

The Royal Air Forces Association
Wales, Midland & South West
Area Headquarters & South Western Office
RAFA House, Chancel Lane
Pinhoe, Exeter, EX4 8JU
Tel: 01392 462 088
Email: southwestern@rafa.org.uk
www.rafa.org.uk

Wales, Midland & South Western Area

Newsletter

October 2017

AREA CONFERENCE AND REUNION 2018 – CHELTENHAM CHASE HOTEL, BROCKWORTH, GLOUCESTER

Area Council is delighted to advise that accommodation bookings can now be made for next year's Area Conference and Reunion which will take place over the weekend Friday 23 March to Sunday 25 March 2018 at the Cheltenham Chase Hotel, Shurdington Road, Brockworth, Gloucester, GL3 4PB.

The Chase proved to be a popular venue in 2016 – please don't be disappointed by leaving your booking too late – rooms will be taken up on a first come first served basis. Here are the details you need for your booking:

Please call 0845-034-5777 and quote the date of your arrival followed by 'RAF Association preferential rate'. The following rates have been agreed:

- £130 per person for 2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast when sharing a double or twin room. Both evening meals will be a 3-course dinner.
- A single supplement of £30 per room per night will apply.
- For those wishing to stay for just the Saturday night (24 March) – dinner, bed and breakfast rate sharing a double/twin room - £80 per person.

You will be asked to make a 25% deposit at the time of booking.

- For those planning to attend Conference as non-residents and looking to have the Saturday evening dinner - £35 per person. Please call the Hotel direct on 01452-519942 and ask for Hayley Cannock who will maintain a list of Saturday evening dinner requests.

For those who are considering attendance for the first time at the Chase, you'll find plentiful parking on flat and level ground, with very few steps inside the hotel and with elevators that work!

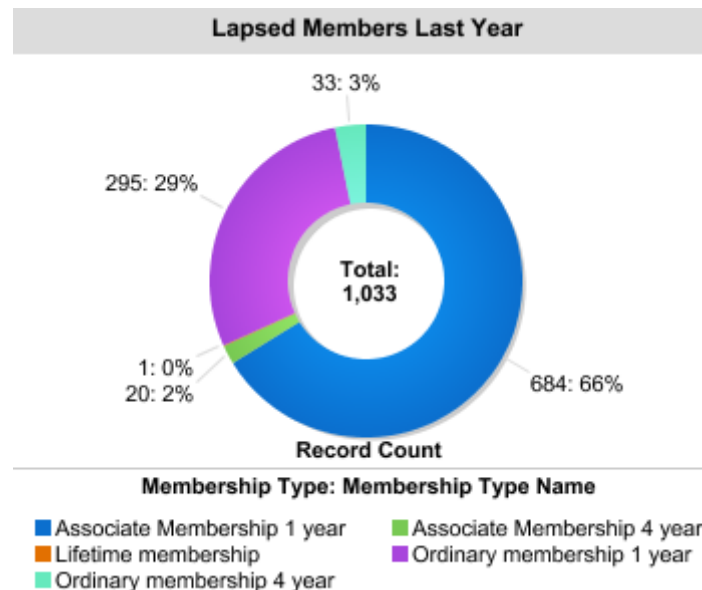
Council will come out to branches and members in due course with more detail regarding the content of the weekend; suffice to say, there will be plenty of opportunity to discuss plans for next year's RAF Centenary, to receive updates on business and governance aspects, to hear from today's Royal Air Force, to meet members of the local Branch at Gloucester and, most importantly, to catch up with old friends and have fun!

Please don't hesitate to call the Exeter Office if you need help or clarification – Tel No 01392-462088.



AREA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE – LAPSED MEMBERS

As our membership numbers increase, naturally there is greater chance that more will lapse from time to time and this is the case in 2017. Maybe you can take a moment to consider one last effort this year to reconnect with branch members who may have drifted away. Branch lapsed lists are available from the Exeter office. Here is how the Area stands in respect of lapsed members.



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).

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

AREA WELFARE SEMINARS

Our Area Council is committed to staging annual seminars around the Area so as to give our Welfare Volunteers the opportunity to meet others within the Association and hear the latest information on developments in our welfare work. This year we have chosen the following venues and dates:

- Royal Air Forces Association Branch Club Llandaff & Ely, Riverside Terrace, Ely, Cardiff, CF5 5AS – Wednesday 18 October 2017.
- Nuffield Pavilion, RAF Cosford, Wolverhampton, WV7 3EX – Thursday 26 October 2017.

In past years we have taken this opportunity to discuss more general topics of interest, however, as there is quite a lot happening in welfare at present we have decided that this year the seminars will be geared solely around welfare matters. We are at present putting the Agenda together and this will be finalised and issued to those attending in due course. We hope to engage speakers from other agencies of interest and a representative from Welfare at Headquarters.

As there is not a great amount of time until the first of our Seminars we would really appreciate your help to get this information out as quickly as possible. The next Area Welfare Bulletin will also carry this information. All Members are very welcome but obviously we would like to see as many HWOs/Caseworkers and Befrienders as possible. Please make immediate contact with Debbie Byam at the Exeter office if you wish to attend one of these seminars.

WINGS APPEAL PRESS RELEASE

We would like to say a huge thank you to all our branches for the tremendous amount of fundraising that has taken place around the Area so far 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.

Returning Branch Wings Appeal monies

Please have your branch's final Wings monies returned to the Wings Appeal team at Headquarters by **Friday 10 November 2017**. This will enable them to process all 2017 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 by using the Wings Returns (WR) paper packs. Instructions on how to fill these in and return your monies was sent to your branch Wings Appeal Organiser in their September Wings newsletter. If you would like any further information on the above then please contact the Wings Appeal team by emailing wings@rafa.org.uk or calling 0116 268 8797 / 8758.

SHREWSBURY TOWN SHOW – SATURDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2017

A very big 'well done' to our Shrewsbury Branch for their recent efforts at the Shrewsbury Town Show. Mike Logue, BSO, was pleased to support this occasion with the Area Trailer. All smile!

From left to right: Iain Davison (Area Welfare Officer), Jim Penny (Branch Vice-President), Jane MacKenzie (Mayor), Michael Bradbury (Branch Social Secretary), Pam Small (Branch Treasurer) and Mike Logue BSO.



DIAMOND 9 WITH THE RAF ASSOCIATION

The RAF Association took its place recently at the Rolls Royce Filton Families Day which provided an opportunity to engage with membership recruitment and merchandise sales. The team also created a Diamond 9!



BRANCH SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Area Council is pleased to offer additional advice and guidance to branch officers this autumn in the form of support and development workshops. Please see the detail enclosed with this newsletter.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- The Falmouth Branch will be holding a Service of Thanksgiving and 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.
- The RAF Association Concert Band present as part of the Celebration of RAF Locking 1939-1999 a Concert on Saturday 14 October 2017 - venue is 'Radio Wing' Locking Parklands, (former RAF Locking Camp). Starts at 7pm - finishes at 9pm. Tickets £7.50 Tel 01934 822050 for info.
- The RAF Association Concert Band present a Concert for Children's Hospice SW on Saturday 21 October 2017 - venue is Victoria Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Weston s Mare BS23 1XU. Starts at 5.30pm - finishes at 9.30pm. Tickets £7.00 Tel 01934 6322074 or 01934 253673.
- The RAF Association Concert Band - Concert Poppy Launch Event on Thursday 2 November 2017 - venue is The Galleries Bristol. Entry is FREE. Will be playing intermittently between 11am to 1145am then 12.30pm to 1.30pm.
- The RAF Association Concert Band present an Armistice Concert on Saturday 11 November 2017 - venue is Banwell Village Hall, Banwell, Near Weston s Mare. Starts at 5.30pm - finishes at 9.30pm. Tel 01934 823842 for info.
- The East Glamorgan & Gwent Region will be laying up the old Mountain Ash Branch Standard at 3pm on Sunday 15th October in St Margaret's Church, Mountain Ash, Duffryn Road, CF45 4DA. Any member welcome plus Branch Standards. Afterwards light refreshments will be served in Church Hall. For more info contact Tich Taylor 01446 730894, 07986 043818 or email Linda at linda.49taylor@tiscali.co.uk
- Devon Region Meeting at the Plymouth Club – Saturday 21 October at 2.30pm.
- Concert by The Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment – Wednesday 13 December at Millfield School, Concert Hall, Street, Mid-Somerset. Doors open at 7pm, seated by 7.30pm. Tickets £15.00 available from the following; Millfield School 01458-444320, Wells ATC 1955@aircadets.org and Street Tourist Information Centre 01458-447384.
- Plymouth Branch Members Christmas Lunch at 12.30pm on 16th December at Raffles Club, Ermington Terrace, Mutley, Plymouth.

PLEASE NOTE EXETER AHQ TEAM'S DIRECT DIAL TELEPHONE NUMBERS HAVE CHANGED TO THE FOLLOWING:

(To cut out and keep for future reference).

Name		Tel. No.
Alan Goudge	BSO South (South West)	01392-341390
Debbie Byam	Area Administrator	01392-341391
Paul Baker	Area Director	01392-341392
Sally Hall	Assistant Area Welfare Officer	01392-341393
Chris Francis	War Pensions/AFCS Manager	01392-341394
Glenford Bishop	Area Welfare Manager	01392-341395
Mike Logue	BSO North (Midland & Mid/North Wales)	01902-297935
Ian Campbell	BSO Central (Midland & South Wales)	01793-967019

There is still the facility for general enquiries or for those who have not noticed our new telephone numbers of 01392-462088. Apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Debbie Byam
Area Administrator

Life shrinks or expands according to one's courage.

Enclosure:

1. Branch Support and Development Workshop Letter and Return Proforma.