

# FLASHPOINT



ROYAL AIR FORCE & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



# 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 was 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 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 has become the Defence Fire and Rescue Service. 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.

\* 1987, Royal Navy founded the Aircraft Handlers Association and Website: [www.chockheads.org.uk/](http://www.chockheads.org.uk/)

**Some members asked if the photo could be replaced, suggesting that something more modern might be apt, the difficulty being, what? However, it's your magazine and, the customer is always right, and I took the suggestion on board. The idea of repeating the Brief History of the Association, (and the RAF and DF&RS), was to allow anyone reading it to know who we are and I appreciate that, for regular readers, it might seem a bit repetitive! Flashpoint was designed as an ongoing advertisement for the Association to encourage potential members to join us! I've trawled through the archive and found the photo below, and will try to remember to replace it from time to time.?**

**The photo below taken at RAF Leeming 16 May 1996, shows:- L/R - F/f Russell Barnet, and members, Tom Sellars, Joe Shackleton, the late Eddie Mashiter, the late Billy Bannister, the late Jim Souter, Mike King, Dave Murray and L/FF Tony Eaton. The Crash Truck backdrop is a MK9 - Ed?**



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# Who To Contact

## Officers and Committee

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### South

John Hurl member 564  
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## AREA CO-ORDINATORS REQUIRED - What does

a coordinator do? Well the simple answer is, as little or as much as you can? However, the main aims are;

- To try and keep contact with members in your area?
- Recruit new members if possible?

Welfare is also an important part of the job and, through the Committee; we ask that you give whatever help necessary to members and their families should there be illness, bereavement or any other problems that we may be able to assist with?

We wish to encourage members and their families to get in touch with us if there is bereavement and, if desired by relatives, then make every effort to have an Association presence at funerals. The Association offers to provide flowers or a donation to an appropriate charity.

Through Isle of Wight Tours, we are in the process of trying to organise coach transport to reunions, which should be of benefit to many, and is a good way of getting to know fellow members enroute. Also, a good amateur tour guide can make the journey another interesting feature of the reunion experience; and let the driver take the strain! We may ask coordinators to become involved in the organisation of central rendezvous points? Out of pocket expenses can be claimed, on the production of appropriate receipts, to the Association Treasurer. You can be assured of the full support of the Committee in all aspects of the work.

**Vacancies exist in the following areas:** East Yorkshire Midlands, North, Various parts of Scotland, Cornwall and the South West\* (see below)

Serving Military Coordinator \*\* (see below) Other areas as necessary?

\*Wilf Longmire is standing down after long and conspicuous service as Coordinator for Cornwall and the South West.

\*\*Stevie Bowden is also standing down after exceptional work as the Serving Military Coordinator.

Steve Shirley (Flt Sgt RAF Fire Service) has kindly put his name forward for election to fill this vacancy.

Interested members should please contact myself, or any Committee member for information, as per details to be found in Flashpoint, on the "Who to Contact" page.

John Goupillot, Chairman



**RAF Co-ordinator vacancy.** I was sorry to hear that Flt Sgt Stevie Bowden, has decided to step down as RAF Co-ordinator, but pleased that member, Flt Sgt Steve Shirley, has volunteered

to fill the post. Our chairman has prepared an item on page 3 asking for coordinator volunteers.

**I must take this opportunity to apologise to member, Alec Robertson,** a Scottish co-ordinator, and friend; as his coordinator details disappeared from the pages of the January and May 07 editions of Flashpoint. I've corrected the problem and published a sincere apology on page 18. Sorry mate, what else can I say?

**The RAF Lakenheath visit on Saturday 2nd June,** is well featured in this edition with a full colour back cover item and a two page report on pages 20/21. Thanks to Howard Harper for making all the arrangements and for the report.

**Bookings for the forthcoming October reunion at Bracklesham Bay, Sussex,** are going really well, and I'm delighted as this venue is a new and exciting prospect. Due to a family wedding, I won't be attending the reunion, so it looks like next March, 2008, will be my next reunion weekend.

**Shirley Winn of Isle of Wight Tours,** and her staff, are working hard to ensure the forthcoming reunion is a deserved success and I can't thank them

enough, for their efforts on our behalf.

**FSCTE Manston visit, Tuesday 1st May 2007,** is featured in full colour in the centre spread on pages 12/13, along with a report, and grateful thanks go to the Commandant, Wg Cdr David I Lainchbury, Warrant Officer Bill McCreath, Flt Sgt Phil Judd, SubO Bob Graystone, Sgt Bill Wallace and all fire school staff and students, for making it a memorable visit.

**The combined two front cover photos** maintain the 'wow' factor for Flashpoint, when seeing it for the first time, as the quality is excellent, and I'm grateful having them made available for our use.

**Seeing the Royal Assent from 1953,** for the Royal Air Force School of Fire Fighting and Rescue badge, then based at RAF Sutton-on-Hull, East Yorkshire, was a fascinating bonus during the visit to the Fire School.

**Manston Fire Museum** was a further bonus to our visit and was very impressive with the memorabilia and artefacts on display and we were pleased to be escorted by the owner, member, Steve Shirley, and 'volunteer' Curator, member, Brian Harris. Brian is still recovering from a really bad DIY accident and I'm delighted that he is well enough now to carry on

**British Fire Services Association (BFSA)** - Finally, I'm pleased to put two items in this edition on the BFSA. Page 6 has membership information and page 11 has genuine 1950's fireman's axes for sale.

Regard  
*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

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

**VETERAN'S BADGE** - 0800 169 3458 Overseas callers - +44 1253 866 043

**BLESMA** - British Limbless Ex Servicemen's Association - Tel: 020 8590 1124 Fax 020 8599 2932 email: blesma185@btconnect.com website: www.blesma.org

**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

## In Memoriam - a sincere tribute to those recently passed away - Leonard Alan Way

Ron, it is with great sadness that I must let you know that my father, Leonard Alan May, passed away Sunday 5th August 2007. It was a very short illness at Poole Hospital. He had told my brother and me, on numerous occasions, the wonderful stories of being stationed at Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, and Little Rissington: these will always remain in our memories. The funeral was held at St James' Church, Poole, at 1000hrs on Wednesday 15th August followed by cremation and wake. The family requested that the information be passed on to all concerned. Thank you and kind regards,

Tony May



## AGENDA ITEMS FOR OCTOBER AGM 2007 – REMINDER TO MEMBERS

Under Rule 12 Meetings, the October Annual General Meeting Agenda shall be in accordance with the programme determined by the committee. Members should note that, items submitted by a member, must be received in writing by the Secretary not less than 28 days before the date of the meeting e.g.: no later than Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September, (with sincere apologies for the short notice).

Any such notices not reaching the Secretary in time to comply with this rule may, at the discretion of the Secretary, be included in as an item in Any Other Business, always providing that sufficient time is available on the day to deal with it.

George Edwards, Secretary, Friday, 31 August 2007

# Chairman's Report from the 25th Reunion



Welcome to this latest issue of Flashpoint. I receive many magazines from other organisations including some from Associations similar to ours, some very interesting, but I don't

believe there is another to touch the output items and quality of production that we enjoy with Flashpoint. The credit for this is down to you the members for your input, and the quality of production by our printing staff at Raysul Print, York.

**Who would have thought that the marvellous front cover picture of this issue was taken in 1942?** When I first saw it, I assumed that it was a modern posed photograph until I read that the famous Robert Capa took it. Our thanks to Ernie Fisher for sending the information for the article and I am sure that many of you will be pleased to note that Ernie has rejoined the Association and will be at the next reunion. Our special thanks must go to Dave Kenyon, for his work collating and editing in such a professional manner. Again he will not thank me for telling you that he is still not in the best of health but continues to work extremely hard on our behalf.

**The last reunion Gala Dinner at Peterborough** was, I hope, a pleasant experience for those of you attending. The letters of appreciation received from our Honorary President, Air Marshal Sir John Sutton KCB, Lady Angela, and many other members who were present certainly indicate that this was the case. However, there was a serious amount of disruption earlier in the day that potentially could have spelt disaster for the Association? Following the referendum you are all now aware of some of the reasons behind the unpleasantness even though you do not have all the facts. All I will say at this stage is that your elected Committee took no pleasure in the final outcome but carried out the inquiry, on your behalf, under very difficult circumstances, using the Constitution and Rules as they applied at the time. The atmosphere that surrounded the investigation adversely affected the health of some of the members and at one stage most of the Committee had seriously considered resigning. I was delighted when, at an unscheduled emergency meeting, held shortly after the reunion, the decision was made to stay on and see matters through to a conclusion, for the benefit of

those honourable members who elected us into post. In practice, we found inherent deficiencies within the adopted rules and their application and a review is to be carried out in due course to amend them as necessary. In accordance with the rules, any amendments would then be presented for approval at an appropriate AGM.

**Our next reunion at Bracklesham Bay, near Chichester, Sussex,** is planned to be something really special and I would request that we should put behind us, what has happened since the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2006, and enjoy the comradeship that we expect at these reunions. (If any of you require more information regarding the inquiry I would respectfully request that you contact me in private and I will try to answer any queries or concerns you may have)? As I have already said this next reunion should be quite unique, with the final itinerary yet to be finalised. However, a full programme of entertainment is planned and the theme for the Falklands Conflict has provoked a vast amount of interest with a lot of photographs and memorabilia being on display and played on DVD etc.

**We are hoping to have some vehicles on show of the types used at Stanley and other airbases on the Falklands such as the Mk9 and TACR 2.**

**If you have any such vehicles or equipment, then please consider bringing them along for display** and, if assistance is required, get in touch with a member of the Committee as per the Who to Contact page of Flashpoint and we'll see what we can do to help?

**There will be a resident band planned for the venue that will play throughout the weekend** and another band has agreed to play appropriate marches for a march-past on the Sunday morning prior to the remembrance service (weather permitting)? They will also entertain us after the service so get ready for a sing-along. Do bring your berets and medals and, if you are a member of any other related Association such as RAFA, National Service Association etc; please feel free to bring your standard along for the parade. The Remembrance Service is to commemorate those young people who lost their lives or were injured in the Falklands Conflict. I find that such services allow me to remember all my friends and relatives that I have lost over the years whether in the services or not.

**We may wish to spend time to remember those lost in recent times in**

**military conflicts and those affected by the recent dreadful floods.** We should also spare a thought for the gallant actions of the Emergency Services, the Army, and others, during that time, in particular, our colleagues in the Fire and Rescue Services.

**Saturday we plan to arrange transport to visit Portsmouth; and are scheduling the AGM for straight after breakfast to allow time to visit?** If so, bring your cameras to record any warships in the harbour and Naval Dockyard, with **Nelson's Flagship, Victory, Warrior, Mary Rose and the Submarine Museum,** and many other exhibits. Weather permitting; a boat tour round the harbour is well worth the time and effort! Oh yes, don't forget to bring your spending money to enjoy the shopping!!

**Finally on your behalf,** I must thank the Committee members and everyone else involved in the running of this wonderful Association. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at the forthcoming October 2007 reunion, Blackpool in March 2008, or at future reunions that may be held nearer your area and allow you to join us and, hopefully, meet old service pals and make new ones? We'd be delighted to see you so come along and make yourself known.

John Gouppillot 17<sup>th</sup> July 2007



Front cover photos are courtesy of MoD FSC TE Manston Fire School, Kent, and fireground simulator practice crash

exercise with lots of flame, heat and realism!

Grateful thanks to W/O Bill McCreath, Flt Sgt Phil Judd, Sgt Bill Wallace, Sub Officer Bob Graystone, and all personnel, for their help, hospitality and cooperation, which ensured the visit was a great success and for the information supplied - Ed.

# Membership News MEMBERSHIP NEWS FROM JOHN HANLEY, MEMBER

Welcome to your latest issue of FLASHPOINT. Please enjoy reading it. Since my last report for the May issue of Flashpoint our membership has increased by 16, I would like to, on behalf of all the membership, to welcome all you new members to the Association. Although the increase of 16 new members is very welcome it is a marked reduction on previous years applications, our total of successful applications now stand at 913, and actual members at the time of going to press is 607 in total so, come on fellow members, lets us all be coordinators, there are more FIREMEN in the woodwork!!!



I was greatly surprised when I received an email from Flight Sergeant Steve Bowden informing me that that he had resigned from his post as our Royal Air Force Fire Service Co-ordinator, however he is going to "recruit" where and when he can? Steve, I am sorry that you felt you had to go, and I hope that I can, on behalf of the Association, say thank you very much for your contribution to the success of our membership. Member No 271 Colin Hall has decided to call it a day, as he feels he is 'out of touch with the Association. Also, member 684, Mr Nason, has resigned for personal reasons.

Most of you should now have received your "Joining Instructions" for our reunion in October, and booked your accommodation. I have already booked and am looking forward to seeing old friends once more. By the time you read this issue I will have moved house to North Hykeham in Lincoln.

Finally, my friends, can I respectfully remind you all that your **Annual Subscription falls due 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007**; irrespective of whatever date you enrolled. **Please note** that, as in recent years, **there has been no subscription increase, which remains at £12.50. Please also remember, if paying by cheque, put your name and membership number on the reverse.**

It is noted with sadness that there are some members who are behind with their subscriptions, some in excess of 2 years. If you are one of them, please remember that it costs the Association to have this magazine produced, and you have not contributed. It would be appreciated if those who have not paid and don't intend to continue as members, make their intentions clear to stay or go? Please, if you want to remain members of this fine group, send your cheque for subscription to; Geoff Varley (**Cheques made payable to RAF&DFSA**), as soon as possible. His details are in the excellent magazine you are reading; however, to those members that are in arrears, this may be your last copy, as your Association cannot afford to keep subsidising those who have not paid? You know its WORTH IT!!!

**Listed Below is the New Member List and Membership Numbers. Welcome to you all!**

903 Mr Raymond Bond	904 Mr John William (Maxi) Richards	905 Mr Colin Douglas Aldous
906 Mr Toby Fredrick Roy Jennings	907 Mr Robert (Bob) Graystone	908 Mr William (Bill) Wallace
909 Mr Peter Lowe	910 Mr Jeffrey Bates	911 Mr M r
Gerard Gwynne Williams	912 Mr Glyn Mills	913 Mr A l e x
Bramley	914 Mr Dave Pearson	915 Mr Shane Richard
Allen	916 Mr Ian Jackson	151 Mr Ronald Roberts (re-join)
385 Mr Ernie Fisher (re-join)		

This is my report,

**IMPORTANT REMINDER - SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE 1ST SEPTEMBER - Just a quick reminder that it's that time of year again and, like many of us, you may have trouble remembering when subs are due and it's so easy to overlook paying your dues and miss out on our excellent Flashpoint magazine and Association activities.**

**PLEASE CONSIDER USING THE BANKERS ORDER PROCEDURE.** It saves an awful lot of hassle for our treasurer, Geoff Varley, and ensures your membership won't lapse due to one of those 'Senior Moments' from which we can suffer from at times and it will save Association funds being spent sending reminders!

**IMPORTANT REMINDER TO MEMBERS & PERSONAL PARTICULARS** - Please ensure that any changes in personal particulars such as Bank or Building Society Account details, address and telephone changes are notified to the Membership Secretary, John Hanley or the Treasurer, Geoff Varley, without delay. This will ensure you will continue to receive your Flashpoint and correspondence such as, reunion details and any reminders about subscription oversights that may occur.

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**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

# Shop Report and Fairford International Air Tattoo

Preparing for a big sales event takes up a lot of time – what with seeing what new items can be purchased, costing them, ordering them, checking them when they arrive, pricing them and doing a stock-take, selling the items, counting the takings and banking it and then keeping records. Anyone who offers to take on this role has to understand the amount of volunteer time it takes, and we are just beginning to understand how complicated this job can be.

However, in saying that we are enjoying ourselves and running the shop at RAF Fairford was great fun. The weather was not brilliant but we still took over £1000 - £1007.80 to be precise - together with £96.40 in donations to CRASH.

We all worked extremely hard to achieve this figure and our thanks must go to Brenda Sanders and Joy Potts who helped with the stock taking, pricing and sales and also to Sue Brooks, Pat Booth, Anita Shenton, Betty Bell, Helen Lawes and all the fellas who threw their hearts into encouraging the “punters” to spend their cash at our stall. Sam Gill did a brilliant job in persuading people that the ear defenders and ear plugs were much needed by them – we sold out!

We have purchased a number of stationery items to make life easier for us including more plastic boxes, a larger folder to hold the pictures and a price gun. We have also reduced the old stock by reducing it until it

has sold including coloured baseball caps, thimbles, coloured t-shirts and polo shirts. It is our intention to stock one colour for the RAF and Defence Association – navy blue and to have CRASH items in red. If anyone wishes to deviate from these colours, it will have to be a special order with cash in advance.

Speaking of cash, there is some confusion with prices and also to whom the cheques be made payable. **All cheques for shop items must be made in the name RAF&DFSA Shop Account** otherwise we cannot cash the cheques and it costs more money to the customer by contacting them either by phone or mail. It is also important that customers appreciate that each order is bespoke – mainly due to postage charges and it is better for them to contact us first with their order and then we inform them either by phone, email or post as to the cost. This system may seem a little drawn-out but it works for us.

Correct charges are vital and there have been some discrepancies in the magazine and below are a list of prices of the Association items:

Baseball caps with Assn logo £6.00  
Polo shirts £10.00  
T-shirts £6.00  
Assn tie £9.00  
Caj Bags £6.50  
Document Bags £8.50  
Mug £4.00  
Keyring £1.00

Blazer badge £10.00  
Cap Badge £8.00  
Lapel badge £3.50  
Self cling car sticker £1.00  
RAF School F/F sticker .50p  
Patch Badge £3.50  
Lanyard and wallet £2.50  
Cuff links (RAF Roundel) £5.50  
Leather book marks £1.00  
Fire Engine Print (1940-1960) £5.00  
Fire Engine Print (new design) £5.00  
Metal fire engine models – price on request  
CRASH items – price on request  
**Note: CRASH items are special orders**

Other novelty items will change over a period of time so it is best to either contact us to see what we have in stock, or come to the Association reunions, or one of the shows where we are selling (no list of these dates as yet)?

Allan and Marilyn Brooke

Telephone number: 01636 688680  
Email: allana.brooke@ntlworld.com or  
marilyn.brooke@ntlworld.com  
Address: 20 Chestnut Grove, Farndon,  
Newark, Notts NG24 3TW

**Cheques must be made payable to:  
RAF&DFSA Shop Account**

## BRITISH FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION (BFS)



**Membership:** As much as we would welcome new membership I am happy to advise you that at this moment in time all your members are already given membership to the BFS via the Royal Air Force & Defence Fire & Rescue Service, which is why they are entitled to the BFS Long Service Medals and access to the Member's welfare fund if the need arises?

This may change in the future as I understand that the MOD are going to regionalise the Fire Service which may require us to offer membership on a station to station basis due to the withdrawal of central funding. That may then be a time for your Association to join in its own right. Regretfully, I do not think your members have been receiving our journal as the DFS receive the copies but do not seem to pass on to you. I can try and rectify this if it is helpful to send a bulk number to you direct for distribution.

I was pleased to hear about Steve Shirley, (now Association member, 852 - Ed). I have been prodding him for long enough. I think you will find that he will be a very good asset to have on your side.

Kind regards,

Derrick Crouch

General Secretary, British Fire Services Association

Footnote: Your Committee is considering corporate membership of the BFS and is discussing that prospect, which could see benefits for our Association and membership? There is an item on page 11 of this issue, offering genuine 1950's fireman's axes for sale, which are available directly from the General Secretary, Derrick Crouch. Costs and ordering info is detailed on the page - Ed.

# Letters to the Editor

## RAF Fire Service Competition Medal presented 1952 to 3128928 SAC Tankard M. G.



In an attempt to find the original holder of the above medal, pictured left, Australian overseas member, Colin Ellicock, 276, initially emailed details via our secretary, George Edwards, (who kindly passed them on to me) and asked if it could be put in Flashpoint magazine in the hope that members might be able to help return it to its rightful owner, and I am happy to oblige?

I suggested he considered the RAF NEWS and have forwarded his request by email for consideration. We hope the editorial staff will approve it, which will greatly increase the chances of getting a result? He would prefer the medal to go to ex SAC Tankard M G, or his family, but would consider donating it to a museum if he, or relatives, can't be found?

Colin writes that the medal came into his possession in 2005, whilst visiting a family friend in the UK, who'd bought a box of paraphernalia, including medals, from Ebay and gave it as a keepsake as he knew it would interest him being an ex RAF fireman.

The photo shows the front with service number, name and a badge with a belt and buckle motif. The reverse is inscribed: C.C. Fire Fighting Championship 1952, Class A Winners. It's suggested that the C.C. could relate to Coastal Command?

If any members can help, could they please contact me, in the first place, and I'll collate the information and pass it on to Colin.

Regards and best wishes,

Dave Kenyon, Flashpoint Editor

Contact: Tel/Fax 01274 666 043 or Email: [rafdsaeditor@aol.com](mailto:rafdsaeditor@aol.com)

## Fire-fighters Wife's Prayer

*God I thank you for my husband  
This fire-fighter that I love.  
Give me strength to give him  
support*

*With Your guidance from above.*

*Make me a good partner, attentive  
Listener, my husband's best friend.*

*When I chose him I chose a fire-  
fighter*

*And the job on which we depend.*

*Lord keep my fire-fighter safe  
When our plans have gone awry.*

*Answering an emergency call  
With a life or death cry.*

*Keep the gusting winds and raging  
flames*

*From being his fmal fate.*

*Help me cope with the trauma  
Of being a fire-fighters mate.*

*Ronald L Knox*

Sent by Ray Wood, member 118

## RECRUITMENT MEMORIES FROM NOVEMBER 1955

Hi Dave,

Well done on the latest "Flashpoint" it's excellent. I read with great interest the letter in the May issue of "Flashpoint" from Steve Bowden regarding the modern recruitment procedure for fire fighters. It brought back memories of my own recruitment back in Nov 1955 when I volunteered at 17 ½, as I wanted to join the RAF and, if I'd waited for my call up, would probably have ended up in the Army, which I definitely didn't want!

I went to Reading recruiting centre and, at the time, didn't know what I wanted to do so I went with an open mind. In those days you didn't have a lot of say in what

trade you went in and think it all depended on what they were short of? I looked at pictures of different trades round the walls and saw one of a chap with roll neck sweater and sea boot socks, standing on the deck of an air sea rescue launch, and said, "I'll be one of those." An officer said, "Right, just sign on for twelve years." "No way," said I, "I'm only doing the minimum." I then said I'd be an MT driver only to be told that, you have to have a full driving licence! He then asked me if I wanted to learn to drive and, when I said, "Yes," he said, "Why don't you join as a fireman as they will teach you to drive?" And that

is how I became a fireman, a decision I have never once regretted. I did four years before being demobbed in 1959 and went back in 1962 staying until I retired in 1980, having served for 22 ½ years.

Ron Brown Mem 294

Footnote: Ron's tale runs very closely to my own when I became due for National Service in 1957 and, eventually, chose the trade of fireman as they would teach me to drive and I too don't regret that decision – Ed.

# Letters to the Editor

**247 SODN RAF CARNABY - Flashpoint photo January 2007 – page 21 – Confirmation that our founding president, John Arthur, was the Flt Sgt pictured front row, far right!**



Dear Ed,

With ref to the January photo showing 247 Sqn, RAF Carnaby, I confirm that the F/Sgt seated on front right grass was our founder president John Arthur. I was the first Cpl to be posted to 247 Fire Sqn (the good looking one rear row left standing) in July 1960. My section consisted of myself, SAC Paddy Stewart and LAC Jock McCart, plus a load of fire buckets and FAFAs, (first aid fire fighting appliances).

Between us we somehow put the fire section into some sort of good order, until John Arthur was posted in for the second phase of the squadron build up. I had many a pint with him at the Brentwood Hotel in Bridlington. When the squadron was operational, John Arthur was posted in, and we went our separate ways. I was delighted to meet him again at our Telford reunion and at each event until he sadly passed away but, without doubt, it is the same man.

A little history of 247 Sqn Fire Section, after John Arthur left, was that Sgt Lee Harper took over. If he is still around, he may be able to recall falling over garden hedges, and taking home stray dogs as a peace offering following nights out in Bridlington?

Other section personnel as I recall, and apologies to those I omit, were Cpl Eddie Lynner, Cpl Ron Thatcher, SACs Morgan, Herdman, Gordon Simpson, Jock Wallace, Geordie Parker and another fellow called, Goupillot; who learned how to reverse a land rover while he was there, and also used the winter clothing issue, (1963 winter was very cold), to go fishing off Bridlington!

The squadron was disbanded late 1963 and I was one of the last to go, as I believe were two of my original mates, Paddy and Jock.

I went to Cranwell till 1965 and Marham till 1966, Gutersloh until 1969, and Wyton until discharge, 1971. Carnaby is still there, of course, the big main runway, and the crash strip, however, an industrial estate has now been built on it. I hope this provides you with the authenticity you required?

Roger Stevens, Cpl (Steve),  
Membership number 559

Footnote: Many thanks for taking the time to send in the info, Roger, especially as it confirms that John Arthur, our founding president, was in the photograph - Ed.

## The Fireman

*The screams of the dying choking in  
their grave,  
Their faces full of sorrow as they  
fight to be saved.  
From far in the distance the  
clamour of a bell,  
Racing against time,  
heaven and hell.  
The men on the Tender  
faces so straight,  
No sorrow or feeling show  
in their gait.  
With discipline and courage  
they tackle that fire,  
To stem its advance;  
to smash its desire.  
Smoke covers in a vast  
black cloud,  
And swirls above like death's  
drab shroud.  
The cries of the injured trapped  
in the fire,  
Make the safety of life their one  
thought and desire.  
Speedily moving through  
consuming flame,  
Bringing out bodies in agony  
and pain.  
Now when you should hear the  
clamour of that bell;  
Remember those who walk, through  
the fires of hell.*

A C Doolan  
Catterick Fire Squadron 1969

Thanks to Allan Brooke, member,  
250, for sending the item - Ed.

### MEMBER JOHN HEWITT PROPOSES ASSOCIATION MEMBER'S GOLF SOCIETY

John is a keen golfer and would like to start a Golf Society amongst Association members to be played on a Saturday morning when attending reunions, with Trophies to play for.

Unfortunately, his request arrived too late for the May issue, which was a great shame as he was hoping to get something, organized for the forthcoming reunion at Bracklesham Bay in October 2007, but lack of time may prove difficult as this edition isn't due to go out to members until September.

As the reunion is the last weekend in October, it doesn't leave much time so, if interested, please contact John direct on 01325 352 881 without delay.



# Letters to the Editor

## RAF ST MAWGAN NATIONAL RECORD BID - AUGUST 1981

Hi Dave,

The attached item may be of interest to members either for publication in Flashpoint or for the "new book" or both! On the weekend of 1st and 2nd August 1981 (a very hot weekend) a successful attempt to break the British record for manually pulling an 11 cwt, fire pump was made. The previous record, held by the Dublin Fire Service, had stood at 168 miles in 24 hours. A team comprising firemen from RAF St Mawgan, Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose and Cornwall County Fire Service achieved 184 miles in 24 hours, an incredible achievement. As part of the support team, I was proud to have assisted the runners in their record breaking endeavours.

Best wishes,

Ray Wood (member

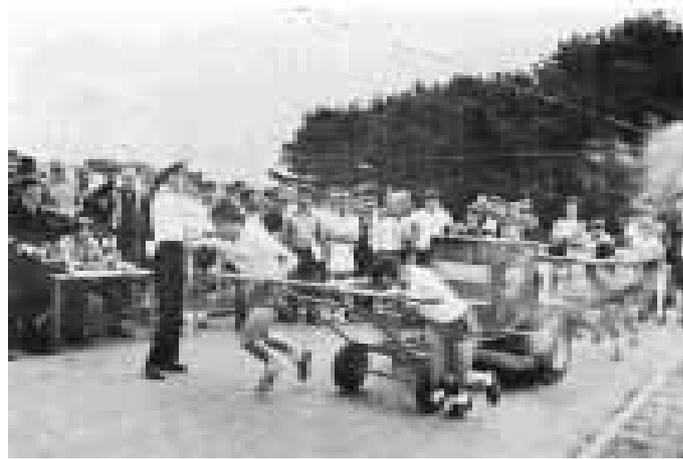
118)

### A NATIONAL RECORD IS SHATTERED!

Over the weekend the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 1981, 10 Firemen from Royal Air Force St Mawgan 10 Firemen from Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose and 12 Civilian firemen from 'the Cornwall County Fire Service made an attempt on the National Record for pulling an 11cwt Fire Pump. "The record was held by the Dublin Fire Service and stood at 168 miles in 24 hours. The 32 men involved were divided into 2 RAF four man teams, 2 RN four man teams, 1 joint RAF/RN team and 3 civilian four man teams. These teams were supported by some 20 further mixed service personnel acting as timekeepers, independent witnesses from the civil police

and caterers.

The record breaking attempt was made at RNAS Culdrose and the weekend turned out to be one of the rare Cornish hot summer ones, much to the discomfort of the runners. The Commanding Officer RNAS Culdrose started the event at 1100hours on the 1<sup>st</sup> and a fast pace was set even though the course of 1 mile 50 metres contained three gruelling hills, the first, about 20 metres from the start. Each hill on the course



was followed by very sharp bends, which were slowing the pace down. However, the enthusiasm of the men involved was such that the timekeeper's table was demolished by the pump on the changeover between the third and fourth laps. One of the civilian firemen was pinned under the pump for a few seconds but was so determined to run for the remaining 23 hours, that he got up and continued despite injuries to both legs, head and face.

The first RAF team of Phil Walmsley, Kev Barber, Chris Rickard and Andy Pittock, set a cracking pace and completed their lap in 6 mins. 31 secs. This time stood for just over an hour when it was knocked

down to 6 mins. 20 secs. After this, however, the heat of the day began to drain the men and the times began to average out at 7 mins. 15 secs. The team deserving the most, praise was, the second RAP team of Jim Banon, Geordie Taylor and John Kneelone who completed 20 hours training with just three men after Ricky Floyd had to withdraw with a chest complaint. They still managed to complete laps in times compatible with the four man teams. The

other two RAF Firemen from St Mawgan were Mark Penny and Tony Hayes, who were part of the RAF/RN team.

At 0830 hours on the 2nd the first RAF team were greeted at the end of their lap with a great cheer as they completed the 169th mile thus breaking the National Record with 2 ½ hours

still to go. Fatigue and injuries had taken their toll overnight and men having to retire, were replaced by others still able to keep the pump so that by 1100 hours, when the 24 hours ended, a new. National Record of 184 miles had been established.

Footnote: With regard to the 11cwt Fire Pump mentioned, it may be helpful to explain that a cwt was short for, one hundredweight, or 112lbs, (in old Weights and Measures terms), and will leave it to those able, to work it out in metric! No prizes for those who can?- Ed.

**FIREFIGHTER - A Firefighter is a man who knows very little about a great deal and keeps knowing less and less about more and more until he knows practically nothing about everything.**

**LEADING FIREFIGHTER - A Leading Firefighter is a man who knows a great deal about very little and who goes along knowing more about less and less until he finally knows practically everything about nothing.**

**SUB OFFICER - A Sub Officer starts out knowing practically everything but ends up knowing nothing about anything due to his association with Leading Firefighter and Firefighters.**

**Dan Gurney © 1998, member 795**



## BRITISH FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION (BFSA)



**FIREMAN'S AXES FOR SALE** - Don't miss out on a rare opportunity to obtain an AUTHENTIC ASH HANDLED FIREMAN'S AXE circa 1950's.

Available from the BFSA General Secretary, Derrick Crouch, @ only £20 each + P & P.



**PRESENTATION AXE** - These are authentic Ash Handled fire-fighters axes mounted on to a 28mm thick polished solid Oak or Mahogany base. They are the real thing and were manufactured in the 1950's and would make superb presentation gifts to any fire-fighter or Memorabilia collector. The badge shown is for example only.

Base measures: 430mm x 274mm (approx 17inches x 11 inches).

Available @ only £55 + P & P with delivery via Courier Service.

For further details, please contact the BFSA General Secretary, Derrick Crouch, Tel: 01526 830255 or email: [Crouderri@aol.com](mailto:Crouderri@aol.com)



Footnote: I've purchased a mounted Presentation Axe on a polished solid Oak base and the quality is excellent. When retiring from the local authority fire services, it was common practice to be presented with a mounted axe and badge(s) but, having retired on ill-health, unfortunately, missed out and took this opportunity to buy my own, (16 years later) - Ed!

# FSCTE MANSTON VISIT TUESDAY 2nd MAY 2007



Day 1 - Monday 30th April, John Goupillot, and I, set off for MoD FSCTE Manston as guests of the Training School. Enroute, we met up just south of Ferrybridge on the A1, with 3 others travelling from Cleveland, Joe Shackleton, Ron Gaunt and Kevin Doyle.

We arrived mid afternoon and booked in at the guardroom where we met Dave Arnold travelling up from Kent. We were accommodated for two nights in the Sgt's Mess where we enjoyed the hospitality of the staff for our meals and 'off-duty' recreation in the bar!

We were surprised, and delighted, to meet up with serving members, Flt Sgts Steve Bowden, Steve Shirley and Sgt Chris Davies, who were carrying out selection interviews for potential recruits. We also met up with one our nominated guides, Bob Graystone.

The school moved from RAF Catterick in 1988, where it was combined with the Central Training Establishment, which was housed in what is now the Manston Fire Museum, to become the Fire Services Central Training Establishment, (FSCTE), on what was RAF Manston, now Manston, (London) Airport. Many of the original buildings are still there but unused.

Day 2 - Tuesday morning, 1st May, after an enjoyable breakfast, we arrived at the Training School and were met by Sub Officer Bob Graystone, and Sgt William (Bill) Wallace who welcomed us on behalf of the commandant, Wg Cdr David I Lainchbury, and W/O Bill McCreath, and Training School staff.

Bill Wallace told us that, when greeting new recruits he emphasises his name and Scottish accent, which helps them focus on the job in hand!

John Goupillot and Bill McCreath were instructors together at the



RAF Catterick Fire Training Squadron, in 1982, which was featured in the April and August 2006 editions of Flashpoint, with the Pt1 and Pt2 story of Catterick and the back cover colour photo of the staff in the August issue.

After a Health & Safety talk and a DVD of a Passing Out Parade, we were escorted on a tour of the facilities, including the fire ground, where we observed recruits undergoing various live training exercises. A basic course is for 19 weeks, soon to increase to 22!

When John Goupillot was finalising the visit, he was surprised to learn that he had a relative at the school, Sgt Lee Goupillot, the son of a cousin. Lee had been nominated to act as our escort but, was detached overseas, so they weren't able to meet up. As consolation, and to



prove he was there, John sat at Lee's desk for a souvenir photo for the family archive.

Following a break for lunch we reassembled and toured the Manston Fire Museum, where we met the owner, serving member, Flt Sgt Steve Shirley and the museum's voluntary curator, member Brian Harris. We then went on to the Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum, where we saw the WOT1 featured in the May 2007 issue on display and it looked great surrounded by memorabilia of the age, and was followed by a visit to the Manston History Museum. All three museums were well worth a visit and would recommend them to anyone with an interest in such things. We were all very impressed with the artefacts on display at the Fire Museum and hope to do an item on it in a future edition. The evening was spent relaxing in the bar before retiring to bed after a long, tiring but enjoyable day.

Day 3 we settled our Mess bills and said our farewells to the Mess staff and thanked them for looking after us so well. We then set off for home, with Joe, Ron and Kevin going on to spend a few days on the Isle of Wight, before returning home

to the north East.

We wish to thank the Commandant, Wg Cdr David I Lainchbury, for kindly agreeing to the visit, and Warrant Officer Bill McCreath and his staff, for ensuring it happened and proved a most enjoyable experience.



Text and photos: FSCTE archive and Dave Kenyon - Ed.

## ROYAL ASSENT FOR FIRE SCHOOL BADGE SEPTEMBER 1953



When stationed at RAF Catterick, in the 1980's our chairman, John Goupillot, was in charge of the Fire Museum and had the sad task of handing over the artefacts when the museum was wound up.

During the visit, he was delighted to find that the original document was held in the safe keeping of the Fire School.

It was signed by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth 2, and dated 25th September 1953. This historic document from the Royal College of Arms, authorised the Royal Air Force School of Fire Fighting and Rescue badge, then based at RAF Sutton-on-Hull, East Yorkshire.

The photo, right, shows the authority from the Ministry of Defence, signed by the Air Member for Personnel, January 1989, for the badge created for the Royal Air Force Fire Services Central Training Establishment, now the MoD Fire Services Central Training



# FIRE GROUND EXERCISES AND FIRE MUSEUM VISIT



The photos from top left, clockwise: Volvo Saxon Fire Car and RIV - Major Foam Vehicle instruction for the 'Old Timers' - Dominie Practice Crash Exercise with a 'Running fire scenario and Simulator fire.



The photo, left, is taken in the Manston Fire Museum, (see below), showing, standing: L/R: Serving member, and Museum owner, Flt Sgt Steve Shirley, Vice-President, Joe Shackleton, Chairman, John Goupillot, Ron Gaunt, member, and volunteer Museum Curator, Brian Harris. Kneeling front L/R: Dave Arnold and Dave Kenyon



# Photographic Memories



**RAF Mount Pleasant, Falklands** – Outside Fire Section Circa 1987 – Horace Tarpy, Bantam Weight for Burtons, Leeds – ‘Paddy’ Love, Jim Daggett, Alan Brightman, Sgt Holran, Light Welter Weight, London, (i/c Hangar at Sutton with excellent Boxing Squad and first man to Catterick and i/c Fire Squadron and Advanced Pt1’s. Last heard of suffering from Bell’s palsy attack). ‘Pinky’ Watson, ‘Jock’ Irving, ‘Chalky’ White. 2 i/c, Harry Halford sitting on Bill’s left.

In keeping with the Falklands theme for the October reunion at Bracklesham Bay, this photo is courtesy of W/O Bill McKay, member 270, now serving at BFPO 35. He supplied the following info and maybe members can help with the rest?

**Footnote:** Bill sent me a few photos and I hope to publish them in a future issue so, watch this space - Ed.

## In Memoriam - Rita Longmire - August 2007 - Letter of Appreciation

Dear Friends and colleagues,

Following Rita’s death I, and my family, have received over 150 cards from members, friends and well wishers, and it would be impossible for me to reply to everyone in person to thank them for their kind thoughts and support.

However, through Flashpoint I would like to try and, on Rita’s behalf, and mine, express sincere thanks and gratitude to all of you who sent cards of condolence.

I would also like to thank Keith Penfold for attending on behalf of the Association and Graham Lawes, for bringing a wreath on behalf of the members of the vehicle CRASH Team, for which, I’m very grateful.

Rita’s funeral took place at Truro Crematorium on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August.

Yours sincerely,

Wilf Longmire and family, Tuesday, 28 August 2007



Photos left & above right, show Wilf and Rita at Buckingham Palace Garden Party, on the 10 July 2005, for the VE/VJ celebrations.

**Footnote:** On behalf of the membership, a card of condolence and donation in lieu of flowers was sent to Wilf to donate to a Charity of his choice.

# More Photographic Memories

## “It’s surprising who you meet on the other side of the world?”



A year ago, members, Terry Sedgewick and John Savage ‘bumped’ into each other and their families, whilst enjoying a recent cruise.

The photograph was taken on board the RMS Queen Mary 2 on her transatlantic voyage from New York to Southampton, 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> September 2006.

From left to right it reads: Terry’s daughter, Sharon, Terry and Sue Sedgewick, Captain Bernie Warner, Master of the QM2, Jeannie and John Savage.

## A must read for Grandparents!

(Those who aren’t will love it, too).

At one point during a game, the coach called one of his 9-year-old baseball players aside and asked, “Do you understand what cooperation is? What a team is?”

The little boy nodded in the affirmative.

“Do you understand that what matters is whether we win or lose together as a team?”

The little boy nodded, yes.

“So,” the coach continued, “I’m sure you know, when an out is called, you shouldn’t argue, curse, attack the umpire, or call him a stupid shit. Do you understand all that?”

Again, the little boy nodded.

He continued, “And when I take you out of the game so another boy gets a chance to play, it’s not good sportsmanship to call your coach ‘a dumb ass’ is it?”

Again the little boy nodded.

“Good,” said the coach. “Now go over there and explain all that to your grandmother.”

**Ron Brown  
member 294**



## OUR 26th REUNION - OCTOBER 2007 AND THE RICH NAVAL HERITAGE OF NEARBY HISTORIC PORTSMOUTH

**H**MS Victory offers a fascinating experience. Visitors can witness where Nelson fell and where he later died below deck. The ship is still in use today for special hospitality events. The 170 metre high Spinnaker Tower offers amazing views over the Solent.

**Portsmouth Fact File:** Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, Visitor Centre, Victory Gate, HM Naval Base. All inclusive attraction tickets; @ £16.50 per adult, £12.00 per child to see, Victory, Warrior, (the first iron clad, steam driven warship, now restored to her former glory), and the Mary Rose etc. Other attractions in the area, include, Submarine Museum, Gunwharf Quays shopping centre, Bluereef Aquarium, D-Day Museum and the 83 metre long, Overlord Embroidery, a modern day equivalent of the Bordeaux Tapestry, commissioned by Lord Dulverton of Batsford and created by The Royal School of Embroidery.

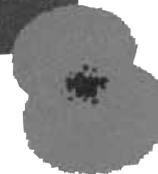
Source: Staffordshire Express & Star, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2007, and Travel Editor, Jim Walsh and reporter, John Hackney.

# Remembrance Day Parade

## REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE WHITEHALL - LONDON - SUNDAY 11th. NOVEMBER 2007



Attendance at the Parade is by ticket only and you must be a fully paid up Association member and complete a ticket application and \*send to Ron Brown without delay.



All ticket applications should be sent to me as soon as possible & no later than mid/late September 2007

Surname: ..... First name: ..... Membership number: .....

Address: .....

..... Postcode: ..... Tel No: .....

Signed: ..... Dated: ..... 2007

To avoid damaging your copy of Flashpoint, photocopy it, or print the details clearly on a separate sheet of paper.

\*Please enclose an SAE with your application for the return of your ticket and assembly details etc.

Send to:- Ron Brown, 38 Sedgebrook, Liden, Swindon, Wiltshire SN3 6EY - Tel: 01793 496 307  
or email: ron@brown3840.fsnet.co.uk

Tickets will be dispatched as soon as I receive them from the Royal British Legion or at the October reunion.

**Late application** - Anyone *not* applying for a ticket immediately but finding later, that they may be able to attend the Parade on the day after all, can ring me direct as I *may* have a spare ticket available, but don't leave it too late!

Tel. 01793 496 307

**Note:-** Travel and accommodation are your responsibility, but the following might be helpful:-

**The Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London Tel. 020 7928 481**

**Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF Tel: 020 7616 8302 Fax: 020 7616 8344 email: mem@vsc.co.uk**

It is in your interest to check prices before booking.

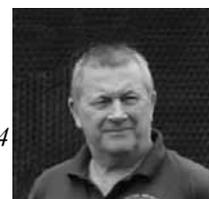
**Dress on this special occasion** - Blazer & Badge, Tie, Medals, Veteran's Badge and Beret with RAF or Crash Fire Rescue Badge please.\*\*

- 1)\*\* It helps to show up the badge on Parade by placing a circle of red material behind it as per photo right.
- 2) Badges are available from Allan Brook, via the RAF&DFSA Shop page at a cost of £8 plus P&P, unless you are going to attend the AGM at Coventry in October when you could buy direct?



**Important Note: Mobile phones must be switched off before entering Horse Guards Parade.**

**Please make every effort to attend. Thank you.**



Ron Brown member 294

# Bracklesham Bay Reunion 26th to 30th October 2007

**STOP PRESS:** Members, please take careful note of the details and times below.

## OCTOBER REUNION, SCHEDULE, ITINERARY and CUT-OFF DATE

Friday 26<sup>th</sup>  
day)

Arrive: with rooms ready for occupancy from 3 pm. (Friday is changeover

2.00 pm Bar open.  
6.30 pm Dinner followed by entertainment.  
7.30pm Committee Meeting.



Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>

8.30 am - Breakfast (one sitting only).

10.00 am - AGM in Gerry's bar. (This will allow members to enjoy the afternoon free).

10.00 am to 1245 - Ladies optional coach trip to Chichester (Market Day) @ £1 per head.

1 pm - Lunch.

2 pm to 5.30pm - Coach trip to Portsmouth @ £1 per head.

6.30 pm - Wine reception for 7pm Gala Dinner followed by entertainment.

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>

8.30am - Breakfast (one sitting only).

9.45am - Assemble for Parade.

10.00am - March Past - Salute to be taken by Commander Simon Staley and

Penfold. (Commander Staley served in Fleet

LifePresident, Keith

Air Arm Helicopters in the Falklands).

10.20am - Remembrance Service.

12.00 pm to 1 pm - Band Concert (2 night guests depart after lunch).

6.30 pm - Dinner.



Monday 29<sup>th</sup>

8.30 am - Breakfast (one sitting only) and home departure by 10 am.

### Footnotes:

- Cut-off date for bookings was 15th August, but accommodation may still be available? If you wish to book after this date, then please contact IoW Tours direct, to check availability. Tel: 01983 405 116 or Fax: 01983 405 584
- As the October Reunion venue is a change from what has gone before, your Committee felt that the above

## RAF Marham Water Garden and Proposed Memorial Plaque Update

Members, John Savage and Howard Harper, have liaised with Sgt Neil Cousell for the refurbishment of the Memorial Water Garden dedicated in memory of the late, W/O Charles Framingham, Station Fire Officer. Whilst attending a family Open Day in July 2006, Geoff Varley and Dave Kenyon discussed the project with Neil and W/O Dave Starkings (Oi/c at the time). As a result, Geoff, supported by the committee, presented a recommendation, to the AGM in October 2006, which was unanimously approved, to donate £1000 to the project, and would include a Memorial Plaque commemorating the Association's participation.

John reports that, work has started but without a completion date although Neil is still hoping to have the official opening, in September? Twice before, we've tried unsuccessfully, to establish a permanent memorial as the membership had wished: first with a Stained Glass window, then an Ipad at the RAF Museum, Hendon. Now we have the opportunity to do so on an operational RAF base with a long-term future, supported, maintained and established as part of the Fire Section - Ed).

Photo, John Savage, shows the refurbishment progress, so far and L/R - Cpl Gaz Paterson, Sgt Neil Cousell, Oi/c, W/O Mick Clarkson, and 'Shy Duty Crew' in the background?



In Memory of  
WO Charles Framingham  
Station Fire Officer

Those of you unable to attend the reunions will be aware that we have a range of promotional RAFDFA 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 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 No personal callers please**  
**Tel: 01636 688 680 Email: allana.brooke@ntlworld.com marilyn.brooke@ntlworld.com**

**Note:- For Mail Order - All items will be subject to postage and packaging, which will be calculated per individual order. The customer will be informed of the cost and then, when payment is received, the order will be despatched.**

**Cheques and Postal Orders to be made payable to RAF&DFSA Shop Account**

## STOCK AND PRICE LIST 2007

### RAF & DEFENCE FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION

BASEBALL CAPS with Assn logo.....	£6.00
POLO SHIRTS (Navy) SM,M,L,XL, XXL.....	£10.00
T SHIRTS (Navy) L, XL, XXL.....	£6.00
BLAZER BADGE.....	£10.00
TIE - NEW DESIGN Dk Blue + Red/White stripes & Ass. Badge.....	£9.00
CAJ BAGS.....	£6.50
DOCUMENT BAGS.....	£8.50
KEYRING.....	£1.00
MUG.....	£4.00
CAP BADGE.....	£8.00
LAPEL BADGE.....	£3.00
SELF CLING CAR STICKER.....	£1.00
RAF FIRE SCHOOL of FIREFIGHTING STICKER.....	£0.50
PATCH BADGE.....	£3.50
LANYARD AND WALLET.....	£2.50
CUFF LINKS (RAF ROUNDEL).....	£5.50
L E A T H E R	
BOOKMARKS.....	£1.00
FIRE ENGINE PRINT 1940-1960**.....	£5.00
FIRE ENGINE PRINT (New Design)*.....	£5.00
METAL FIRE ENGINE MODELS 1/76TH SCALE <b>Price on request</b>	
NOTE: All models need constructing and painting	
CRASH items - <b>Prices on request</b>	

**CONTACT US TO SEE WHAT WE HAVE IN STOCK?** Other novelty items will change over a period of time so it is best to either contact us to see what we have in stock, or come to the Association reunions or one of the shows where we are selling, (no list of these dates as yet)?

\***The New design Print shown above right** depicts vehicles from 1960's to present day. **From top left clockwise** - Mk10, Mk11a Tacr1, Tac-T, Tacr2, Major and Mini Angus Bedford Domestics, Queen's Squadron TQF Scania, Falklands Bv206 tracked vehicle, Mk7, Mk8, and Mk9, with MFV and RIV in the centre - Ed.

\*\***The Print shown bottom right** depicts vehicles from 1940 to 1960. **From Top left clockwise:** 30 Cwt Crossley, Fordson, Crossley 6 x 4, Crossley PE 1, Crossley (Streamline), 1944 Fordson Monitor Conversion, 1945 Fordson Monitor, Bedford Domestic, 600 gallon, Thornycroft MK5A, Thornycroft Dual Purpose Tender



## RAF Firefighters Seize Drugs in Afghanistan!

Within hours of arrival in Afghanistan, a team of Royal Air Force firefighters found themselves at the centre of the action when they uncovered a quantity of drugs in a vehicle entering Kandahar airbase.

Primarily deployed into theatre to maintain the RAF's operational fire fighting capability, the crew was tasked to carry out guard duties and control of entry checks at the main entrance to the airbase. Despite having only just arrived in Afghanistan, and expecting to deploy 150 kms forward to Camp Bastion, the crew rose to the challenge.

Conducting a routine search of vehicles entering the camp, the team uncovered a quantity of drugs. Not content with this unexpected achievement, the RAF team then chalked up two further successes - firstly discovering a local man attempting to enter the airfield with false paperwork and then providing first aid to an Afghanistan worker stabbed on route to the airfield.

Following their brief tour of duty as part of the guard force element at Kandahar, the team have now deployed to Camp Bastion (Deployed Operating Base) where they are providing vital fire fighting capability.

Commanding Officer of the 904 Expeditionary Air Wing, Wing Commander Keith Cowieson, said: "The firemen are right to be proud of their achievements. Their efforts are indicative of the high standards of professionalism that we depend upon from our guard force to ensure our safety. What makes their achievements all the more noteworthy is that they had only recently arrived in theatre? This only goes to underscore the value of Enhanced Individual Reinforcement Training (EIRT) and multi-skilling."

Source: MoD Oracle NEWS, Wednesday, April 19, 2006

Footnote: Even though the item is a few months old, I thought the detail would prove of great interest to those of us not even doing guard duties during our time in the service, as a fire fighter? Oh, how times have changed, since those days and, whilst not always for the best, definitely appears to be a lot more exciting and less boring, these days? - Ed

## VETERAN'S BADGE ELIGIBILITY EXTENDED TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 1984

Hi Dave,

Just a quick note as I wondered if the Association was aware, as I've just discovered, that the Veteran's Badge eligibility has been extended to 31st December 1984? Perhaps our younger members may be interested in applying? This info is from the GNN (Government News Network) web site.

Best wishes,

Ray Wood, member 118

**HOW TO OBTAIN A BADGE?** - Many have already applied and received their badges, either from their RBL County Secretary or the MOD Veterans Policy Unit in Whitehall. However, the sole responsibility for the distribution of the badge is now that of the MoD Veterans Agency.

If you have not yet applied for your badge and would like to, please contact the Veterans Agency as follows: Free helpline: 0800 169 2277 - Text phone: 0800 169 3458 - Overseas callers: +44 1253 866 043 Telephone lines are open: Monday to Thursday 8:15am - 5:15pm & Friday 8:15 to 4:30pm Email: [help@veteransagency.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:help@veteransagency.gsi.gov.uk) or write to: Veterans Advice Unit, Veterans Badge Office, Room 6108, Norcross, Blackpool, FY5 3WP

You can also download an application form from: [www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk) - Ed

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES FOR NEXT FLASHPOINT ISSUE DUE January 2008 1 December 2007**

## MEMORIAL MUSEUM MEMORABILIA REQUEST TO RETURN TO DONORS?

As many of you are aware, the above museum recently closed and the artefacts removed to storage by co-founder, member 683 David Hughes. In a recent conversation with Chairman, John Goupillot, David stated that none of the stored museum items belonged to the Association. However, if members wished to recover items they had donated, then they should contact him direct, when he will arrange their return. **Details as follows:** David Hughes, 42 Downs Park Crescent, Eling, Southampton SO40 9GN Tel: 02380 660995

## Next Issue

- RAF Marham Memorial Garden
- Airport Fire Services
- October Reunion report
- Remembrance Parade report
- More photographic memories



## SINCERE APOLOGY TO ALEC ROBERTSON!

In the January and May 07 issues of Flashpoint, Alec's details as Scottish co-ordinator, disappeared completely from the pages and I didn't notice.

The shame of it is, he's a long time ex-service good friend and colleague and it needed another of our mutual friends, Terry Matson, to point it out, as Alec was too much of a gentleman to embarrass me. Sorry, Alec, it was a 'senior moment' mate!

Providing I don't mess it up again, your details should be back where they belong, on page 3 for the September issue?

Dave Kenyon  
Flashpoint



# RAF LAKENHEATH VISIT SATURDAY 2nd JUNE 2007 -

RAF Lakenheath is the home of the 48<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing (Liberty Wing), housing three squadrons of F15 aircraft, and one squadron of HH-60G



Pave Hawks.

**The visit commenced with our members checking in at the Security Building,** where Leading Fire Fighter Nigel Taylor and his crew on Rescue 4 met us. We then proceeded in convoy to the Fire Department. In reception, Nigel and Leading Fire Fighter Darren Penrose, gave us a formal welcome. Before commencing the station tour, we posed for a group photograph, and looked at the fire related memorabilia. **First on the agenda was a look round the Fire Station,** which, since my last visit, now has a new extension housing individual bunk rooms, a comprehensively equipped gymnasium, sauna room, equipment servicing rooms, kitchen and dining room, where we met the rest of the on duty crew.

**Our Station tour continued with a look in the alarm room,** with its computerised systems (a far cry from the red telephone to ATC and the log book).

**This was followed by a tour of the appliances,** which were lined up in front of the bays, our members showed a keen interest, where Nigel and Darren, fielded questions on the vehicles and equipment. There are 11 bays on the Station to accommodate all the fire vehicles (a list of vehicles can be found later on).

**Next was a demonstration by the crew of a P-19, (foam tender),** producing water through a bumper and main roof monitor. **This was followed by a 'bunker drill' carried out by, A1C Joshua McCormick,** who had to don his fire kit, breathing ap-

paratus, (which he had to start up), and achieved it in an impressive one minute and fifty-five seconds, (not easy to do with an audience)! **Until the alarm call operated, Joshua was unaware of the drill, but responded magnificently** and received a well deserved round of applause and the respect of the 'Old Timers' watching. Very impressive!

**We looked over the remainder of the fire appliances,** and perhaps one of the most striking was the new P26 International - Pierce Water Carrier, which was equipped with a portable dam and the ability through a large pipe on the rear, and one on each side, to fill the dam in a very short space of time. This vehicle is used to carry water to an incident and during the hot summer of 2006 was used to assist Norfolk Fire Service with a large number of field and brush fires.

**The last, (but not least), appliance of the day was the KME Aerialcat 102 foot Hydraulic Ladder.** We saw a demonstration and were then invited to take a ride up in the basket to its fullest extension, which was the highlight of the day for our members.

**The Fire Department covers all aircraft and other airfield emergencies.** In addition to this they also have to deploy the RHAG (Rotary Hydraulic Arrestor Gear). **They cover the site from two stations with a third station at RAF Feltwell.** In addition to airfield emergencies, the crew cover the domestic side of the site as a first attendance, with assistance, if required, from Suffolk Fire Service. **The fire crew are rostered 24 hours on duty, and 72 hours off.**

**Before breaking for the barbeque, we were given a further demonstration this time by the Oshkosh P-3000 Snozzle.** This is a new concept in fire fighting in that the vehicle has a hydraulic arm, which can extend towards the aircraft, with the ability to produce foam, and in addition, to pierce the skin of an aircraft to reach internal fire situations, mainly on large transport aircraft such as the KC-135, C-5, C-17, KC-10 and C-130 Hercules.

**The barbeque was well received with the traditional beef burgers, hot dogs, coleslaw, salad and soft drinks.** After the barbeque our members sat down and conversed with the Duty Crew, and talked about fire fighting from the different eras, and the differences in equipment and protective clothing (P.P.E.) and then managed to get ourselves, and the duty crew, lined up in front of Rescue 4 for a group

photograph.

**All too soon the visit was concluded** with a vote of thanks to Nigel, Darren and Duty Crew. Nigel was presented with an RAF and DFSA polo shirt and car sticker. It was then out to the car park to say our goodbyes, and off home after an excellent day as guests of the section duty personnel made up of a mix of MoD Defence Fire and Rescue Service and American firefighters.

**Photo line up left to right and members attending:** Geoff Varley, Arthur Elton, Howard Harper, Dave Arnold, Dave Kenyon and Ron Newsome

**NB** - It was a shame that, some members booked in for the visit, were unable to attend on the day.

**For the benefit of the more technically minded members,** I've listed the fire appliances below.

Chief 1 - Ford Explorer (control vehicle)  
Chief 2 - Ford Explorer (control vehicle)  
Unit 23 - GMC 3500 Hazmat vehicle.

P-19 - Fleet no. 5, Oshkosh Light Foam Truck.

P-19 - Fleet no. 6, Oshkosh Light Foam Truck.

P-22 - Fleet no. 18, KME 4 x 2 Pumper.

P-22 - Fleet no. 9, KME 4 x 2 Pumper.

P-23 - (no fleet number) Oshkosh 8 x 8 Heavy Foam Truck.

P-24 - Fleet no. 19, KME (Kovatch Mobile Equipment) 4 x 4 Pumper.

P-26 - Fleet no. 14, International - Pierce Water Carrier.

P-31 Fleet no. Rescue 4, Pierce Medium Rescue.

P-3000 - Fleet no. 8, Oshkosh 6 x 6 Heavy Foam Truck.

KME Aerialcat, 102 ft Ladder, Fleet no. 12.

**NB:** See right for details of some vehicles.

**Also on station is a mobile Breathing Apparatus service and cylinder recharging unit** for prolonged incidents where BA has to be worn.

**Report** - Howard Harper, member 682, Lincs & Cambs Coordinator and organiser of the visit. Photos: Geoff Varley, Ron Newsome and Dave Kenyon

**NB** - See back cover for photo display, a copy of which, is to be presented to the base Fire Department, as a memento of our visit and placed on their wall display. Grateful thanks to Howard and Lakenheath personnel for their efforts in making it such a great day out - Ed.

# Photographic Memories of RAF Lakenheath Visit



## FIREFIGHTER WINS GOLD AT WORLD GAMES

**Defence Fire and Rescue Service, RAF Croughton, Northamptonshire NN13 5N**

Leading Firefighter Steve Price proudly displays his gold medal and Firefighter's hat. He won them both at the ninth World Firefighter Games in Hong Kong. He secured the gold in the indoor rowing event. More than 3,000 firefighters from



32 countries attended.

Firefighters throughout the world take pride in the fact that they are well known for being in top physical shape. One member of the Defence Fire and Rescue Service based at RAF Croughton recently took that pride a step further than most when he travelled almost 12,000 miles round trip to compete in the ninth World Firefighter Games in Hong Kong. This bi-annual competition has 52 events and was attended by more than 3,000 competitors. Leading Firefighter Steve Price competed in three of those 52 events and stood out among the 3000 competitors when he won the gold medal in indoor Rowing.

Steve Price competed against firefighters from France and South Africa in the event and triumphed over his nearest rival by an eight second margin. Steve Commented "I know that doesn't sound like much, but that's about 20 metres in front of the nearest competitor". The race is, in essence 2,000 metre sprint according to Leading Firefighter Price.

"You've really got to know what you are doing" he said, "It's a sprint, but you don't want to burn yourself out in the first 1,000 metres". "The race is conducted indoors using rowing machines. The machines have indicators that let you know exactly what place you're in and how far you are from the person in front and behind you," continued Leading Firefighter Price. These indicators were used to his best advantage. "When I got to 500 metres I was in third place," he said. "I thought at that point

it would be nice to finish with a bronze. When I got to a thousand I was in second, and thought I might have a chance to win it. When I hit the 1,500metre mark I moved into first place and then just kept the pressure on." His was a good tactical race and Steve has the medal to prove it!

He didn't keep his competitive spirit to his area of expertise; though as he also competed in the 50-metres backstroke and freestyle swim. "That's not my strongest area, and it showed," laughed Price as he talked about the competition. "It was really embarrassing. Not only did I come in last, I was about 10 seconds behind the guy who came in second to last. That's a pretty big difference when you're only swimming 50 metres." The Firefighters Games in Hong Kong weren't the first ones Steve Price has competed in. "I competed in the games in Sheffield two years ago," he said. "It was then I decided I was going to do the one in China."

The Hong Kong games won't be his last either. The next games are in Liverpool, and Steve will once again represent the Service. "I'm going to try and get my wife to play in the next one," he said. "I need a team player for my Lawn Bowls, so I'm going to try and persuade her to do that."

Reproduced by kind permission of BFSAs Editor, Steve Dudney G.I. Fire.E, from an item in the BFSAs Journal Spring 2006 - Ed.

## ANGEL OF KHANDAHAR



**RAF Corporal Creates Angel of Kandahar**

Inspired by the world famous 'Angel of the North' in Gateshead, RAF Corporal Craig Leighton has created his own version

at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, using spare aluminium aircraft parts.

Corporal Leighton has been in Afghanistan since December 2006. He is normally stationed in the Enhanced Station Workshop at RAF Waddington which is involved with the manufacture, modification and repair of aircraft components. The crafts of his trade are sheet metal work, welding, milling, turning and hand forming. He explained: "Nearly anything can be done with a 'can do' attitude in both detachment and base unit levels and we are renowned for making serviceable items from quite minimal materials,"

So, assisted by fellow RAF Waddington Senior Aircraftsman Chris Dyke, he saw an opportunity in his 'spare time' in Afghanistan to put his skills to more artistic endeavours and create the 'Angel of Kandahar':

"Nearly everyone knows what the 'Angel of the North' looks like and have probably passed it going up or down the A 1, so it seemed an ideal and recognisable subject," Corporal Leighton said.

"We spent our off duty time in the evening cleaning and welding the parts together; it finally took shape and a base was also manufactured from scrap to prevent the work from blowing over in inclement weather of which we've had a bit recently,"

Corporal Leighton, who is coming to the end of his tour, added:

"I wanted to raise the profile of the RAF workshops and also a smile from people as they passed by. I also thought it would be a good reference point for the General Engineering Flight and it would help me leave my mark here at Kandahar. I have had an enjoyable and interesting tour and have learned a lot. I would also like to thank everyone I have worked with for making it so memorable."

Source: MoD Oracle NEWS, Tuesday, 1st May 2007

Footnote: Whilst Cpl Craig Leighton isn't a Firefighter, his efforts are worthy of mention, as I'm sure his creation will be appreciated by everyone serving out there, whatever their trade, and provide a great reminder of home!

Well done Craig - Ed.

# Brief History of the Royal Air Force Fire Service



the circumstances. This they certainly did, if listening to some of our "Elder Statesmen" is anything to go by! A School of Firefighting and Rescue was then established on an

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

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

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 left is a practice crash using the simulator and RIV, (Rapid Intervention Vehicle), at the Fire Services Central Training Establishment, (FSCTE), Manston fireground on Tuesday 1 May 2007.



# 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!

The DFS now has 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 and Rescue Service**. Basically, it appears to be a name change only recognising the rescue role. If, and when, I have any official detail explaining the

changes, I'll keep you informed. The job will still tend to attract those personnel with similar characteristics, personalities, and vocation, as all those who have gone before. Long may it remain so - Ed.

The cap badges, and uniform buttons, reproduced right and below, are of originals worn in the 1960's by the Air Ministry Fire Service, (AMFS), followed by the Air Force Department Fire Service, (AFDFS). It then became the Defence Fire Services, followed by the Defence Fire and Rescue Services of today. The AFDFS badge, (below right), is reproduced in colour on the front cover of this issue showing its blue circle and red centre). The AMFS badge, (below left), being plain metal.



# RAF LAKENHEATH VISIT SATURDAY 2nd JUNE 2007

