



The Royal Air Force Regiment
Association
Lincolnshire Branch



****APRIL MEETING MOVED TO SUNDAY 13TH****

The RAF Regiment Association is saddened to hear of the death of it's National Chairman Jeff Stevenson, on the 20th February 2014. Our thoughts go out to Sue and his family and friends. Jeff had been in hospital since just before Christmas and his passing was unexpected.

ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON AT RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL



Branch Newsletter April/May/June 2014

FROM THE BRANCH PRESIDENT
TOM MONTEITH

Dear Branch Members

Our Annual General Meeting has just passed and I write these few lines at what I consider as the start of our 'new year', for the Lincolnshire Branch.

I make a clear statement when I say; we can all look back on the past year with pride and satisfaction. We have once again performed well, benefiting both ourselves, the charities that we have supported and individuals whom we have helped. This has indeed been a great team effort and I am well aware that our success owes much to the leadership provided by individuals - some more visible than others but I thank you all for a job well done. We can hold our heads high.

We met as a Branch at RAF Waddington a total of ten times this year and this has culminated with our Annual General Meeting on Sunday, 16 March 2014. During the year, we ran various forms of fund-raising in support of local charities, 'Christmas Cheer' for our Squadrons on deployment and comforts for our unwell Association Members. Over all our fund-raising brought in a total of £1700, to help us do this.

We had two main functions during the year, namely our 'Remembrance Lunch' and 'Christmas Function'. These functions we managed to subsidise by a small amount from our Branch funds. We visited our house-bound and hospitalised on a monthly basis taking comforts to them.

All this is something that we hope to be able to maintain. We have a good bunch of members who are regular attendees at our monthly meetings and we have a lot to thank you all for. Also, we have good members who are unable to attend our meetings but who very kindly send donations to help us keep all this going.

Now, on our year ahead, our plan is to run a similar programme to that of last year i.e. our very successful 200 Club, the stall at the Rauceby War Week-end, Jean's Smarties Project and our monthly raffles. Hopefully this will give us sufficient finances to sustain the support to charities and our house-bound members as we have done over the past years. All this requires considerable effort from our hard-working teams who give up of their spare time to do this and for that we are very grateful.

The comments I always get from our hard- working members is that it was good fun and we enjoyed ourselves, had a good time and we always knew it was worth while.

To you all, I thank you most sincerely.

Per Ardua.

Tom Monteith

APRIL 2014

April already and what a mild winter so far one of the driest and warmest on record in Lincolnshire the weather men tell us. I guess we should be grateful considering the chaos and disruption further South. It was good to see that the Regiment was helping out in certain areas and the novel way they came up with to fill sandbags using traffic cones.

Several of the branch members attended the anniversary luncheon at RAF Cranwell and we were privileged to sit down with Sgt David Hayden MC who recalled for us his exploits than night in Iraq and the bravery he showed in rescuing his downed comrade and also recovering his section without further casualties. The luncheon was excellent and enjoyed by all who attended.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend the AGM but all the committee agreed to stay in post for another year which is always good and I would just like to thank them all for their hard work and dedication to the branch and the Association. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our Standard bearer Dick Graham who has turned out whenever he could to parade the standard. Due to ill health he has now stood down so once again a big thank you to him for his efforts. My thanks must also go to Colin Claridge-Jones for taking on the role of Standard Bearer thank you. Colin is one of our newest members.

As usual a busy year ahead for the branch with all the usual activities and in particular this year we have arranged a visit and luncheon in the College at Cranwell. It is some time since we were last there and if you have never been then now is the time to get your name down on the list by contacting Tom Monteith. Details of the visit appear in the newsletter.

During the next few months there will be several commemorations of the start of the Great War and if you are able then please try to attend and pay your respects to all those who fell during those terrible times between 1914-1918. If you have a relative you would like mentioned in the next issue of the newsletter then please let me have the details and I will endeavor to include them in the July issue. We also have a couple of really good speakers coming up over the next few months so do try and make the meetings if you can.

Roy Miskelly
Chairman

ANNUAL CHAPEL COMMEMORATION SERVICE - 2014

The 2014 Annual RAF Regiment Chapel Commemoration Service will take place at St Anne's Church, Catterick Village , at 13.00 on Saturday 17th May. The Service should be completed by 14.00.

After the Service, the National Management Committee, on behalf of the RAF Regt Assoc, invites all Chapel Commemoration attendees to join them for a Reception, which will be held at the Catterick Golf Club from 14.30 - 18.00. The Catterick Golf Club is located approximately 6 miles away (a 15 min drive) in Leyburn Road, Catterick Garrison , DL9 3QE The facilities may be viewed on the Club's website at <http://www.catterickgolfclub.co.uk>. However, please book only through the Nat Sec and not direct with the Golf Club.

The Reception will be for those who have registered their attendance and paid in advance. There will be a charge of £5.00 per person to attend, which is a discounted price for Assoc members. Non-Members, and all those registering after 10 May, may also attend at a cost of £8.50 per person. Emailed or telephoned bookings will not be accepted. The Form is available from the Nat Sec or may be downloaded from the Assoc website at <http://www.rafregt.org.uk/association/raf-regiment-chapel-commemoration-service-2014-reception-booking-form/>.

If you wish to attend the Reception at the Golf Club, please complete the application form and mail it, with a cheque for the appropriate amount, to the Assoc Nat Sec at the address shown as soon as possible and no later than 10th May to ensure a place. There is no need to register attendance at the Commemoration Service itself.

LODGEMENT OF THE 58 SQN RAF REGT STANDARD

Upon the disestablishment of 58 Sqn RAF Regt in mid-2014, the Sqn Standard will be lodged for the time being in the Rotunda of the RAF College, Cranwell, where it will stay until such time as the Sqn is re-established, or the Standard is finally laid up. The provisional date for the lodgement is Tue 8 Jul 14. While it will be a fairly informal ceremony, mainly for the benefit of the Sqn itself, there is an opportunity for a limited number of ex-58 Sqn RAF Regt veterans to attend. Details are yet to be announced but if any such veterans would like to be involved, they should contact the Regtl Sec at HON-HQRAFRgtSec@mod.uk in the first instance. Priority will be given to former 58 Sqn Cdrs, 2ICs and WOs.

RAF REGIMENT IN THE NEWS

REGIMENT WATER AID !

Air Cdre Andy Hall, Air Officer Force Protection, visited RAF personnel deployed on Op PITCHPOLE to emphasise the important role they are providing to the local community. With 223 personnel deployed from RAF Honington made up of RAF Regiment personnel from 1, II, 26 and 27 Sqn RAF Regiment as well as various ground trades of the RAF Air Cdre Hall visited to reinforce the importance of the job they are performing as well as commending them for the hard work they are conducting.

"It's important that our personnel are acknowledged as an important output of both defence and the service. This visit gives me the opportunity to do that"

He also visited airmen based out of Combermere Barracks, home of the Household Cavalry Regiment as well as meet with the CO Lt Col D James. He then proceeded to the Bronze Control Post at Bisham Primary School, to meet with the control staff as well as thank the head teacher Mr Jim Cooke for kindly letting the RAF stage their operations from his staff room.



The CG speaks to Gunners on duty



Similar method used to fill sandbags quickly

OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

The following recognition has been made to members of the Corps in the Operational Honours and Awards List No42 published on 21 Mar 14:

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service:

LCpl E W PRICE - Gnr - 1 Sqn RAF Regt

Joint Commander's Commendation:

Flt Lt A J COSTIN - Ops Spt (Regt) - FP Force HQ, RAF Honington.

Sqn Ldr P HAWTIN - Ops Spt (Regt) - 22 (Trg) Gp RAF Halton.

RAF REGIMENT ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE - THE FLASH

The next edition (Spring 2014) of the quarterly magazine of the RAF Regt Assoc, The Flash, is scheduled to be delivered to members on or after 17 May 14. This is a calling note for any articles, news items or pictures intended for inclusion in that edition. All items must be with the Editor no later than 30 Apr 14. The usual conditions apply, with all images at a min of 300 dpi and text in MS Word or PDF or OS Pages. Photographs must not be embedded in Word documents. Intended contributors should contact the editor at mco2@rafregt.org.uk for more information or guidance.

RAF REGT ASSOC MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

The RAF Regt Assoc has, for a number of years, offered an introductory 3-year membership fee of £25, giving a saving of £5 over the annual subscription. The Assoc NMC has decided to cease with this facility with immediate effect. The Membership Application on the website has been amended. Copies of the old application are no long valid and should be destroyed. Any queries should be directed to the Memb Sec at membsec@rafregt.org.uk.

COMMANDANT GENERAL'S COMMENDATIONS 2014

The need was identified in 2008 for the CG RAF Regt to be able to recognize the efforts of Corps individuals or teams within the RAF Regiment family, for example those of the RAF Regt Assoc, who may fall outside of the conventional Service Commanders' Commendations associated with the New Year's and The Queen's Birthday Honours Lists; as such, serving personnel were not eligible for consideration in the first few years. However, from 2013, serving RAF Regt and support personnel will be eligible for the Award. Team awards will also be considered.

The period covered by the Awards will be from 1 Aug to 31 Jul annually, and the completed nominations for the Award Year 2013-14 must be received between 1 Aug and 1 Sep 14. All nominations must be initiated by a suitable Sponsor and supported by one other individual. Sponsors or supporting signatories may not be related to the nominated individual. In the case of a RAF Regt Assoc nomination, one of the signatories must be a National or Branch executive, while Service nominees must be sponsored or supported at OF-4 level or above, and come through the respective chain of command.

All nominations must be submitted using the official Nomination Form, which is available from the Regtl Sec. However, it should not be submitted before 1 Aug 14.

RAF REGIMENT IN THE NEWS

ARMED FORCES DAY 2014

This years Armed Forces Day will be held on the 28th June and the main events will be held in Stirling in Scotland. This year Defence chiefs are offering Community Groups the chance to show their support by offering grants of up to £10,000 to cover half the cost of staging an event.

RAF Regiment Warrant Officer Nick Dale was pictured getting the 'ten-shun' of some readers inviting them to get ready and participate in some of the events that will be held nationwide on the 28th June.



SGT WAYNE GOES BACKWARDS FOR CHARITY

Super fit Gunner Sgt Wayne Hopewell completes a fundraising stunt by running backwards in a half marathon. Wayne took on the challenge to help out Air Force colleague SAC Becky Hoskins who he was training to run in her first road race. He told her he could do it 'running backwards and his RAF pals challenged him to do it and keep to his word. Other members of 904 EAW also took part and medic FS Jennifer Fairclough said " It is all a bit crazy but he RAF Regiment are all a bit like that"



LUNCH WITH A HERO

Several members of the branch attended the Anniversary luncheon held in the Sgts Mess at RAF College Cranwell on Friday 31st January 2014. Not only was the meal and the company excellent but we were privileged to sit down with Sgt David Hayden MC. His exploits in Iraq are well known and of course you have read about them in a previous edition of the newsletter. Sgt Hayden MC is himself a Lincolnshire Lad hailing from Spalding and it was an honour to sit down to lunch and afterwards to listen to his own explanation of what happened in that market place. Not just the once did he cover open ground, the first time to rescue SAC Beard who had been shot, but again to carry him further to receive medical attention unaware that he had been fatally wounded. The third time he returned to gather his section and extradite them from the gun battle raging in the market place.



Lincolnshire branch members with Sgt David Hayden MC (4th from left)

RED ARROWS 50th ANNIVERSARY

The famous jets have had their tail fins painted with a Union flag design Graphic 'reflects the best of British' and emphasises team's RAF role.

Look out for them over Lincolnshire this summer.



Some thoughts on Commemoration

by

Harry Foxley

In this centenary year of the Great War it is the stated intention of the government to commemorate 1914-18 in ways that will renew the memories among those surviving few whose loss and suffering was personal, in addition to informing three generations who cannot have experienced such experiences first-hand. We will doubtless have formed our own ideas on how best such commemoration may be presented, and perhaps fervently hoping, meanwhile, that the wilder swings of jingoism, the bitter recrimination against the failures of military, political and regal leadership and, not least, the eternal squabbling among supposed historians will be wholly ignored.

The short series 'The Great War' broadcast by BBC TV offered a promising beginning, with a dispassionate presentation by a Jeremy Paxman content to offer statistics woven into personal accounts. The image of the cinema-goer in Leeds who recognised the face of her dead husband in footage of the Somme battle in 1916 was especially haunting, whilst nicely capturing the cost to just one family among thousands of them. It has been noted that there was scarcely a home in Britain that was not directly affected by the war, and another image in the BBC series was the display of the Times pages whose small print listed the thousands of casualties of the latest 'big push' that had advanced merely a matter of yards.

Two of my great-uncles served. Harry Emerton served seven years with the Grenadier Guards until 1907 and was recalled to the Colours within twenty-four hours of Britain's declaration of war. Albert Hurst would not have been called so early, being just sixteen at the time, but he was infected with the patriotic enthusiasm of the day and, having inflated his age and slightly changed his name (to Hirst) to deflect any attempts by his parents to secure his release, he enlisted in the Manchester Regiment. He fought in the first battle of Ypres, in April-May 1915, where the huge losses offered a foretaste of the years to follow. The Manchesters were so severely mauled that the survivors were quietly absorbed by the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment that became Albert's new home. He remained in touch with his sister, frequently sending pencilled postcards, and in one he poignantly writes: 'Sometimes Sis I think that this war will never end.' It ended for Albert six weeks later, on 1 July 1916 when, in the blackest day in the annals of the British army, 18,500 soldiers died on the opening day of the Battle of the Somme. Albert was not yet eighteen.

Harry survived the trenches and, according to his elder sister, my paternal grandmother with whom I lived for a time in Australia, he never spoke of the war. His medals remained in the cardboard box of issue for ninety years and the silver War Medal was quite black with age when they passed into my care five years ago. They are now displayed on my 'office' wall with some detail of Harry's life for the advice of a future custodian within the family. I do not know where Albert's trio of medals might be (jocularly known to the soldiers of the day as 'Pip, Squeak & Wilfred'), other than perhaps in Canada where Albert's branch of the family migrated to at much the same time as mine was finding a new life in Australia.

Cont.

In this commemorative year I have determined to read – and in several cases to re-read – some of the standard war histories, and I have already re-discovered the several works by Max Arthur, in whose books, to include 'Forgotten Voices of the Great War', the survivors tell their own stories in ways that require little editorial comment. (Perhaps the BBC should have

the evening news announcers read out just one of these prior to the news every evening.) In the example named there are several accounts by Captain Philip Neame VC of the Royal Engineers, who survived the war and ended the second as a general. His son became Fg Offr Phil Neame and he was my flight commander on No II Sqn in the early Seventies. He later transferred to the Parachute Regiment, serving with distinction in the Falklands War before retiring in the rank of colonel.

And not just in a commemorative year, but at odd moments when my glance falls upon Harry Emerton's image, when my recourse is to the war poets, whose ability to frame the loss, the horrors, the struggle and even the humour in a few lines of prose we should not ignore for the truths they held then and still do. The poet Laurence Binyon, whose 1914 poem 'For the Fallen' provides the fragment that we effortlessly recite on Armistice Day, ANZAC Day and other commemorative occasions, wrote less familiar lines that contrast a landscape visited by war with its intended purpose, and to which it will surely return.

The Sower

Familiar, year by year, to the creaking wain
Is the long road's level ridge above the plain.
Today a battery comes with horses and guns
On the straight road, that under the poplars runs,
At leisurely pace, the guns with mouths declined,
Harness merrily ringing, and dust behind.
Makers of widows, makers of orphans, they
Pass to their burial business, alert and gay.

But down in the field, where the sun has the furrow dried,
Is a man who walks in the furrow with even stride.
At every step, with elbow jerked across,
He scatters seed in a quick, deliberate toss,
The immemorial gesture of Man confiding
To Earth, that restores tenfold in a season's gliding.
He is grave and patient, sowing his children's bread;
He treads the furrow kindly, nor turns his head.

Harry Foxley

"A VETERAN DIED TODAY"

He was getting old and paunchy
And his hair was falling fast,
And he sat around the Legion,
Telling stories of the past.
Of a war that he once fought in
And the deeds that he had done,
In his exploits with his buddies;
They were heroes, every one.
And 'tho sometimes to his neighbors
His tales became a joke,
All his buddies listened quietly
For they knew where of he spoke.
But we'll hear his tales no longer,
For ol' Joe has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer
For a Veteran died today.
He won't be mourned by many,
Just his children and his wife.
For he lived an ordinary,
Very quiet sort of life.
He held a job and raised a family,
Going quietly on his way;
And the world won't note his passing,
'Tho a Veteran died today.
When politicians leave this earth,
Their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing,
And proclaim that they were great.

Papers tell of their life stories
From the time that they were young
But the passing of a Veteran
Goes unnoticed, and unsung,
Is the greatest contribution
To the welfare of our land,
Some jerk who breaks his promise
And cons his fellow man?
Or the ordinary fellow
Who in times of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his country
And offers up his life?
The politician's stipend
And the style in which he lives,
Are often disproportionate,
To the service that he gives.
While the ordinary Veteran,
Who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal
And perhaps a pension, small.
It is not the politicians
With their compromise and ploys,
Who won for us the freedom
That our country now enjoys.
Should you find yourself in danger,
With your enemies at hand,
Would you really want some cop-out,
With his ever waffling stand?

Or would you want a Veteran
His home, his country, his kin,
Just a common Veteran,
Who would fight until the end.
He was just a common Veteran,
And his ranks are growing thin,
But his presence should remind us
We may need his likes again.
For when countries are in conflict,
We find the Veteran's part
Is to clean up all the troubles
That the politicians start.
If we cannot do him honor
While he's here to hear the praise,
Then at least let's give him homage
At the ending of his days.
Perhaps just a simple headline
In the paper that might say

**"OUR COUNTRY IS IN
MOURNING,
A VETERAN DIED TODAY."**

**Sent to me by a friend in Canada.
No offence to politicians intended.**

Roy Miskelly

NEW BRANCH MEMBERS

We are fortunate to recently have two new Members join us at RAF Waddington for the Association and the first is Colin Claridge-Jones who will be well known by Corps members who served between the late 1970s and the late 1980s.

1. COLIN CLARIDGE-JONES

Colin enlisted in October 1977 and served until October 1989. His first Squadron was No15 at RAF Wittering where he served from January 1978 until January 1979. From there it was a posting to No37 Squadron at RAF Bruggen on Rapier for a two year tour of duty. On completion of this, Colin was back to the UK again and to NO 5 Wing at RAF Wittering where he served from October 1981 until July 1982. After this in July 1982, he trained for and joined No 2 Squadron at RAF Hullavington where he remained until September 1984. From there it was off to the Depot at RAF Catterick on a posting to No 51 Squadron for a year until September 1985. Then Colin's final posting was to No 1 Squadron at RAF Laarbruch, West Germany where he served for the final 4 years of his service.

Colin now has his home in Lincoln where he lives with his wife, Heather, and 6 year old daughter, Coreelia. He does truck driving for local firms in the Lincoln area and holds a Commission with the Lincoln Air Training Corps where he is a Flight Lieutenant. Colin has already attended several meetings at RAF Waddington and has volunteered to be our Standard Bearer, on the standing down of the current bearer, Dick Graham.

2. MICHAEL J O'HARA (Flt Lt)

Michael joined the RAF Regiment in 1978 and has served on various Field Squadrons throughout the Corp. These include 1 Sqn, 2 Sqn, (4 x tours culminating as Sqn WO), 15 Squadron (LA), 34 Sqn, and QCS/63 Sqn, (as Gnr, SNCO) and more recently as an officer). He was an instructor at the DIOT College RAF Cranwell for three years. Having completed 'P Coy', he spent nearly three years on an exchange tour as a Pln Sgt on a Rifle Coy and subsequently Pln Cdr, (MG Plt) with the 3rd Battalion Parachute Regiment in Aldershot.

He was also the Station Warrant Officer at RAF Coltishall before being commissioned to the rank of Flt Lt in January 2008 through the Warrant Officer commissioning fast track scheme and has since served on QCS/63 Sqn as the RSO, 2503 Sqn as the Training Officer/DSC; as Ops Officer on 7FP Wg HQ and most recently as OC Regt on FPTF, (GDT), at RAF Coningsby. Being well travelled, he has served in operational theatres that include Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Croatia and more recently Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mike, known as Ginge, has been married to Linda for 32 years and they have two sons aged 26 and 23 years. They live in Anwick village where Mike is an active Parish Councillor, (Vice-Chairman) helping to liaise between local business and residents.

His interests are numerous and varied but he is keen on paragliding, motorbikes and gardening.

LINCOLN BOMBER COMMAND MEMORIAL UPDATE

The Lincolnshire Bomber Command Memorial Appeal has won the support of a Lincolnshire based donor who has given the Trust over three quarters of a million pounds towards the construction of the planned Memorial, The Spire of Names. The donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, has helped swell the amount raised since launching at the end of May 2013 to £1.4 million.

Chairman of the Trust, Lord-Lieutenant Tony Worth, said "This generous contribution means that the Memorial itself is now fully funded, which is fantastic, particularly so soon after we launched the Appeal. It now allows us time to secure funding for the Interpretation Centre and the Memorial Park from other funding sources, much of which is already in progress. We obviously have a way to go to reach our target of £5 million but this is a huge step in the right direction."

The Trust has already held a number of fund raising events and more are planned throughout 2014. These, with the additional support of many Lincolnshire businesses and private individuals, have made a significant step towards reaching the total fund target. In recognition of the national and international aspects of this project the Trust is also working to secure funding from a number of international organisations who have connections to Lincolnshire or Bomber Command.



Bomber Designer Honoured

Roy Chadwick, one of the aeronautical industry's most influential and prolific design engineers, has been honoured by the Trustees of The Lincolnshire Bomber Command Memorial Appeal. The decision has been made to name the planned Interpretation Centre after the designer of the iconic Lancaster bomber. The Chadwick Centre will house the collective story of Bomber Command. The Centre will include a tribute to the 55,573 aircrew who died flying for Bomber Command, including those who died whilst in training; those crew members who were lucky enough to survive, including POW's; the ground crews and support staff.

NEW HOME FOR THE MAGNA CARTA

Lincoln Castle has taken a step closer to becoming a world-class heritage attraction as the final phase of improvements get underway.

Work to give the world-famous "Magna Carta" a superb new home of its own at Lincoln Castle is now underway ahead of the document's 800th Anniversary in 2015. A new underground vault is being created to display both Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest - another constitutional itme of major importance. This is a real milestone moment for the Lincoln Castle Revealed project. The Castle is the only place in the world where the Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest can be seen together, and this phase of the improvements will give them the home they deserve.

It will make the Castle an attraction of international importance, bringing in many more visitors from near and far and that is good news for the local economy. Besides the building of the vault, work has started on the refurbishment and restoration of the historic Georgian and Victorian prison buildings.



The project also involves:

- Creation of a cinema screen and auditorium to showcase the story of Magna Carta.
- New visitor facilities, including a ticket office, gift shop, café and toilets.
- Improved disabled access.
- The £20m project has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£12m), the County Council (£5m) and the European Regional Development Fund (£1.1m) with the newly-formed Historic

Lincoln Trust helping to raise the additional money.

The Castle is remaining open to the public throughout, and work is due to be completed in time to celebrate the 800th Anniversary of Magna Carta in 2015.

In the meantime, a team of archaeologists has successfully recovered a late-Saxon sarcophagus discovered on site. The Stone coffin was found three metres down in a small area being excavated for a lift shaft. It appears to have been part of a previously unknown church at least 1000 years old. The skeleton inside seems to be that of a man in his 20s. Unusually for that period, he was wearing leather boots or shoes which suggest he was someone of importance. Finding a sarcophagus from this period that is still undisturbed is extremely rare, so this discovery is of national significance.

The plan now is to thoroughly analyse both the sarcophagus and the remains to learn as much as possible. This will undoubtedly increase what we know about Saxon Lincoln.

JOLLY RETURNS TO SKEGGIE

The Jolly Fisherman, Skegness's much-loved statue, is back in his rightful place, ready to welcome another generation of visitors.

After 24 years' striding across the train station concourse, Jolly had to be completely recast.



Lincolnshire County Council commissioned the original artist, Sioban Coppinger, to faithfully recreate her statue.

After several months of hard work, he was in perfect condition to return.

Sioban and her team fixed Jolly onto his new plinth, just outside Skegness Train Station, along with his trade-mark bronze bucket, spade and suitcase.

The thousands of holiday makers who visit the area each year will be delighted that "Jolly" is back in Skegness, where he will meet and greet visitors for many years to come.

In addition to the statue at the Station, the town also boasts the iconic one on the seafront, based on the original 1909 publicity poster.

THE LAST TWO LANCASTERS WILL FLY TOGETHER AGAIN

The last two airworthy Lancaster Bombers in the world will team up for a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight unlikely to ever happen again. The Royal Air Force Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Lancaster from RAF Coningsby will fly alongside the Canadian Warplane Heritage Avro Lancaster during its month-long visit to England in August this year.

The Trans-Atlantic crossing and visit to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight will most likely never happen again. This year, a rare window of opportunity was identified to bring the last two flying Lancasters in the world together as a special salute to all the veterans of Bomber Command, many of whom are in their late 80s or older now.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Lancaster and the Canadian Heritage Lancaster will showcase a flying display as a tribute to all those who served in Canada, Britain, and the Commonwealth. The Canadian Lancaster will leave from Hamilton in Ontario on 4 August 2014 and should arrive in England on 8 August, staging through Goose Bay, Labrador, Canada, Narsarsuaq, Greenland and Keflavik, Iceland before the plane arrives in the UK. The Canadian plane's crews will complete a short training programme with the BBMF ready for several air displays and fly pasts with the British Lancaster and fighters, starting on 14 August.

To see these two magnificent aircraft flying at events together will be a unique sight, and the opportunity to truly commemorate those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. It is also hoped that these two Lancasters can be flown into East Kirby and be parked along the non-flying Lancaster, "Just Jane" there. What a sight that will be and definitely one not to be missed. More details will follow in our next Newsletter.

THE UK'S REMOTEST WAR GRAVE

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has completed a project to mark the crash site of an RAF crew killed in the Scottish Highlands during the Second World War.

Pilot Officer William Drew, Sergeant Jack Emery, Sergeant Harold Arthur Tompsett, Flying Officer James Henry Steyn DFC, Sergeant Charles McPherson Mitchell and Flight Sergeant Thomas Brendon Kenny were killed when their Anson plane crashed on Ben More Assynt in April 1941.



Due to the inaccessibility of the crash site, the crew were buried on the mountain, their final resting places marked with a cairn. The crew are commemorated by the Commission on a memorial in the nearest graveyard at Inchnadamph Old Churchyard, 20 miles north of Ullapool. In 2012, the Commission decided to replace the existing cairn, which had deteriorated on account of the harsh climate, with a

granite marker weighing some 600 kilograms, to identify and protect the aircrew's burial site from becoming lost or disturbed in the future. The site on Ben Moore Assynt is one of the Commission's most remote sites in the UK and the logistics of replacing the cairn have proved challenging. But the Commission's efforts were supported by a variety of interested parties, including the Royal Air Force who assisted with the use of a Chinook helicopter from RAF Odiham to airlift the new marker, necessary tools and materials onto the mountain, where work to replace the cairn began in May 2013.

The Commission has kept the families of the crew informed throughout the project and for Bernie Tompsett, nephew of Sergeant Harold Arthur Tompsett, the installation of the new marker has been a great comfort. He said it was a time when so many families learned of the tragic loss of their loved ones, so perhaps it was fortunate that they came to rest in such a beautiful part of Scotland.

The Commission is delighted that they have been able to carry out this work and they are very grateful to all the organisations and individuals who so generously assisted in the project.

The new stone will secure the grave site for years to come and help honour the sacrifice of six brave young men. *"We will remember them."*

ANYONE GOT A SURPLUS NISSEN HUT?

A secondary school is on the hunt for a Second World War Nissen hut so it can fulfil a dream of building an RAF Museum.

William Farr School, a few miles north of Lincoln, was built on the site of the former RAF Dunholme Lodge and has collected an archive of memorabilia over the years. The Academy is now preparing a bid for £100,000 worth of Lottery funding to help construct a museum to house the artefacts and celebrate the school's unique history.

It is also on the lookout for a Nissen hut that can be reconditioned to host the collection. Nissen Huts, named after its designer Major Peter Norman Nissen of the 29th Company Royal Engineers, are half-cylindrical buildings which were used in the First World War and were designed to be portable and quick to put up.

The idea to house the school's museum in one of the huts was raised by ex-RAF service-men who attended a Spitfire flypast at the school earlier this year. They have had initial discussions with the Lottery Heritage office and the feedback has been very positive but they need the help of people from the country to bring their dream to life.

The grass airfield at RAF Dunholme Lodge was first used by the Royal Air Force in 1941 and became home to Handley Page Hampden aircraft from nearby RAF Scampton. It was officially opened as an RAF Station in September 1942 as part of Bomber Command when three hard runways were installed at the site. The station was used by 44 Squadron's Avro Lancaster four-engine heavy bombers, which moved in from RAF Waddington in May 1943 and stayed until it moved to RAF Spilsby in September 1944. Flying operations ceased in November 1944 due to the proximity of other stations, which did not allow night flying.

At the end of the war 120 Lancasters had been lost on operations from Dunholme Lodge. William Farr School is named after the local vicar who established the first school on the site more than 60 years ago. The Rev William Farr bought the plot of land which used to be the base, for £600 and opened the school in 1952. The school had been up and running for three years when the Rev Farr died in 1955.



The head-teacher of William Farr School is now on the lookout for a Nissen hut, similar to the one pictured on the left.

SOME NEWS FOR PENSIONERS

TRIPLE LOCK

The Coalition Government has put a "triple lock" on the state pension, which ensures it is increased each year by whichever is bigger, the rise in prices or the rise in earnings. There is also a guarantee that in any event the rise will not be less than 2.5%. This year inflation was 2.7%, way ahead of the rise in earnings. So this April, the basic state pension will rise by £2.95, making it £113.10 a week.

A couple who depend on the husband's contributions will get an extra £4.75 a week making a total of £180.00 basic state pension. All other parts of the state pension, such as SERPS, will also rise by 2.7%, but nearly three million low-income pensioners, who rely on Pension Credit, will get less. One and three quarter million will get an increase of just £1.69 a week, or £2.44 for many couples, raising income by as little as 1%. The remainder, more than a million of the poorest, will get the same cash increase as the State Pension, only a 2% rise in their total income.

It is part of phasing out an element of pension credit, "savings credit", which is given to people over state pension age whose income is above £148.35 a week,(single),or £226.50 a week, for a couple. As a result the maximum income to get any pension credit has been frozen. From May 2010-2013, the number benefiting from pension credit fell by 420,000 saving the Government £715 million per annum.

TIME TO TOP UP

Pensioners who do not qualify for the new higher state pension may be able to buy their way towards it in weekly units. More than 12 million pensioners will be able to boost their state pension by up to around £25 a week under plans announced by the Government. The offer applies to all existing pensioners and anyone who reaches state pension age before the new higher 'single tier' state pension, worth about £144 a week, begins on 6 April 2016.

The new pension will be up to £40 a week more than the basic pension is now and this deal will allow those born on the wrong side of the line to boost their pension towards that level. Men born before 6 April 1951 and women born before 6 April 1953 will not get the new pension but will be able to buy the additional pension in units of £1 a week up to the maximum. The Government has not announced how much people will have to pay, but independent experts reckon that at age 65 years it will be about £1,000 for every £1 a week bought, around £25,000 to £28,000 to buy the full £25 a week extra. Someone who lives an average lifespan will get their money back. So the amount will fall the older you are. But it will not vary by health, sex or postcode, all of which affect how long you will live.

It will be increased each year in line with inflation and at least half of it can be inherited by a spouse. The offer will be open from October 2015 but people will have to act quickly as it is expected to close within a year or two. The Government says about seven million pensioners have enough savings to buy at least some extra pension but expects only 'a small proportion' will do so.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION - HANDY PERSON SERVICE

I thought readers would like to know of our experience with the service offered by the British Legion covering low level maintenance/repairs. We have previously had an incident wherein "handymen" services were procured to find we were overcharged for shoddy workmanship. Not wishing for a repeat performance and through a chance conversation with our local Branch Secretary who suggested that we contacted British Legion Handyman Service.

A call was made to their offices and the work required was established as within their remit. Within a week I was contacted by the Service and a date made for the handyman to call. This amiable gentleman called today, around 10 am, having driven from Grimsby and began work immediately on the repairs. This involved removing two wooden garage doors, dealing with the rotten base, undercoat and repainting the touched up work to match the rest of the doors before rehangng them correctly.

There were other repairs required in the house which he did efficiently without wasting time and helpful with enquiries relating to building issues. Being a rather hot day, I did not object to mugs of tea as they did not deter him from carrying out the work efficiently and correctly.

The handyman is an experienced electrician and confirmed that putting up two security lights could be carried out.

I had requested this and advised that it was down to the expert to confirm whether this could be done.

Consequently another visit is on the agenda. .

But that's not all - the entire service, including the next visit, security lights and equipment is free. Anyone over 75 (check) is entitled to a free service.

Naturally, we did not want to take advantage of the Legion's generosity and a cheque is in the post, covering, we hope, some of the costs.

Thoroughly recommended to anyone who wishes to use this service.

Just a telephone call is required to talk about your tasks and arrange a date to suit you.

The telephone number is: 0800 032 0306

IN EVERY PLACE

The RAF Armoured Cars in the Middle East 1921-53

Author: Dr Nigel W. M. Warwick
 Publisher: Forces & Corporate Ltd
 ISBN: 978-0-9574725-2-5
 Cover Price: £29.95 (*excl P&P)

Pages: 664
 Images: 280 Photographs + 37 detailed Maps
 Weight: Approx 1.75Kgs
 Dimensions: (H) 252mm (W) 175mm (D) 45mm

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THE 'MISSING' HARRIERS

There has been much speculation in the world press about what the US Marines Corps, (USMC), are doing with the 72 harriers they purchased from the UK. Included in these observations is that by doing some simple maths, there are 14 'missing' while the remaining 58 stripped clean carcasses lie in suspended animation in the desert at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, still wearing their RAF and Royal Navy squadron colours. The popular view is that the missing 14 will be returned to flying service as an additional squadron within the USMC but, as romantic as this may be, it is untrue.

Whilst similar to look at, the UK Harrier GR5/7/9 and the USMC(plus Italian and Spanish) AV-8B harrier IIs are very different aircraft. The UK parted ways with the rest of the Harrier family during the development of the Harrier II programme in the 1980s. Some of the differences between the two types include a stronger, bird strike resistant leading wing edge, the lack of additional chaff and flare dispensers in the upper fuselage, the contrasting nose and wing mouldings to mount the Zeus jamming system and additional pylons on the wing.

A tri-national programme office under the US Navy's Naval Air Systems Command manages the AV-8B variant using Boeing as the main contractor to provide design authority, whereas the UK Harrier was managed in service with BAE Systems. Some 25 years of differing modifications to avionics, software and weapons, plus concessions for flight and operating environment, would make the introduction of the UK Harrier into USMC, flying service the same as bringing in a new aircraft.

The reality is that the missing 14 Harrier GB9s are sitting in a hangar at the USMC Air Station at Cherry Point in North Carolina being dismantled quietly, much like the Tornado Reduce to Produce (RTP) programme ongoing at RAF Leeming. RTP sees retired F3 and GR4 airframes harvested for common parts of value to the Tornado GR4 fleet. Exactly the same process is being executed at the Naval Air Depot (NADEP) also at Cherry Point to the Harriers.

The USMC, like the US Air Force and to a lesser extent, the US Navy, faces a significant shortfall of 'strike fighters' between now and the delayed introduction of the F-35B Lightning II. The purchase of the 72UK Harriers was an opportunity to improve the availability of the USMC AV-8B fleet with fresh parts at a significantly reduced cost compared to new. Extending the life of in-service aircraft that have completed production can be challenging when parts that are no longer produced start to fail, so harvesting the UK aircraft was too good an opportunity to be missed.

The USMC was never going to increase the numbers of Harrier Squadrons, particularly as it will be standing up the first F-35B squadron at Yuma, in Arizona, in 2014. The USMC Service Life Extension programme will squeeze as much life as possible from the F/A-18 Hornet until F-35C replaces them. So, the 'missing' 14 Harriers are not a brewing controversy, just the result of a very controlled environment where the USMC has kindly prohibited any pictures of the process, given the emotive nature of the sale of the Harrier to the US.

So the 72 Harriers that the US purchased from the UK are stored in the desert at the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base minus the 14 which are being dismantled at the USMC Base at Cherry Point, North Carolina to be used for spares.

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BRANCH FUND-RAISING

The majority of our Branch Members will be well aware that to raise some funds for our chosen Charities in 2013, the agreed plan was to run a '200 Club'. This was a success and the grand sum of £500, was raised. This, no mean task, could not have been done, had it not been for the help of some very good Branch Members. The following in particular are thanked most sincerely for their part in selling large numbers of squares on the '200 Club' sheets:-

Graham & Sue Atherton	- Sales at RAF Cranwell
Graham & Claire Frank	- Sales at work
Roy Miskelly	- Sales at work
Andy Ingham	- Sales at Shooting Club
Jon Cooper and Jenny	- Sales at work

Also we must thank all the Members who attended our meetings over the months and bought loads of squares and also, everyone who donated prizes. This was very generous and kind.

The Prize winners were as follows:-

- 1st Prize Spitfire Picture - Ginge Roffey - RAF Digby
- 2nd Prize Toiletries Basket - John Ferguson - RAF Waddington.
- 3rd Prize Fleece Blanket - Robbie Williams - MT- RAF Cranwell
- 4th Prize Toiletries Garden Collection - Sheila Barker Church- RAF Cranwell
- 5th Prize David Winter Miniature Cottage -Viv Warnes - RAF Digby.
- 6th Prize Bottle of Asbac Brandy - Phil Dhobar- Digby Clay Shooting Club.
- 7th Prize Mantle-piece Clock - Steve Jennings - Digby Clay Shooting Club.
- 8th Prize Nintendo Games - Harry Foxley- RAF Regt Association.
- 9th Prize Gents Wrist Watch - Tim Wiibond - Digby Clay Shooting Club.
- 10th Prize 1 Pair Dartington Wine Glasses - Wg Cdr Turner - RAF Cranwell.
- 11th Prize Power Fix Screw-driver Set - Ian Edwards - Waddington.
- 12th Prize Double Bed Duvet Cover - ??
- 13th Prize 1 pair Chippendale Silver Trays - Heather MacPherson - RAF Scampton
- 14th Prize Large Silver Serving Tray - Karl Bird.

It was agreed that once again this money should go to the Lincolnshire Air Ambulance and a £500 cheque was duly handed over to a representative from them at our Branch luncheon on Remembrance Sunday in the Solo Club, Market Place, Sleaford.

Other donations made by our Branch for the last year included:

- £150 towards Christmas Cheer for our Squadrons in Afghanistan.
- £100 to RAF Waddington for The Hive Maintenance Fund.
- £100 Cleethorpes Armed Forces Day Memorial Plaque
- £220 Donations in lieu of Flowers for deceased Members and numerous House/Care-Home Visits etc.

To raise some more funds, we also ran a stall at The Rauceby War Weekend which brought in over £439.00. Some of this was used to fund the above donations and the remainder went towards our Branch funding. The Rauceby Stall was made possible due to the help provided by Graham and Sue Atherton, Terence Saiter and Jean and Tom who persuaded people over 2 days to part with their money. Wrapping up bottles for the Stall was kindly undertaken by Val Graham and Sue Atherton whom we thank. Also thanks to Andy Ingham for the help he gave.

Can we do it again this year? Well it was agreed to try but first all we need to find some prizes to make it attractive enough. Then we need our stalwarts to help run it and also prepare the items for the table. It is all quite a challenge which is for a good cause, so let us hope we can do it for another year. I am pleased to say we already have some volunteers.

TCM

ROYAL AIR FORCE REGIMENT ASSOCIATION
LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH - YEARLY PLANNER
2014

Sun Apr 13 *	Branch meeting 1400 hours	Guest Speaker-The Lincolnshire Regt in WWI - Chris Bailey
Sat May 17	Annual Chapel Commemoration	St Anne's Church, Catterick Village, North Yorkshire
Sun May 18	Branch meeting 1400 hours	The Hive, RAF Waddington
Sun Jun 15	Branch meeting 1400 hours	The Hive, RAF Waddington
Fri Jun 20	Visit to RAF College	RAF College Cranwell
Sat Jun 28	UK Armed Forces Day	RAF Regt Memorial Service - NMA
Sun Jul 20 *	Branch meeting 1400 hours	Guest Speaker- Mr Jim Burgess "My Radar Days"
Aug 23/24/25	Rauceby War Week-end	Branch Participation
Sun Sept 21	Branch meeting 1400 hours	The Hive, RAF Waddington
Sun Oct 19 *	Branch meeting 1400 hours	Guest Speaker -John Allen-"A timeline of his Great Uncle's War Service."
Oct 24 -27	Association National AGM-Re-union	Yew Tree Lodge Hotel KEGWORTH
Sun Nov 9	Remembrance Day Nationwide	Remembrance Lunch
Sun Nov 16	Branch meeting 1400 hours	The Hive, RAF Waddington
Sat Dec 20	Branch Christmas Function	Sleaford Solo Club
	NO DECEMBER MEETING	
Sun Jan 18 2015	Branch meeting 1400 hours	The Hive, RAF Waddington
Sun Feb 15 2015	Branch meeting 1400 hours	The Hive, RAF Waddington
Sun Mar 15 2015	Branch Annual General Meeting - 1400 hours	The Hive, RAF Waddington

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Committee Members

Graham Atherton
Andy Ingham

Standard Bearer

Colin Claridge-Jones

MEETINGS

The Hive
RAF Waddington
3rd Sunday of the month
(Ex - August/December)

ANNUAL CORPS MEMORIAL COMMEMORATION 2014

The annual Corps Memorial Commemoration for 2014 will take place at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, on Armed Forces' Day, Sat 28 Jun. The event is sponsored jointly by the Corps and the RAF Regt Assoc. Further details will be issued in due course but the Service will occur after midday and the main RBL Commemoration Service.



SLEAFORD ARMED FORCES DAY PARADE

An Armed Forces Day Parade will be held in Sleaford this year on Sunday June 29th and as many members as possible are asked to attend and take part. Details and timings will be given later.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Branch Meeting

Sunday 13th April - 1400 - RAF Waddington
(Guest Speaker)

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE DUE TO EASTER

Branch Meeting

Sunday 18th May - 1400 - RAF Waddington

Nos 50 & 61 Squadrons Reunion and Commemoration

Sunday 1st June 2014 - 1000 - Birchwood Lincoln

Branch Meeting

Sunday 15th June - 1400 - RAF Waddington