

ANNUAL CONFERENCE SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND AREA
QUEENS HOTEL, PERTH 31MARCH/1 APRIL 2007

A good turnout of members and visitors complemented the 27 branch delegates attending the conference. For the second year the event was held in the Queens Hotel which again proved a very acceptable venue. Our thanks go to the Management and Staff of the Symphony Hotels Group who catered for all our needs and to the Perth Branch for its local help in organising the Conference.

Tricia Freer, the RAFA Welfare Director, presented the Saturday morning symposium. The theme being "Welfare, The Present and the Future". A very interesting presentation was appreciated by all who attended and provided an excellent incite to the progress of Welfare delivery within the Association. Conference began with the marching in of the Area Standard accompanied by a piper, Provost Bob Scott, Perth & Kinross Council conducted the Opening Ceremony and the Area President, Group Captain Needham, presented the Council with a framed aircraft picture. The Silent Tribute was led by the Reverend Archie Millar. The Area Chairman, John Maclean, presented his Annual Report which was accepted by the Conference and the Financial Report by Helen Robertson, the Deputy Area Treasurer. Air Commodore Mike Barter updated us on RAF Benevolent Fund and Air Marshal Philip Sturley followed with a very informative talk on the RAF Association and the way forward. The Air Officer Scotland, Air Commodore Clive Bairsto then treated us to a very enlightening insight into what the modern Air Force is undertaking and accomplishing in today's world.

The RAFALOs from Scotland and Northern Ireland Units once again demonstrated their commitment to the Association and we thank them for their assistance during Conference. The Area RAFALO report was presented by Flight Sergeant Kathy Griffiths. We thank Warrant Officer Tom Tomney, from RAF Leuchars, for acting as the judge for the Area Standard Bearer Competition which was won by John Kirkpatrick (Larne) with the runner up John Sloan (East Kilbride). Congratulations to both.

The following were nominated and accepted as Council Members to represent Scotland & Northern Ireland Area for 2007/2008:

Mr J Maclean (Peterhead) – Chairman
Mr T Foster MBE (Armagh) – Vice Chairman
Mr D Edwards (Edinburgh) – Area Treasurer
Mr J Skelton MBE (Glasgow) – Rep to Central Council
Mrs H Robertson (Dunfermline & District)
Mr N J Coulter (Lisburn)
Mr J H Kirkpatrick (Larne)
Mr J Sims (Lossiemouth)
Co-opted – Flight Sergeant K Griffiths (RAF Kinloss), RAFALO

Congratulations to all Council Members and to Vice Presidents, Air Vice-Marshal D Whittaker CB MBE and Mr J McGowan MBE on their election.

The awards of Presidential Certificates and Area Trophies were presented and the vote of thanks was given by The Perth Branch Chairman. At the closure of Conference the Area Standard marched out again accompanied by the piper.

On Sunday morning the Association Members were made to feel very welcome at the church service in St Leonards-in-the-Fields & Trinity Church by the Reverend Gilbert Nisbet and the congregation. Following the Service there was a Parade to the War Memorial where wreaths were laid. We thank all who accompanied the membership on parade, The RAF Leuchars Pipe Band, Black Watch Association, Korean Veterans Association, 38F Perth ATC Squadron and their Standard Bearers.

A sincere thank you to all who donated to the Saturday night raffle. Again your generosity was unbounded as was that of those who purchased tickets on the night. RAFA benefits from the success of the fundraising. Thanks to all who attended, made the Conference a success and contributed to the business and social aspects of the weekend.