

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

Newsletter

August 2017

WE WILL REMEMBER

It is with sadness that we record the passing of Mrs Muriel Phillips, a long-time active supporter of the Association at our Tamworth Branch and the Flarepath Club. Muriel's care and attention of the RAF family will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with Tom and the family at this time.

ROYAL AIR FORCE CENTENARY – RAF100 - UPDATE

On 1 April 2018 the RAF will mark the centenary of its formation as the world's first independent air force. RAF100 activities and events will be taking place across the UK from Autumn 2017 throughout 2018 with the theme of Celebration, Commemoration and Inspiration. The focus will be on enhancing the awareness, understanding and reputation of the RAF and its charities, feeling proud of the RAF's achievements and inspired about its future. The RAF will also target future generations through activities focusing on the subjects of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

The RAF100 website has recently been updated and you can subscribe to a newsletter giving more information on what is happening. You can also submit details of events you are organising that are open for members of the public to attend, for the RAF to consider publicising. Visit <https://www.raf.mod.uk/raf100/submit-your-event/>

You might also want to keep the Area Office updated with your plans.

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP/NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS WITH PAYMENTS

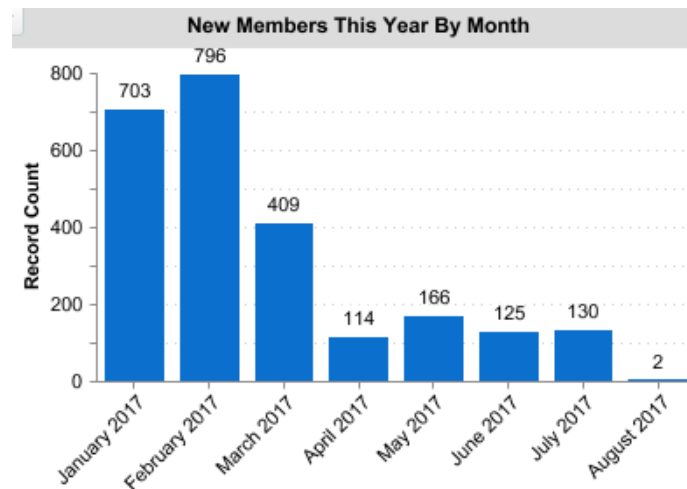
Renewal/new member applications with payments should be sent to the membership team in Leicester Headquarters as follows:

Len Griffiths email: len.griffiths@rafa.org.uk. Tel No. 0116-268 8783. Rishi Sheth email: rishi.sheth@rafa.org.uk. Tel No. 0116-268 8785. Molly Henson email: molly.henson@rafa.org.uk. Tel No. 0116-268 8762 or Hayley Williamson email: Hayley.williamson@rafa.org.uk. Tel No. 0116-268 8789 or you may wish to post the membership renewals/new member application forms with payment to one of the abovementioned at RAFA, Atlas House, 41 Wembley Road, Leicester LE3 1UT direct. Don't forget to use Forms 4 & 5.



AREA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Thank you for your continued efforts to find new members – the month of July was stronger than April and June – excellent! Are you managing to get these new people involved?



WESTON-SUPER-MARE CLUB ON A LADIES NIGHT OUT!



A Ladies Night Dinner on July 8th was a huge success. The men cooked, served, cleared away and washed up on the night which the ladies of Weston super Mare RAFA Club, Eagle House thoroughly enjoyed, see the smiling faces below.

“We are now looking forward to the next one” say the ladies! You can hear the men saying “I think I am washing my hair that night”!

A great ladies night out for any area branch members of RAFA.

STEAM LOCOMOTIVE 34072 257 SQN – RECOMMISSIONING CEREMONY 30TH SEPTEMBER 2017

Southern Locomotives Ltd is a not-for-profit company which restores steam locomotives. Among our seven locos are three from the Southern Railway's Battle of Britain class, built in the mid 1940's. They are 34053 *Sir Keith Park*, 34070 *Manston*, and 34072 257 *Squadron*. *Sir Keith Park* operates on the Severn Valley Railway, *Manston* is at Swanage, and 257 *Squadron* will shortly return to service after an extended overhaul. To mark this event we are arranging a recommissioning ceremony to be held at the Swanage Railway on Saturday 30th September 2017.

For those who are interested, these locos have a resonance among those who served with the Royal Air Force, and their families and participation of the Poole Branch has been enlisted along with the Wareham Air Cadets. Southern Locomotives Ltd also welcome the attendance of anyone who served with 257 Squadron or has a particular interest in the squadron or the eponymous locomotive. The event will include a special train hauled by the loco leaving Swanage at around 14:00 to Corfe Castle, where a short ceremony will be held. The train will then return to Swanage, arriving around 16:00. We hope the naming ceremony will be performed by Patron, the actor Edward Fox, well known for his role in the 1969 film “Battle of Britain”. There is no charge for participation in the event, however they do need to keep a count on those wishing to attend, so please contact Nick Thompson by email, nhthompson@gmail.com

UPDATE FROM THE AREA ADMINISTRATOR

A reminder for all branches – it is important to advise Debbie Byam, Area Administrator of any changes or updates, for example, change of address, telephone numbers, email addresses and so on. Debbie can also provide up-to-date membership lists including those who have lapsed (it's good to report that all our branches have now returned a signed data protection form). Please do not hesitate to contact Debbie direct on 01392-462088 option 4 or email Debbie.byam@rafa.org.uk.

AREA NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

Please do all you can to get the Area Newsletter and your own Branch Newsletter out to as many members as possible. For branches with large membership numbers, please ask Exeter for support who will send out a copy to those without emails charging the branch for postage (franking price of 41p per letter) and a small administration fee to cover other costs incurred.

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR AUTUMN WELFARE AND BRANCH COMMITTEE SEMINARS

Our plan this autumn is to provide four separate seminars (two focussed on core welfare issues/updates and two on the roles and responsibilities of branch officers and trustees). Right now we can only confirm the one date/location for the first welfare seminar which will be held on Thursday 26 October at RAF Cosford (more details to follow). Dates for other seminars will come out as soon as possible (we'll get letters out to individual branches). It is likely we shall try and stage one of the Branch Officer and Trustees Seminars on a Saturday....more to follow!

VOLUNTEER AND BEFRIENDING UP-DATE

Since my last update to you, I have attended the Armed Forces Day in Hereford and have been busy sending out posters to around 100 locations and responding to the volunteer interest generated by this and by the social media campaign for Fundraising Team Leaders. I also enjoyed a holiday in sunny Scotland! We are actively seeking caseworkers and befrienders to provide support whenever and wherever it is required and a full list of the vacancies can be found on our website at www.rafa.org.uk/volunteer (also as an enclosure to this newsletter). If you are interested, or know of someone who may be interested in a volunteering role, please ask them to visit our website or to contact me, Graeme Russell, on 07775 959376 or on email using graeme.russell@rafa.org.uk.



In addition, we are assisting branches in their recruitment of volunteers in a variety of roles. If your branch is in need of support from a volunteer please contact me for a branch volunteer vacancy details form.

Graeme Russell - Area Volunteer Coordinator - Wales, Midland and South Western Area.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Red Arrows Display, Falmouth, Wednesday 9 August.
- RAF Harrowbeer 1940's weekend – 12th & 13th August. Volunteers welcome, contact Plymouth branch.
- Bodmin Branch will set sail for the annual Wreath Laying at Sea from Padstow Harbour – 2.30pm on Sunday 17 September.
- Battle of Britain Wreath Laying Ceremony on Sunday, 17 September 2017– Teignmouth Promenade at 1100hrs, Armed Force Bike Riders. Afterwards at 1500hrs Wings Appeal Concert at Pavilions Theatre, Teignmouth.
- The Falmouth Branch of the RAF Association will be holding a Service of Thanksgiving & Commemoration of the 77th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain at the Falmouth Parish Church of King Charles the Martyr at 1030am on Sunday the 8th of October 2017 - All are welcome to attend.
- Devon Region Meeting at the Plymouth Club – Saturday 21 October at 2.30pm.
- Trowbridge Armed Forces Weekend, 24 and 25 June - RAFA will be in attendance along with various branches of the ATC, all would be welcome.

- North Cornwall Branch - Battle of Britain Service at Kilkhampton Parish Church at 11.00am on Sunday 10th September 2017. All Branches are welcome to attend with their Standards.
- Battle of Britain Service Parade, Minster Church of St Andrews, Royal Parade at 11.15am on Sunday, 17 September 2017 supported by Air Cadets.
- Plymouth Rafa Members Christmas Lunch at 12.30pm on 16th December at Raffles Club, Ermington Terrace, Mutley, Plymouth.

Debbie Byam
Area Administrator

Life is better when you are laughing!

Enclosures:

1. Flowerdown Concert Poster.
2. RAF Association Concert Band Engagements.
3. List of Area Volunteer Vacancies.