

The Royal Air Forces Association
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Wales, Midland & South Western Area

OCTOBER 2016

Newsletter

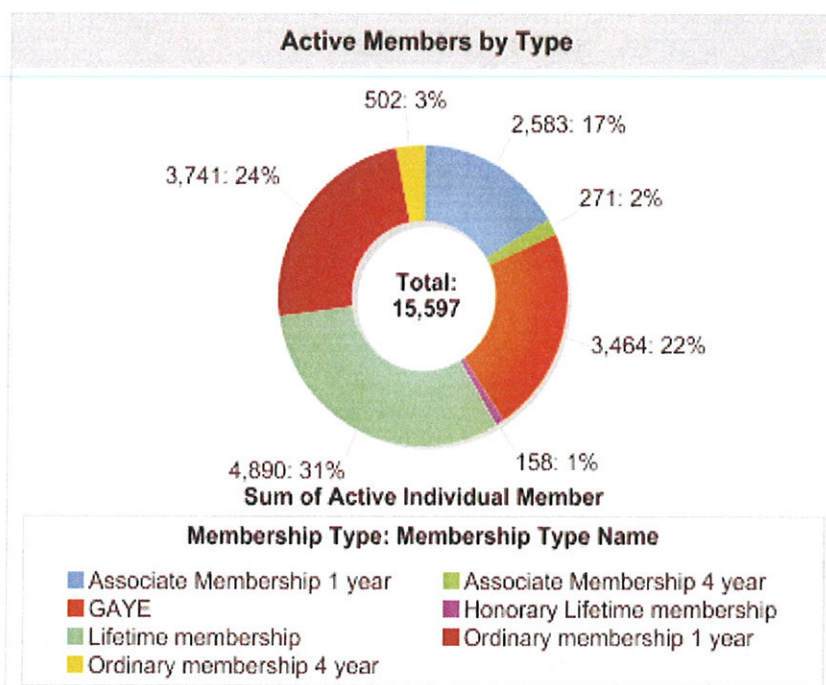
Christmas is coming – membership to the RAF Association – what a wonderful gift to give!

WILL REMEMBER THEM

It is with great sadness we record the passing of Mr Paul Symons, Truro Branch Chairman. Paul was very committed to ensuring our Truro Branch remained active. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and Branch colleagues.

KEEP THOSE NEW MEMBERS COMING!

We are doing really well in signing up new members – thank you – please keep that application form in your top pocket just in case you see an old RAF friend. Accepting that we want all these new members to become active within our Branches, the plan is fairly straight forward, the more members we have the greater and more diverse our welfare delivery can be for the whole of the RAF family. Area Staff are extremely busy engaging with today's RAF on Stations such as Cosford, St Athan, St Mawgan, Valley, Boscombe Down, Shawbury, DMS Whittington, MoD Corsham and Abbeywood – to name just a few. For those of you who look at the numbers, a reminder that we ended 2015 with 14,880 members in our Area. You'll see we've already gone past that mark with 3 months still remaining. Thank you.



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Membership Subscriptions 2017/2018 (Prices held from 2015/2016)

Category	2017/2018 Membership Fee
Ordinary Member – 1 Year	£20.50
Ordinary Member – 4 Year	£78.00 (Existing 4 Year members only)
Associate Member – 1 Year – Air Mail	£14.50
Associate Member – 1 Year – No Air Mail	£8.50
Associate Member – 4 Year -- Air Mail	£55.50 (Existing 4 Year members only)
Associate Member – 4 Year – No Air Mail	£30.50 (Existing 4 Year members only)
Give As You Earn (GAYE) Serving RAF (Gross payment before basic tax relief)	£25.68
(Net payment after basic tax relief)	£20.52

Following the decisions of Annual Conference 2016, from 1 January 2017 a number of changes will occur to the membership criteria. These are subject to the Privy Council's final approval, which we expect to receive before the end of the year. However, we need to plan for these changes and remind all members and branch Chairmen of these amendments.

Cessation of Membership

The grace period for the lapsing of a membership has changed from 90 days to 30 days. See Byelaw 7 – Membership – Subscriptions.

Membership will cease if a renewal subscription is not paid within 30 days of the end of the membership period. For all members to date, the end of the 30 day period is 30 January 2017. If a member renews after that time, their membership will run to the end of the 2017 calendar year, even if they renew in December 2017. If a member does not renew until 2018, they will transfer from calendar membership to anniversary membership (see below). They will retain their original membership number.

Anniversary Memberships

Anniversary Memberships will apply to all new members who join the Association from 1 January 2017. For example, if a member joins the RAF Association on 31 August 17, their membership will be valid until 30 August 18.

Multiple Branches

A member may now be a member of as many branches, including branch committees, as they wish. Members have to nominate one primary (or home) branch. The nominated branch will receive the membership rebate. The member will only pay one membership subscription, irrespective of their membership of other branches. Members will only receive a membership card for their primary branch.

Members of a primary branch may sit on the committees of other branches. This will be reflected on the F1056s, which all branches are required to submit annually to the Association's Headquarters. The Association's membership database will record a member's primary branch only.

AREA WELFARE SEMINARS – LAST MINUTE.COM!

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

By the time this Newsletter hits the streets there will be just a couple of weeks before our first Area Seminar at RAF St Mawgan on Tuesday 18 October. Are you booked in? Please join us by calling Debbie Byam in

the Exeter Office on 01392-462088 Option 4 or at debbie.byam@rafa.org.uk. It's not just for Branch HWOs – anyone is welcome! We'll be providing updates on general welfare, volunteering and befriending as well opportunities to discuss Branch and Club related activity. We also have external speakers lined up and a buffet lunch will be provided at no cost to those attending.

Then – we'll do it all again on Wednesday 26 October at the Defence Medical Services, Whittington Barracks, Lichfield.

The team is looking forward to seeing you at these seminars.

AREA CONFERENCE AND REUNION – MARCH 2017

The Area will come together once more at the Derwent Hotel in Torquay for its Thirteenth Annual General Meeting, to be held on Saturday 18 March 2017 as part of the Annual Conference and Reunion. This year saw 44 Branches represented and we'd dearly love to beat that mark in 2017! These gatherings provide different opportunities for us all, to enjoy reunion, to have a good social, to update each other on progress across the Association, to reinforce the fabulous work of our branches and volunteers, to recognise our high achievers and, this time round, to consider nominations for Elected Members of Area Council.

Here's a re-run of the accommodation booking detail for the Derwent Hotel in Torquay over the weekend 17 to 19 March 2017:

- Two nights accommodation (Friday and Saturday), dinner, bed and breakfast and Sunday lunch - £122 per person.
- An option to stay Sunday night is available at an additional £35 per person, dinner, bed and breakfast.
- There are a few single rooms available, when they've gone a £10 per night supplement will apply.
- **Please make your booking direct with TLH Leisure Group on 01803-400500 for the 'RAF Association Weekend'. They will request a 25% deposit.**

Please join us – we hope to make it a very worthwhile weekend.

LAPSED MEMBERS AT OUR BRANCHES

As we enter the last quarter of the year (that sounds a bit too business like!) it might be useful to know where your Branch is with lapsed members – or at least – what we have recorded! Please keep up your efforts to reach out, to call and check on them and, out of which may come a membership renewal. The current lapsed list is enclosed with this Newsletter. Please do not hesitate to make contact with the Exeter Office if you need an updated Branch lapsed list. Thank you for your help.

RAF IN CONCERT TOUR—2016

Tickets are now on sale for this autumn's Royal Air Force in Concert Tour.

Enjoy an uplifting evening of musical entertainment showcasing the Best of British Entertainment, performed by the RAF's finest musicians with vocalists Squadron Leader Matthew Little and West End performer Sarah Francis.

The programme of music includes *Dambusters March*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Devil's Gallop*, *Bring Me Sunshine*, *633 Squadron*, *Impossible Dream*, *O Fortuna*, *Crown Imperial* and the *RAF March Past*.

The 15 venue tour will visit: October 21, Royal Hall, **Harrogate**; Oct 23: The Sage, **Gateshead**; Oct 26: The Anvil **Basingstoke**; Oct 27: Colston Hall, **Bristol**; Oct 30: Wycombe Swan, **High Wycombe**; Nov 1: Cadogan Hall, **London**; Nov 6: Marlowe Theatre, **Canterbury**; Nov 18, Bridgewater Hall, **Manchester**; Nov 19: Royal Centre, **Nottingham**; Nov 20: Symphony Hall, **Birmingham**; Nov 30: Congress Theatre, **Eastbourne**; Dec 1: Cliffs Pavilion, **Southend**; Dec 3: **Ipswich** Regent; Dec 4: Theatre Royal, **Norwich**; Dec 11: Lighthouse, **Poole**.

For ticketing details and further information, visit www.rafinconcert.com.

Don't forget, you can also book (or even join) our very own RAF Association Concert Band. Find out more at www.rafaconcertband.org.uk.

THE RAF ASSOCIATION ON PARADE AT THIS YEAR'S RAF COSFORD BATTLE OF BRITAIN PARADE AND SERVICE

Thank you to those Association members who took part in year's Cosford Parade and Service, and, of course, to our very dedicated Standard Bearers.



STORYBOOK WINGS NEWSLETTER 2016

Enclosed with this Newsletter is an update on Storybook Wings which has been busy celebrating the birthday of Roald Dahl on 13 September using this occasion by opening up Storybook Wings to all RAF families so they can experience the joy Storybook Wings brings. Thank you to Lisa and Claire, what a lovely experience for the children whose parents may have to work away.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN SUNDAY - CALNE AND DISTRICT BRANCH

On Sunday 18 September our Calne and District Branch dedicated a new Standard and laid up their old Standard in St Mary's Church, Calne. Although the Branch started at RAF Yatesbury in 1944 it was not until their relocation to Calne in 1946 that the Standard was purchased and has been paraded at every Calne Remembrance Parade and also at the Royal Wootton Bassett repatriations. It has also been paraded at the Arnhem Commemorations where a number of members have attended on numerous occasions.



Pictures L to R - Rev R Kenway, Air Cdr B Poulton President, Sqn Ldr (Ret) G Sweetlove Deputy Chairman, Mr Paul Ellis Standard Bearer, Mr A Stackman Branch Chairman.

RETURNING BRANCH APPEAL MONIES

We would like to say a huge thank you for the tremendous amount of fundraising which has been undertaken around the country this year. We appreciate the time and effort it takes to arrange a collection, find volunteers to staff it and of course thank everyone afterwards. It is only through the considerable efforts of people like your branch committee, branch members, families and friends that we are able to continue to collect the significant amounts for the Wings Appeal each year.

Please have your branch's final Wings monies returned to the Wings Appeal team at Headquarters by **Friday 11 November 2016**. This will enable them to process all 2016 income and close your branch's Wings account for the year in preparation for producing the branch's annual Wings statement. Any monies raised specifically from street collections should be submitted 14 days after the date the collection took place, in order for the Wings Appeal team to make the relevant returns to your local council.

You can return Wings monies either through the online Wings Portal or by using the Wings Returns (WR) paper packs. Instructions on both of these methods have been sent to your branch Wings Appeal Organiser in their September Newsletter.

CYCLING FOR WINGS

Norman and Sylvia Powell, aged 78 and 76, cycled on their vintage tandem cycle from the site of the former RAF Bridgnorth at Stanmore Park to RAF Cosford and then on to RAF Shawbury and back ~ a distance of 80 miles in aid of the RAF Association. They were given an official send off by the Mayor of Bridgnorth, Mrs Vanessa Voysey from the Memorial Garden.



On arrival at RAF Cosford they were greeted by Cpl Lucinda Reeve and taken to the Spitfire where they met Wg Cdr Tim Mason, OC Base Support Wing and had official photographs taken. After a quick cup of tea, they headed off on the next stage to RAF Shawbury.

The weather deteriorated during this stage and they arrived on time at RAF Shawbury just as a thunderstorm erupted. FS Steve Smith welcomed them to the station and took them to lunch in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess while the rain hammered on the roof. Despite the heavy rain, they returned to the gate to meet Gp Capt Jason Appleton and have official photographs before setting off on their return journey. It rained most of the way back to RAF Cosford where they were greeted by the Station Warrant Officer Mike Stokes and Wg Cdr Tim Mason for more photographs and a quick cup of tea before once again setting off in driving rain on the last leg of the journey.

They arrived back at RAF Bridgnorth achieving their goal and astounding those of us who followed them every step of the way. Our warmest thanks go to the Commanding Officers and personnel of both RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury for their superb support in allowing this epic journey to take place. The weather deteriorated during this stage and they arrived on time at RAF Shawbury just as a thunderstorm erupted. FS Steve Smith welcomed them to the station and took them to lunch in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess while the rain hammered on the roof. Despite the heavy rain, they returned to the gate to meet Gp Capt Jason Appleton and have official photographs before setting off on their return journey.



BREW FOR THE FEW

Although we are approaching the deadline for Wings Appeal monies for 2016, we would like to remind everyone that fundraising can take place all year round. If you have an opportunity for a collection or would like to hold an event late in the year, even after the deadline for Wings monies 2016 has passed, we would encourage you to do so. The monies raised could get your 2017 Wings Appeal off to a flying start! One idea of an event you could arrange is one of our popular 'Brew for the Few' tea parties. Guests make a donation in return for a much-needed cup of tea and delicious slice of cake.

You can hold one at your branch meeting place, at work, or ask your local Mayor to hold one in their chambers. Perhaps you or others within your branch have links to local sports clubs, colleges or businesses where an event could be held. Brew for the Few parties can be large or small, with all helping to raise funds for the Wings Appeal and awareness of the Association.

A 'Brew for the Few' pack detailing how to organise your event and containing posters, invites and hints and tips can be downloaded from www.rafa.org.uk/brew. Alternatively, a hard copy pack can be ordered from RAFATRAD through www.rafashop.com or the Wings Appeal 2016 order form which will have been sent to your branch Wings Appeal Organiser earlier in the year.

CONGRATULATIONS EILEEN GALLING FROM WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND BRANCH — WE ARE THRILLED AT YOUR BRITISH CITIZEN AWARD

Any individual can be nominated for a British Citizen Award provided they have had a meaningful impact on those around them. Nominees come from all corners of the UK, all cultural backgrounds, and from all sectors of the community. The defining common aspect amongst the nominees is that they have made life better for those around them. Successful applicants are invited to a presentation day at the Palace of Westminster in London.

Eileen Galling from our Weymouth & Portland Branch has devoted 62 years of service to Scouting and became a Cub Assistant then Leader, aged 16. She instructed the Cubs at Royal Air Force Stations throughout the UK and in Weymouth where she now has her family home. During all her 62 years (and counting) not only scouting but in other community groups, the Royal Air Forces Association being one of them, her organisational skills and infectious sense of humour has undoubtedly benefited all who have enjoyed her company—a true community citizen. Congratulations Eileen.

GRAND DRAW 2016 – LAST CHANCE TO PLAY

This is your final chance to enter this year's RAF Association Grand Draw, where the top prizes include a BMW 1 Series and a luxury cruise for two. You can buy tickets online at www.rafa.org.uk/granddraw by emailing jo.bray@rafa.org.uk or calling her on 0116 266 5224. Tickets must be returned by Monday 17 October 2016, with the draw on 21 October.* Don't delay and enter today! Good luck everyone.

*Terms and conditions apply (www.rafa.org.uk).

AREA STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

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HELP US TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOU

By far, the quickest and easiest way for us to get in contact with our members is by email. Postage is money that we can spend on providing welfare support to members of the RAF Family. Please update us with your current email address by sending a quick note to Debbie.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Let Debbie know what your Branch is up to, so that it can be included in next month's Newsletter. You can contact Debbie by calling the Exeter office, or email your updates and photographs. Thank you.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Northern Counties (Wales) Region – Llangollen Branch Club - Saturday, 19 November and Saturday, 8 April 2017.
- East Glamorgan & Gwent Regional Meeting - Penarth Branch – (2pm) Saturday 19 November.
- Area Council Meeting - Knighton & District Branch HQ – (1045am) Saturday 26 November 2016.
- Area Council Meeting - Atlas House, Headquarters – (1045am) Saturday 11 February 2017.

- Area Conference and Reunion, Derwent Hotel, Torquay – 17 to 19 March 2017.

Paul Baker – Area Director

You never truly understand something until you can explain it to your grandmother.

Enclosures:

1. List of Branches with Lapsed Members.
2. Storybook Wings Newsletter.

Storybook Wings

Newsletter

**ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association**

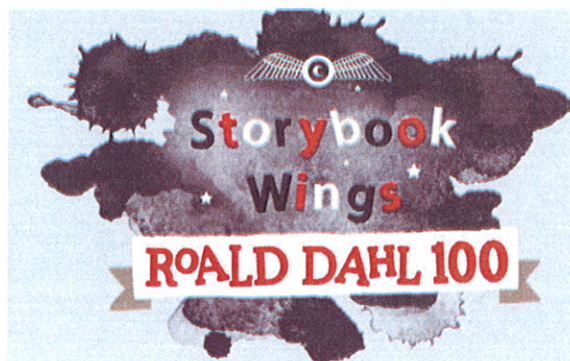
The charity that supports the RAF family

rafa.org.uk | 01780 783 645

Storybook Wings
Force Development Squadron
RAF Wittering
Peterborough
PE8 6HB

September 2016

Hello from me...



The summer is over now (sorry to break it to you all!) and we have been cheering ourselves up by beavering away here at Story HQ on all the wonderful Roald Dahl stories that have flooded in from stations across the world.

Roald Dahl would have turned 100 on September 13th so we thought it only fitting to mark the occasion by opening up Storybook Wings to all our families so they can experience the joy that Storybook Wings brings.

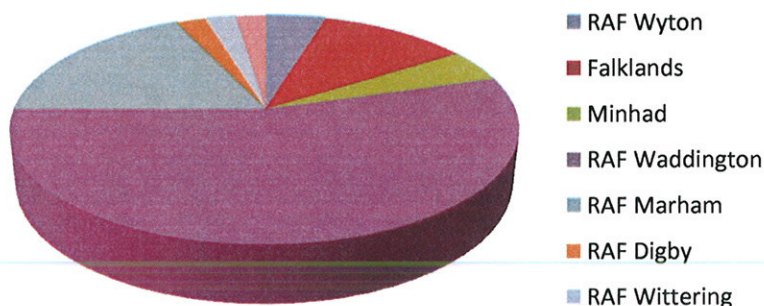
You can see the results of our activity below and join us in congratulating RAF Waddington for recording a huge 24 stories in one week!

Being a lover of books from an early age, I couldn't agree more with one of Roald's famous quotes:

'So, please, oh please, we beg, we pray, go throw your TV set away, and in its place you can install, a lovely bookcase on the wall.'

Lisa

Number of Roald Dahl Stories Recorded



Happy families...

Hello, I've just received my Story Wings CD today for my little boy and its perfect! Thank you for enabling my little boy to hear his daddy's voice every night!

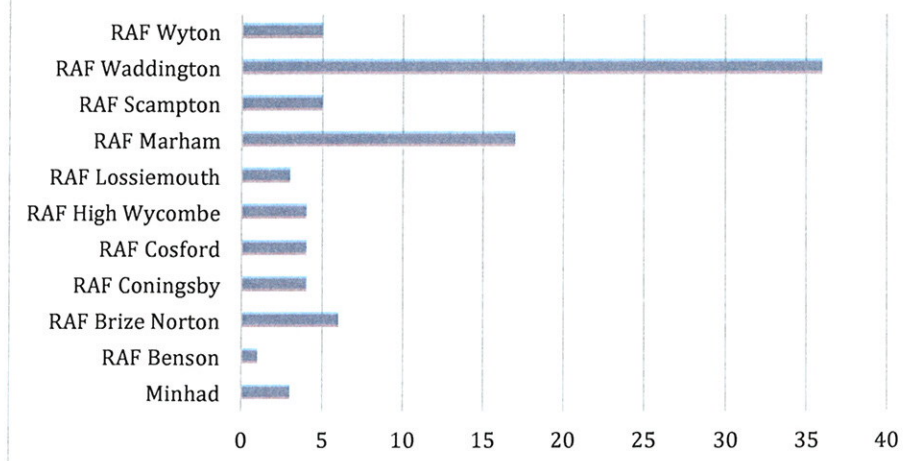
Hello, I just wanted to let you know that both my children were absolutely thrilled to receive their story book wings whilst their dad was away, it arrived very quickly and the children loved the special medals that came with it, such a lovely touch.



Facts and figures.

	2015	2016	Difference	Electronic
July	34	39	+5	11
August	31	15	-16	4
September	39	73	+34	15

Stories recorded, September 2016



Volunteer News



We are delighted to have Claire Evans as our newest team member. Claire is from an RAF family herself so is well aware of what it feels like when your Dad has to work away from home.

Claire came across the project when she was searching for volunteer opportunities online to fit around her studies.

We are so glad to have her and she is already proving to be a very hard worker having already completed 4 stories in her first 2 weeks of joining us!

LAPSED MEMBERS LIST

BRANCH	LAPSED	BRANCH	LAPSED
Taunton Deane	65	Newcastle U Lyme	2
Porthcawl & Kenfig	47	Plymouth	2
City of Bristol	37	Poole	2
Torquay	37	Rugby & District	2
Weymouth & Portland	34	Shrewsbury & District	2
St Davids Solva	26	Wrekin/Wellington	2
Swindon	26	Barnstaple & N.Devon	1
Weston Super Mare	23	Bridport & Lyme Regis RMG	1
Dawlish	19	Calne & District	1
Sherborne	16	Cannock Chase	1
WRAF Virtual	15	Christchurch	1
Tamworth	13	Corsham/Chippenham	1
Cheltenham	9	Cwmbran	1
Coventry	8	Dudley	1
Mid-Somerset	6	Dursley & S. Gloucester	1
Wolverhampton & Dist	6	Evesham	1
Cosford & District	5	Frome	1
Knighton & District	5	Haverfordwest	1
RAF St Mawgan	5	Leek	1
Bargoed/Blackwood	4	Llandaff & Ely	1
Barry	4	Llanidloes	1
Pontardawe & Dist.	4	Melksham	1
SturminsterNewton&Gill	4	RAF Reserves Virtual	1
Teignmouth	4	Salisbury	1
Anglesey	3	Shaftesbury	1
Brecon	3	Solihull	1
Chepstow & Dist	3	Stafford	1
Ellesmere	3	St Austell	1
Exmouth	3	Stone & District	1
Llangollen	3	Towyn & Aberdovey	1
North Cornwall	3	Treorchy	1
Penarth	3	Trowbridge & W. Wiltshire	1
Penzance	3	Warminster RMG	1
Swansea	3	Worcester & District	1
Wimborne	3		
Wrexham	3		
Aberdare	2		
Birmingham Sheldon	2		
Birmingham Moseley	2		
Burnham on Sea	2		
Dunkeswell/HonitonRMG2			
Gloucester	2		
Kidderminster	2		
Llanelli	2		
Neath	2		