

FLASHPOINT

ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



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Note - For those members who don't know Joe, he has enjoyed a distinguished career with the Association as a founder member from its formation on the 13th May 1995, and served as Coordinator North, Vice-Chairman and Chairman, before retiring at Shap Wells in October 2001.

He also organised the very popular Tattershall/Waddington/RAF Coningsby weekends at the end of June, and is looking at an

alternative venue around Woodhall Spa for the future. Additionally, he enjoys meeting regularly at the Redcar RAFA Club with friends and colleagues from the area. Having recently decided to give up work and, whilst attending the March Peterborough reunion, he was, once again, 'persuaded to volunteer his services' and agreed to take on responsibility as Coordinator North.

If anyone is considering volunteering as a Coordinator and wants to know more about the job, they couldn't do better than to have a chat with Joe, as he has a boundless enthusiasm for the Association and can be very persuasive!

Welcome back Joe. - Ed.

CO-ORDINATOR VACANCIES

EAST YORKSHIRE LINCOLNSHIRE/CAMBRIDGE

MIDLANDS NORTHERN IRELAND

SCOTLAND (2) 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. WE ASSURE YOU

FRONT COVER
PHOTOGRAPH IS
COURTESY OF
GORDON SMITH,
MEMBER 64, AND
SHOWS A 'PRACTICE
FIRE' AT TEESIDE
TRAINING SCHOOL.
GORDON WAS A
FORMER SECRETARY



OF THE ASSOCIATION WHEN A SERVING MEMBER OF THE RAF
FIRE SERVICE AT WADDINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE; AND NOW
SERVES IN THE DFS AT RAF LEEMING, NORTH YORKSHIRE.
MANY THANKS GORDON - ED.

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Welcome to my third issue of Flashpoint since May 2004. Items are coming in on a regular basis, and I now have a reasonable amount of archive material for the near future, but urge members to still keep sending in items for inclusion in your magazine. Many thanks to everyone who has already contributed by sending in their personal stories, memories, anecdotes, letters and photographs. Please do keep them coming.

Whilst the editor's job is hard work and very time consuming, it's also very enjoyable and rewarding, especially when the magazine starts to come together ready for the printer. I can then stop panicking!

Hopefully, I won't forget to include someone's item, but you may have to be patient and wait a while to see your article in print. As we only produce three Flashpoints per financial year, between 1st September and 31st August the following year, it takes time to sort, and prepare, each edition. Additionally, I try to keep a balance

of contributions, from our serving members in the RAF and Defence Fire Services and those already retired; bearing in mind there are members unable to attend a reunion, to include information to keep their interest and in touch with what is going on and, hopefully, there will be something to suit everyone's taste.

If there is anything you would like to discuss with regard to Flashpoint, or submitting something for publication please don't hesitate to contact me through the usual channels. I'd be pleased to hear from you.

Can I ask members to include a telephone number, fax or email address, in case I need to contact you about the detail and information? It's always nice to see a photograph accompany any items.

I hope you like the item on the back cover showing the recovery of the MK 7 & 8 on Monday 24th. January 2005, from Monte's Transport Spares, Dealers in Commercial Spares and MOD Vehicles, Fencehouses, Durham. Dennis McCann, your newly elected Vice-President purchased the



MK 7. (See his personal profile in this issue).

From pledges made at the Stoke AGM and reunion in October 2004, and voluntary contributions received since, members purchased the MK 8. Very well done to all those many very generous individuals who dug deep to save these historic vehicles for the future. All they need now is some TLC (and a bit of spare cash!) to restore them to their best!

By the time you read this, the Museum should have been dedicated and opened on the 2 April 2005. If so, I intend to have an article on the opening in the August issue of Flashpoint.

Due to circumstances beyond my control this issue is late, and I sincerely apologise for the delay. Regards,

Dave

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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

A Note from your Chairman

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT PETERBOROUGH MARCH 2005

It is with sadness that, once again, I have to report the passing of two of our members, Rab Dawson member 527 Scottish Coordinator, and Gary Passmore member 27. I know they will be sadly missed. Cards of condolence were sent to the families and members were in attendance at both funerals. (See - In Memoriam page in this issue).

THANKS TO COMMITTEE

The Committee have continued to work hard during the winter months for the benefit of the Association, and I extend my thanks to them for their continued help and support.

10TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

I am not sure if you all realise that this year is the 10th anniversary of our Association and this weekend is the 21st reunion - which was a good one.

JOHN ARTHUR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

I am really pleased to be able to report that the 2nd April 2005 should see the opening of the John Arthur Museum named in commemoration of our late founding President. It is situated at the ex RAF station at Halfpenny Green. David Hughes and Bill Lawrence explained more about it.

PROPOSED RAF HENDON PROJECT

Now the bad news! You may remember that for the last year or so we have been talking of the project at the RAF Museum, Hendon, which the Association had agreed to fund. Unfortunately this is not going well. The initial cost was going to be £3,000 however, Hendon seem to have been dragging their heels and, guess what - the cost has now risen to £7,000. This is obviously out of our league, and the Committee recommended that we pull out and do not go any further down this road. John Savage informed members of the situation and they agreed to withdraw.

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM NORTH DISPLAY

More good news for the Association. I recently had a phone call from Ron Brown telling me to expect an email from someone called Alex Emmart, a research

assistant with the Imperial War Museum North. He wanted to know if we would be interested in taking part in a display at the Museum called North at War. The display aims to promote veterans organisations and will be open from March 2005 until February 2006. The Committee has sent Alex some information and photos of the Association that will be displayed on a large notice board. If you happen to be in the area of Manchester please do go and have a look, I am certainly hoping to do so.

10TH JULY VE/VJ DAY PARADE

Well, not a day later, Ron phoned me again. He had just had a bit of a shock; a brown envelope had come in the post from the MOD! For anyone who does not know, 1st July until 10th July is designated this year as Veterans Week celebrating the end of WWII. On 10th July, designated VE/VJ Day, a big parade is being held in London and the letter from the MOD was an invitation to our Association to take part and parade our Standard. I have accepted on our behalf. It looks a very grand parade with a fly past down The Mall including, they are hoping, 2 Lancasters!

1000 STANDARDS ON PARADE!

The MOD are also hoping that there will be 1,000 standards on parade, but unfortunately, Gordon Smith, our Standard Bearer, is working and not able to take part. As some of you know, I am a Standard Bearer for the Royal British Legion and am willing to fill in for Gordon on this day. It would be good to see some of you there and I hope that, as many of you as possible are able to attend.

LATE PRESIDENT JOHN ARTHUR ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY PARADE ON 1945 MONITOR

Those of you who don't know, may be interested in the fact that John Arthur, (our late Founding President), did this parade for the 50th Anniversary riding on the back of a 45 Monitor. (See photo on page 11 of December 2004 issue of Flashpoint - Ed)

This concludes my report, and it only remains to thank you, our members, for your continued support, and interest, in the



Association. See you in October.
Roger Brooks Chairman member 16

AGENDA 19TH MARCH PETERBOROUGH

1. Chairman's Opening Address
2. Introduction of Committee
3. Apologies for absence & number attending
4. Minutes of last meeting
5. Matters arising
6. Chairman's report
7. Treasurer's report
8. Secretary's report
9. Membership Secretary's report
10. Flashpoint editor's report
11. Hendon update
12. Any other business
13. Venue & Date of October AGM
14. Chairman's closing address

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING RE ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION & RULES was held prior to the main meeting, when draft Constitution & Rules amendments were discussed, and approved, by the members attending.

ANY COMMENTS ON THE CONSTITUTION TO BE WITH THE SECRETARY, GEORGE EDWARDS, BY 1ST MAY 2005.

Roger explained that changes were necessary for the Association to progress with regard to considering applying for Charity status and said that we were long overdue in finalising the document and announced the set up of a sub-committee chaired by the Vice-Chairman, Jim Paterson, to report back to the AGM in October for member's final approval.

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Membership News

BOB TO STAND DOWN AT HULL AGM - I have been Membership Secretary now for 8 years. After such a long period I have decided that it is time to hand over the job to someone else. The October reunion will be my last as Membership Secretary. I shall not be seeking re-election to the post. If you are interested in doing the job please, don't delay, get in touch with our Chairman, Roger Brooks. **Word of Mouth!** I urge all members to please pass on the word about our Association to all their friends who served with us. Not only the RAF, but you lads who served, or are serving, with the Defence Fire Services or on a Civilian Airport. That is why we need your help. We can't do it without you! Recruiting must carry on.

It is with great pleasure, on behalf of the Association, that I welcome our latest members listed below along with their names, membership numbers and brief Service details. Bob Feather 218



CHRIS MAWER 751 1963 - 1968	COLIN NIXON 752 1956 - 1961	ALEC ROBERTSON 753 1958 -1963 LINTON-ON-OUSE	STEVE DUFFY 754 1987 - 1999	TED DAVIS 755 1956 - 1961
DAVE WOODWARD 756 1979 - Present		PETER SMITH 758 1969 - 1983	RICHARD BOYLE 759 July 1986 - Present	STEVE BROWN 760 1978 - 1991
	DAVE SEDGBEER 762 No Details	Mick Greene 763 1967 - 1979	GERRY SANSOM 764 1978 - 2004	JOHN FALLOWS 765 1975 - 2000
	STEVE ROBERTSON 767 Present.....	DAVE STEVENSON 768 from? - 2003	DAVE GIBB 769 1988 - 2002	CHRIS HAUGHTON 770 1965 - 1988
ARTHUR ELTON 771 1953 - 1956	JASON LESTER 772 ASSOCIATE MEMBER (MUSEUM)	RONALD NEWSOME 773 1951 - 1975	'Colinsky' - Close Up Magic Cabaret	



Personal Profiles

President Keith Penfold Founding Chairman & Member 9

A BRIEF SUMMARY FROM YOUR PRESIDENT MEMBER 9

First, I must say how honoured, and privileged I feel, to have been elected at the Stoke reunion in October 2004, as your President. In my wildest dreams, I would never have imagined just how successful the Association was to become. Since that first get-together at Shoreham Airport, East Sussex in September 1994, when it was decided, by those attending, to go ahead and

been made possible by the dedicated, and hard work, of all past, and present, committee members.

I served for thirty-one years in the Royal Air Force but, unfortunately, only fifteen and a half as a fireman. The years in the Fire Service took me from 1951 at Sutton-on-Hull, to Odiham, Upwood, Malta Egypt, Cyprus, South Cerney, Wildenrath, Laarbruch, Brampton and, finally, Oakington, (it wasn't a camp for refugees in those days), though, after my travels, I felt like one!

During these years, I reached the rank of Sgt. and produced three children.

My days as a fireman were brought



to an abrupt halt through health problems and, reluctantly, I had to re-muster; and finished my next

arrange an inaugural meeting for May 13th 1995, when twenty three ex-RAF firemen met again at Shoreham and formed the Association. I am sure today's success has



A
B r i e f
Summary from your President & Member 9
First, I must say how honoured, and privileged I feel, to have been elected at the Stoke reunion in October 2004, as your President. In



NIGHT ADVENTURE IN A CARDBOARD BOX

A late meal of fish and chips
Bought with Busking money tips

Then to sleeping bag in a card board box
Going to earth like a hunted fox

Warm and dry in an underground vent
Like summer holidays he'd had in a summer tent

For a pillow he'd rolled up his jeans
And soon was lost in erotic dreams

His pillow of jeans was stolen without a care
The moving of them made him aware

He grabbed hold of baggy ragged pants
Screams came and raving rants

This threw him in a scare
With trousers down, her lower half bare

How true his dreams of erotica scenes
But this girl still clutched his jeans

Should he keep the baggy strides?
And remember what his jeans now hide!

Bill Wilson 342

Bill sent this in some time ago, sorry for the delay - Ed.

Does Someone You Know Need Help?

Useful Contact Numbers

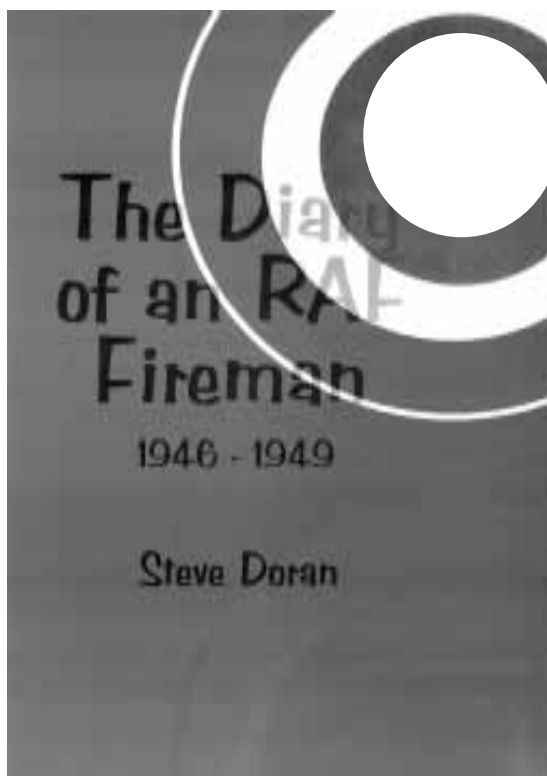
RAFBF The Heart of the RAF Family - 0800 169 2942

RAFA The Royal Air Force Association - 0800 018 2361

RAF Medals Section -Building 248A, Room 6, RAF Innsworth Gloucester

RBL The Royal British Legion - 08457 725 725

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



Vice - President - Dennis McCann Founding Secretary & Member 7

A Brief Outline of your new Vice-President Dennis McCann member 7

I was born in Manchester to a family of seven on 7th May 1933. My father was a policeman and mother was a tailoress. 1939 saw the start of World War 2, and my sister, and I, was evacuated to Canada to our aunt and uncle. At seven years of age it was a great adventure that many young children could only dream about.

The ship sailed from Liverpool on a very damp grey morning as part of a convoy to Canada, and was the first of the war! Many ships were torpedoed – including ours, but we were the lucky ones, as the torpedo did not explode. That was our lucky day!

In Canada, we lived on the prairies with my father's brother, his wife and their daughter. He was a Mounted Policeman. Our stay was wonderful, and I still return there regularly, like it is my home.

I returned to England after the war, but never settled. I joined the RAF in 1950 as a fire fighter, going to West Kirby then good old Sutton-on-Hull; followed by stations such as, Bircham Newton, (where one of the GD's, (General Duties), was Alf Roberts from Coronation Street).

Then Suez Canal for 2 ½ years, then 1954 to Yatesbury, 1956 to South Cerney, where I first met Keith Penfold, and our

paths have crossed over many years. Whilst at South Cerney, Keith and I, went to the Squadron Leader's office on the same day to be told that we were promoted to Acting Corporals!

Now, fifty years later, Keith and I have been nominated and elected to be President and Vice-President on the same day, such a nice coincidence.

In 1956 I arrived in Tripoli to find out, there was no Lybian Air Force, and my job was with I.A.L. who ran the main Airport; and had a bad history of dealing with passenger aircraft crashes. I was sent there as an Instructor!

From there I went to many RAF stations such as: - Old Sarum, near Salisbury, then Chivenor, Seleta, Quanton (Malaya) Northolt, Borneo, North Coates, 1968 to Sharja, 1969 Strubby (which has special memories for me, as I was awarded the BEM there), 1971 Laarbruch, 1973 Abingdon, Gan then back to Abingdon, and on to Laarbruch before demob in 1980.

I then did a management course with good old NAAFI, and returned to Germany ending up at Wildenrath. In 1992 I returned to England then, three years later, I met Keith again with all our founder members at Shoreham Airport, east Sussex, where we started our RAF and Defence Fire Services Association, and the rest is history!



I would like to thank all our members for electing me Vice-President; I feel most honoured and will do my very best for you.

Footnote: - FLASHPOINT HEADLINE NAME

Recently, Dennis let slip that he was the man who thought up the original headline name for our magazine Flashpoint.

He also said that Roger Smith designed the first front cover for Flashpoint. Thanks Dennis. It's such little gems of information that tend to get forgotten, but which are so much part of the history of our Association - Ed.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR FOR LONDON - 'JESS' JESSUP MEMBER 133

4137165 Jessup T. W. joined the RAF in October 1953 until demob in October 1958 with the rank of Corporal. He did his 'Square Bashing' at West Kirby near Liverpool, before moving on to RAF Sutton-on-Hull for firefighting training. His first Station was Wartling, Sussex, a Radar Unit and then a short journey to another Radar Unit at Rye, Sussex. His next posting sent him to the 2nd TAF (Tactical Air Force) at Buckeburg Germany from 1955 to 1958 before his return to the U.K. at RAF Cottesmore, Rutland. Jess was Medically Discharged on a War Disability Pension.

RAF Buckeburg 2nd TAF 1955 - 1958 - Jess wants to know if any members have photographs of the Mercedes Fire Tenders i.e.: - Domestic - Water Bowser - Foam - Dry Powder and, if so, he would like to have copies. Some of his were misplaced during a move and, if anyone remembers him from RAF Buckeburg, he would love to hear from you. Jess has 'volunteered' to act as coordinator for the London area and his personal contact details are on page 2 of this issue.

**BUCKEBURG PHOTOS
SHOW - LEFT TO RIGHT -
LAC JESSUP & ACRT
'FANCY DRESS' SEPT
1955
PROMOTED CORPORAL**



Letters to the Editor

50 YEARS ON!

Thanks to the advert in the Flashpoint last year asking for ex RAF members who were at RAF Biggen Fire Service in 1954/58, to contact me for a 50th Anniversary reunion. I received 12 replies, 8 of which were able to attend, with their wives, for a two night stay at a local hotel with visits to both Biggen Hill and Manston Airport.

We all met at the Ramada Hotel, Tunbridge Wells, on Sunday 5th September. Many old stories were swapped, and much reminiscing took place.

The following day, we all went to Biggen Hill, which is now a civilian airport: our main aim was to meet CFO Andy Mellors, and his staff, who entertained us and put on a wonderful spread. After a trip round the fire station, we went on a tour of the airfield escorted by a fire appliance.

Going round the airfield, it was pointed out to us, that the old Trolley Ack, (Wheeled Battery Accumulator), we'd had behind the Landover ACRT when on Crash Duties, was still on the airfield, tucked away in a corner, but now looking a bit sorry for itself. It was used to power the radio without draining the vehicle battery.

We all noted that the old



600 – 615 hangars have gone and, on a great deal of South Camp, where there was very little, much new building had now taken place. Some of the buildings are now used as an *in situ* Flying School, aircraft sales companies and rentals, as well as flights out of the airport.

On the north side, 41 Squad-

ron hangar has been demolished, the main gate locked off, and all living quarters are very dilapidated and used. We were not allowed into this area, as it is privately owned.

The visit to the Chapel was very good, and it hasn't changed much in 50 years, except that the Spitfire and Hurricane are replicas, and on pedestals! The warden showed us round and looked through the archives. It was very poignant seeing all the names of the pilots, who lost their lives, listed on the Roll of Honour.

The Parade Ground has been built on!!!! Where's the S.W.O.??

At the end of a very busy day, we returned to the hotel for a rest and dinner, and they'd laid on a private room for us!

On Tuesday 7th, we

went to RAF Manston to the RAF Fire Service Museum, which is owned by Sgt Steve Shirley, a serving RAF fireman, and is run for him by

Mr Peter Harris and his helpers. The museum is on MOD ground and we had an enjoyable time looking at the memorabilia, and trying on some of the equipment we used so many years ago. Looking at it today, and comparing

it with what is worn now, it's unbelievable what was termed 'Protective Clothing.' We were also able to see some of the fire fighting vehicles on display. Many thanks to Mr Harris for his hospitality, and answering our many questions.

After lunch, we went on to the Battle of Britain Museum, and the aircraft museum, which

again are on MOD property and are well worth a visit.

Considering it has been such a long time since we saw each other, most of us remembered who was who! We had a wonderful time catching up on past exploits, and looking at old photos: what a handsome bunch we were! Many of us want to meet again next year and, hopefully, gain a few more members.

Our thanks go to all who helped us on our visits, and to the management and staff of the hotel.

Photo shows standing L/R
Gordon Reynolds 678
Roy Watkins 360
Gordon Ringe
'Nip' Spendiff



John Hope 617
John Shepperd 615
Pat Mulready
Peter Picknell
Kneeling - Airport firefighters
L/FF 'Taff' Tanner
CFO Andy Mellors
L/FF Stephen Taylor

John Hope member 617
3 Larch Grove
Paddock Wood
Kent
TN12 6LA
Congratulations John it shows it can be done if you have the will, and a little luck. Its what it's all about, meeting and reminiscing about shared experiences! - Ed.

RAF FIRE SERVICE ADVANCED TRADE 1950'S

Dear Dave,
I am writing to say how much I enjoy 'Flashpoint' however; I would like to draw your attention to the article on page 23 of the December 2004 issue and the 'Brief History of the Royal Air Force Fire Service. The article failed to include the period in the early fifties with the advent of the new trade structure.

The aerodrome part of the service was amalgamated with the Air Traffic Service. I was then a corporal fireman stationed at Poling CH Station during this time and my first posting following service at Habbamiga in Iraq, and at Mauripin in Pakistan.

On the trade 'shuffle' I completed the Aerodrome Traffic Controller's Course at Shawbury, Shropshire, followed by a Fire Course at Sutton-on-Hull, (beating the officers with a 98% pass!), and, within about 6 months, a GCA (Ground Controlled Approach) Course at Shawbury and Sleep. Many RAF firemen completed this series of courses.

I continued at Poling with spells in ATC at Tangmere to keep my hand in, as it were; and took part in the Fighter Command Fire Fighting Competitions at Kenley with 2nd and 3rd placings.

After service, I worked as a controller at Shoreham Airport where our Association was formed, until an eyesight problem put paid to that! I trust that you will find this note of interest.

Yours sincerely, Roy Wright
member 715

Note - Many thanks for that update Roy, as I'd completely forgotten about our Advanced Trade in ATC until I read your letter: and have now amended the info. in the article - Ed.

Letters to the Editor

GAN INVASION!

I was a sergeant on the Fire Section at Gan and had a small hand in precautions to prevent the invasion of Gan! The local population of Addu Atoll, most of whom worked on the base, were paid in £'s sterling. I think I was told that it was Afif Didi, who being an educated man, (educated at Cairo University I believe), realized that the local people were living a better life than they had previously, and that he could take advantage of this situation.

TROUBLE WITH AFIF DIDI

For some time, we had been aware that trouble was brewing and this was borne out by the arrival of a detachment of RAF regiment personnel from Singapore. A few days after, an announcement by Afif Didi, six members of the Maldivian Government were flown to Gan. At the same time, the Duke of Devonshire arrived from the U.K. There were rumours that the islanders on the next atoll to the north of Addu Atoll, had sympathy with Afif, but this had been very quickly put down through action taken by the Maldivian Government.

TROUBLE FOR FIRE SECTION

My first knowledge of trouble on Gan was being called from the Sergeant's Mess, to the Fire Section, and instructed to take a party of firemen, with a fire vehicle, and set up a line of hoses on the shore, adjacent to the Parliament Building, (the name by which we knew it!), near to the jetty.

On arrival, I was amazed to see dozens of native boats loaded with men waving heavy sticks and iron bars and shouting loudly. They had obviously got to know that the Government officials were meeting in the Parliament Building probably with the Duke! The Regiment, fully

armed, surrounded the whole building.

RAF POLICE W/O "GET BACK"

We set our hoses up and received instructions to use them should the rioters try and come ashore. Suddenly, to my utter astonishment, an RAF Police Warrant Officer, complete with white belt and cap, waded into the water up to his waist shouting, "Get back – get back." As you can imagine, very little notice was taken of his actions, other than providing us with a little light relief. He soon left the water soaking wet and looking very sheepish!

RAF POLICE DOGS DO THE TRICK

I was asked to report to the Station Commander, who was standing nearby with the Duke. On arrival, he informed me that a number of women from the neighbouring island were wading across from Gan, near the old causeway. I was ordered to set up some hoses there, and use them if they came ashore. I said I didn't think that using hoses on women was a good idea, and he relented. The sight of RAF police dogs eventually stopped the women.

THE END OF THE REPUBLIC!

After a few hours, the rioters dispersed and, thank goodness, the Maldivian officials left the island later that night, and calm was restored. We never saw Afif Didi again, but were told he owned a cabin cruiser, and that the RAF had fuelled it then ordered him to leave. To where, I do not know, and that was the end of the People's Republic! Regards,

STEVE DAVEY'S MEMORIES OF GUTERSLOH, FALKLANDS, OAKINGTON AND CATS!

Dear Dave, Congratulations on your first edition it was well produced and edited.

The Memory Lane article from George Edwards certainly stirred my Grey Cells. RAF Gutersloh was indeed a unique station with an excellent mix of personnel both Brit and locally

employed civilians. Warrant Officer Morrell was a firm and fair leader who originated from Devon and possessed all the country mans lore and values. I shared an office with him and his homespun philosophy for 2 years sayings like "Never associate your self with a failure." He never did of his own volition.

FIRE DEMO HIGHLIGHTS!

However, in 1976 when a high-ranking government official visited the station we staged a quick knock down fire demo on an old Hunter fuselage. This had been meticulously rehearsed with lines drawn for stopping positions and crowd viewing area. On the day' the event was perfect and the minister was greatly impressed. He said what a wonderful vehicle the MK 9 obviously was. The Flt Lt Fire Officer then volunteered the information that the truck could also produce foam on the move and, before Jack could step in, offered a demonstration. I believe the driver was Geordie Donaldson; the man wielding the monitor remains a mystery.

The truck circled away from the watchers, came back from the down wind side, and produced foam on the move, but toward the VIP assembly! I am sure Mr. Morrell thanked the Fire Officer when he caught up with him and the prominence in their rapid retreat from the snowstorm!

1986 FALKLANDS 'NAPALM'

Moving on to 1986 - When the Fire Section at RAF Mount Pleasant MPA (Falkland Islands) was new and everything was moving up from RAF Stanley, it was intended to cull all the cats which had become personal pets during the occupation; ostensibly to prevent a proliferation of pussies* at MPA. The firemen "Spirited" one tabby 'moggie' away from Stanley to MPA ahead of the hunt. The lads christened it "Napalm." I don't know why, but would hazard a guess that it had dropped a few nasty

"Bombs" in its time. The boys made it a home in a cardboard box with his name painted on it. One fine day the cat found itself in its box in the crew room with the phone placed on top of the box.

Following the afternoon Tristar flight, an FNG (Falklands New Guy) fireman found his way to the section and was alone in the crew room with the box/cat/phone.

The established hands had observed this situation through the Georgian wire viewing panels in the crew room door. One bright spark then called the crew room phone from another extension in the section. The FNG detects the ringing and looks around, but no one comes to answer so, gingerly, he picks up the receiver on top of the cats box and sez rather timidly. "Fire Section", "Hello" sez the Wag, "Is the cat in?" The FNG locates puss in the box and replies "Yes, but he's asleep!" "OK" sez the wag, I will call back." Everybody fall about!

1966 RAF OAKINGTON CATS!

*Talking of cats. At RAF Oakington in 1966 the heating ducts around the station became the home of free breeding feral cats. The RSPCA or some other humane animal organisation provided steel-trap cages to put in the ducts to catch the moggies.

This job fell to the Firemen. The "Pest Control Officer" came into the section one morning and asked SAC Paddy Tipper "Any luck last night?" "Yes Sor" sez Paddy. "We got a ginormous black one" "Was it wild" enquired the Flying Officer? "It wasn't very happy Sor" "was Paddy's reply!" Steve Davey 670

Thanks for the article Steve. Sorry you had to wait so long to see it in print. I told you at Peterborough that I hadn't binned it! (Took some finding though!) - Ed.

Secretary and Treasurer's Peterborough Reports



In January this year (in agreement with the committee) I contacted Air Marshal Sir John Sutton KCB and asked if he would accept the title of Honorary President

for our association. Sir John replied and in his letter he stated, *"If you think it will help your organisation in some way then I will be happy to be your Honorary President. Certainly I am in all favour of ex service organisations and as you see I am involved in one now (Sir John is President of RAF A – Sec.). What has become apparent is that very often it is only after they have left that people realise how much they enjoyed and miss the RAF community. Thus anything that can bring ex-servicemen back together should be encouraged. I would be happy to travel to meet you on occasion and I would like to receive your magazine to keep me up to date with your association activities"*

As I stated at our meeting in Peterborough why you may ask do we need an Honorary President when we already have a distinguished President and Vice President. Sir John's name now appears on our association headed paper and as we seek to develop on the excellent work undertaken by those early association pioneers we now have a greater chance of station visits and obtaining resources for The John Arthur Memorial RAF Fire Service Museum incorporating the Halfpenny Green collection of vehicles, equipment and memorabilia. It may also increase recruitment particularly of serving fire fighters. I met Sir John during my RAF service and I found him to be extremely kind and pleasant gentleman. There will be many association members who knowingly or unknowingly may have "manned" up for Sir John during his flying days a fact I pointed out to Sir John in my letter to him. It will therefore be interesting to meet Sir John hopefully at one of our reunions.

I attended my first general meeting

as secretary at the Moat House Hotel Peterborough in March. Prior to the meeting we get together as a committee and plan and prepare for the general meeting. I have found to my cost that being a member of this committee takes up quite a bit of time and for Bob Feather and Jim Paterson who organise the reunions they are extremely busy on our behalf. Jim and Bob for instance have visited six hotels in the last six months seeking suitable venues for reunions. It is difficult these days trying to obtain high quality service at a reasonable cost it is easy to get reasonable service at high prices but Bob and Jim persevere with their thankless task. I accept that is difficult to please all of the people all of the time but Bob and Jim are hardworking dedicated volunteers and in my opinion they deserve our total support.

A hundred and five members attended the reunion of which fifty-six attended the general meeting and twenty-five members sent their apologies.

I intend to provide a guest book at future reunions and members can make comment on the standard of service received at the venue and any other comments they may want to include. Issues discussed at the meeting ranged from the developments taking place at the John Arthur Museum and the Halfpenny Green Collection to the price of the beer at the Moat house. In relation to the museum Dave Hughes gave members a progress report on developments at Half Penny Green.

Finalisation of the association constitution has been under review for the last few years, It is hoped that we can finalise the constitution at our October AGM. Members wishing to receive a copy of the constitution are asked to write or e-mail me and I will send out a copy. Members wishing to submit amendments to the constitution are asked to do so by the end of May (2005) amendments to myself please.

Best wishes,

George Edwards member 238



In an effort to try and keep the membership more fully informed on how your Subscription payments are being spent, I will, during my tenure as your Treasurer, produce a six monthly "Summary of Accounts". These summaries will be made available to all members attending our March Reunion & General Meetings. Should any member be unable to attend these meetings and require a copy of these summaries, a request with a Stamped Addressed envelope, will be accommodated. Any member having any questions regarding the entries, please do not hesitate to ask.

It would now appear that our decision to send out Reminders Letters regarding subscription payments for the first time has paid off, with now only 4% of our members, failing to renew their membership for this year, last year at this time it was 8%.

The number of members now paying by "Standing Order Mandate" has increased over this year, with over 36% of the membership now using this system for payments. My thanks to all the members who responded to my request for new Mandate Forms (with the new Account Number & Address). All the returned forms will be submitted to our Bank over the next few weeks.

It must now be assumed, that the members who elected not to return their forms, have made their own arrangement to inform their respective Banks of the changes to the Association's account details. We have received an excellent response to the Mk 8 appeal, with all but one member honouring their pledges made at our Stoke meeting. Ten other members have also responded to the appeal in "Flashpoint". The vehicle has now been purchased and transported to Halfpenny Green, its new home.

As promised in my "End of Year Report", I am at present seeking the possibilities of a better return of interest on our investment account, a problem we all face. Currently, George (our new Secretary), and I, are investigating the possibilities of our Association receiving "Gift Aid" via the Charity Commission, and we will keep the membership fully aware of any progress.

Geoff Varley member 221.

“ONE-DAY P’RAPS!”

The first spitfire I saw, was in June ‘42’, when I was in my dad’s lorry on a trip to Nottingham. The road we were on ran beside Castle Bromwich airfield and, as there were a few planes about, I asked if we could stop for a look?

Coming down the runway was a brand new fighter from the factory just across the road. When it got to the control tower, the pilot gave the engine a quick burst of throttle and turned the aircraft round. With brakes on, the pilot opened up the throttle to full power, for a few seconds, and then shut down to a tick over. Then, brakes off, full power and, in a few seconds lifted off into the blue sky.

Climbing and turning slowly, it did a circuit over the airfield going like the ‘clappers’ then nose up and, a second or two later, was lost from sight. “Wish I was big enough to go in one of them Dad?” “Yeah, one day p’raps!” he said.

Whitsuntide passed and school



holidays arrived at last. “Mom, could you do me a couple of pieces of jam, ‘cos I’m going a ride on me bike, and can you spare thre’pence for a little bottle of pop?” Well, this trip got me a smacking as I didn’t tell them where I was going! During that first day, I made up my mind that I was going to be in the RAF, and that’s that!

May 53 saw me, and one or two others, arriving at Cardington, Bedfordshire, for Induction and ‘Kitting Out.’ Though I had been in the ‘A’ classes in school, my secondary education wasn’t adequate enough for me to be considered for pilot training so, a ground job it had to be. I signed on for 3 years and, after 8 weeks at West Kirby, I had some leave, then off to Sutton-on-Hull for fire training. I met my service pal, Peter Scott, a Warwick man, as we left Birmingham for

Sutton, and we were together all our service life and a little beyond too!

We both passed our exams and were posted to RAF Honiley. When we found out where it was, just 3 miles from Warwick, and 15 miles from ‘Brum’, say no more! Anyway, we got there and did the ‘arriving bit’, which took most of the morning, and then we had a wander around the camp to get to know it.

The Fire Trucks were 2 x Bedford Water Browsers, 1 x Coventry Climax Pump, 1 X ACRV Willy’s Jeep, (in 1955 a Landrover replaced the Willy’s jeep 1 x 6x4 Fordson WOT1A & 1A1A Monitor, 1 x 6x4 Austin Gas Truck.

Honiley was the home of 605 County of Warwick Auxiliary Squadron and was the first Auxiliary Squadron to have jets and made quite a name for themselves over the years.

NCO i/c Fire section was Flt/Sgt Frank Wallace. What a smashing bloke he was. Everyone on the section liked ‘Chiefy.’ He was very easy going, but we all ‘toed the line’ and, if he said he wanted this that done, it was so! 2 ½ years later, we said ‘cheerio’ to our ‘Chiefy’ as he went to Hendon for demob.

Moving forward to now, in 2004, I had an invite to RAF Coningsby via Sgt, (now Flt/Sgt), Steve Bowden and Sgt Terry Monahan. During my visit, I found we were to go into the BBMF, (Battle of Britain Memorial Flight), hangar and, there I was, after waiting for so long, sitting in the cockpit of a Spitfire! It only took 61 years for that “One day p’raps’ to finally arrive! What an experience and all down to the generosity and kindness of all at Coningsby. I can’t thank them enough.

Frank Smith member 593

P.S. My grateful thanks also go to all who showed every concern for my well being at Stoke, when I became a little unwell, including the ladies and staff of the Moat House Hotel. It was very much appreciated.

Frank

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Sunday 14th November 04 dawned bright and clear without a cloud in the sky, and was perfect weather for the annual Remembrance Parade. Alan Alsop and I arrived on Horse Guards Parade at 08:20 in plenty of time as we were not due to march off until 10:30 and, one by one, the rest of our contingent arrived until all 14 were present.

I was given the honour of leading the Association at this years parade, and it made me feel very proud to march in front giving the orders. I would like to thank all members present for making it such a memorable occasion (and obeying orders!).

We were all thinking of John Arthur, as it was the first time we had been on the Parade without John, and I know how much it meant to him. The atmosphere in Whitehall when we were waiting for the march past to begin was fantastic, and, personally, I have never known anything like it. I have already booked my room at the Union Jack Club for next year. It was disappointing that only 14 members were present this year but I appreciate that a lot of members are unable to attend for various reasons, but it would be nice if we could get a few more in future.

I would like to finish by thanking Alan Alsop for his efforts in organising our annual Remembrance Parade attendance.

Ron Brown member 294



Picture from Frank Smith, 593, shows members forming up for the 2003 Remembrance Parade. They include Steve Doran Alan Alsop Ron Brown John Goupillot Bob Dickinson Geoff Varley John Savage and our late President John Arthur. Apologies to those members not named, but if they let me know I’ll make it right in a future edition - Ed.



Above shows the front cover of *ASTRAL* Magazine from The National Service (Royal Air Force) Association. The magazine is 28 pages A5 size in black & white with a wealth of information and it’s own website www.nsrafa.com

Mick Urquhart, member 420, sent it to me, but neither of us had been aware of it prior to seeing this copy. We have members who were National Service and some may also be members of this Association and vice - versa.

An item on page 12 headed, HAY MAKING OR WERE THEY MAKING HAY? is by ex-Cpl Robinson (no Christian name given) and shows an ACRT 37 AA 30 T/25. He served from December ‘51’ to late ‘52’ at RAF Merryfield and satellite dorm at Dunkerswell.

Committee members’ details are given, but no telephone numbers etc. so I’m going to try the website and maybe a letter to the Secretary for openers. I’ll try to find out more about the organisation and give an update in a future issue.

Watch this space! - Ed.

Footnote - Mick is recovering in hospital from surgery and our best wishes go to him and Molly - Ed.

SPOTLIGHT ON SUTTON CAMP - CIRCA 1958/1959



A part from the aerial view of the camp and the Sutton badge, Mick Blackman member 439, sent in the other items. Mick was on permanent staff at the time and in the 1959 Cup Final Team:
 - Standing L/R - Stewart-Collier-Best Mustard-Blackman

Front L/R – Milshom-unknown-Stn/ Carpenter-unknown-Humphrey-Duncan

Thanks for this info Mick - it's great. Paragon Station and the Christmas menu are real gems and please note, the meal includes Beer, Minerals and Cigarettes! What! No wine, women and song to round things off nicely? Shame, can't have everything - Ed.

Does anyone remember enjoying this

Stop Press - RAF Fire Service Museum Working Weekend Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th May 2005 - VOLUNTEERS URGENTLY NEEDED

- Why not come along and get some 'job satisfaction' by helping with the exhibits and building renovation etc. For further information and to find out what you can do to help - Contact David Hughes weekends on: - 01952 412 152 or Mobile - 0796 563 74

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HEROES OF THE FIRE SERVICE

HERO AT ROYAL AIR FORCE CATTERICK

In a recent issue of Flashpoint we recorded the story of the heroism of Victorian Fireman Joseph Ford, in this one we have our own hero, Royal Air Force Fire Fighter Senior Aircraftsman (SAC) Nicholas Harrison.

On the 5th of November 1981 SAC



Harrison went to the aid of a colleague whose Fire Land Rover had collided head-on with a stationary fuel bowser and appeared to be trapped in the cab of the burning vehicle.

Why this young airman should wish to take his own life we shall never know.

Having got his badly burned comrade clear of the inferno on the second attempt, during which he received extensive burns to his own face and hands, he then waded into the fast flowing River Swale, into which his colleague had jumped, still determined to kill himself, and supported him until assistance arrived.

Despite the grave danger to himself, and the great pain he was suffering, SAC Harrison displayed an outstanding sense of responsibility together with cool and sustained courage of the highest order and in total accord with the finest traditions of the RAF Fire Service.

Sadly the young man died from his injuries four days later and was buried in the family grave in Hull escorted by his comrades from the Fire and Rescue Squadron Support Staff. SAC Harrison was given leave from hospital to attend.

At the inquest, the coroner described the

efforts of the young fire fighter, who himself spent 13 days in hospital after the incident, as *"A wonderful tale of comradeship and courage."* *"I have been a coroner for 22 years and I can't think of any occasion when the conduct of someone trying to save the life of another has been so remarkable."*

SAC Nicholas Harrison was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct, had the incident been witnessed, a much higher award would undoubtedly have been recommended.

I was his Flt Sgt at the time of the incident and it is with great pride and sadness that I have been able to relay this little known story of heroism to you all.

E FLAMMIS ATQUE RUINIS SALUS (Salvation From The Flames And Ruin)

If anyone is able to contact Nick, his last known address was in Wath Upon Dearne near Barnsley, let's get him into the Association. As I recall, from times in the Angel Hotel and the Twig, he enjoys a good drink. John Goupillot member 358

Footnote: - On this very subject of Fire Service heroes, during a recent chat with Secretary, George Edwards, I mentioned that 'Jess' Jessup member 133, had sent me some extracts from the London Gazette from 1941 to 1958 on a number of such heroes and I was intending to use them in a future edition. George said he was already researching this area of our history, including those who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties. So, with Jess's permission, I will give copies to George to further his research. If anyone else has any info; please let me know and I'll pass it on. - Ed.

"ERK'S" PRAYER Does anyone have a copy? *Not the Fireman's Prayer!*

Ken Hird, member 491, had a copy that has been misplaced. He says he can't remember the entire poem, only a bit of the beginning and the end as follows:-
"The SP is my protector, I shall not want. His brassards and Clubs will protect me.....?"

Or I shall dwell in the Guardhouse forever!"

Can you help? If so, please reply to the Editor.

**Next Issue - 10th Anniversary
AGM & Reunion - Royal Hotel
Hull 21st to 23rd October 2005**

**Profile of Honorary President Air
Marshal Sir John Sutton KCB**

**Reports re Waddington RIAT &
Eastbourne 999 Shows**

**Opening and Dedication of the
John Arthur Memorial RAF Fire
Service Museum at Halfpenny Green
Saturday 2 April 2005**

**Pictures of RAF Stafford 2 MT
Squadron's transfer of an Alvis
Pyrene MK6 to Halfpenny Green**

**Proposed future visit to RAF
Marham. Details to follow**

'The Dan Dare' Story 1936 - 1973

**London Sunday 10 July 2005 -
WW2 60th Commemoration VE/VJ
Parade, Royal Lunch and Service in
Westminster Abbey**

Remembrance Parade details

TATTERSHALL WEEKEND AND RAF CONINGSBY VISIT JULY 2005

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the weekend is cancelled. The site has been taken over by a Holiday Company and prices increased to where he decided the cost was unreasonable. Joe sincerely apologizes for any inconvenience occurring because of the changes and cancellation, and is extremely disappointed to have had to make the decision.

For 2006, Joe is looking at a site near Woodhall Spa, not too far from RAF Coningsby. Joe Shackleton member 22

Co-ordinator North



RAB DAWSON - 1942 - 2004



'Winter Mountain Man' taken in Scotland, January 1996, was Rab's favourite.



L/R - Rab Dawson - Alec Robertson - Terry Matson - 20 November 2004 Perth, Scotland

In loving memory of Robert Dawson - 22nd December 1942 - 24th December 2004



On Thursday 13th January 2005, five Association members, Jim Paterson, Terry Matson, Bob Feather, Alec Robertson and Dave Kenyon, joined family and friends for Rab's funeral in Glasgow. The Funeral

Parlour was full, with people standing in the aisles, corridors and reception area. Many more waited outside during the short service. At the Crematorium, the Chapel was again full and we stood at the back, after forming a Guard of Honour as the mourners filed in, (and out after the Service).

The numbers attending were no great surprise to those who knew Rab, for he was very likeable, and good company, with a *very quirky sense of humour*; and loved winding people up. He was a great friend, colleague, a Scottish co-ordinator and member 527.

In November 2004, Rab met with Terry Matson and Dave Kenyon, just north of Perth, Scotland, for a reunion with Alec

Robertson with whom we had worked at RAF Linton-on-Ouse 40 odd years ago. We had a fantastic weekend reminiscing about the 'Good old days' and Alec is now a member and was eagerly looking forward to more reunions with his old friends.

Rab was due to start to a new job in January 2005, following his holiday at Christmas, in Lanzarote, but that was not meant to be, as he died suddenly Christmas Eve. A great shock to his wife, family and friends. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him and, on behalf of the Association; our heartfelt sympathies go to Rab's family. He leaves a wife, Rose, 2 daughters, Adele & Tracy and stepdaughter, Linda. 4 grandsons, aged between 13 & 10, Shaun, Jason, Calum & Sasha, will miss their loving, lively grandad.

His hobbies included Mountain Climbing, Cycling, Walking, Akaido Martial Arts, (he was a Brown Belt due to go for his Black Belt in May this year,) and enjoyed the odd pint or two with friends!

Rab joined the RAF on the 20 Feb 1962 until 19 Feb 1967. He trained at RAF Catterick, and served at Linton-on-Ouse 62/64, Masira 64/65, and Ballykelly, Northern Ireland, 65/67 until demob.

Dave Kenyon friend and member 239

Course photo - Hut 214 RAF Bridgnorth, Shropshire in early 1962 and 'Square Bashing time!'

G4270531 SAC Dawson R is seated 3rd from the right in the centre row looking like he was very happy to be there!



Miss me but let me go

*Miss me but let me go.
When I come to the end of
the road and the sun has set
for me.
I want no tears in a gloom
filled room.
Why cry for a soul set free?
Miss me a little but not too
long, and not with your
head bowed low.
Remember the love that we
once shared.
Miss me but let me go.*

*For this a journey that we
all must take, and each must
go alone.
It's all a part of the Master's
plan, a step on the road to
home.*

*When you are lonely and
sick of heart, go to the
friends that we know,
and bury your sorrows in
doing good works.
Miss me and let me go.*

*Perhaps if we could see
the splendour of the land,
to which our loved ones are
called, from you and me,
we'd understand.*

*Perhaps if we could hear
the welcome they receive,
from old familiar voices also
dear.*

We would not grieve.

*Perhaps if we could know
the reason why they went.
We'd smile and wipe away
the tears that flow.
We'd wait content.*

*This poem was a favourite
of Rose's and formed part of
the Funeral Service.*



In Memoriam - a sincere tribute to members recently passed away



Monday 14th March 2005 saw friends, colleagues, Association & RAFA members and ICI Wilton personnel converge on Redcar Crematorium in support of family and friends, to pay their respects and help celebrate Gary's life.

Gordon Smith, Association Standard Bearer, flanked by two escorts, Stan Readman and John Taylor, preceded the Funeral Cortege to the Chapel and Pall Bearers from ICI Wilton, wearing Ceremonial Uniforms provided by Cleveland County Fire Service carried the Flag draped coffin. A Guard of Honour was provided by a combination of RAFA and Association members, and RAFA President, Dennis Eels, brought everyone to attention as the mourners filed in for the Service. Andrew, Gary's son, gave a short Eulogy to his dad which is reproduced later in this report of events.

Others attending included, Jim Adams ex 1st King's Dragoons, Pat Bluck, Tom Clulow ex Army Fire Service, Bob Dickinson, Kevin Doyle ex Green Howard, Dickie Fawcett RAFA Redcar Secretary, Bob Feather, Ron Gaunt, Arthur Gettings, John Gouppilot, John Hewitt, Dave Kenyon, Terry Matson, Tom Searle ex Royal Signals and Joe Shackleton. After the Service, the family invited everyone back to the Redcar RAFA Club for refreshments.

Gary served in the RAF from 26 June 1958 to 4 June 1962 in Air Movements, and then remustered as a fireman from 5 June 1962 to 30 March 1967. Following demob, he worked at ICI Wilton on Teesside until retirement. He was Association member 27, not quite a founder member, but close enough. He'd not been well for many years, but didn't dwell on his problems and, with his positive outlook and sense of humour, was very good company. Gary's passing leaves a void for so many that knew, and loved

him, and, on behalf of the Association, our heartfelt sympathies go to Hazel, Andrew and all family and friends.

All photos courtesy of Joe Shackleton, friend.



Above - Gary attending a visit and presentation to ICI Wilton, Teesside. Pictured with his son Andrew, ADO in Charge, and our late President John Arthur, Gordon Smith and on-duty ICI personnel.



An expression of grief

*Do not stand at my grave
and weep,
I am not there I do not
sleep,
I am a thousand winds that
blow,
I am the diamond glints on
snow,
I am the sunlight on
ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn
rain.
When you awaken in the
morning hush,
I am the quiet uplifting
rush,
Of quiet birds in circled
flight,
I am the soft stars that
shine at night,
Do not stand at my grave
and cry,
I am not there - I did not
die.*

The poem was left in an envelope by Stephen Cummins, a soldier serving in Northern Ireland to be opened in the event of his death. Stephen was killed on active service and many people incorrectly assumed that he had written it. Stephen's father read the poem on Remembrance Day 1995.

There are several people who claim authorship of the poem, which was also read at the memorial service for the five Astronauts who died in the Challenger Space Shuttle tragedy.

The poem was reproduced in Yours magazine May 2004 and states: - 'This is a well known poem which is often read at funerals and seems to offer comfort to bereaved people.'

RAF & Defence Fire Services Association RAFDFSA ENTERPRISES - Our "Shop"

Those of you who have been able to attend the reunions will be aware that we have a range of promotional **RAFDFSA goods for sale**, all profits of which go to **Association funds**. Goods are also available by mail order via **Bob Feather (Membership Secretary)** or **Sue Brooks (Chairman's wife - (see WHO TO CONTACT on page 2 for full address details))**. Goods are also available via the **Association website** shown at the bottom of each page. As requested by members, we have several new items this year including mugs and self cling car stickers, as well as new fire engine thimbles and keyrings. Looking forward to seeing you at the reunions, regards and best wishes, Bob Feather and Sue Brooks.

Below is an updated stock and price list for your information.

Cheques and Postal Orders payable to RAF&DFSA Enterprises

Note:- For Mail Order Postage & Packing please add 17% to prices quoted. Minimum Postage charge £1.00

STOCK AND PRICE LIST 2005

RAF FIREFIGHTING & RESCUE

STICKERS x 2 (RAF Fire Service).....	£0.50
CAP BADGE (RAF Crash Fire Service).....	£10.00
EMBROIDERED PATCH BADGE.....	£3.50
ACRT CORGI MODEL.....	£10.00

RAF & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION

CAR STICKER.....	£1.20
KEYRING.....	£2.00
MUG.....	£4.75
ASSOCIATION PEN.....	£0.50
THIMBLES.....	£1.50
Set of 4.....	£5.00
POCKET CALCULATOR.....	£3.99
WALL PLAQUE.....	£26.00
OLD SUTTON-ON-HULL MAGAZINE.....	£1.00
BLAZER BADGE (Gold Wired).....	£10.00
LAPEL BADGE.....	£3.00
TIES (Blue, Grey, Burgundy, Green).....	£6.00
SWEATSHIRT (Navy, Grey, Green, White) (Sm. Med. Lg. XL. XXL).....	£16.99
POLO SHIRT - Navy (Sm. Med. Lg. XL. XXL).....	£10.00
T SHIRT (Red, Black, Navy, White) (Sm. Med. Lg. XL. XXL).....	£6.50
FLEECE (Navy - to order only) (Sm. Med. Lg. XL. XXL).....	£35.00
BASEBALL CAP (Navy, Black, Green, Natural).....	£6.00

MISCELLANEOUS

FIRE ENGINE PRINT.....	£6.00
FIRE EXTINGUISHER LIGHTER.....	£2.50
CHRISTMAS CARDS - REDUCED TO CLEAR	
Pack of 10.....	£1.50
Special Offer - 4 packs	£4.00



Brief History Of The Association

CALLING ALL EX RAF ERKS 1939 TO 1963

There will be a re-union parade taking place at the RAF Museum at Cosford, Shropshire on Sunday, June 26th 2005 (National Service Day) organised by the National Service (RAF) Association, The RAF Museum and DCAE Cosford. All ex-RAF personnel who served from 1939 to 1963 (in the ranks) – be they National Service or regulars – are invited to come along for the day. You do not have to be a member of the NS (RAF) A.

Try to be there for 1030am. A parade and march past, with an RAF Band will take place at 1130am – under the tender care of ex-1950's Drill Instructors – and it will give you the opportunity to once more march and salute the Ensign under which we once all served.

Join us, with your families, for a memorable day of nostalgia and all things RAF, including a planned fly-past by the Lancaster of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (subject to weather/mechanical conditions).

For information, contact Pat Honey on 01782 516 887 or Les Cooper on 01543 503 946. Or see our Website www.nsrafa.com

Note: This item was extracted from the RAF NEWS, page 20, 26th November 2004, and is published for member's information only. Editor

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

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

Area Coordinators Elected

Area Coordinators were subsequently elected to cover the U.K. as follows:-

	Member	
Devon & Cornwall	Wilf. Longmire	83
Lincolnshire	Roger Smith	32
Midlands	Graham Kennedy	10
Norfolk	G S Bridges	18
North	Joe Shackleton	22
Northern Ireland	John Hanley	69
RAF	Gordon Smith	64
Scotland	Jim Souter	106
Scotland	Richard Callanan	52
South	Barry Poulton	14
Wales	Reg Silcock	24

N.B. See page 2 for details of those in post now.

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, 'Flashpoint' with information, news, updates, articles, anecdotes, photos. and stories.

The 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 Services.

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.



Photo shows 21 ex-RAF Firemen attending Shoreham Airport, East Sussex on the 13th May 1995 for the inauguration of the RAF & Defence Fire Services Association but only 15 are named- Basil Cotton, Barry Poulton, Bob Good, Roger Brooks, John Knight, Joe Shackleton, Len Nightingale, John Arthur, 'Nobby' Clarke, Bob Hodgeson, Dennis McCann, Graham Kennedy, Keith Penfold, Bill Bennett & Tony Cullen (didn't join). 6 names are missing from the photo, plus another 2 members not in the shot, to account for the 23 ex RAF Firemen who started it all off for us?

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 2 – Who to Contact. Please enclose an SAE for the return of photos etc. Thank you. Dave Kenyon Editor 239

News - Views - Updates

Committee Meeting - 22nd January 2005 at City of Cambridge ATC Squadron H.Q.

Brief Report and Update on Meeting

Saturday saw committee members arriving for their scheduled meeting hosted by Geoff Varley, Treasurer, and his wife, Hazel, and included: - Chairman, Roger Brooks, Vice-Chairman Jim Paterson, Secretary George Edwards, Membership Secretary, Bob Feather, Flashpoint Editor, Dave Kenyon and Vice-President, Dennis McCann.

At the start of the meeting, Roger asked members to stand and observe two minutes silence in memory of our recently deceased Scottish coordinator, Rab Dawson, member 527.

He then welcomed the new Secretary and Vice-

President to their first committee meeting.

Agenda items

Chairman reported re Hendon project and said costs had escalated and it was agreed to drop the project. Roger to inform John Savage.

Proposed amendments to the Constitution.

MK 7 purchased by Dennis McCann and partner, Pauline, donated to Association.

Roll of Honour Board - arrangements to be made to place on show at the new RAF Fire Service Museum.

Treasurer reported on accounts and donations to purchase vehicles.

Secretary reported details of Gloster Saro Fire Truck for sale.

Asked if association had an inventory and informed Chairman currently holds it.

Editor informed committee he hadn't yet started next edition due in April 05, and it may be delayed. Agreed to keep print run at 800 copies.

Vice-Chairman said the Public Address equipment is kept at his home, and was an overlarge piece of kit and difficult to store and transport. Agreed to sell and replace with a more suitable item.

Still looking at Venues for 2006.

Agreed thimbles for tables at next reunion will have Association crest.

October 05 reunion

likely to be at the Royal Hotel, Hull last used October 2003, but needs to confirm.

Discussed payment of Coach bill for Ladies transport in March 05.

Entertainment for March venue at Peterborough discussed. Bob to deal.

AOB - Proposed by the Secretary that an Information Notice be posted at reunion hotels detailing all those attending to enable members, and first time attendees, to find friends and colleagues. Agreed, Secretary to deal.

Geoff Varley suggested that, to help raise the profile of the Association, we ought to consider an Honorary

President, such as a Senior RAF Officer. Agreed unanimously after discussion - Secretary to deal.

The benefits to the Association of Charity status were discussed. Agreed to look into the possibility. Secretary to deal.

Secretary to send thank you letter to OC Cambridge ATC Squadron for the use of their facilities.

Once again, our grateful thanks go to Hazel Varley for being there and providing the refreshments.



Committee members meeting in City of Cambridge Squadron H.Q. ATC Drill Hall

Back Row- L/R

George Edwards Dennis McCann
Dave Kenyon

Front Row - L/R

Jim Paterson

Roger Brooks

Bob Feather

Geoff Varley

Photo & Text Dave Kenyon

Get Well Wishes - At present, a number of our members, and their families, are not enjoying the best of health. Some are undergoing treatment, including surgery, whilst others are still waiting. Those we know about include - Barry Hartley, John Myers, Derek Moscrop, Mick Urquhart and Alan Alsop. We wish them, and any others not mentioned personally, a sincere speedy recovery and return to better health.

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES FOR
NEXT ISSUE OF FLASHPOINT DUE
AUGUST - 1 July 2005**

RAF & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES NEWS & UPDATES

FIRE FIGHTERS GO THROUGH THEIR PACES IN ROYAL DEMONSTRATION



Personnel at the MOD Fire Services Central Training Establishment got the chance to show off their skills during a visit by the Princess Royal.

Instructional staff and students at Manston demonstrated the roles and competencies needed by Defence Fire Services personnel with a series of scenarios, which ranged from road accident rescues through hazardous chemical decontamination procedures, fire behaviour and breathing apparatus training.

The visit ended with a demonstration of aircraft crash firefighting and rescue involving a crash combine of a Major Foam Vehicle (MFV) and crews responding to an exercise emergency involving a large aircraft.

It was a particularly signifi-

cant visit in renewing the link with the Princess, who opened the establishment in 1992.

The Princess was escorted during her visit by the Commandant, Wg Cdr Peter Kennedy, and she spent some time chatting to staff and families.

Wg Cdr Kennedy praised the hard work of everyone at Manston in making the event such a success. "The visit reflected the valuable contribution made by everyone at Manston over the last few years, particularly marking the station's role in training personnel for Operation Fresco."

This commitment was again clearly evident in the enthusiasm of the staff and students in demonstrating their professional skills to Her Royal Highness.

Text and pictures courtesy of the RAF NEWS 20 August 2004



SCOUTING MISSION

The Fire Section, and Air Traffic Control, were on the agenda for Sea Scouts in Bushey and Oxhey who visited Northolt.

Youngsters had great fun as they learned about life on an RAF Station.

Photo shows two of the youngsters enjoying their view from the top of the vehicle.

Text and picture courtesy of the RAF NEWS 21 January 2005

Note - names of on duty personnel pictured were not recorded -Ed.



TORNADO CRASH – LANDING



An RAF Tornado crew managed to crash-land their aircraft at Lossiemouth after the jet suffered undercarriage problems.

The 12 Squadron crew was on a routine training sortie from its base at Lossiemouth on the afternoon of February 21 when the incident occurred. The crew reported they could only lower the port side undercarriage.

With a search-and-rescue Sea King from D Flight 202 Squadron on standby, the GR4 made

a controlled emergency landing at the base. An arrestor wire brought the aircraft to a halt and the crew were able to walk away from the aircraft, which

caught fire after landing.

Fire fighters from the station's Defence Fire Services section were called out to the crash, and were on the scene immediately and brought the fire under control.

Speaking on February 22nd a Lossiemouth spokesman said: "The two crewmen were obviously shaken, but escaped any serious injury. The actions of the crew and the fire fighters, was an excellent example of professionalism and effective training."

The fire damaged Tornado was moved off the runway, but the spokesman pointed out that it could be repaired. Text and image courtesy of the RAF NEWS 4 March 2005.

Pictured – the moment the Tornado touched down at Lossiemouth. (Video image)

Photographic Memories!



This photo was given to me at the Stoke AGM in October 2004 and shows a group taken the year before at the Hull Reunion 2003.

L/R Standing -

Les Williams 676	Jimmy Croll 208
John Wright	Lofty' Hansford
674 Bill Bennett 3	

Seated - Jim Crabtree 275

I apologise if any names are incorrect, but it was a bit hectic after the meeting when photos and articles were coming from all directions. Ed.



THE RAF GETS FESTIVE ACROSS THE GLOBE.

Picture shows Sac Ian Kempton, Sac Rob Moylan and Sgt Adi Hanbury taking time out to make snow angels in Lithuania. Text and picture courtesy of RAF NEWS 10 December 2004

Note - At the time of printing details of the home stations of the personnel pictured were not available - Ed.

Website Sponsor - David Hughes, member 683, whose business is in the Fire Protection Trade, and his company ABC Fire Protection which is based in Southampton - David F Hughes 17 Testwood Road, Southampton SO15 8RQ Tel 02380 326000 Mobile 07976 563740 Fax 02380 821533

Photo update - Akrotiri 1966 from August 2004 page 8 & December 2004 page 20 issues of Flashpoint .

At the Peterborough March reunion, Dave Stevenson, member 175, gave the name of the guy on the right hand end of the middle row as 'Taff' Porter. Does this just about sort all the names from the photo? - Ed.

Brief History of the Royal Air Force Fire Service

maintaining necessary high standards of training, expertise and efficiency.

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

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



RAF Coningsby fireground demo using Training Module and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) on a simulated aircraft crash rescue exercise using light water foam via the monitor on the Alvis Rapid Intervention Vehicle (RIV) - Sunday 25 June 2000.

Photo Dave Kenyon member 239

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

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 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 Central Training Establishment (CTE) 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

Brief History of the Defence Fire Services (DFS)



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!

Today, the service is in a state of uncertainty as to its future with rumours of privatisation of both the RAF and DFS. Whatever the outcome, 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

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 its own right.

The early 1960's also saw the gradual civilianisation of certain



RAF Linton-on-Ouse Defence Fire Services (DFS) Alvis Rapid Intervention Vehicle (RIV) and Victor Wheel Brake incident at Elvington Airshow 26 August 2001

Photo Dave Kenyon member 239

Bruntingthorpe MK V1 & 'Delta Lady'



Sqdn Ldr's Dave Thomas and Paul Millikin and Flt Lt David Bradford emerge from the cockpit of XH 558 after the delivery flight to Bruntingthorpe 23rd March 1993 surrounded by its supporters. Copyright Vulcan 558 Club' Produced by Famous Vulcans photos by Charles Toop*

'Delta Lady' & the V1

Whilst chatting with members of the Vulcan Restoration Trust at the Waddington Air Show several years ago, one of them asked, "Isn't there an old RAF Fire Engine across the airfield at Bruntingthorpe?" As we hadn't a clue, (nothing new there then!), we decided to follow it up ASAP. We phoned the owner of Bruntingthorpe Airfield, David Walton, (which is the home of the last flying Vulcan XH558 - 'Delta Lady'), and 3 members, Bob Feather (218) Terry Matson (401) and Dave Kenyon (239) visited the Airfield near Leicester on Saturday 1 September 2001, and found the "RAF Fire Engine" to be an Alvis Pyrene MKVI Crash Tender, circa 1950's! We took loads of photographs, (see **), as we swarmed all over the "6" and re-lived old times, and great experiences.

Offer to the Association***

As a result of our visit and subsequent negotiations the owner, David Walton, agreed to donate the vehicle to the Association. However, it has suffered from its years sitting on the airfield and was pushed around at sometime

by a bulldozer sustaining extra damage to the bodywork.

RESTORATION POTENTIAL?

On first impressions, it appeared it may be past economical and viable repair, and our original Restoration Team, (now disbanded due to lack of volunteers), were going to very closely inspect it before any subsequent decision was taken as to its future. It was thought that it might be useful for spares, which would be a great shame, but there it is. According to staff, it was running several years ago, however, until we pointed it out to the owners, no one had realized the significance of their Alvis Pyrene MKVI Crash Tender and its relationship to the Vulcan Bomber, which the owners are striving to return to the skies with their Vulcan to the Sky project or VTS. Latest March bulletin says that work is to commence in the very soon to restore her to full flying condition.

For more info see website:

www.vulcantothesky.com

(Pssst! They also have a "live" Victor K2 tanker 'Teasin' Tina' which is 'fast taxied' along with 2 Lightings, Buccaneer etc.

and, usually, flying and static displays).

VULCAN FORMER PROTECTOR

It's ironic, as there is a magnificent example of British design, technology and engineering of the 1950's era under restoration to its former glory, whilst its former "protector" languishes in serious decline. If only it could be brought back from the brink. Hmmm, maybe!

Salvage Squad Channel 4

For those of you lucky enough to see the first series of 'Salvage Squad' on Channel 4 in 2001, will have been well chuffed with the glimpse of a mint MKV1, in full colour, "bombing" across the TV screen. The sequence looked as though it could be archive film from the Alvis factory and was part of the restoration of an Alvis 'Stalwart' Amphibious Army Vehicle. As a result of that programme, (and in an attempt to grab their interest), we wrote to the producer offering them a "crack" at our Bruntingthorpe "6." At present, it's marked as a possible for a future 'Salvage Squad' subject to the financing of any further series?

Notes: - Not forgetting personnel from RAF Coningsby Fire Section who sent information via Steve Bowden, (RAF Coordinator & member 413), confirming the 6's existence.

* Apologies for the quality of the Vulcan postcard.

** All MK 6 photos and text by Dave Kenyon member 239

*** The '6' is at its new home at the RAF Fire Service Museum at Halfpenny Green. Ed.



Letters of Appreciation to the Membership

From the family of the late Robert (Rab) Dawson

We would like to thank the friends, in the Association, who sent cards and letters of condolence when Robert died so unexpectedly. It meant so much to us to know he was held in such high regard. Everyone who knew him was stunned that he should die so suddenly. Robert was so full of life. Full of plans. So full of fun.

And that is how he is remembered. Rab's funeral was truly a celebration of his life. The minister, John Joyce, a lay preacher, knew Bob, as he called him, from when he was demobbed from the RAF in 1967. His service was humorous, upbeat and sincere. It was just Robert to a 'T'

We, the family, want to thank from the bottom of our hearts, Robert's RAF Buddies, who made it to the funeral. You guys were exceptional. You were all so visibly moved, and determined, to make Rab's funeral as meaningful, and fitting, as possible. Thank you for the Association Flag you draped over the coffin, and for the berets on top. All so poignant.

And the Guard of Honour: all standing so straight and respectfully, in your Berets and Blazers, Badges and Ties. You guys added Pomp and Ceremony, and Dignity, which made all our hearts swell up with pride for Robert. There was an aura on the day.

Robert would have enjoyed his own funeral. And, of course, he was there in spirit, having a laugh along with us all, and being proud of himself, as always. God bless you all.

Sincerest thanks from Rose, Tracy, Adele, Stephen, David, Karen and all other family members.



Dumfries reunion weekend 2000 - left to right
Joe Graham Terry Matson Rab Dawson Dave Kenyon

Dear Association members, I thought I would write an open letter to Flashpoint to give thanks to the R.A.F Benevolent Fund and to pay tribute to the friends of my late father, Joseph (Joe) Graham, who died on March 25th 2001. First of all, it has taken me almost four years to put pen to paper and, without the help and advice from certain members of the association, namely, Terry Matson, Bob Feather and Dave Kenyon; I would not have been able to write to the magazine. I am entirely grateful to them for encouraging me to take the opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to everyone who helped.

Second of all and, most importantly to my family, we will always be grateful for the events before my dad died when he met up with Dave Kenyon, Terry Matson and the late Rab Dawson. I'd not seen my dad with so much renewed vigour as he retold the many stories he and Rab shared from his RAF days that gave us a laugh, and how special it was to him to see his old buddies again after so many years. I've never seen him so happy although, at the time, we didn't know that he would pass away just a few short months after meeting up with Terry and Dave.

I would like to thank the R.A.F Benevolent Fund for the excellent help they gave to my family at a time when it was sorely needed, after my father passed away. His funeral was also the first occasion the family had personally met another of his ex RAF buddies, other than family friend, Rab Dawson, and was the first time I had the privilege of meeting Dave Kenyon, whom my dad had spoken about, at great length. He also spoke about Terry Matson, who I met at Rab's funeral, in January this year, along with Alex Robertson, Bob Feather and Jim Paterson.

You guys are all special to me because of what you meant to my father and just for being his friends. I thank you from the bottom of my heart, as you are all special to my family and me. For the joy you brought to my father before he died. Myself, and my family, would like you to know that we now regard you as family friends forever and mean that from the bottom of our hearts and hope that we won't lose touch.

And, before I finish, I would like to pay a personal tribute to Rab Dawson, who I had the privilege to know for a long number of years. He was just not a family friend; we regarded him as part of the family but, also, was the one driving force that kept my dad going and the person who took him to meet Dave and Terry. I know my dad thought about Rab like the brother he never had, and had the utmost respect for him, as did the rest of my family. When we received the news of his death it was a shattering blow because we thought Rab was invincible. He will be sorely missed and our thoughts are still with Rose, Tracey and Adele, I would like to thank Dave for giving me this chance to say thanks to everyone.

Yours sincerely and respectfully,

Scott Graham

Note: - Member 544, Joe Graham's obituary was recorded in Flashpoint, page 2, issue 5, July 2001 - Ed.



Monday 24th January 2005 dawned cold, grey and overcast with flurries of snow, and occasional sunshine, as Bob Feather, and I, set off from his home near Tadcaster, North Yorkshire, to journey up to Durham to rendezvous with other Association members. David Hughes had set off earlier from Telford, Shropshire around 0630 hrs, onboard the transporter (Rob Holding Transport). Terry Matson, journeying up the A19 from Teesside was, unfortunately, involved in a shunt in slush a few miles from the destination, and had to limp home with a badly damaged car. Apart from the shock of the accident, thankfully, Terry was O.K.

On arrival at Monte's Vehicle Transport Spares at Fencehouses near Durham, we met Bill Wilkinson, from North Shields, and the yard owners, Graham and Shaun Monte, who supplied us with a welcome cuppa! Bob Dickinson, turned up shortly after and, eventually, David Hughes and the vehicle transporter. Once the transporter was in position, Graham and Shaun got stuck in and, firstly, with Bob's help, manoeuvred the MK 8, then the MK 7 onto the trailer. As time progressed, the conditions got worse with cold, wet and brief blizzard conditions and those of us "observing" were full of admiration for the way Graham, Shaun and the transport driver Les grafted in the cold and wet conditions. Finally, both vehicles were safely onboard, and everyone set off for home by the early afternoon. Grateful thanks go to everyone who turned up and, especially to Graham and Shaun Monte, for their hard work sorting and loading the vehicles. We couldn't have done it as quickly without their enthusiasm and expertise.

Text and Photos - Dave Kenyon - Flashpoint Editor

MUSEUM WEBSITE - www.raf-fireservicemuseum.com.

