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Wales, Midland & South West
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Wales, Midland & South Western Area

JULY 2016

Newsletter

*Don't forget – Helping Hand and Branch Match Grants are available to help you sustain and grow your branch.
Ask your Branch Support Officer for more details.*

1. CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR VERY OWN JAN ELDERS!

We send congratulations to our Area colleague, Mrs Jan Elders, Assistant Area Welfare Officer in the Midlands, on being awarded a British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2016, for services to the North Costa Blanca Branch of the RAF Association and the wider ex-pat community. Well done Jan, richly deserved! Here she is – keeping busy at last year's Birmingham International Tattoo.



We are also pleased to announce the following recipients of a National Presidential Certificate in conjunction with the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2016. Congratulations to all, especially those from our patch!

- Eddie Duke-Low, City & Central London Branch.
- Brian Fox, Edinburg, Lothians & Borders Branch.
- Joseph Corr, Carrickfergus Branch.
- Richard Noel Williams, Carrickfergus Branch.
- Jeanne Roach, South Shields Branch.
- Kath Allison, York Branch.
- Arlene Dowson, Skipton Branch.
- Alan Goudge, RAF ST Mawgan Branch.



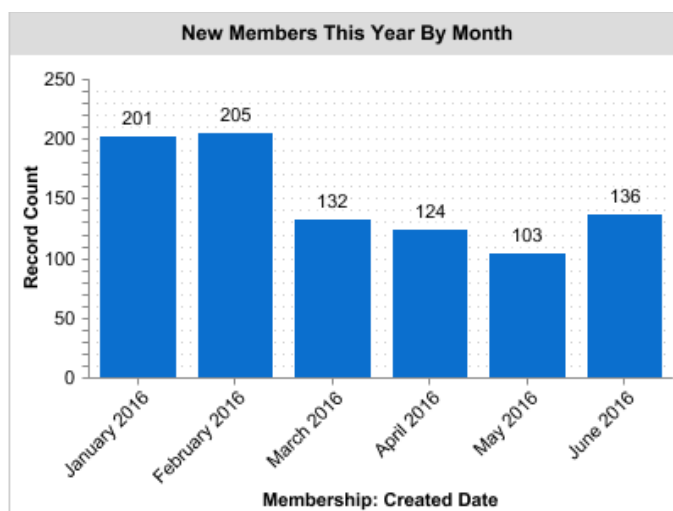
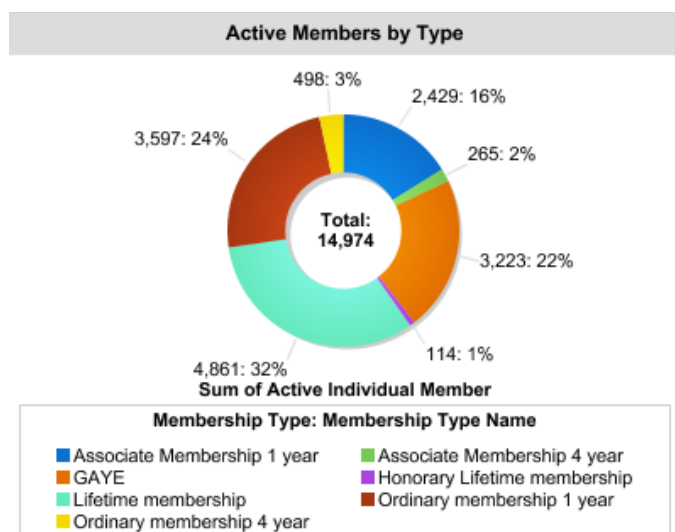
- Warrant Officer(ATC) Jon Barnes, Camborne, Redruth & Illogan Branch.
- Keith Moule, North Cotswold Branch.
- Warrant Officer Vince Taylor, Swindon Branch.
- Caryl Vivien Williams, Llanidloes Branch.

Now might be a good time to remind Branches the importance of recognising the efforts and dedication of our members. The Association has a structure that welcomes submissions for honours and awards, be it a state award or an Association certificate. Please don't hesitate to make contact with the Area Director in Exeter, if you'd like to consider 'writing up' a colleague whose efforts should be officially recognised.



2. MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Great news to report with our overall Area membership totals in that we have now started to grow beyond 2015 levels. This is down to your hard work at Branch level as much the Area team; thank you. Our aim this year is to try and grow by at least 10% so please keep up the good work. We all know someone who is serving or has served in the RAF but hasn't joined the Association. Please call them, have a chat and get them signed up. The stronger our membership base, the more chance we have sustaining and developing our branch structure and reaching out to those in need.



3. AREA WELFARE SEMINARS – ON THEIR WAY!

It remains an objective of Area Council to provide Welfare Seminars each year and 2016 is no different, so in an effort to work even closer with today's RAF we are happy to provide the following dates and venues. Whilst appreciating these particular venues may not suit everyone, we do keep an eye on where we've already been and where we have yet to visit! Please mark your diary and we will get more detail to you soon.

- Tue 18 October 2016 - Defence Medical Services, Whittington Barracks, Lichfield, WS14 9PY.
- Wed 26 October 2016 – RAF St Mawgan, Newquay, TR8 4HP.

4. E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Please can Branch Secretaries continue to encourage members to provide us with their e-mail address – if they have one! Having an e-mail address not only means the member can receive information and correspondence more quickly but would contribute to significant savings in time, printing and postage. Debbie Byam, Area HQ Administrator, will be happy to receive this information. Thanks.

5. RAFA CONCERT BAND – KEEPING BUSY

The Association Concert Band under the direction of Peter Skellon continues to raise our profile through music and is keeping as busy as ever. Recent performances include the National Memorial Arboretum in support of the Association's Annual Service of Dedication and the Armed Forces Day celebrations at Whitchurch near Bristol. This is your Band – please use them as part of your local fundraising plans. You can catch them next at Grove Park Bandstand in Weston-super-Mare on Sunday 31 July.



6. AREA RAFFLE DRAW – THE WINNERS

A big thank you to those who took part in this year's Area Raffle, helping to raise more than £10k for Wings Appeal. Here are the winners and winning ticket numbers. Congratulations.

Place	Name	Winning Ticket No.	Amount in £
1 st	R Stoodley	091714	1,000
2 nd	Karen Smart	027921	250
3 rd	S Lightwood	055380	100
4 th	W Robson	078518	50
5 th	L Stevenson	070376	50
6 th	B Carter	055494	20
7 th	M Roden	029306	20
8 th	R Stabb	069793	20
9 th	J Stainer	020699	20
10 th	G Langdan	030988	20

7. BATTLE OF BRITAIN SERVICE AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY – SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2016



As is customary the Association has been allocated a quantity of admission tickets for the Battle of Britain Service at Westminster Abbey. Twenty (20) Branch Standard Bearers are invited to form a Lining Party. Applications for admission tickets and Standard Bearers wishing to attend are to contact the South East & Eastern Area Headquarters on Tel: 0116-2688784 or by e-mail to eastern@rafa.org.uk no later than **Thursday 21 July 2016**.

8. VOLUNTEERING UPDATE FROM THE CENTRE

During Volunteers' Week last month we featured case studies on a number of Association volunteers from across the UK. Some examples include a Branch Chair and Branch Welfare Officer.

Marilyn Addison is the Chairman of the Cosford and District Branch and volunteers her time to plan, book activities and visits, fundraisers and awareness campaigns and to bring more people to the Branch. Marilyn was inspired to volunteer her time and tells us: "The fact that a Branch could fold without a Chairman and you cannot have an active RAF station without an active RAF Association Branch meant I could not stand by and see that happen so I thought I would give it a go." Read more about Marilyn's story here:

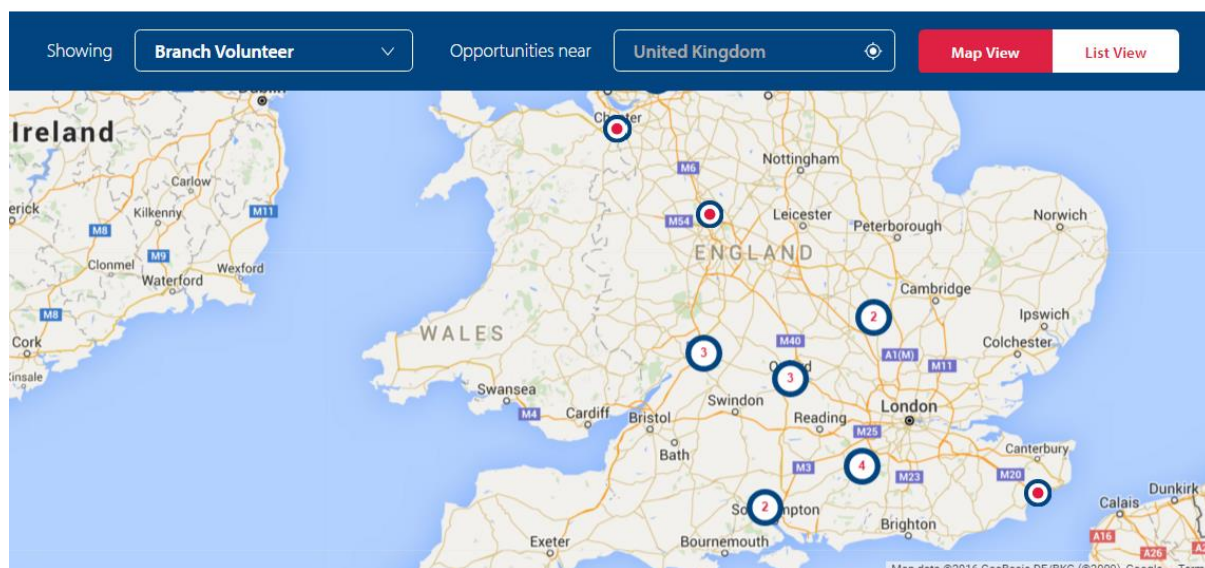
<https://www.rafa.org.uk/blog/2016/06/03/marilyn-addison-welfare-officer-chairman-cosford-district-branch/>

Marion Robinson is a Welfare Officer at the Erewash Branch and helped set up the Erewash Branch drop-in centre. Marion tells us: "My personal volunteering background is from the Air Training Corps, I worked with them for 15 years, firstly on the committee, then as a civilian instructor. Professionally I ran my own ladies and children's clothing business until early retirement. I got involved with the Association in 2006, when a friend nominated me to be the new Honorary Welfare Officer as the present team was stepping down. Ten years later and I'm still here." Read more about Marion's story here:

<https://www.rafa.org.uk/blog/2016/06/11/volunteers-week-marion-robinson-honorary-welfare-officer/>

Advertising your Branch vacancies

Search for opportunities



If you would like support to recruit for volunteers around the area of your Branch, we can advertise these based on postcodes or locations, either nearby or further afield, where we may find additional support from someone who is willing to help us with Branch tasks. We have already received a number of requests from Branches and are advertising these on our website and to potential new volunteers in the local area. Please contact the team for more information.

Print on demand

Since the introduction of the print on demand service, we are able to offer our Branches a way to easily advertise their own volunteering vacancies. The service enables you to produce your own promotional material where the site has a number of templates for items such as posters, banners, name badges, etc. You can edit the text and order them for print, or you can download to print at your own leisure in small quantities. The service is relatively new and more templates will be added as the project develops. For help and information on this, please email helen.pack@rafa.org.uk or call 0116 266 5224 for assistance.

Contact details for the Volunteering Team: volunteers@rafa.org.uk or 0116 266 5224.

9. ADOPTION CEREMONY FOR LOCAL AIR CADETS

On Wednesday 1st June, No 84 (Coventry Airport) Squadron ATC were officially adopted by their local RAF Association Branch in a ceremony held at the Royal Naval Association Club in Leamington Spa. The event was attended by both current cadets from the squadron alongside Branch members who meet once a month and had invited the cadets to join the extra special June meeting.

The Royal Leamington Spa and Warwick Branch have been in contact with No 84 Sqn for some time: partnering to provide a fantastic display of cadets and service personnel for the Battle of Britain and Remembrance parades which take place annually in Leamington Spa town centre. They have also worked together raising money and selling poppies during the Poppy Appeal weeks in October and November and some of the members have visited the Squadron to give talks about their involvement with the Royal Air Force and aviation over their wide and varied careers. When approached by Branch President Group Captain Raymond MacDonald MBE (RAF Retired) regarding an official adoption, Officer-in-Charge, Flying Officer Rosie Robinson was quick to accept the wonderful offer and so the process was started.

Unfortunately Raymond MacDonald was unable to attend the ceremony due to ill health but the Branch Chairman, Stuart Powney made the official presentation of the adoption certificate. The cadets were given a short introduction to the work of the RAF Association and their role alongside the regular service and then the buffet was declared open. The members and cadets were encouraged to mingle and share stories. Flying Officer Rosie Robinson made a short acceptance speech thanking the branch for their warm hospitality and the fantastic refreshments provided adding: "this is not just something to hang on our wall, this is the start of a strong relationship between our two organisations. I've been approached by so many members who would like to come and share their stories with the cadets and we really look forward to taking up these offers as part of our training programme in the next few months".

Since writing this article, sadly, Group Captain Raymond MacDonald, Branch President, has passed away. An absolute gentleman. We send our sincere condolences to his family and friends.



10. SECRETARY GENERAL IN CORNWALL

As part of a recent visit to Cornwall, Mr Nick Bunting, Secretary General, called in to the Falmouth Branch to meet members and congratulate them on winning the Gwynne-Vaughan Wings Appeal Trophy for 2015. Pictured below with Nick are members of the Falmouth Branch including Sean Pascoe, Chief Executive, Turn 2 Starboard Charity that works closely with the Branch. Congratulations Falmouth!

Nick also visited the Penzance Branch at their Gremlin Club HQ and enjoyed a pasty and quiz night at the RAF St Mawgan Branch.



11. UNIQUE FUNDRAISING AT OUR STAFFORD BRANCH

Stafford Branch took a new approach when it was decided by their Wings Appeal Officer, Kenny Devoir, to collect at the Uttoxeter Racecourse. In addition Kenny and Branch Chairman, Peter Knight, were asked to present the winner's prize in the fourth race which was won by a 9-year old gelding, named Exemplary, ridden by Brendan Powell and trained by J Fareilly. The betting was 9/1 and if more attention had been paid to a tongue-in-cheek suggestion by one of the Branch members collecting that day, we should have put the entire collection we had taken on this horse, thus boosting our Wings Appeal gains for the afternoon from £580 to £5,220.....now that would have been a nice little earner!!



12. WINGS APPEAL WORKSHOPS

Have you seen this? Is your Branch attending?

Repeat Article. A couple of Wings Appeal workshops will be held throughout the Area in July and delivered by the fundraising team at Leicester. These sessions will cover a variety of topics and give the Wings Appeal Organisers from different branches the chance to come together to share ideas, receive updates on new initiatives while feeding back and making suggestions on how the central team can improve the support you receive. The workshops will be taking place at the following locations:

- Weds 13 July – Wolverhampton Branch Club.
- Thurs 14 July – City of Bristol Branch Club.

The days will run from 10.00am until 2.30pm with refreshments being provided during the day. Previous events have proved a great success at putting Wings Organisers from surrounding branches in touch.

The session will also reaffirm what you and your branch do and how to approach fundraising in the best possible way to make your campaigns even more successful.

If you'd like to be involved then please get confirmation of attendance in by Wednesday 6 July to ensure the day is set up correctly to cater for all needs. Full details will be sent to Branch Wings Appeal Organisers but if you have any questions or would like to confirm attendance please email wings@rafa.org.uk or call Molly Henson in the Wings Appeal office on 0116 268 8797. Thanks.

13. AIR CADET ORGANISATION – 75TH ANNIVERSARY TORCH RELAY – AN UPDATE

Enclosed with this Newsletter is an update from the Air Cadet Organisation on their plans for a UK-wide Torch Relay. Please take a look and see if your Branch can support their efforts.

14. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY (we look forward to seeing you out there amongst all those potential new members!).

- Bristol Harbour Festival – 16 and 17 July.
- Camborne Branch of the Royal British Legion will hold a Memorial Service at Roscroghan just outside Camborne Town (site of a Memorial stone with the details of the RAF aircraft that crashed during the war) – 1030am on 23 July.
- RNAS Culdrose Air Day 28 July 2016.
- Calne Motorbike Show – 30 July 2016.
- Leek Show – 30 July 2016.
- Red Arrows display - Falmouth Wednesday 10 August 2016 at 6 30pm.
- Weymouth Carnival – 16 and 17 August 2016.
- Bournemouth Airshow – 18 to 21 August 2016.
- East Glamorgan & Gwent Region Meeting at Llandaff & Ely Branch Club HQ – 2pm, Sat 20 August 2016.
- Mid-Somerset Sow – 21 August 2016.
- The Falmouth Branch Battle of Britain Service will be held at the Falmouth Parish Church of King Charles The Martyr on Sunday 4 September 2016 at 10.30am.
- Truro Day (with involvement from the Association's Cornwall Region – Truro Branch has the lead) – 11am – Sun 11 September 2016.
- RAF Cosford Battle of Britain Parade and Service - Sun 11 September 2016.
- MoD St Athan Battle of Britain Parade and Service – Sun 11 September 2016.
- Wreath Laying Service at Sea on Sunday 11 September (date change from 25 Sep) sailing from Padstow Harbour at 11.30am (organised through our Bodmin Branch – this is a unique Service. Real flowers please as part of any wreath).
- RAF Cosford Battle of Britain Parade and Service – Sunday 11 September 2016 (Area Office will be providing details shortly).
- Wolverhampton & District Branch Battle of Britain Parade and Service – Sun 18 September 2016.
- RAF Association Concert Band Performance at the Pavilions Theatre, Teignmouth – 3pm on Sun 18 September 2016.
- Plymouth Branch Annual Battle of Britain Parade and Service at the Minster Church St Andrews (special opportunity to also celebrate ATC 75th Anniversary) – 1100am on Sun 18 September 2016.

Paul Baker – Area Director

Whether you think you can, or think you can't, you're probably right.

Enclosure:

1. Torch Relay Admin Order and Route Cards.