

FLASHPOINT

ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



Brief History Of The Association

Formation of the Association



The formation of the Royal Air Force & Defence Fire Services Association took place at Shoreham Airport in East Sussex, on the 13th. May 1995, when ex-service personnel got together to remedy the fact, that there wasn't an organisation relating to the trade of firefighter when most other trades had one of their own many years ago?

On that day, those founder members turned up from all over the country, and went on to form

the inaugural committee of the Association and elected the Officers and Committee and Area Coordinators to cover the U.K.

Since, many changes have taken place as the Association established itself over the intervening years and, with its formation, old comrades, past and present, now have

a better chance of finding each other again, renewing old friendships and making new ones.

The Association publishes Flashpoint magazine 3 times per year with updates information, news, articles, anecdotes, photos. and stories.

Association membership is made up of ex and serving firefighters and includes those personnel who made up the Air Force, Army and Royal Navy* Fire Service Departments, which has become the Defence Fire and Rescue Service.

Together we are the Royal Air Force and Defence Fire Services Association.

Associate Membership is open to ex and serving personnel having a minimum of three months service with the Civilian Aviation Authority (CAA) Licenced Aerodrome Fire Services.

* 1987, Royal Navy founded the Aircraft Handlers Association and Website: www.chockheads.org.uk/

Brief History of the RAF Fire and Rescue Service



Uniform, equipment, technology and appliances have developed since, and today's personnel are doing exactly what those early pioneers did, whilst still maintaining essential high standards of training, expertise and efficiency.

They are carrying on the same traditions, skills, expertise, enthusiasm and dedication, to which we can all relate from our own personal experiences.

Today, the service is much depleted from those days following the War years plus, when the Cold War eventually came to an end, many Overseas and Home Stations closed, with the choice of postings being reduced and numbers of personnel and equipment being cut back to the service levels of today.

The Trade of Fireman was first introduced in 1943 within Trade Group 9, to train personnel in Aircraft Crash Rescue and Firefighting techniques and included an Advanced Trade in Air Traffic Control. Prior, personnel on general and aircraft handling duties were used to carry out fire fighting responsibilities; with vehicles driven by M.T.

A School of Firefighting and Rescue was then established on an RAF Balloon Unit, north of the City of Hull, as RAF Sutton-on-Hull, until its closure in 1959. The School then moved to RAF Catterick, North Yorkshire and later, to RAF Manston in Kent, as the Central Training Establishment, (CTE), then the Fire Services Central Training Establishment (FSCTE).

In the late 1950's, the RAF Fire Service was amalgamated with the RAF Regiment for several years until being reinstated as an independent Trade.

Brief History of the Defence Fire and Rescue Service



The Air Ministry Fire Service, (AMFS), became the Air Force Department Fire Service, (AFDFS), with a badge change, then the Defence Fire Services, (DFS), with another badge change and, now is the Defence Fire and Rescue Service, (DF&RS).

The early 1960's also saw the gradual civilianisation of certain Stations starting with Flying Training Command. Many personnel recruited were ex RAF, Navy and Army, and formed an experienced nucleus for the change over.

Many recruits hadn't experienced service camaraderie before; although it developed by nature of the job itself. This is no reflection on those individuals whatsoever, or on their abilities as fire fighters, it was just a complete change in the way things were done when previously manned by Regular Volunteers and National Service personnel.

Some of those early recruits went on to become Senior Officers, Training School Commandants at Manston, and Command Fire Officers throughout the RAF and DFS, both home and abroad.

Like the RAF Fire and Rescue Service, reviews are ongoing and the future is unsure. Hopefully it will remain a viable force.

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Co-ordinator Vacancies - East Yorkshire - Midlands, Scotland (1), South East and other areas as necessary. It's not too arduous, just a matter of keeping in touch, and promoting the Association when able to do so. If you can help, please contact a Committee member.

HOW TO JOIN - For more information about the Royal Air Force & Defence Fire Services Association and to request an application form contact :-

**John Hanley, Membership Secretary,
27 Laburnham Close, North Hykeham,
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Tel: 01522 884 054

email - john.hanley13@ntlworld.com

or

Visit our website at - www.fireservicesassociation.net

Front cover photo is from FSCTE Manston Op Refresher 13/07 21st - 25th January 2008, and courtesy of Steve Brown, member 760 - Ed.



From Your New Editor - Steve Doran



At age 14 I left school and went to work in a factory making ammunition boxes, it was very heavy work for us young lads, but we survived. Age 16 I went on to night work, 60 hour week and learnt welding, the money was slightly better, thereby allowing a few more cigarettes per week.

By the time I reached 17 years I decided I would join the RAF before it was too late, but the recruiting Sgt. thought otherwise, it did not matter what he thought, I told him the RAF wanted me. He told me in strong service language to go home and come back in 6 months, I was on his doorstep to the day, and he welcomed me with open arms, he said one volunteer was worth 20 pressed men. At Padgate the Sgt who was helping us find a job went through the list until the very end when he came to Group 4, Cooks, Clerks, and Firemen it was the lowest pay rate, and he thought I was mad picking as he said the most dangerous job for the lowest pay

.Deenethorpe, a WW2 American B-17 Airfield was where I did my basic training, and being February living in Nissen huts it was cold, I think the Sgt. and 2 corporals took pity on me, because of my age, they used to get me to run errands for them, while the others did their training. After the finish of basic I had to wait for a couple of weeks before going to Sutton, so was given a job in the Officers mess helping the Sgt cook, who sent me off after putting the meal plates through the washing machine. The day was mine. My time at Sutton was very short, I learnt to be a Fireman in 2 weeks, and then on to my first Station, Silverstone, the reason for such a short training was given that there were so many people being demobbed there was a shortage, we would learn the rest when we got to our Station. How wrong they were, the majority of men at Silverstone were waiting for demob and were not interested in answering my questions.

Next station was Lindholme in Yorkshire, same as before, the SGT I/c was a GD,

so was not too worried about what went on, I spent the bad winter 46/47 there and then got an exchange posting to Fassburg Germany. The section was about 13 strong, but here we had enough for 3 crews and a crew of Germans to do the chores about the Section, as the station was Tempest 2s we had no night flying, just 1 grass strip. Most of our fires were in the surrounding forest which kept us busy if the wind was in our direction we would go out to the forest with the WOTI down the fire lanes to find out how serious things were and try and damp down the best we could, if it got near the fence then we had plenty of water from the mains, then basically all it was to watch for sparks blowing over and dealing with them

The Wing moved to Gutersloh late 47 and I was once again left in charge, leaving to catch up with the others in spring 48, here we had large aircraft sometimes calling if Berlin was clogged up, and they always seemed to turn up during the night. At this time they were still desperate for bodies and I had the offer if I signed on for an extra 6 months I would get another 21 days leave, I took the offer, and when my time finally came I had the offer of 2 stripes if I signed on for a further 7 years. It was very tempting, but the rumour was going around that the RAF Regiment would be taking over, the offer was worth it, but when I asked for the offer to be put in writing, they told me they did not do things that way.

The whole of my time there was never any LACs or Corporals on any Section.

So there my 3 year career came to an end, in hindsight I think I should have accepted that offer. If you are further interested in my story I have some copies of my book I wrote, Diary of an RAF Fireman.

Useful Contact Numbers

RAFBF - The Heart of the RAF Family:- 0800 169 2942

RAFA - The Royal Air Force Association:- 0800 018 2361

SSAFA Forces Help - The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association:- 020 7403 8783

The Royal British Legion - RBL:- 08457 725 725

RAF Records and Medals Section - Building 248A, RAF Innsworth Gloucester GL3 1EZ

Public Records Office Kew Richmond Surrey TW9 4DU

VETERAN'S BADGE - 0800 169 3458 Overseas callers - +44 1253 866 043

BLESMA - British Limbless Ex Servicemen's Association -

Congratulatory Messages from the Queen, for 60th, 65th, and 70th Wedding Anniversaries, and every anniversary following, and birthday congratulations to celebrate 100th, 105th and following birthdays, request an application form from: the Anniversaries Office, Buckingham Palace, London SW1A 1AA

CHANGING ADDRESS OR BANK DETAILS?

Please don't forget to let the Membership Secretary or Treasurer know your new address or bank details.

The most important thing is to always give us your new details in writing, or email, quoting your membership number. We don't want to lose contact with you, so please try to remember to inform us as soon as you can? Thank you.

Chairman's Report January 2009

GORDON SMITH

Dear Member

As your new Association Chairman I thought I would use this opportunity to introduce myself to those members who have not met me in the past

I am Gordon Smith; I have been a member of the Association since October 1995. I served 24 years in the Royal Air Force Fire Service from 1979 to 2003. I am at present a member of the Defence Fire and Rescue Service stationed at Royal Air Force Leeming in North Yorkshire.

I have served on the Committee before in various positions.

My interests include attending the reunions, collecting fire service memorabilia and the restoration of Land Rover based fire appliances of which I currently have 3.

I look forward to seeing the many friends that I have made during my time in the Association at the next reunion.

Please find enclosed the details for the next reunion, please read the paperwork fully before completing and returning to Shirley at I.O.W. Tours.

Please also find enclosed some paperwork relating to a resolution that was proposed at the last AGM, again I ask that you read the resolution and give it some serious thought before you vote, if you so wish to vote on the said resolution. Please note that the voting slips are to be returned to the Association Secretary and not the I.O.W. Tours.

Food For Thought

Firefighters who turned up deliberately late to a burning Pizza delivery company were reprimanded yesterday for making an ironic comment on their standard of service. Pronto Pizza of Balham, South London. It was burnt to the ground in June despite being less than half a mile from Balham Fire Station. When the flames initially broke out in the kitchen back on a busy Friday evening, the manager Peter Annal immediately called 999 and requested the fire brigade. But fifteen minutes later, with the inferno spreading to the shop front and the upstairs rooms, the pizza chefs and delivery drivers were surprised to see a florist suddenly arrive with a bunch of flowers. This big burly bloke came with a load of lilies and violets. He was clearly a fireman but he said he was delivering the wedding bouquet we had ordered, it was like he was suppressing the giggles the whole time. Mr Annal urgently explained that he had in fact ordered a couple of fire engines and the fireman apologised and said he would have to go back to the station. Thirty five minutes later, with much of the downstairs now completely gutted, the fireman returned with a complete Ocado shopping delivery. 'It was then that one of our drivers recognised him' explained Mr Annal. He said he often delivered Pizzas to him at the Fire Station, and that the fireman had often been irritated by wrong orders and late delivery. A desperate Mr Annal then called the local police station who listened to what had happened, the police then sent round a window cleaner, a central heating engineer and some cold garlic bread, a number of fire engines did finally turn up about three hours after we called them explained Mr Annal. But by then the whole building had burnt to the ground. And one of them kept saying "Sooo sorry we didn't listen to what you actually asked for, we really must listen more carefully next time. Yesterday at South London magistrates court, six members of the crew were ordered to pay compensation. They were ordered to pay the company a £1 voucher for taking longer than 30 minutes.

OUTGOING TREASURERS REPORT

As your retiring Treasurer, I have pleasure in presenting to the membership,) the Association's financial reports for the last Financial Year (2007/2008)

As with last year, our expenditure has again exceeded or income, but the Association accounts, I am very pleased to report, still remain in the **black**.

The main cause of this discrepancy is the ever increasing postage and the administration costs our Association is experiencing, our postal costs alone have increased by a staggering **67%**, and our printing costs by a further **15%**. These increased costs coupled with a decrease in income from lapsed members, have prevented as from from financially breaking **even** at the year end.

As in the past years, I have supplied copies of both the "**Statement of Accounts**" and the more detailed "**Summary of Accounts**"

In my last year's annual report, I made the mention of the setting up of an Association's **Welfare Account** with another Bank, but after a full investigation of the procedures required, and the fact that I would not now be administering that account, the Committee agreed to put the proposal on hold until the new Treasurer is in Post, thus making the Bank's "**change of signatories**", requirement more manageable.

As some of you now have noticed, Subscription Reminders are now being handled by our Membership Secretary, and payments for this year's subscriptions are gradually coming in, but I would again like to thank all members who pay their subscription by **Standing Order**,

As this will be my last end of year financial report, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the majority of the membership, who have been very supportive of my work and the accountancy methods, and I sincerely hope that during my 5 year tenure as your Treasurer, I have fulfilled the promise I made on my appointment back in 2003, to maintain and control the Association's finances in an open and efficient manner.

May I wish every success to my replacement.

Finally, should any member have any queries regarding the issued accounts, please do not hesitate in contacting me by e-mail:

varley786@btinternet.com

Last word from Editor

Geoff has done a marvelous job keeping our accounts on track and understandable to the membership during his term as Treasurer, as I am sure you will all agree with. Thanks for everything.

In Memoriam - a sincere tribute to those recently passed away

MICK NEILAN

In memory of ex SAC Mick Neilan, who served at RAF Ouston and Christmas Island, 1957 - 1962. Sadly missed by wife, Kathy, and family and his old RAF and schooldays friend, Mick Thompson.

Source: RAF NEWS 21st November 2008

OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Dear Members,

As you may or may not be aware I have been replaced as your Chairman at the AGM held at Bracklesham Bay on the 11th October 2008.

My aim had been to serve a further two years in order to consolidate the ideas that your Committee and I had endeavoured to introduce to the Association.

It came as a shock to me that you the Members should wish to replace me, when I had the feeling that things were going so well. That decision for change was made and I therefore step aside and wish your new Chairman Gordon Smith and the newly formed Committee every success.

My thanks go to you the Members for making my stay in office such a pleasure. I would like to think that Vera and I were able to look after the detail that had helped to make reunions a comfortable and enjoyable experience for you all.

I wish to pay special tribute to my wife Vera, my son Michael and daughter in law Sue for the tremendous support and encouragement given to me throughout my term of office. Mike and Sue have worked hard behind the scenes producing policy documents for the protection of the Association, different kinds of certificates including those for the Cenotaph attendees, time table book marks, various notice

cards and all the illustrated information regarding stations that we served at and other historic information, in particular the tremendous Falklands display at the first Bracklesham reunion.

I must also thank the members of the Committee that served with me, in particular John Arnold, my loyal friend and your Vice Chairman, and his wife Olive. Sadly John has also left the Committee. The other stoic Committee members and their ladies that are stepping aside are George Edwards, Geoff Varley, Dave Kenyon and Howard Harper. These Members have had to endure the full brunt of the complimentary rooms debacle and have acted in the most honourable manner to try to bring this very unpleasant episode to an acceptable conclusion.

I must also thank the other Committee members, John Hanley, John Savage, Dave Arnold, Nick Harrison, Allan Brooke, Ron Brown, Jack King and Ron Gaunt. These members have worked with us to move the Association forward and have contributed much to the smooth running and efficient control of the various aspects of welfare and administration etc for the benefit of you the Members.

These have been the most difficult times during which the discipline problems have had the potential to tear this wonderful Association of ours apart. Sadly this seems to be rumbling on and I regret that I am no longer in a position to help resolve these problems in an amicable manner for the protection of the Association.

I only hope that these problems can be sorted before this ever-increasing damage can disrupt the future welfare of the group and that we can stop any more members leaving the Association because of it. I believe that the greatest damage has been the effect on one of our founder members and tower of strength, friend to us all, Joe Shackleton who has left the Association mainly because of the ongoing situation regarding the complimentary rooms. Ron Gaunt has left for the same reason.

My thanks also to your good friend and mine Shirley Winn and her staff at Isle of Wight Tours for the hard work sorting and bringing such great venues etc at reasonable cost for us all. Using Isle of Wight Tours ensured that there was no risk to the Association for cancellations etc, and postage of application forms etc was a big saving to us in time and expense.

Some of you the Members complained to me that you did not like the holiday type hotels, hence the reason we have booked the Royal Court (conference) Hotel at Coventry, this also allows us to visit the nearby National Memorial Arboretum; this is something we have talked about doing for some time in order to dedicate, with the help of our Padre, the tree that has now been planted in honour of our departed colleagues.

Finally my family and I can now sit back at reunions and spend more time enjoying the company of you our friends and colleagues.
John Goupillot
Member 358

OUTGOING EDITOR

Dave Kenyon, who has sadly retired as the outgoing editor, must have an enormous vote of thanks from the members for the magnificent effort he has put into every issue of Flashpoint, in it's present format, since August 2004. As the new editor I will be the first to congratulate and thank Dave for the vast amount of time and effort he has applied to each issue.

Until anyone has tried to put together 24 pages, 3 times a year, they will not understand the dedication he has applied to the magazine.

He has also given me valuable time and effort in getting started. I must confess he started this issue off for me, putting at least 2/3rds together to get me going, to which I am trying to follow in his footsteps in producing a magazine up to his high standards.

Steve Doran.

Letters to the Editor

First Remembrance Day Parade 2008 and Personal Thoughts

Dear Dave,

I attended my first National Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph yesterday, (Sunday 9th November), having spent most of my short RAF career, (12 yrs), avoiding all types of parades, AOC's inspections and marching in general. I like to believe that I was better off concentrating on my fire fighting abilities while actually avoiding the Bull S***.

I now have to say how proud and honoured I was to have been a part of this national celebration. I would like to thank Ron Brown for organising our detachment and a big thank you to all of my fellow ex firefighters for the warm welcome and the camaraderie shown to me through out the assembly and march past: we even made it onto national television which gave my family a great cheer. The crowds were fantastic even if our marching was not up to the standards of the Guards NCO who practically deafened us on the corner by Big Ben; still, we shuffled on manfully!!!! It was the Snow Drops in front who were the real problem as they can't march for toffee!

I hope to be able to attend the next reunion as I now have more time available to me. I would like to take this opportunity to say to the greater membership that being a part of this national celebration at the Cenotaph is something you should all try and do, before you hang up your tunic for the last time. Well done to everyone who attended and the Association for making it possible for me to attend

All the very best,

Ken Slade 711

P.S. Can't remember my number funnily enough I couldn't remember names yesterday, things are starting to slip!!!!!!!

RAF&DFSA Guard of Honour - Remembrance Parade - Cenotaph Whitehall - London - Sunday 9th November 2008

Dear Dave,

I am writing to say how proud I felt as a member of the RAF&DFSA contingent who attended the Remembrance Day Parade at the Cenotaph, Whitehall, London, on the 9th November 2008.

It was an inspirational occasion and I am very pleased that I made the effort to attend. We all looked very smart, (well suited up), and we were well looked after, and marshalled, by our leader for the day, Brian Ford, who did an excellent job.

It is such a long time since I had marched anywhere, not in fact since I took my retirement, (medically), from the AFDFS, (Air Force Department Fire Service – Ed), MoD, Air on the 26th November 1986, after 25 years service.

It is also a long time since I have seen such crowds at a parade, even though I attended quite a few when I was in the RAF, so it was appreciated by every one of us.

Today, I have received my certificate from Ron Brown for being part of the Guard of Honour. I wasn't expecting one but it is a very nice gesture and I shall have it framed.

Anyway, I would advise any of our members who have not yet provided the Guard of Honour at a Remembrance Day Parade, with the RAF&DFSA, to consider doing so, because it is well worth the effort and is something to be embraced. Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Ron Preston, member 804

Hi Dave,

Thanks for my copy of Flashpoint, (Autumn 08 issue), which arrived yesterday. I bet your colleagues will be sorry to see you leave your post. You do an excellent job. Even I, who was in the merchant navy, as far removed from the RAF as you could get, enjoy the mag.

Keep in touch and if you want any event etc plugging, I will be pleased to accommodate you in the NARF News.

All the best

Pete Maguire, NARF News Editor

Lt Col Freddie Warburton and Bell?

d-c-turner@supanet.com

Dear Sir,

I have in my possession a brass bell from a fire engine which has an inscription on it "Presented to Lt Colonel Freddie Warburton from Army Fire Services West Midland District".

As you can see by the pictures included I currently have it proudly displayed on my 1956 Bedford Green Goddess. However I have had no luck trying to work out who this person was. Would there be in anyway you could assist me with this some how?

All the very best,

David Turner, Dunoon, Argyll



If anyone can help David with his quest for the origin of the bell and inscription, please contact him direct on the above email address, or let us know and I'll pass it on - Ed.



Atom Bomb by Anon!

I arrived at RAF Leeming as a very green Aerodrome Fireman in September 1956 to find the station undergoing a major refit. The runway was being extended, taxiways re-laid, an expanded ASP being concreted and a BDU [Bomber Dispersal Unit] constructed. Leeming was the home of 228 OCU and operated the Meteor NF 11. In the spring of 1957 the first Gloster Javelin Night Fighter arrived and I happened to be on crash that day when it made a spectacular landing.

In those days the A1 ran alongside the airfield and the secondary runway 04/22 meant aircraft had to cross over it. Our job was to hold up the traffic [wearing the de rigour overalls, gum boots leather jerkin et al] until the a/c landed. For those who know Leeming, 04 runway is short and the Javelin crossed the A1 road at no higher than 10 feet and touched down bang on the threshold. That 'First' was to be the many of 'Firsts' in a career that spanned almost 40 years with the RAF/MoD Fire Services. Other 'Firsts' were being on crash when

the Fairey Delta 2 with droop snoot extended, landed and took off while on route to Scotland, the first USAF B50, Starlifter, and F111. In later years the first MRCA Tornado on a State 2, Tornado F3, Mig 29, Eurofighter [Typhoon] on a weather diversion.

However, my most memorable First was when Leeming was acting as a Bolthole for the V bomber force. In the autumn of 1957 Leeming received a flight of Vickers Valiant V bombers from Gaydon for the first ever exercise. I was not on crash when they arrived but I was when an RAF Pantechnicon drove past our circular metal crash hut, which was sited near the bomber hard standing. It pulled alongside a Valiant and I watched as a huge bomb about 25ft long was lowered and placed into the pantechnicon.

Sometime later there was a national outcry about V bombers flying around while carrying Atomic weapons and the practice was stopped forthwith. Hence the development of the spectacular Vulcan QRA scrambles. Some years ago I received a phone call from an ex RAF Fireman, a Mr. Bennett,

who had been attached to Leeming for the exercise and he asked me if I recalled the incident and, to our mutual relief, we both confirmed what we had really witnessed. Is there anyone out there who also witnessed an Atomic bomb with the V Bombers?

Footnote: the member, who sent in the above item, expressed a wish to remain anonymous but what a career, and I envy him his roll call of aircraft over the years of service. I well remember the Fairy Delta 2, which held the World Airspeed Record at one time when piloted by Peter Twiss.

Footnote: If anyone can answer his question on V Bombers and 'A' Bombs, (especially if there are any photos?), please let me know and I'll pass on the info and see about doing a follow up in a future Flashpoint. Well done and thanks for the article, which is an integral part of our history from the Cold War days - Ed

Letters to the Editor



ARMY

From Major N B V Campbell, SCOTS Headquarters Catterick Garrison
Scotton Road, CATTERICK GARRISON,
North Yorkshire DL9 3JS

Civil 01748872007 Fax 01748872380

Reference:

CG/G1/1/1582

Mr Dave Kenyon

Dear Mr Kenyon

Date: 23 October 2008 Colonel Nick Millen has asked me to write thanking you for your very kind cheque for £20. It will be paid into the Garrison Welfare Fund from which we make donations to local charities that support the wider army community in this area.

Thank you also for the copy of Flashpoint with the piece on the Garrison Open Day. I must agree with you that the weather was a shame! However, despite that we did get about 5,000 people visiting from far and wide. Hopefully next year will be better as I am not sure it could be much worse.

I hope that we will see you again next year at the Open Day.- the date is Saturday 20 June 2008 - as you are always most welcome. Once again many thanks for your very kind donation which is most appreciated.

*Yours
aye
Nick Campbell.*

Footnote: Members should note that the Association may not have an official presence at the Army Open Day on Saturday 20th June but could still attend at a great event designed to show off the Army and make money for local charities, and deserves to be supported - Ed.

THE NATIONAL SERVICE (ROYAL AIR FORCE) ASSOCIATION

Dear Dave,

Many thanks for the latest issue of Flashpoint which includes I notice a timely warning about the Veteran's badge; I wondered how long it would be before someone realised the potential profit in copying it! Is nothing sacred?

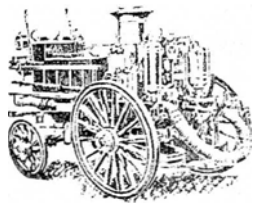
Thank you for kind words about Astral and I reciprocate them in respect of Flashpoint, I just wish I had a budget which would allow me to introduce four colour into our pages although to be honest, I do not receive very many four colour pictures which I could use. Astral is a magazine in which members recall the past, while of course the Fire Service, be it in a military or civilian capacity is ongoing, meaning there is more opportunity to use colour pictures.

Perhaps when your successor is appointed you will make him aware of our arrangement for 'nicking' bits from each other and suggest he carries on the tradition. I wish you well in your second attempt at retirement!

Regards and best wishes,

Brian

Brian Hooper, Editor ASTRAL Magazine, 29th September 2008



Fire Services National Museum Trust MGC/AED 1 October 2008

The Editor, Flashpoint, Mr Dave Kenyon

Dear Dave,

Many thanks for the current issue of Flashpoint which I will add to our existing collection. I was sorry to read that you are standing down as editor of Flashpoint, particularly now that you have improved it to its current standard. I would be pleased if you would make sure that we continue to receive the magazine as it makes an interesting addition to our library.

I find it interesting personally as in my twelve years with the RAF Police I attended many fires at home and abroad in their company - plus many cups of tea afterwards.

Yours sincerely,

Maurice Cole

Maurice Cole, Collection Curator

Registered with the Charity Commissioners under the Charities Act reg. No 276571

The Fire Services National Museum Trust,

Cavalry House, Building 86, The Former Royal Ordnance Depot,

Bridge Street, Weedon Northampton NN7 4PS

Tel/Fax 01327342396 e-mail admin@fireworld.org.uk www.fireworld.org.uk

Chairman MR N S Dickerson QSFM, 52 Latimer Road, Leicester LE7 7GN 01162350194

Do You Remember the FMB & Knapsack Tank - BA, Gas Mask, Filter & 30ft of Corrugated Hose?

Dear Dave,

Here are a few me comments for your next edition of Flashpoint. While checking some info on Traction Engines in V/S mag; I came across an article about a Shand Kidde Fire Cart that had been restored. Now, that rang a bell about those Hose Reel Carts we had in the Service mid fifties, and held over from WW11. I hope some members who served in the mid-fifties may like to comment?

Also, a couple more items come to mind: does anyone remember the FMB with Knapsack Tank? I think this matched to the tune of, The Happy Wanderer? "*May I go a wandering around the peri track with FMB in front and the knapsack on my back?*"

And finally, does anyone remember the BA that was about 30ft, (10metres), of corrugated rubber hose with a Gas Mask on the end and a filter on the other end, and was 'state of the art' eh? These notes might get some comment?

Cheerio,

W Harriss, member 520

Footnote: I do remember the FMB & Knapsack Tank and the BA, but to be fair won't spoil it for members with my answer now, and will reserve comment until others have had a chance to put their thinking caps on and hopefully, reply? - Ed.

Information for Tom Armstrong, enquiring about Joe Labouch-Ardiere

Dear Ed,

In the latest Flashpoint, (autumn 2008, page 22), member 291, Tom Armstrong, was enquiring about Joe Lab. I'm afraid Joe passed away about 4 years ago. I was also on Sgt Enright's crew in 1964, and Joe used to drive the MK6 of which, I was crewman. I will give you my telephone number for Tom to ring me.

Yours sincerely,

Tony 'Spider' Webster, member 223

Footnote: Tony, I'll pass on your phone number to Tom but have withheld it from the article to avoid the possibility of nuisance calls - Ed.

Robert 'Dan' Gurney - RAF - MoD & Retirement

Dave,

I joined the RAF on the 19th August 1959 and served at the following stations: Cardington, Bridgenorth, Catterick, 2nd or 3rd Course – Instructors: Cpl Walsh, Sgt Madden & W/O Newbold, Lyneham 30th December 59, Weeton Driving Course 1960, Lyneham until civilianization in late August 61, Benson 61 – July 64 and demob & joined the Air Ministry Fire Service, (AMFS), at Lyneham, Manston Initial Course, St Athan MK6 Course, Catterick Rough Terrain Driving Course, Lyneham, Detached duties, Abingdon, Benson, Marham, Binbrook, TQF Fire Service, St Mawgan, Driffild, Upavon, Brize Norton, Fairford, Greenham Common, Manston CTE Fire Ground Support Courses, Manston Initial Advanced L/F Course, B/A Instructor, (Minox), 8 x Refreshers Courses, SubO Course, Fire prevention Course, Potential Officer Course, Special Safety Course at St Athan, Retired as Sub Officer February 2000.

Awards: Flight Safety, 'Good Show', Fire LSGCM, (Long Service & Good Conduct Medal), AOC Strike Command Commendation.

The last survivor to have served at Lyneham as an RAF and Civilian fireman!

Robert 'Dan' Gurney, member 795



Photographic Memories - Whoops - Who Did This



Alvis Pyrene MK6 23 AG 83 accident at RAF Oakington, 30th May 1973. Photos courtesy of Dan Gurney



**RAF Lubeck
Henschel Fire Truck
22nd October 1947
Taken on charge from the
Luftwaffe in 1945
RF - 15052
85W N5 RAF OG
405 G**

**Photo donated to Dan by ex W/O
Nick Carter fireman and Air
Ministry Fire Officer for Kemble
and Lyneham, deceased.**

**Spring 1967 Detachment TQF Hedon Nr
Hull East Yorkshire**

2 Westland Whirlwind Helicopters

Dan Gurney removing landing 'H'

**One crashed in early December 1967
and all on board were killed.**

Photos courtesy of Dan Gurney



RAF Gibraltar - Rocket Assisted Firemen!



DATELINE.....ROYAL **DATELINE.....ROYAL AIR FORCE No 89 - ROCKET ASSISTED FIREMEN**

RAF Gibraltar has the only Fire Section in the Royal Air Force to be equipped with a rocket launcher. Under certain conditions, waves off the eastern end of the runway make it impossible to launch the section's Gemini inshore rescue craft. To overcome this, a grapnel and 800 feet of cable are attached to the rocket and fired out to sea, so enabling the firemen in the Gemini to haul themselves out through the breakers - a task that calls for brute force but certainly not ignorance.

The runway at Gibraltar has undershoot and overshoot areas which are over the sea and, for this reason, the section constantly practices with the Gemini, in conjunction with the Marine Craft Section, and maintains a high standard of fitness, although happily it is many years since an aircraft has gone into the sea.

The complete duty watch of the fire section can be at any part of the runway within 60 seconds of being 'scrambled'. The duty watch comprises an Airfield Crash Rescue Tender Land Rover, two of the latest Mk 7 foam trucks, each capable of pumping 5,000 gallons of foam per minute, two dual purpose Mk 1 water trucks and the Gemini craft.

The airfield is obviously first priority, responsibility for domestic fire services at dump, which occupies part of the 36 miles of a part to play in the Upper Rock Fire Plan.

During the summer months, the scrub presents a considerable fire hazard. To counter been drawn up. The RAF provides a control water trucks if required. In spite of the narrow turns, fire vehicles can reach three quarters of water tanks positioned on the Upper Rock any of these, water can still be pumped using mile, if necessary?

There must be few fire brigades in firefighting and crash rescue services for mountain. The Fire Section at RAF Gibraltar is at constant readiness to deal with any such emergencies.



but the section has other tasks including RAF Gibraltar and for the aviation fuel tunnelling within the Rock itself; it also has

on the Upper Rock becomes very dry and this, a joint Civil and Service Fire Plan has vehicle for entry in and out of the area, and roads, steep inclines and narrow radius of the way up easily. There are a number but, if the site of the fire is some way from a relay of fire pumps – up a distance of one

the world who are on stand-by to provide emergencies on an airfield, at sea or up a

WELL, IT'S AN IDEA?

Footnote: This item is from a Royal Air Force Catterick Fire Magazine, (of unknown date), pages 16/17, and is courtesy of ex – W/O Ron Shearn, who was Editor and Production and Reporting with Sgt G Nelson. The quality of the top graphic isn't too good,

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you with a photo of my father, Corporal Michael Coulson, 4165184, (3rd from left), serving at RAF Upwood in 55 - 60 with LAC Roy Watkins (2nd left), Ken Warns (4th left) and Ray Mancel (1st left)

I just thought you would like to see a copy of the picture? My father and Roy Watkins attended the reunion at Bracklesham Bay!

Many thanks,

Fiona Coulson

Footnote: Many thanks for your letter, Fiona, and I hope you and your dad are pleased seeing yourselves in print and they enjoyed Bracklesham Bay? According to my info, Michael Coulson is member 372 & Roy Watkins 360 - Ed



RAF Laarbruch visit made by Members of the RAF&DFSA May 2008



FRANCE-BELGIUM-GERMANY-HOLLAND

- The journey started up in Yorkshire very early, heading south to the wilds of Norfolk, where they were fed and watered with sandwiches, cakes, tea and Angie's sponge. After a short stop, we were on the move again to the next break at Stansted rest area; then quickly on the move again to Folkestone to pick up Brian and Grace, from where; it was just a short hop to the tunnel. Once in France, just a 60-mile trip to the site, but this is where things started to go wrong, we were lost, but no problem; we arrived at the site just after 10pm. Next morning we sorted the bus out and a couple of true firemen found where the bar was?

Our first trip out was to Amiens and Albert, very beautiful towns with plenty of WW1 museums and reminders, and very clean. Our next trip was to Ypres, (Leper), and on the way, we had a quick look

at Dunkerque. Then, on the way, we found a cemetery just outside the town of Boezinge of 10,000 soldiers aged around 19 years old, and we left a cross. On reaching the town, we parked close to the centre, just a short walk to the Cloth Hall, a very large Gothic style building full of history and after the War; the Belgians rebuilt everything as it was before. We wandered around, had a meal and made our way to the Menin Gate and waited for the 8.30 parade, which was very impressive. We then had photos taken with Belgian firemen, and I spoke to one who has been on the parade for 54 years!

Following a day of rest, we now headed to Germany leaving the site at 09.15 and arriving in Kevelaer at 2.45 in the afternoon without getting lost after 522 miles! We were booked into was a very nice small privately owned hotel near the centre of the town, and the rooms were comfortable and food plentiful and good. The town itself was clean with lots of shops, and was very clean; and the experts among us found the best bar and restaurant in the very friendly town and some good nights were spent there.

The museum at Overloon in Holland was first class, and really needs more than one day because of the large amount of exhibits. I found an example of a Bailey Bridge, which I worked on during the war, which made my day. The whole area is laid out in a forest area where the last battle in Holland was fought, guns tanks, trenches with lots of equipment all over. Another visit we made was to Laarbruch where some of our party had been stationed, but the museum was closed, so we went to the airport at Wese. Again the honeyed tongue of the standard fireman came in to use with a very helpful girl, who made a phone call and the Sqdn Leader who runs the museum, came and opened up for us.

Once the building is prepared this is where a tender is to be donated and, if anyone has any bits and pieces they do not need, he would be glad to take them. We left Kevelaer with an early start at 07.45 and arrived back at the tunnel at 17.35, and were loaded straight on to the train. On arrival at the other end, we reversed the process to get home where Angie had everything laid on for us again. Overall it was a very tiring time but well worth every minute of it, even if we did get lost once or twice!

Steve Doran, member 41

Top photo: L/R - Joe Shackleton,



The bottom photo was taken with the Belgian civil Firemen, they parade every night at 8p.m., and one of them told me he has been doing this for 56 years. When I first saw them in 2003 there were only 4 on parade. For those of you with Google Earth on their Computers, you can find this photo by typing in - RAFDFSA WITH BUGGLERS. The Belgian Fireman behind John G was very helpful in sorting out a problem with a young Belgian hot rod driver.

Air Commodore's Award for RAF Fire Services Heroes



Celebrating 90 Years

The RAF Fire Service recently received the Meritorious Service award from Air Commodore Barmby for outstanding service in operational duties in Afghanistan. There was a article placed in a recent addition of the RAF News, however the document I have attached goes into more detail on the reasons they got the award. If you already have this Information my apologies, if not it might make for good reading in the next addition of Flashpoint?

Regards,

Terry Monaghan, member 568

**Royal Air Force Media Operations
83 Expeditionary Air Group BFP0639
UK Air Component Commander's HQ 2 October
2008**

RAF FIRE HEROES RECEIVE AWARD

The RAF Fire Section at Bastion Airfield in Afghanistan has just received an award from Air Officer Commanding 83 Expeditionary Air Group, Air Commodore Tony Barmby, for meritorious service.

The Fire Fighters, forming the RAF Fire and Rescue Incident Response Team (IRT) were heavily committed, during September, to a number of incidents during which lives were saved. On 4 Sep 08 Operation OQAB TSUKA, a Task Force Helmand mission to deliver a new hydroelectric turbine to the Kajaki Dam, was drawing to a close as the final forces were extracting themselves. In the evening a 13 Close Support Logistics Regiment WMIK vehicle, part of one of the final convoys, suffered a mine strike on Highway One in Maywand. Three casualties were trapped in the vehicle. The Joint Operations Cell (JOC) at Bastion requested the RAF Fire and Rescue IRT to assist. Under the command of Cpl Kerry, who had only been in 'theatre' for 4 days, the 3-man IRT reported to the IR Chinook. "We have 15 minutes to get airborne, but we were there in 5 and airborne in 10 minutes." said Cpl Kerry. They were equipped as infantry plus carrying an additional 50kg each of specialist tools which included cutting saws, hydraulic vices and electricity generators. "Your head goes into overdrive when you are en route, we had very little information. The Air Loadmaster updated us in the air" explained Cpl Kerry. The Team then deployed directly into the heart of a live 'Troops in Contact', described on the ground at the time by seasoned soldiers as 'hostile'. As the Fire Fighters arrived on the ground an AH64 Apache was providing covering fire with 30

mm cannon overhead. Unflinching in unfamiliar surroundings and not without a degree of personal danger, the IRT assisted the Medical Emergency Response Team to extract and recover the 3 casualties from the badly mangled vehicle to the relative safety of the helicopter. "Our training in the UK has been invaluable; we are trained in rescuing from road traffic collisions." said Cpl Kerry. The rescue was successfully achieved, with personnel returning back to Bastion in just 2 hours after receipt of the initial call-out.

Later that evening, nine minutes after the first call; the JOC requested a second IRT, this time to assist with the Post Crash Management of an incident involving an Apache helicopter near Musa Qalah. The helicopter, armed and fully fuelled, had crashed on take-off. The crew was safe and no fire had been reported, but it was an imperative to make the aircraft safe and begin the recovery process; this was a task for which RAF Fire Fighters are well prepared. Assistance was provided to the Joint Helicopter Force Incident Officer, while the specialist equipment to deal with man-made fibres in the Apache was corralled and made ready. The hastily generated second IRT also received some rapid briefings on immediate actions required upon arrival at the helicopter. In the event, the ground situation was deemed unsafe overnight, and the second IRT was not deployed until first light the next day. The Team's subsequent performance on arrival at the crash scene did; however, draw praise from those tasked with overseeing the recovery operation.. Whilst the two IRTs were being deployed, a UK C-17 carrying personnel was making an approach to land at Bastion. The airfield required fire cover to maintain the C-17 air-bridge into Afghanistan, so additional Fire Fighters were called in from rest to ensure the aircraft landed safely.

It was an outstanding feat that every need was met; lives were saved, the recovery of a valuable downed aircraft was commenced and the air-bridge continued uninterrupted. The Fire Section, under the command of Warrant Officer Trafford, was honoured to receive this award for their tenacity, commitment and sheer effort, delivered in person by the Air Commodore. Cpl Kerry said, "I used to feel nervous about deploying on the IRT, but it gets easier as you do more. We appreciated the award was for the Section and not just my IRT, because the whole team had to work hard to maintain airfield cover." Air Commodore Barmby commented, "I've always been totally confident during my flying career about RAF Fire Fighters' fire fighting ability. However, it's not well known generally that they have a role deploying from air bases to conduct vehicle rescue missions for our troops in combat. I watched these lads demonstrating their skills – they're just fantastic. It's good to know that our fellow Servicemen in the field have such a committed team willing to come to their aid. However, this was a very unusual two days and the whole Bastion Fire Section performed exceptionally well under difficult and sometimes dangerous conditions supporting several missions".

Dear Dave,

Many thanks once again for an excellent edition of Flashpoint. The article regarding the veteran's lapel badge threw up an interesting point. Once the MoD commences issuing the new badge, how will we current (legitimate) holders of the badge be fixed? Our badges will not have the proposed design number imprinted on them. How can we prove that they are legitimate?

Best wishes

Ray Wood (118)

Footnote: Good point Ray and I haven't an answer but maybe someone out there can put us right? – Ed.



PRESS RELEASE – PRINCES TRUST PALACE TO PALACE CYCLE RIDE

A team of 9 RAF Firefighters from RAF Brize Norton have recently completed the annual: The Princes Trust - Palace-to-Palace 45 mile cycle ride. Sunday 7th September was the day in question where they were amongst 3,000 other cyclists who were given the unique opportunity to cycle from Buckingham Palace to Windsor Castle, passing some of London's great attractions, crossed 3 counties and passed through numerous Royal Parks, all whilst cycling throughout an array of torrential down pours!

The demanding challenge, which the RAF Fire Service personnel took on, encouraged many training sessions leaving the team confident going into the starting pit. The team, which named themselves 'Fog Nozzle.com', traversed the course in a steady and timely manner taking in the spirit of the event along the way. The team raised an estimated £800, but as money still flows in, they hope the grand total will continue to increase. The support crew providing mobile emergency cover, in case of puncture repairs and accidents, was a valuable resource for the event but this year thankfully, were not required in anger.

Corporal Simon Watson (28) RAF Team Coordinator for the Palace-to-Palace cycle event explained, *'The atmosphere and camaraderie between fellow cyclists was amazing, and the satisfaction of completing the challenging 45 miles was immense, and was truly enjoyed by all the team members of Fog Nozzle.com'*.

At the finish line Gold Medal Olympian, Dame Kelly Holmes, presented our race medals and chatted to the team commending them on their efforts. Senior Aircraftsman Christopher Windsor (21) said, *'The cycle ride was tough and demanding, but totally satisfying at the same time. A great experience and a surprise to receive my medal from Dame Kelly Holmes.'*

The event was primarily organised to raise an abundance of money for The Princes Trust, a UK based charity headed by HRH The Prince of Wales, which provides help, training, financial and practical support to UK citizens aged between 14 & 30. At the same time they also play a part in the RAF Youth Activities Policy, by raising awareness of the Royal Air Force in the minds of young people.

Notes – Cyclists – Major Liam McCormick, Sgt Mike Ratten, Cpl Simon Watson, Sac's Christopher Windsor, Peter Harper and David Glasgow and LAC Christopher Norris

Support Crew – Cpl Brian Doyle, Sac's John Mayman and Sandy Anderson



**Photos L/R Clockwise -
Cpl Simon Watson setting off
- The end of the ride - Dame
Kelly Holmes presenting
medals to the riders.**

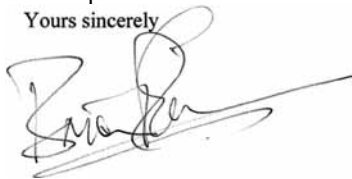
Hi Dave,

My most grateful thanks for the recent copy of "Flashpoint", as ever, and without knowing the members and locations; I find it an excellent newsletter of which you, your committee and members should be proud.

Sadly, and this has also come to light since I attended my own Regimental Association Annual Reunion in Cardiff in July, the active numbers in Branches or joining Associations is on the decline. I have been informed that the younger servicemen and women leaving the Forces today, do not consider themselves Veterans, and prefer the night club to our events. Consequently, I have proposed that next year's "Blackpool Veterans Week/Weekend" should be used as an opportunity to attract the younger veterans - don't ask me how yet!

I note your decision to leave your current position, and I must thank you for your kindness with "Flashpoint", and your time at Blackpool earlier this year. May I wish you all the best for the future, and would be grateful if you could advise your colleagues that I am always prepared to assist with notification of events here in Blackpool.

Yours sincerely



Brian R.

Evans, Aden Veterans

REMEMBRANCE DAY

We arrive and we all meet
Other acquaintances we do greet
We laugh and joke and talk of times
When we were on crew, maybe reading saucy rhymes
After line up, on to Whitehall we do march
Going through the Horseguards Arch,
From one kerb to the other in columns we stand
Maybe not as quiet as is thought across the land
We watch the screens and have a 'nip'
From the many hip flasks that are brought into view
Then as Nimrod is heard from way up front
Silence descends we smarten anew
We march down the road, all of us doing our very best
To look smarter and march better, than all the rest
'Eyes left' at the Cenotaph then back to the front
The watchers applauding and making us proud
That we are able to be centre, and not in the crowd
Its' right turn then and again in a while
Back into Horseguards we march still in file
One of the Royals is there to salute our 'Eyes Right'
We are hoping we make a very good sight
We again form up at the top of the square
Dismiss, and then a few more jokes we share
Then it's off to the pub, bus, train or plane
All promising next year to meet up there again
Many have fallen, and still they do
One thing's for sure, WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!
Mick Haywood 458

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES
FOR NEXT FLASHPOINT
ISSUE DUE SUMMER 2009
IS 1st MARCH 2009**

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Invitation to all members - Let's have your personal stories, anecdotes and photographs for publication. Remember, it's your Association, and Flashpoint is produced for your enjoyment. That's why we need to tell of all those many experiences out there. If your article requires a photograph, remember to enclose it along with your article, and send to the Editor by mail, or email, at the address detailed on page 3 – Who to Contact.

**Please enclose an SAE for the return of photos etc. Thank you.
Steve Doran 41**

We must not forget the time and effort Dave has put in to produce such a high standard magazine since he took over as Editor, I myself can

appreciate this since Starting in this issue, of which he has been a great help, I could not have done it without his help and advice.

Remembrance Day Parade 2008



On Sunday the 9th of November I attended the Remembrance Service in London, and took part in the Cenotaph parade around Whitehall and Downing Street. I was pushing the wheelchair of a veteran from my street, Steve, who has a dodgy hip and was therefore unable to walk in the parade this year. When he asked me if I would help him, I felt honoured and nervous, but I agreed. He had served for a period in the Royal Air Force Fighting and Rescue Service as a fire-fighter. In order to reach the service in time, I had to get up at 4.30 am in the morning; a time, as a student, I never knew existed! We caught the train down to London, which was surprisingly only a few minutes late, and then took a cab to the service. Wreathes were laid by the Queen, the Prime Minister, and other dignitaries to honour the soldiers, sailors, airmen and other servicemen and women who had fallen whilst fighting in wars past and present from Britain and Commonwealth countries from around the globe. Then we were off along the designated route, keeping in step with the rest of our group, around 20 other ex-servicemen from the RAFFD&FSA. It was very inspiring as we were walking, as the crowd, young and old, clapped and cheers us round, and the veterans appreciated this very much.

The parade ended where it had begun about two hours after it had started. The journey back was uneventful, and we arrived back in Norwich at about 18.00. Quote Steve: "Chris can be very dangerous... it's a wheelchair, not a Ferrari!" Justified, perhaps, but I only nearly tipped him out once... seriously though, the day was very moving, and helped me to understand the people who had fought and died, not as a statistic in a text book, but as individuals.

By Chris Fisher, 17.



This parade in the village of Le Bodeo, in Brittany, France on the 11th November was attended by the editor and his son Paul, and was conducted by the local Mairee, Ann Henry. The local people were very appreciative of us beng there, and afterwards we returned to the Mairee's parlour for wine and biscuits.

STORIES ABOUT THE RAF FIRE SERVICE

George Edwards and John Goupillot have started to write a book about the RAF Fire Service, They will be having it published in due course, but they need your help with the content..The book is to be a series of short and sometimes long stories about life in the Service.They hope to put together individual experiences on any subject, including the following,or any others you think may be of interest.

Personal stories,personalities,crash, fire and domestic incidents and crash barriers,RHAG, vehicles including specials and experimental types,
fire fighting equipment,protective clothing,driver training,sports and hobbies,married life,life in barracks/billets and Fire Sections,training and training schools,support to others such as youth clubs,scouting and guide movements, Boy's Brigade etc, open days,crash fire demos,Civil Defence,local fire fighters,Harrier operations,nuclear convoy escorts,SST,runway foam laying,goosenecks and glims,rocket line rescue,Fire floats,Queens flight,fire vehicles transported by air,fire simulators,reef and water rescues,civil firemen strikes,airFlashpoint,field defence and missile operations,underground operations, assistance to civil authorities,,oil, ship and pumping operations, museums, vehicle restoration, Remebrance Day Parades,the Association, Flashpoint, reunions, other outing and visits.

Your items can be sent in any format, hand written, typed, email etc, and they will be sorted through and consult with contributors as appropriate.

This is your chance to tell the stories that you are dying to tell and will provide the platform for you to do just that!.

So, come on and get writing.
please send all items to either of the two addresses

**George Edwards
8 East Close
Ecclestone Park
Prescot
Merseyside
L34 2RA**

Tel 0151 426 509
george.edwards46@virgin.net

**John Goupillot
2 Cricketers Green
Rawdon
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS19 7YS**

Tel 0113 250 768
johngoupillot@aol.com

Howie Marson, 29/12/08.

RAF St Mawgan finally closed as an RAF airfield on Dec 1 2008, and reopened as NewqayAirport run by Cornwall Airport Limited (CAL). Most of the DFRS personnel transferred across to CAL, those that did not moved to other stations or retired.

I have recently alongside other DFRS personnel been making the long trip west to help put "bums" on seats,the old RAF Fire Section and the ATC are going to be demolished and new buildings are currently under construction to replace them on the other side of the Airfield by the new passenger terminal.

It was a bit of a shock on my first trip there this summer as my last visit had been in 1984, whilst on leave to see some friends and the section was "Bulled up" as all RAF sections were,but now it was rather unloved.

Letter from President Dennis McCann



Once again it was really great meeting old friends in October at the reunion at Bracklesham Bay. To have a drink and laugh with friends is what the main aim of the Association was always meant to be about. The weather over the weekend was absolutely brilliant and being on the coast was a bonus. Thanks to Shirley Winn the entertainment was as ever very good and enjoyed by all who attended. Most of us enjoyed our trips out to Chichester and Portsmouth: that part of England is well blessed with the natural beauty of the countryside.

The main business of the AGM concerned replacing the outgoing Committee members: George Edwards, Geof Varley, Dave Kenyon and Howard Harper who were not standing for another term of office.

A new Chairman and Vice Chairman were proposed and voted in with the result that John Goupillot and John Arnold also retired from office. Vice President Joe Shackleton decided to resign from his position as did Ron Gaunt. All those retiring from the Committee will be a very hard act to follow- they have carried out their duties in a very efficient and professional manner and I will be forever in their debt. A big "Thank You" must also go out to all their families for their tremendous support for the benefit of us all. Many thanks too to those continuing with their Committee work and to the newly elected members. I know only too well how much time it can take out of our daily lives to perform the necessary tasks.

I was disappointed that at the AGM only just over 40 members out of 80 attending the reunion took the trouble to attend the meeting. With such a low attendance the Association will not receive the true feelings of members. So "Come on" if you cannot attend and you have some good ideas please put pen to paper. The hard work done by the Committee since the Association started and with the election of each new Committee there has always been new ideas and movement forwards and we should all support and help the elected Committee who do so much voluntarily on our behalf.

There is unfortunately some sad news that as well as Dave Kenyon standing down as Flashpoint Editor his wife Jacky has recently passed away. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Dave and his family.

Flashpoint continues to go from strength to strength and is of the highest standard being read in Australia, Thailand and the Continent. Its present success is down to the hard work and commitment of Dave and thanks to all the members who regularly send in articles and photographs to be shared -please keep items of interest coming in.

Finally, let us all meet up again with good friends in March 2009 at the next reunion in Coventry at the Royal Court Hotel (which we know well) and continue the good work of the Association. Hoping that everyone has a Good Christmas and that the New Year brings all you could wish.

Dennis McCann BEM

21st November 2008

Those Born Before 1940

We are survivors! We were born before television. Before penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox,

plastic contact lenses, videos, Frisbees and the pill. We were born before Radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens, before dishwashers, tumble dryers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip dry clothes and before man walked on the moon

We got married first and then lived together (how quaint can one be?) We thought "fast food" was what you ate in Lent, a Big Mac was an oversized raincoat, and 'crumpet' was something we had for tea. We existed before 'house husbands' 'computer dating' dual careers and when a 'meaningful relationship' meant getting on with cousins, aunts and uncles. 'Sheltered accommodation' was when you waited for a bus.

We were before 'day care centres', group homes and disposable nappies, we never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters, artificial hearts, word processors and young men wearing earrings. For us 'time sharing meant togetherness', a chip was a piece of wood or a fried potato, 'hardware meant nuts and bolts and 'software' was not even a word.

Before 1940 'Made in Japan' meant junk, the term 'Making out' referred to how you did in your exams. 'stud' was something that fixed a collar to a shirt and 'going all the way' meant staying on the bus to the terminus. Pizzas, McDonald's, and instant coffee were unheard of. In our day cigarette smoking was fashionable, 'grass' was something that had to be mown, 'coke' was kept in the coal house, a 'joint' was a piece of meat you had on Sundays. 'Pot' was some dish you cooked in, 'Rock' music was grandmothers lullaby. 'Eldorado was an ice cream, a 'gay person' was the life and soul of the party and nothing more, whilst 'aids' just meant beauty treatment or help for someone in trouble.

We who were born before 1940 must be a hardy bunch when you think of the way the world

RAF Benson 1951-1956



Dear Ed,

Just a note to let you know something about the enclosed scanned photos, taken while serving at the fire section at R.A.F Benson between the years 1953-1956.

They may just be useful to someone or at least jog a few memories; I served there from 53-56, but my brother(in photo) was there from 51-54. We both have many memories of happy as well as traumatic times during that period.



The Flight Sergeants name at that time was W.A. Proctor, and the Corporals were Wendy, Leon and Hank Conway. I would love to hear from them or anyone else who was serving at that time, I have many more photos of the lads that I will send if you feel it worthy of your brilliant magazine which both Pat and I enjoy so much.

Thanks again for all the effort that you and the team have put into the running of the association, it certainly is very worthwhile.

From David Wood, (Member No 866)

Email Address - Davidg220@btinternet.com



Keep Smiling Continued

- 9.) If at first you dont succeed, skydiving is not for you.
- 10.) Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit n a boat and drink beer all day.
- 11.) If you lend someone £20 and you never see that person again, it was probably worth it.
- 12.) If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.
- 13.) Some days you're the bug; some days, you're the windscreen.
- 14.) Good judgment comes from bad experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.
- 15.) Duct tape is like the force. It has a light side and a dark side, and it holds the Universe together.
- 16.) There are two theories to arguing with women. Neither one works.
- 17.) Never, under any circumstances, take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.

RAFDFA Shop

Those of you unable to attend the reunions will be aware that we have a range of promotional RAFDFA and CRASH goods for sale, which are also available by mail order via Allan and Marilyn and the Association website shown at the bottom of each page. We look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at the reunions.

Regards and best wishes, Allan and Marilyn

Contact details: - Allan and Marilyn Brooke, 20 Chestnut Grove, Farndon, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 3TW No personal callers please.

Tel: 01636 688 680 Email: allana.brooke@ntlworld.com or marilyn.brooke@ntlworld.com Note:- For Mail Order - All items will be subject to postage and packaging, which will be calculated per individual order. A customer will be informed of the cost and, when payment is received, the order will be despatched.

Cheques & Postal Orders made payable to RAF&DFSA Shop Account.

STOCK AND PRICE LIST @ JANUARY 2009

RAF & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION

BASEBALL CAPS with Assn logo.....	£6.00
POLO SHIRTS (Navy) SM,M,L,XL, XXL.....	10.00
T SHIRTS (Navy) L, XL, XXL.....	£6.00
BLAZER BADGE.....	£12.50
TIE - NEW DESIGN Dk Blue + Red/White stripes & Ass. Badge.....	£9.00
CAJ BAGS.....	£6.50
DOCUMENT BAGS.....	£8.50
KEYRING.....	£1.00
MUG.....	£4.00
CAP BADGE.....	£8.00
LAPEL BADGE.....	£3.00
SELF CLING CAR STICKER.....	£1.00
RAF FIRE SCHOOL of FIREFIGHTING STICKER.....	£0.50
EMBROIDERED RAF FIRE SERVICE PATCH BADGE.....	£3.50
LANYARD AND WALLET.....	£2.50
CUFF LINKS (RAF ROUNDEL).....	£5.50
LEATHER BOOKMARKS.....	£1.00
FIRE ENGINE PRINT (New Design)*.....	£5.00
FIRE ENGINE PRINT 1940-1960**.....	£5.00
METAL FIRE ENGINE MODELS 1/76TH SCALE Price on request.	

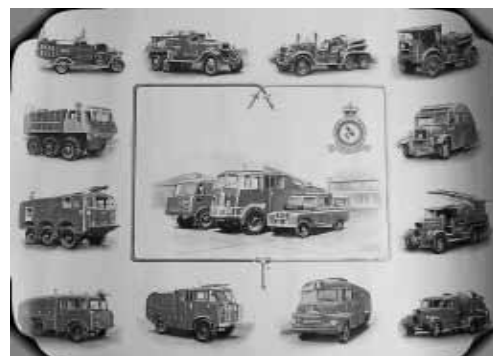
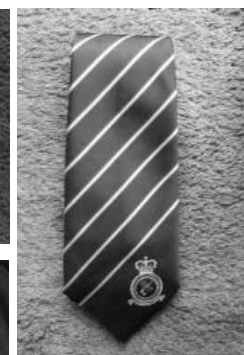
Note: All models need constructing and painting.

CRASH TEAM items - Prices on request

CONTACT US TO SEE WHAT WE HAVE IN STOCK? Other novelty items will change over a period of time so it is best to either contact us to see what we have in stock, or come to the Association reunions or one of the shows where we are selling, (no list of dates and venues yet)?

***The New design Print above right** depicts vehicles from 1960's to present day. **From top left clockwise** - Mk10, Mk11a Tacr1, Tac-T, Tacr2, Major and Mini Angus Bedford Domestics, Queen's Squadron TQF Scania, Falklands Bv206 tracked vehicle, Mk7, Mk8, and Mk9, with MFV and RIV in the centre.

****The Print bottom right** depicts vehicles from 1940 to 1960. **From Top left clockwise:** 30 Cwt Crossley, Fordson, Crossley 6 x 4, Crossley PE 1, Crossley (Streamline), 1944 Fordson Monitor Conversion, 1945 Fordson Monitor, Bedford Domestic, 600 gallon, Thornycroft MK5A, & Dual Purpose Tender MK 2 (DP2), Alvis Pyrene MK6, Alvis Stalwart, **Centre: Left to right:** Dual Purpose Tender MK1, (DP1), Thornycroft MK5 and ACRT, (Aircraft Crash Rescue Truck).





Thanks to member, Steve Brown, for the above photos and Course info on Op Refresher 13/07 from 21st to 25th January 2008.