



# FLASHPOINT

ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



*Wash Photography*  
KEN & MAREN

**IN THIS ISSUE**

Winter 2018 [www.rafanddfsa.co.uk](http://www.rafanddfsa.co.uk)

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## Cover Photo

Donald Pape and Reg Metcalfe on the ascent to great gable for the remembrance service

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# Flashpoint Editorial

It has been a very busy 3 months for me since the last edition. I attended my first AGM and social weekend which I fully enjoyed. Reunited with many old friends and made many more new ones. There were some real character's there I can tell you. The Gala Dinner was fantastic and the entertainment was outstanding. I was however surprised at the very few members that turned up considering it is the 75th anniversary of the RAF Fire Service this year. I had the honour of making two new friends. Firstly Bob Dickinson, what an outstanding character Bob is, full of life and many a tale to tell, pure legend. There are 3 photographs of Bob later on in this edition.

I thought I was the only RAF Fireman in Cumbria, but no. At the bar I heard a broad west coast of Cumbria accent and again had the great honour of making a good friend in Donald Pape. Don has an article in this edition and a very amusing one it is.

As for me, I have been doing lots of crazy stuff that a 54year old shouldn't really be doing lol. On remembrance Sunday, myself, Don Pape and a fellow H4H beneficiary Ken Nash set off from Honister Slate Mine to the summit of Great Gable for a service at 1100. Nothing special you may think, just 8 miles in high winds, torrential rain and low cloud. We did it in support

of Matt Bainridge who has never served but his chosen charity is H4H. Matt did the hike with a 30kg fridge on his back.

The next crazy thing that I will be doing is entering a power lifting competition on February the 2nd and going to all the Invictus training camps and hopefully getting in the 2020 team.

Well enough waffle so it leaves me to wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year

*Cheers*

*Reg*



*We on remembrance day*

# A Tale of Two Mannequins

As this year is the 75th anniversary of the association, I thought I would try to mark the occasion at the AGM in some way. I hit upon the idea of borrowing two mannequins from the museum, one wearing the old uniform and the other wearing modern uniform, and having these present in the room during the AGM meeting and evening celebrations.

Transporting them back and forth proved to be somewhat problematical as they were so large – they would only fit in my car with their heads removed!

I collected them from the museum and took them to the hotel ahead of the AGM. The hotel staff were bemused by this, they stored them in a small office and the staff admitted being somewhat frightened by them every time they entered this room.

They proved quite a success at the AGM and many had their photos taken with them as a souvenir.

On returning home, I had to store them for a week before taking them back to the museum. So, they had pride of place in my hall (see picture below). The builder had the shock of his life when he came in to carry out some work!!

On Saturday morning, I headed off to the museum with the two mannequins lying headless in my car. I saw several other drivers and passengers staring at them and pointing as I passed. However I was not prepared for what happened to me. On the A1, a car pulled alongside me and the passenger took some photos. Some time later I was stopped by an unmarked police car and the two officers said they wanted to search the car as someone had reported that I had been transporting two dead bodies. I had to laugh and then explain the whole story to them. The lads at the museum found this very amusing when I finally got there.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

*Neil Slade - Chairman*



Dear Editor,

the excellent article re Passchendaele in the Autumn Flashpoint was exceedingly well written and very readable with excellent photographs and is good guide for anyone thinking of visiting the battlefields.

May I make reference to three-themes within the article.

The first is the dates given for the three battles. The first Battle of Ypres was Oct 19 to 22 November 1914, the second was 22 April to 15 May 1915 the third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) was 31 July to the end of November 1917.

The casualties for the Passchendaele Battle were nowhere near the 500,000 quoted. The total BEF killed for that battle was c 53,000 but total casualties was 250,000 with approximately the same for the Germans. The total of Allied deaths for all three Ypres battles was c240,000. There was no single WW1 battle that had 500,000 killed.

The number given for the missing on the Menin Gate 75,000 is wrong, that is the combined total for the Gate and Tyne Cot.

This does not detract from what is a very good piece and I congratulate the author.

*Anthony Eaton*

# Catterick (my first day)

So here I am. It's early 1967. I have just completed my Square Bashing at RAF Hemswell, had a spot of leave and I am on my way to start my training to be a Royal Air Force Fireman at Royal Air Force Regiment Depot, Catterick.

The journey to Catterick involved four different trains travelling from West Cumberland (as it was then – now Cumbria) to Catterick Bridge Station. Arriving at Catterick Bridge in the afternoon I got off the train, absolutely no one about, just a notice saying that anyone requiring transport to RAF Catterick should telephone this number. As I recall, there was a telephone available on the platform (no mobile phones in those days), you should also know at this time I was 17 and a half, 9 stone wet through and hardly been let out alone. Anyway, the man who ran the station must have looked at me, took pity and rang the number. He told me to wait where I was and someone would come and collect me. I don't know where he disappeared to but I was now stood on a deserted Catterick Bridge platform once again.

After a while a Land Rover pulled up at the crossing gates and an airman shouted over 'you for RAF Catterick?' so off we went. There was not much said as I remember on the journey except 'you just been posted in?' Not knowing any different I just said 'yes'. Arriving at the camp we went straight past the 'Main Gate Hotel' (Guard Room) you could in those days and I was dropped off at SHQ. All I had to do now was find my way in (no front entrances for AC Plonk, side entrance only).

So up the stairs I went (suitcase in hand), clattered through the doors to be greeted by a rather startled looking Corporal (he would have been 'God' to me at that time). 'What do you want lad?' he asks. 'Er, I'm reporting for training as a Royal Air Force Fireman, Corporal'. 'Say that again' so I did. 'God' then asks me for my Travel Warrant etc and I hand them over to him. He checks them, looks at me, checks them again, checks me over again, goes to someone else in the office, has a natter, comes back, then says to me that someone has entered the incorrect

arrival date on my docs 'you're a day early lad!!!' So I am now wondering what I should do!

'What we need to do is get you sorted out with some bedding, your Course is already allocated in the block over the road. The Bedding Store' he explains, 'is to be found on the ground floor, so through that door over there, down the stairs, along the corridor, third door on the left. It says "Bedding Store" on the door.' 'OK, thanks Corporal' says I, and off I went suitcase in hand, went through the door at the bottom of the stairs, went through the door leading into the corridor. Hang on, which door was it? I'll ask someone where I am supposed to be.

I remember being outside an office door to my right, still with suitcase in hand. I knocked on the door which was answered by a sharp reply 'C'min, which I did. There was a gentleman sitting behind the desk to whom I said, 'Excuse me but I am looking for the bedding store'. This was followed by a long pause from the gentleman behind the desk. After the pause, he then asks me, 'Tell me lad, am I wearing pyjamas?' Strange thing to ask I thought. He then asks me to go outside and read what it says on the office door, something I should've done before I went in. Out I went, read the plaque on the door, read it again, W/O – now what do you need to say to a W/O Donald, I am thinking to myself. The highest rank I had met to date was a Sergeant! Then it twigged, Oh God it's a 'SIR'. I had no idea at this time who I was about to grovel and apologise to, so finding the courage to actually go back into the office, I did so, trying to put a sentence together with 'sorry' and 'sir' in it with a mouth as dry as the Ghobi Desert. I looked down at 'Sir's' forearms on the desk and yes you guessed it, the 'sir' in front of me with the Tate & Lyle on his sleeves, was the famous W/O 'Danny Gourd'.

So what was to be my fate? W/O Gourd looked me up and down, asked me to explain why I was there and needed bedding, which I did. 'Ok lad, come with me' he says and we head towards the door stating 'Bedding Store' on it. There was a lot of chatter etc going on

behind the door. Then the footsteps in the corridor were heard and recognised and it fell silent behind the door. W/O stepped into the Bedding Store and instructed the staff inside to look after me and sort me out with bedding. They looked at me, looked at W/O Gourd and replied 'Yes Sir'. At that, W/O Gourd turned to leave and as he was going back to his office he said, 'Good Luck with your course son, and if you have any problems getting a meal in the Airman's mess, refer them to me!!' I still remember the look on the Bedding Store Corporal's face. Perhaps he thought 'Danny' was my dad. Anyway, I did get sorted out.

So, the next day the rest of the course lads began to arrive, Dave Thompson, Les (sorry I have forgotten his surname), Chadda, Bren Gunn (really!), Stott (STOTT) who had been civvy fireman, another lad from Geordieland (I had trouble making out what he was saying, sorry) his name was Snowball and my mate Dennis Jennings from Nelson (not seen him for decades). There were a few other lads but unfortunately I cannot recall their names, apologies to them.

During my training I did get stopped by W/O Gourd who would ask me how I was doing on my course. There were a couple of occasions when he even complemented me on my turnout!

Well there are other stories from the past but I think that I will leave them for now (some should be left there forever). I even spent time in the 'Army Regulars' but that's another story! Some may wonder how I can recall it in such detail. Well you know, there are times when some things just stick and you just never forget the good times in your life!. I'll lay odds that there will be other's out there who can relate to my first day at RAF Catterick.

*Donald Pape - Member no – 140*

Dear Reg,

Congratulations on keeping the Flashpoints coming, it's always a pleasure to see a new copy coming through the door. It is also great to see Mr Davey writing again, his letter "Grenfell et al" got me thinking about Fire Prevention and the part it played in my RAF career. I know the limited training we received fell far short of those involved in Inner City high rise flat safety, but had we had RAF hirings in such a building what would be our observations and recommendations to the Families Officer? I think it would have been difficult to foresee the shortcomings with the external cladding given that it was deemed to conform with current standards, but I'd like to think the omission of sprinklers and other shortcomings on the escape routes would not go without strong objections. There don't seem to have been many members memories of FP published in Flashpoint so far, so I thought I'd buck the trend and share my experiences in this letter.

My introduction to FP came along with my promotion to Sergeant in March 1987. I'd spent all of my previous service, about 15 years, on operational airfield duties and was looking forward to taking charge of my own crew on a fast jet station. However, as fate would have it, I was allocated the role of Fire Prevention Officer at RAF Honington, which at the time was home to the Tornado Weapons Conversion Unit, 20 Squadron RAF Regiment and 13 Squadron was in the process of reforming in the reconnaissance role in a brand new HAS Site, also with Tornados. In addition to that I had FP responsibilities for Barnham Camp, RAF Watton and Eastern Radar, and a large fuel installation at Thetford as well as the usual ATC Squadrons.

In order to take up my post I did the mandatory three week Fire Prevention course at Manston where I was bamboozled by all the legislation involved, and learned about such things as the fifteen requirements of a well designed staircase along with similar brain food. On top of that, when returning to my Unit I found I had had a whole library of books and documents to read which may or may not be used to support the work that lay ahead of me. Thankfully my predecessor had been a hard working sort of chap, and by looking through the files I started to get a good picture of what lay ahead.

I think that throughout my career I'd

always wondered about the way the RAF and other services valued their human resources as opposed to material assets. In 1974 the M62 bus bombing killed 11 servicemen travelling between Manchester and Catterick and wounded more 50 others, yet more than 10 years later you could still just drive into RAF Catterick without being challenged. At the same time billions of pounds were being spent on hardened aircraft shelters and the like to protect our aeroplanes. Looking around the real estate, the same seemed to be true with regard to fire safety. Honington had one existing HAS Site and another under construction and all these installations had state of the art fire protection and the latest alarm and detection systems. On the other hand, barrack blocks had never been properly updated and in some cases were still relying upon rotary hand bells to warn occupants of a fire. I guess this observation moulded my mindset with regard to Fire Prevention so in a benign sort of way my personal goal was to try and get a better balance between reducing the danger to life and the protection of expensive and vital assets, and I never missed an opportunity to recommend improvements to this end.

That attitude linked in well with another duty that came with the job, which was delivering fire safety presentations to Station personnel and anyone else who would listen. I'd become an avid reader of Fire Prevention magazines and similar publications, taking a particular interest in fire safety in the home and residential type accommodation. Armed with the gen gleaned from that and motivational stuff that was in the news in the 80s, such as the Kings Cross Underground fire, Bradford City Football Stadium as well as fires at HQ Support Command Brampton and Donnington Storage Depot, I had no problems putting a hard hitting lecture together. I attended a Video Producers Course at Newton while I was at Honington and later managed to get my Fire Safety Presentation made into a video while at JHQ Rheindahlen.

For the first time in my life I discovered that I actually enjoyed writing, and became a regular contributor to the Station Magazine, Station Routine Orders and even wrote a few pieces for the RAF News. All that on top of the many detailed fire prevention reports, Pre-Fire Plans and other niff-naff that came my way from Command via the Flight Sergeant's Office.

Having to work days meant less time for golf, especially with two young kids at home too, but I still managed to get the job of captain of the station golf team as a secondary duty, and having my own office was a godsend when it came to organising matches and competitions.

Being a day worker meant getting lumbered with all sorts of secondary duties. Apart from the Station Golf stuff that I volunteered for, I was detailed to represent the Section at whatever meetings came up, and was also put in charge of a barrack block at Barnham which came with the usual plethora of admin problems. Honington also had a Special Safety Storage Area, and another role I had to perform was that of SNCO IC the Temporary Control Post (TCP) as part of the local Nuclear Accident Response Organization. That involved attending a course at St Athan, and then every time there was a weapon move the team had to assemble on a designated dispersal with all our kit, and a Search and Rescue helicopter was flown in from Leconfield or Wattisham on standby to fly us out to a crash site if needed. We would all be fully dressed in brand new NBC suits with wellies and gloves taped up, and gas masks with spare canisters all in date. By contrast the fire-fighting element of our team consisted of a 150 litre foam extinguisher and the most junior sprog from the crash crew dressed in normal crash kit and a Martindale Mask. I often wonder how he would have managed had we had to deploy to a C130 crash.

Despite my initial disappointment at not getting to be a crew chief, I relished the challenge of learning this new job. I found myself rubbing shoulders with the Station execs and during FP inspections got to see in detail what other trades on the station did, and how the unit functioned as a whole. I may have been a little overzealous in the initial stages, though never to the extent of counting the participants at the NAAFI bingo or recommending 4 hour doors for 1 hour buildings, but all in all I left Honington with a feeling of pride in what I'd achieved. I considered myself fortunate to have a very helpful DOE Fire Prevention Officer at Newmarket who was never too busy to answer any queries I had.

After Honington, I was posted to the Command Regiment Training Team at JHQ Rheindahlen, where FS Kevin Mason and I provided Fire Prevention services to HQ RAF Germany, 2 ATAF, RAF Hospital

Wegberg, and a whole multitude of UK Support Units throughout North-West Europe. This provided new challenges with all sorts of new regulations to take on board. Kev and I were also qualified NATO evaluators, and one of the perks we enjoyed was getting the first pick of the Tac-evals, where we got to observe our allies in action. Half way through my tour, options for change reared its ugly head and RAF Germany ceased to exist as a Command, becoming 2 Group in the revised setup. I did my obligatory 4 month stint in the Falkland Islands where I commanded a crash crew at MPA, then returned to find I was posted to Wegberg as Hospital Fire Officer.

Wegberg was a good place to work, and being the first in post I had to get a lot of stuff set up from scratch. Being close to JHQ I still enjoyed the benefits of Tace-valling and took over the running of the golf team

while still playing for RAF Rheindahlen/2 Group HQ. The biggest problem there was trying to get the Station Services Officer to spend money on Fire Safety. Because he was effectively my boss, he thought he could order me to withdraw expensive recommendations and our relationship was never a happy one.

On completion of my four year tour in Germany I went to Scampton which seemed at the time to be the most dysfunctional Fire Section I ever worked on. I did a stint as SNCO IC and FP before taking over a crew which in turn was made up of three mini-crews. After only a year there I PVR'd and moved to Whitby where I still live happily today.

Given the choice between airfield duties and a desk job I'd choose the crash line every time, but looking back on it, I consider myself to have been very lucky to have been able to do the best part of seven

years carrying out FP duties in such diverse areas. I'd like to think that I did my bit to make a few places safer to live and work in. On top of that, the job certainly served to broaden my horizons and provide me with a much deeper knowledge of our fire services, and the RAF as a whole. Even now, that knowledge helps occasionally when I'm developing the RAF&DFSA web site.

I know quite a few of our members went on to do Fire Safety jobs in Civvie street and I'd be interested to read of their experiences there. Thanks again for Flashpoint.

*Yours sincerely  
Dave Kirk  
Membership No 414*

## BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

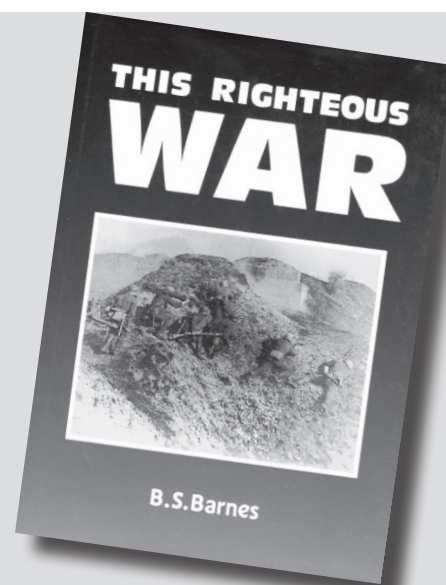
I have in the past recommended books to you all and despite my resolve not to buy any more books I keep failing. As many of you know I was born in Kingston upon Hull and while I was running around in its war worn torn streets many of our older members were running around RAF Sutton on Hull doing drills. (Well done Ron Brown) In the spring edition 2017 I wrote an article about the experiences of my Dad as a fire fighter in Hull during the war covering just one incident he was involved in about a bridge and that I found a book with photographs showing the damaged bridge.

The book is entitled "HULL at WAR" by Clive Hardy ISBN 1 873626 53 3. The book covers all aspects of the city's life through those years including the home front, farming, air raid precautions, the bombing and the war at sea. There are many photographs in this book which cover all those subjects and



it really does portray well what the folk of Hull went through. I know that there are members from Hull and surrounding district who maybe don't know about the book and those that served at Sutton may well be interested. You can find it on the internet for under £4 so not expensive for an intriguing read. I found this on Louth market of all places I didn't expect and just a couple of weeks ago I found another Hull related book on this guys same stall entitled "THIS RIGHTEOUS WAR"

This book is the story of one town's efforts and sacrifice during the 'the war to end all wars' and the part played by the Hull Pals of the East Yorkshire Regiment, from recruitment to the battles to the outcome of their lives. It a great record of the times and I was shocked by some of the letters which appeared in the Hull Daily Mail because recruiting was slow one reads-"Now, now, now is the time! To arms, to arms, or it will be every too late. Your King and Country needs you.

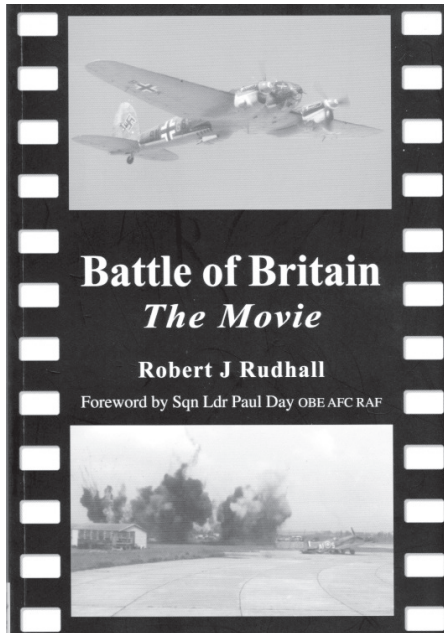


Your fathers and mothers want you (if they are not lily-livered) to at once prepare to acquit yourselves like men-for the day of reckoning is at hand" The tone of the letters in the Hull Daily Mail became hysterically jingoistic, most of them being written by people living in affluent middle class areas or by people too old to go to war. The book is written by B.S. Barnes who it took three years to research after he listened to his grandfather's stories. You can get this book also for under £4 and the ISBN No is 1 872955 00 2. I hope if you buy them then you enjoy the read!

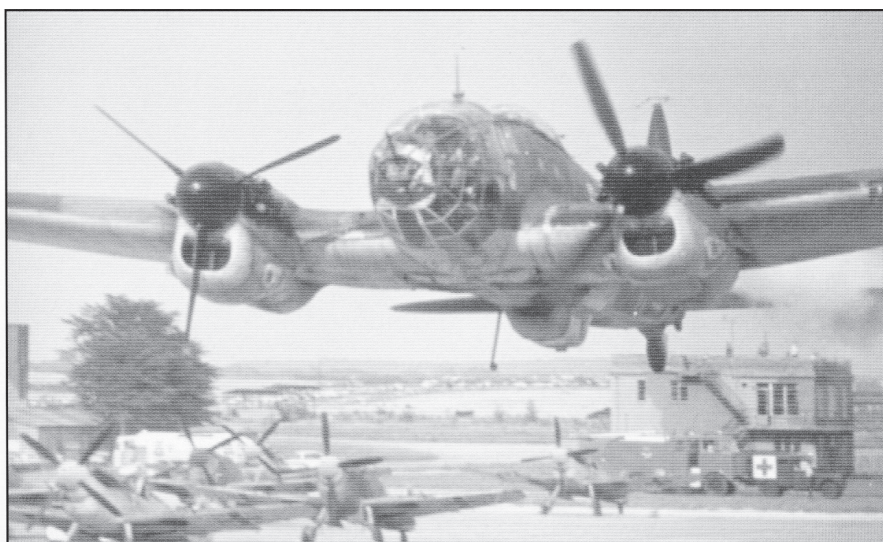
*Steve Harrison*

# BATTLE OF BRITAIN 'THE MOVIE'

I recently purchased at auction a number of aviation books, which included Battle of Britain 'The Movie' by Robert J Rudall. What did surprise me was the cost of this apparently rare book on the internet, so hopefully I can make a few bob!!



When scanning through I came across a paragraph which made me smile. In the chapter "Film Logistics" where it



Although low flying was prohibited, some did inevitably take place as the aircraft returned from filming flights. With one engine shut down, and smoke trailing from the other, Heinkel 111 G-AWHA comes in low over Duxford.

*(Peter Sargent)*

stated: Vehicles-required at Duxford. 1st May to 15th August. (For Airfield Safety Service) 1 Mk 5 or Mk 6 Fire truck, 1 Dual Purpose Fire/Crash truck, 1 Landrover, 1 Ambulance. (For conveyance of stores and personnel) 1 passenger/cargo van, 1 minicar (For towing aircraft and ground purposes) 2 Light tractors.

When looking for any more references about fire cover or trucks I came across the image below of the Heinkel and what is front of the tower a Mk5A, so I gather things changed!!

*Steve Harrison*

## THREE GENTLEMEN

Just a few more lines to hopefully ensure Flashpoint is as interesting read as always; it is after all the cornerstone of our Association.

Many of our members, on leaving the Royal Air Force, became members of their local area Ambulance Service, and continued their worthwhile careers; during which time they would have been involved in many humorous incidents. Here are memories of one I had while serving in the Cornwall Ambulance Service, which was my home County.

The call came from a Doctors Surgery via Ambulance Control, stating that a Gentleman had collapsed at an address in town (Falmouth), and he was non-responsive. The Doctor was engaged at the time and we were to activate and deal with the situation until the Doctor arrived.

Falmouth is a sea port, with quite a few retired Mariners living there. On arrival, my mate driving, me as Attendant, we were met by an old gentleman, who had the appearance of a typical Sea Captain, of sailing ship days, complete with beard as used to be portrayed on John Players Cigarette Packets, leaning on a walking stick waving us down.

I got out of the Ambulance, carrying anticipated equipment needed, I said to the Gent "where do I go sir?" he replied,

in perfect deep Cornish Accent," ee's in there my ansome, my mates in there ee is ee'I show ee where ta go". Now, unknown to me the Doctor had indeed pulled up behind the Ambulance in his car, and followed me into the house.

When inside the house there was yet a second old Gent, also with walking stick and beard, he recognized my indication for directions, he said, also in a deep Cornish Accent " ee's in there my beauty, see look there ee is". On entering the room I saw a third old Gent, also complete with beard lying on a bed, looking very blue, and he was an Amputee, only had one leg. I walked around the bed to the far side, followed by the Doctor, who I still didn't realize was behind me, I placed the back of four fingers on the blue gentleman's forehead and found it as expected, very cold indeed, I said to the second old gent who was at the other side of the room, "how long has he been like this sir?" he replied "Aw, ere boy ,ee's been like tha since 14-18 war". At that stage the Doctor put his hand on my shoulder and said "Ah that will account for the cyanosis."

Such events during what maybe a very stressful shift, makes it all worthwhile.

*Roger Stevens - 559*



# Bob Dickinson

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A few photos of my good friend Bob Dickinson member number 154. Anyone that knows Bob will know that he is a larger than life legend of our trade. Gad to call him a friend. ED

# Museum of RAF Fire Fighting Update

It was reported in the Spring Flashpoint about our sad news of not being able to open, due to the Hexadex/Eminox Group re-acquiring the site due their expansion.

To say we were stunned is an understatement also West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) was also taken aback as they really saw us an asset for the tourist industry in that area.

So we started to get display items back in their boxes, repacking was one activity we did not think we would be doing again, we attend on a Saturday with a heavy heart but the service mindset of let's get this done kicks in, the banter and humour also kicks in and the day doesn't seem so bad.

So what has been happening since then?

As a group we have many brain storming sessions and also feedback from volunteers and the Facebook fire community pages for possible relocation sites. We wish to remain in Lincolnshire as now we have some 35 volunteers and starting again somewhere else would be very difficult.

We have looked in Gainsborough, Lincoln, and surrounding area, airfield sites such as Kirton in Lindsey, Hemswell, and also all types of other factories and warehouses and at the time of writing the sites were not suitable for several reasons.

The local MP Sir Peter Tapsell took an interest, one of our volunteers an ex aircraft handler wrote to Prince Andrew, both have written to the MOD. Contact was made to Sir Richard Branston and James Dyson (Big land owner in Lincolnshire) but nothing has emerged from those.

As the news that the air show company had left the buildings previously occupied by the museum and the fact that the news had broke about Scampton closure a meeting was arranged between WLDC, Lincolnshire CC, the RAF and the DIO (Defence Infrastructure Organisation) about the future of Scampton, during the meeting the subject was approached of the possibility of a return to Scampton for the museum.

Here is an extract from the official email from WLDC

*As you can appreciate we had a lot to discuss on the agenda. The agenda was put together by WLDC and LCC. We did include a specific bullet point about the Museum of RAF Firefighting and the desire to explore options to return to RAF Scampton.*

*In the immediacy focussing on returning to provide storage of the vehicles and collections. We did explain at the meeting the potential links and benefits of the museum as part of a wider protection/preservation of the heritage at the site.*

*Whilst the DIO will be leading on the work around de-commissioning, the base is still operational so all day to day operational decisions rest with the RAF and the Base Commander. The base commander made it very clear in the meeting that they do not want to have the Museum or its assets back on base. This includes back on base for storage.*

*After recent discussions with base support it has been confirmed because of the gradual close down of building into care and maintenance mode i.e. cutting of power and water bring a health and safety issue so there will be no return to Scampton.*

In the meantime we have attended a few high profile shows ( which we had free pitches) such as the Lincolnshire Show, Lincolnshire Steam Rally and the RAF 100 celebrations in Lincoln in order to raise the profile and plight of the museum. Also some small shows for the benefit of the local community.

This has been followed by Steve Shirley giving interviews on Linc's FM and Radio Lincolnshire about our plight.

North Linc's CC have taken an interest and were blown away at the collection and said it should be national importance

## **SO WHERE ARE WE NOW**

After a recent meeting with Hexadex/Eminox Group it was to our relief that they have given us an extension to the end of December with a few caveats, we can store the artefacts and stores in

a Victorian building on the site and we can store the vehicles in the central part of the building for now (which will a squeeze but it gives us some time.) after that we could store them outside, after they take back possession of the building which is not an option we want to take.

At the time of writing, North Lincolnshire Council has offered a large building, a former depot of theirs which would easily accommodate the whole collection. This would be for storage only and rent free for a year. We are looking through the lease at the moment and hope to secure the premises in the next few weeks. In that period of occupancy (If we acquire it) we will be working with as many agency's as possible to acquire a permanent home for the collection.

## **The Future**

Although we are down we are not out and we are determined to carry on and find a new home. The practical problems can be overcome with determination, but things like finance is still a worry we have had no income for 2 years and many of the volunteers have dipped in their own pockets for fuel, paint and spare parts. There is still the insurance to pay for the collection and public liability.

We have stopped all renovation now and just concentrating on survival

We have raised some money from the shows we attended but not vast sums. As regards the donation the association awarded the museum to help move (which would have been impossible without it) should be recovered from compensation from Eminox. Because of the rate reduction they received from the council they have said some of this would be paid As regards fund raising it is difficult raising money when you don't have a working museum to satisfy some of the criteria, so we are to investigate the possibility of raising enough money to buy land and have a building erected on the site.

While we try and raise the money to purchase that, because renting a place or been an encroachment on an RAF base is not the ideal because you cannot progress constantly looking over your shoulder.

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As regards donations we have a “Donate” button link on the museum website which is linked to “PayPal” and we are starting a SOS scheme, (Standing Order Subscriber) which has already been introduced to our volunteers. So we are asking Association members if you could consider setting up a standing order to support the museum in its forward journey. I know that many have contributed to the Memorial via

this method and the funds have just about been raised if you could change the standing order in favour of the museum once assured that this is the case then we would be grateful. To those that have visited the museum you have seen what we can achieve if given the opportunity in preserving our RAF Fire Service history. The S.O. doesn't have to be a great amount what every you can give will be gratefully received.

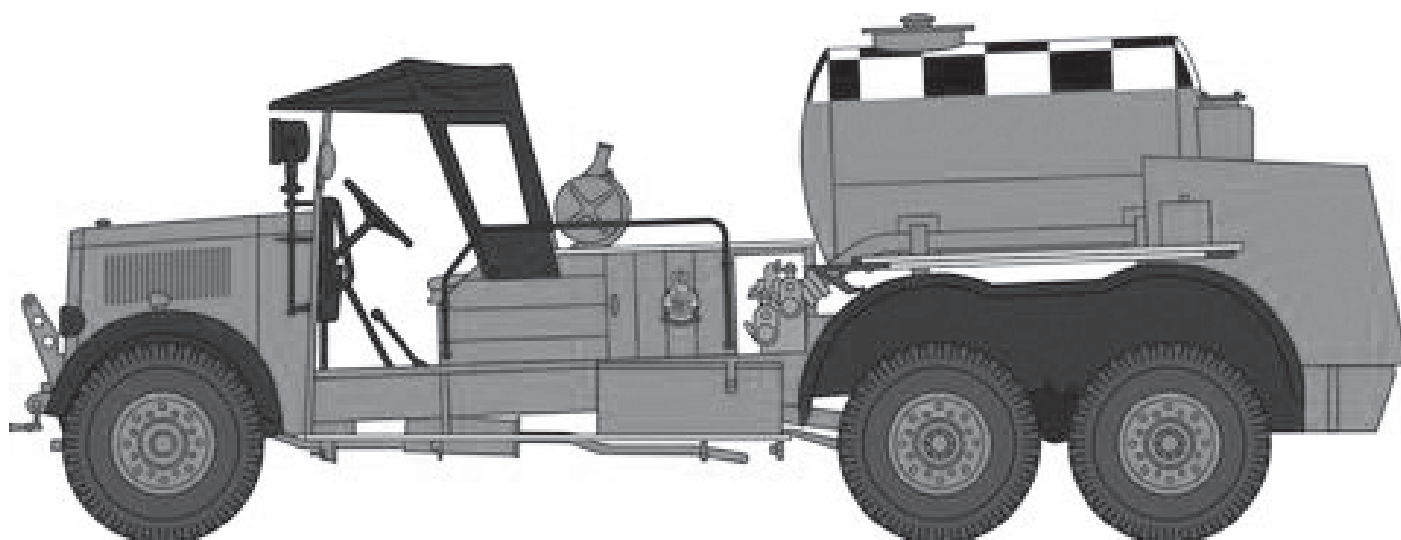
You may think we are to ambitious, no we are just passionate and believe in what we are doing. What is the alternative give up; you know the answer to that.

Thanks' for the association and it members for the continual support both financial and spiritual!

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As a footnote Oxford Diecast has released a model of the WOT1, Oxford Diecast came to the museum while at Scampton and also looked at the TACR2 of which they have released several versions.

Also the RAF Catterick version will be released later.



# PETER KINGLAKE and RAF PEMBROKE DOCK



*Fire Float No 38. which I have not seen before on any website.*

In the midst of all the chaos of moving the museum from RAF Scampton to our new home in Gainsborough Steve Shirley said to me we have a private guest coming on Saturday, we couldn't call him a visitor because we were not open to the public. It turned out to be an ex RAF Firefighter Peter Kinglake, Peter had pre booked his train to Lincoln some time ago and was unaware that the museum had closed, so Steve kindly invited him to Gainsborough. So after a phone call to tell him to continue to Gainsborough he was picked up and brought to the museum. The amazing thing was that he had come up from Somerset.

Peter had brought with him some of his note books from his basic course at RAF Sutton on Hull and his driving course at RAF Weeton, his original driving licence and his loan card (RAF FORM 668) from Sutton, amazing! But the other sweet thing for us at the museum was that he had served at RAF Pembroke Dock on Fire Floats and he had brought along with him some photographs of his time there. I couldn't believe it as we have been researching the history of the Fire Floats for the museum. (Which may

I add that John Goupillot has helped us with a lot?) So after a cup a tea and an interesting chat Peter was shown around the new site and collection of vehicles with Steve Shirley explaining our vision for the future.

Peter has kindly donated his note books and the other bits and pieces to the museum and we have scanned and returned his photographs to him, having talked to Peter since, he didn't realise how important his photographs were to our history as not many about fire floats have come to light. So he was very pleased he has helped us.

Peter was at RAF Sutton on Hull from February to April 1956 and was at RAF Weeton from May to July 1956, then went to RAF Pembroke Dock from Weeton and also served at RAF St Mawgan. Maybe some of our members remember him?

When returning his photographs I also sent him some back issues of Flashpoint one which included an article about the Flying Boat Visitor Centre at Pembroke Dock which opened in 2009. I am also pleased that he is going to become a member of the Association.

For anyone curious, fire float 38 was a conversion from a 40 ft seaplane tender 396 in November 1941. If you want any more information in regard to fire floats you can visit [rafboats.co.uk](http://rafboats.co.uk). I contacted Joe Thomas the collator of the history on the website and offered the image of fire float 38 (on behalf of Peter) as it wasn't on the website although the information about it is. Needless to say he was very pleased and welcomed an update of his images. In turn he has sent me a line drawing of 38, which have sent a copy of to Peter

Also there is also a website for the history of Pembroke Dock if you are interested <http://pembrokedock.org>

I am writing this short piece and reproducing the photographs with Peter's kind permission. He hopes to visit the museum again when we are open and hopefully he will get to one of the reunions.

Thanks again Peter it was a pleasure meeting you.

*Steve Harrison (625)*



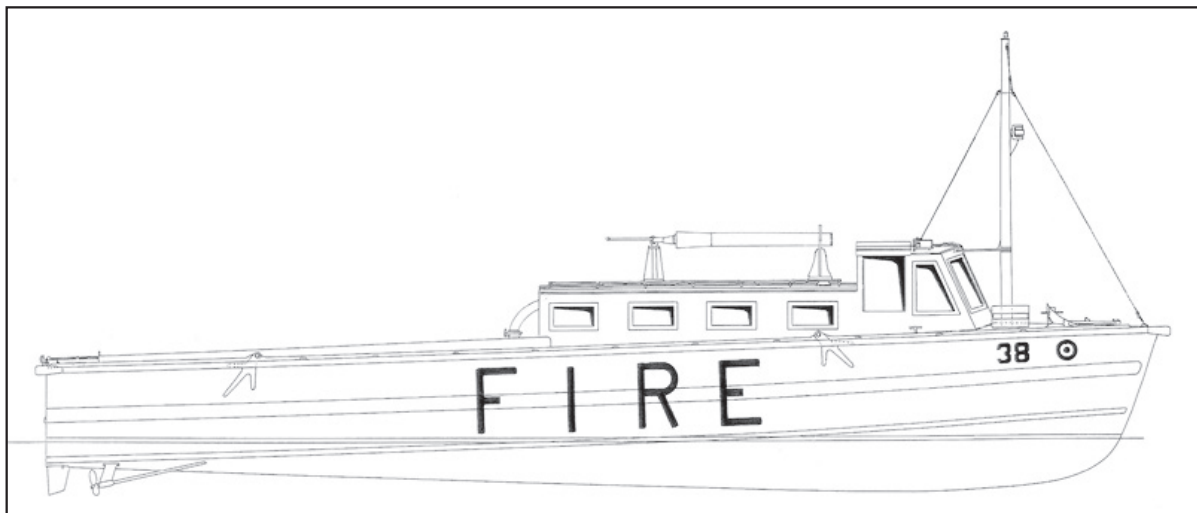
*Peter on board of the Fire Float*



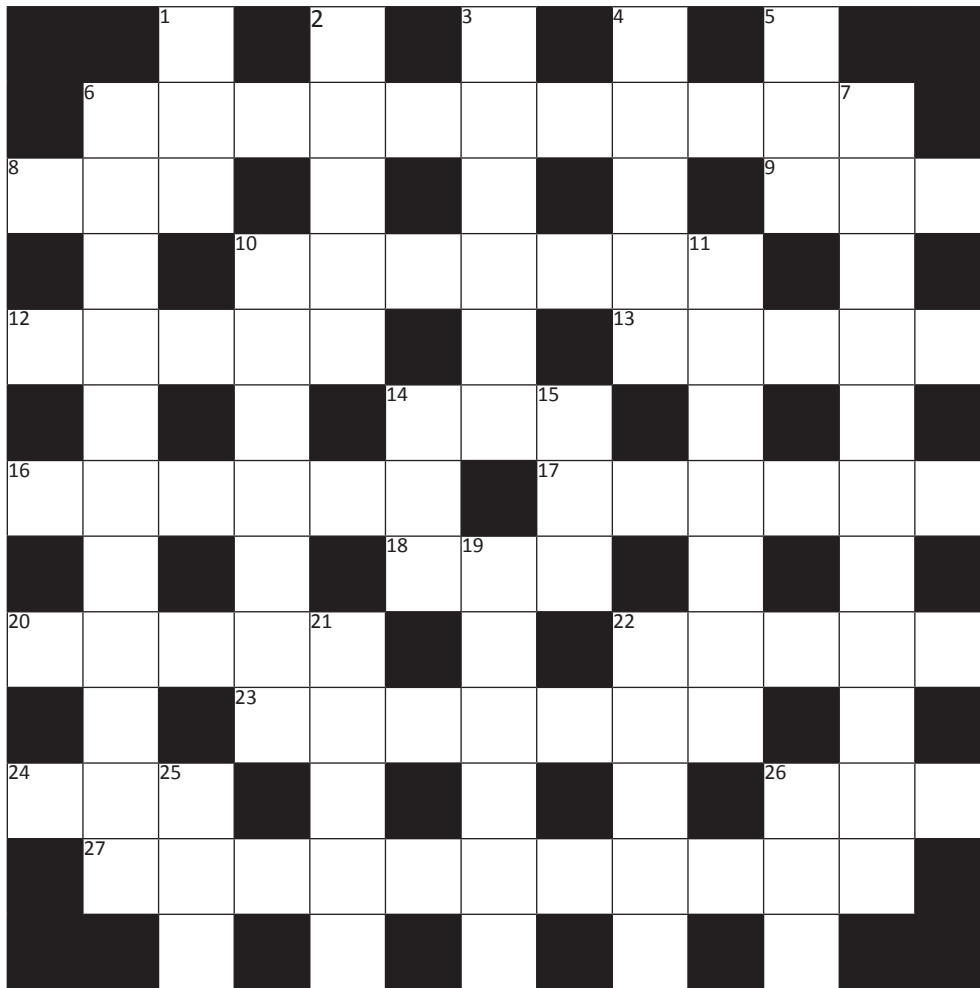
*A Rare photograph of a Short Sunderland taking off which taken by Peter from Fire Float 38*



*RAF Fire personnel with Pembroke Dock Fire Crew, the Flt Sgt is 'Dan Dare'*



# CROSSWORD



## Across

- 6, 17 & 22. Spiky farm house with North African Officer carrying Mk9 maybe? (11,6,5)
- 8. Primary thing was one number. (3)
- 9. Article in bother. (3)
- 10. Five go to hospital department in Gateshead for discharging. (7)
- 12. Headless cad becomes aquatic mammal. (5)
- 13. Room found at camp reception. (5)
- 14. Does ear exist? (3)
- 16. Brought together or untied badly. (6)
- 17. See 6.
- 20. Point to this place, which point? (5)
- 22. See 6.
- 23. Mixed share to audible range. (7)
- 24. A commando maybe, or his weapon. (3)
- 26. Heartless study for pigs. (3)
- 27. Over-clothes from Scotland we hear, or an RAF base in Lincs (5,6)

## Down

- 1. Is that the World Health Organisation... (3)
- 2. .... or the German directive? (5)
- 3. Bivalve from rum storey. (6)
- 4. Page phoned for a crash. (5)
- 5. Chef thought he'd caught a young newt. (3)
- 6. Multi-coloured antler provides audible warning device for the likes of us. (3-4,4)
- 7. Breathes out somewhere around here. (11)
- 10. Air on river leads to endeavour. (7)
- 11. Strange bun in kid on naval vessel. (7)
- 14. Increase endless viper. (3)
- 15. Strange den at last. (3)
- 21. A planet with mixed heart. (5)
- 22. Roam around left grinder. (5)
- 25. Doc died in the ministry. (1,1,1)
- 26. Water supply found in base area. (3)

Hi Ed,

I know you are in need of a few stories to put your next addition of FLASH POINT together, so here is a contribution, which I hope will fit! a few lines for you.

There are a number of events in all our lives that we tend to remember; for people like ourselves this invariably means episodes during our Service life. The most enjoyable posting I had in my almost fifteen years service, was to RAF Gutersloh 1966-1969, 1966 will probably ring a few bells. Yes that's right. The World Cup, England won it.

My very good friend, Bob Taylor and myself were both Corporals, at the time living in quarters at Geoges Marie-Ann Hutter (GMH) our kids played together, our wives socialized together, Bob and I drank together, (Fatal).

Our "Local" was a lovely little Pub, in the nearby Dorf of Atten-Hargen, this was where we decided to watch the Match on local TV, never mind the commentary being in German, just to see the game was all we wanted. Just think of the wisdom of this decision. Two Englishmen, in a Pub jammed full of patriotic German supporters. Fortunately the Land Lord, Otto, had the good sense to sit us behind the bar for our own safety. This gave us two advantages. We had, 1 good view of the TV, and excellent access to the pumps.

I know many of you will be very familiar with the great exuberant behaviour of German fans when things go for or against their team. However, there were four occasions when the atmosphere went very quiet, apart from two little English voices making noises like "GET IN THERE": Each rendition of this cry would be swiftly followed by two 0.5 litres of good beer.

Much to the credit of the German Fans, many of them came to us, shook hands and said things like well done; we on our part, to cement International relations further, said things like tough -----luck.

Bob, re-mustered out of our trade and became a Decip SNCO. We are both near that old Grim Reaper now, so I hope England wins the cup again in the not too distant future; and maybe, some young Airman will celebrate the event in true RAF fire fighters tradition.

Gutersloh at that time was a good



From left to right:- C pi. (in Control room), SAC Gallagher, Cpl Stevens (self), Paul German fireman, SAC Bernie Josling (in cab), German fireman (name unknown holding monitor), Sgt Dominic, Herr Phlanz, Fireman Willey Winkier, Herr Keller, Ferdi German fireman

operational base, and a very busy Station, it was home to two Lighting Squadrons 19 & 92 two Hunter Squadrons 2 & 4, 18 Helicopter Squadron, NATO Base, PSI Flights, Major Diversion Airfield. So there was always something happening to ease the hours of boredom, most Airfield crash crews have to suffer, the odd bird strike, burst tyres, wheel fires Barrier engagements, RHAG engagement, both high and slow speed. One Aircraft even fired off its Cannon in a Hanger, (That shouldn't have been able to happen, but it did). This gave East German Radio the opportunity to broadcast that an Airman had gone mad and shoot up the base; this within a hour of it happening, makes you think, was cold war time after all.

Perhaps, the most notable occurrence of my tour was a German F104 Starfighter which crashed on our Airfield; it was at 18000 feet with a jet nozzle stuck open, couldn't slow down, and elected to make an emergency landing at Gutersloh. We were of course already manned up; crash alarm sounded and the crash combine with the ACRT in the lead, crewed by driver SAC Gallagher and myself moved closer to the Runway in use, which was the West End.

I don't know what made me glance to my left, but radio noise, engine noise, and of course encased in a helmet, were all

over come by a funny scrapping noise, accompanied by a very high pitched whine. Do you remember the old pictures of Road Runner? A little dot going like hell its self, with a great big cloud of dust and smoke behind it, thats what I saw. The Aircraft had come in the wrong end of the Runway, and had flown through the net from the overshoot. The net of course wasn't designed for that but it did rip off its landing gear, which left a high speed dart shooting across our airfield.

We were on scene literally within seconds. A pilot out and foam produced within a minute.

The pilot was a tall chap kept saying thank you, dankershon, thank you dankershon. Which I suppose he was.

While the incident was what we trained for and anticipated the whole crash crew were a total credit to the service, and even more so as we were a mix of RAF and German fire fighters.

The enclosed photo is of the crew but regrettably some of the names have escaped me.

Roger Stevens Member 559

# A Visit to the New York City Fire Department (FDNY)



On 20 October 2004 I left Heathrow on a Virgin Atlantic Boeing 747 bound for New York.

The purpose of a 5 day visit to the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) that was pre arranged with the FDNY through Capt James Butler PA to the HQ at Brooklyn Headquarters.

The first days visit was to the Fire Academy on what is known as Randalls Island.this is a site some 8 miles away from Broadway where we were staying at the Quality Hotel. After formal Introductions at the Security Gate Capt John Patten of the chauffer driving school began the Tour.

The Academy is the Training School of the FDNY,The recruits known as Probbies,(Trainees in our

slang) undergo a thirteen week course in Basic Firefighting and Rescue Techniques similar to our Fire and Rescue Training,they are then allocated to their Fire House (Fire Station) where they udergo further training as a probationer for a further 12 months.

The training is Intense and Hard work, and emphasis is put on Personal Fitness.

There is no residential accommodation at the Acaademy and all staff make their own way in daily,this Includes a number of different Engines and Ladder units from all areas of New York City.

This enables the Firefighters to participate in further qualified training and to keep abreast of new knowledge.



The four pictures above are the result of accidents on the way to fire calls

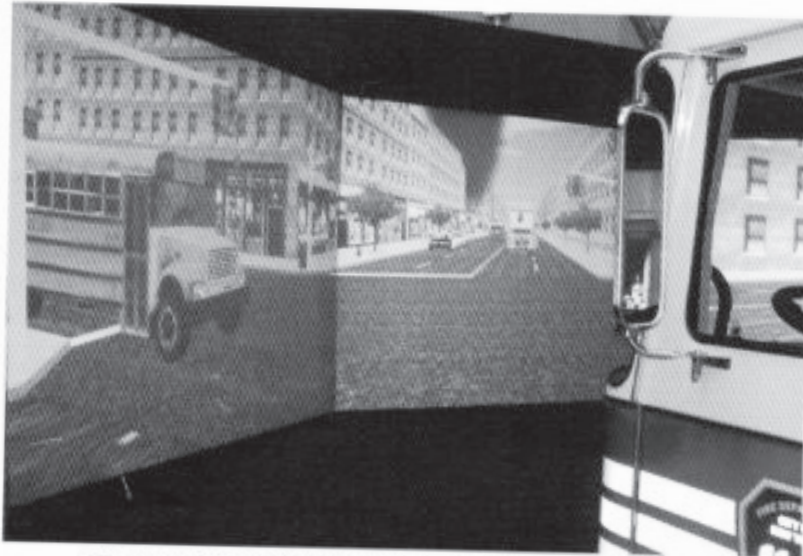


The Academy also has two Driving Simulators donated by Nascar, these form part of the Chauffer Training School. (Chauffers are what the drivers of the FDNY are referred to as opposed to our Drivers).

The opportunity arose to have a go on one of the simulators in a variety of Senarios including positioning at the scene of an Incident.

It is literally first come first served

( meant in the nicest possible way). Considering there is no ladder tall enough to reach the highest SkyScraper the fighters do a tremendous job under arduose conditions as do our Fire and Rescue Services but the FDNY has



This Simulator one of two in the Chauffering School was donated to the NYFD by Nascar



The two pictures above show the Interior conversion being carried out

to negotiate the Towering Buildings

With Visits to various Fire Houses with different Units as the FDNY also cover Paramedical Duties in some Areas. There was so much going on and so many vehicles to see it was hard to keep track so in photos only and captions I hope you will enjoy the Journey into the New York Fire Fighters way of Life.



These various shop units are built within a sort of shopping Mall/Precinct and gives the feeling that you are actually within them, each unit has a different way of entry different interiors etc so that gaining entry and working within smoke is a reality.



Keeping fit with Dumb Bell Training.



Spot The Dummy?



On Scene





The type of Paramedic Units that can be seen in use at some Firehouses.



Training Acadamey and some Visiting Units



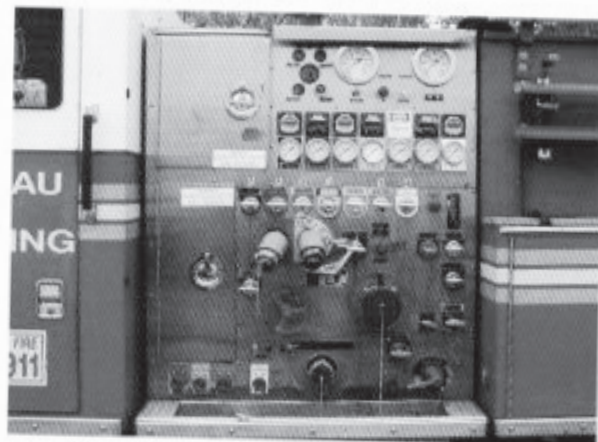
The equivilant to our Chemical Incident Units



The Mack is a Type of Pod Vehicle used for Heavy Duty Incidents



A view of the side pump



A close up view of the side pump

# RAF Fire and Rescue Service Falkland Island's

When I found out I would be going to the Falklands for the second time, I instantly felt a sigh of relief. Being a non-driver, and having 2 family weddings on either side of the world at the end of 2018, it was clear to me that my chances of getting a warm and sunny tour were going to be slim. But, the drafter was true to her word and sent me here at the beginning of June, ensuring I would be able to get back in time for both weddings.

Most people seem to hear bad things about life in the Falklands before they even take-off, but the truth is, life here is pretty good; and I should know, I'm halfway through my second tour in three years. I joined the RAF in 2013 and have been based at Brize Norton since I completed my training at Manston. I have had many opportunities to represent the RAF such as sporting events, Poppy selling, Parading through London, and as a Steward at Wimbledon. My God Father, Giles Hodges, had been an RAF Firefighter and he encouraged me to make the most of my years in the service. By seeing the positives in everything, getting out and about, and being involved in things you don't normally do back home, not only does it make the time you spend out here go a lot quicker, it also makes it much more enjoyable. I loved my first tour in the Falkland's and as a positive person; I knew I was going to make the most of my second tour as well. So, when I was given nine months' notice of my deployment. I began waiting for my next adventure.

I felt slightly more prepared this time as I had completed a winter tour of the Falkland's previously, and as a result, not only did I know what to expect, I also had a good idea of what the facilities were like, and how much is on offer. I didn't finish work until 4 days prior to my departure flight. This was my choice as I wanted to save up as much leave as possible for the weddings when I get back in October. Having packed my bags I left BZN for my final weekend in the UK, spent with friends and family.

The weekend flew by and before I knew it, I was heading back to BZN to collect my bags. After checking in I went back to my room to relax for a few hours. I felt like I'd only just blinked and I was being driven back to the terminal, preparing myself to say goodbye to my fiancé and the rest of the country for the next 4 months. It never gets easier but I know it's something I have to do. It comes with the job so I just try and

think of the positives. It's an opportunity to do something different, see something out of this world, and meet new faces, some of whom may become the best friends I will ever know.

Inside the terminal I bumped into one of my friends that I had met and shared a room with in the Falkland's previously. Emma Pook had worked on the domestic crew and I worked at the Crash Bays so we only saw each other every other night, but it was great to have some female company. I couldn't believe my luck when I saw her again and we managed to have a chat and catch up with one another before we boarded the Voyager aircraft.

The first leg of the flight only took about 6 or 7 hours and it absolutely flew by. The flight was a little different this time as we stopped off at Cape Verde due to Ascension Islands runway being under repair. At Cape Verde it was so lovely and warm that part of me felt sad I'd soon be leaving there to enjoy the cold windy greeting that the Falklands had to offer me. As the two of us disembarked the aircraft and made our way into the departure lounge, we recognised another firefighter, this time it was WO Sean Kerr who was to be our Force Fire officer. After a short break we made our way back onto the aircraft for the second leg of our journey, which would take roughly 10 hours. I can honestly say it was one of the worst flights I have ever been on as we had a lot of turbulence, which made me feel very sick so I was happy to eventually land in what seemed like an alternative version of Dartmoor. With its boggy marshland like terrain and trees bent horizontal by the wind, it really is somewhere you need to physically see to appreciate.

We made our way through the terminal and collected our baggage and were met by the domestic fire crew. They kindly took our bags, popped them in the back of the Land Rover and drove us to the fire-fighters block. As soon as I saw the terminal, the block and the surroundings, it felt like only yesterday that I had left. I'm not sure whether that's a good thing or a bad thing but I embraced the familiarity of the place in the hope it would help me settle in quickly.

It turns out we were sharing a room, so Emma and I quickly unpacked, and she then had to go on crew to allow someone else to fly home. Once I had freshened up, I got ready for bed and took a moment to

open a parcel which my mum had given me a few hours before I left home. Between her and my sister they had compiled a selection of goodies, things which I may find useful during my time out here, and wrapped it up with a card from each of them. It was so lovely and it made me smile so much. After the journey and the settling in, it is perfect to have something to open which reminds you of home and the people you love.

The following day I had the Station Arrivals Brief... In other words, death by PowerPoint! Fortunately it had clearly undergone some improvements as it didn't seem half as painful as it did last time and I was done by 3pm. Once I had been given the thumbs up from work that I wasn't needed until tomorrow, I wasted no time in heading down to the gym.

My first day at work was slightly nerve racking but exciting. Working on the domestic crew this time presented me with an exciting new challenge which I was ready to take on. I didn't know what to expect, but the lads were so friendly and as I had met the new WO on my flight out here, I was nervous and excited to start work. It's the people you serve alongside whilst you're away which make your tour. You could be in the worst place in the world but if you've got a crew that you can have a good laugh with, there's no doubt you'll have so many happy memories throughout your tour that you will remember for years to come.

My tour has already flown by rapidly; I am coming up to 10 weeks now so I'm over half way there. I feel like as soon as I blink, that's another week done. I am very lucky though as I find it very easy to meet new people, I enjoying trying out new activities and I have a natural gift, though some call it a curse, when it comes to talking. A few months ago my Mum told my Brize crew commander that every conversation with me should start "Charlotte is this going to take long?"!

Getting back to the tour and what I've done so far... Within a couple of days I had already settled in and began chatting to anybody and everybody! By the end of my first week, I had managed to go to the cinema, find the gym and check out timetables for all of the clubs which they had on offer, I'd covered on crew at the crash bays, I'd been down to the swimming pool, played football with the lads, watched the opening ceremony of

the World Cup in Russia, watched quite a few of the football games on for that week (not bad considering I don't actually watch or follow football back home), I had been bowling, baked cakes at the Oasis café, worked the café serving tea, coffee, cake and making toasties for personnel on the camp during the weekly quiz and I'd even spontaneously been Go-Karting. As you could imagine, my first week had been a busy but exciting week and I had absolutely no doubt that there would be a lot more to come.

Throughout the next 9 weeks I continued to talk a lot and go to various classes/clubs at the gym such as: Ladies that Lift, Bodymax, Kayak Club, Circuits, Basketball, Boxing, Swimming Club, Rock Climbing, Pole Fitness and Flexibility Classes. I've also taken part in a 10k Charity Run around MPC, The South West Atlantic Midwinter Swim 2018 at Surf Bay and a Dodge ball Tournament, two of which raised money for a Service charity and the other a local

charity in the Falklands. I'd made new friends from Sections I didn't even know existed, as well as reconnecting with old friends whom I had met at other times; including my Brize crew commander, Sgt Shaun Sparkes.

My main aim whilst I am out here is to get involved in as many different activities, charity events and days out as possible, as well as improving my knowledge and skills to make me a better fire-fighter! I want to get physically fitter, become mentally stronger and help as many people as I can on the way. Whether that's by assisting someone in carrying out a job or simply just a smile a day, it all goes a long way out here. Someone once said to me, "it's the little things in life which make the big difference..." Only once I did my first tour in the RAF did I realise what they actually meant! Most people seem to give the Falklands a bad reputation and say that it is awful, but I don't think that's true. I think the Falklands is as good or as bad as

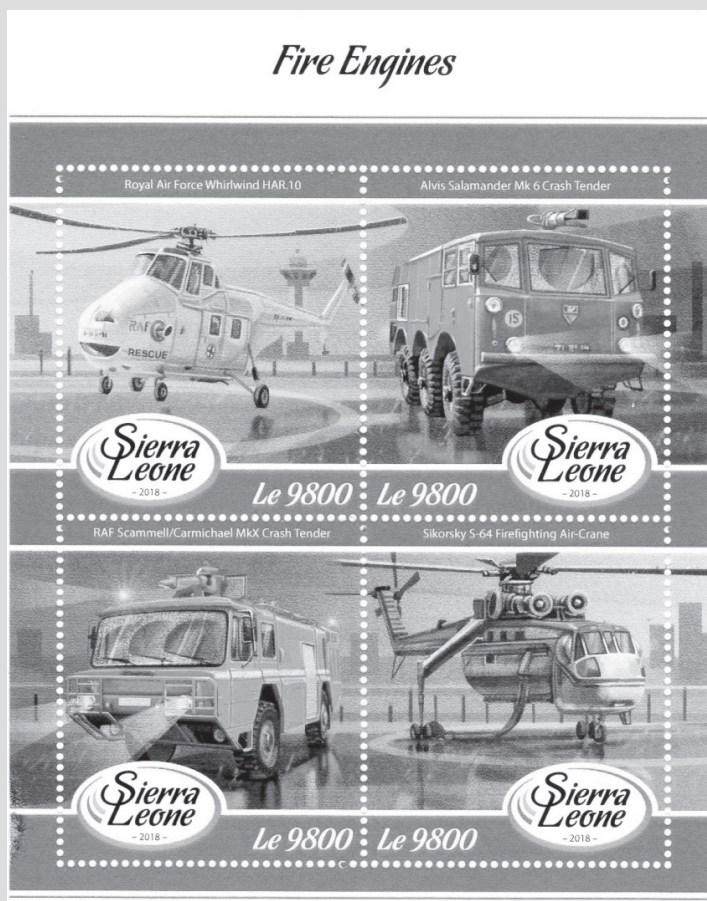
you make it and whether we choose to be out here or not, we are all working together to achieve the same goal. Everybody is in a similar position having left loved ones back home whether that's friends or family. Some are fortunate to only do 4 months like me; others are out here for longer. This is when it is important to speak to people, do things together and look after each other. You never know when you may need a helping hand or a warming smile.

For myself, I know that I will continue to enjoy the remainder of my tour as I am willing to go out there and give anything a go. Life is far too short in my eyes and I don't feel like we appreciate the small things as much as we should do when we are back home. Sometimes it takes a place like the Falklands to remind you of what you do have. Suddenly things don't seem as bad after all...

*SAC Charlotte Lord  
RAF Fire & Rescue Service  
Falkland Islands*

My good buddy and fellow museum volunteer Kev Bereton is always looking out for Mk6 related bits and pieces for me and found these.

*Steve Harrison*



# Fire Floats/Zodiac

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My first overseas posting was to RAF Kai Tak Hong Kong (1954). Sunderland Flying Boats were still based there together with visiting American Amphibians. One of my first duties was manning the Fire Floats (we had two, a broad beam and a narrow beam converted pinnacle/sea plane tenders). Before a Sunderland took off or landed we would 'snore' (Marine Craft speak) up and down the Kowloon side of the bay to clear the Sampans, junks and other sundry vessels. Sometimes the Fire Floats were misused to ferry people (VIPs mainly) across the harbour to Hong Kong Island with the firemen performing the "let go for 'ard" without the Boat Hook Drill.

With the demise of RAF Sea Planes, the need for Sea Crash Rescue Persisted. Wherever the RAF had a Base next to an oversea approach or overshoot in our overseas locations the Fire Section invariably had/have an inshore rescue inflatable boat as part of its equipment for Crash Rescue (Zodiac).

I think they also serve as a pleasure craft for off duty Firemen using the boats as

swim platforms in the guise of training. I recall that at RAF Khormaksar we also used ours as a water ski tow boat, with no regard to the reputed sharks in the Gulf of Aden off the Red Sea. I seem to remember when visiting RAF Akrotiri we were ferried from the station over the bay to Limassol in the said craft.

Most memorable exposure to this sea faring use/practice of the Zodiac was RAF Gibraltar. The Eastern approach to the only runway was over the Straits of Gibraltar/Mediterranean Sea. The Navigation markers extended out into the water from the runway centre line at 1000 foot intervals; these were square metal buoys. A visiting Command Fire Officer wanted to observe a practice deployment launch of our Zodiac and to add realism to the Rescue my Deputy Sgt Mick Traynor and I elected to pre-position ourselves on the 3000 foot marker out in the Med to await Rescue.

Ferried out on a "rigid raider" we climbed onto the Buoy to await proceedings. After observing the launch of the Zodiac

on Eastern Beach we gave the Rescuers time to see us before we jumped into the open sea and shouted for help. Imagine my surprise when my immersion suit started to leak and my further dismay as the Mediterranean current was pulling us quickly towards the Costa del Sol away from the intended easy pick up. The Zodiac did reach us and the incident had added a little more unintended realism. In the boat on the way back to the beach I chatted to my Firemen and one new SAC I had I had not yet got to know, I noticed that he was rather subdued in the general happy atmosphere.

"Are you ok" I asked. "No Sir" he replied "I can't swim"

*Steve Dave Member 670*

Thank you Steve for another interesting story and the hilarious ending, Ed

During part of my service as a Fireman; and in common with other Sergeant's in the trade I did a tour on Recruiting Duties. I was posted to the Careers Information Office on Hanover in Edinburgh. We had a married quarter over the Forth Bridge at RAF Pitreavie Castle in the County of Fife. We drove to the office every day in our colourful recruiters J2 Van. I told people that I worked from "Eight till Fife". Going back to Pitreavie one evening we were waved down by a man half way across the bridge.

I didn't think that he wanted to join the RAF! In fact he had broken down and from our vans paintwork he thought we were the RAC! I had long thought that our uniforms did not exactly portray the 'Royal Air Force' particularly after they removed the Eagle badges on the working blue and apparently our van failed to proclaim "Per Ardua ad Astra".

Some years later as a Warrant Officer I was driving home from Catterick to Hull on a Friday afternoon still in my working blue with my peaked cap on. I stopped off in the Village of Market Weighton to visit the small market. Traders were beginning to close and my walk around the stalls drew inordinate attention. Heading for the exit I was stopped by a man who asked me if everything on the trading area was ok. Surprised I said no problem but why are you asking me? He said "you're the market inspector are you not?"

After 9 months of the 3 year tour a call came for volunteers to move to C class Recruiting Offices (one man). On the list was Taunton Somerset, 11 miles from my birthplace. I applied and was successful. My new Office was located inside the Army Pay Office complex inside Jellalabad Barracks. I guess I was the object of curiosity (one RAF Uniform) among the Pongo's...

I had suffered a wee bit in Edingburgh understanding the local and Fife miners in particular patois. For example; our offices were on the second floor reached by an open staircase. One morning whilst sitting at my desk a man came up the stairs and said to me "is yer knock even jimmy?" It was a foreign language and I had to ask my Scots companion what

he meant. Apparently he wanted to know if our clock was telling the right time. I assured it was and he bounded back down the stairs to Hanover Street.

Now in Somerset I had no problem with the language. Only one local. A young man of weathered appearance came into my office and said "I wants to be a Pilot".

"Yes Sir" I replied, and asked for his name and address. His name was Mr Quantock, which I thought rather strange never having heard the name before and because we were close to the Quantock Hills. Not withstanding the Interview continued. "What academic qualifications do you have?" I sked. "Wass they then" he replied?". "Educational attainments, O and A levels?" I continued.

"Wadee he want they for?" he asked. I went into a practiced diatribe about the expense of training pilots and the necessary ability to absorb technical training and that a basic academic requirement was a starting point in assessing whether a client could be able to complete training.

"What about they wog pilots?" he asked. "They got they academics ave em?" "I'm sure Sir" I replied. "They will have the native equivalent to enable them to understand the difficulties and technicalities of flying"

He sat across from me open legged and mimed having a joy stick in his hand. He moved his imaginary control column about and looked me in the eye and said "Wass difficult about that? And silly bugger could do that". He disappeared out of the door to his probable Combined Harvester. He then apparently wrote to some government department possibly the Queen. I got phone call from a well-spoken official somewhere in the bowels of Whitehall asking about Mr Quantock. After I related the interview details and his inability to know about or satisfy the entry criteria he had departed. He thanked me and that was an end to a failed flying career.

Steve Davey

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## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

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Panoramic of the team at the summit of Great Gable



*Nash Photography*  
KEN & MAREN



*Nash Photography*  
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Matt, Don and Reg coming up the steep scramble to Great Gable.