

# FLASHPOINT

ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE

ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



**WANTED  
FOR MODEL-  
LING PROJECT,  
AIR PUBLICATION  
SPECS ON DP2?  
SEE PAGE 22**



**URGENT!  
JUNE 2007 CATERICK  
ARMY EVENT CANCELLED DUE  
TO OPERATIONAL COMMITMENTS!  
SEE PAGE 18 - 'ONE FOR THE  
DIARY!'**



**INSIDE THIS 24 PAGE ISSUE**

**25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALKLANDS WAR IN 1982**

**ROBERT CAPA - WW11 PHOTOGRAPHER & RAF CROSSLEY CRASH CREW - MAGNUM PHOTOS LONDON MEMBER,  
W/O DAVE STARKINGS MBE RETIRES FROM RAF MARHAM AFTER 37 YEARS SERVICE**

**NEW COBRA 2 FIRE VEHICLE @ MOD ST ATHAN - ASSOCIATION SHOP**



# 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 23 ex-service personnel got together to settle the question of why there wasn't an organisation relating to the trade of firefighter when most other trades had formed one of their own many years ago?

### Inaugural Committee Formed

On that day, when those founder members turned up from all over the country, they went on to form the inaugural committee of the Association and elected the following Officers and Committee:-

		Member
President	Late John Arthur	11
Vice President	Ken Rimmel	20
Chairman	Keith Penfold	9
Vice Chairman	Mick Clark	2
Secretary	Dennis McCann	7
Treasurer	Late John Knight	21
Editor *	Late Alan Alsop	49

\*The position of Editor was first introduced in 1995, when the late Alan Alsop took post as founding editor, but after the formation of the Association in May of that year.

Area Coordinators were subsequently elected to cover the U.K.

### The Intervening Years

Many changes have taken place since then as the Association established itself over the intervening years and, with its formation, colleagues, 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 information, news, updates, 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.

\* Royal Navy have since founded their own Aircraft Handlers Association.

**Some members asked if the photo could be replaced, suggesting that something more modern might be apt, the difficulty being, what? However, it's your magazine and, the customer is always right, and I took the suggestion on board. The idea of repeating the Brief History of the Association, (and the RAF and DF&RS), was to allow anyone reading it to know who we are and I appreciate that, for regular readers, it might seem a bit repetitive! Flashpoint was designed as an ongoing advertisement for the Association to encourage potential members to join us! and I've trawled through the archive and found the photo below, and will try to remember to replace it from time to time.**

**The photo below taken at RAF Leeming 16 May 1996, shows:- L/R - F/f Russell Barnet, and members, Tom Sellars, Joe Shackleton, the late Eddie Mashiter, the late Billy Bannister, the late Jim Souter, Mike King, Dave Murray and L/FF Tony Eaton. The Crash Truck backdrop is a MK9**



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# Who To Contact

## Officers and Committee

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**Co-ordinator Vacancies** - East Yorkshire - Midlands, North, Scotland (1) - South East. 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.

**THE NATIONAL SERVICE (RAF) ASSOCIATION  
REUNION AND PARADE @ THE RAF MUSEUM  
COSFORD, SHROPSHIRE, SUNDAY 24th JUNE  
2007**

**Latest arrival time - 0930 hrs.  
Outdoor Parade assembles - 1100 hrs  
Salute by Air Commodore Gammon, DCAE Cosford.  
Limited seating will be available for family and  
friends.**

**Parade will incorporate a short Service of Remem-  
brance and the Last Post and Reveille will be played.  
A flypast by a Hurricane and Spitfire will take place at  
approximately 1300 hrs.**

**Contact: Pat Honey, 87 Park Lane, Knypersley, Staf-**



Front cover photographs are courtesy of Magnum Photos London from an item first published in The Times Sunday magazine 29th May 2004. The caption read: "An RAF rescue crew awaits the return of a bomber damaged by anti-aircraft fire over France, 1941."



**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. Dave Kenyon Editor 239





**Promotions** - To celebrate the 25th Reunion in the presence of our Honorary President, Sir John Sutton KCB, your committee decided to promote Keith Penfold, from President to Life President, Dennis McCann, Vice-President to President and Joe Shackleton to Vice-President. All three were delighted to accept the honour, which is well deserved for three of our founding members and all the hard work they've done to develop the Association.

**The front cover** again gives tremendous impact to the magazine and I thank Ernie Fisher for sending the details some time ago from the Sunday Times magazine. I managed to track down the company, Magnum Photos, who hold the copyright, and they kindly offered to allow us to use them for Flashpoint. My grateful thanks go to, Nick Galvin, Deputy Archive Director, Magnum Photos, London, for his help in securing permission for our use from the New York Office. The quality is fantastic and is typical of the late photographer, Robert Capa's, high standards. See page 12 of the centre spread for more examples of his art.

**The back cover is the Manston WOT1** with FSCTE Fire School volunteers polishing the exhibit in the Spitfire Museum.

**Page 2 Brief History of the Association** - In previous issues, it was suggested that a more modern photo might be apt and so I've replaced it with one from the archive from RAF Leeming with members visiting

their old station from their Service days.

**Page 14 - W/O Dave Starkings**, on his recent retirement from RAF Marham and We all wish him a long and happy retirement, and hope to see him at our reunions? Thanks go to, Dave Tudge, Marham Fire Section, for providing initial details and Denise Foggett, Assistant Media and Communication Officer at Marham, for a copy of the Press Release.

**The full colour centre spread** is excellent and the item on the delivery of the new Cobra Fire Vehicle at MOD St Athan was provided by our RAF Coordinator, Flt Sgt Stevie Bowden. Thanks for that, Stevie.

**Chairman's comprehensive report** on the 25th Reunion at Peterborough on Page 5, outlines some positive proposed changes for the future of your Association.

**I've updated my 'Mug Shot'** which should have been on display at the March Peterborough reunion, and offer my apologies to those members of a nervous disposition who may not have been prepared for such a sight!

**Finally**, I have the sad duty of informing you of the passing of some of our members on the In Memoriam page. Also, I'd like to take the opportunity of wishing any of our members, and their families, not enjoying good health, all the very best and hope they will improve before too long soon?

Regards,

*Dave*

## 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

**FLASHPOINT BACK COPIES** are available from the Editor at a cost of £1.00 each including P&P. Issues available are: January 02 (1st full colour edition by Brodie Publishing, Liverpool), December 04, April, August & December 05, April 06. Send orders to the Editor, details on the Who To Contact page.

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES OR POSTAL ORDERS PAYABLE TO RAF&DFSA AND SEND WITH YOUR ORDER - Ed.

### EDITORIAL NOTES

We welcome your comments and enquiries about Flashpoint, or the Association in general. Letters should be kept brief. The Editor reserves the right to edit, shorten, any letter or correspondence in order to fit available space.

Anonymous, or unsigned letters will not be published, nor anything of an offensive or abusive nature.

The Editor, and the Officers and Committee of the Association, do not necessarily endorse opinions expressed by contributors.

The Editor's decision is final.

### Address for all letters etc: -

Flashpoint - c/o 47 Grange Avenue, Thornbury, Bradford BD3 7BE tel/fax 01274 666 043 email rafdfsaeitor@aol.com

Include name, address, telephone and membership number; and a photo with brief service details for publication with your letter or article. Old friends and colleagues may then more readily recognise you.

**Please ensure you enclose an SAE for any items you wish returned. Thank you - Ed.**

# Chairman's Report from the 25th Reunion



**Your Committee has made a number of changes** that we hope will improve the Association for the benefit of all members. There are a number of reasons for these changes not least

the replies that I received from resigned members when we wrote to them for comments and, in the main, they were asking for cheaper reunion hotels and requesting that they would like the occasional reunion nearer to their areas. The members voted some time ago to hold all reunions in the middle of the country and this has been successful to an extent, however I believe that now is the time to reconsider with venues that I suggested in the last Flashpoint. To this end the present Events Organisers have been looking at good quality hotels costing under £45.00 per person and in areas throughout the UK.

**Perhaps the main changes** are those involving some of our senior founder members with Keith Penfold becoming an Honorary Life President (he doesn't have to pay subs now!!!!) and Dennis McCann taking the pressure off Keith by agreeing to become President and, not least, the very popular decision to elect Joe Shackleton to the post of Vice President. These changes are to be ratified by the membership at the AGM in October.

**New co-opted posts established** to ease the burden on the Committee are; Nick Harrison, Inventory Controller and Deputy Security Officer, John Savage, Security Officer and Toastmaster, Dave Arnold, Association Publicity Officer, and Howard Harper, Note Taker for meetings.

**A Ladies meeting held** at the Peterborough weekend was well attended, with over 40 of our ladies, some of whom expressed an interest in running their own activities, and why not? It is recommended that a £1000.00 float be donated to get them started, after which they could be self sufficient. This is also to be ratified by the membership at the AGM.

**The raffle was a success** making £495.31 and no doubt boosted by the 2 free weekend holidays from Marriott Hotels and the one for Blackpool very kindly donated by Member Keith Wiggin. Ron Gaunt seems to have been a hit with his fancy new machine; I am told that it will do other things like a standard draw, bingo etc. I understand that the raffle seemed to go on far too long, maybe we should consider having one Friday evening and the other

as normal at the Gala Dinner, especially when we have so many nice prizes, 116 in total this time.

**The Policy and Guidance documents created by my son Mike Goupillot**, member 359, and his wife Sue, models for which were taken from industry and other similar organisations to ours, are designed to support the Constitution and Rules. These are documents that show that the Association is up to date with its thinking in an easy to understand format, to deal with problems that may arise.

**Mike also created the Battle Honours Plaque** showing the campaigns where our Fire Fighters have served, and are still serving and the table menus with Association crest and the fire vehicle, duplicated on the thimbles, ordered by our new shop controller, Allan Brooke. The Committee name badges and the mug shot board to show your Committee Members. Certificates awarded to Keith and the Cadets at the Gala dinner and the documents at the welcoming area were all beautifully created by Mike and Sue.

**Due to circumstances beyond my control** I was unable to attend the Gala Dinner at Peterborough but I have seen the video taken by Ron Gaunt and was delighted to see that the months of hard work by your Committee and others was a resounding success and a credit to all concerned. The cake organised by Joe Shackleton was wonderful and a credit to the maker, Mrs Sylvia Lazenby, and to Terry Matson for some of the decorative artwork. As you will see in other areas of Flashpoint our guests have expressed great respect and admiration for our history and also their pleasure at being in our company at the Gala Dinner. Our thanks also go to, John Savage, for adding that touch of finesse to the proceedings as Toastmaster. The Association Standard looked resplendent with the beautiful mahogany base recently presented to us by Mr Ron Shearn. (Ex W/O stationed at ex RAF Catterick, Fire Training Squadron).

**On your behalf**, I must express my admiration for the work of the Vehicle Restoration Group, ably Chaired by, Wilf Longmire, assisted by, Secretary, Mike Shenton and Treasurer Allan Brooke and other helpers. On my recent visit to the site, I was impressed by the set up and their development strategy and the MK6 was running in the hangar, which was all very nostalgic.

**With the excellent support of the**

**RAF's 2 MT Squadron**, they have moved the vehicles and equipment from Halfpenny Green to Barkston Heath, with their emblem showing an Elephant carrying a heavy load; you will please excuse the pun when I say that they had a 'Mammoth task' and carried it out with professional skill and dedication. Our grateful thanks go to them all. There is still a lot to be done and some of us will be asked to help and, all I can say is that, if you decide to lend a hand, you will enjoy the company of dedicated people hell bent on preserving part of our heritage.

**We are also indebted to Allan Brooke and his wife Marilyn** for taking over the shop, and noted that Roger and Sue Brooks were helping and we are grateful for that, as it must have taken the strain off Allan and Marilyn for their first time out with the shop.

**Ron Brown will be chasing us to attend the Cenotaph again in November**, and I ask you to give him your support. Some of you attend parades in your area, but would recommend you try London at least once as you will not regret it.

**I understand from Geoff Varley and John Savage** that the proposed project to have an Association Memorial Plaque at RAF Marham is going ahead and we will be informed of the dedication date.

**Once again our special thanks go to Dave Kenyon** for producing this gem of a magazine. He will not thank me for telling you that he's not been firing on all cylinders recently but has carried out his work with Flashpoint and has continued to give the Committee every support and encouragement behind the scenes.

**I must express my sincere thanks** to our ladies who had to put up with us during these last few traumatic months. They are always there in the background to give support and a shoulder to cry on and we have had need of both at times. The old adage that behind every man is a good woman is a truism that applies to all fire fighters, not just us trying our best to run the Association. Ladies we salute you.

**Your Committee is in the process** of implementing some major changes and, I hope you will give your new Committee every support and encouragement, to keep this wonderful Association running smoothly for the benefit of all?

John Goupillot, Chairman  
Saturday, 31 March 2007

Welcome to your May issue of Flashpoint, I sincerely hope that you all enjoy reading it. Since the last issue our membership has increased by 45. On behalf of your committee and the membership I welcome you all to the Association and, would further like to thank all the coordinators who have helped in finding these latest members. A BIG vote of thanks to you, FLIGHT SERGEANT STEVE BOWDEN, for your help in "recruiting" all those non serving and serving members. On the downside at the time of going to press, 3 of our comrades have passed away. Their names are Mr Tony Patrick Shiell, Mr George Lamont, and Mr George Harley they will be missed, MAY THEY REST IN PEACE.



**Listed below is the New Members list (45) and membership Numbers:**

860 Mr Keith Whigham 861 Mr Bernard Trevor Bowyer 862 Mr Arnold Young 863 Mr Simon Young 864 Mr Andy Bennett 865 Mr Mike Ratten 866 Mr Mark Cutler 867 Mr Michael Newby 868 Mr Shaun Grady 869 Mr Shaun Kerr 870 Mr Mike Broadley 871 Mr Stephen Walker 872 Mr Joe Reidy 873 Russell McGrady 874 Mr Shaun Sparkes 875 Mr Stephen Axworthy 876 Mr Alex Blackford 877 Mr Simon Allsop 878 Mr Keith Lammin 879 Mr Allan John Gitsham 880 Mr Johnny Ball 881 Mr Huw Morgan 882 Mr George Lovie 883 Mr David Palmer 884 Mr John Andrew Allan 885 Mr Dave Yates 886 Mr Roy John Potts (honorary member) 887 Mr Pip Piper 888 Mr Dennis Lawson 889 Mr Glenn Mattinson 890 Mr Edward William Kisbee 891 Mr Nigel Robert Burgess 892 Mr Richard (Dick) Page 893 Mr Andrew Pittock 894 Mr Michael Rowlands 895 Mr David Peter Moll 896 Mr Brian Shepherd 897 Mr Steve Wiles 898 M Kenneth (Kenny) McAulay 899 Mr Jason Dodd 900 Mr Barry Scott 901 Mr Allan Arthur Winspur 902 Mr Terry Gormley 903 Mr R A Bond 904 Mr J W Richards. I have today, 29 March 2007, sent out 15 new applications and let's hope we have a good return...?

**I would respectfully remind members that subscriptions are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2007**, irrespective of whatever date you enrolled. Please note as in previous years there has been no subscription increase; please also remember, if you are paying by cheque, to put your name and membership number on the back of the cheque. Hopefully see you at the next reunion. This is my report.

John Joseph Hanley, Membership Secretary, Member Number 69

## Treasurer's Half Yearly Report

In an effort to keep the membership fully aware of the financial standing of our Association, I have much pleasure in presenting a "Six Monthly Summary of Accounts", to all of you attending this General Meeting, copies will also be supplied, on request, to any other members who were unable to attend.

**As you will see from the summary**, our expenditure for the first six months of this financial year (2006/07), has again, not exceeded our income, leaving us with another set of healthy accounts. As with last year's report, this healthy balance is mainly due to the repeat of the excellent response we received from our subscription reminder letter sent out in August 06, and over 95% renewed their membership at our request. 36% of members paid by Standing Order Mandate, and my sincere thanks must go to all these members for easing my heavy workload.

**Extra donations - My thanks must also go** to the many members who also made donations to the Association, along with their regular subscription payments.

**As my statement of accounts list, our main expenditure has again been the production and postage of "Flashpoint"**, but as I have stated on many occasions in the past, this expenditure is very much "value for money" and is I feel, a fully justified expenditure (again, very well done Dave).

Our other large outgoing payment was to the Memorial Fund, located at Royal Air Force Marham. This payment you will remember was approved by the attending membership at our AGM at Coventry.

Mr John Savage has now been appointed by the Committee, as the Memorial's Projects Officer, he, with the help of Mr Howard Harper, will now oversee and maintain progress of this very important project.

**As you will be aware, postage costs have recently been greatly increased** by the Royal Mail, and will, if not tightly controlled, be a substantial drain on our future funds, so I feel sure you will all understand, when I state that is much more important that we are not forced to send out repeat outstanding subscription reminder letters.

**I am very pleased that Allan Brooke and his good lady, Marilyn**, have volunteered to take over the running of our merchandising operation As you will recall, I had to take over and maintain this account (Enterprises Account), after the resignation of both Mr Bob Feather and Mrs Sue Brooks.

This new operation will now be known as the RAFDFS (Shop) Account, and a new bank account with Barclays Bank plc, is being set up.

**The original "Start-up" loan, made by the Association**, to fund the commencement of the old Enterprises account, has now been repaid (with some interest), and is now being held in the main Association's bank account.

**For your information regarding possible future membership discussions**, I have also supplied those attending today's meeting, with copies of breakdowns of both Reunion events and Museum Restoration team funding, paid out by the Association over the past few years.

Geoff Varley (221) Association Treasurer  
1st March 2007

# Honorary President with ATC Cadets Guard of Honour!



**Photographs clockwise from the top to centre.**  
**Guard of Honour from 115 (Peterborough) Squadron Air Training Corps for Honorary President, Air Marshal Sir John & Lady Angela Sutton, escorted by Secretary, George Edwards.**  
**Sir John & Fg/Off Zoe Hogg of 2MT Squadron, RAF Wittering. O i/c Cadets W/O Gary Akehurst.**  
**Lady Angela cutting the 25th Reunion cake. Vice-President, Joe Shackleton escorting Lady Angela.**  
**Sir John presenting Founding Chairman, Keith Penfold, with a Certificate electing him Honorary Life President.**

**Main photo detail page 21**





## RAF Fire Service Crash Rescue Badge Design including the Phoenix World Pewter RAF Fireman & Power Saw

Dear Dave,

During the early 1980's I was stationed at the RAF West Drayton Fire Section as a Cpl Crew Commander. The term CFR, Crash Fire Rescue, had been in general use a short while namely as an overall title for Airport Fire Services and as a general term for any type of airport foam vehicle i.e. Crash Fire Rescue Truck. The term RIV - RAFid Intervention Vehicle had also entered the English language.

I had been toying with the idea of producing an eight-pointed fire service star with this terminology teamed with the words "Royal Air Force Crash Fire Rescue Service". One of the SAC's at West Drayton at the time was Duncan Heyes and he produced for me a drawing of the finished badge that I wanted to use on a cap badge. Being a very unofficial badge Steve Davey said, when shown the design, that we had the wording Royal Air Force in the correct position i.e. at the top of the ring. This wouldn't, he explained, bring the wrath of the Gods down on us and he was correct.

I sent the design off to The London Badge and Button Company who said that they would produce the initial batch of fifty badges at a reasonable price for us and then would take over the design/mould to produce further badges for sale as charity items for the Benefit Fund etc. This was agreed and we set about selling the fifty badges, which did sell rather quickly, and the initial batch was ordered and eventually delivered. Mind you we did bend a few arms in the process. The original cap badge was an eight-pointed star without a Crown on it. We numbered those badges 1-50, simple really.

In the late 80's I had some lapel badges made up copying the original design and 100 of these were purchased as give-aways on visits to Fire Services that my wife Judy and I attended. After all these years, I still have a few left.

One thing that really upset me when we first had these produced was that a Badge Dealer from London conned a lovely Irishman who was an ex-RAF Fireman out of £27.00! The initial cost to the dealer in those days would have been no more than £2 or £3. The dealer had advertised this badge as a "Special Edition" he never did reply to my letter I wrote to him and I had regularly brought badges from him but never again. I found this out when we attended from West Drayton an Open Day at the LFB fire station at Stanmore

and this gentleman came up to talk to me about this special badge that he had been sold. I really did feel for the chap.

I was surprised when I ordered a cap badge from the Association to see our design with the addition of the Crown on it drop through the letterbox but, must admit that the Crown makes a pleasing addition to my original design.

Again at RAF West Drayton I was there when Phoenix World first produced the original figure of the RAF Fireman with Power Saw. I had a large collection of pewter fireman figures and many other items of a fire service nature. Ken Storey a young SAC had discussed with others and I about getting a figure produced for the RAF. Initial contacts with the Company seemed to be good so Ken set out to organise the figure.

He went across to RAF Northolt and photographed a Cpl dressed in crash kit and holding the saw. Once the photos were developed he sent them off and received a reply from the Company saying thanks and they would consider producing a figure. Hearing no more from them he was surprised to get many months later a very apologetic letter stating that the original modeller had messed up and it had been given to someone else who if my memory serves me well was their main master modeller. A further wait of a few months finally saw a small neat package delivered to Ken at the Fire Section office and on opening it a very smart, crisp silvery figure was displayed. The rest as they say is history.

Judy purchased one of these figures for my birthday and said that she would get it painted for me. But not by the Company as I had seen some figures superbly painted and put on display for sale in a small jewellers shop in a side street in Uxbridge. The artist was a petite young blond teenage girl who was the daughter of the owner and she had already painted a "French Maid" figure for me. I gave her a photograph to copy the colour scheme and a few weeks later we were asked back to the shop to collect the finished article. I couldn't figure out what the white line was on the side of the saw until I looked at the photograph and found it was the white masking tape stating RAF Bruggen.

Alan Godfree Member No: 79.

## Letter of Appreciation

Dear Dave,

Brian Whiting, member 629.

Thank you so much for your very kind letter of condolence for my husband, Brian, together with copies of the August 2006 Flashpoint, and January 2007 magazine. I am very grateful, and appreciate them very much.

I know Frank Smith (543) had been in touch with you, about Brian, and he asked if I had seen Brian's memoriam in the Flashpoint, but I hadn't received it last year.

Frank and Brian had been great friends since they met at RAF Honiley. He used to visit, and keep us updated about the reunions as, unfortunately; Brian was unable to attend because of disability. Frank is not very well, and he is still in hospital.

If it is possible, I would like to continue sending the yearly subscription on behalf of Brian's memory, if it will help your Association funds? If not, I will send a donation. I would like to receive copies of Flashpoint please. Thanking you again.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret

Footnote: Frank is now out of hospital but is still unwell after suffering a serious lung problem and is recovering at home. On your behalf, I wish him well and a quick recovery to better health - Ed.

### Fireman's Prayer

**When I am called to duty, God,  
wherever flames may rage, give  
me strength to save some life  
whatever be its age, help me  
embrace a little child before  
it is too late, or save an older  
person from the horror of that  
fate.**

Footnote: I found this version on a key ring and include it for comparison with others of the same name - Ed.



# Letters to the Editor

Dear Dave,

Please find a story, which you may wish to publish in Flashpoint. I thought it might interest our members as it has links with firefighting and Hull.

The poem should be published in the format that it is presented in, but there might be difficulties with this, which I appreciate.

Regards,

Steve (Silverfox) Harrison

## Links with Kingston upon Hull - Father and Son

After an enjoyable reunion at Hull I was inspired to share with the members mine, and my father's, links with Hull and fire fighting.

Many of the members who carried out their fire training at Sutton on Hull may recall the ragged look of Hull with its many gaps where buildings used to be before the war. It took many years before this war torn city was rebuilt. Like many ports and industrial towns Hull took quite a beating during the war.

I was born after the war in 1947, and I grew up playing on those bombsites and spent many a night along with my sister listening to my parents telling their stories of the war. My parents were bombed out of their houses five times. My father was a firefighter and often came home after long shifts (often days) to find his home had disappeared! I listen in wide-eyed wonder at the stories my father told about his firefighting adventures. He told us many stories like getting shot at by an aircraft while taking on water from a dyke and getting caught in an air raid while cycling over a bridge and it disappearing behind him, the aircraft making a direct hit on the bridge. Many more horrific episodes my father was involved in came only via my mother, and as we all understand there are certain situations that we just prefer not to talk about.

One traumatic experience my father had was when he attended a scene in 1941 when a parachute mine killed 60 people in a communal shelter. My mother said it really affected him, but in those times you just had to get on with it. No time for counselling!

If we thought we had a few 'shouts' then read this- between May 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 1941 the Hull Fire Service tackled over 800 fires, 50

people were killed and over 2,000 dwellings destroyed or damaged. The people of Hull who lived there during the war will never forget the courage of those who served in the Fire Service and saved the city from becoming a wasteland.

When I joined the RAF I went to RAF Catterick to carry out my fire training and at that time I was quite ignorant of the fact that the RAF Fire Service School used to be at Hull.

My father was not fully supportive when I decided to join up but when he realized I was to become a firefighter he started to tell me more about his time in the Fire Service. It was during these conversations that he told me had helped in the training of RAF personnel at Sutton.

Needless to say when I arrived at my first unit, which was RAF Strubby/ Manby there were lads who had trained at Sutton, and I was asked numerous questions about Hull. Mainly about pubs and certain ladies that frequented Paragon Station area!

Over the years I have written poetry and one I wrote is called 'A North East Town' the title comes from a phrase from the radio when reports of bombing was announced. They never mention the actual place names and Hull as always referred to as 'a north east town' which is strange as Hull is a city (sorry a bit of pride coming out) I should imagine that people from similar background as myself will identify with it and lads that know Hull or come from Hull will recognize a few names.

### **In a North East Town**

In a north east town the bombs  
rained down  
where my father fought the fires of hell.  
As those bombs fell, who could foretell  
How it was to change our lives.

In the grey days after the sirens  
upon a mound of bomb strewn rocks,  
stood a grubby urchin  
short grey trousers, wrinkled grey socks.  
Although the winter air ruddied his  
complexion  
he stood there.....in quiet retrospection.  
knowing his country had not heard the  
word.....'Subjection'

No pleasant playgrounds  
for this little fellow

no cut fields and pretty flowers yellow.  
Only streets of houses, looking akin  
to a row of bad teeth, gaps within.  
Bomb created playgrounds, filled  
with laughing sounds, smoke from  
the urchin's bonfire...swirls all around.

Where once stood the boy  
now stands the man.

In modern suburban bliss.  
Looking back...fondly remembering  
his mothers warm welcoming kiss....  
Stew and dumplings in a cracked dish,  
the smell of dads overalls....stinking of  
fish

Watching grey smoke from  
a chimney stack  
more memories of youth come  
flooding back...

The coalman delivering sacks of  
'Nutty Slack'  
the smell of damp washing, drying  
on a rack...

Cold meat and chips adorned with  
'HP Sauce'

Hull Brewery beer casks drawn by  
a dray horse,  
Along the High Street.....home of Wil-  
liam Wilberforce.

To the corporation pier to  
watch the ships  
chattering teeth and cold blue lips.  
A mug of tea, consumed in warm wel-  
coming sips.

His only sister now grown up,  
His thoughts turned....  
Should he join the Naval ships?  
Or go to the action! On the RAF air-  
strips?

So he left to serve the Crown  
Fondly remembering .....  
his north east town.

Steve Harrison 1997 (published in Anthology: Observing Life – Poetry Today).  
Thanks for that Steve - Ed.

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# Letters to the Editor

## From Air Marshal Sir John Sutton KCB

12th March, 2007  
Mr George Edwards BEM 8 East Close  
Ecclestone Park  
Prescot  
Merseyside  
L34 2RA

### *Dear George*

I write to you - and through you if I may to those others involved - for such an enjoyable evening and dinner on the occasion of your 25th reunion in Peterborough last Saturday. It was very clear from the outset that no effort had been spared to ensure that the evening was a huge success. It certainly was just that and I hope all those involved in the preparations felt their efforts were well rewarded.

I was delighted to see the link between your Association and the young by having those very smart cadets lined up for the welcome at the entrance and thought it a nice touch to give them a framed certificate afterwards. The special menus and the cake featuring fire engines was also nice to see and added significantly to the occasion. Perhaps most impressive of all was the size of your gathering. As I said at the time, as the Services get smaller many Associations find it difficult to keep up their numbers but yours clearly goes from strength to strength. It is very nice to see and shows the extent of the bond built up over the years.

I hope we did not offend by leaving rather early but I am most grateful to you for taking fully into account my wife's spinal problems and for the arrangements which enabled us to slip away. Everyone was having such an enjoyable time I suspect that many continued well into the small hours.

Thank you all again for your kind hospitality. I gather you sometimes get together with some of your "museum" appliances. If you do perhaps I could join you there.

Yours sincerely,

*John Sutton*

## Letter of Appreciation - Angela Sutton

12<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Dear George,

I was very touched to be presented with such a magnificent bouquet of flowers on Saturday evening. They really are magnificent. Thank you very much indeed.

Do please pass on my appreciation of not only the flowers but the excellent dinner. You have obviously found the right formula for a successful and well attended gathering. We were delighted to meet so many people and to be looked after so well.

I just hope you have a competent person to take over your job? These occasions do not 'just happen' but take a lot of time, thought and preparation. My congratulations to everyone involved.

I do hope this will be the first of many happy events with the Association.

Yours sincerely,

*Angela*

## THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM - THE HENDON PAGEANT RETURNS!

**Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 2007 - Time: 1000 - 1800 - Admission: FREE**

In the 1920's and '30's, thousands flocked to RAF Hendon to enjoy examples of aviation prowess and the latest in military aircraft technology. Now the Museum hosts a special weekend of events, hailing back to the glory years and history of this legendary site! Come and enjoy the **Royal Air Force Museum's Hendon Pageant 2007**, an open air living history experience demonstrating the story of the world's oldest independent air force. Meet costumed interpreters and watch them in action. Enjoy the sights and sounds of genuine historic equipment and vehicles and a wartime Spitfire. Time-travel with us, back to the dark days of the Second World War where you can see Battle of Britain fighter pilots at dispersal, poised to scramble at a moments notice. See how Britain's anti-aircraft defences prepare for the onslaught of the Luftwaffe. Sign up as a recruit in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and see raw recruits put through their paces on the drill square.

Then leap in time to 1944 and catch the action beyond D-Day – a temporary landing strip in Normandy with pilot and RAF Servicing Commandos rushing to get a Spitfire prepared for the next attack on enemy positions. See a detachment of the Queen's Royal Regiment in camp before they go into action and members of the RAF Regiment explain their story. Also on display is a selection of genuine wartime vehicles across the site. Go back in time to 1930 to hear and see Miss Amy Johnson as she plans to tackle her greatest adventure to date, a flight from the UK to Australia. Hear presentations from expert speakers on themes such as the Golden Age of Flight and RAF Hendon's role in the Battle of Britain. Enjoy the music of The Barnet Band (Sunday afternoon only). A range of activities is available for younger visitors during the weekend. Entry to the event and to the rest of the Museum site is **FREE**.

**Notes To Editors:** • Royal Air Force Museum, Grahame Park Way, London, NW9 5LL

- Free admission and parking to Museum halls
- Nearest tube Colindale, Northern Line

• For further information, photos and all media enquiries please contact: Ajay Srivastava: **02083586410** or email: [ajay@rafmuseum.org](mailto:ajay@rafmuseum.org)

### Air Ministry Fire Service, Air Force Department Fire Service, Defence Fire Services & Defence Fire and Rescue Service

Dear Sir,  
I have read with great interest your Brief History of the Royal Air Force Fire Service and also that of the Defence Fire and Rescue Service, and have enjoyed looking at the different cap badges. Alas, nowhere have I seen, or read, anything to do with the Air Ministry Fire Service, (AMFS), which I served in, from 1963 to 1968, when we were taken over by the RAF Fire Service, (RAF Regiment), returning to the UK from overseas bases that were closing down.

I joined the AMFS at RAF Little Rissington, and was on permanent detachment to RAF Fairford. We were responsible for the first RAF Red Arrows Team, (flying Gnats), then VC10's, Belfasts and a host of others would drop in from time to time. We were, even then, a NATO, (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation), landing strip. We had 1 Land rover, 1 MK6, 1 MK5, 1 DP 2 and a DP1. All the crews trained at RAF Manston, Central Training Establishment, (CTE). As you can see from the photo enclosed, my cap badges are very different from those shown in the magazine. The silver one, (my first badge), says, Air Ministry Fire Service. The second says, Fire Service Air Force Department. We had to wear a Regiment shoulder flash when the RAF moved out in 1967.

I would like to know where, if anywhere, the Air Ministry Fire Service fits in with your RAF & Defence Fire Services Association. I feel a bit like a poor relation at the moment, and would be grateful if you can fit me into your family tree, somewhere, or I might find I have to give up my membership, (751), which would be sad as I enjoy the magazine.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Mawer

**Footnote:** Thanks very much for asking the questions, Chris. I will try to answer your queries by first referring to the Brief History of the Association on page 2. Due to lack of space, it isn't possible to cram in every detail but, says in paragraph 3 of the Intervening Years, "*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 became the Defence Fire & Rescue Service. Together we are the Royal Air Force and Defence Fire Services Association.*" That includes the Air Ministry Fire Service, and the Air Force Department Fire Service, then the Defence Fire Services and now the Defence Fire and Rescue Service, of today.

I hope this explains where you are in our family tree? Also, if I tell you that I did 5 years as an RAF fireman, before joining the AMFS at Shawbury, (with a silver cap badge), and served from 1963 to 1966, before redundancies saw me leave and return home to Yorkshire, where I joined the West Riding County Fire Service and served two years at Leeds and Bradford Airport, before continuing as a local authority fireman until retirement in 1991. So, Chris, you're not on your own and we have other members from a similar background and trust this means that you will stay with us? Thank you for your item and may it inspire a response from other ex-AMFS/AFDFS/DFS and DF&RS. I do hope so. See front cover and page 23 for update – Ed?



# ROBERT CAPA "THE GREATEST WAR PHOTOGRAPHER"

MAGNUM PHOTOS 60TH ANNIVERSARY



**ROBERT CAPA** - American, b. (Budapest) 1913 - d. (Indochina) 1954

On December 3, 1938, Picture Post introduced "The Greatest War Photographer in the World: Robert Capa" with a spread of 26 photographs taken during the Spanish Civil War at the battle of Ebro.

The "greatest war photographer" hated war. He was born Andre Friedman, a Jew from Budapest, and studied political science at the Deutsche Hochschule für Politik in Berlin (1931-33). At the same time he was working part-time in the lab of the Ullstein magazines group to whom he sold his first published picture of Leon Trotsky's 1931 Copenhagen meeting. Driven out of the country by the beginnings of the Nazi regime, he settled in Paris in 1933.



In Paris he participated in the beginnings of the agency Alliance Photo and met the journalist and photographer, Gerda Taro. Together they invented the "famous" American photographer Robert Capa and sold his prints under that name. He met many artists, among them Picasso and Hemingway, and began friendships with colleagues that would be essential in the creation of Magnum, such as David "Chim" Seymour and Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Beginning in 1936, Capa's coverage of the Spanish Civil War appeared regularly in Vu, Regards, Ce Soir, Weekly Illustrated and Life. His 1936 picture of the Loyalist soldier falling to his death brought him international reputation and became a powerful symbol of war. In Spain Capa also shot newsreels for March of Time, Time-Life's film department.



From 1939-45 he photographed World War II including the D/Day landing of American troops on Omaha beach on 6th June 1944 - After his companion Gerda Taro was killed in Spain Capa travelled to China (1938), then emigrated to New York in 1939. From 1939-45 he photographed World War II (most famously the landing of American troops on Omaha Beach, the Liberation of Paris and the Battle of the Bulge) as a Life and Collier's correspondent in Europe.



In 1947 he founded Magnum Photos, in conjunction with Henri Cartier-Bresson, David Seymour, George Rodger and William Vandivert. The next year Capa

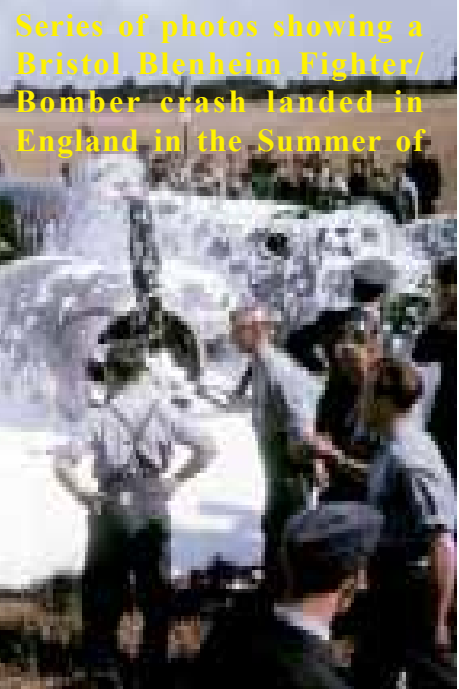
travelled to Russia with John Steinbeck, and from 1948-1950 to Israel with Irwin Shaw, completing the first of a number of stories for Holiday. In 1951 he became president of Magnum and initiated several group projects involving all his colleagues.

Robert Capa died on May 25, 1954, in Thai-Binh, Indochina, after stepping on a land mine while photographing for Life. He was awarded the War Cross with Palm by the French army. The Robert Capa Gold Medal Award was established in 1955 to reward exceptional professional merit.

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Footnote: This item was first published in The Times Sunday magazine on the 29th May 2004 and was sent in thanks to Ernie Fisher as a possible future Flashpoint article. Now, at last, I've dug it from the archive for this issue and hope it invokes memories for some of our Elder Statesmen.

It also gives an insight to younger members into the pre History of the RAF Fire Service prior to 1943, when the Trade of Fireman was first introduced, and the cutting edge of technology included asbestos suits! At the time, it was down to the Aircraft Handlers/General Duties, (ACH/GD), personnel commonly known as "Odds and Sods" who paraded and were then detailed on a daily basis to undertake fire fighting duties, with fire vehicles being driven by MT Drivers - Ed.



Series of photos showing a Bristol Blenheim Fighter/Bomber crash landed in England in the Summer of

# ARRIVAL OF NEW COBRA 2 FIRE VEHICLE @ MOD St



## **MOD ST ATHAN FIRE SERVICE & ARRIVAL OF NEW FIRE VEHICLE**

First of all, many of you may be asking the question, why MOD St Athan and not RAF St Athan as it used to be when I was there, either on a posting or driving course? The site is now a multiple agency occupied site, i.e., RAF, Army and DARA to name a few, hence the reason for the MOD prefix.

The Fire Service at MOD St Athan recently took delivery of a new Cobra 2 fire vehicle from vehicle manufacturers, AMDAC CARMICHAEL. The Fire Service at St Athan is unique in the fact that it is a mixture of 15 RAF and 11 Civilian Fire-fighters, employed by DARA and operating the Fire Service on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government. The arrival of the new vehicle is the result of over two years work by personnel at St Athan and the vehicle manufacturers, it replaces a vehicle that has been on hire. As you all know, it is unusual for a Fire Section to purchase such major equipment on its own, as they are normally all MOD contracts. It was a very steep learning curve for all involved and thanks must go to the manufacturers for helping out along the way, particularly during one very sticky period in the middle of the contract. You can see by the photos that the Fire Section has had a wide and varied fleet over the last three years, even loaning from Cardiff Airport. It has certainly been interesting from the fire-fighters point of view. The Fire Service will now be able to operate its own fleet, enabling fire cover to be provided to all of the agencies that make MOD St Athan such a unique location.

Stevie. B. 413

# Member W/O Dave Starkings Retires From RAF

## Royal Air Force Marham

Media & Communication Officer

### PRESS RELEASE



#### WO DAVE STARKINGS MBE RETIRES AFTER 37 YEARS SERVICE 1970 - 2007

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February marked the end of an era for Norfolk born and bred Warrant Officer David Alan Starkings. He left the main gates of RAF Marham for the final time after completing a total of 37 years in the Royal Air Force as a Fireman.

This momentous occasion was marked by hosting a gathering of close friends and colleagues from across the years to a formal dinner in the

Warrant Officers & Sergeants Mess at RAF Marham. A fantastic and memorable event, where the level of attendance proved testimony to a very popular and highly respected individual. Having served overseas in Masirah in the Persian Gulf, Bruggen in Germany, working with NATO in the Netherlands, The Falkland Islands and Basrah in addition to several UK based postings including Conningsby, Coltishall, St Mawgan and Marham culminating in what has been a diverse and successful vocation.

In Her Majesty the Queen's New Years Honour list (2006) Warrant Officer Starkings was awarded the MBE for his efforts in Basrah, his contributions to the organisation of both the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford and Operation FRESCO (Military cover for the Civil Fire Service strike) where he was based in Norwich as well as his charity fund raising for Children In Need over several years.

Warrant Officer Starkings (Retired) who resides in Wroxham with his wife Georgina and sons Bradley and Fraser, leaves the Service with proud and fond memories of a varied and distinguished career within the Royal Air Force.

Footnote: Many thanks to Flt/Sgt Dave Tudge, RAF Marham Fire Section, and Denise Foggett, Assistant Media and Communications Officer, for arranging to send the article for inclusion in Flashpoint, which I'm delighted to do - Ed.



Group Photo – Warrant Officer Starkings and friends.  
Acting Station Commander,  
Wing Commander Mike Barley  
toasting Warrant Officer Dave  
Starkings . Photos taken by: Senior  
Aircraftsman Ashley Keates.



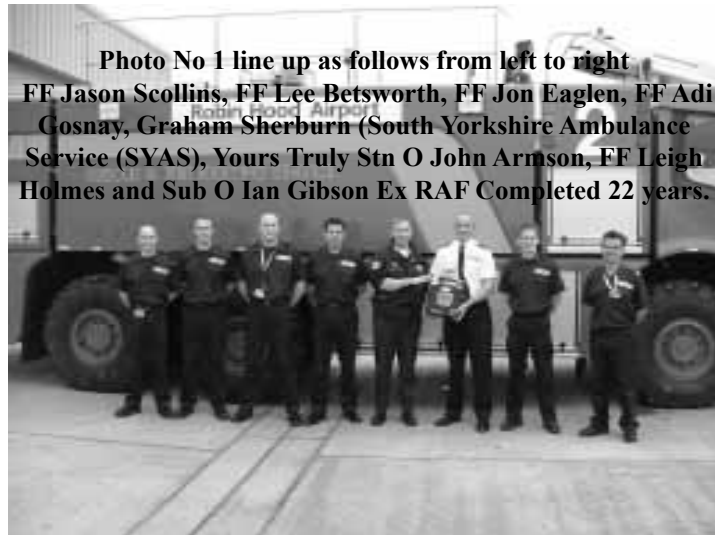
# Ex - RAF Finningley - Robin Hood Airport & RAF

**THIS MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED IN PEACE AND IN CONFLICT AT RAF FINNINGLEY.**

**THE MEMORIAL COMPRISES TWO ELEMENTS. THE FIRST CONTAINS DETAILS OF THE UNITS AND SQUADRONS, WHICH OPERATED FROM OR NEAR THIS SITE FROM 1916 - 1996.**

**THE OTHER, A STAINLESS STEEL SCULPTURE ENTITLED "AVIATOR", REFLECTS THE AIRFIELD'S COMMERCIAL FUTURE.**

I'm grateful to member, StnO John Armson, Oi/c Red Watch for sending this item, which featured earlier in the RAF NEWS - Ed.



**Photo No 1 line up as follows from left to right  
FF Jason Scollins, FF Lee Betsworth, FF Jon Eaglen, FF Adi Gosnay, Graham Sherburn (South Yorkshire Ambulance Service (SYAS)), Yours Truly Stn O John Armson, FF Leigh Holmes and Sub O Ian Gibson Ex RAF Completed 22 years.**



## **HEROES OF THE FIRE SERVICE - BRUMMIE YATES BEM**

### **LONDON GAZETTE CITATION**

#### **AIR FORCE DEPARTMENT**

#### **CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD**

St. James's Palace, London

S.W.1

3rd February 1970.

The Queen has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the British Empire Medal for Gallantry (Military Division) to the undermentioned:

N4262076 Senior Aircraftman John Richard Yates, Royal Air Force Regiment.

On the 29th July 1969, Senior Aircraftman Yates was in charge of the Domestic Fire Crew at Royal Air Force, Wildenrath, which was called to a fire in the Blacksmith's shop, MPBW, at 0902 hours. The fire had started when rubber hose lines connected to an oxyacetylene apparatus in use had ruptured. Gas escaped from the acetylene cylinder was ignited and the broken hose lines quickly burnt away. When the Domestic Fire Crew arrived

minutes, he eventually managed to close it and the fire was extinguished.

Senior Aircraftman Yates displayed commendable courage in extinguishing the fire. He was well aware of the dangers which confronted him, yet, with total disregard for his own safety, he approached the burning cylinder and successfully arrested the fire. By his prompt, cool and courageous action and correct decisions he prevented a dangerous situation from developing into a serious accident, which could have resulted in death or injury to a number of airmen. If the acetylene cylinder had exploded, the linked oxygen cylinder could have exploded also, the building would have been extensively damaged and there would have been grave risk of immediately adjacent buildings catching fire. Senior Aircraftman Yates's devotion to duty was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Service.

3rd February 1970.

#### **ROYAL AIR FORCE**

See page 18 for Brummies letter and photo

at the site of the fire some three minutes after the sounding of the alarm the fire had been burning for seven minutes. Senior Aircraftman Yates quickly assessed the problem and promptly ordered the eight personnel in the immediate vicinity to evacuate the area.

Then, assisted by one fireman, who at all times was protected by the wall of the building, he sprayed the apparatus with water to lower its temperature, thus lessening the chance of hot spots and reducing the possibility of the acetylene cylinder exploding. It is, however, inadvisable to extinguish this type of fire with water or foam compound without also closing the outlet valves on the gas cylinder. The valve on the oxygen cylinder had already been closed. Senior Aircraftman Yates decided that, as the leader of the Fire Crew, it was his responsibility to attempt to close the outlet valve on the acetylene cylinder, even though he was aware that the cylinder might explode. He entered the building, and with his hands protected by asbestos gloves, he attempted to close the valve. Initially he was unsuccessful but, after struggling with the valve for about two

# Your Stories - One by the Late John Taylor

## 'THE NIGHT TEESIDE HELD ITS BREATH' JULY 24th 1971 - THE STORY OF THE BRITISH STEEL

Driving to work for the 10pm - 6am shift towards ICI Wilton Fire Station from my home at Marske on a balmy summer's evening in late July 1971, I noticed dark black clouds gathering over the Cleveland Hills and heard the distant rumble of thunder. Little did I realise as I parked my car and reported to Bill Shephard, the shift controller, that the night of the 24th July to the morning of the 25th, would be a night to remember.

Tom Welsh, the shift Fire Officer, had detailed me to work with the maintenance van throughout the coming shift. The maintenance van was used at the station to carry out various duties like replacing fire extinguishers on the site plants, or delivering compressed air cylinders for standby duties. In an emergency, the van became a fire appliance, carrying rescue equipment and essential tools that may be needed at a fire scene.

Whilst taking over from the previous shift driver and testing the emergency equipment which included breathing apparatus, the storm became violent, large forks of lightning lit up the hills beyond the site; with each flash the area became daylight for a few seconds. The storm was now directly overhead.

My mind flashed back to a similar scene I witnessed as a small child with my mother during the second world war of a similar intense storm when barrage balloons around Middlesbrough were hit by lightning and floated down to earth in huge balls of fire.

Before finishing the equipment test, the station alarm sounded, Tom Welsh rushed to the control room, Bill Shephard shouted through the open door, "No 4 polythene, Tom, Vent stack hit, hydrogen fire at the top of the structure".

Teesside Fire Brigade from the Redcar and Grangetown stations was called as 'back up'. The fire was quickly dealt with and all units began to return to base. Over the radio came a second call, another lightening strike at the Terylene plant, and a second reported at Nylon Solvents.

Tom Welsh decided to split the crews and deal with the incidents individually and requested further back up. Over the radio, he requested the control room to inform First Fire Officer Danny Waters to be informed, as the situation on the site was now becoming serious, Bill Shephard, replied, that he was already on his way and would be on site in a few minutes. When Denny Waters arrived on the fire ground, the sub officer from Grangetown brigade informed him that he had to withdraw his crews as a very serious situation had occurred at British Steel, South Bank. He would alert the local Retained Crews to assist the Wilton Fire Service.

At 11 - 30 pm, the storm abated. The crews were stood down and returned to

base. Just as Danny Waters was preparing to return to his home in Redcar, Bill Shephard, called over the station tannoy, for Chief Fire Officer Waters to report to the control room to answer an urgent telephone call from Chief Fire Officer Harry Johnson Teesside, Brigade. Within minutes Denny Waters rushed from the control room and shouted, to me "get that new B.C.F. unit \* attached to the maintenance van, Tom, Help me to make a few adjustments to the couplings." Turning to me, he said, "Drive the unit to the South Bank Trolley bus station and report to me there, a gasholder at British Steel has been struck by Lightning and is in a very dangerous state".

At that time of the night the roads leading to South Bank were very quiet which was just as well when towing an unstable one tonne cylinder. Over the bridge on Middlesbrough Road next to the old trolley bus terminus, ten appliances and police patrol cars blocked the approach roads to South Bank Coke ovens and the road leading to Middlesbrough. Denny Waters was already speaking to Harry Johnson as I approached. "Look this is the situation" Harry Johnson. Said, "I have withdrawn my crews from the Holder to a distance of one mile, its on fire at the top, the piston valve is jammed and pressure is building up, it could explode at any minute, I am about to give the order to withdraw to a further distance and request the police to evacuate the residents of the area, all shipping on the Tees has been warned to set sail and also to clear the docks. Only a few essential workers remain on British Steel Site, the rest have been told to clear the area."

"The men remaining have volunteered to stay; I now have to ask you both if you will go in there and use the B.C.F.? If you refuse I will understand." A decision was taken between Denny Waters and me that we would both go in. Driving towards the base of the holder we were met by Mr Larker Manager of South Bank Coke Ovens, who explained that it was essential the metal piston be cooled to allow it to descend, and withdraw off excess coke gas. A small explosion had already occurred distorting the piston which would make this a difficult operation. (Additional information from Denny Waters: An input of "coke gas" basically, a high % of methane had to be maintained between the free weather proof roof to ensure air (oxygen) was not induced to create a highly flammable (Explosive mixture) - Vapour explosive formation.

A fitter C. Crowther in the meantime had fitted a valve to the base of the holder and after a quick inspection of the B.C.F. unit made an adaptation to marry the unit to the base of the holder. Once this was completed the fire B.C.F. was released into the holder. (Additional information D. Waters, The

injection of B.C.F. (Halon 1211) re-acted to create inert gas conditions resulting in reduction of flame at the "Cods mouth" section of the fixed weatherproof roof, concern was extremely high that due to a change of the direction of wind radiated heat! Tom the holder flame was being transmitted to the nearby methanol tank

After a few anxious minutes wait, the flames at the top of the holder started to reduce and then finally disappeared; however the metal was still hot and could re-ignite the gas at any time. We now had a very potentially dangerous situation, loose gas in an explosive state. Three carbon dioxide tankers had been summoned from ICI Billingham to counteract this situation and they were immediately attached to the holder and the liquefied gas was released inside the gasholder. This also helped to contract the piston allowing it to descend and surplus gas withdrawn. During the gas holder emergency Wilton Fire control room became the command centre for the Gas Holder operation, messages and decisions were passed through the control room to various emergency services which was later describe by all concerned as of the highest standard and a degree of co-operation between both industries (IC! & British Steel)

Five o'clock, Sunday morning 25th. July and the situation was now under control, the team began to relax, except for one final scare. Every one froze in horror as they noticed the top of the holder glowing red. Somebody shouted, "Don't worry its only the rising sun reflecting off the top". At 5.30am, the situation was declared safe, six hours after the initial lightening strike, but it would be another fifteen hours before all emergency services would be withdrawn.

Later, in the site manager's offices, the coke oven manager showed Danny and me photo's of a previous gasholder explosion that had happened in Germany many years previous. The blast shown from an aerial view was disturbing; a town the size of Middlesbrough had been completely blown apart with enormous loss of life. I dread to think of what would have happened if B.C.F (halogen 1211) and liquid had not been available that particular night.

Late John Taylor, November 2000.

\* B.C.F. (Bromochlorodifluoromethane)

Note: John's passing was recorded in Flashpoint, August 2006, using the photo



below: L/R - John Hewit, John Taylor, Joe Shackleton and the late Jim Souter, outside St James'

Those of you unable to attend the reunions will be aware that we have a range of promotional RAFDFA goods for sale, all profits of which go to Association funds. Goods are also available by mail order via Allan and Marilyn Brooke 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: al.maz@ntlworld.com**

**Note:- For Mail Order - All items will be subject to postage and packaging, which will be calculated per individual order. The customer will be informed of the cost and then, when payment is received, the order will be despatched.**

**Cheques and Postal Orders to be made payable to RAFDFA Shop A/C**

## STOCK AND PRICE LIST 2007

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RED T SHIRTS, OVERALLS, POLO SHIRTS, BASEBALL CAPS, SHOWER PROOF SOFT BAGS, ALL WITH (VEHICLE RESTORATION TEAM), C.R.A.S.H. LOGO TO ORDER.

\*The Commemorative FSCTE Print shown right is taken from an original painting by Eric Day, commissioned by Air Commodore Witherow, and presented to the FSCTE, RAF Manston. It represents the combining of the RAF and DFS Fire Services Training establishments of Catterick and Manston. Brian Harris, member 393, Curator of the Manston Fire Museum, supplied the prints - Ed.

\*\* Fire Engine Print shown 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, Thornycroft Dual Purpose Tender MK 2 (DP2), Alvis Pyrene MK6, Alvis Stalwart, (Stollie) **Centre:** **Left to right:** Dual Purpose Tender MK1, (DP1), Thornycroft MK5 and ACRT,





## **Urgent! - 'One for the Diary'**

**Marne Barracks Army Open Day Event  
Ex - RAF Catterick, North Yorkshire  
Scheduled for Saturday 23rd June 2007**

**DUE TO OPERATIONAL COMMITMENTS  
THE 2007 CATTERICK ARMY EVENT HAS  
BEEN CANCELLED!**

**George Edwards Secretary**

## **Next Issue**

- RAF Marham Memorial
- Airport Fire Services x 2
- RAF Lakenheath visit
- FSCTE RAF Manston visit
- More photographic memories
- 

## **PRINTING ERROR APOLOGY - JANUARY 2007 ISSUE**

**'ONE FOR THE FLASHPOINT 2 + 2 + 6'** Letters page 9 - Should have read:  
2 + 2 = 6 Apologies to member, Steve Doran for that- Ed.

## **WANTED - GOOD HOME FOR PROJECTOR AND SCREEN!**

Member, Ron Newsome, has one surplus to his requirements and will donate it free of charge to a worthy new owner. New owner to arrange for collection!

**Hanimex 2100RF, Instructions, Spare bulb, Carousel, 2 x Universal Slide Magazines and 4ft 'Artist' Collapsible Screen on Tripod.**

Apply in the first instance to the editor and I'll pass your details on to Ron.

**DEADLINE FOR  
ENTRIES FOR NEXT  
FLASHPOINT ISSUE  
DUE SEPTEMBER 07  
1 AUGUST 2007**

## **HEROES OF THE FIRE SERVICE - BRUMMIE YATES**

Dear George,

Playing about on the computer a few days ago, I put my details into the London Gazette just to see if I could get a copy of the citation for my BEM, as the copy I had was on an old and very tatty piece of A4 paper. As you will see by the enclosed, I was successful. Do you want to put it in the proposed book? I also enclose the official 'Photograph' if you want to use it?

Other detail of the incident that may be of use for example; why was an SAC in charge of the crew? Well the 'crew' was odds and sods as the official Domestic Crew was in MT at the time either getting fuel or having a minor defect sorted? The I/C crash crew, Sgt Rickey Burren, Scotsman & Ex Rock, sent me, Fmn Gerrard (Poppa) Sholtz, and Geordie Osborn, to have a look to see what we could do until the 'Official Domestic Crew' could be contacted and sent to the fire. The rest is in the citation.

Some people might not know what MPBW (Ministry of Public Buildings and Works) means? It was the Works Department that came between AMWD (Air Ministry Works Dept) and DOE/PSA.

The two things that come to mind, when I think back about it was, after the incident, I went home to my married quarter to get some dry crash kit. (Crash kit wasn't all that waterproof in those days, after it had been dry cleaned a few times) I had only a few days to do before I was posted to Binbrook and went into the house, which was being prepared for March Out. That was a big mistake!! She moaned and winged at me for days after for putting dirty hands on the wall of the hall etc. The other is the day I was told that I was awarded the BEM, (I was at Binbrook by this time Feb 1970), and went home to tell her that I was getting a medal. "What for?" she said, "You haven't been to Ireland!" (GSM was just starting for Northern Ireland). To say my ego had been deflated is an understatement!

By the way, Alan Waddle who is a member of the Association was also awarded the BEM for Gallantry, but don't know if you knew that? Also, I had a lad on my section who had been awarded a Royal Humane Society Medal for Saving Life for pulling a pilot out of a crashed



Hawk at Chivenor. His name was, SAC Carl Austin, (Ozzie). I last heard of him in the Manchester Fire Service about 7 years ago. Anyway, I hope the enclosed is of some use. All the best.

Brummie Yates

See page 15 for  
London Gazette Citation.

# RAF & Defence Fire Services News, Views & Updates

## **POTENTIAL RECRUIT SELECTION**

Remember the days when you were conscripted into the RAF and told you would be this trade or that, perhaps you are slightly younger and had a little choice of trade, as long as they didn't need to make up the numbers in the Regiment!!!

Well, those days have now all gone, this is a brief insight into the early stages of a young civilian who thinks he or she may wish to join us.

**The candidates first of all make contact** with their local Armed Forces Careers Office (AFCO) and go through the admin process and medicals etc. They are then informed that they will have to attend a Specialist Interview for the trade of Fire-fighter. The Specialist Interview is held at MOD Manston in Kent, an area familiar to many of you no doubt. Two Assessors and two Instructors that are drawn from the trade as a whole, coming from various RAF Stations in the UK, look after the candidates. MOD Manston personnel provide a very good support service during this Specialist Interview process.

**The potential candidate arrives by 16:00** (familiar time?) on the Monday; the two RAF Fire-fighter Instructors meet them during the evening. This part of the exercise is to ensure that they can follow instructions given to them at the Guardroom and of course that they can arrive on time. The two Senior RAF Fire-fighter Assessors check on the arrival times of the candidates when they book in at the Guardroom.

**Tuesday is the first time** that the Candidates meet the Assessors, they are informed of the activities and the standards expected of them. From this stage they are under no illusion that it is not merely an attendance and they will have to pass all aspects of the Specialist Interviews. They are also informed how to address the Instructors, thereby getting them into the military way of things.

**After the briefing**, off to the Medical Centre for self-certification that they are fit to carry out the exercises. They have already had their Medicals at the AFCO. They are then taken up to the Station Gymnasium where they undergo a series of fitness exercises. All exercises are Gender non-specific at the moment; there are currently up to six Female Fire-fighters in the RAF so the system works.

**Upon successful completion of the fitness exercises**, the candidates are kitted out in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and this is worn at all times whilst carrying out the fire related exercises on Tuesday afternoon. After lunch, the candidates are put through a series of exercises to determine whether they have the potential for selection for the trade of Fire-fighter. Whilst carrying out these exercises, they are assessed for attitude and determination as well as team spirit.

**The exercises include**, Ladder Climb, Enclosed Space, and Hose Running. No problems there you may think, however, some candidates must still think we don't

climb ladders these days; they wobble all over the place. The hose running is timed; six lengths ran out and rolled back up in eight minutes, which usually sorts them out!! I of course do this every morning before breakfast!! Several candidates fall down in the Enclosed Space exercise, as they have never encountered anything like that before. Most of the candidates discover things about themselves whilst undertaking the Specialist Interviews.

**On the Wednesday**, Interviews are conducted to ascertain what the candidates have learnt and the knowledge gained.

**When the candidates are safely off the site**, the four RAF Fire-fighters get together and commence the selection process. At no point are the candidates told whether they have a job or not, we are only part of the process and that decision is taken by the Recruit Control Centre at RAF Cranwell. Clearly, there is a very close working relationship between the Recruiters and the Assessors.

**The RAF Fire Service continues** to be very popular and often over subscribed with potential recruits. This is good for us as we can hopefully choose the best to maintain our high standards. I hope that this has given you an insight to the recruitment process currently in place. I have tried to keep it brief believe me!!  
Stevie B. 413



## **MARATHON MAN LEE AIMS TO RUN IN FULL KIT!**

An RAF firefighter plans to run in the London Marathon in full fire fighting kit, complete with three-stone heavy, breathing apparatus.

SAC Lee Suggett, from St Athan, has taken on the task of participating in the 2007 Flora London Marathon for Macmillan Cancer Relief. He's been training improving his stamina using the runway to practice. Lee hopes to raise as much money as possible to help Macmillan continue its fantastic work, and has family members suffering from cancer. In the UK, more than a million people are living with cancer and four in ten will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime.

By the time you read this, Lee should have completed the Marathon and well done to him - Ed.

# Photographic Memories!

MOD St Athan line-up 18th September 2006  
Left to right - RIV, MFV, Cobra 2, Mk12 and Pathfinder.  
Photographs courtesy of member, Stevie Bowden



## **MOD ST ATHAN FIRE SERVICE & ARRIVAL OF NEW FIRE VEHICLE!**

First of all, many of you may be asking the question, “Why MOD St Athan and not RAF St Athan as it used to be when I was there, either on a posting or driving course?” The site is now a multiple agency occupied site, i.e., RAF, Army and DARA to name a few, hence the reason for the MOD prefix.

The Fire Service at MOD St Athan recently took delivery of a new Cobra 2 fire vehicle from vehicle manufacturers, AMDAC CARMICHAEL. The Fire Service at St Athan is unique in the fact that it is a mixture of 15 RAF and 11 Civilian Fire-fighters, employed by DARA and operating the Fire Service on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government. The arrival of the new vehicle is the result of over two years work by personnel at St Athan and the vehicle manufacturers, it replaces a vehicle that has been on hire. As you all know, it is unusual for a Fire Section to purchase such major equipment on its own, as they are normally all MOD contracts. It was a very steep learning curve for all involved and thanks must go to the manufacturers for helping out along the way, particularly during one very sticky period in the middle of the contract.

You can see by the photos that the Fire Section has had a wide and varied fleet over the last three years, even loaning from Cardiff Airport. It has certainly been interesting from the fire-fighters point of view. The Fire Service will now be able to operate its own fleet, enabling fire cover to be provided to all of the agencies that make MOD St Athan such a unique location.

Stevie. B. 413

**USEFUL ADVICE – MOBILE CALL - 112 -VERIFIED BY THE EMERGENCY SERVICES** - It was the Saturday before New Year, 1pm in the afternoon, Lauren, a 19 year old college student, was driving to visit a friend. An unmarked police car pulled up behind her and put its lights on. Lauren is one of four children and their parents have always told them never to pull over for an unmarked car on the side of the road, but rather wait until they get to a service station. Lauren remembered her parents’ advice and telephoned 112 from her mobile. This connected her to the Emergency Services. She told the police dispatcher that there was an unmarked car with a flashing red light on his rooftop behind her and that she would only pull over when she reached a service station or busy area. The dispatcher checked to see if there was a police car where she was. Finding there was not, he told her to keep driving, remain calm and that he had backup already on the way. Ten minutes later four police cars surrounded her and the unmarked car behind her. One policeman went to her side and the others surrounded the car behind. They pulled the guy from the car and tackled him to the ground – the man was a convicted rapist and wanted for other crimes.

Many people are not aware that a woman alone in a car, DOES NOT have to pull over for an unmarked car – the police have to respect your right to keep going to a ‘safe’ place. You obviously need to acknowledge them, for example by putting on your hazard lights or calling 112 as Lauren did. Too bad the mobile companies don’t give you this vital information. Please pass details on to all your friends, especially females.

Norman Marven - London Police Pensioner Magazine. Info sent from member, John Savage.

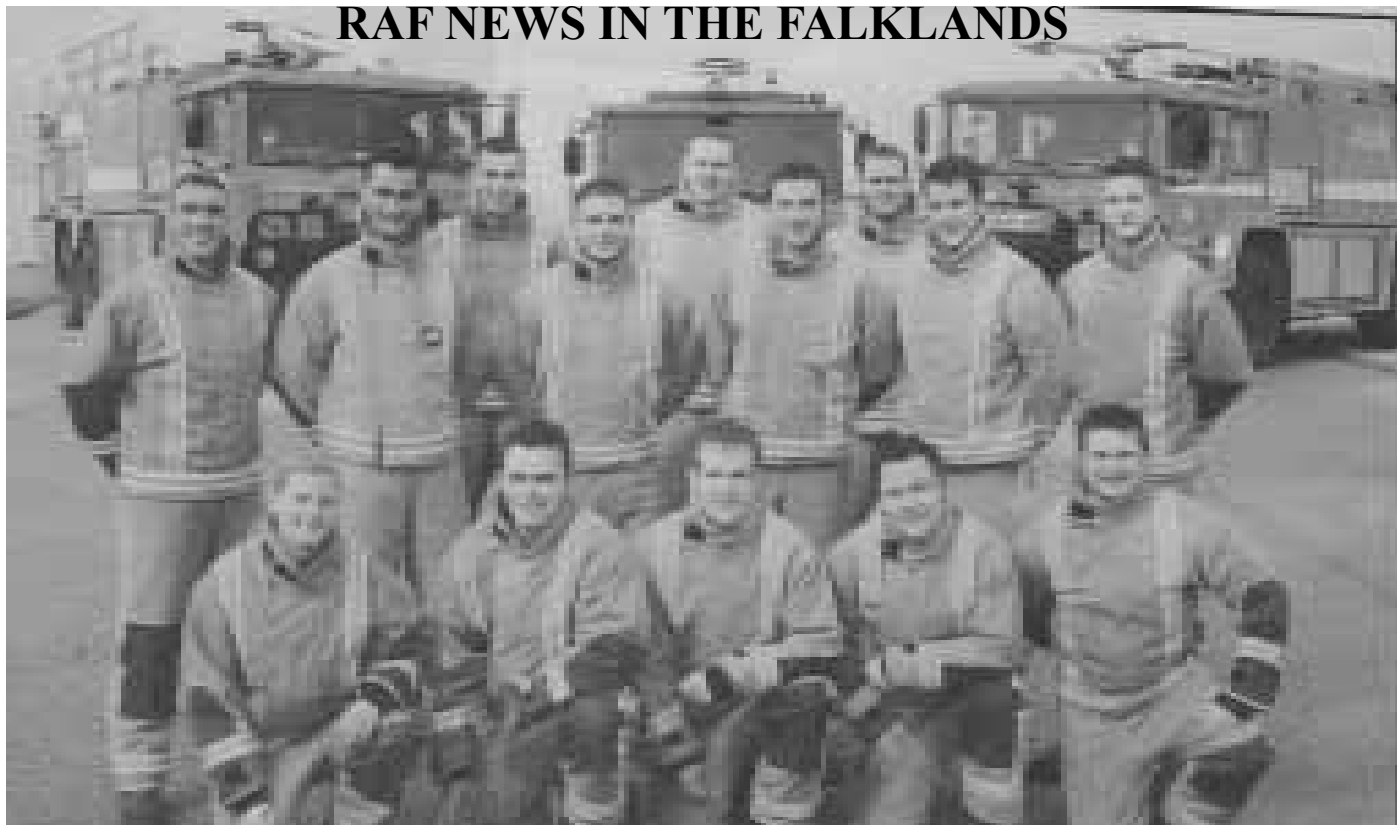
## **David Watson, Aviation and Transport Artist- Typing Error with Phone Number -**

If you would like a unique memento of some fondly remembered car, boat train or whatever; just provide David with a serial number, code letters, registration number, or even a faded photograph, and he will transform it into an atmospheric painting. In the January 2007 edition of Flashpoint, the contact phone number for commissions was wrong and slipped through the proof reading net! It should have read: **01535 633 069** My sincere apologies for any difficulties caused - Ed.



# 25th Anniversary of the Falklands in 1982

## RAF NEWS IN THE FALKLANDS



**Red Watch at Mount Pleasant** - Front: SAC Rhae McCartney, SAC Matt Hoult, SAC Cirian O'Sullivan, Cpl Chuck Berry, SAC Jamie Fenwick. Middle: Cpl Reggie Redgewell, Sgt Ewen Garwood, SAC Dan Glorioso, SAC Aaron McGregor, SAC Jon Roberts, SAC Ian Settingington. Back: SAC Eddie Wheeler, Cpl George Hynd, Cpl Rob Townend. Pictures and Text courtesy of Royal Air Force NEWS, 2nd March 2007, centre-spread pages 14/15. It's a shock to realise that it's, 25 years since the Falklands invasion but is, and this item will evoke memories for those having served at the time, and since - Ed.

### **Guard of Honour - 115 (Peterborough) Squadron Air Training Corps:**

Cadet Flt Sgt Barham. Cadet Cpl Brazier. Cadet Cpl Morton. Cadet Alwin. Cadet Parton. Cadet Dalton. Cadet Liggins. Cadet Stephens.  
O i/c - W/O Gary Akehurst.

The Guard of Honour provided by the above Squadron Cadets proved to be a credit to themselves, their Squadron and their Officers. Their presence enhanced the occasion of the first visit of our Honorary President, Air Marshal Sir John Sutton, KCB, and his wife, Lady Angela, to the 25th Reunion since our inauguration on the 13th May 1995.

Other Guests of Honour were, Fg/Off Zoe Hogg, OC C Flight 2 MT Squadron, RAF Wittering, with Cpl Andy Lewis and his wife, Amanda.

### **REMEMBER**

You've not grown old when your hair turns grey

You've not grown old when your teeth decay

But you've taken that first big step to that long final sleep

When your mind takes appointments your body can't keep!!!!

Brian Ford

Thanks for that thought Brian. I'm sure it will cheer some of us oldies up no end - Ed!

### **MEMBERSHIP UPDATE LIST ERROR SENT OUT WITH JANUARY FLASHPOINT**

The update list sent out with the January 2007 Flashpoint was alphabetical and, whilst the names were correct, somehow, the membership numbers were transposed and don't tally. This caused problems with the recent Referendum and, as Editor, I sincerely apologise for the error and confusion caused, as it was my responsibility to proof read the draft, but it slipped through the net. As soon as possible, we will try and rectify it and re-issue a corrected list - Ed.

**LAST ISSUE - main photo detail from back cover :-** Apologies to Ron Newsome and Mrs Rosemary Lewis for missing them off the group photo detail in the last issue. Sorry - Ed.

**RAF Carnaby photo, page 21, January 2007** I'm informed that the Flt Sgt Arthur identified may not be our late president, but another Flt Sgt Arthur? Can anyone confirm this, one way or the other - Ed?

# In Memoriam - a sincere tribute to members recently passed

The Association has been informed that the following members have passed away. On behalf of your Committee, and membership, our heartfelt condolences go to their family, friends and colleagues.

## Frank Good 30th July 2006

Frank, member, 274, died on the 30th July, but we have only recently been informed. His wife said that he was always very proud to be a member of the Association. Unfortunately, he was not well enough to attend a reunion.

Apologies to family and friends, as the information arrived too late to be included in the last issue sent out in January

## Fred Makin 29th December 2006

Member 569, John F (Fred) T Makin, passed away on the 29th December 2006, leaving a widow, Agnes. A card of condolence was sent from the Chairman, John Goupillot.

## George Lamont 2006

George, member 641, enlisted in the RAF Fire Service on the 25th October 1955, and served for 12 years, before demob on the 22nd January 1977. He joined the Association on the 15th June 2002. A card of condolence was sent from the Chairman, John Goupillot.

## Tony Patrick Shiell 2006

Tony, member 304, enlisted in the RAF Fire Service. He joined the Association on the 18th September 1987. A card of condolence was sent from the Chairman, John Goupillot.

## George Harley 21 March 2007

George, member, 540, died suddenly on Wednesday 21st March, aged 64. Dearest husband of Helen and much-loved father and granddad. He will be sadly missed by all. His funeral was on Friday 30th at Morton Hall Crematorium, Liberton, Edinburgh. George's son, Paul, contacted us and a card of condolence was sent on behalf of the Association.

The photo, right, shows George in Court kit of, black gown, white bow tie and flyaway collar and he was tickled pink to find he was the first ex-RAF to be a Macer, although, there have been plenty of ex-Army, Navy and Marine personnel in the role. Since he started, another 2 ex-RAF were employed, a supplier and air traffic.

George served 37 years in the RAF Fire Service, from 25 March 1960 to 1997 and was stationed at, Cardington, Bridgnorth, Catterick, Lyneham, Dishforth, Saleta (with Dennis 'Mac' McCann), Gan, Melksham, Binbrook, St Athan, (driving course & FTI Course for Corporal), Gib. (66), Machrahanish, (69/71), Laarbruch, Lossiemouth (74), Hendon, Afcen (Holland), Brussum, Buchan (86), Falklands (89), Machrahanish (91), Akrotiri (93), Kinloss (96 to



## FIRST EX RAF SCOTTISH MACER!



## CAN YOU HELP DENNIS McCANN WITH A NEW MODELLING PROJECT FOR A DP2?

**Details of MK 6 model shown on front cover and right:** Length 57cm - Width 25cm - Height 27cm. Water monitor throw - 3 metres. Speed approx 30kmph. Hoses Pauline, made from a canvas shopping bag, and she also made the aluminium tread plate from tomato puree tubes. Working Head and Reversing lights. Crew of three (short handed on crew). All cab controls as per AP details. Wheels from a Tonka toy crane!



**Thornycroft DP2**

were about the same (or am I wrong?). I think that the MK 6 wheels were slightly larger than the DP - or were they? Cheers - Dennis McCann Tel: 01255 830 546

My next project is to build a Thornycroft Dual Purpose Tender MK2 (DP2); to about the same scale but, before I can start, I need the measurements, or the loan of an AP on the DP2. **Can you please help** ? Any help that you can give me I will be very grateful to receive and will gladly cover the cost of postage etc. From what I can remember the DP2 was slightly longer but the height and width

Footnote: Those of you attending the recent Reunion at Peterborough may have been privileged to see a scale model MK6 going through its paces in the hotel and, if so, will have marveled at the detail and seen the high standard of Dennis's, (and

# Brief History of the Royal Air Force Fire Service



did, if listening to some of our "Elder Statesmen" is anything to go by! 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, when the School moved to RAF Catterick, North Yorkshire and, later, to RAF Manston in Kent as the Fire Services Central Training Establishment (FSCTE) which still continues to this day.

When you see the way uniform, equipment, technology and appliances have developed since then, it seems a very different job today. But it's not! Today's personnel are doing exactly what those early pioneers did then, whilst still maintaining necessary high standards of training, expertise and efficiency.

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 to this, personnel on general and aircraft handling duties were used to carry out fire fighting responsibilities; with vehicles being driven by M.T. drivers. It was mainly a case of turning up for duty and being detailed on the day.

No insult intended, but it was down to the "Odds & Sods" to do the best they could in the circumstances. This they certainly

They are carrying on the same traditions, skills, expertise, enthusiasm and dedication, to which we can all relate from our own personal experiences, via whatever branch of the Fire Services we did our time.

Today, the service is very 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 gradually cut back to the service levels of today.

Like the Defence Fire Services, (DFS), reviews are ongoing and the future role of the RAF Fire Service is unsure. Hopefully it will remain a viable force in the long term. - Ed

Pictured is an MFV producing 'On the run' courtesy of Howard Harper, member 682, on an Association visit to RAF Marham, Wednesday 23rd November 2005, organised by Steve Doran coordinator for Norfolk.



# Brief History of the Defence Fire and Rescue Service



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 in it's own right.

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.

Some 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. Another change was that many recruits were now older, married and lived off camp, so the days of the young, single, living on camp serviceman sadly, in my opinion, came to an untimely end!

The DFS now has a new badge, which is reproduced along with the old one for comparison. The badge centre remains the same, but the name has changed to **Defence Fire and Rescue Service**. Basically, it appears to be a name change only recognising the rescue role. If, and when, I have any official detail explaining the

changes, I'll keep you informed. The job will still tend to attract those personnel with similar characteristics, personalities, and vocation, as all those who have gone before. Long may it remain so - Ed.

The cap badges, and uniform buttons, reproduced below, are of originals worn in the 1960's by the Air Ministry Fire Service, (AMFS), which was superceded by the Air Force Department Fire Service, (AFDFS). (The AFDFS badge is reproduced in colour on the front cover of this issue showing its blue circle and red centre). The AMFS badge is plain metal. It then became the Defence Fire Services, followed by the DF&RS of today.

Member, Chris Mawer, asked about the badges and I was pleased to answer his letter, (See the Letters pages), and update the information at his request. Thanks Chris - Ed.





# Manston WOT 1 - Phil Judd & FSCTE Recruit



Dear Dave,

The publication of the photos of the Catterick WOT1, outlining that it is presently on display in the Spitfire & Hurricane Museum Manston, prompted me to give you all an update on the vehicle's condition.

The Museum building is made up of two large halls; one houses a Spitfire and the other a Hurricane. There are many other small exhibits that enhance the aircraft displays. The WOT1 has a prime position alongside the Hurricane. It is still in excellent condition and is very well looked after. It attracts many favourable comments and is photographed regularly by many visitors.

In order to maintain its condition and to keep it as pristine as possible, we here at MoD FSCTE ask for "volunteers" from the current basic fire fighters course to spend an hour or two washing and polishing! We do get quite a few volunteers (Not necessarily pressed men!!) who are at a loss for something to do on a Saturday morning when they can't get home.

The photos show some members of BF 03/06 applying plenty of elbow grease to the WOT1 on the weekend of 25 Nov 06. Whilst beavering away they attracted a fair amount of attention themselves and were treated to refreshments from the museum staff.

Seated on the WOT1, they are left to right: In the cab - AC Andy Dowell, AC Ian Rowland, on the running board - Fftr Hywel Ford, FS Phil Judd Senior Instructor, AC Jim Roberts.

