



RAF REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

East Kent Branch

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New Year Newsletter 2009

Lots to tell you and, with a change to our regular meetings, decided the best way was by doing a Newsletter. Hopefully this is all clear but ring me if you have any queries.

Meetings - With our dwindling numbers and with some members reporting that they are finding driving at night in winter an unattractive proposition it was unanimously agreed by the members present at our January meeting that we should reduce our gatherings at the Red Arrow Club to the third Thursday of every other month with immediate effect. Hence our meetings for this year will be on the third Thursdays of **March, May, July, September** and **November**. Hopefully everyone will make an effort to get along to these gatherings.

Annual General Meeting – The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Red Arrow Club at the start of our March meeting on Thursday 19th March 2009 commencing at 8 pm. If any member has any item they wish to include in the agenda please let the Secretary or any other committee member know beforehand.

Subscriptions – Subscriptions for 2009 are now due and are set at £14 for full RAF Regiment members of which £10 goes to the National Association and includes the costs of The Flash magazine. Our friends are invited to make a donation to the branch of their own choosing. Every little helps. Please send your cheque to Cyril, our Treasurer or pay him at the AGM.

Social Events – With the reduction in the numbers of regular meetings it was felt that we should try to have a few more social events and with an emphasis on lunchtimes. The lunch at the Racing Greyhound was a great success with a full turnout, not to mention good blow out, particularly for those who washed down the steak and kidney pudding with the spotted dick and custard. The first of these will hopefully be in April but more on that in a later notice.

Warzone – Those who have been following this series on TV will be aware that it has been rescheduled from its 2100 hours Monday slot on Channel 5 to later in the year. It is all about the front line at Kandahar which is defended by an RAF Regiment Squadron. Apparently the programme brought a quadrupling of viewings to the RAF Careers website. It is hoped the later return of this series will bring similar levels of interest.

Annual Corps Commemoration – This will take place at the RAF Regiment Memorial at the NMA on Saturday 27 June 2009.

RAF Regiment Association Annual Reunion – This is to be held this year at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry on Friday 2nd October through to Monday 5th October 2009 at an inclusive cost

for half board and the Gala Night of £139 per person. Full members should by now have received details from Isle of Wight Tours.

2

In Memoriam – Those of you who remember him will be saddened to learn of the passing of former Flight Lieutenant and TA Lieutenant Colonel William (Bill) Albert Weightman. Bill was 84 and is survived by his widow, Val. Bill was dedicated to the service, served a pensionable career with the RAF Regiment, retiring in 1970, and within days had been commissioned into the Royal Artillery (TA), later served with an airborne artillery TA unit and reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel before retiring.

We will remember them.

Editorial Comment – You will recall that at a meeting last year we discussed the announcement in the papers that a committee had recommended an average compensation award of £4,000 each to those veterans of Britain's nuclear test programme who had suffered ill health as a result. This was only after about 50 years of campaigning.

The government in the form of MOD have now engaged lawyers to contest this award on the basis that it is too long ago for the claims to have any validity. Some misguided persons wrote on Teletext letters page that it was typical of the brass hats to deny the ordinary soldiers their due. Rest assured this is not down to 'brass hats' but the civil servants in the ministry whose puppet strings are being manipulated by their political masters and they are the same people who gave a six figure compensation award to an MOD typist who got repetitive finger strain (hate to think where she had been putting it) and are considering giving £12,000 each to relatives of ex-IRA bombers. You simply couldn't make it up in this country at present!

Smile a While – To end on a lighter note here is a story. Sid and Bill were two elderly gentlemen who met daily at around 11 o'clock in a park and sat on a bench chewing over times gone by. If it was wet they used to adjourn to a nearby coffee shop.

One day Sid turned up and there was no Bill. He waited a while but figured Bill must have a cold or something. The days went by and still no Bill. Sid was worried but, as he did not have Bill's address, there was nothing he could do about it and, as the days turned into weeks, he felt he had probably seen the last of his old chum.

Then one day, after about a month, there was Bill sitting on the park bench. "Where have you been" exclaimed Sid to which came the response "In Jail." "In Jail" echoed Sid "Whatever for." "Well" said Bill "You know that pretty little dark waitress down at the coffee shop. Well she made a complaint of rape against me." "Now I am 89 years of age and I was so proud that I could still be accused of rape that when I got to court I pleaded guilty." "Surely they did not convict you of rape" said Sid. "No" responded Bill "The Judge sent me down for a month for perjury!"

Until the next time and keep taking the tablets.

Saving on postage – If you have an email address or should get one subsequently please let me know.