

Christmas and New Year 2018/19



Wales, Midland and South Western Area

Newsletter

AREA MEMBERSHIP DURING 2018 – HOW HAVE WE FARED?

Although membership growth in our area has not been all we had hoped for in 2018 (given the opportunities that RAF100 presented) we are pleased to report more than 2,000 people have joined the Association in our area so far this year, which will look like a net growth of around 3 per cent. Thanks to those amongst you who have kept membership recruitment uppermost. 2019 will be a year to push on and find other like-minded individuals who can help to strengthen our branch network. It has been a challenging year especially for those amongst you who take on branch and club officer responsibilities. Thank you for support and to those who attended branch development workshops; more opportunities will be organised in 2019.

The charity that supports the RAF family

The Royal Air Forces Association
Wales, Midland & South Western
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RAFA House, Chancel Lane
Pinhoe, Exeter, EX4 8JU
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BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL TATTOO

A huge thank you to those standard bearers who attended the Birmingham International Tattoo in November and paraded in front of thousands as the Association looked to 'sign off' this RAF centenary year in style. More than 60 standard bearers were joined in the Arena by our three RAF100 tokens which were ceremonially paraded by 'reforming' the three founding elements of the RAF – namely the Royal Flying Corps, Royal Naval Air Service and Lord Trenchard.



WE WILL REMEMBER





The Dursley and South Gloucestershire Branch is shocked and extremely saddened at the passing of our friend and colleague, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer, Malcolm Hall. Malcolm began his career in aviation with a four-year engineering apprenticeship at the Fairey Aviation Company, subsequently learning to fly at the Company's test airfield White Waltham.

In 1955 he joined the Royal Air Force on a three-year short service engagement in the Technical Branch. Returning to the aircraft industry, Malcolm worked on the flight development of the Buccaneer, followed by Concorde. During the former period he was recommissioned in the RAF VR (Training Branch), serving for eight years at weekends as a gliding instructor with 642 Air Cadet Gliding School at RAF Linton-on-Ouse. Having joined the RAF Association in the 1990s, Malcolm assumed the office of Treasurer for the Dursley and South Gloucestershire Branch in 2002. Malcolm was an avid supporter of the Association and would regularly volunteer for the collecting roster. In the past he has supported the headquarters fundraising stand at the RIAT and could regularly be seen collecting at our local supermarkets. This year Malcolm collected £806.41 in support of the RAF Association's welfare work and that figure exceeded our next most successful collector by some £26. Malcolm you will be sadly missed by all who knew you, but at the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember you.

Our sincerest condolences for the family and friends of Malcolm, our thoughts are with you at this sad time.

**AREA CONFERENCE AND REUNION
WEEKEND ON 22 – 24 MARCH 2019 -
DETAILS ARE NOW AVAILABLE**

Our fifteenth Area Conference and Reunion weekend, will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Plymouth, over the period Friday 22 to Sunday 24 March 2019. Area Council is looking forward to welcoming you to this new venue for what we hope will be an enjoyable and worthwhile weekend in Devon's 'City of voyage, discovery and military importance'. Yes – the RAF will be resident in senior service country!

Situated just yards from the famous Plymouth Hoe, the Crowne Plaza Hotel (formerly Holiday Inn) is offering a superb package for our Conference weekend and I urge you to make your bookings as soon as you are able. Clearly, the main purpose of the weekend will be to provide important updates on Association business with some more branch development opportunities, but also for friends old and new to get back together and enjoy comradeship that runs through the core of our Association. However, for wives, husbands and partners who simply want to join us for the weekend – the shops are just around the corner!

The weekend package is £175 per person per weekend – based on two people sharing either a king, double or twin, single beds or king bed with double sofa bed. £25 single supplement per room per night. This includes 2 night's accommodation on 22 and 23 March, full English breakfast served in the Penthouse restaurant with panoramic views of Plymouth Hoe, Friday evening 2 course hot fork buffet in the Mariner ballroom, 2 course chef's choice lunch on Saturday, (or alternatively for those not participating directly in conference business – afternoon tea in Marco Pierre White restaurant), and a gala 4-course dinner in the Mariner ballroom.

Saturday night only package is £120 per person based on two people sharing either a king, double or twin, single beds or king bed with double sofa bed. One night's accommodation on 23 March, full English breakfast served in the Penthouse restaurant with panoramic views of Plymouth Hoe, 2 course chef's choice lunch on Saturday (or alternatively for those not participating directly in conference business – afternoon tea in the Marco Pierre White restaurant), gala 4 course dinner in the Mariner ballroom.

Your package weekend or Saturday one night can now be reserved by calling the hotel on 01752 639988 between the hours of 8am and 7pm Monday to Saturday, or contact revenue@cplymouth.valoreurope.com. You will be required to pay a £50 non-refundable deposit

per room by debit or credit card with the final payment payable upon your arrival. Please inform the hotel of any accessible or dietary needs when you make your booking. Please don't delay, make your booking as soon as you are able and in any case, before 1 March 2019.

FORMS 1056 AND 1056A - Please note:

Please watch this space for updated/revised annual branch and branch club returns (forms 1056 and 1056a) which are to be completed and submitted to Exeter immediately following respective AGMs. We shall get them to you as soon as we are able and certainly before the Christmas break.

A REMINDER TO LOOK AT THE MEMBERS PORTAL!

Please don't forget that some useful information can be found in the Members Portal which can be accessed via the front page of the Association's website (you'll need to get yourself a password as directed). Here is your link - <https://www.rafa.org.uk/portal/>

For those who are interest - this is where you will also find the minutes of past area council meetings (please go to documents-Association Governance-Area Council Minutes).

AREA VOLUNTEER UPDATE

Our Area Volunteer Coordinator, Lucie Paddison, has provided a useful update enclosed.

RAF ASSOCIATION CONCERT BAND

The RAF Association Anniversary and Armistice Concert for the City of Bristol Branch was well attended and the audience thoroughly enjoyed the music. Singing raucously through the medleys from both wars, needless to say, they are booked again for 2019. Unfortunately, George 'Johnny' Johnson of 617 Squadron Dambuster was unable to attend due to illness.



MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2019

Please see enclosed sheet with detailed information from July-September 2018 Air Mail magazine regarding the membership fees for 2019 and onwards.

MORRIS DANCERS SUPPORT RAF ASSOCIATION



Picture shows Squire Peter Morton of Uplyme Morris Dancers presenting a charity cheque to retired Master Air Engineer Alan Kidson, Chairman of Bridport and Lyme Regis, RAF Association RMG. Peter Morton is a former Air Training Corps Cadet whose parents both served in the RAF in WW2. His grandfather was an air gunner in the Royal Flying Corps in WW1.

To contact Uplyme Morris Dancers, see Facebook – Uplyme Morris or call 07917 748087. To contact our Bridport and Lyme Regis RMG please call Alan Kidson on 01308 420135.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS FOR THE RAF ASSOCIATION CONCERT BAND

- Christmas in the Air Concert, Sunday, 9 December, Victoria Methodist Church, Station Road, Weston-Super-Mare at 1500hrs.

If you are interested in finding out more about your Band please visit the website www.rafaconcertband.com or contact the Musical Director on 01934 820205.

DIRECT DIAL NUMBERS FOR THE AREA TEAM!

A quick reminder that you can call the team direct:

- Paul Baker (Area Director) – 01392 341392 or 07796887195.
- Debbie Byam (Administrator) – 01392 462088.
- Alan Goudge (BSO South West) – 01392 341390 or 07827962766.
- Ian Campbell (BSO Central) – 01793 967019 or 07584577064.
- Mike Logue (BSO North Mids and Mid/North Wales) – 01902 297935 or 07776392899.
- Barbara Howells (Area Welfare Manager Wales) – 01495 368341.
- Andrew Carter (Deputy Area Welfare Manager Wales) – 01495 368342.
- Stacey Edwards (Welfare Administrator Wales) – 01495 368343.
- Gary Larsen (Deputy Area Welfare Manager South West) – 01392 341393.
- Chris Francis (AFCS and War Pensions Manager) – 01392 341394.
- Lucie Paddison (Volunteer Coordinator) 07775959376.
- Tracey Khan (Area Welfare Manager Midlands) – 0121 449 9356.
- Audrey Huggins (Welfare Administrator Midlands) – 0121 449 9356.
- Glenford Bishop (Area Welfare Manager South West) – 01392 341395.
- Sally Hall (Deputy Area Welfare Manager South West) – 01392 341393.



Debbie Byam Area Administrator

Enclosures: 1. Area Volunteer Coordinator, Wales, Midland & South Western Area.
2. Membership Subscription fees for 2019.

