

FLASHPOINT



ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE

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INSIDE THIS 24 PAGE ISSUE

ELECTION OF NEW CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN - RAF MARHAM FAMILIES DAY VISIT JULY 2006

RAF FIRE SERVICE AT CAMP BASTION - AFGHANISTAN - CARNABY 'FIDO' - ASSOCIATION SHOP

PROPOSED RAF LAARBRUCH VISIT SEPTEMBER 2007 - JULY 2006 RIAT FAIRFORD REPORT



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.

Some members have asked if the 1995 photo could be replaced, the difficulty being, with what? However, it's your magazine and I've taken on board their suggestion. The original idea of repeating the Brief History of the Association, (and the RAF and DF&RS), was to allow anyone reading the articles to know who we are and I appreciate that, for regular readers, it might seem a bit repetitive! In effect, Flashpoint was designed as an ongoing advertsing leaflet!

The photo below shows the first informal meeting of ex-RAF firemen attending Shoreham Airport, East Sussex in September 1994, when it was decided to form an Association and agreed to return in 1995. On the 13th May 1995 they again met and formed the Association. I will trawl through the archive to see if there is anything else suitable and try and change it from time to time? It was suggested that something more modern might be apt? So, watch this space! - Ed.



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Victoria
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Co-ordinator Vacancies - East Yorkshire - Midlands Scotland (2) - South East. Other areas as necessary. It's not too arduous, just a matter of keeping in touch, and promoting the Association when able to do so. If you can help, please contact a Committee member.

RAFDFSA ENTERPRISES AT RIAT 2006

The shop had a really successful weekend at the air show taking over £800 in 2 days. We had a great site, on grass, between the fire engines, with the banners on either side; the public couldn't miss us. We had a bit of a problem with the marquee on the Saturday due to the wind but, once we had made some running repairs and borrowed some enormous metal clips from another trader, all went well.

Very many thanks to the ladies for their help in running the shop and for allowing me time to go off and spend Roger's money at the craft stalls. I really did appreciate the time off. A big thank you also to Sammy Gill for selling some of the slow moving stock – his techniques have to be seen to be believed! Anyway all the old style T-shirts and the calculators have now been sold. As expected, T-shirts, polo shirts, badges and the children's pocket money toys went well although; overall, there was a good cross section of merchandise sold. With thanks again to you all.

Sue Brooks



Front cover photograph is courtesy of SAC Dave Turnbull, RAF Marham Photographic Section and was taken during a Fire Section Training Exercise on the Fire Ground Simulator.

Dave's photo was awarded a Highly Recommended in Category C, RAF at work, in the RAF's Official Magazine Photographic Competition in 2005. Well done Dave and thanks for permission to use it in Flashpoint - Ed.

Invitation to all members - Let's have your personal stories, anecdotes and photographs for publication. Remember, it's *your* Association, and Flashpoint is produced for your enjoyment. That's why we need to tell of all those many experiences out there. If your article requires a photograph, remember to enclose it along with your article, and send to the Editor by mail, or email, at the address detailed on page 3 – Who to Contact. Please enclose an SAE for the return of photos etc. Thank you. Dave Kenyon Editor 239

Flashpoint Editorial

Once again, it's time to produce another Flashpoint issue and I've been trawling through the many items sent in by the members. I've enough stuff to do several editions, but assure you that your personal memories will be used at some time.



plied by Steve Doran, features in this issue. In his report, Ron urges more members to take part, even if it's only the once?

Paddy's Bonfire - We have another story from John Lewis, entitled, 'Paddy's Bonfire', which may evoke memories for anyone who served at

RAF Swanton Morley? John sent in the article, 'Fire Picket' in the April issue.

Enterprise Shop - Member, Allan Brooke and his wife, Marilyn, have taken over the shop and the Shop page is back. I've invited them to introduce themselves in this addition of Flashpoint, and wish them all the very best in their endeavors.

Breakfast with Jimmy Newell, member 632 - Greetings Jimmy. Nice to meet you and have your company at breakfast on Sunday morning at Coventry.

Finally, I have the sad duty of informing you of the passing of some of our members on the In Memoriam page. Also, I'd like to take the opportunity of wishing any of our members, and their families, not enjoying good health, all the very best and hope their well being will improve in the New Year?

Regards,

Dave

Useful Contact Numbers

RAFBF - The Heart of the RAF Family:-

0800 169 2942

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

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

020 7403 8783

The Royal British Legion - RBL:-

08457 725 725

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

BLESMA

Public Records Office Kew Richmond Surrey TW9 4DU

VETERAN'S BADGE -

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

Often, I get a response to the letters or an article, and put it into the next issue otherwise it will be out of date. This means that others will need to be patient and wait a little longer to see their item in print.

The front cover gives tremendous impact to the magazine and I thank SAC Dave Turnbull of RAF Marham Photographic Section for allowing us to use it.

The back cover shows members enjoying the RAF Marham Families Day as guests of the Fire Section. (Don't reckon much to the back-up crew, what do you think)?

Your new Chairman, John Goupillot, is featured along with the new Vice-Chairman, John Arnold.

The full colour center spread is a cracker and was featured recently in the RAF NEWS from Sgt Steve Wiles. Member, Terry Monaghan, out there in Camp Bastion, Southern Afghanistan, up to his neck in muck and bullets along with his colleagues, sent in the details and I'm proud to give it prominence in full colour. Many thanks for that, Terry.

Remembrance Day Parade report from member, Ron Brown, with a photo sup-

APOLOGY TO BOB MASSIE - In the August issue of Flashpoint, Catterick centrespread, I couldn't identify 2 members. With regard to Bob, my memory failed me as I prepared the article and I forgot to check before it went to the Printer. Can anyone let me know who the other member is? - Ed.



FLASHPOINT BACK COPIES are available from the Editor at a cost of £1.00 each including P&P. Issues available are: **January 02 (1st full colour edition by Brodie Publishing, Liverpool), December 04, April, August & December 05, April 06.** Send orders to the Editor, details on the **Who To Contact page.** PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO RAF&DFSA AND SEND WITH YOUR ORDER - ED.

EDITORIAL NOTES

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

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

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

The Editor's decision is final.

Address for all letters etc: -

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

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

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

Your New Chairman - John Goupillot - Member 358

YOUR NEW CHAIRPERSON, JOHN D GOUPILLOT B.E.M. (Member 358)



Born 2 July 1937 in Middlesbrough, John served from 1954 to 1957 as a Tank Driver/Signaller with the Royal Scots Greys. Postings included Catterick Garrison (square bashing), Aldershot, and Castle Martin tank firing ranges in South Wales, Jordan and Suez Canal during the crisis of 1956. John is now starting his 50th year in the fire service and his 49th year married to Vera. During most of that time he and Vera have worked with children and adult leader training in Scouting, Youth Clubs, St John's Ambulance and various other activities.

After release from the Army he joined the then Middlesbrough Fire Brigade as a fireman for 5 years.

In 1962 he joined the RAF Fire Service, starting at Bridgnorth then Catterick, and served at 12 different stations throughout his 21 years including; Germany, Gan Northern Ireland and 7 years instructional duties at RAF Catterick. It was there that he was awarded the British Empire Medal; he would be the first to agree that it was due to many other people's efforts in particular Vera's!

John was demobbed from RAF Scampton with the rank of Flight Sergeant in 1983 and then joined the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) as a Station Officer instructor at the Teesside Airport Fire School. He was promoted to Senior Instructor with the rank of Assistant Divisional Officer. Then on promotion to Divisional Officer he was posted to the CAA at Aviation House, Gatwick as the inspector with responsibility for the licensed civil airports in the UK, bar those in Scotland, and was later promoted to Senior Divisional Officer until his retirement at 60.

After leaving the CAA Inspectorate he became a consultant to the UK CAA International Services Department auditing and lecturing in various parts of the World. In tandem with that, he has established, and is, the Director of the Aviation Fire and Crash Rescue Consultancy Group.

For some time John has expressed an interest in putting something back into the Association and is now pleased that he has this opportunity as your newly elected Chairman.

CHAIRMANS REPORT

As your newly appointed Chairman I have noted that an increasing number of members are resigning and this is something that the Committee has asked me to address.

I would ask that you give the newly formed Committee a chance to review the way that we operate for our members.

Comments and suggestions - We would appreciate your comments and suggestions on how we can improve your Association. We have a Committee meeting scheduled in January 2007 and I shall be recommending that we consider moving the reunions nearer to our members by holding some in the north including Scotland and some in the south including Wales.

Venues such as Edinburgh, Stirling, Blackpool, Scarborough, Llandudno, Cardiff, London, Torquay, Margate, and others will be considered. The aim will be, subject to popular demand and agreement, to alternate between north and south and somewhere in the middle.

We will be striving to reduce the cost of weekends to a minimum commensurate with quality.

I will be recommending also that we give our ladies every opportunity to get more out of their weekends with us by arranging specific events while we talk shop. We need feedback from our Ladies on how to advance these ideas.

The Association Management Committee consists of: Keith Penfold President, Dennis McCann Vice President, Myself Chairman, John Arnold Vice Chairman, George Edwards Secretary, Geoff Varley Treasurer, John Hanley Membership Secretary, Flashpoint Editor Dave Kenyon, with Joe Shackleton and Gordon Smith as our events organisers.

Area Coordinators - We are looking for more Area Coordinators to volunteer to assist at local level and others to assist with particular activities.

We will also encourage smaller groups to meet up at local venues to have a chat and a drink and maybe have outings together as happens at Redcar and the newly formed group in the Doncaster area.

As you can see this is a very strong Com-

mittee with fresh ideas and we will strive to give the best we can for our members.

I have written to those members that have resigned and asked for their ideas comments and suggestions, in the hope that they may consider joining up with us again.

I have enjoyed the many reunions that I, and my wife Vera, have attended and my aim will be to encourage your elected Committee to take the best that we have had in the past and try to improve where we can?

We need your input and I promise that we will consider all suggestions, so get your thinking heads on and let us have your ideas for improving your Association.

Peterborough Reunion in March 2007 - Honorary President, Air Marshal Sir John Sutton KCB, and other invited Guests of Honour - Vera and I will be looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible at Peterborough in March where the Committee is hoping to put on a good show for the Air Marshal and other invited Guests of Honour. We have some surprise ideas for the weekend that we believe you will all enjoy; but you will have to come to see what they are?

Finally, this is your Association and my aim is to try to further the aims and ideals of that small group inspired by the late John Arthur all those years ago in 1995 into an even brighter future.

John Goupillot, member 358

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Membership News

MEMBERSHIP NEWS FROM JOHN HANLEY, MEMBER 69

Welcome to the December issue of Flashpoint and I hope you all enjoy reading it? It's been a good year for the Association with our membership increasing by 55 however, on the down side, a number of our comrades passed away. May they rest in peace? Two (2) members decided to call it a day and resigned; one through ill health, the other being on the other side of the world. However, the latter has decided to return to the fold and will again enjoy reading his Flashpoint!!

Most of you will have received your 'Joining Instructions for Peterborough' and I have already booked and am looking forward to seeing my friends again.

I've had a request from a serving RAF

fireman in Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, for application forms and we could be looking at another 12 new serving members.



Subscription

Reminder Could I please remind those members who have not paid their Subscriptions, to please do so? A complete up to date membership list should be included in your Flashpoint and, if not, please contact the Editor or myself, and we'll send one on with our apologies. In conclusion, can I take this opportunity to wish all the membership, and all your loved ones, a VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS & A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR?

Regards,
John, member 69

Below is a list of 13 new members joined since August 2006 and welcomed to the Association: -

847	Donald Hood
848	Geoffrey Cook
849	Thomas Eddleston
850	Geoffrey Hancock (Serving member)
851	Michael Edward White
852	Steve Shirley
853	Arthur Basset
854	Stephen Carlson
855	Lawrence Holding
856	Allan Lymer
857	Bernie Zaccardelli
858	John Michael White
859	Richard Brown

ACTING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - ROYAL COURT HOTEL, COVENTRY - OCTOBER 2006

May I take this opportunity to welcome everyone to the Royal Court Hotel Coventry, I hope you find everything to your satisfaction if not please see the hotel staff and I am sure they will sort it out for you.

The Association had three visits this year, we went back to RAF Marham and I have been informed the members who attended had a fantastic time and look forward to the next visit in 2007. We went to Catterick in June of this year; all the members who turned up for this visit had a great time. There was a full report in the latest Flashpoint so I will not go in to the many details. There is one thing I would like to tell you about Bob, Dave and I, we went for a walk on the Friday afternoon to see the old burning area the tower and wash down area where we did lots of drills, we came across a notice saying no unauthorised persons past this point, being the good fireman we are we obeyed the instructions and found another route that did not have a sign, so we could see the areas. Members from the Association and the Museum went to the Royal International Air Tattoo in July. I did not attend this event but I have been informed it was a great weekend with lots of hard work and I do believe a few problems with the vehicles?

Our Chairman Roger Brooks has had to stand down and his wife Sue has given up the shop, this is for personal and work related reasons. Roger and Sue did a lot for the Association and they will be hard to replace but I am sure there is someone out there who will take up the challenge. There was a write up as a loose minute in Flashpoint explaining what Roger had achieved while holding the position of chairman I would just like to add to these in this report. He was responsible for organising the Dedication of our Standard and registered the Association with the Royal College of Arms to make sure we could parade our Standard, and made sure we had a modern day Constitution and Rules laid out that all members could understand. This was a lot of hard work and took up a lot of his spare time but he leaves a good solid foundation that I am sure the next chairman can build on. We wish Roger and Sue all the best for the future and many happy hours with their new born grandson and we hope to see you both at Peterborough.

It has taken a long time to achieve what we think the members wanted at a reunion, and it has taken two years to set up the deal we have this weekend. I am sure you will like the prices of the Beer, Lager and house wine and if you took the special at dinnertime that too was value for money. It proves Bob and I did listen to the members when they put forward their comments it just takes time to put these deals together. Bob has to be congratulated for this weekend as he did most of the groundwork. I wish the new Reunion Organisers success for all future reunions.

Last but not least the Committee have done a lot of hard work this year with all the visits, George did a great job with Catterick and the association has been asked back next year, Wilf again has to be congratulated for all his work organising Fairford. I wish the new committee members, who will be voted in at the AGM, every success and I hope the Association continues to go forward in strength. I am now looking forward with Brenda to joining everyone on the other side, just sitting around at reunions talking to friends and having a few drinks. I wish everyone all the best for the future.

Jim Paterson Acting Chairman, member 405

CHAIRMAN'S RESPONSE ON REUNION COST CONCERNS!



Message to the Membership - I have received a number of complaints from members regarding the rising cost of the hotels for our reunions. The cost for the March event at the Marriot Hotel, Peterborough, is £57.50, and appears to be out of reach for some of our members?

The contract for this was signed and sealed by previous Events Organisers, before I took the chair and, other than cancelling, which we may do, if we don't get the minimum numbers required by the contract; the hotel could then impose a penalty on the Association and those members already booked in, including myself.

To consider changing the venue, at this late stage, could prove costly and very difficult. I would, therefore, ask members to support this event at Peterborough, as we will be dining our Honorary President, Air Marshal Sir John Sutton KCB, for the first time and we are hoping to put on a good show.

All I can say is, that our current Events Organisers, Gordon Smith and Joe Shackleton, are in contact with another group of hotels for future events at interesting locations including, Scarborough, Folkestone, Blackpool, Llandudno, and others, at a cost of around, £40.00 per head, Bed, Breakfast and Evening meal.

Your committee will be considering these arrangements before making recommendations to you, the membership, at the next General Meeting at Peterborough in March 2007 and then take forward to the AGM in October 2007.

Once again gentlemen, please support us in what is expected to be an enjoyable event at Peterborough, and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the reunion weekend.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity of hoping you all had a good Christmas and, on behalf of myself and Committee colleagues, to wish you all the very best of health and happiness for the New Year.

Best wishes and regards,

John Goupillot, Chairman and member 358

COVENTRY AGM UPDATE SUMMARY - A large number of issues were dealt with via a very full Agenda of over 24 items, including, Any Other Business. There was an excellent input from the 70 members attending the meeting.

Election of Officials - 1 nomination for Chairman, John Goupillot, Vice-Chairman, 2 nominations, David Hughes and John Arnold, with John Arnold being successful on a majority vote.

Secretary, Treasurer and Flashpoint Editor, stood for re-election and were returned unopposed.

Proposal for the restoration of the RAF Marham Water Garden Memorial Approved.

Catterick Visit 24th June 2006 was a great success and we've been invited to return on Saturday 23rd June 2007.

Comments and Suggestions Book - a book is provided for members to enter ideas for improving the quality of reunions etc.

AOB - Vehicle and Museum problems - David Hughes brought members up to date, followed by Allan Brooke and John Sanders, who said that, they were hopeful of approval for the use of vehicle storage facilities at RAF Barkston Heath, a satellite of RAF Cranwell and had the support of the Air Commodore. A committee was to be set up to oversee the vehicles.

Members decided they wished to keep the vehicles and, after lengthy discussion, it was decided to make funds available to underwrite the costs being imposed on the Association's vehicles at Halfpenny Green, Wolverhampton Airport. 3 members, Keith Penfold, Dennis McCann and David Hughes, immediately volunteered to pay 1 months costs each - Ed.

THE HISTORY OF RAF CHANGI - UPDATE AND BOOK OFFER TO OUR MEMBERS

Dear Dave,

May I take this opportunity to thank you, and your RAF & Defence Fire Services Association, for advertising the revised book, "The History of Changi" by our President, Air Commodore H.A. Probert, MBE. MA. RAF (Retd). You may be interested to know that the book has been enlarged from, 79 pages to 132 pages, with the most up-to-date photographs, which includes photos of the new A380 Airbus, (In Singapore Airline Livery).

Should any of your members be interested in purchasing the Book, the price to non-members is *£10, (including postage & packing).

MAIL ORDERS to UK addresses may be sent to Wing Commander Jerry Evans, who agreed to assist with sales. Requests should be addressed to him at: - 'Lilac Cottage' Bank, Lyndhurst, Hants SO43 7FD, accompanied by a cheque for *£10.00, payable to the "RAF Changi Association".

Kind regards,

Mike James (M1) Chairman, RAF Changi Association

Many thanks for the offer, Mike, and I'm pleased to find a space to inform the membership. The item was referred to in the August 2006 edition of Flashpoint on page 17 - Ed.

Letters to the Editor

FIRE SECTION SONG UPDATE!

Dave,

With regards to the Fire Section Song as printed on page 15 in the August 2006 issue of Flashpoint; I am pleased to add the second verse as follows:

*Early in the morning when on parade,
Up comes the Warrant singing a serenade,
Some stupid sergeant shouts " Right Dress",
We are the Fire Section we are a bloody shower;*

I hope this will bring back a few more memories for our fellow members?

Alan 'Al' Price, member 257

**Round and round the peri track
at 90 miles an hour,**

**We are the Fire Section
we are a bloody shower,**

**We can't change up and
we can't change down,**

**The gearbox is in but
it's upside down,**

**We are the Fire Section
we are a bloody shower!**

**Early in the morning
when on parade,**

**Up comes the Warrant
singing a serenade,**

**Some stupid Sergeant
shouts " Right Dress",**

**You should have seen
the bloody mess!**

**We are the Fire Section,
we are a bloody shower!**

Extract from page 15 of the August issue *"Wherever we trained, Cranfield, Weeton, Sutton, Catterick, or Manston the one thing we had in common was the Fire Service marching song to the tune of 'Lilly of the Lamp Light.' (It is everybody else's marching tune as well, but with words to suit themselves)!*

If you know of any other verses or versions and they are reasonably clean, let's have them for the next Flashpoint?"

John Goupillot

Many thanks for that Alan. I hope everyone liked the full version, (unless someone knows better)? See version 2 in letters page 9! - Ed

Dear Mr. Editor,

Re - Flashpoint April 06

I was interested in the article by member 187, D Edgerton.

The photo of the MKVA, 21 AG 87, brings back memories to me because I may have used that vehicle at a major incident in March 1957, when a Beverley crashed.

It's also nice to see the DP1 with Beverleys in the background. Also intriguing is the photo of the Crash Bay at Hendon in 1956.

Could there be some way of finding out if Cpl. John Chant ever served at RAF Abingdon prior to 1956? I remember a J Chant on the Fire Section there during that period.

Could you please let me know who supplied the photos of the MKVA and DP1, because I would like to have some printed if this could be done?



I have a photo of one of the first Beverleys to arrive at RAF Abingdon mid 1950's. I hope to hear from you in the near future, or from member 187? Thank you, W F Harris (Bomber), member 520

Footnote: 'Bomber's request was emailed to David Edgerton and I hope that they have managed to have a chat?

The Beverley crash referred to was reported in the April 2005 Flashpoint on page 20 - Ed

OLDENBURG RAF GER-MANY

Dear Dave,

Avro York crash , 50 years ago, at Malta, (Luqa), enroute from the Middle East to the UK? At last I've managed a few words on Oldenburg, but feel free to change anything you want. Am enclosing copies of the originals, which were on show at the Hull Reunion in October 2003 also, a few pieces of interest you can have.

Could you insert a piece in Flashpoint for any eye witnesses who were at the crash of the Avro York, 50 years ago, enroute from the Middle East to the UK? It crashed on take-off from Malta, (Luqa), with no survivors and was put down to

pilot error.

A friend of mine, who's brother was in the RAF Police, was killed on that aircraft, and he now wants information. If you can help, please contact Richard

Paddy's Bonfire - RAF Swanton Morley - May 1967

I was strolling, (I did a lot of strolling especially when in uniform!), as the marching thing never really caught on with me. I thought it OK but others; the SWO, my Flight Commander, some senior officers, many SNCO's and, on one occasion, the Station Commander personally objected to my strolling.

Anyway I digress; I was strolling towards the station hairdressers (upstairs on the left hand side of the NAAFI building) late one warm afternoon, when my attention was drawn to smoke rising over one of the administration blocks (converted airman's H block), I'd just heard some garbled speech over the Tannoy but not distinctly enough to realise that the message was – Fire, Fire, Fire!

I rounded the corner of the building to see a considerable number, and we are talking 30 plus, of officers, some fairly senior and equal numbers of SNCO's moving rapidly and randomly at running speed in front of Paddy the Painters store shed which was, although I would not be an expert on these matters – well alight!

Paddy was a large and genial guy who was based at Swanton Morley on behalf of a major contractor to the MoD for the maintenance of military establishments all over the East of England. Paddy was a generous man only too willing to help you out with the odd tin of paint for some small project. I had even had a selection of paints from him to hand paint a very rusty Morris Minor; the Registration Document described it as psychedelic! Regretfully all those 'small projects' had mounted up and Paddy had recently been advised that the annual audit was due – he was in deep s*#@#!

Although Paddy had Sergeants Mess status he spent most of his drinking time in the Pig's Bar of the NAAFI but, given the average age in the Mess, was probably 50+ and the topics of discussion were likely to be limited. One evening, Paddy had joined a group of us in the Bar, he looked mournful and eventually he told us of his dilemma; "What should he

do he asked?" Without prompting, at least six people turned to him and without rehearsal said as one - "Set fire to the shed!"

As I stood and admired Paddy's handiwork, the civilian barber joined me in the sunshine, "Is there a queue?" I asked? "Not now" he replied. The Station Commander, in shirtsleeves and without hat, and to be fair even I did not take liberties like that, arrived on the scene. As he ran past me he shouted, "Where's the Fire Appliance?" He clutched in his hand the fire extinguisher from his car; again while not being trained in these matters, I did not think that was going to have a lot of impact on the conflagration.

Jock the Fireman approached, running across the 9 Hole Pitch and Putt Course in uniform from the direction of the Guardroom and Fire Section, battledress jacket buttoned up and wearing his beret, his fire jacket under one arm and a red soda acid extinguisher in his other hand. The Station Commander turned and ran to meet Jock.

Jock had arrived at Swanton a couple of months before direct from training and was for much of the time on his own. The other junior rank was on long term sick, the SNCO always on a course and I never do remember seeing the Corporal who should have made up the set. Still, a tour for an ambitious person at Central Servicing Development Establishment could have well been the end of anyone's career!

Jock was young and fit but even he was rather hot and breathless as he stood in front of the Station Commander who repeated his question, "Where's the Fire Appliance?" Jock struggled to get his words out, "In the Fire Section Sir", "Why?" demanded the CO. "Cos' I can't drive Sir", was the response. Every morning a driver from MT had gone to the Fire Section and driven a few miles on the appliance, parking it outside so that Jock could check, clean and tend to it. Every evening someone from MT had returned and parked it back inside the Fire Section.

The civilian brigade from East Dereham arrived, and two appliances drove all over the grass including our Pitch and Putt Course! They extinguished the shed but there was not enough of anything left to count, so Paddy was safe, and the fire was attributed to a glue heater that had been left on when the chippy had gone off on tea break - nice thinking! Jock a driving course, which included his civilian licence! As there was no queue I strolled over for a

haircut. Everybody was a winner!

John Lewis RAF Photographer
1961 - 1975

Footnote - John is a friend of member 588, Cliff Thatcham and sent in the item on 'Fire Picket' featured in the April 2006 issue of Flashpoint. Do any members recollect Paddy's Bonfire? - Ed.

ONE FOR THE FLASH- POINT 2+2+6?

This is a story of an RAF Fireman who upon demob did not fancy having to work for a living as he had not been used to this for a long while in the RAF and did not want to start now.

So, one day, when he was whiling away a bit of time at the London Zoo he overheard two of the keepers talking about the cost of elephants; now being a good ex fireman he started to wonder about what he could do to help.

Finally he came up with a plan, He bought a blackboard, some chalk, a pair of tweezers, a pair of binoculars and off he went to darkest Africa and, on his blackboard he wrote in large print, 2+2+6 he placed the board at the foot of a nice big tree; climbed it and waited, having a fag while doing so.

In a short while the first elephant came along, read the notice and thought what silly sod did that? In the meantime, more were arriving and arguing about the mathematics of some people. Calmly, our friend opened his binoculars and reversed them, now the elephants were reduced to the size of ants so, he opened his matchbox; picked them up one by one and placed them inside.

I never did get to hear the sequel to this story as the Fireman who was telling me fell off the bar stool and had to be carried back to the Section. The next day he could not remember.

I was assured at the time the story was 100% true?

Steve Doran

Yeah! Right Steve. I believe you were thousands wouldn't! - Ed.

VERSION 2 OF THE FIRE SECTION MARCHING SONG ?

Dear John,

Ref: Fire Section Marching Song, which I first encountered when I arrived at RAF Finningley, (now Robin Hood Airport!!!), Yorkshire in 1967 and recollect that it was one of members who taught me? I was just a green LAC from Catterick, when I first heard it in the NAAFI Bar late one Saturday night, as one does! Vast quantities of Watney's Red Barrel, then a rendition started up. I think it was John Goupillot, who started the first few lines, then joined by Andy Innis, Colin Ellyard and Jock Campbell!!! (If the Devil could have cast his net? What a racket! Anyway, here goes.....

Rolling down the runway ninety miles an hour

We are the Fire Section, we are a bloody shower
We can't change up, we can't change down

We are the Fire Section, we are a bloody shower
If your wagon's in the s---t, never mind
If your wagon's in the s---t, never mind

There's a handle on the front, you can swing it like a fool

One Sunday morning we were on Parade

The Flight Sgt called it a Donkey Serenade
Some silly bugger shout's, "Right Dress"

You should have seen the bloody mess

We are the Fire Section, we are a bloody shower

I have left out the expletives, John, well, most of them which could be printed!

Bill Baldam

Your version makes two for the price of one Bill and wonder if there are any more out there - Ed?

Letters to the Editor

KHORMAKSAR ADEN

1967

Dave,

With reference to the Terry Sedgwick letter, (Aden 1967), in Flashpoint August 2006, I also was involved in this incident and my version of the crash has been published in a book, which covers the history of the Britannia in the RAF, and has a very detailed account of the incident. Let me explain.

Back in March 2005, I discovered the existence of the book, borrowed it from the library service, and came across a chapter on the crash of XL 638 in Aden, contacted the editor who asked me to give my version of events for an updated edition of the book.

This was my version, "I was serving as a fireman at RAF Khormaksar and was on night duty on Thursday 12th October 1967. When XL 638 landed, I was doing my two hour stint on guard duty at the gate to the compound. After seeing and hearing many a Britannia land, I was waiting to hear the sound of the reverse pitch coming in. It didn't! I then heard the crash alarm going and ran to the vehicle I was manning that shift. We made our way to the scene of the crash at the causeway end of the runway.

On arrival, we found the barbed wire perimeter fence intact and, luckily, the tide was out! Using ladders, we scaled the fence and made our way to the aircraft. It was difficult to run or walk through the clinging mud. The crew had evacuated the aircraft.

On entering, we were astonished to see that the nose wheel had come through the floor. Obviously our first concern was if anyone was still onboard? We then looked for the correct switches to stop the propeller, which was still turning very slowly. I can remember our joy at being successful. We were then ordered to leave the aircraft." I did add more, but won't take up space and bore you! The most interesting thing is Terry and I agree that the Britannia cleared the perimeter fence as if trying to take off again, when the reverse pitch failed.

The author of the book, Squadron Leader David Berry, was very surprised by this and managed to contact the co-pilot "Who did not support the theory that the aircraft jumped the fence". It would appear that he was wrong!

The cause, (according to the book), was wear and tear on the reverse system caused by age and the vibrations of



landing, plus the inexperience of the two crew members responsible for operation of the reverse pitch. Normally, the aircraft would have been salvage, but because of the situation in Aden at the time, it was blown-up mainly to get rid of the tail, which, as I'm sure you will remember, was very high.

The book, 'The RAF Britannia and its People', is in the National Library Service and at present is in Powis. For more information, go to; www.keyham-books.co.uk, which also has, links to other RAF and Aircraft sites.

Don Davies member 86

Thanks for the update Don – Ed.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Dear Mr Varley,

On behalf of my late husband, Peter Parritt, member 515, please accept the enclosed donation to the Association.

Regards,

Stella Moore

My sincere apologies to Stella for not including this in an earlier issue. I hope she

SGT RON LAUGHTON

On the back page of the August issue of Flashpoint, is a photo of Ex-Cat-terick crew and, sitting on John Goupilot's left, is a Sgt Ron Laughton. I'm pretty sure he is SAC Ron Laughton who was with me at Eastleigh 1958-60? I wonder if anyone knows where he lives?

Colin Hall, member 271

Footnote: If anyone can help Colin, please let me know and I'll pass it on - Ed.

Letters to the Editor

OUT OF THE BLUE WITH 'TAFF' THE FIRE!

Dear Editor,

Those of you who know me will be aware that I am not an avid reader. Other than page three of a certain newspaper and the centre spread of 'Playboy' magazine! My attention span can be measured against the average fireman cleaning any vehicle whilst the boss is away from the section?

At a recent reunion, I was accosted, (in the best possible taste), by our secretary, George Edards, with a pile of books under his arm. Now, asking a Welshman to buy a book, is like trying to sell flags in Glasgow, so I jumped over three chairs and hid behind the bar - to no avail! Now, having worked with George and finding him to be a decent chap, I gave in and ended up with a copy of 'Out of the Blue', an account of George's exploits over the years. His days as a youth, (he still is!), adventures under flashing blue lights, (and some Red ones!), tours abroad, days on and off duty, then 'Civvy Street', ending up at the door of 'Buck House' and meeting 'Her'! The one who has a real crown upon Her head, that many 'Chiefies' try to emulate?

To be honest, I had no intention of reading the book, but it ended up on the breakfast table and, one morning, I picked it up thinking, 'I'd better read a bit, so I can waffle to George at the next reunion.' Once started, I could't put the ruddy thing down. In fact, I've read it through, time and time again. It took me back to many of the days spent on various RAF camps. I could feel the old pride of being a fireman, the blokes I had worked with and some of the, how can I put this nicely?, some of the 'unusual' firemen one comes across.

I can thoroughly recommend 'Out of the Blue' to any ex or serving lads, fireman or otherwise, but beware, once started, you'll have one heck of a job putting it down. Well done George, for an interesting and extremely well written book. I had intended to suggest that all firemen should get a copy, but knowing some of my old mates, I will re-phrase that statement. Buy a copy! It's worth every penny. I expect George will have some with him at the next reunion and, if you can't make it, I am sure that by writing to our Secretary, and supplying the necessary pennies, a copy will soon be on its way to you. Happy reading,

Jim Jones, member 320
('Taff the Fire')

Many thanks for that, Jim, I'm sure George will

appreciate your sentiments and should have a few spare copies lying around for sale?

TO ORDER YOUR COPY: The book is available



from Woodfield Publishing, Woodfield House, Babsham Lane, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 5EL
Telephone 01243821234
Email address: woodfieldpublishing.com

Alternatively, the book (personally signed by the author) is available from:
George Edwards, 8 East Close, Eccleston Park, Prescott, Merseyside L34 2RA
Cost is £9.95, including post and packing.

RAF Fire Service at Camp Bastion - Afghanistan



ments were never unable to provide essential Fire cover or Force Protection duties.

Recently there has been a big turn around of fire fighters within the theatre and the replacements are continuing to show dedication to the task in hand. At the present time Sgt Terry Monaghan, 2 i/c Fire Section (member 568,) is undertaking the arduous task of Fire Prevention duties for the immense domestic area, most of which are tent facilities and of a high priority. WO Dave Keen has also taken over the running of the section and his responsibilities include liaising

with the Contract Fire Service at Kandahar, a base some 35 minutes flight from Camp Bastion, ensuring the British Flight Line is adequately covered by fire fighting extinguishing media. He is also accountable for all fire fighting commitments at Camp Bastion and answerable to the Camp Commandant for any airfield Force Protection duties.



The fire fighters within the detachment are under extreme pressure to keep the fire fighting vehicles in a serviceable condition at all times, something that is very hard with so much dust and sand in the air. Due to the conditions vehicles have become unserviceable and replacements flown in by C17 in to Kandahar.

The vehicles are then low loaded by either local contractors or an Army convoy. When an Army convoy is used fire fighters are required to fly to Kandahar and be part of a very dangerous 8-hour road journey. Their task is to ride with the low loader and disembark the fire vehicle should the convoy come under attack. In recent times SAC 'Paddy' McCleanon has taken on this most hazardous duty. With Army operations at full stretch, the versatility of the Fighters has been seen in it's full. In recent weeks they have been trained on large weaponry and taken up guarding responsibilities on station sangers, (guard posts), and the main gate. Duties have included checking paperwork, searching vehicles and working the most strenuous of hours.

In all the fire-fighters are carrying out a major assignment and showing the Royal Air Force in a fine light. A huge pat on the back must be given to the young men that are completely dedicated to a mammoth undertaking.



ABOVE - RAF FIREFIGHTING AND RES

BELOW - CRASH 3 MFV ON FORCE PROTECTION D
BAST

RIGHT - CRASH 3 MFV (M
BOTTOM RIGHT - 'ON WATCH' AS



Desert Firefighters Feel The Heat! - Sgt Terry



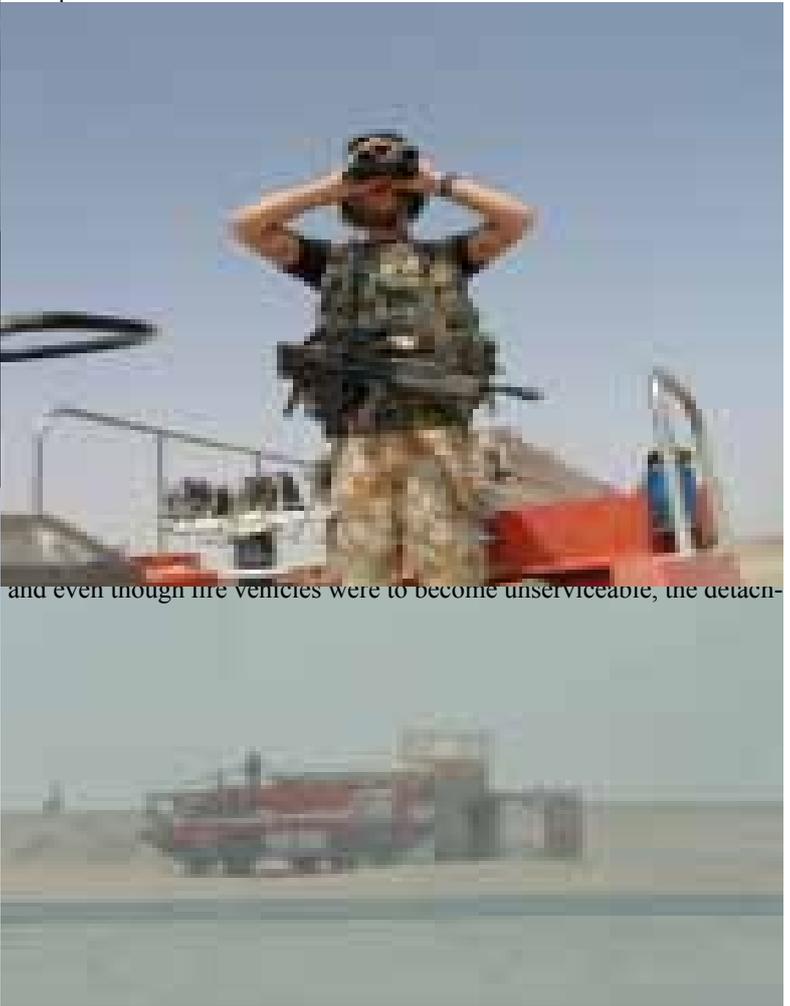
RESCUE SERVICE 'READY FOR ACTION'!
DUTIES AS THE HERCULES C130J DEPARTS CAMP
ION!
(MAJOR FOAM VEHICLE)
HERCULES COMES IN TO LAND.



Hi Dave,

This is an article that was sent into the RAF NEWS by Sgt Steve Wiles, and I thought it might make interesting reading for association members in your next issue of Flashpoint. I have been promoting the association whilst serving in southern Afghanistan, and I reckon you might be getting a few requests from serving members of the RAF Fire Service to join very soon. I have enclosed a few photos that you might also find interesting (Fire-fighters tooled up for war). I think you will agree we have come a long way since the Sutton-on-Hull days. I am a Catterick boy myself joined up in 78 and still going strong. Looking forward to coming home in Jan 07, and maybe making the re-union in March. All the best from the lads on the front line, still fighting the good fight.

Sgt Terry Monaghan (Member 568)
RAF Fire & Rescue Service
Camp Bastion



and even though fire vehicles were to become unserviceable, the detach-

What a fantastic article compiled by Sgt Steve Wiles and grateful thanks to Sgt Terry Monaghan, member 568, for making the time and effort to collect the info and send it on for Flashpoint.

It gives a great insight into what the conditions are like out there for our lads in the Armed Forces and I take my hat off to them! I only wish I had room to place all the photos and names!

There was a report in the 13th October 2006 issue of RAF NEWS and I 'borrowed' the bit about the 'Desert fire-fighters' etc from it - Ed

Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford July 2006

A big THANK YOU to all our members and their wives who took time out to help at RIAT. What a wonderful time we all had. The weather was hot and dry, if somewhat windy on the Saturday, but we all went home tired, happy and, in some cases, a different colour to when we arrived.

A special thank you goes to Wilf Longmire without whom the Association would probably not have been at Fairford. He has spent months organising our presence at RIAT. He had to negotiate our pitch, passes for vehicles and personnel, food tickets and rotas. Even up to the last minute he was working endlessly on our behalf to ensure that everything ran smoothly for us. He also made up 4 display boards with information on the Association, the Museum and vehicles, past and present, and restoration being undertaken which generated a lot of interest from the public and a number of new members. Thank you Wilf.

I would think that this was one of the most successful Royal International Air Tattoos ever. The weather of course helped, provisional figures were 140,000 + people and 31C on the Saturday and probably more people on the Sunday but higher temperatures in the range of 36C with little breeze. We had 6 vehicles on display, Mark 10, DP 2, TAC 1, Range Rover, Mini Angus and Bedford Domestic and the shop also in attendance. We had a really good pitch being positioned just inside one of the main entrances – Blue Gate; so that the first and the last thing people saw was the Association stand and the fire engines.

The Association was asked to help with the setting up of the display arena and go-kart track. This entailed using the vehicles to fill up water safety fencing (probably in the region of 750 large interlocking water butts) around the two arenas and took most of Thursday and Friday. What a lot of water – what water shortage!!

On the Saturday and Sunday we were asked to display the vehicles in the main arena with a commentary given by one of our members, Allan Brooke. Many thanks to Allan he did a splendid job giving information on all the vehicles while we all had a great time driving round as fast as we could in little circles making as much noise as possible with the blues and twos.

We had some fun with the Oxford Fire Cadets, (photo 1). They are made up of 12 – 16 year olds and sponsored by Oxfordshire County Council and Fire Brigade. They decided to take us (old and

not so old ex RAF firemen) on a fire drill competition. Well, who do you think won? It was actually an honourable draw but well done to Dinger Bell for his bravery in the line of duty – he was knocked to the floor and soaked to the skin while everyone else ran away!

Phillip Webb decided to wear the ultimate in sun protection, Factor 90 at least, dressing up in a silver suite, with helmet and blue boots, (photo 2). He became a mime artist standing motionless and frightening the general public by moving suddenly. They might still be looking for one little boy – really Phil!

Getting on to the flying display, this was excellent as always and given the weather, high and noisy. Besides the Euro fighter one of the most interesting aircraft was the Osprey USMC. This is part plane and part helicopter and changes from one to other almost instantly. Another first this year was the Red Arrows in formation with a VC10 from Brize Norton commemorating 40 years of service with the RAF.

Canberra memories 1951-2006
The saddest moment was the last flying display, by a Canberra from 39 (1 PRU) Squadron at RAF Marham - a farewell display at a public event given at Fairford - the Squadron being disbanded at the end of this month.
Most of our members stayed on the campsite taking over the whole of one



side of the site. Sue doesn't do camping so we stayed in a hotel in Fairford village! Wilf organised our members into a rota to undertake fire cover for the site using a fully operational fire vehicle, The Dodge, and some of the ladies provided First Aid cover as required in a fully equipped tent



– just like “Mash”.

In the evenings at 20.30 hours the gang was summoned to sit round the campfire, (not required to be lit), by Dinger Bell and Wilf Longmire for a de-brief/briefing session. This was accompanied by quantities of drinks and nibbles, a degree of mickey taking by one and all and old stories came out – yet again. See Dinger for copies of the Minutes! We all worked hard but had a great time. Well done everybody and thanks again to you all.

Roger Brooks, member 16

Secretary and Treasurer's Reports from Coventry

SECRETARY'S REPORT - A copy of his report in more detail, was made available to members, which included copies of letters received and information covering the following items: -

- **Roger Brooks resignation**, and his wife, Sue with the Shop. Bob Feather also stated he will no longer be involved with the Shop.
- **Honorary President**, Sir John Sutton KCB confirming he would attend 25th Reunion in March 2007.
- **Howard Harper** re voting rights for Associate Members? Pointed out that current rules didn't allow for this as only full members have a vote although there was sympathy with his request as he was keen to put something back into the Association. It would need a change of the rules and approval from the membership, before any changes could take place.
- **Allan Brooke** offering his services to manage the Shop.
- **Wilf Longmire** requesting election of two non-member volunteers working on the vehicles, to be elected Associate Members. Again, the rules didn't allow for this, but it was suggested that they could be elected as Honorary Members and would pay subs, but have no vote and this proved acceptable.
- **Catterick Visit, 24th June 2006**, which proved very successful and we've been invited to attend next year's event on the 23rd June 2007 and further details would be published in Flashpoint.
- **Comments and Suggestions Book** – Members were reminded that there is a book provided available for members to enter any suggestions/ideas they think could improve the quality of reunions etc? Any urgent, or pressing matters should be reported in the first instance, to any committee member.
- **Special Announcements** – If any member would like a special announcement made at the Gala Dinner, please speak to any committee member.

George Edwards, member 238

TREASURER'S REPORT - Third end of year financial report - As my Two (2), year tenure as your Treasurer draws to a close, I have much pleasure in presenting to the membership, my Third end of year financial report. As with last year, I have made available to you, *copies of both the independently audited "Statement of Accounts", and the more detailed "Summary of Accounts", for Financial Year (2005/06).

Successful year in financial terms - As you will see, it has again been a successful year in financial terms, with a record 16% growth of the funds available, compared with 2004/05, (in 2003/04 it was only 1 %), and our expenditure has not exceeded our income.

Record growth - Part of the reason for this record growth is due to our much-improved Subscription payment and follow-up system that is now fully operational, with only Thirteen (13) members electing not to renew their membership last year. But my thanks must go to all of the members who have made so many generous donation or advance payments, when making subscription payments.

Main expenditure - Again our main expenditure has been the production and distribution of "Flashpoint", but I think you will all agree, this is very much "value for money" and is greatly enjoyed by all of the membership, especially those who are unable to attend our Reunions (well done Ed). To help Dave with his task in producing "Flashpoint", you will see we have now purchased a new Laptop Computer that was agreed at our last reunion. Also, as last year, I have supplied a copy of an up to date Reunion Account, for your records.

Association's finances on firm ground - With the Association's finances on firm ground I feel fully justified in presenting my proposal, regarding the support of the Memorial Garden at RAF Marham (see August Flashpoint).

Enterprises (Shop) Account - With Sue Brooks and Bob Feather standing down as the operators of Enterprises (Shop) Account, I have had to take over temporary control of its finances, which you will understand has greatly increased my workload, especially at this time of the year. It is hoped that Volunteers can be found urgently, to take on this task.

Subscription payments - As to this year's (2006/07), finances, subscription payments from members are now flowing in, and it appears that only a very few members have experienced problems with their Standing Order payments, so it is hoped that the Association should have another financially sound year.

Any queries regarding these accounts - Should any member have any queries regarding these accounts, please do not hesitate in contacting me at my listed address.

Geoff Varley, member 221

***Copy of the Accounts** - Members who were unable to attend the Coventry Reunion, can request a copy of the Accounts, by sending an SAE to the Treasurer at my listed address on the Who to Contact page.

Remembrance Day Parade - Report



The morning of Sunday November 12th was cold and cloudy early on but, by the time the members who were on parade arrived on Horse Guards Parade, the sun was breaking through and whilst still quite chilly was turning out to be a very pleasant day and, by the time we got onto Whitehall, it was quite warm.

By 10:00 all our members taking part were on parade as follows: - Ron Brown, Geoff Varley, George Edwards, Fred Greenwood, Mike Clapton, Jess Jessup, Trevor Hayes, David Frost, Howard Harper, John @Roberts, Steve Doran, John Goupillot, Brian Jones, Mick Hayward, Arthur Elton, Brian Ford, John Dicks and David Hughes, and it was good to see a few new marchers and hope to see you all again next year.

We had our usual friendly banter with our friends from the RAF Police Association who were in front of our group and the Air Sea Rescue Association who were immediately behind us and we line up with them every year.

The turnout was disappointing as there were only 18 of us but we made our presence felt as usual. This year, we were led by John Goupillot who is celebrating 50 years of being involved with the Fire Service, and he made an excellent job of keeping us all under control. We were very pleased to see Steve Doran on parade, albeit in a wheelchair, and our thanks go to his neighbour who came along as his attendant and Steve was given the honour of carrying the Association Wreath to the Cenotaph.

It's not easy to push a wheelchair, especially on Horse Guards Parade, as I well know having pushed our late President John Arthur one year.



On Parade' - Ron Brown, Geoff Varley, George Edwards, Fred Greenwood, Mike Clapton, Jess Jessup, Trevor Hayes, David Frost, Howard Harper, John Roberts, Steve Doran, John Goupillot, Brian Jones, Mick Hayward, Arthur Elton, Brian Ford, John Dicks and David Hughes, (not on photo).

Appeal for more members 'On parade' in 2007 - I would like to end by making an appeal for more members to make an effort to take part in the parade as I can assure you it will be well worth it. I have never known an experience like it. On Horse Guards Parade after the march past we all said our farewells and agreed to meet again next year, a fitting end to a very moving day.

Ron Brown Mem. 294

NEW RAF FIRE SERVICE VEHICLE PRINT NOW AVAILABLE - VERSION 2!

Gordon Smith, member 64, announced at the recent Coventry Reunion, that a new vehicle print was available, which is the same size as the previous one, (750 mm x 55mm, 291/2 x 213/4in). A copy of the print is reproduced below. The prints will be signed by the artist, limited to 300 signed copies.

Content - Vehicles include from bottom left clockwise - Mk7, Mk8, Mk9, Mk10, Mk11a Tacr1, Tac-T, Tacr2, Major and Mini Angus Bedford Domestics, TQF Scania, and Bv206, with MFV and RIV in the middle.

Prints cost £10 each, plus £3.50 P&P, and can be ordered direct from Gordon via his home address below, for delivery by Royal Mail, or collection at the Peterborough reunion in March 2007.

Gordon Smith
23 Darrowby Lane
Thirsk
North Yorkshire
YO7 1FJ

Cheques made payable to Mr G Smith and please include your membership number on the cheque.

Please note that the print is copyright protected.



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

Those of you unable to attend the reunions will be aware that we have a range of promotional RAFDFSA goods for sale, all profits of which go to Association funds. Goods are also available by mail order via Allan and Marilyn Brooke and the Association website shown at the bottom of each page. We have taken responsibility for the Shop and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at the reunions. Regards and best wishes, Allan and Marilyn

Contact details: - Allan and Marilyn Brooke, 20 Chestnut Grove, Farndon, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 3TW

Tel: 01636 688 680 Email: allana.brooke@ntlworld.com

Note: - No personal callers please?

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.....	£1.20
KEYRING.....	£2.00
MUG.....	£4.75
ASSOCIATION PEN.....	£0.50
THIMBLES.....	£1.50
Set of 4.....	£5.00
POCKET CALCULATOR.....	£3.99
WALL PLAQUE.....	£26.00
OLD SUTTON-ON-HULL MAGAZINE.....	£1.00
BLAZER BADGE (Gold Wired).....	£10.00
LAPEL BADGE.....	£3.00
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 - 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
OUT OF THE BLUE an Airman's Tale 1995 - 2005.....	£9.95

*Note: Version 2 now available - see details left on page 16 - Ed.

** 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. Brian Harris, member 393, Curator of the Manston Fire Museum, supplied the prints - Ed.



'One for the Diary'

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

Permission has been granted by the Catterick Garrison Commander for the Association to hold a second event at the former RAF Catterick Fire Service Training School in June 2007.

A parade of vehicles, past and present, along with RAF and Defence Fire Services personnel in period uniforms is planned. More details to follow!

Next Issue

- 25th. Anniversary Reunion - Peterborough Marriot Hotel, 9/10/11 March 2007
- Airport Fire Services x 2
- St Athan's new Cobras
- Memories of RAF Sutton Upon Hull - The Fire School - early 1956
-
- More photographic memories
- Ex-RAF Catterick event, 23 June 2007, at Marne Barracks

COVENTRY GALA DINNER SATURDAY 21 OCTOBER 2006

A collection for Staff, raised a magnificent £165.55 which, at the

WANTED - GOOD HOME FOR PROJECTOR AND SCREEN!

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

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

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

**DEADLINE FOR
ENTRIES FOR NEXT
FLASHPOINT ISSUE
DUE May 2007
1 March 2007**

RAF LAARBRUCH MUSEUM VISIT EARLY SEPTEMBER 2007

Proposed trip to Germany - 6 Nights including 2 on the Ferry, crossing at Kvelaer staying for 4 nights at the Hotel Garni.

When? - early September 2007 - Cut-off date - March Reunion 07

Interested? - Then don't delay, phone Joe Shackleton on 01642 285 098



The northern party will be going via Hull - Rotterdam on P&O Ferries, with a 2 hour mini-bus ride to Kvelaer.



Recent visit by Ron Gaunt (left) and Joe Shackleton



RAF & Defence Fire Services News, Views & Updates

LAST EMAIL TO LEAVE RAF STRIKE COMMAND FIRE

HQ! (Sung to the tune of Frank Sinatra's hit, 'I did it my way!')

Hi Dave,

As promised: Subject: Internet-
Authorised: FAREWELL TO STC FIRE

And now, the end is near;
And so you face Strike's final
e-mail.
My friends, I'll type it clear,
To pastures new we've set our
sail.

We've lived a life that's full.
We've travelled each and
every motorway; But more,
much more than this,
We did it Strike's way.

Rejects, we've worked with a
few;
Like past ACO's, not worth a
mention.
We listened to their bull
And saw it through with
constipation.

The Army now steers our
course;
Each careful step among the
minefields,
But more, much more than
this,
You'll do it the 'Green' way.

Yes, there were times, I'm
sure you knew
When the DFRMO bit off
more than it could chew.
But through it all, when there
was doubt,
The Green Machine ate us up
and spat us out.

We'll face it all and stand tall;
And do it the Green way.

We've laughed, we've had
despair.
We've had our fill of MFV's
failing
And do you think that they
really care
In time we may find it all so
amusing.

To think we're going Green;
And may I say - "don't forget
to recycle"
Oh no, not in the bin,
Do it the "Green way".

For what is DFRMO, what has
it got?
If not the finance, then it has
naught.
To our Regions we're all
dispersed;
Which Brigade, who the hell
knows.
The record shows we took the
blows, And did it our way!

Take it with a pinch of salt. Good luck and
tatti-by. Don't bother replying, I've gone,
the door is locked, STC Fire is no more. It
is dead, deceased. This is an ex-office...!!!

Regards,

Dave Kirk, member 414,
Fylingdales, North Yorkshire

Many thanks for that. Dave sent another
item on changes and I'll try and include it
in a future issue -Ed.

THE RAF'S NEW HQ WAS OFFICIALLY OPENED YESTERDAY, 17TH OCTOBER 2006, BY DEFENCE SECRETARY, DES BROWNE.

RAF High Wycombe will now be home
to both Strike Command, (HQ STC),
and HQ Personnel and Training Command,
(HQ PTC), which was previously located
at RAF Innsworth, designed to ensure its
personnel are better equipped and trained
for meeting the security challenges of the
21st Century. has had its HQ at RAF High
Wycombe, since its formation in 1968.
The RAF is undergoing a radical restruc-
turing, design plays aimed to ensure its
personnel are better equipped and trained
for meeting the security challenges of the
21st Century. Joining the two headquarters
will deliver significant savings and a more
modern and effective command headquar-
ters structure for the RAF.

Unveiling a plaque to mark the occasion,
Mr Browne said: "This new joint head-
quarters is a vital part of creating a flexible
and adaptable RAF ready to deal with the
challenges of the modern world, while
ploughing more of the defence budget into
our front-line capabilities.

It is expected that the majority of PTC staff
will have transferred to High Wycombe
by the end of November 2006. Staff from
the Personnel Management Agency at RAF
Innsworth are also due to move to High
Wycombe in early 2008, after which, RAF
Innsworth will close.

The changes, which will permit a reduc-
tion in staff of about 1000 people, and
result in annual cost savings of around
£23 million, will provide a major oppor-
tunity for increasing the effectiveness of
the Commands.

Source: Ministry of Defence - MoD
Oracle, Wed. 18th October 2006 - Ed.

Would anyone care to comment on
recruiting drive and name the latest



what appears to be an RAF Marham
recruit to the Fire & Rescue Service?



Photographic Memories!

THE CARNABY FIDO - DELIA SMITH, BRIDLINGTON - 'Down Your Way' Magazine

It was a cold and foggy night early in 1944 when my sister Olive shot through the doorway slamming the door behind her; she was twenty at the time. Our mother had died in 1936 leaving Dad with a family of seven children aged between one and fifteen. Anne, the eldest, had looked after us until she joined the ATS. Olive, then aged sixteen, took over the running of the house. Joe, my only brother, was on bomb repair work in London, Meril aged eighteen had commenced training as a nurse at the Royal Waterloo Hospital, also in London. This left my sisters Janette aged sixteen and Geraldine fourteen at home along with Dad, I was eight and a half years old.

"You look as if you've seen a ghost," said Dad. I looked up from my jigsaw. Olive stood with her eyes blinking. Becoming accustomed to the light, although the curfew imposed on the east coast early in the war had been lifted, nightly blackout was still in operation. "Dad, what's FIDO?" Olive asked. "I've no idea," he replied. "Sounds like a dog," put in Geraldine. "I'm serious," went on Olive. "I was coming down Star Yard when all of a sudden the sky lit up and I could see as plain as day, I let out a scream, a man who I'd not seen in the darkness said "Don't worry love, it's only FIDO. It looks as if Bessingby is on fire, come and see it's still there."

We all trooped out, being careful that no light shone through the doorway. Sure enough behind the fog was a brilliant red glow, which lit up the whole area. "You're right," Dad said, as we returned inside, "I'll go to the ARP post and find out what's happening." He was gone ages. In the meantime Janette, Geraldine and myself went upstairs to look out of the front bedroom window, Geraldine opened the window for a better view; overhead droning planes could be heard. All through the war, every night whatever the weather, we'd lie in bed watching search lights sweep the sky, listening, identifying Spitfires, Halifax and Lancaster bombers; by their drones we could even tell how many engines they were coming in on.

The next morning Dad announced that FIDO stood for the initials Fog Investigation Dispersal Organisation and that it was used at Carnaby aerodrome for emergency landings of planes returning from German bombing missions. After the war we forgot about FIDO. As we got older we would reminisce about the old times. Olive told us that Carnaby aerodrome held the record for the number of planes landing in one day, the aircrews being multinational, from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Free French, Canadian, American, Australian, South African and others, their home bases were anywhere in Great Britain. The aircrews used to go to dances in Bridlington; I guess that's where Olive gained her knowledge but we never came across any information to confirm it.

Recently, while researching church history in the local library, going through old newspapers, I came across an article headed RAF 'FIDO' Secret. With a subheading Carnaby's 'Watchdog' of Distressed Aircraft, the article was based on facts issued by the Minister of Information and the Air Ministry in 1945, stating that 'FIDO' was one of the greatest inventions and the best kept secret of the war'. The aerodrome, three miles long, was constructed early in the war. The workmen had no idea what a great part the aerodrome was to play in the defeat of Germany.

"On either side of the emergency runway, for 1,800 yards in double lines ran the pipelines of FIDO filled with petrol, they were ready to operate in three seconds and be fully operational in less than five minutes; it was first used in April 1944." The official description of the system was: 'A great glow in the sky accompanied by dense volumes of thick black oily smoke; when the smoke disappeared the fog was tinged red, growing brighter and brighter until people in Bridlington could read newspapers by it.' The blaze could be seen for over fifty miles. Some fire brigades from many miles away actually changed themselves to Bridlington to find that there was no fire. What they were witnessing for the first time was the faithful watchdog of distressed aircraft, Carnaby FIDO.

From April 1944 to the end of hostilities, 1,600 aircraft made emergency landings at Carnaby alone, this figure did not include normal or routine landings. Once, 75 four-engine aircraft, returning from an attack on Germany, landed in just under an hour and 37 were once landed in 25 minutes. A low flying German bomber dropped a bomb on the runway, which landed 25 yards from the control tower; fortunately it failed to explode and several aircraft landed safely and the crews were saved.

Another incident concerned a Halifax, one night on its way back from Norway: it was attacked and a hole blown in its side, there was no sign of the air-gunner. The crew knew they'd lost him; imagine their surprise when on landing safely at Carnaby they found the air-gunner suspended only by his parachute straps, alive, in spite of the nightmare journey.

I was so delighted with the find that my first response was I must show Olive. Alas it was not to be, Olive had died two weeks earlier at the age of eighty.

Reproduction by kind permission of the editor of 'Down Your Way' magazine, Averil Thornton, who said that: if any



Images courtesy of David Watson, Aviation and Transport Artist - These, and other paintings, are all available as cards and prints from: Watershed Mill, Settle, North Yorkshire BD4 9LR - Tel: - 01729 825 539

If you would like a unique memento of some fondly remembered car, boat train or whatever; just provide David with a serial number, code letters, registration number, or even a faded photograph, and he will transform it into an atmospheric painting - Tel. 01535 63306 (The black and white images don't do justice to the original full colour paintings supplied - Ed).

More Photographic Memories



No 247 Squadron RAF Carnaby, East Riding, Yorkshire - 1961/63?

Stevie Stevens, member, 559, gave me this photo some time ago and, when I saw the article on 'Fido' in the 'Down Your Way' magazine, I dug it out! He'd said the figure front row, far right, is Flt Sgt John Arthur, our late Association founding President.

Footnote: I did my initial MKV1 training from Sutton at Carnaby in June 1958 - Ed.

WOLVERHAMPTON BUSINESS AIRPORT FIRE SECTION



Dave,

If possible, could you print a small feature on the Wolverhampton, Halfpenny Green Fire Section? SubO John Dunn kindly showed me round the Simon on Tuesday 18th May 06, and produced water through the monitor. (I only went to borrow a yard broom)! Please send them our gratitude and thanks for their kind co-operation and assistance.

Kind regards and best wishes,

Colin Nixon, member 752

Happy to oblige Colin - Ed.

Above - FIRE 3 - Simon Gloucester Saro Protector (6 x 6), which came from Exeter Airport around 2 years ago.

L/R: FF Clay - FF Guest & SubO Dunn

Grateful thanks to all on behalf of the Museum and Association - Ed.



Left - FIRE 1 - Land Rover 110

L/R: FF Guest - FF Clay & SubO Dunn

Note: Gentlemen - How about joining us as Associate Members? - Ed

ANNIVERSARY OF SUEZ MARCH 1956 - Suez withdrawal went ahead in March 1957, when Britain and France agreed to hand over the Suez Canal Zone to a UN peacekeeping force, which they'd occupied since 5th November last year.

In Britain, the brief conflict divided the country as never before and, Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, resigned. Were any members there - Ed?

Main photo detail from back cover :-

L/R - Sgt Neil Cousell, Dave Kenyon, Edith and Steve Doran, Kevin Doyle, John Lewis, W/O Dave Starkins, Howard Harper, Hazel and Geoff Varley, Joe Shackleton, Ron 'Yorkie' Gaunt, Johnny and Sylvia King, Arthur Elton and Dave Allen.

Photos Geoff Varley and John Lewis

WANTED FOR FLASHPOINT

Articles, photos, stories and anecdotes - are you a member of an RAF or Defence Fire Services establishment, civilian airport, defence related company or vehicle/equipment manufacturer/supplier? Are you willing to provide articles and/or information that may be of interest to our members and readers for publication in future editions of flashpoint magazine? If so, please contact the editor as per the who to contact page. all items published will be identified, and acknowledged, with regard to the originator's details. Thank you - Ed.

In Memoriam - a sincere tribute to members recently passed

Jim 'Jock' Eaglesham 2006

Jim died recently and his friend, and colleague, Graham Kennedy, founder member 10, forwarded information and photographs, and said they'd served together at Fayid and Khartoum in the early 1950's, along with Jim Guy, member 153. Due to ill-health problems,

Jim had become a lapsed member and leaves a widow, Grace.

Jim was a good and popular member of the fire section and an excellent footballer. I am so sad that we've lost him! Hopefully, you can publish a few words in the next issue along with a photo? There must be many members who served with him.



Above - Jim 3rd from right back row. Graham Kennedy in the stripe! Main photo below, with raffle prizes!



Raymond Eaton 2006

Raymond, member 219, died on the 21st October, and his funeral was at Whitley Bay, Northumberland on the 28th and his friend, Fred Slingo, member 232, attended.

Raymond and Fred served together at RAF Yeadon, now Leeds and Bradford Airport, in 1947 onward, before being posted together to RAF Kenley. Later, they parted company and found each other as Association members.

Raymond leaves a widow, Sheila.

Derek 'Gus' Burnage 2006

Obituary - Derek 'Gus' Burnage, WO (retired), died 28th February 2006, aged 72, in Bedford hospital following a courageous fight against cancer. Served from 1951 to 1978 in the RAF Fire and Rescue Service.

The funeral service took place on 10th March at Norse Road Crematorium, Bedford. His family, friends and colleagues sadly miss him.

Source - RAF NEWS, 14th April 2006 (Non-Member)

Frank Good July 2006

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

to attend a reunion.

STOP PRESS - NEW VEHICLE COMMITTEE UPDATE - 17 DECEMBER 2006

Sadly the museum is now out of business but as we all know, it's hard to keep a fireman down. A new group has been formed to preserve and display the vehicles of interest to us. All our present vehicles, owned by the association and those owned privately that we look after are in the process of being moved to RAF Barkston Heath, a satellite airfield of RAF Cranwell where the 'raff' have kindly rented us a hangar!!!!

Wilf Longmire, Tel 01726 64274 is in charge of things, ably assisted by Vice Chairman, John Sanders, Tel 01362 695295. Allan Brooke is the Treasurer, Tel 01636 688680, and I am the Secretary, Michael Shenton Tel 01492 573707. If you are skilled or unskilled and would like to join in then contact any of the above for further info and note this group is run under the umbrella of the Association.

We have two main aims, one is to restore and display the vehicles and the other is to enjoy ourselves while doing so. Don't ask me which is the most important. Wives, families and girl friends, (if anybody is that lucky?), are not only welcome they are absolutely essential and, truth be told, they probably do more than the men? I can honestly say that until you have spent an evening being conducted by maestro Roger (DINGER) Bell you have yet to find out what this association is really about.

We are looking forward to the coming year and we hope that you will be able to join us. More information on progress in the next Flashpoint.

Michael Shenton, member 550, Secretary

Brief History of the Royal Air Force Fire Service



did, if listening to some of our "Elder Statesmen" is anything to go by! A School of Firefighting and Rescue was then established on an RAF Balloon Unit, north of the City of Hull, as RAF

Sutton-on-Hull, until its closure in 1959, when the School moved to RAF Catterick, North Yorkshire and, later, to RAF Manston in Kent as the Fire Services Central Training Establishment (FSCTE) which still continues to this day.

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Brief History of the Defence Fire and Rescue Service



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

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

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

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

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

I was recently informed, by two of our serving members, that the DFS had now acquired a new badge, which is reproduced along with the old one for comparison. The badge centre remains the same, but the name has changed to **Defence Fire & 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 Families Day Visit Thursday 27th July



Main photo shows guests enjoying the Families Day and hospitality provided by fire section personnel.

Norfolk coordintaor, Steve, 'Sgt for the day', Doran, organised the visit with Neil Coussell, and arranged for some of the 'old boys' to dress up in the modern gear, which proved quite a performance and great fun?

L/R - Arthur Elton, Howard Harper, Joe Shackleton, Steve Doran, Dave Kenyon and Ron 'Yorkie' Gaunt.

Congratulations must go to both Steve and Neil for making the arrangements for what proved to be, a great day out.

Note-Main photo detail on page 21