

Scotland and Northern Ireland Area

Newsletter

JULY 2008

1. DIARY DATES

2008

Aug 20	Scottish Southern Region Meeting, Glasgow
Sept 6/7	Portrush International Airshow
Sept 10 London	Northern Ireland Commemoration Service, St Pauls Cathedral,
Sept 12	Northern Ireland Wings Appeal Launch, RAF Aldergrove
Sept 12	Northern Ireland Regional Committee Meeting, RAF Aldergrove
Sept 13	RAF Leuchars Airshow
Sept 14	Lord Dowding Memorial Service, Moffat
Sept 15-21	Battle of Britain Week
Sept 21	Northern Ireland Annual Battle of Britain Parade, RAF Aldergrove
Sept 21	Battle of Britain Service, Westminster Abbey
Oct 5	Scotland & Northern Ireland Area Golf Championship, Perth

2. MEMBERSHIP

Annual subscriptions normally apply to the end of the calendar year in which a new member joins. There is, however, a concession that new members joining after 1st July shall have their membership extended to the end of the following year. This means that anyone joining after 1st July 2008 will pay the current 2008 subscription but their membership will be valid until 31 December 2009.

3. THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST 2008

Members will be pleased to hear that the following were awarded National Presidential Certificates to coincide with the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2008.

Mr John Blagden	Diss & District Branch	SE & E
Chf Tech David Craven	RAFALO, RAF Cottesmore	SE & E
Mr Robert Eaton	St Neots Branch	SE & E
Mr Peter Ferry	Penarth Branch	Wales, Midland
Mr David Francis	Abbots & Kings Langley Branch	SE & E
Area		

Our congratulations to all.



4. ADDITIONAL RECOGNITION FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL WHO DIE ON OPERATIONS – WRITTEN MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Members of the Armed Forces who die on operations or in training are remembered on the new Armed Forces Memorial in Staffordshire which was dedicated by Her Majesty the Queen last October. For some months now the military Chiefs of Staff have been giving careful consideration to how the nation might give additional recognition.

The Chiefs have concluded that the time is now right to recommend a new national award for the families of those personnel who die on operations or as a result of terrorist action whilst on duty. This award will recognise their terrible loss and the sacrifice made by their loved one whilst serving their country. The Chiefs' recommendations have been endorsed by MOD Ministers, by the cross-Government committee on Honours and Awards and been approved by Her Majesty the Queen.

The recognition will be in the form of a memorial scroll and an emblem for wear. The scroll will be similar in concept to those that were issued to the families of those who died in the two World Wars and in Korea in the early 1950s. The introduction of an emblem for the families of those killed is not something that we have done as a nation before but similar recognition already exists, for example, in Canada and New Zealand. The Chiefs of Staff have also recommended that the award should be retrospective.

Much detailed work will now be required to consider what the criteria for the award should be, how far the award should go back, and who will receive it along with other issues such as the design and production of the scroll and emblem. A team has been established and is pressing ahead with this work. This is a sensitive and complex subject and we must take time to get the details right. It will therefore be some months before the award will be ready for issue and I expect to be able to announce more details later this year.

I pay tribute to the bravery and courage that the families of all our serving men and women show and I hope that the new award will provide a more visible form of recognition from the nation for those who pay the ultimate sacrifice in the name of their country.

5. AREA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: QUEENS HOTEL, PERTH – 20/22 MARCH 2009

Plans for the 2009 Area Annual Conference are already underway for the weekend of 20/22 March 2009. It is hoped that we will continue with the strong support and look forward to seeing you there. The booking terms for the weekend are as ever and prices have been held as at 2008. The terms are £49.50 per person per night for those sharing a double or twin room. There is a £10.00 supplement for single occupancy of twin or double room. Full details will be sent out in due course.

6. ANNUAL GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS, KING JAMES VI GOLF CLUB, PERTH

The Area Golf Championships will again be held in Perth on Sunday 5 October 2008. Details will be sent to all Branch and Club Golf Convenors. It is hoped for a good turnout and the closing date for entries will be 12 September 2008.

**7. BATTLE OF BRITAIN SERVICE – WESTMINSTER ABBEY
SUNDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2008**

As is customary, the Association has been allocated a quantity of admission tickets for the above Service and twenty Branch Standard Bearers are invited to form a Lining Party. Peter Stockdale MBE, SE Area Manager on 020 828 6667 is the Co-ordinator for this event. Branches should submit applications for admission tickets to him and advise of Standard Bearers wishing to attend by 11 August 2008.

8. RAF 90TH ANNIVERSARY MICROSITE

The Association has recently launched a 90th Anniversary of the RAF microsite – a sub section of the RAF Website dedicated solely to the Anniversary. Joanne Rutter, the Site Manager at CHQ, tel: 0116 268 8772, is populating the pages with news related to the Anniversary and in particular any events Branches may be holding can be included. Please have a look at www.royal-air-force-90th-anniversary.co.uk . Jo will be pleased to hear any planned events, whatever the size, which would be applicable to the site. Similarly, news and pictures of any events which have already been held will be welcome. Any queries please refer to Jo.

9. BRITISH FORCES BROADCASTING SERVICE (BFBS) SERIES – THE RAF AT 90

As part of the RAF 90th Anniversary Celebrations, BFBS TV are looking to make 6 programmes highlighting the RAF in different ways over 90 years. In particular, the Producer is looking for Battle of Britain Pilots. Ground Crew who served in Malta servicing aircraft during the island's fight for survival are also being sought. RAFA Corporate Manager, Tony Hirons, Tel: 0116 268 8760 would be delighted to hear from anyone who fits the bill. He urgently needs names, addresses and if possible a short biography, which he can forward to BFBS. If you can help please get in touch with Tony at CHQ.

10. CADET 9 CHALLENGE

Cadet 9 Challenge is a new Wings Appeal Fundraising Initiative launched by CHQ. This has replaced the Top Flight Competition and it is hoped will have a greater appeal for the ATC Cadets and Girls Venture Corps Cadets. There are many ATC Squadrons working independently or with a local Branch raising funds for the Wings Appeal effort. It is hoped that the Cadet 9 Challenge will help to encourage ATC Squadrons to bond with their local Branch. Where Cadets' collections are currently being processed through Branch Wings Appeal returns then this should continue unchanged. Squadrons should have received information on the Challenge. Those Branches wishing more details should contact Anne Henson (0116 268 8752), Griff Griffiths (0116 268 8783), or Sue Spare (0116 268 8758) at CHQ. Information is also available on the RAFA website www.rafa.org.uk and use the Fundraising or ATC links.

11. BRANCH WEBSITES

A number of Branches have created their own independent websites. These are now becoming increasingly important in advising what is happening locally and also in the recruitment of Members. The RAFA Website Manager, Jo Rutter at CHQ, tel: 0116 268 8772 or webmaster@rafa.org.uk is keen to have details of these websites so she can link them directly with our main website. Please check our Area page on www.rafa.org.uk and the Links Page to firstly establish you website details are correct or should it not be listed, contact Jo.

12. RAF COMRADE CONTACT

This website www.raf-comrade-contact.co.uk is a service which is free to members of RAFA. It encourages comradeship amongst the RAF Family and is proving a very popular addition to the RAFA facilities. Jo Rutter at CHQ is always keen to include news, events and activities and if you have photographs, so much the better. Jo can be contacted at webmaster@rafa.org.uk or by telephone on 0116 268 8772.

13. POPPY TRAVEL

Travel to sites of historical importance, such as war cemeteries, battlefields and memorials, is an increasingly popular pastime – and a service which The Royal British Legion, the custodians of Remembrance, has been offering for over 80 years.

Poppy Travel is part of the Poppy Support Welfare Services at the Legion and exists to enable people to visit their chosen destinations with expert guides.

For further information on destination and dates, visit www.poppytravel.org.uk or call 01622 716 729.

14. PRESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATE HOLDERS – ACCOMPANYING BADGE

I have been asked to point out that the detail on page 10 of the April – June 2008 Air Mail, regarding the recently introduced Badge for Presidential Certificate Holders, refers to National Presidential Certificate Holders and not Area Certificate holders. We apologise for the omission of this information in the article.

15. VETERANS BADGES

I have been asked to advise that, further to the article on page 10 of the April – June 2008 Air Mail, Veterans Badges are available from the Veterans Agency, details as follows:

Service Personnel & Veterans Agency, Norcross, Thornton – Clevelays, FY5 3WP

Tel No. 0800 169 2277 (UK Only), +44 1253 866 043 (Overseas)

E-mail: veterans.help@spva.gsi.gov.uk or via the website: www.veterans-uk.info/ click on the relevant HM Armed Forces Badge section and download the application form.

16. BRANCH “DROP-IN” SHOP

As indicated in the June Newsletter, one of our Branches in conjunction with other Service Charities participated in a Public Awareness Week operating a “Drop-in” shop for a week. The response from the public was very good, promoting awareness. There were those who will now become members of their appropriate Organisation and those who will receive assistance, but who previously were not aware of the help on offer. The initiative was rewarded with a ¾ page spread in a local Newspaper and 45 minutes on a local Radio Station. The power of the media is great and I know that many Branches do have a good liaison with local media. Local publicity is something all Branches may wish to pursue. Let me know if I can be of any assistance.

17. SCOTLAND & NORTHERN IRELAND AREA 250 CLUB

The winner for June is Mr A W Hay, Dunblane (Share No. 11)

David Hamer
Director – Scotland & Northern Ireland

Area