

# FLASHPOINT

ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE

ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



NEW ASSOCIATION TIE  
AVAILABLE  
SEE SHOP PAGE



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RAF MARHAM VISIT 23RD NOVEMBER 2005 - SPOTLIGHT ON RAF CATTERICK FIRE SQUADRON PART 1  
MUSEUM UPDATE - VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR WORKING PARTIES - FOR CATTERICK - RIAT AND MUSEUM  
VICE- CHAIRMAN VACANCY - PROPOSED NEW RAF AND DEFENCE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BOOK !**



# Brief History Of The Association

## Formation of the Association

The formation of the Royal Air Force & Defence Fire Services Association took place at Shoreham Airport in East Sussex, on the 13th. May 1995, when 23 ex-service personnel got together to settle the question of why there wasn't an organisation relating to the trade of firefighter when most other trades had formed one of their own many years ago?

### Inaugural Committee Formed

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

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

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

### Area Coordinators Elected

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

### The Intervening Years

Many changes have taken place since then as the Association established itself over the intervening years and, with its formation, colleagues, past and present, now have a better chance of finding each other again, renewing old friendships and making new ones.

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

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

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



**MISSING FOUNDER MEMBER NO. 30 CHARLES SHARP, WRITES IN TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT WITH A TOTAL NOW OF 32 FOUNDER MEMBERS AT SHOREHAM ON 13TH MAY 1995!**

SEE UPDATE BELOW

Photo shows 21 ex-RAF Firemen attending Shoreham Airport, East Sussex on Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> May 1995 for the forming of the 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)! The photo was taken Sunday morning and several founder members were missing, for various reasons. They were, C Ayling, S Morley, F Hoxey, R Smallridge, A Watts, R Rideout, D Shields, J Dalton, G Bridges, Bob Westwood, Reg Silcock, Richard Callanan, 'Brummie' Yates, Brian Wooldridge, Brian Ford, Ron Mason and, now, Charles Sharp (see Update below). Grateful thanks go to Richard Callanan, 'Brummie' Yates, Brian Ford and, Ron Mason, for their help in compiling the list and, Joe Shackleton, for supplying me with further details. A grand total of 32 who started things off, for all those of us, who have followed on behind - Are there any more out there or, is that it? Ken Rimmel, D/Day Museum, and founding vice-president, member 20, took the photograph - Ed.

**Update - 1 March 2006** - Dear Dave, Having read through Flashpoint, I see I am not mentioned as missing from the photo printed. This was because I had wandered off to the front of the Museum, to read all the photos of bygone RAF personnel and did not know I was wanted!

When I went to a reunion in Blackpool, some years ago, I saw I was in another big group photo, but can't remember when it was taken? At my age of 85 years, you forget these things. I do hope this will put your records straight? Yours sincerely, Charles Sharp, ex Sgt Firefighter and Founder member No 30.

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# Who To Contact

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\* Member, Mark Watson, volunteered as coordinator to cover Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - details to follow in next issue August 06

## CO-ORDINATOR VACANCIES

EAST YORKSHIRE - LINCOLNSHIRE - MIDLANDS - SCOTLAND - 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 OF A WARM WELCOME.

## PROPOSED NEW BOOK

- It has been agreed by the committee that we should go ahead with the production and publication of a high quality book recording the history and development of the RAF & Defence Fire and Rescue Service. Basically the book will be in three sections. **Section One** will record the history of the RAF Fire Schools and the history of the RAF & Defence Fire and Rescue Service. Tony Eaton who has considerable knowledge and material relating to this topic will compile this section. **Section Two** will provide a pictorial record of the vehicles and equipment used by the RAF & Defence fire services. Gordon Smith will compile this section. **Section Three** will consist of the personal profiles of the men (and women) who were and are now RAF or DF&RS fire fighters. John Goupillot will compile this section.

Members are asked to forward details of their RAF or DF&RS careers to John Goupillot, 2 Cricketers Green, Rawdon, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS19 7YS or contact myself. Several other association members have agreed to assist in this production. I urge all members to compile a personal profile as this is an opportunity to say as much or as little as you wish about your time as an RAF or Defence fire fighter but please say something. You may want to write about a particular incident or experience or you may want to record for posterity's sake your RAF or Defence Fire and Rescue Service career.

This initiative promises to be a major project and an opportunity for the work undertaken by RAF and Defence fire fighters to be recorded in a professional manner befitting our trade. We have a publisher and we have the talent within the association to complete this task; all we need are your stories and photographs. I have to say I have had sight of some personal profiles and they do, as expected, make fantastic reading. If you require any further information about Catterick or the book project please contact me.

Many thanks to all those who purchased my recently published book *Out of the Blue An Airman's Tale* (signed copies of which are available from yours truly for £9.95 including p&p). The book is selling very well but unlike my fellow Liverpudlian, Wayne Rooney, I have not received a £5 million advance from my publisher for my next book.

Best wishes,

George Edwards Secretary  
(Address details on the Who to Contact page)





Another year is here, it's February, and I'm busy compiling the next issue of Flashpoint, due at the end of April, and trust you liked the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Souvenir Edition; and enjoyed

trawling through the articles, especially the centre spread, and hope you all find something to stir your memory cells and remind you of your time in the service and the development of the Association over the past decade. I must take this opportunity of thanking your Committee who, wholeheartedly, supported my request to include extra colour to celebrate ten years, the cost per printed copy still being under £1.00 each. Apart from Bob Feather, who collected the Flashpoints from the printer, and myself, they only saw the finished article at a committee meeting at Cambridge on the 28<sup>th</sup> January and were very complimentary about it.

You will note on the front cover, that I've kept the various badges and standard from the December issue and intend to retain it as a permanent item. Wherever you served in the RAF or Defence Fire and Rescue Service, you should recognise your badge. The Royal Air Force Crash Fire Rescue Service cap badge was never an official one, but filled a gap, as we never had a squadron badge to identify with, and has proved popular with members and is worn by many attending the annual Remembrance Parade in London in November each year. On the subject of badges, you will see on that, on page 23, I've amended the Brief History of the Defence Fire Services to recognise the recent change to their role and new badge, which now reads, Defence Fire and Rescue Service. The back cover shows a visit last November to RAF Marham, Norfolk, and proved to be an excellent day out for those privileged to attend. On the day, it was disappointing that only 11 were able to attend out of 20 that originally showed an interest. It took a while to organise from the first request, but full marks to Steve Doran, Norfolk coordinator, for finalising the visit. He is hoping to arrange a future visit and will inform members as soon as he can.

Ex-RAF Catterick Fire School features twice in this issue, once for an Open Day event on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2006, which we are hoping to attend with the Army, who now occupy the site as Marne Barracks, and in the centrespread on the his-

tory of the Fire School. John Goupillot, member 358, who was an Instructor at the school, has provided the history detail and I think it's a cracker! I've had to split it into two parts and can't wait to include part two in the August edition, along with a report of the 24<sup>th</sup> June event.

In the Letters pages, we hear from ex-RAF Finningley, near Doncaster, now Robin Hood Airport, with a report from Station Officer John Harmson, member 737, (a very appropriate membership number John for someone working on a civilian airport, as the Boeing 737 is a popular aircraft with airlines - Ed)! John is ex - RAF Fire Service and a full member but, under our Constitution and Rules, personnel working as firefighters on CAA licensed airports, are eligible to apply for Associate Membership of the Association. He has provided me with some great photographs and I intend to do an article on Robin Hood Airport Fire Station in a future edition.

Those of you who read the RAF NEWS of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2006, may have seen an item on an RAF Calendar which mentioned the formation of various trades and, on your behalf, I emailed the Editor, Andrew Wise, and asked that he take note of the formation of the Trade of Fireman in 1943. He kindly pointed out that it wasn't an RAF NEWS item, but an RAF one, and had passed on the details to the right department. Maybe it might get a mention in the next one due 2007?

Whilst requesting members to send in a personal photograph to go with their articles, I confess that I hate having mine taken and seeing it, (see yourself as others see you - yuk!), but can't ask others to do what I won't! On reading my copy of the last issue, I was embarrassed to see that my photo was bigger than others and apologise, as it seems I'd taken the opportunity to 'hog the limelight' and assure you that was not the case and have both, reduced, and updated it. Please carry on sending me your stories, anecdotes and photos.

Finally, my two-year term of office as Editor expires in October 2006, and I've already informed the committee that, providing the membership approves, I intend to stand for re-election.

Yours sincerely,

*Dave*

## Useful Contact Numbers

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

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

**SSAFA Forces Help** - The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association:-

020 7403 8783

**The Royal British Legion** - RBL:-

08457 725 725

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

### BLESMA

**Public Records Office Kew** Richmond  
Surrey TW9 4DU

### VETERAN'S BADGE -

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



Front cover photo is from a visit to RAF Coningsby, Lincolnshire, on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2001, when Association members were guests of the Fire Section. It was

arranged by, (the then), Sgt Steve Bowden, member 413, as part of what had become known as the Tattershall Weekends, (near RAF Coningsby), organised by member, Joe Shackleton and his family - Ed.

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# A Note From Your Chairman

## Chairman's Report - Saturday 11 March 2006 Peterbor-

I would like to welcome you all to Peterborough Marriott Hotel for our March reunion and hope that you enjoy yourselves. Welcome also to our new members and I look forward to meeting you during the course of the weekend. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome onto the Committee, John Hanley as Membership Secretary, John Arnold, Area Co-Coordinator committee representative and Howard Harper who is Area Co-Coordinator, Cambridgeshire and look forward to working with them.

**Members Passed Away** - I am afraid that once again I have to report that we have lost two of our members over the last six months. Peter Parritt, who some of you might remember, arranged with Shop Motability in Hull for electric scooters to be available to those of our members who needed them for the weekend. Bernard (Spud) Murphy passed away very recently in the middle of February. The Association will sadly miss them both and our thoughts and condolences go out to their families.

**10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Hull October 2005** For those of you who did not attend, our 10th anniversary reunion went really well in Hull last October. The hotel and the food was very good and we had entertainment on the Saturday night provided by Richard C Parker, a good all round entertainer. Most of our wives went into Hull shopping on the Saturday, I hope lads that they did not completely empty the bank account - any complaints see Bob or Jim!

**Catterick and RIAT** - This year we will be looking forward to attending the Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford on the 15th & 16 July. We are hoping to be taking some of the vehicles and have heard from 2MT who are still willing to help out with vehicle transportation, subject to operational commitments. We are also going to RAF Catterick on Saturday 24th June. The shop will be set up on both occasions. We hope to see as many of you as possible at these events, Dennis & George will give you more information in the meeting.

**A good read** - I like reading a good book and I picked one up at our last committee meeting. It is called "Out of the Blue, An Airman's Tale 1965 - 2005". Our secretary, George Edwards, has written it and I can highly recommend it. It's got a lot of funny things in it; ones, which immediately come to mind, are references to RAF scouring powder and Honington MQ! The book is available for sale through the shop

with a percentage of each sale going to our funds. Thank you George.

**Association Shop Takings** - At Hull, last October, they took a magnificent £1000, which is brilliant!

**Saturday Gala Dinner Staff Collection** raised over £200. Thanks to all for that.

**Thanks from the Chairman** - The Committee has once again had a busy few months and I would like to thank them all for their continued hard work and support. It makes my job of Chairman a lot easier. I would also like to thank our wives. They do a lot of work on behalf of the Association both at our reunions and behind the scenes and without whose help I am sure the Association would not function as smoothly. Thank you all.

Roger Brooks Chairman



### Treasurer's Half Yearly Report to General Meeting Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2006 Peterborough

As promised in my report to the membership last March, it is my intention to issue a half yearly "Summary of Accounts" that will be made available for distribution to all members attending the March Reunion General Meetings, and I have pleasure in presenting that summary to you today. **(Should any member unable to attend these meetings, and would like a copy of this summary; a request with an SAE envelope will be accommodated).**

As you will see from my summary, our expenditure for the first six months of this financial year has not exceeded our income for the same period, leaving us with a healthy set of accounts at this time. This healthy balance is mainly due to the excellent response we received from our subscription reminder letters sent out in August 05, with over 95% renewing their membership at our first request, with 36% of members paying by Standing Order Mandate. My sincere thanks go to you all for making my work so much easier.

**Standing Order Payments** - I'm pleased to report that the problem some members

experienced with Standing Order payment last year, appear to have now been addressed by their respective banks, (we live in hope for next September.)

**Hull Reunion Collection in memory of Pat Clarke** - the collection made in memory of the late Pat Clark at our Hull meeting, reached £468, this amount was rounded up to £500 from association funds, and was passed on to the Museum Team with a further support payment of £200, to enable them to purchase a TACR 1 (ex Gordon Smith), this vehicle will carry a memorial plaque to Pat and is being dealt with by Steve Brown, member 760 from RAF Stafford, DF&RS.

**RAF Marham Children In Need Appeal** - A donation from association funds was also made to RAF Marham Fire Section's, "Children in Need" Appeal. This sum was a rounding up payment to supplement the collection made by members attending the excellent visit to the Station on 23rd November 05.

**Reunion Income & Expenditure Account** - At the request of our Vice Chairman, Jim Paterson, I was asked if I could produce a summary of account covering only the income and expenditure of reunion events, this I have been able to do, but only back to October 2003. This information was made available to attending members for their information. As they saw from the figures, other than the Peterborough events in March 04 and 05, (where we received a rebate for poor service), our expenditure has nearly always exceeded our income, requiring support payments from the Association's funds. Should any member have any questions regarding any item, please do not hesitate to contact me. Details as per the: Who to Contact page in Flashpoint.

Geoff Varley Treasurer & member 221

### ILL HEALTH BEST WISHES

At present, some of our members, and their families, are not enjoying the best of health and we would like them to know that we wish them well and that they are in our thoughts as valued members of the Association - Ed.

# Membership News from new Mem. Sec. John Hanley

## Hello from the new Membership Secretary John Joseph Hanley - member 69

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for electing me as your Membership Secretary. Quite a number of you know me, but for those that do not, here is a little background info about me. I was born in Enniskillen the main market town for County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 1938 and attended a Christian Brothers School up until the age of 14. On leaving school I took a trade of motor mechanic finishing my time in 1957 and then wanted a change of direction in my life and decided to enlist. My family being a completely Army family I opted to join the Royal Air Force (!!!!), enlisting on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 1957. This move did not go down very well with the male side of my family. After completion of "Square bashing" in July 1957 I proceeded to RAF Sutton-Upon-Hull for my formal training as an Aerodrome Fireman. I was posted from Sutton and arrived at RAF St Athan during the Asian flu crisis. I left St Athan in 1959 posted to RAF Khormaksar and then up to Sharjah where I carried out a 13-month tour, returning to England in 1960 posted to RAF Horsham-St-Faith.

It was here I met my Helen whom I married on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 1961. We had 4 children 2 boys and 2 girls, and now have 14 grand children and 2 great grandsons. I was posted to North Front Gibraltar in 1963 on the closure of Horsham-St-Faith and moved to Marham in 1966. From Marham I was posted to Odiham with my "Tapes" May 1966, leaving for Seletar, Singapore Oct 1967. I returned to England In 1970, posted to Bawdsey, until 1971; then RAF Bishops Court until 1973 and Masirah up the Gulf. On returning from Masirah in 1974, I was posted to RAF Wyton, leaving there in June 1975 for Gibraltar.

On return from Gib in 1976, on promotion to Sergeant, I was posted to RAF Binbrook leaving there for a tour on recruiting in 1977. I left recruiting in July of 1980 for RAF Laarbruch,

leaving on promotion to Flight Sergeant in 1983 and posted once more to RAF Bawdsey. I left Bawdsey in 1984 for RAF Gutersloh, returning in 1987 on my last tour of duty at RAF Coltishall in Norfolk. At one time all of my children, and their spouses, were serving in the Royal Air Force.



I completed my time at Coltishall retiring in 1993 and returned to Northern Ireland to a little village called Lisbellaw where we had a bungalow built. I went to work for HM Custom & Excise for 12 months, and then the twice-bombed Killyhevlin Hotel as head of security. On leaving the hotel I worked in a garage and remained there until 2003. We began to miss our children, and grand children, and upped sticks returning to England where we had already bought a house at Wittering in Cambridgeshire, where I again came out of retirement, and took up employment at Oakham School. I retire from there on the 28<sup>th</sup> April this year!

I joined the Association in 1995 and attended most reunions, which I always enjoy. At the moment, the membership stands at 830, of which, 548 are paid up members. Since I took the post of Mem Sec I've processed 21 new members, of which, 6 are serving members. I'm expecting to process 2 more associate members who own a Bedford Domestic Tender, fully restored and functional. This vehicle was stationed at RAF Nocton Hall for most of its service.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank FS Steve Bowden for his great efforts in assisting the Association in recruiting new members. Cheers Steve. Finally, I am honoured to have been elected to this post and will endeavour to do my best in the interest of our Association. Thank you all.

*John*

Here's an update of 40 new members to add to those in the December 2005 Flashpoint, and I'd like to welcome them to the Association and hope to meet as many as possible at future reunions

- 791 Brian Jones
- 792 Albert Gosnal
- 793 Raymond Skinner
- 794 Michael Jackson
- 795 Robert Gurney
- 796 John Dunn
- 797 Dawson Poulson
- 798 Roy Catlow
- 799 Phillip Cooper
- 800 George Temple
- 801 Darrell Hopkins
- 802 John Miller
- 803 Bob Evans
- 804 Raymond Preston
- 805 David Brown
- 806 Norman Tarring
- 807 Michael Heslop
- 808 Stuart Frayling
- 809 Don Somerset
- 810 David Jessop
- 811 Martin George
- 812 Quentin Eaton
- 813 Brian Port
- 814 Herbert Block
- 815 Paul Raynor
- 816 Steve Hitchcock
- 817 Stewart Bundy
- 818 William (Benny) Goodman
- 819 Allan Jenkins
- 820 Neil Morrell
- 821 Brent Inglis
- 822 Mark Alsop
- 823 Andy Mc Donnell
- 824 Chris Davies
- 825 Charles John Morrell
- 826 Tony Eaton
- 827 William Rogers
- 828 William Baldham
- 829 Nicholas Harrison
- 830 Mark Watson

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CATTERICK, RIAT & RAF FIRE SERVICE MUSEUM** -Volunteers are desperately needed to help with the Gala Day with the Army at Marne Barracks, ex RAF Catterick, North Yorkshire, on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2006, the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) at RAF Fairford, from 11<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and the Museum. **See Details below:- Catterick - Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June** - George Edwards - 0151 426 5093 **RAF Fairford - RIAT Airshow from 11<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2006** **Note: Cut-off date for RIAT volunteers is 26<sup>th</sup> May to allow for the processing of passes etc** - Tel: Wilf Longmire 01726 642 74  
**RAF Fire Service Museum - Working Party from 15<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May at Wolverhampton Airport** - Wilf Longmire 01726 642 74 or David Hughes 02380 326 000 Mob. 07976 563 740 and 07766 058 619



# Personal Profiles - Two Volunteer Coordinators

## VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR FOR SCOTLAND

Service no xxxxxxx Robertson A. G., Originally from Kirkintilloch, Glasgow, joined the RAF in 1958 and, apart from a



short period as a Medic before re-mustering to fireman, he served at RAF Linton-on-Ouse,

North Yorkshire until demob in 1963. He did his 'square bashing' at RAF xxxxx before going on to Sutton-on-Hull for firefighting training. Alec did his MK6 training at Catterick and recalls his instructor was a Cpl Jones. As he spent his time at Linton, he knows quite a few of our members including Tony Smith, (Thailand), Bill Wilkinson, Jim Paterson, Terry Matson, Sam Gill, Mick Jackson, Mick Bates, Allan Gilchrist, Mick Urquhart and the late Rab Dawson and Joe Graham.

After leaving the service, he went back into the medical profession where he met his wife to be, Margaret, and spent the next xx years there before retiring and taking up driving for a local VW dealer transporting customer's cars for servicing and repairs etc; and covers the whole of Scotland. They have a son, Alistair. Alec's

personal contact details can be found on the Who to Contact page.

Editorial comment: I owe an apology to Alec, as I persuaded him to 'volunteer' as Scottish co-ordinator at the Hull AGM and Reunion, last October, and then promptly forgot to include his details in the December issue of Flashpoint!



Nothing personal mate, just a genuine oversight or, 'senior moment' on my part and one, you'll no doubt frequently remind me of, in the years to come!

I remember Alec and another member, Dave Read, (Tasmania), arriving together at Linton-on-Ouse and, as duty Corporal, I booked them in and welcomed both to the real world! It was this early contact that gave me the background information to eventually track Alec down in November 2004, when members, Terry Matson, the late Rab Dawson, (Scottish Coordinator), and myself, met up at Alec's

and renewed an acquaintance from the late 50's and early 60's. I only wish that other members were as lucky as we have been in meeting up again with old comrades. As Scotland is allocated 2 coordinators, we still have a vacancy to fill and, if you feel you can contribute to the post, please see the Who to Contact page for further details. - Ed.

Photos and text Dave Kenyon - 1 - Relief Landing Ground, RAF Full Sutton, (now a prison), Stamford Bridge, York - 1959 L/R - John Preston 'Civvy' MT driver, Norman Haddrick, (National Service), Medic, Oi/c Cpl Dave Kenyon, Dave Read (Tasmania), kneeling front - Alec Robertson.

2 - Linton Crash Crew at ATC early 1960's - L/R - 2 unknowns - Jim 'Paddy' Jardine, late Alec 'Buster' Davies - Standing - Dave Read, Alec Robertson, (ACRT Crew in Fearnought suits), and Cpl Dave Kenyon.

3 - L/R - Terry Matson, Dave Kenyon, Alec Robertson and the late Rab Dawson at Alec's house, 21st November 2004, together again after over 40 years!



N.B. - Photo 1 shows MK5 45 AF 08 & 2 - MK6 23 AG 79

## VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE

In 1959 I joined the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Fire and Rescue Service, where I was employed until 1961, retiring due to ill health.

I first became interested in Airfield Firefighting in 1975 when I joined the volunteer fire crew at Duxford Aerodrome along with Dave Deacon member 480, I rose to the rank of Sub-Officer.

In 1979 I joined the fire crew at Cambridge Airport (R.A.F. Teversham) as a probationer fireman, where I was appointed to the rank of Leading Firefighter in 1979.

We were MOD qualified to carry out fire and rescue on a variety of Military aircraft using our airfield, including fast jets, training and heavy transport aircraft. Because of my full time employment at Cambridge, and the shift patterns, which we worked, I had to resign from the Duxford crew in 1982.

I retired from the fire service in 2000 at the age of 60, to join the Health and Safety Department at Marshall Aerospace, carrying out fire training, and

fire prevention. On reaching 65, I continued to work, albeit part time, still carrying out fire related duties. I have been a member of the Association for four years. Howard Harper member 682

Footnote: To celebrate our 10th Anniversary at the Hull AGM in October 2005, your committee decided to make a presentation to President, Keith Penfold, (on the left in photo), in recognition of all the hard work he's done on behalf of membership over the last ten years.



As founder chairman and one of the key prime movers of the Association, he is also a keen model fire engine collector and Howard offered to make up a collection from models available via the Shop Enterprise and the photos show the presentation and close up of the aircraft crash diorama he created. Keith was overwhelmed, but delighted, with the gift and sincerely thanked the membership.



Howard did an excellent job and should be congratulated on his expertise - Ed.

# Letters to the Editor

## 'ONCE A FIREFIGHTER!'

My biggest fear was to leave the RAF Fire and Rescue Service and never don PPE on active service or enjoy the rush of attending an incident again.

I had never intended to leave the RAF as I was doing a job that was, and still is, second to none, moreover having attained the privilege of signing onto 55, I believed that was me set for the duration.

However the constant commuting and separation from loved ones takes its toll and after 4 ½ years of living out of a suitcase the situation became untenable.

If anyone believes in fate, then I was dealt a fantastic opportunity in the opening of Robin Hood Airport some 15 minutes from my doorstep and the establishment of a full complement of 4 Watches each with a Station Officer Watch Commander, a Sub Officer Deputy, 1, soon to be 2 Leading firefighter Crew Commanders and 7 firefighters providing Category 7 cover 24/7. I decided that this was too good an opportunity to miss so I wrote letters to the CAA and to the International Fire Training



Centre (IFTC) at Teeside explaining my cause and my wish to join the civil sector plus shouting my corner and the attributes of RAF Fire & Rescue personnel.

After some hard bargaining I was allowed to self fund on an initial Watch Commanders course at the IFTC in the October of 04, this was my 1<sup>st</sup> key to the door, having attended a resettlement course at Cottesmore and gaining some top tips from all the excellent staff there, I submitted my CV and accompanying letter after much scrutinizing of the job advertisement in the August edition of the FIRE magazine. The CV and letter afforded me an interview for one of the Watch Commander positions, all I had to do was give a presentation on developing a training package for the Fire Service in compliance with Civilian Aviation Publication (CAP) 168 and CAP 699 and get through my 1<sup>st</sup> job interview

for 23 years no problem! !

I was still putting together my portfolio and training packages in my Bart Simpson boxers that, incidentally, were a good luck present from the kids and that my new suit wasn't going to clash with the neutral tie when I realized with 40 minutes to run and a drive of 15 minutes to the airport I was maybe cutting it a little fine. That was the Wednesday, I was offered the job on the following Monday and notified by way of Head office (The Wife) also very excitable, who rang me at Brize to apologise for ripping open the letter but, 'You've bloody well got it!!' 'Bloody hell you've bloody done it' and then she hung up. I had to phone her back to ascertain what I had bloody got as she so aptly put it.

I thoroughly enjoyed my course up at Teeside and having been in the job some 10 months with massive job satisfaction I can honestly say life couldn't be sweeter. I am in charge of training and having built the training manual we are now road testing it to ensure it meets our needs, I have also been accepted into Humberside Fire and Rescue Service at D5 Epworth retained Station earlier on this year so I have truly had my cake and eaten it.

We have an excellent rapport with colleagues still within the RAF and Defence Fire Services and have been on visits to Leeming for emergency escape systems training, and are hopeful to get over to Coningsby for training on the Typhoon.

There is a life after the RAF or should a say the Fire Service family within the RAF and the profession that we will always belong to, moreover the percentage of ex RAF Fire and Rescue personnel here at the airport prove that.

We have all completed our defibrillator training and now have them on the appliances and within the airport. We provide First Responder turnouts for all Medical Emergencies and work closely with South Yorkshire Ambulance Service (SYAS) in dealing with heart attack victims on the airport. Yours,

Stn Officer John Armson member, 737



Photo details - 1st photo shows Red Watch and presentation of Defibrillator by Graham Sherburn of the South Yorkshire Ambulance Service. Red Watch L/R - FF Jason Scollins FF Lee Betsworth FF Jon Eaglen FF Adi Gosney Graham Sherburn (South Yorks Ambulance Service) Stn O John Armson FF Leigh Holmes SubO Ian Gibson (ex RAF completed 22 years) 2nd photo shows Graham Sherburn handing over 1st Defibrillator to Customer Services Manager, Lorraine Reay

## "ANY SNAGS?" & THE OLD 'SIT UP & BEG' BICYCLE!

Dear Dave,

I have only recently joined the association and to see the article on Dan's exploits was really nice. I was one of his wee saplings, Sac, at Cottesmore 1966-69, and the guy's in the photo are remembered well. Sgt Ken Burt, and Cpl George 'The card,' (my name for him), Walker. I was one of their crewmembers and I have a memory that Ken had a love for the NAAFI Steak and Kidney Pie; he was occasionally known to share it in a verbal outburst when upset... Happy days.

Other names of note Mike Beggs, ex Merchant Navy, went to the RAF Boats, Ivan Vemulen, Cpl Denis Smalley: I have a photo of him somewhere out the top of a Mk5 trying to grab a Vulcan as it did a fly past. I must dig that out!

What a surprise I had reading the April 05 Mag, free offer on joining, to see a photo of my ex W/O from Aden 1966, Jim Crabtree, member 275. I still remember his greeting on inspection day; approaching the vehicle, "Any Snag's?" and that old sit-up and beg bicycle that carried him for many a mile.

I must add that the Lad's did us old un's proud at the RIAT display and wet the eye of this oldish ex RAF Fire Service - Dec 61-Oct 86

It should be noted that Pete Elliot, member 509, lives on this estate at Number 86...?

Brian E Jones Membership No 791  
Tel - 01269594065  
[jonesb@celtic48.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:jonesb@celtic48.fsnet.co.uk)



# Letters to the Editor

## DO YOU REMEMBER – ‘EMERGENCY STANDBY?’

Dear Dave,

Enclosed is a short article that you might find interesting enough to print in the next or future edition of Flashpoint. You may of course edit it if you think that is necessary. You also may have noticed that I have not mentioned any names. The reason being that I have either forgotten or was not 100% sure, so thought it best not to mention any at all. Don't know if you can use the enclosed photos. They were slides originally that I had put on a Disc and managed to print from it. Regards,

Don Davies, member 86

Can anyone remember what was called Emergency Standby? I was put on it at the beginning of 1970, while at RAF St Athan, during my last year of service. Like most people who had been placed on this Standby I did not expect to do, or go, anywhere – but only take part in a ‘paper exercise’. This time though, it was for real and on Saturday 30th May, I was on my way to RAF Innsworth to take part in – ‘Exercise Bersatu Padu in Singapore and Malaya. On the Sunday, we got some kit and paperwork and were on our way to RAF Brize Norton where at 0530hrs on Monday 1st June our VC10 took off. We arrived at RAF Seletar, (Singapore), at 0500hrs local time. It had been a very long tiring flight because we only had a short re-fuelling stop in Bahrein and then non-stop to Seletar not calling at RAF Gan. On arrival, there was the usual ‘cock-ups’, as nobody seemed to know what to do with us, but it was eventually sorted out.

After a few days in Singapore being briefed on our mission, getting some more kit, visiting Tiger Balm Gardens etc. and, of course, sampling the Tiger Beer (it is the lime that gets you drunk!!). We set out for a place called Dungan on the northeast coast of Malaya. The route we were taking was via Kuala Lumpur and Kuantan. If I remember correctly, it was about a 15hour + journey on an RAF type coach. The coach broke down several times and we had to spend the night in a village that I think was called Gemas? Some slept inside, and some outside a building beside a railway track. The coach was repaired by the afternoon of the following day and we arrived in Dungan at about mid-night, and met up with the Advance

Party. There we spent about a week preparing and testing vehicles etc before going to the beach, having a few beers and going to places called Panarek and Mochenf for stores and water. Who was the brave RAF Fireman who slept fully clothed, trousers in socks, long sleeved shirt and all tent flaps fully closed? Was it the same one who came running out of the bushes because he was disturbed by a Monitor lizard, while having a c\*\*p?

We eventually left for Penarek, which was not too far away up the coast, to the exercise site, which was a clearing with a short earth/sand runway. A tented camp was set up complete with Air Traffic Control and the Hercules started to arrive carrying men and equipment, mostly Army. These poor Bods had come directly from the UK very white, but soon changed to red and, of course, there were lots

of cases of sunburn and sunstroke. As part of the exercise the airfield was attacked several times by land and air. As a Fire Section we had a reasonable easy time of it compared to a lot of the other personnel, but had to do our share of guard duties and crew up when alerts were on, day or night. One of the perks was taking a DP1 to Dungan for fresh water for drinking and cooking; we had plenty of water for other purposes from the river next to the Section. One trip I remember very well because I was driving. We returned from Dungan, pulled into the Section and the steering went. The wheel just spun around in my hands and I dread to think of the results had it happened on the open road. Another vehicle incident was when a certain Warrant Officer rolled an ACRT after a trip out (Tiger beer??) which was a write-off.

Luckily nobody was seriously injured.

The journey back to Singapore was quite an experience, especially for yours truly. After a night-stop at Kuantan we set out once again for Seletar, a convoy of Fire Vehicles through Malaya

was not an every day sight. Unfortunately a DP2 left the road and went down a small embankment, the driver was not seriously hurt but badly shaken. The powers that be

decided he should be taken to SSQ at Seletar as soon as possible, and I was detailed to go as relief driver with the Ambulance. After a couple of hours driving, with me as passenger, we stopped for a break. I don't know if anyone remembers but the old

RAF type ambulances had very high and heavy back doors and unfortunately one hit my co-driver in the eye. That meant that he couldn't drive any more so the remaining part of the journey, about six to eight hours was all mine.

After a few more stops for refreshments and re-fuelling, and to fend off tiredness, we arrived at Seletar in the early hours of the morning. After dropping the other two lads at SSQ, I then ‘crashed out’ for about ten hours, or so I was informed!

We spent another week in Singapore servicing the vehicles, and returning some to Changi visiting the swimming pool, NAAFI and, of course, Singapore by day and night. One of the evenings was spent at the cinema seeing ‘The Virgin Soldiers’ which was an appropriate coincidence!

The flight home was a long boring trek in a Britannia via Gan, Bahrein and Cyprus, arriving at Brize Norton sometime in the morning. The Customs were not very kind to us, going through everything including our weapons, which we then handed in to the Station Armoury. One consolation was that we had individual transport waiting to take us back to our respective RAF Stations. This was all part of the Exercise and we were still dressed in KD's or jungle greens.

I found out at a later date that the object of the Exercise was to see how quickly a force could be got out to the Far East pending the British withdrawal from that area. This of course is only a brief outline of the six weeks. If there is anyone out there who would like to reminisce, you are welcome to contact me at: ann-davies@ic24.net or via Flashpoint. Ex - SAC Don ‘Taffy’ Davies, member 86. **Photos** - top left - ‘Taffy’ in his ‘Shiny Suit’ for the Penarek Exercise - centre - ‘Bent ACRT’ - Ambulance refuel

Footnote: Great item ‘Taffy’ and I hope members can help put a few names your way - Ed.



# Letters to the Editor

## A FACE FROM THE PAST!



As we all know, down the years, the Fire Service has produced some great characters and none more than the gentleman sitting proudly on a TACR2 (Truck Airfield Crash Rescue MK2 vehicle). The date I believe summer 1987, and the last day of a distinguished 35 year career in the RAF. Fire Service, the name, Sgt Dave Eustace. Those that have now put a name to the face, may well be reminiscing their own past experiences with Dave, after all no one who knew him, could ever accuse life of been dull when he was around, not least for his explosive temper and high blood pressure, along with a good heart and a wicked sense of hum or a very volatile mixture, as many may well remember. For such a volatile

character it is hard to believe the love of his life was birds, not that kind, the feathered kind, which always gave me a bit of a titter as Dave bless him could be a bit of a flapper himself at times but he meant well.

The 100-dollar question is, does anyone know if Dave is alive and well, and if so where? I would love to get in touch so any help in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Mick Fotherby, member, 592

Tel 01522883175

Photo details: Taken at RAF Digby, summer of 1987, with Mick Fotherby and Kev Barber, at the front of the TACR, with Dave Eustace, on the bonnet. The rest of the station personnel were out in force to see him off the Station or, wqas it to make sure he went, (only kidding)?

## From our man down under!

Dear Dave,

Maybe you have space in Flashpoint for a joke I thought was quite amusing which is as follows: A man phoned the fire brigade and shouted, "Fire! Fire!" "Where is it?" asked the switchboard operator. "In my house!" came

the answer. "No no, I mean the location of the fire." "In my kitchen." "Yes, but how do we get to your house?" "You have a fire engine, don't you?"

If you have space for another one this is good too: A copper pulled a motorist over who was doing about 200km an hour, (120mph), down the middle of a highway. "What do you think you're doing, said the copper, are you crazy?" "No mate." said the driver. "Well why were you going so fast down the middle of the road?" asked the copper. "I'm obeying the instructions on my licence." replied the driver. "See, at the bottom, it clearly says, 'Tear along the dottedline.'"

I hope that you may have some space Dave to include these little notes in the next Flashpoint.

Just a brief history of my service life. I joined in 1957 and enjoyed various postings in the UK and overseas and after 37 ½ years in the Force retired and moved to Australia in 1997 to be with our daughter and her family. We truly enjoy being out here and the lifestyle we lead now. Thank you.

Yours,

Colin Ellicock, member 276

Footnote: Thanks for the letter and jokes, Colin. Glad to find space and oblige - Ed.



## Fire Brigade Pensioners Association (Wiltshire) - Affiliated to the National Association of Retired Firefighters (NARF) - Welcome Our President, Keith Penfold, into Membership

Keith rang to say he'd joined the above Association and requested space to include information for our members. The annual subscription is £7.00 and falls due on the 1st of April, which includes receiving a newsletter called, "The Branch". He will also receive the "NARF NEWS" 3 times per year and copies of "Shout" magazine published by the Fire Services National Benevolent Fund for retired members of the Fire Service.

The branch hold regular meetings, informal dinners, and arrange evening presentations by, such as, Rapid UK, the International Rescue organisation that does such excellent work when disasters occur overseas. Keith told me that he'd been made very welcome and said that, in August 2006, the branch were going by coach to Scotland for a five-day break the highlight of which, will be attendance at the Edinburgh Tattoo.

They have negotiated a particularly good package at a very competitive price and places are still available. A request has been made to publicise the offer in Flashpoint and an invitation is made to

Association members to apply for the spare places. Details as follows:

### THE EDINBURGH MILITARY TATTOO

The last few places remain to be sold on THE SPIRIT SCOTLAND five-day break to include attendance at a performance of the Tattoo. The coach will leave Wiltshire on 10th August and arrive back in the late evening of 14th August.

The accommodation in Scotland is at a 4 star standard hotel near Stirling and the holiday price is for half-board in a room with private facilities. Similar packages are being advertised currently in the Daily Telegraph, at £349.00 and by Peter Carol Holidays of Bristol, at £389.00. This confirms that this branch is being offered a very good deal by Brightwater Holidays at £325.00. **To book, ring John Craig on 01380 726 343**

Please note that details of the five-day break, are published at the request of the above mentioned association, and it must be fully understood, that any ar-

rangements made, are not with the RAF&DFSA but are between individuals and the Wiltshire Branch of NARF. The offer is made on a first come, first served basis so, if interested, you should contact them without delay.



Footnote: As a result of previous careers in the local authority fire service, I know of at least two other members that are also members of NARF. They are, Bob Feather and myself and, no doubt, there may well be others. We have many members in other organisations as diverse as the RAFA, RBL, Naval Association, National Service (RAF) Association, The El Adem Radio Station (TEARS), Changi Association, British Fire Services Association and many more. If you know of any others, please let me know and I'll publish details in Flashpoint - Ed.

# Letters to the Editor

## CENTRAL SERVICING DEVELOPMENT ESTABLISHMENT

RAF Swanton Morley  
Norfolk  
Summer 1967

### FIRE PICKET!

I was an SAC Photographer working in the Print Shop - The most hateful posting for my Trade Group anywhere on this planet, although for any single junior rank heterosexual male there were benefits! Know what I mean!!! The daily mindless routine of working in the Print Shop was only punctuated by; sudden death, leave, power cuts, sickness and Duty Fire Picket!

Fire Picket (Corporal plus two) was the only junior rank duty on the station and to escape from the tedium of work I volunteered frequently and was one of the Station Warrant Officers 'trusties'. We had just one Fireman on the establishment - 'Jock the Fireman', also an SAC not to be exempt or persecuted he also did his share of Fire Picket duties (is this a unique occurrence?) as he could not be Duty Fireman everyday!

The station was due its annual Fire Officer's Inspection and I had been nominated by the SWO to be on duty that day and off I went to early-lunch where I met Jock, stressed and picking over his food. This was (potentially) his great day but my arrival in the Airman's Mess with my laid-back attitude and less than smart uniform did not help with his situation. Half way through my Lasagne the Fire Alarm sounded and 'Paddy the Admin Man' (the SWO's right hand man!) announces that Station Engineering Flight is on fire; Jock and I ran for the fire vehicle parked at the rear of the Mess. As we run through the Cookhouse we get a cheer from the staff and board the vehicle outside.

Jock was new to driving (but that is another story I will share with you some other time) and the type of appliance we were in is unknown to me, although it could well have been a Red 'Green Goddess' or similar derivative. From the Mess, square right and down the road pass the WRAF block to the T-junction with the camp's main access road to turn right. Stood at the junction is 50% of Swanton's RAEP establishment, namely one Corporal resplendent in his best T63 with bulled toecaps and a shine on the peak of his SD Cap to die for. As we approach he steps into the road and halts the flow of traffic, there was not another vehicle in sight! We start to turn right, the engine is cold, Jock is in the

wrong gear and the vehicle starts to hiccup its way down the road. Our friendly (if such a term can be applied) Plod thinks we have slowed to enable him to climb aboard and runs alongside the vehicle and grabs the handle just inside the concertina doors, which have sprung open. The engine bites and with Jock's foot buried on the throttle the vehicle leaps off down the road. Plod is launched at great knots at 30 degrees to our direction of travel; my final sight of him is laying in the road his SD Cap rolling along at speed.

We arrive at Station Engineering, NCO i/c has his men in a line outside the building and clutching a clipboard is conducting a roll call. My fellow SAC Fire Picket is standing off to one side chatting up a WRAF from the Typing Pool (come on chaps - needs as needs must!). The Corporal i/c Fire Picket is approaching on his issue bicycle, so where the hell has he been for the last 15 minutes? Given that stripes equal responsibility I guess he has



been cycling around the airfield (no aircraft at Swanton in this era) to ensure that the situation is under control before his arrival. Also in attendance: Fire Officer, Station Commander, OC Engineering, OC Admin, sundry Sq Ldrs and Flt Lts and the SWO. Jock leaps into action, I am impressed: he interrogates NCO i/c, details a team to search outbuildings, pointing to me tells me to run out the hose reel.

With the other SAC I run out the hose reel from the appliance and selecting an area of open ground request the Corporal i/c to provide some water pressure. Now I must admit that this modest action did look slick, as it should as we had practiced this drill many times on the sports field on previous evenings. The water pressure rose and we both felt the surge on the hose.

We had selected an area of open ground between the 'burning' Station Engineering Flight and the building site that

would develop into the new Print Shop (if the fire had been here six months later we could have witnessed photographers throwing themselves onto the conflagration to maintain combustion!) and as with many RAF stations we benefited from piped water central heating. We played our jet of water on to our imaginary fire, the Fire Officer and his entourage gathered next to us, it was a warm day and the water jet developed a rainbow in the middle distance - fire fighting in action, RAF style.

Suddenly a figure appeared some 20 meters ahead of us, raising from the ground he flicked his welding mask from his face, lowered the torch in his hand looked skywards and then turning to us said in a broad Brummie accent - 'F\*\*\* off you w\*\*\*\*\*s' and immediately returned to welding our central heating pipes!

No one was going to disagree so Jock's first Fire Officers inspection was a success but he was in deep s\*\*\* with plod!

I started life as a 'Brat' at Cosford in 1961, aged 15, and eventually handed over my F1250 at Innsworth in 1976. I 'retired' to Norfolk in 2000, but still do a couple of days a week to keep the systems functioning. I am still involved with photography and have totally embraced the digital revolution! All material is free of copyright but I would appreciate a mention of my mate, Cliff Matcham, member 588, if you do use anything.

Fire Picket - A piece I wrote with the RAF&DFSA in mind, factual, as far as my grey matter will allow!

B/W - Photograph taken at RAF West Raynham during 1972.

I was 50% of the Station Photographic Section and 50% of me was owned by the Bloodhound Missile Development Flight. I used this print as part of a submission to the British Institute of Professional Photography in 1976 to obtain my professional qualification.

Best regards, John Lewis - C1944575 - Photographer G April 2005

Footnote - Great feature John, and many thanks for the photos and text and to member, 588, Cliff Matcham for his input in helping make this item available to our members. Well done Cliff! The story goes well with our history. John sent some photos of a TACR2, Q 797 LFL, taken at Duxford and I hope to use them in a future edition. Does anyone know who the Fire-fighters were in the picture from 1972? - Ed.



# Spotlight on Royal Air Force Catterick Fire Squadron - Pt 1



WO Shearn was definitely not amused if a fire recruit sported one. A trail of fish and chip papers marked the route from the village chippy back to camp.

A couple of dozen of us brylcreem boys would compete against hundreds of pongos for the local talent in Richmond, or at the Walkerville Night Club in Colburn near Catterick Army Garrison.

The club has long since disappeared, and the site is now the Walkerville Industrial Estate. An ex RAF Fireman John Parmenter (1950s) Member 486, works there building, would you believe, fire trucks.

The instructional staff at that time, were mostly Taffs, Roberts, Evans, Davey, Williams and Terry Jarvis, my instructor. Ron Shearn was the Squadron WO and WO Jack Morrell was in Trade Standards. I can't remember the names of other staff, but they all had time and patience with some of us thickos!

Six weeks domestic fire training, dressed in plastic coats, leggings, wellies and with berets to protect our delicate little skulls. It was the late 70s before domestic fire helmets were introduced and they are now worn with pride.

**THE PRIDE OF THE FIRE PIQUET, THE 600GALL BEDFORD DOMESTIC OUTSIDE OF THE CAMP FIRE STATION IN THE 1960s**

During training we had to spend time on Fire Piquet, in the camp Fire Station, with the 600 galls Bedford Domestic Water Tender. The Station had beds on the top floor and a brass pole. (Real fire fighters at last!)

**THE BLUE CRASH KIT WITH THE 400LBS DRY POWDER LAND ROVER**

Then on to the crash phase, blue suits, string long johns and white boots were in fashion at that time, and we had the Mk1 bone domes to prevent us from seeing too much! Mk5s, 5As, DP1s and 2s, 200 and 400lbs dry powder ACRTs, the Bedford Domestic, and God only knows how many trailer pumps, ladders and foam branches. At that time we had over 20 crash scenarios (old aircraft and buildings), on the airfield and in the surrounding



areas. We even had a dummy in a parachute on the far side of the River Swale. That rescue was reserved for those students that had managed to stay dry during other exercises! The aircrews must have been heartbroken to fly their perfectly good aircraft into our burning area that was littered with dozens of aircraft of all types. The burning stick in the gauntleted hand of the support staff soon put paid to all of them.

**JUST SOME OF THE BEAUTIFUL VULCANS FLOWN IN TO CATTERICK**

**FOR BURNING.**

I returned to Catterick as an instructor in 1976. Ron Shearn was the Squadron WO followed by Bobby Gibbons and John Balfour. The Regiment officers were SqnLdr Roberts, Markey, Robertson and Lay, Flt Lts James, Blenkinsop, Sargeant and Smith. Trade Standards staff WO Bob Plumb, McGrath, Brian Baldwin, Joe Proctor and Steve Davey. AFDFS Technical advisors Divisional Officers Butcher and Ramage, Shirley Swainson was the cleaner, and made the big cakes for weddings and Squadron do's. Ken Wilson was the Station Fireman, and he serviced the fire extinguishers around the camp. There were others that I can't now remember, and I apologise if I have some of the spellings wrong and that I can't remember all of the first names.

**1982 Fire and Rescue Training Squadron. On the left the WOT1A and a Vulcan for burning and the Pink Panther TACR2 (Front & Centre - Nimrod, the Irish Wolfhound, was the brains of the outfit)! Nimrod got his name because he would slip on the office polished floors and sail on with head up and legs splayed out in all directions.**



**Back** - Cpl Richie SAC Carr SAC Taylor SAC Ayles SAC Brown SAC Taylor SAC Harrison SAC Bolster SAC Trafford LAC Gorst  
**Centre** - Sgt Farrell Cpl Syme Cpl Jones Cpl McCreath Cpl Spanswick Cpl Johannsen Cpl Shaw Cpl Wynne SAC Webster  
**Front** - Sgt Furmage Sgt Shiell Sgt Lawrence WO Balfour Sqdn Ldr DR Markey Flt Lt James Flt Sgt Goupillot Sgt Laughton Sgt Traynor

We parted company with the RAF Regiment in 1977, and became the Fire and Rescue Training Squadron, FRTS. The Rocks called us farts, but not to our faces!! We were kept busy with all manner of courses from basic fire and, Mike Moncrief will not have forgotten the day an Oleo leg exploded, and splatted his, and my basic courses with molten magnesium. Thankfully nobody was



hurt. FT1s and 2s advanced courses, Smokie's favourite, the Mk6, and other driving courses, (Don't remind Mike Traynor about how he was told by one of his students that the Mk7 had fallen over!), and BA instructional techniques and special courses for overseas students.

# 1958 to 1988 - "Oh! You Didn't Go To Sutton Then?"

## ROYAL AIR FORCE CATTERICK FIRE



### SQUADRON

#### *OH, YOU DIDN'T GO TO SUTTON THEN?*

They would say to us with a sneer and not a hint of sympathy that we were now at the RAF Regiment Depot, or that we fire recruits had to undergo 3 weeks Gunner training with grenades and guns; "they are rifles not guns you stupid airman" or words to that effect! Boots, gaiters, webbing belts and, when we passed out, we had to wear the rock flashes. I've yet to meet a fireman that was proud to wear them. This is no disrespect to the RAF Regiment Gunners, who I believe are one of the most versatile units in the British Military.

There were other Fire Schools before Sutton, the first at Cranwell



in 1921. This moved to Weeton in 1940, on to Sutton on Hull in 1950, and then to Catterick in 1958/59 until 1999. The school is now based at RAF Manston, where the RAF and AFDfS Fire Services became the Defence Fire Services. There is speculation that it may be on the move again in the near future.

There is evidence that the Romans had some of the 5<sup>th</sup> Cohort of Vigiles (Fire fighters) stationed at Catterick (Cataractonium, which is Celtic for Battle Ramparts), probably stationed in the Castle Hills area at Catterick. The remains of the Roman helmet, depicted on the Station Badge, might well have been that of a Vigiles Centurion. (Ref; A History of the British Fire Service by G.V. Blackstone 1957).

Of course RAF Catterick was a famous wartime Fighter Station and had it's own fire fighters to protect the Spitfires and Hurricanes etc. But that's another story!

#### **1962 BASIC FIRE COURSE BR 142 INSTRUCTOR TERRY JARVIS**

Me on his right with a silly waxed moustache. What did I think I looked like? Mr Pastry says Vera, (Mrs John Goupillot - Ed). I joined in 1962, and by then the Fire Squadron was well established. The Regiment seemed to be letting the Fire School do

it's own thing provided we stayed clear of Regiment WO Danny Gourt. There were punch-ups in the NAAFI, the Angel, Bay Horse and the Twig. A black eye was a badge of honour to a Rock, but



**COME ON NOW LADS YOU WILL HAVE TO DO A LITTLE BETTER THAN THIS AT YOUR OWN STATIONS!!**



George Nelson, David Brown, others, and myself, took on the Light Rescue training mostly at the purpose built Rescue Set House, for non-fire section rescue teams. Five Stages of Rescue, Ladder, slides and hinges, 2 and 4-point suspension for stretchers etc. Many a stroppy student was left tied to a stretcher while we had a break. I always felt that this subject should have been included in the normal fire courses. Many of the techniques taught, are being used today by fire fighters, at many of the terrorist incidents that are happening throughout the world.

Text and Photographs John Goupillot, member 358

Footnote: John, what can I say, other than fantastic, and I can't wait to set out Part 2 in the August Flashpoint - Ed.



# RAF Station Kai Tak Circa 1957

Dear Dave,

Please find enclosed the pictures taken at RAF Station Kai Tak circa 1957, as promised several months ago. As you can see on the group photograph we were a pretty immature lot, in fact us six LAC's were on our first posting, straight out of training school, Sutton-on-Hull, so it was a good job that we were only back-up for the Kai Tak airport's fire section, who were Chinese firemen with European Officers.



**AERIAL VIEW OF KAI TAK AIRPORT**



**THE RAF BUILDINGS AT KAI TAK**



**RAF KAI TAK FIRE AND RESCUE PERSONNEL CIRCA 1957**

**BACK ROW - LEFT TO RIGHT - LAC JOHN DICKS - SGT? - CPL 'GEORDIE' BORDER - LAC ERIC SLADE - LAC KEN?**

**FRONT ROW - LEFT TO RIGHT - LAC MICK BALDRY - LAC IAN ? - LAC 'JOCK' LONGMUIR - HO CHAN WEE - SAC RON DUCKHAM - FRONT CENTRE - SAC EDDIE KERR**



**SELETAR SHORT'S SUNDERLAND FLYING BOAT REFUELLING**



**SHORT SUNDERLAND FLYING BOAT MOORED IN HONG KONG BAY**

On the two occasions when RAF Venoms crashed, both on take off, once it had been established that there would probably be no fire, we were left to standby and to flush away any spilled fuel. Our one big incident was a large fire in the Chinese settlement area, across the road opposite the camp, which we tackled for a good half hour before the Kowloon fire brigade arrived, for which we got letters of thanks from the governor of Hong Kong and the British Colonial Secretary.

All the best for now Dave, keep up the good work with "Flashpoint" and thanks again for the extra copy for the Changi Association.

Kind regards,

John Dicks member 495  
Footnote: John is Archivist for the Changi Association, and sent the item on RAF Changi in the December 2004 edition of Flashpoint. I never served abroad, and would like to thank him for giving me a flavour of what it was like out there in the sun - Ed!



**1945 MONITORS**



**FIRE FLOAT**



**DE HAVILLAND VENOM**



# HM Armed Forces Veteran's Badge - Eligibility

## VETERAN'S - BADGE ELIGIBILITY CHANGES!

Eligibility for the popular Veterans Badge is being extended to those who served up until 1954. Defence Secretary John Reid announced the extension on Remembrance Sunday and said those who served in more recent campaigns, such as Malaya and Korea, would now be eligible. He said: "This is just a small way for the Government and the nation to say to those who served their country, "You should be recognised and recognise each other by wearing this in your lapel."



The badges, which were launched last year, are intended to raise the profile of veterans among the public. Eligibility has been widened to include those who served in the inter-war years, and those who served between the end of World War II and 31st December 1954.

Men and women who served in the UK armed forces in World War I and II are also entitled to a Veterans Badge. The Cyprus Regiment, Merchant Navy Seamen, Home Guard, Polish Forces under UK Command, War Widows and Widowers who are in receipt of a War Widowers Pension also qualify.

**HOW TO OBTAIN A BADGE?** - Many have already applied and received their badges, either from their RBL County Secretary or the MOD Veterans Policy Unit in Whitehall. However, with immediate effect, the Legion has handed back sole responsibility for the distribution of the badge to the MoD Veterans Agency.

If you have not yet applied for your badge and would like to, please contact the Veterans Agency as follows:

Free helpline: 0800 169 2277 - Textphone: 0800 1693458 - Overseas callers: +44 1253 866043

Email: [help@veteransagency.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:help@veteransagency.gsi.gov.uk)

Write to: Graham Taylor, Veterans Badge Office, Room 6108 Tomlison House, Norcross, Blackpool, FY5 3WP  
You can also download an application form from [www.veteransagency.mod.uk/vets\\_badge/vets\\_badge.htm](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk/vets_badge/vets_badge.htm)

**VETERAN'S BADGES UPDATE** - Source – RAF NEWS 17<sup>th</sup> March 2006, page 8 – Have Your Say.

The Veteran's Agency has confirmed that men and women who served in the armed forces up to and including 31<sup>st</sup> December 1954 are eligible for the lapel badge.

However, those who served between 1<sup>st</sup> January 1955 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 1959 will be entitled to a badge with effect from 27<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

The agency cannot accept applications from within this new criteria until 27<sup>th</sup> June, so do not send an application until then. More details are available from the agency's help line on 0800 169 2277.

Incidentally, the Veteran's Agency website defines a veteran as: "Anyone who has served in HM Armed Forces at any time, irrespective of length of service, (including National Servicemen and Reservists)."

Footnote: Thanks to our Vice President, Dennis McCann who first raised the matter, and provided the badge picture. Thanks too to members, John Savage and Lofty Hansford for their information and input – Ed.

## STOP PRESS - FORTHCOMING COMMITTEE CHANGES DUE OCTOBER 2006

**JIM & BOB STANDING DOWN** - I have to inform you that our Vice Chairman, Jim Paterson, has decided to hang up his briefcase and has resigned from this post with effect from our AGM in October this year. One of Jim's many tasks was the organisation of our reunions with his sidekick, Bob Feather. They will be vacating this role at the 2006 October reunion.

**THANKS TO BOTH** - Before we go any further I would like to thank Jim for his support to me personally and both Jim and Bob for their hard work over the last 5 years in finding some wonderful venues for us to enjoy. I know that they have put in a lot of time and effort in researching possible hotels and then making several visits to negotiate acceptable terms for us.

**RAFFLE** - Jim and Brenda have run the raffle very successfully for the last few years but have decided that it is time for someone else to take over. It is an important part of our income generation at the reunions, and a big thank you goes to both from myself, and the Association.

**I AM SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR VICE CHAIRMAN AND 2 REUNION ORGANISERS** to be elected by members at the AGM. The Vice Chairman assists, supports and stands in for the Chairman when necessary. The Reunion Organisers are answerable to the Committee and responsible for all the weekend activities for members and wives including the Saturday raffle.

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 11 - CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS** - All nominations for these posts must be forwarded to our Secretary, George Edwards, at least 28 days prior to the meeting. George's details are on the Who to Contact page of Flashpoint. If anyone would like more information, or wishes to discuss these posts, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Roger Brooks - Chairman

**DEPLETED URANIUM TESTS FACE CHOP** - A Depleted Uranium Testing Programme is to be closed unless more applicants come forward.

Since September 2004, the independent Depleted Uranium Oversight Board has provided a facility for testing veterans of the 1990-91 Gulf War and of operations in the Balkans who believe they may have been exposed to Depleted Uranium. However, due to a lack of applicants, the testing programme is now being wound down, and a closing date has been set for 31 January.

If you wish to be tested, you should apply as soon as possible to: DUOB Secretariat at MOD Main Building (Floor 7 Zone H), Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB or email [info@duob.org.uk](mailto:info@duob.org.uk) Visit [www.duob.org.uk](http://www.duob.org.uk) for more details.

Footnote: This information was available with the Veteran's Badge details and is included for those members who may have served in the Gulf War and the Balkans - Ed.

# In Memoriam - a sincere tribute to members recently passed

## Peter Parritt - 1939 - 2005

Pete died 28th January and his funeral took place at 1100 hours on Wednesday 8th February at Chanterland Avenue Crematorium, Hull. The mourners included Pete's wife, Stella, family members, friends, neighbours and Association members, Jim Paterson, Steve Davey, Bob Feather, Dave Kenyon and Brian Underhill, who formed a Guard of Honour. The coffin was draped with the RAF Standard and Pall Bearers included two nephews serving in the Prince of Wales Own Regiment in full dress uniform. Pete was Hull born and bred and served in the Merchant Navy at 17 years of age from 7th May 1957 to 6th March 1959. Whilst in the Merchant Navy, Pete had an accident when he fell down a hold and damaged his spine.

On the 19th March 1959 he joined the RAF and went to Cardington, Bedfordshire, and, according to the information from his family, served at Lindholme, Lyneham and Gan before demob. He then became a long distance lorry driver, before retraining as a Television Engineer in Hull. In 1985/86

he joined the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign for a couple of years and did a variety of jobs before becoming a civil servant working for the Benefits Agency in the early 90's.

He also worked at Brough Aerospace as a fireman when member, Lofty Hansford, went there as a MK6 driver and they first met up. At the time, the company were producing Buccaneer aircraft and used Holme-on-Spalding Moor airfield as well as Brough.

In 1998, whilst holidaying in Australia, he collapsed and the hospital found he'd suffered an abdominal aortic aneurysm. His health deteriorated resulting in him having to use a wheelchair occasionally and electric scooter to aid his mobility. He then became a Board member of Shop Mobility and arranged for scooters to be available for the Hull reunion in October 2005.

He'd been a keen gardener and other hobbies included, DIY and Cooking! Stella says he was a far better cook than herself. Pete was a caring man and had a great sense of humour and was involved

in so many things and will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

He leaves a widow, Stella, a sister, a brother in Australia, a half brother and sister, three sons, a daughter, six grandchildren and a stepson.

Peter served with member, Norman Bowden and was also great friends with Ken and Steve Bowden and



many others in the Association.

Above photo taken at the Hull reunion in October 2005, shows left to right - Ken Bowden, Pete Parritt and Norman Bowden at the original RAF Sutton-on-Hull Camp Gates that were renovated, installed and officially opened by the Lord Mayor of Hull in East Park, Hull on Friday 30th April 1999 - Ed.

## Obituary

**Bernard 'Spud' Murphy 345** - At the time of going to press, we regret that no further details were available -Ed

**OBITUARY INFORMATION** - As editor, I'm always saddened having to notify you of the passing of colleagues. In this issue, Pete Parritt and Bernard 'Spud' Murphy recently passed away and, at Peterborough in March, our Chairman, Roger Brooks, held a minute's silence in their memory.

You will be aware that I use the In Memoriam page to record those passing away and rely on information passed on to me via the Membership Secretary, members, friends and family. The personal information recorded in their membership applications is limited and not always complete. Also, some don't give approval for their personal details to be used and it's not always possible, or prudent, to approach family requesting information at such times.

In Peter's case, I knew him personally and his wife, Stella, and felt able to talk to her about Peter's life and get some information. In Bernard's case, I didn't have the same contact. This is a source of regret and I appeal to members, family and friends, to help in such circumstances and inform the Association, but accept that it's a trying time and not necessarily a priority at the time; but it would allow me to record their passing in a little more detail than a brief statement. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Dave Kenyon Flashpoint Editor

## Letter of Appreciation

*"You took your candle and went into another room I cannot find, but know you were here, because of all the happiness you left behind."*

Dear Dave,

Thank you for the piece that you put in the Flashpoint after Gary's death. I also have a lot of people to thank for the wonderful night they put on for me to remember Gary at the RAFA Club, in Redcar. Joe Shackleton arranged it all with the help of Kevin Doyle, and all our friends. We had a buffet and entertainment by Kevin!

I was given a cheque for £70 pounds that had been collected for me, and a wonderful photo of Gary that one of the members had taken time out to do. I will never forget you all; you are wonderful people and my very dear friends. It is marvellous to see the comradeship that we all have together. Gary would have been proud.

Love to you all. Hazel and family.





## RAF & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION RAF&DFSA ENTERPRISES

Those of you who have been able to attend the reunions will be aware that we have a range of promotional **RAF&DFSA goods for sale**, all profits of which go to **Association funds**. Goods are also available by mail order via **Sue Brooks (Chairman's wife - (see WHO TO CONTACT on page for full address details))** and via the **Association website** shown at the bottom of each page.

We have several new items this year including a new tie, Commemorative FSCTE print, self cling car stickers, as well as new fire engine thimbles and keyrings. We look forward to seeing you at the reunions.

Regards and best wishes, Sue Brooks and Bob Feather. 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 2006

#### RAF FIREFIGHTING & RESCUE

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

#### RAF & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION

CAR STICKER - self cling.....	£1.20
KEYRING.....	£2.00
MUG.....	£4.75
PEN.....	
LEATHER BOOKMARKS.....	
FIRE ENGINE THIMBLES.....	
POCKET CALCULATOR.....	£2.99
WALL PLAQUE.....	£26.00
OLD SUTTON-ON-HULL MAGAZINE.....	£1.00
BLAZER BADGE (Gold Wired).....	£10.00
LAPEL BADGE.....	£3.00
TIE - NEW DESIGN Dk Blue + Red/White stripes & badge.....	£9.00
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 & Black to order only) (Sm. Med. Lg. XL, XXL).....	£35.00
BASEBALL CAP (Navy, Black, Green, Natural).....	£6.00

#### MISCELLANEOUS

FIRE ENGINE PRINT.....	£5.00
COMMEMORATIVE FSCTE PRINT*.....	£1.99
TEA TOWELS - Fire Fighter & Cadbury's Cocoa.....	£3.50
OUT OF THE BLUE an Airman's Tale 1995 - 2005.....	£9.95

\* The Commemorative FSCTE Print is taken from an original painting by Eric Day, commissioned by Air Commodore Witherow and presented to the FSCTE, RAF Manston. It represents the combining of the RAF and DFS Fire Services Training establishments of Catterick and Manston. The prints are smaller than the originals from 1991, and are available to students who use them for colleagues to sign as a memento of their time at the school. Source - The 'Treble Two' magazine issue 5, Summer 1991, and Brian Harris, member 393, Curator





**Arabian Service Medal Update** -This information was first published in the December 2005 Flashpoint and John Savage, member, 180, has sent in this reply to an enquiry he recently made to Award Productions Ltd about the wearing of the medal with other medals awarded to Servicemen. The answer he received is as follows:



Dear Mr Savage,

Thank you for your interest in the Arabian Service Medal. This is a commemorative issue and the directive from the Ministry of Defence in the U.K. is that;- They may be worn alongside official awards & decorations or on official uniforms.

Each country and many associations have their own rules and therefore we can only give guidelines and advice. Most people this applies to are now civilians, so in our opinion we feel, that within reason; there should be allowance for personal preference.

In the past these medals were usually worn on the right breast, but in the U.K. it has now become customary for them to be worn on the line below official issues, and the medals of next of kin worn on the right breast.

You are welcome to visit our website [www.awardsmedals.com](http://www.awardsmedals.com) to review the medals and related items we issue and use the application/order form (s) available on the site. In case you do not have access to the Internet or prefer to receive the details in the post please let us have your address so we can send these to you. We are looking forward to being of service to you.

Yours sincerely, Bob van Mook for Award Productions Ltd

Footnote: Thanks, John. I hope the above information clarifies matters for those members entitled to wear the medal - Ed?

## Next Issue

Reunion Coventry 20 to 22 October 06

More photographic memories Hendon & Abingdon & Kormaksar, Aden

Bruntingthorpe and Museum MK6, 23 AG 81, history update !

Spotlight on RAF Catterick Pt 2

RAF Catterick event June 2006 report

RAF Fairford (RIAT) report

Fire Service Heroes - Sgt George Masterson - RAF Luqa, Malta

Do you remember Skiffle? If not, Colin Nixon will remind you!

Remembrance Parade details for November 2006

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES  
FOR NEXT FLASHPOINT  
ISSUE DUE AUGUST 06  
1 July 2006**

Dear David,

Many thanks for forwarding copies of your magazine to me. Although I wasn't part of the fire service in the RAF, they still make an interesting read. Our own magazine is not nearly as grand in appearance; as our budget will not run to four colour printing, but I like to think I make it interesting for the readers.

My working life was spent in print and publishing, so although producing the magazine, with all its entails, I don't find it a chore. I recently re-read the 2005 issue of Flashpoint and noticed an item on page 7 concerning Jess Jessup. It caught my eye, because we both joined up, (or rather were asked politely to do so!), in 1953 and at one time were both stationed at RAF Wartling in Sussex. I don't believe our paths would have crossed, as I was a radar operator and worked down the 'hole', while Jess, would have been out and about.

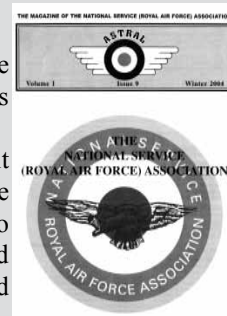
I would be interested to know what memories he has of the camp. For example, I can remember the lady who ran the taxi service from Cooden Beach station and would pack dozens of returning airmen into her little bungalow on a Sunday night, to avoid losing business to rival companies. The 'chippy' next to the railway bridge in Bexhill comes to mind. Perhaps he remembers Dennis Hillman the England weightlifter, (big lad he was), who married a diminutive WRAF girl; or the officer whose name escapes me, who would always be accompanied by an Alsatian dog on his tours of inspection.

Our Association will be holding its AGM in Eastbourne in October this year and I am hoping to visit Wartling. Sadly, the domestic site is no more and I believe the underground bunker is flooded and no longer accessible. The pub and the church as far as I know are still there. I find it sad that so many of the places that were of such importance fifty years ago, including the basic training camps, are not even remembered, except by those who served there and by enthusiasts who try to keep the memories alive. That is why I think associations such as ours are so important. I wish you and your Association all the best.

Kind regards, Brian Hooper Editor Astral magazine

P.S. You will note from the magazine enclosed that we have local groups in some areas, and if any of your members live in the localities mentioned and would like to come along as guests they would be more than welcome.

Footnote: Many thanks for your kind comments about Flashpoint and it's praise indeed, from someone from the 'trade' and much appreciated. Astral magazine looks quality and is full of interesting information in nearly 30 pages. I echo your sentiments on producing the magazine and the satisfaction from doing it and the value of Associations such as ours. Anyone wishing to accept your offer to attend local groups can contact me direct and I'll pass on details as follows: Cambridge - Cosford - East Sussex - Edinburgh - Exeter The South West - Greater Manchester - Hornchurch/Romford - Norwich - North Wales - Southend - West Yorkshire - Wigan - Wiltshire - Ed.



# Heroes of the Fire Service

## LAC 'TAFFY' JENNICK AWARDED BEM FOR HEROIC RESCUE FROM CRASHED HANDLEY PAGE HASTINGS AT RAF COLERNE, WILTSHIRE!

Hello Dave,

Here is the story of Taffy Jennick and his award of the BEM for Gallantry [Military Division] as told to me by Taffy himself some 20 years ago. I have tried to contact him via his last address but he must have moved on, one way or another? I have written to a Welsh newspaper to ask for help. I'll keep you posted. Tony Eaton

On the 12<sup>th</sup> July 1957 LAC Terence 'Taffy' Jennick was detailed as No 2 on the Aircraft Rescue Landrover on airfield crash duties at RAF Colerne,



the other vehicles forming the crash line up were a Mk5 Foam Truck and a CO2 Gas Truck. Operating out of Colerne was the four-engined Handley Page Hastings transport aircraft and one of largest aircraft in service with the RAF. At

1202 hrs a Hastings on a training flight with five crewmembers aboard was attempting a three-engined overshoot down the runway. This manoeuvre was a perfectly normal training practice but in this instance it went terribly wrong.

As the Hastings flew low along the runway it suddenly stalled and hit the runway with great force causing it to bounce high in the air and then slew across the airfield finally crashing into a nearby meadow. The Air Traffic Control immediately alerted the crash crew and they raced to the scene heading towards a huge column of smoke caused by the burning Hastings. The heavy vehicles of the crash line up were forced to punch their way through hedgerows and fencing to get to the stricken aircraft. Once deployed the Mk5 Crew and Gas truck operator began fighting the fierce fires that were engulfing the Hastings while the rescue crew began the search around the wreckage for crewmembers. It was later discovered that one crewman [unseen] had been thrown clear and three others had managed to free themselves from the wreckage. This left the possibility of two men still inside. Taffy Jennick, with the

other rescue man, ran to the aircraft and the senior man hesitated for a moment, but Taffy Jennick didn't think twice and began entering the burning fuselage. It must be remembered that the standard crash kit of the day were denims, sea boot socks, gumboots leather jerkin and probably a shirt with a WW1 tin hat and asbestos face visor. Heaving himself into the shattered aircraft he entered the flames and made his way to where the trapped crewman was most likely be seated. He was found trapped between two seats with his clothing on fire. Wasting no time Taffy Jennick smothered the flames and began to drag the man towards the exit. As the two men neared the exit the starboard wing exploded showering the whole area with burning petrol. Undaunted, he carried the crewman out and completed the rescue and then did a further search for the other crewmember that had not been accounted for. The crash of the Hastings had coincided with the changeover of crash crews and Taffy Jennick had not had time to don his crash kit and as a result had carried out the rescue wearing just his battle dress, uniform slacks, shirt, jacket and shoes and a face visor and helmet affording him less protection than the meagre crash kit he usually wore.

For his bravery and prompt action in saving the crewman's life LAC Jennick was awarded the British Empire Medal for Gallantry.



Tony has now joined the Association - Ed.

Footnote: Great story Tony and one well worthy of archiving in Flashpoint. We've had one success recently in finding another hero from Catterick, Nick Harrison, and it would be nice if we could make it a double! Many thanks for the story and picture. Above photo shows a Handley Page Hastings of the type that crashed - Ed.

## THE AIRMAN'S PRAYER

The first thing we'll pray for we'll pray for some beer, glorious, glorious, glorious beer!

If we only have one beer may we also have ten?

May we have a whole brewery said the airmen "Amen"

The next thing we'll pray for we'll pray for some girls, glorious, glorious, glorious girls.

If we only have one girl may we also have ten?

May we have a whole Harem said the airmen "Amen"

The next thing we'll pray for we'll pray for the King

If he only has one son may he also have ten?

May he have a whole squadron said the airmen "Amen"

The last thing we'll pray for we'll pray for the Erk.

The poor little blighter who does all the work.

And if he only serves one year may he also serve ten?

May he serve forever said the airmen "Amen"?"

Footnote - My apologies to whoever sent, or gave me this poem, as I can't recollect! Member, Ken Hird, has been looking for a copy of the Airman's Prayer, but I don't think this is the one he's wanting! Maybe next time? - Ed.

## 2MT PENNANT HANDOVER

Sqdn Ldr Stu Beeby handed over his pennant as Commander of 2 Mechanical Transport Squadron at Stafford, to Sqdn Ldr Dave Hubbick, who arrived after a tour at Permanent Joint Headquarters, Northwood. The squadron is the RAF's Heavy Lift Surface Movements Transport Unit with 250 personnel.

On behalf of the Association, we wish Stu Beeby all the best in his future career and have written to Sqdn Ldr Hubbick welcoming him as the new OC of 2MT and hope that we can carry on enjoying the liaison we have built up between ourselves and the John Arthur Memorial RAF Fire Service Museum and Halfpenny Green Vehicle Collection - Ed.



# Photographic Memories - RAF Hendon and Abingdon etc 1956 -

Dear Dave,

Having read the latest splendid edition of the magazine I have been encouraged to send you some photographs you may like to consider for publication. I would accept you may get quite a few pictures of groups of fire crews and vehicles that could change the content of the magazine if you published them all.

However most of the pictures were taken at RAF Hendon during 1957, which means we are all old men now but hopefully young in heart! Hendon in 1956/1957 was the base for the RAF Metropolitan Communications Squadron with Ansons, Devons and Chipmunks. There was also a detachment from the US Navy with Dakota's. They also had an Albatross amphibian and the US Army flew a Beaver, amongst other aircraft, I have forgotten. The largest RAF aircraft to visit was a Blackburn Beverley, which came from the OCU at RAF Dishforth for an open day in September 1957. The aero-fireman lived upstairs in the brick built converted NAAFI block, above the fire piquet room. This building was recently demolished to make space for the rebuilt Graham White Factory hangar. The Crash Bay was to the rear of the Station Workshops, now part of the RAF Museum.

When the airfield was closed and the runways torn up it was used for building houses. I was interested to see that last year some of the houses near the museum were being demolished. I hope to have painted a brief picture of a fireman's view of Hendon. Now for the photographs and I apologise for the scrappy presentation, but some of the pictures scanned in were unsuitable. I have given them numbers and these refer to a description on the enclosed sheet. Please use/keep them if they are of interest? It all seems so long ago, but I have never forgotten my short time as an RAF fireman. Thanking you and a Happy New Year.

David Edgerton, member 187



Cpl 'Pluto Marshall (pikeman) - Pete Boot (with axe) - Dave Langley (on block)



Crash Bay Hendon 1956 - Rear - L/R - Dennis Castle - ? Hammet - Les Bridges  
Middle row L/R - Mick Upward - Tom Pugh - Steve Stephenson - Roy Starling - Paddy Doyle

Front L/R - Cpl John Chant - 'Pluto' Marshall - 'Tuppence' - Alan Goreham



Garden - Rear - L/R - Les Bridges - Tony Keene - Roy Starling - 'Ginger' Bradnam - John Stenton

Row 3 L/R - Cpl Tom Pugh - Dennis Castle - John Bunyan

Row 2 L/R - Mick Upward - Dave Mewett - ??? - Alan Goreham

Front L/R - Dave Edgerton - Jock Gray - 'Pluto' Marshall - Dave Langley



1957 Austin CO2 Gas Truck 08 AC 57



General view of crash line RAF Hendon 1956. The Belfast hangars in the background are now incorporated into the RAF museum buildings. Fordson WOT1 00 AG 08. Fordson 1945 Monitor 02 AG 73. Austin CO2 Gas Truck 08 AC 57. Landrover rescue vehicle 23 AA 81. Also on strength, was an Austin Domestic Tender, Coventry Climax trailer Pump and Bedford 500 gallon Water Tender.

## RAF ABINGDON CRASH VEHICLES 1958



MK5A 21 AG 87 & Cab interior below



DP1 24 AG 37 & Blackburn Beverley



1958 Alvis Pyrene MK 6 23 AG 81  
'Bruntingthorpe' 6? More next issue!



1945 Monitor 02 AG 70 driving off landing stage on Christmas Island for 'Operation Grapple' Atom Bomb tests during 1950's taken from tv picture.

Footnote: Many thanks for the info Dave and I apologise for the wait - Ed.



# Museum Update and New Initiatives for it's future!



At the recent Peterborough Reunion and General Meeting, David Hughes, member 683, from the RAF Fire Service Museum, made a presentation to the members on it's future.

**Limited Company and Charitable status** - It had been decided that a Limited Company would be formed and Charitable Status would be sought. To obtain it we must have a structure with plans, opening times, policy document and a governing document.

**RAF Fire Service Museum Society** - It was hoped to recruit members to the society the members of which, would own the Museum and not David Hughes, nor any other individual. He wanted the Museum and vehicles to stay together and, when feasible, to apply for Lottery Heritage Funding.

**Museum assets would not be to sold off** for his, or anyone else's personal benefit, and confirmed that his aim, and intention, was to establish the Museum in honour of our late Founding President, John Arthur.

**Fund raising activities and events are essential** and would be the main revenue stream. Help would be needed to organise such events.

**Admission charges would be set at a minimum of £2.50** which might put some people off, but don't expect to lose much revenue, as they probably wouldn't have made a voluntary donation anyway.

**Cataloguing of museum items** to confirm ownership is vital if we are to avoid a repeat of the trouble caused when the Shoreham D/DAY museum failed, and it's closure resulted in the exhibits being sold off by the owners, which included memorabilia donated, or loaned, and owned by members. John Arthur, tried hard to recover the items on behalf of members, but many items were sold off.

This experience had left many members wary of supporting a similar venture, now establishing itself at Wolverhampton Airport, and need to be convinced that this is the way forward.

**Museum Constitution and Gift Aid** - The Museum now has a Constitution and policy, which gives structure to the

project and, when charitable status has been established, Gift Aid would enable donations to be increased by claiming 28p in the pound back from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

**Museum Directorships** - A number of Directors would be needed to run the Company and, to that end, David Hughes is one and two other volunteers had come forward, Steve Bowden, serving member 413, RAF Coordinator and Philip Webb, (non member), but experienced in vehicle preservation. They would serve an initial 3 years as trustees. Once established, as a Company and Charity, it would need the approval of Society members and the Charity Commissioners to dispose of any assets should the Museum fold. To satisfy their criteria, the Museum would need to have a programme of openings and he suggested that would likely be 10am to 4pm every weekend which would be planned to coincide with working parties.

At this moment, due to work and time commitments, there would be no committee to run the Museum, but working weekends would provide a forum for open discussion.

**Working Parties** - The next is scheduled for the 15 to 24 May 2006 and it's hoped to hold regular sessions throughout the year, (weather permitting), on the last weekend of each month.

All degrees of skill and abilities will be accepted so don't discount yourself as every little helps and you'll enjoy the camaraderie amongst like minded people and, hopefully, make new friends. It's hoped to liaise with volunteers to ensure people are available to look after visitors.

**Newsletter** - it was hoped to provide a regular Newsletter via Flashpoint to keep everyone updated with the Museum's progress and activities.

**Museum Society Membership** - at the start of this report it was mentioned that a Museum Society was to be formed, and an application form for membership, based on the lines of Newark Air Museum's has been compiled.

A number of members signed up at the reunion weekend, but more are needed to help provide a regular source of funding. Income derived will help pay such as public liability insurance premiums, vehicle restoration funds, fuel and expenses. Basically, the more members, the more income and the more likely that the museum will succeed. This also falls in line with the AGM last October when the Association Treasurer, Geoff Varley, sug-

gested some form of voluntary contribution was called for so those wishing to, could give monetary support direct to the Museum. **Membership** is available at £15 Individual and £20 for a Family.

Application forms are available from: Mr D F Hughes, 42 Downs Park Crescent, Eling, Southampton SO40 9GN  
Tel: 02380 326 000 Mobile: 07976 563 740 and 0776 058 619



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CATTERICK, RIAT & RAF FIRE SERVICE MUSEUM



Volunteers are desperately needed to help with the Gala Day with the Army at Marne Barracks, ex RAF Catterick, North Yorkshire, on Saturday 24th June 2006, the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) at RAF Fairford, from 11th to 18th July 2006 and the Museum. **See Details below:-**

**Catterick - Saturday 24th June**  
George Edwards - 0151 426 5093

**RAF Fairford - RIAT Airshow from 11th to the 18th July 2006**  
Tel: Wilf Longmire 01726 642 74

**Note: Cut-off date for RIAT volunteers is 26th May to allow for the processing of passes etc.**

**RAF Fire Service Museum - Working Party from 15th to 24th May at Wolverhampton Airport.**

**Wilf Longmire 01726 642 74**  
or  
**David Hughes 02380 326 000**  
**Mob. 07976 563 740 and 07766 058 619**

## RAF FIREFIGHTERS TRAIN IRAQI FIRE CREWS!

The man in charge, War-rant Officer Andy Pittock, and his 36 strong team, have set up a comprehensive fire and rescue training programme to prepare members of the Iraqi Fire Service who will eventually replace them in what is a vital task.

Seven Mercedes Rosenbauer Fire Engines, together with associated support equipment have been provided by the Multi National Force as part of the ongoing programme for Iraq. The engines should have been delivered by the end of

October 2005 and, along with the Iraqi crews, will eventually take over from the RAF fire crews in providing the airfield crash and fire cover for the airport.

Sergeant Al Hadfield, responsible for the training and implementation programme, has been impressed with the progress being made by the Iraqis: "Although they are experienced, they aren't used to working with such modern equipment. However, they are an extremely enthusiastic bunch who are clearly delighted to get their hands on kit like the Mercedes

Rosenbauer Fire Engines and they are making great progress."

Sgt Hadfield's team began the training programme on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2005. The rate of progress has been such that the first Iraqi crews were scheduled to start to shadow the RAF crews by late September 2005. It is envisaged that the first Iraqi Fire Service Crews will be fully trained and ready to start providing full crash and fire coverage by early December 2005, thereby allowing the first RAF crews to return to the UK.



Source - MOD Oracle September 10 2005 - Ed.

## Firefighter Baz Ignites Salsa Passion in Bas-

An RAF firefighter at Basrah Air Station has been sharing his love of Salsa dancing with his colleagues, teaching classes during his nights off. During his four month tour in Iraq, Cpl Malcolm 'Baz' Barratt, wanted to keep up with his dancing and thought that teaching some moves to his colleagues would be a way to do it.

**Fever** - Baz started teaching Salsa classes at the accommodation area where he was living on the air station. As news of the classes spread, more people keen to do something different, and fun, in their time off got to hear and 'Salsa Fever' caught on. Soon he started teaching les-



sons in other areas around the base, initially twice a week and then every other night. "Initially, I had a few people

coming to my classes, and this built up to about 30 - 40, then numbers went up to 50 - 60 at its peak. The classes were quite multi-cultural; we had Italians, Portuguese and Americans, coming along as well as Brits. As individuals started to finish their tours, and go home, and others came along, I had to start two different classes, one for beginners and one for intermediates."

"I'm not a teacher, I'm just sharing what I know with them. There's no greater feeling than when you look at someone who can't do something one day, and seeing their progress the next. It makes you feel quite proud of your, and their, achievements."

"All I'd done before was teach my friends a few moves and I taught my fiancée, Nicola, to dance from scratch but I wasn't daunted teaching a class, as I found it quite easy, actually. Everyone who came along to the lessons found it easy to dance. Either I was a good teacher, or they were naturally talented!" He added, "I am sure that most people I taught to Salsa dance

will carry on when I go. I've shown them something they enjoyed, and now, they're keen to continue it."

**React** - When not Salsa dancing, Baz works at the airport fire station. As well as being on hand to react to incidents at the airport, he is responsible for Fire Prevention Instruction, giving lectures and servicing fire extinguishers. He also trains Iraqi firefighters, at the airport, and is a member



promote the Latin scene on the island.



Photo detail - Far left - Baz takes charge during one of his Salsa lessons at Basrah where he is medical assistant, SAC Lorna Batman. Top right - Baz puts dancing partner, Michelle Magure, who works in the Explosive Storage area through her paces. Centre - A more usual attire for the Basrah firefighter.

Photos and Text - Cpl Will Craig & RAF NEWS February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006

of the Incident Response Crew dealing with road accidents and emergencies. "I've made the most of my time here. The way I looked at it, I was here to do a job," he said. Baz became interested in Latin culture and dancing on his visits to Ibiza, where he saw people dancing the Merengue and then, years later, decided to set about learning Salsa. Baz is usually based at Akrotiri, Cyprus, and has set up a Latin events website with friends to



# Brief History of the Royal Air Force Fire Service



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 Fire Services Central Training Establishment (FSCTE) which still continues to this day.

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

The Trade of Fireman was first introduced in 1943 within Trade Group 9, to train personnel in Aircraft Crash Rescue and Firefighting techniques and included an Advanced Trade in Air Traffic Control. Prior to this, personnel on general and aircraft handling duties were used to carry out fire fighting responsibilities; with vehicles being driven by M.T. drivers. It was mainly a case of turning up for duty and being detailed on the day.

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

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

Pictured is an MFV producing 'On the run' courtesy of Howard Harper, member 682 and Cambridge coordinator, on an Association visit to RAF Marham Wednesday 23rd



# Brief History of the Defence Fire and Rescue Services



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

The early 1960's also saw the gradual civilianisation of certain Stations starting with Flying Training Command. Many

personnel recruited were ex RAF, Navy and Army, and formed an experienced nucleus for the change over.

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

Some of those early recruits went on to become Senior Officers, Training School Commandants at Manston, and Command Fire Officers throughout the RAF and DFS, both home and abroad. Another change was that many recruits were now older, married and lived off camp, so the days of the young, single, living on camp serviceman sadly, in my opinion, came to an untimely end!

I was recently informed, by two of our serving members, that the DFS had now acquired a new badge, which is reproduced alongside the old one for comparison. The badge centre remains the same, but the name has changed to **Defence Fire and Rescue Service** Basically, it appears to be a name change only recognising the rescue role. If, and when, I have any official detail explaining



the changes, I'll keep you informed. The job will still tend to attract those personnel with similar characteristics, personalities, and vocation, as all those who have gone before Long may it remain so! Thanks to members, Steve Brown (Stafford) and Gordon 'Smudge' Smith (Leeming) for their input - Ed.



Photo courtesy of Gordon 'Smudge' Smith, member 64, and shows one of the Fireground Simulators at Teeside Fire Training School.



# RAF Marham Fire Section Visit 23rd November 2005



Wednesday 23rd November dawned cold with bright blue skies, when members met at 0930 hours outside Marham main guardroom as guests of the Fire Section. The visits to 39 PRU Canberra, and 13 GR4 Tornado Squadrons, were excellent, as was lunch in the WO/Sgt's Mess, and our compliments go to the Mess staff for a first class meal and service, not forgetting the lady MT driver who chauffeured us around. Many thanks to our guide for the day, Sgt Neil Cousell, and SAC Tom Gateley, photographer, Squadron personnel, and Sqdn Ldr 'Rem' Merrick's welcome, introduction and history of RAF Marham., especially his explanation of the 'Blue Bull' and motto, 'Deter'. We all enjoyed the experience and were very impressed with the welcome, and enthusiasm, of all personnel we met. Thanks to W/O Dave Starkings, Sgt Neil Cousell and all fire section personnel for a memorable day, and Steve Doran, Norfolk coordinator, for finalising the arrangements, well done Steve, (when's the next one?). My congratulations go to the Webmaster for a great website and recommend it to those having access to the internet.

Photograph above standing left to right - Kevin Doyle - 'Yorkie' Gaunt - Joe Shackleton - Dave Kenyon - Steve Doran - John Roberts - Richard Cook - Howard Harper - Arthur Elton - Geoff Varley - Dave Allen - Kneeling - Duty Crew.

Photographs below - **1st line** - Fire Section Fire Training demo (3) - Neil Cousell and Steve Doran - **2nd line** - Crew member demonstrating a modern branch sideline - 2 shots of lunch - 39 PRU Canberra Squadron hangar - **3rd line** - 13 Squadron 'live' GR4 Tornado and members enjoying an in depth guide around the aircraft, followed by a look at the weapons store - far right W/O Dave Starkings and his New Years Honours MBE taken from the station website 4th January 2006.

Main group photograph above courtesy of SAC Tom Gateley, Station photographer. Text - Dave Kenyon

