunity, on behalf of the Association, to present to him the fantastic presentation crest which you arranged to be made.

To say that Peter was delighted would be an understatement - he was thrilled and, I believe, very touched by the gesture. Martin Hooker took photographs of the presentation and I understand that the best one will be used as the front cover of

the forthcoming edition of *The Flash*.

It only remains for me to thank you and the Birmingham Branch for taking the initiative in having this marvellous piece made. With all good wishes. Yours sincerely. Steven Brereton Martin. Chairman".

I am delighted that the CG was pleased with his gift and I have passed on this information to Chris. You can see how pleased the CG was in the photograph below.

We would all wish to thank Air Commodore Drissell for all his hard work on behalf of the Association. His service as Commandant General will be long remembered, for in facilitating the formation of the new RAF Regiment Association, he has enabled a dream to come true. It is something that all members with a wish to see an Association formed that would bring credit to our parent Regiment have long wanted.

The establishment of the new RAF Regiment Association will forever be a monument to his tenure as CG and to his success in seeing the project through. He has our grateful thanks.

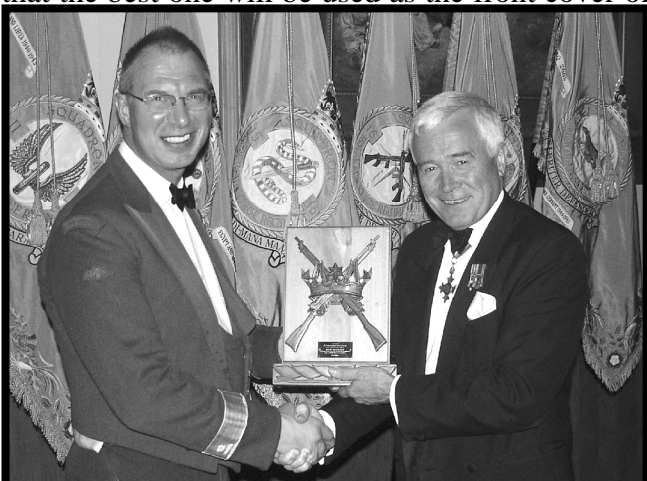
Members of the Birmingham Branch would also like to wish him every success in his future career.

A NEW PATRON FOR THE ASSOCIATION

At the Executive Meeting last December, the Chairman proposed that The Right Honourable The Viscount Chelsea, heir to the Cadogan estate, be nominated as Patron of the Association. Edward Cadogan served in the RAF Regiment in the 1980's on No 1 Squadron and in other posts.

The Chairman has asked him if he would be prepared to be nominated and he reported that Viscount Cadogan had been delighted to be considered as the Patron of the RAF Regiment Association. Charles Gerald John Cadogan, the 8th Earl Cadogan was the Viscount Chelsea before inheriting the title of Earl Cadogan on July 4th 1997.

I am delighted he has agreed to accept his nomination as Patron of the Association, as it can only enhance the standing of the Association. I'm not too familiar with titles but I understand that his full name and title is Charles Gerald John Cadogan, 8th Earl Cadogan and he was the



Viscount Chelsea before inheriting the title of Earl Cadogan on 4th July 1997.

As I understand it, a Patron is a celebrity or public figure who is willing to lend their credibility and high profile support to become a figurehead for his organisation. Patrons may help their organisation by being named on publicity material, being interviewed by the media, generating media coverage, hosting or attending fundraising events, contributing to the Association's public image and attracting new members. As such he would fit the bill admirably and we welcome him to his new position.

BRANCH SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

Fred and Edith Ringham organise lunchtime socials at 12.00 noon approximately at the Windermere Club. These events are very popular each month as many of our members appreciate the benefits of meeting in the daylight hours. The Windermere Club is located in Wake Green Road, Moseley, Birmingham, at the corner of Wake Green Road and Windermere Road.

It is on several bus routes including the Numbers 1 and 1A bus, which will drop you right outside the Club and should be fairly easy to get to for those of our members who live within the Birmingham conurbation. If you would like to know more about them, give Fred and Edith a call on 0121 430 4833 and come along for a good old natter, swing the lamps, have a few drinks and hopefully, get the missus to drive you home.

DCAE COSFORD

There are to be great changes at Cosford. The Defence College of Aeronautical Engineering (DCAE) was established on 1st April 2004 as a result of the Defence Training Review (DTR). The principal task of the DCAE is to provide a high quality, relevant and up-to-date aeronautical engineering (AE) training to fulfill the needs of tomorrow's front line.

Comprised of training establishments across 5 sites. The DCAE embraces the AE and survival equipment elements of RN training at HMS Sultan (Gosport), the REME School of Electronic and Aeronautical Engineering at Arborfield, the RAF No 1 School of Technical Training at Cosford, specialist RAF Engineering Officer Training at Cranwell and the RAF's Painter and Finisher training at St Athan.

The site also incorporates elements of training for No 1 Radio School, as well as housing the RAF School of Physical Training and the tri-

service Defence School of Photography. The University of Birmingham Air Squadron is also based there.

However

In a move which will have a major impact on RAF specialist training across the UK, St Athan has been chosen as the future base of a massive new defence training campus. Under existing plans, most of the military's aeronautical engineering, electro-mechanical engineering and communications and information systems training will move to St Athan over the next ten years,

The biggest impact will be at Cosford, where training will relocate to St Athan but the Ministry of Defence says that there are no plans to close the site. A MOD spokesman said:-

"Looking to the future, Cosford is well-placed as a highly flexible defence site. We are looking at options to continue to make best defence use of it post-DTR by moving other units here, but these plans are not firm and are subject to studies which will not conclude for some months. It is hoped that in any new role it will also host a defence learning centre and training development centre as a satellite from the St Athan site, so ensuring the continuation of defence technical training in the West Midlands".

All aeronautical and communications engineering training at Cranwell will move to Wales. However, the College's core Initial Officer Training Task remains unchanged. The Ariel Erector School at Digby will move to St Athan as part of the relocation of communication and information systems training.

So it's all change at Cosford then. It does seem a little bit surprising though, considering the millions of pounds spent on upgrading Cosford to accommodate all these training units, only to move them out again a few years later. We shall have to wait and see what happens to Cosford.

THE RAF MUSEUM COSFORD

THE NATIONAL COLD WAR EXHIBITION

All the exhibits are in place, the Hot Spots ready for action and the doors opened to the public at the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford on Thursday 8th February. Before the public opening, the Museum proudly announced the Royal opening, by Her Royal Highness, The

Princess Royal, on Wednesday the 7th. This was an invite only VIP event.

BRAND NEW WEBSITE:

www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org.uk

As a result of generous sponsorship by Specialist Computer Centres plc, the new National Cold War Exhibition has its own internet presence in a site which will push the boundaries of virtual museums to the limit. Together with all the regular features expected of a modern website, it will be equipped with features which will push the envelope for virtual museums.

SPITFIRE MK1A - 1/5th SCALE MODEL:

This highly detailed and unique 1/5th scale model was hand built over eleven years, by (company director) David Glen, using many original Supermarine factory drawings.

It was kindly donated to the Museum by Mr Glenn and is exhibited in a display case donated by the Royal Air Force Museum Society of Friends and can be seen in the Conference Reception of Historic Hangars in London.

THE NEW CHAIRMAN:

The Museum welcomes Air Chief Marshal Sir John Day KCB OBE as the new Chairman. Already a Trustee of the Museum for two years, Sir John has chaired the Development Committee and taken part in a number of key initiatives.

Always a keen supporter of the Museum, Sir John kept his interest alive whilst serving in his final appointment as Commander-in-Chief Strike Command by providing the Museum with tangible support towards the successful "Milestones of Flight" project.

With an extremely successful RAF career, in 2000 he was appointed Air Member for Personnel and Commander-in-Chief Personnel and Training Command. In 2001, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief Strike Command.

After his retirement from the Royal Air Force in 2003, he was appointed the Senior Military Adviser to BAE Systems. Sir John said:

"The Royal Air Force Museum is a vibrant museum, which is always evolving. It not only encapsulates the Royal Air Force's past, but it also reflects the present and looks forward to the future. It holds an important position for the Royal Air Force as well as for the aviation industry. I look forward to my tenure as Chairman and hope to contribute to the Museum's ever increasing successes."

COLD WAR CONFERENCE: 13 MARCH 07

The Museum presented a conference to mark the opening of the National Cold War Exhibition at its Cosford site. The conference is intended to give a broad overview of the Cold War, with papers by a range of noted historians discussing social, political and military aspects of this crucial period of the 20th Century.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM UPDATE

The week beginning Saturday 23rd June 2007 is going to be a very special week at the NMA, as there are going to be several veterans functions that week. To mark its importance, the NMA has called the week "Veterans Awareness Week". The events taking place both in the day and in the evening that week are as follows.

Saturday 23rd June – "For the Troops"

From 7.00 p.m. Tickets £5.00 each.

Forces Sweethearts "The Swing Cats" with the West Midlands Police Band and the wonderful Netherstowe School Swing Band, present an evening of nostalgia and Proms music to sing along with. To book, call 01283 792333.

Sunday 24th June – National Service Veterans Association Service and Parade.

Starts at 1.00 p.m. with the Light Infantry Band, one of the most respected and professional military bands.

Monday 25th June – Navy Theme Day/Merchant Navy Day

10.00 a.m. until 5.00 p.m. A Service of Remembrance will take place at 11.00 a.m. at the newly planted Antelope Azalea Garden to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Falklands Islands Campaign. At 12.00 mid-day, there will be a flypast of a Royal Navy Historic Flight.

Tuesday 26th June – "Questions, Answers, Share my Experiences".

An event from 10.00 a.m. until 3.00 p.m. There will be a talk by author Geoffrey Blore.

In 1941, Dicky Blore was evacuated from his working class home in a district of Birmingham and together with hundreds of others, was transported to, what was for them, a new world – rural England. For Dicky, it was to the village of Yoxall in Staffordshire. There will be two other speakers and three book signing sessions.

Wednesday 27th June – Veterans Day

There will be a Service at 11.00 a.m., a show from 12.00 mid-day and a parade at 2.00 p.m.. Learn how to march/drill, salute, how to address an officer! Visit a field kitchen for lunch. There will be a Fashion Show with vintage wartime costumes, all free of charge.

Visit the Staffordshire Regiment Museum at Whittington Barracks, Lichfield, for "The Trenches Experience" and tea in the Anderson Shelter. Shuttle buses will provide transport to the Museum. The Museum is nine and a half miles from the Arboretum.

Staffordshire Regiment Museum

The collection tells the story of the Regiment and its forbears from its formation in Lichfield in 1705. It includes uniforms, equipment, medals (8 of the Regiment's 13 VCs are on display), badges and regimental memorabilia. There are special sections covering Militia & Volunteers, the Zulu War, both World Wars and the Gulf War. There is a children's hands-on area and outside there are armoured vehicles, two Anderson Shelters and a long section of WW1 trench. The Regimental archive and library are on-site and may be viewed by appointment. There is normally a charge to visit the Museum but on this occasion, it will be free.

Thursday 28th June – RAF Theme Day

The 65th Anniversary of the RAF Regiment's foundation will be celebrated with a Service of Remembrance and a Re-Dedication of the RAF Regiment Memorial. The format will be:-

- 10.00 a.m.** Gather in Visitor Centre
- 10.50 a.m.** Move to Millennium Chapel
- 10.55 a.m.** Daily Homage Followed by Service
- 11.30 a.m.** Move to Memorial Garden
- 11.45 a.m.** Rededicate Memorial
- 12.15 p.m.** Lunch in Arbor Restaurant
- 2.00 p.m.** Disperse

There will be an air display. It is hoped that it will be a flypast of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

Later, Beating Retreat – at 6.30 p.m. Followed by Dinner (HMS Raleigh Catering Division) with after-dinner speaker Lieutenant Colonel Gerome Church – BLESMA. Tickets £25.00 each. To book call 01283 792333.

Friday 29th June – Army Theme Day

A Tea Dance at £2.50 per head, which will include a cup of tea and a slice of cake, from 1.00

p.m. to 3.00 p.m. with the Henley Farrell Big Band.

ACCOMMODATION FOR THE NMA

Several members living some distance away from the National Memorial Arboretum, have asked me for details of accommodation in the area reasonably close to the NMA. As the NMA is in a very rural area, there isn't much in the immediate area but Lichfield town centre is less than seven miles from the NMA.

So I have compiled a short list of hotels and B & Bs in Lichfield, these range from £42.00 to £50.00 per night for a double room. They vary in distance from the NMA from 5.78 miles to 9.62 miles. So if anyone is looking for a short stay in the area of the NMA, let me know. Lichfield is a beautiful cathedral town which is Staffordshire's Premier Heritage City. Situated right in the heart of England, with easy access to Birmingham and the rich countryside of the Peak District, Lichfield is an ideal place for a short break.

Within this Cathedral City you will find beautiful, historic architecture combined with modern amenities where every building has a tale to tell. The Lichfield Heritage Trail, launched in April 2006, guides you around the City, helping you to discover more about Lichfield's hidden past and attractions. A visit to the magnificent three-spired Cathedral is a must. Here you'll discover beautiful sculptures, a silver collection, breathtaking Flemish stained glass windows and the 8th Century Lichfield Gospels manuscript. Find out more about Lichfield's famous sons at The Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum and Erasmus Darwin House, both of which have interactive displays to illustrate the life and work of these influential characters.

In addition Lichfield Heritage Centre gives an overall history of the district detailing some of the events, which have made it what it is today.

Take time out from Lichfield's bustling City with a walk to Beacon Park - perfect for a sunny day with play areas and activities including crazy golf, an 18-hole golf course, tennis and a boating lake. Or take a drive to nearby Chasewater Country Park with water sport activities and a vintage steam railway. Also situated a few minutes from the City Centre are a number a picturesque villages and beauty spots.

The National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas is a perfect place to relax and reflect on the stories and events of the last Century and the Staffordshire Regiment Museum near Whittington

gives an interesting, hands-on account of the Regiment's involvement in Britain's conflicts over the years. For those with a taste for something more extreme, Drayton Manor Theme Park boasts some of Europe's best white-knuckle rides, alongside a Zoo and Garden Centre while the events at Curborough Sprint Course are perfect for those with a passion for speed!

Future Events at the NMA

APRIL

Saturday 14th April 2007

Allied Special Forces Association AGM at 1.00 p.m. in the Conference Room. For further information contact Mike Colton on 01432 357666, e-mail postroom@alliedspecialforces.org.

Saturday 28th April 2007

Mercian Volunteers at 11.00 a.m. on site at memorial for a Memorial Dedication Service. For further information contact Lieutenant. Colonel Brian Clarke on 01905 820617.

MAY

Tuesday 1st May 2007

Royal Engineers Service of Dedication for the Corps of Royal Engineers Memorial at 11.00 a.m. on-site. For further information contact Royal Engineers Association on 01634 847005.

Saturday 12th May 2007

Air Formation Signals Association at 11.30 a.m. in the Millennium Chapel. A Service and dedication of a new Association standard and a new tree in the Air Formation Crescent. For further information contact Dr. A. Vickers on 01704 507918.

Tuesday 15th May 2007

The British Nuclear Tests Veterans Association. At 2.00 p.m. in the Millennium Chapel. A Service to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of First Hydrogen Bomb at Christmas Island. For further information contact Bob Smith on 01360 311300.

JUNE

Saturday 2nd June 2007

Royal Military Police at 10.45 a.m. in the Millennium Chapel. For the Annual Service of Remembrance. For further information contact Mr. Norman Harvey on 01332 381306.

Tuesday 5th June 2007-02-06

Royal Tank Regiment Annual Service of Remembrance at 12.30 p.m. on-site at plot. For

further information contact Mr. Brian Rogers. On 07740 631426.

Wednesday 6th June 2007

Service of Remembrance for the 63rd Anniversary of D-Day at a time to be confirmed. For further information contact NMA on 01283 792333.

Sunday 10th June 2007

The Irish Guards Annual Service of Remembrance, with pipe band and regimental mascot. At a time to be confirmed. For further information contact Mr. Paddy McGowan. On 0121 243 5973.

The Chindits Service of Dedication for memorial obelisk at 11.30 a.m. on-site. For further information contact NMA on 01283 792333.

Saturday 23rd June 2007

Service of Dedication for new RAF Police Association Memorial at a time to be confirmed. For further information contact NMA on 01283 792333.

Sunday 24th June 2007

National Service Veterans' Association. Time to be confirmed. Annual Service of Remembrance. For further information contact NMA on 01283 792333.

Wednesday 27th June 2007

National Veterans' Awareness Day at a time to be confirmed. For further information contact NMA on 01283 792333.

Thursday 28th June 2007

RAF Regiment 65th Anniversary. For further information contact RAF Regiment Secretary on 01359 237824 or by e-mail on [<rafregtsecretary@honington.raf.mod.uk>](mailto:rafregtsecretary@honington.raf.mod.uk).

Saturday 30th June

Civil Defence Association. At 10.50 a.m. in the Millennium Chapel for the Annual service of remembrance and wreath laying. For further information contact 01629 55738.

JULY

Wednesday 4th July 2007

Army Benevolent Fund at a time to be notified in the Millennium Chapel the Annual service of Remembrance. For further information contact Fay Ponikowski on 020 7591 2052.

Thursday 5th July 2007

British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's

Association (BLESMA) at 11.30 a.m. on-site. A Service for the Dedication of a new standard, alterations to plot, and commemoration of 75th anniversary of the Association.

For further information contact Peter Shields on 01469 532176. Or by e-mail on <awone@blesma.org>.

Saturday 7th July 2007

Royal Artillery Association at 10.30 a.m. in the Millennium Chapel, the Annual Service of Commemoration, followed by laying of wreaths at RA plot. Lancashire Artillery Band and standards in attendance. For further information contact Lt. Col. Ian Vere Nicoll on 01980 845698.

ARMED FORCES MEMORIAL (AFM) UPDATE

Where are we now? At the moment, there is a six metre high, 60,000 ton mound of compacted soil, with driven through it, one hundred and seventy-seven steel piles with associated capping to support the walls and steps.

As I reported previously, the Foundation Stone was laid by the Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, James Hawley TD JP on Tuesday 23rd January. Since that date of course, masonry construction has proceeded apace and this phase alone will take thirty-two weeks. By my reckoning, this means that the masonry phase will be completed on or about Tuesday 11th September. The work involves constructing a masonry core and then fitting to the outside of this, carved Portland Stone panels bearing the 16,500 names. On the same date, construction work started on the foundations of the main staircase and causeway, linking the Visitor Centre to the AFM. This is due to be finished by early April.

Groundworks have also begun and will progress towards the Visitor Centre and then they will work back to the AFM, laying the finished surface. As construction work nears the Visitor Centre, there will be some disruption and visitors are asked to bear with the NMA while this phase is completed. A water supply to the AFM is in the process of being installed, most noticeably across the top of "The Beat" and through the Normandy plot. The ground will be rough and uneven in places whilst waiting to be reinstated, so would visitors please take care. REEF TV have installed a time-lapse camera at the end of the Long Gallery. This will take one picture every hour and

will be used in a documentary charting the development of the AFM.

REEF TV is based in the heart of Covent Garden and is a young and dynamic television production company that specialises in lifestyle and factual programmes. Established in 2003, Reef has quickly built a reputation for making high quality television on a range of budgets: Travel, museums, art, history and homes have all been given the Reef treatment. The results are glossy shows, beautifully filmed and well written – all with a strong editorial direction.

To date REEF Television has made programmes for BBC One, BBC Two, ITV1, UKTV Style, Discovery Real Time and Discovery Travel and Living.

NEW MEMBERS

ROBERT DONNELL OF COVENTRY

We welcome Robert Donnell of Coventry. Robert enlisted in 1979 and after his Regiment training at RAF Catterick, he was posted to 2 Squadron at Catterick and completed his service with that Squadron, until his discharge in 1983.

We welcome him and hope that he has a long and happy association with us.

Oh dear oh dear, in last month's newsletter, I asked you all what were your opinions of my Editorial Comment column and whether I should or should not include political and/or personal comments. From your replies my request does seem to have struck a chord somewhere, happily in my favour I'm glad to say. It seems that my readers are glad that someone at least has the chance to "get it off their chest".

I thank Birmingham Branch members - and some of my other readers – for your support for your response has been marvellous. The following e-mails are just a short selection of my replies as they are typical, one from a Branch member and one from someone who subscribes to the Birmingham Branch newsletters. I wish I could print them all but I don't have the space. I have replied to them all of course.

CORRESPONDENCE

JOHN DOE OF THE WEST MIDLANDS

Dear Malcolm. With reference to your comments in this month's newsletter, please carry on with the good work. I really enjoy reading them. They make my day because you are only telling the truth and there must be millions that

have the same opinion. You make it very clear that they are your own opinion and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Branch, enough said. It is a pity that you did not see the report about MPs expenses before you wrote your column. One female Labour MP claimed enough car allowance to have enabled her to drive around the world twice in her car but I guess you have seen it by now. It has taken two years for an MP to get them published.

It makes my blood boil to see it because my wife and I cannot get a single penny off the State because I receive a small pension for my Health Service employment. I don't want to waste your time but just this one instance.

I had a crown come out so I went to see my dentist, but as he was on holiday I saw one of his partners. He told me he could do nothing about the crown but he could fit a bridge costing me over £1,000.00 so I left it until my own dentist came back. He said he would do it but for about £200.00 as I was his National Health patient, so I had it done.

Then his receptionist tried to charge me £245.00 but I had been on the Web and copied the New Dentist Charter prices. I think these are excessive but even so, it told me that the top price he could charge was £189.00 which of course I had to accept. At the same time, the dentist looked in my wife's mouth and said that her teeth were fine. The minimum charge for that is now £15.50. Talking about wasting money, the latest is that the PM is going to send an e-mail to all the 1.2 million people that signed the Road Charge petition on the Web but there we go. I hope haven't I bored you Malcolm? Trusting that you and Valerie are both keeping well. All the very best. I am awaiting top go in to hospital to have two hip replacements. John.

I have changed John's name and not given his town as these newsletters seem to get everywhere and I would be very upset if he got struck off his dentist's list for making these comments, for these things do happen.

**ANN PEARMAN, EX-SQUADRON
CHAIRMAN OF 492 SQUADRON
WING CHAIRMAN OF WARWICKSHIRE &
BIRMINGHAM WING ATC**

Hi Malcolm. Long time no speak – I hope you are keeping well. I think your Editorial Comments are wonderful – on the ball – up-to-date – pertinent and how I wish you had a wider

circulation for your Comments!! Keep them coming. Although the latest revelation re: MP's expenses, is nothing to do with military affairs, you and I along with thousands of others, are on the same wavelength! My kind regards. Ann.

Alas and alack, as you will all probably have noticed, due to adverse criticism, my Editorial Column no longer exists, I have binned it and now, we even the senior Army RC Padre complaining about the poor equipment our troops have in Afghanistan and Iraq. What a subject that would have made for my Editorial Column.

I shall really miss it though for I really enjoyed "tilting at windmills". It was far more satisfying that corresponding with MPs who generally take no notice whatsoever of what their constituents want anyway. Otherwise we'd bring back Capital and Corporal Punishment for violent thugs, instead of all the comforts of home with plasma screen televisions and gyms to keep themselves fit in.

But maybe there is someone out there who would like to take up the cudgels on my behalf and perhaps submit articles to me as the private views of the contributor. I could then publish the articles with a disclaimer that the letter or article does not necessarily reflect the views of the Branch or the Association. However on a lighter note!

**KATIE AND MICHAEL BEARD OF
WALSALL, WEST MIDLANDS**

Dear Malcolm. Katie and I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the Branch for the vouchers that you kindly sent us on the occasion of our marriage. Thanks also for the good wishes expressed in the note we received with the vouchers. This gift expresses the true comradeship of all Rock Apes and is greatly appreciated. With kind regards. Per Ardua. Katie and Michael.

We wish Katie and Michael every happiness in their newly married life. It couldn't have happened to two nicer people.

**Annual Ceremony at the
Commonwealth Air Forces Memorial
Runnymede Sunday 13th May 2007**

The annual commemorative service at the Air Forces Memorial Runnymede will be held this year on Sunday 13th May 2007 at 1100 hours. The Service will be to honour the airmen of all the Commonwealth Air Forces who lost their lives

while serving at bases in the United Kingdom and North West Europe during World War II and who have no known graves. The next-of-kin and relatives of airmen whose names are engraved on the Memorial and others wishing to pay their respects are invited to attend. Copies of Order of Ceremony will be available at the Memorial.

THE ROYAL CENTRE FOR DEFENCE MEDICINE

The Birmingham Branch, because of its proximity to the UK's Military Medical Facility at Birmingham's Selly Oak Hospital, has offered to take on the local support of any RAF Regiment casualties from Iraq or Afghanistan. While Corps casualties have yet to be evacuated to Selly Oak, the intensity of combat operations in those theatres probably only made it a matter of time before one of our members is injured.

The RAF Force Protection Force Commander, Group Captain Paul Burt, has therefore accepted our offer with grateful thanks. The task would likely be limited to basic visiting and delivery of the occasional 'Red Cross Parcel' and would, in any case, be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The initial point-of-contact would be your Branch Secretary, but the scheme could expand as needs arise. Let us hope though, that it will never be tested!" All the very best.

Malcolm

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES



Thurs 15 th -Fri 30 th Mar	2007 Ann Battle for Meiktila	Friday 11 th May	2007 Officer's Dinner Club Rec
Thursday 5th April	2007 6th Ann Ded of Mem.l	Sunday 13 th May	2007 Rededication of Chapel
Thursday 12 th April	2007 Branch Night	Sunday 13 th May	2007 Runnymede Service
Monday 16 th April	2007 Branch Social Lunch	Sunday 20 th May	2007 Tower of London Parade
Monday 23 rd April	2007 St George's Day	Monday 21 st May	2007 Branch Social Lunch
Sunday 30 th April	2007 St George's Day Par	Saturday 26 th May	2007 63 Sqdn Reunion London
Wednesday 25 th April	2007 ANZAC Day	Sunday 10 th June	2007 RAF Cosford Air Show
Sunday 29 th April	2007 ANZAC Day Parade	Thursday 14 th June	2007 Branch Night
Thursday 10 th May	2007 Branch Night	Sat 9 th - Fri 15 th June	2007 Weymouth Military Fest.l
		Saturday 16th June	2007 19th Ann Branch
		Saturday 17 th June	2007 Falklands 25 th Ann Comm
		Monday 18 th June	2007 Branch Social Lunch
		Sunday 24 th June	2007 NS Veterans Service & Par
		Wednesday 27 th June	2007 Veterans Day NMA
		Thursday 28th June	2007 Corps 65th Ann at NMA
		Fri 21 st - Sun 23 rd Sept	2007 WO's & SNCOs Reunion

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