

Royal Air Forces Association

VUELOS

THE COSTA BLANCA BRANCH
NEWSLETTER



COLIN BROADS REPORT ON EUROPEAN AREA CONFERENCE

During the period 18-20 May 2007 I attended the European Area Conference, which was held in Bournemouth accompanied by Members Mick & Janet Outfield. 18 branches were represented at the Conference and there were no real controversial proposals to vote on. Air Marshal Sir Peter Walker gave a very interesting and informative talk on the current and future role of the Royal Air Force, which sadly did not sound too encouraging I am sorry to say. During the Conference I was pleased and proud to be presented with the Walter Harley Shield on behalf of the branch and organizing committee for The Outstanding Efficient and Enjoyable 2006 Autumn Conference, which from comments and reports will be difficult to surpass (not my words). In addition I was presented, for the branch, a European Area 2006 Wings Appeal Certificate for the branch joining the £5000 club. The Conference ended with the outgoing Chairman, Jim Kelly, thanking everyone for their support during his term in office and introducing his successor, Mr M Mason.

On the Sunday morning I attended a most impressive Parade & Memorial Service on Bournemouth Promenade as one of the 85 Standard Bearers. As we marched behind the RAF Central Band to the Service of Remembrance a Lancaster from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight accompanied by a C130 performed a fly past right on cue. I have to say that I felt very proud and even more so knowing that my daughter and granddaughter were in the congregation. All in all it was a most enlightening, enjoyable and unforgettable weekend and would highly recommend it to anyone. **I can totally agree with Colin. I had the privilege of representing the RAFA Hong Kong Branch at Bournemouth and it really is a spectacle to witness and brings a lump to the throat and a tear to the eye! ED**



THE OLD AIRFIELD

(Submitted by Noel Cork MBE Chairman)

When the night is still
and the moon is clear
The ghosts of the past are here
Of men long dead and machines that sped
Into the valley of tear.

Of men who fought to save this land
From the onslaught of a power regime
Of pilots and nays and gunners and sparks
Each one was one of the team.

Each one knew-that he had to do
His job as well as he might
Each said a prayer-and some perished there
In the darkness of the night.

Dark shapes may rumble across the field
From a war that was fought and won
For these are the ghosts of the aircraft and men
Whose landings will never come

They made the sacrifice supreme
So that you and I may go
In peace with freedom--to sit and dream
They gave to make it so.

So when you cross this field again
Please think for a minute or so
Of those machines and of the men
Of days so long ago

Quote from 2006

"Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges"
You mean there's something stronger than duct tape???

HOW DOES THIS COMPARE TO WHEIII YOU WERE 1111 I
(Submitted by Norman Scotting)

The pay scale is *from* 2006, so the pay is probably a bit higher now. I bet a few of you out there raised an eyebrow or two and squirmed a bit, I know I did I Ed

Rank	Monthly pay (Approx)	Annual pay
Recruit during recruit and Specialist training	£1,000	£12,162
Leading Aircraftman/ Aircraftwoman	£1,175	£14,323
Senior Aircraftman/ Aircraftwoman	£1,250 £2,120	£15,166 £25,794
Corporal	£1,920 £2,430	£23,535 £29,576
Flight Sergeant or Chief Technician	£2,450 £3,200	£29,612 £38,551
Warrant Officer	£2,850 £3,450	£34,405 £41,672

Quote From 2006 "Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over"
What a guy !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

THANK YOU STAN!

(Submitted by Ute Vice President Ted Marsh)

Almost 2 years ago the Kentish Express Newspaper in the UK published an article about my elder brother John Marsh. Who was called up for National Service and was posted to the Suez Canal region. Unfortunately John died on 17 Apr 51 and was left. To tie In the Military Cemetery in Egypt. At the end of May 2005 a cousin of mine sent me a page from the paper; it showed a photo of my brother's headstone being saluted by a man I have never seen before. The article explained that the man was my brother's best mate. Stan Mathews and as his address had been Included In the report I contacted him and a family meeting took place in 2006.

In April this year Margaret and I travelled to Egypt in a party of 54, mostly members of the Suez Veterans Association who kindly allowed us to join in their annual 10 day pilgrimage to the Canal Zone. On 25 April 2007. I at last, after 56 years. Stood at the headstone of my brother John. There was a lovely service complete with the Last Post and for Margaret and It was a most moving experience.



Had it not been for Stan and the Kentish Express it would never had happened. I served In the Royal Air Force for 36 years and I lost many comrades along the way, but I have never come across a man like Stan Mathews who has kept alive the memory of a mate for over 56 years. **Ted**

MAN IN THE MIRROR (Submitted by Jose Welch)

If you get what you want in the struggle for self and the world makes you King for a day
then go to the mirror and look at yourself and see what that man has to say.

For it's not a mans father, mother or wife, Whose judgment upon him may pass The
fellow whose verdict accounts most in his life Is the man staring back from the glass.

He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest for he's with you clear up to the end
and you've passed your most dangerous and difficult test If the man in the glass is your
friend.

You can fool the whole world down the pathway of years and get pats on your back as you pass
but your final reward will be heartache and tears if you've cheated the man in the glass

NOEL & HILDA'S 2007 HOUSE PARTY

On Saturday 7 July 2007 we were once again kindly invited to Noel and Hilda's House Party in San Miguel for their Annual Bash. As usual everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed themselves and the excellent buffet, which was laid on. Brian Hewett and Bruce Heath once again excelled at relieving people of their Euros throughout the night. The Party raised 730 Euros and we thank Noel & Hilda and their Little Helpers for once again supplying an excellent evening's entertainment.



Noel with his new Toy!

RAF AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE

(Submitted by Terry Cowley)

Every aircraft In the RAF must have a maintenance log book known to all aircrew as the Form F70a and known to the Ground crew as 'The Pilots Gripe Sheet' This form has to be signed by all ground crew trades before the pilot will take charge of the aircraft. I list below some of the typical 'gripes' together with the ingenious answers from the ground crew. For ease the aircrew is symbolized as AC and the ground staff as GS. All with

AC. The left inside tyre almost needs replacing.

GS. Almost replaced the inside left tyre.

AC. Test flight O.K. except Auto Land very rough.

GS. Auto Land not fitted to this aircraft.

AC. Something loose in the cockpit.

GS. Something tightened in the cockpit.

AC. Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

GS. Evidence removed.

AG. DME volume unbelievably loud.

GS. DME volume set to more believable level.

AG. Suspected crack In windscreen.

GS. Suspect you are right on this one.

AG. No.3 engine Is missing.

GS. No.3 engine found on right wing after a brief search.

AC. Aircraft handles funny.

GS. Aircraft warned to straighten up and fly right and be serious.

AC. Noise coming from under Instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

GS. Took hammer away from midget.

A WELFARE OFFICERS LOT
(Submitted By Eleanor Morris)

As many of you are aware a local Welfare Officers role can be varied and busy from time to time and we never question a request for assistance from where ever it may come – however there is a limit as I found out a few months back. Following a lengthy précis into a gentleman’s personal problems and involvement with the RAFBF and RBL, I was requested to pop over and visit the gentleman concerned and keen as ever I was looking forward to getting stuck in until I checked the address “Malaga”. Do they know the size of Spain came my first words! Needless to say i contacted the RAFA welfare person in the UK (name not divulged to spare embarrassment) to point out!

RAF REGIMENT PERSONEL AWARDED US MEDALS
(Submitted By Brian Hewlett MBE - President)

Headquarters International Security Assistance Force: Kandahar, Afghanistan. In April 2007 U.S Army Colonel Richard Steven Williams, Commander, 207th Infantry Brigade and U.S National Command Element (South) awarded eight Royal Air Force Regiment service members with U.S Army medals in recognition of their excellent service while working to safeguard ISAF’s main operating base in south, Kandahar airfield. Wing Commander Andy Knowles, Squadron Leaders, Steve Carter and Matt Stowers and Warrant Officer Mike O’Hara received Army commendation medals. Flight Lieutenant Mark Foley, Flight Sergeant Andy Smith, and Sergeant Carl Nunn received Army Achievement Medals. All members are part of the Kandahar Airfield Force Protection Team. **How nice to be appreciated, but will they be allowed to wear them I wonder? Ed**

INTERNATIONAL VETERANS DAY

On 27 June 2007 the Torre Vieja International Veterans Day was held in hot weather at the Parque de Naciones. Torre Vieja. We attended in good numbers (about 35 RAFA members), however, I felt the overall attendance was a bit poor. Still all present “flew the flag” and a pleasant afternoon was had. The “Parade” was appreciated by the on lookers who gave a deserved round of applause as we passed by. The picture on the front cover shows some of the members attended with Lt Colonel Rabbit, Defence Attaché from Madrid

HOMES & GARDENS SHOW, ALICANTE, MAY 2007



The photo above shows Dougie Lynn (Our Wings Man!) and his good lady Doris on the RAFA Stand at the Homes & Gardens Show, which was held in Alicante during the last weekend in May 2007. Despite a very tiring weekend for the main players, including Lena and Jose Welch and Wally Shatford, the event only raised a relatively small amount to what had been expected. Never the less the flag was flown and visitors showed a lot of interest.

Final Quote from as Year

“Something Went Wrong i Jet Crash”, Expert Says

No, really???????????????

THE Presidents PIECE

My second 'Piece' for Vuelos, I can hardly believe how quickly the time has flown by. We have managed a lot in that short time. I was very pleased at the way the Association members at large took the sad news of our disqualification from the major charity event at the Alicante Homes and Gardens Exhibition due to the unjustifiably Jealous action of one individual from another Association.

However, thanks to the diligence of our tame Snowdrop, John Reid and the incredibly hard work of 5 of our members; Doris (Sirod to those of us in the know) and Dougie Lynn, Jose and Len Welch and our ubiquitous Han. Sec. Wally Shatford we were able to attend and make our presence in the Allcante Province known and respected. As an added bonus we were also able to make a very small contribution to the Branch funds and 50 odd of us had a most enjoyable day out. Once again my 'thanks' to everyone who helped out and especially the 'famous five'.

On the charity front Noel and I continue to weave our way through Spanish bureaucracy to discover exactly who the right authority is and what exactly they want in our submission, we are now on our third revise, we are nearly there, although we Have said that before, however, we now have help from Costa Blanca North and alocal Spanish business lady who has been tireless on our behalf with phone calls to a wide variety of Spanish departments in our quest for Charity Status in Spain. Keep watching this space.....

To finish, we had a very positive visit from The RAF Central Band Representative on Friday 22 Jun 07. Flt.Sgt. Richard Skelton, the Band Administrator. He liked everything he saw and thought the Hotel was excellent. So, all is looking great for Sunday, 26th Aug 07 at around 2100 hours, get your bids in for tickets I have only managed to get 100 so far but I have bid for a further 100.

Yours Aye,

Brian