



The Fleet Air Arm Association



Airey Fairey

Issue No. 22 – Spring 2013



THE FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION

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Fleet Air Arm Association

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Contents

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Editorial	iv
Fleet Air Arm Association National News and Events	1
News in Brief	3
Events	6
The Standard Bearers of the Fleet Air Arm Association	9
Memory Lane	14
Awards and Donations	21
FAAA Branch News	25
The Squadrons	32
Members who have 'crossed the bar'	43
List of Accoutrements	44
FAAA Branch Details	45



Editorial

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As the reader will see, Airey Fairey 22 (AF22) contains the promised items related to the Standard Bearers and an extended Branch Section. The response from the Branches will I hope give not only a record of Events that have happened but will be of interest to all. The News section has been extended to include a small summary of the activities related to the Conference of Naval Associations (CONA) and a section from Rear Admiral Russ Harding's brief to the Fly Navy Federation at RNAS Yeovilton (February 2013). The Rear Admiral's Bibliography is also included in this edition of the Airey Fairey together with a report on Sir Raymond Lygo's Service of Thanksgiving.

Where appropriate I have included some historical facts related to the Fleet Air Arm Association. They are spread across the contents where there is a link to an article. I hope this will encourage others to go down 'Memory Lane' and to give me some additional 'feed back'. This year the 'Junglies' have their 50th Anniversary (see the Squadron Section related to 845 Squadron). There will be a follow up article in AF23 with more details of the RNAS Yeovilton 'team' visit to Borneo. The Memory Lane section also includes an article related to 848 NAS which has the promise of a further article.

The reader will see that the 'Crossed the Bar' section is a single page in AF22. There is a good reason for this. AF23 will include some of the short stories that the Editor has accumulated throughout the past year. There is an historical link to these stories and requires more space.

As I mentioned in AF21 the activities related to the Royal Naval Air Stations are changing. Training is becoming a priority given the expected new aircraft and the need for preparation and honing of skills related to the new Carrier(s). This has seen co-operation and joint exercises with other countries as the Squadron Section will show. Keeping fit also has its 'lighter' side as the example in the Donation Section shows and the challenge offered through the brewing activities at RNAS Culdrose.

It is almost time to start AF 23 and that means I need your help once again to provide articles for the magazine and perhaps suggestions for covering topics beyond those already included in AF21 and AF22. I have some ideas of my own but input from the reader is a MUST. For example I hope to receive articles/photographs from those attending the Battle of the Atlantic Events – particularly the May (Liverpool and London) Events.

Finally I would like to thank the FAAA members for all the support I have received – particularly those who have provided articles for the magazine and Terry (Hubby) who helps me bring copy to print and to remind everyone once more that the AIREY FAIREY is your Magazine.

I wish you all good health and happiness always.

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Margaret

Fleet Air Arm Association National News and Events

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Rear Admiral Russell (Russ) Harding OBE Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Aviation & Carriers)

The Fleet Air Arm Association has a new Honorary Vice president Rear Admiral Russell (Russ) Harding OBE. In September 2012 he took charge of the Fleet Air Arm and has spent the last 3 months visiting the men and women who keep the Fleet Air Arm 'running at high tempo'. In February 2013 he briefed members of the Fly Navy Federation. He gave a positive and encouraging summary of the current state of the FAA. A statement from the Admiral's office has been circulated to the FAAA Branch Secretaries.



Admiral Russ Harding graduated as an Electrical Engineer (Edinburgh University) and is a Surface Warfare Officer and ASW Observer who has served in Frigates and Naval Air Squadrons attached to Carrier Air Groups as well as a tour instructing ab-initio aircrew. He has commanded at sea on 4 occasions, from a Mine Hunter as a Lieutenant to Captain in a Carrier, the most recent HMS Ocean. As Deputy Commander Strike Force NATO in Naples from March 2011 he served in USS Mount Whitney under Vice Admiral Harry Harris USN, Commander US 6th Fleet during the early part of the Libya crisis and was subsequently selected to be the Deputy Commander of NATO's Libya Operation. He was also the UK's National Contingent Commander.

In the past he has served extensively in the UK Ministry of Defence in both Plans/Resources and Equipment Capability areas. Particular themes of his MOD appointments have been Carrier Strike capability development including co-operation with France on the Porte Avion 2 (2nd Carrier) programme. Between 2000 and 2002 he was the Air Warfare desk officer in Navy Plans and, as a Captain from 2003-2005, he was responsible for day to day oversight of the Maritime Above Water domain with programmes ranging from CVF through T45 to Missile Systems and Maritime Rotorcraft. As Fleet DACOS(AV) 2005/6 he was responsible, as Deputy to Commodore Fleet Air Arm, for the day to day oversight and delivery of Maritime Aviation and for embarked standards and practices of all three services when embarked.

More broadly, Rear Admiral Harding served as the Training Commander at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth from 1998 – 2000 overseeing the delivery of circa 500 Officer Cadets per year to the Fleet.

Immediately prior to taking up his duties in Naples he was the Head of Air & Littoral Manoeuvre Capability within the Ministry of Defence Central Staff from 2008 responsible as the Senior Responsible Owner (Rotary Wing) for the coordination and delivery of all Helicopter capability (from Attack Helicopter and SCMR/BRH through Medium Helicopter Platforms to Chinook). In 2009 he co-authored the Rotary Wing Strategy the recommendations of which remain extant today.

A Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Admiral Sir Raymond Lygo KCB

A Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Admiral Sir Raymond Lygo, KCB (1924 – 2012), was held in Chichester Cathedral on Thursday June 21 2012. The service was conducted by the Reverend Canon Dr Anthony Cane, Chancellor, and was attended by a congregation of over 250 of his family, friends and official representatives from the Royal Navy, Naval Associations and many other organisations. The First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff was represented by Admiral Sir George Zambellas and the Fleet Air Arm by Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham, Chief of Staff (Aviation & Carriers).

Sir Raymond's Orders and Decorations were borne in procession to the Arundel Screen escorted by a Royal Naval Colour Party of Officers and Ratings from HMS Collingwood and HMS Nelson. Buglers from the Band of the HM Royal Marines, Collingwood sounded the Alert and later in the service the buglers played Sunset. The Standards of the Fleet Air Arm Association and HMS St. Vincent Association were also present.

Sir Raymond's son Kevin Lygo welcomed everyone on behalf of Lady Janette Lygo and other members of his family and his other son Derek read the lesson. This was followed by a reading given by his thirteen year old granddaughter Madison Lygo. Sir Patrick Duffy's tribute gave an interesting and informative insight into Sir Raymond's life.

Admiral Sir Raymond Lygo KCB joined the Royal Navy as a Naval Airman 2nd Class at HMS St. Vincent in 1942 and went on to be Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, retiring in 1978. During his long service career he served as a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm and commanded the Frigate HMS Juno and the Carrier HMS Ark Royal. He was Patron of the Fleet Air Arm Association for many years. Known members attending the service were, Arnold Thompson, Brian Bingham, Fred Wadley, Terry Lowden, Ron Golightly, Ray Whitehouse and Ray Thomas.

There was an opportunity for those attending to contribute to the work of RN Historic Flight.

Editor: My thanks to Ray Whitehouse for the picture and copy and Ray Thomas for additional information.



News in Brief

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Dates for the Diary (2013)

The Aviation Pioneers Memorial Service Eastchurch (Isle of Sheppey) planned for May 03 is to be re-scheduled to a date later in the year – Royal Navy Resources are required to support the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.

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|-------------|--|
| May 08 | Battle of the Atlantic Evensong Service – St Paul's Cathedral London |
| May 11 | Battle of the Atlantic Charity Reception (FNHT) – HMS Illustrious London |
| May 19 | The TAGA Memorial service – Lee-on-Solent |
| May 24 | Battle of the Atlantic Charity Reception (FNHT) – HMS Bulwark Liverpool |
| May 26 | Battle of the Atlantic Commemorative Service – Liverpool |
| June 22/23 | Air Britain Fly In – North Weald |
| July 13 | RNAS Yeovilton Air Day, plus FNHT supporters' tent |
| July 24 | RNAS Culdrose Air Day |
| September 6 | St Bartholomew's, Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church – Candlelit Concert |
| September 8 | Bi-Annual Royal Naval Whitehall Parade – London – All Naval Associations |
| September 8 | Community Fun Day – North Weald |
| October 5 | Supporters Day – RNAS Yeovilton, Historic Flight hangar |

Branch news

The Derby Branch has now been dissolved but its members will not be lost from the Association. It is expected that members will join either the Manchester or Daedalus Branch. The question of whether the annual October Derby meeting will be held at the Royal British Legion Club (Allenton) is to be discussed at the AGM Reunion in April. The Bournemouth Branch is in the process of dissolution. Some members have already joined the Daedalus Branch. On a positive note a new Branch, Ferndown and District, has been proposed. A committee is in place. More details will be available after the AGM in April.

All Branches have been asked to up date their membership lists and notify the Membership Secretary (Chairman Arnold Thompson). At the Birmingham AGM the Chairman Peter Styles who is not enjoying the best of health has resigned. The new Chairman is Alan Breward. Alan suggested that Peter should be offered the role of Vice Chairman. As the Branch still means a lot to Peter, he joined in 1974, it was no surprise that he was happy to accept and the Branch will benefit from his past experience.

Daedalus Branch numbers are on the increase. For Peter Roalf its secretary it is a busy time – especially when it is time to send out the Daedalus newsletter. Currently the tally for serving Members is 140 and FAAA (veterans and Associate) members 315 – this figure now includes members that have moved to areas where there is no branch, fall out from the closure of an existing Branch and new members who are looking for a FAA connection.

Battle of the Atlantic Liverpool May 26 2013

As many will know this is one of the key Events for commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic. The Fleet Air Arm Association will have 5 Standards attending the Commemorative Service and Parade on the Sunday. The Standards that the Association has attending are the National, Birmingham, Bristol, Wrekin and Watford. The request for tickets for the Service has been over subscribed but it is expected that everyone who has requested tickets will receive a proportional allocation 'within the next 3 to 6 weeks' (email mid March 2013).

The Telegraphist Air Gunners Association Memorial Service (TAGA)

This year (2013) the annual Memorial Service will take place at Lee-on-Solent Sunday May 19. It will be the last Service to run under 'the banner' of TAGA. The usual arrangements for an evening meal on the Saturday (18th) and Sunday lunch (19th) at the Golf Club are being undertaken by Val Sayer (Tel: 01206 240 328). This is the 60th year since the Memorial was dedicated on May 20 1953 by the Duchess of Kent. The Fly Navy Federation has thanked Chairman Arnold Thompson and the FAAA for agreeing to carry this Event forward. In future years, it is hoped that the Service and parade will be supported by the FAA Associations in the TAG's honour. Funds will also be required, annually, to support the event (last year's cost – £370) and the attendance of FAAA members needs a boost to increase the support for the surviving TAGs who are still fit enough to attend.

FAA Memorial – National Memorial Arboretum

Thirty Four plaques are available for engraving – 18 have been reserved and some plaques have already been engraved. The Aircraft Handlers Association were the first to have their plaque dedicated (March 3 2013). The FAAA Association plaque will be dedicated on April 14 2013. The Memorial flood damage has been repaired and the Memorial cleaned. The FAAA and the FAAOA plaques are engraved and in place. The Birmingham Branch hopes to have a small unveiling ceremony of their Bench, which is now in place in the Royal Naval Review, on the Sunday of the AGM.



The Conference of Naval Associations (CONA)

Almost a year ago there were no answers to these questions – How many Naval Associations are there? Where are the branches? Where are the details of how to join? So on the initiative of the Second Sea Lord major Associations, including the FAAA, were asked their views on whether there was any advantage in ‘pooling resources’ through the development of a Register of Associations with common communication facilities. The conclusion was that ‘getting together was a good idea’ and CONA was ‘born’. A first go at the Register is almost complete, there is a Facebook page and best value suppliers have been identified. Future actions include: the establishment of a simple website with the domain name **www.cona.org.uk**; to open up membership beyond the founding members; to speak up on Royal Navy issues and to support serving and retired shipmates; to negotiate some great benefits and cascade the information to all members. It must be emphasised that this is NOT a merger – keeping individual identity is essential if CONA is to succeed. Any Naval Association or Organisation who would like to join CONA should contact: Paul Quinn (General Secretary RNA).

Email: **paul@royalnavalassoc.com**; Tel: 02392 722983

Secretariat: CONA, Room 209, Semaphore Tower, HM Naval Base Portsmouth, Hampshire PO1 3LT. Tel: 02392 720782.

Maintaining the airborne capability

At the 18th meeting of the Fly Navy Federation at RNAS Yeovilton (February 15 2013) Rear Admiral Russ Harding briefed the meeting and gave his opinions on the current state of the Fleet Air Arm. A Statement from the Admiralty, sent to all FAAA Secretaries, included under the heading ‘Maintaining the airborne capability’ the following:

The Merlin Mk 2 Capability Sustainment Programme is well underway with the first Mk 2 aircraft having been recently delivered to RNAS Culdrose aiming towards full operational capability in 2014. The Merlin fleet, Commando Helicopter Force, air crew and maintainers are now feeding into RAF Benson to start preparing for the transferral of the Merlin Mk 3 to the Royal Navy. There will be a two part upgrade package to the aircraft to transform it into the Merlin Mk 4 to enable it to undertake ship-borne operations: the cockpit will be updated to the same standard as the Merlin Mk 2; folding tails and heads will be fitted to allow the aircraft to be stowed below decks at sea.

Lynx replacement safety statement has been signed off (2012) allowing factory-delivered training at the Agusta Westland site in Yeovil for the first batch of Wildcat helicopter trainers. The first FAA pilots to be trained in Wildcat will fly the first available variant – the Army AH Mk 1 variant.

Further into the future, the FAA is preparing itself for the introduction of the two new Queen Elizabeth-class carriers that will come into service at the end of the decade. There has been no break in fixed-wing pilot recruitment and training. Personnel are also heavily engaged in the F-35B Lightning II programme and the standing up of F-35B maintenance units from both the RAF and the RN is underway. Some of these men and women have transferred to a US-based training establishment – some for up to six years before being transferred back to the UK.

Events

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The 2012 Not Forgotten Association Garden Party A Royal Occasion – Arthur Gardner

Mary and I were invited to a Buckingham Palace garden party held for the 'Not Forgotten Association' (Thursday May 24 2012). We made our way to the Palace through the streets of London. That journey was all the more interesting for us because, this being the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee – the decorations for that event were already being erected, and the Victoria memorial in front of the Palace was resplendent in its fresh renovation.



On arrival at the Palace we parked in our appointed place in the inner courtyard and proceeded as directed along a gallery and through a small elegant room, to the huge glass doors which led to the garden; then out into the sunlight of a beautiful day.

Many guests were already there, enjoying the beauty of the colourful fragrant garden and the bountiful fare provided at the huge refreshment tent. There was also a feast of colour; the guests in their formal clothes, the ladies hats, the garden flowers and most of all, the vibrant colours of the many uniforms of serving personnel and veterans. HRH the Duchess of Gloucester attended and was presented to many of the veterans.

The Royal Marines greeted and mingled with the guests to guide, direct, inform and help them. Members of the Yeomen of the Guard and the Chelsea Pensioners, including two lady pensioners, made a proud and colourful appearance.

Two Scottish pipers 'moved around the garden' playing a selection of Scottish melodies, including the beautiful 'Highland Cathedral'. A 'salute of honour' was given to three veterans in wheel chairs – two of whom wore the kilt. The piper stood behind the wheelchairs and played especially for them. The three veterans linked hands in a touching display of comradeship. We had it confirmed that it really is true that a piper plays for the Queen under her window every morning at 9am. Later the Band of the Scots Guards, who had been entertaining the guests earlier in the day with a medley of tunes, assembled on the lawn to give a rousing display of precision marching to popular marching tunes and finally finished with 'Beating Retreat'. They and the Scottish pipers made the garden party a very musical party indeed.

On that memorable afternoon, many old friendships were renewed and new friendships formed. Mary and I are immensely grateful to the Not Forgotten Association for the privilege of being included in the celebrations and we thank them for inviting us to this truly entertaining and pleasurable Royal Garden Party.

Editor: The Not Forgotten Association is a unique national tri-service charity which provides entertainment, leisure and recreation for the serving wounded, injured or sick and for ex-service men and women with disabilities. Over 2400 people attended this event. The Garden Party this year will be held on the afternoon of July 2 2013.

'All of one company at Goodwood' Sue Eagles Campaign Director Fly Navy Heritage Trust

The Fly Navy Heritage Trust was the official charity for this year's Goodwood Revival in September 2012, raising £35,000 for the Royal Navy Historic Flight, the Fleet Air Arm Museum and St Bartholomew's, the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church.

Attended by over 136,000 people, the world-renowned motorsport and aviation event recreates the glorious days of Goodwood between the 1940s and 1960s and was a highly successful showcase for the nation's Naval Aviation Heritage. The Trust's enclosure, in the Freddie March Spirit of Aviation concours d'elegance, provided a perfect backdrop for two of the Royal Navy's iconic aircraft, the Fairey Swordfish and Westland Wasp. The Sea Fury T20, flown by Lt Cdr Chris Gotke, also excited the crowds with the awesome sound of its Centaurus, and stunning vortices streaming from its wing tips, as it displayed in clear blue skies at the end of each day.

To be the official charity for Goodwood was not only a privilege for the Trust, but was also an important 'Royal Navy in the Public Eye' event for the Royal Navy and Fleet Air Arm.

Speaking at the event, Admiral Sir George Zambellas, Fleet Commander, said: "The support shown by many thousands of visitors at Goodwood was outstanding. It was also fantastic to see the powerful combined effect of the Royal Navy, the Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch, the Fleet Air Arm Association, the Fleet Air Arm Officers' Association and other Associations of the Fly Navy Federation and the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, all working together to promote our Naval Aviation Heritage."

Editor: In April 2013 Admiral Sir George Zambellas will replace Sir Mark Stanhope as First Sea Lord.



Picture: Rear Admiral Terry Loughran. Chairman of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust is telling the audience about the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic and the events planned for 2013.

Air Engineering Technicians from HMS Sultan shook collection buckets, proving very popular with members of the public, and aircrew from the Royal Navy Historic Flight, dressed in 1940s flying clothing, re-enacted historic Battle Honours including the Battle of Taranto, the Battle of the Atlantic, the Channel Dash and the Sinking of the Bismarck. Notable visitors to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust stand included, Nick Mason, drummer with Pink Floyd, and Chairman of Ambassadors for the Trust, distinguished Fleet Air Arm veteran Captain Eric 'Winkle' Brown, Charles Fairey, founder of the Fairey Company, and Cpl Johnson Beharry VC.



The Fly Navy Heritage Trust is undergoing a significant organisational and cultural change in order to raise £10M to save the Royal Navy Historic Flight and preserve and protect the nation's Naval Aviation Heritage. The Royal Navy Historic Flight, the Fleet Air Arm Museum and the Fleet Air Arm Church, together present a strong Naval Aviation heritage brand and the Fleet Air Arm Association is helping the Trust by raising money at many of the Branch events and reunions.

In 2013, the Trust will be launching a Battle of the Atlantic Appeal to raise money to buy a third Pegasus engine in order to ensure that two Swordfish LS326 and W5856 (the oldest surviving Swordfish in the world) can flypast at the commemorative events in tribute to all those who lost their lives in the icy waters of the Northern Atlantic.

Editor: A big thank you to Ray Whitehouse who provided the photographs.



Picture: Top right: Lt Paddy Mc Williams from the RN Historic Flight re-enacts an aircrew briefing in preparation for a Swordfish attack on the Bismarck in 1941. Bottom right; Sue Eagles (3rd left) and Lt Cdr Tim Brown, RNR Air branch, selling raffle tickets. Bottom left: Nick Mason, Chairman of Ambassadors for the FNHT, Admiral Sir George Zambellas and Charles Fairey, founder of the Fairey Company.

The Standard Bearers of the Fleet Air Arm Association

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The National Standard – Gordon Appleby

Gordon Appleby and our FAAA National Standard will be at the AGM (April 2013). Only the National Standard is to be on parade at the Remembrance and plaque dedication service at the Arboretum on Sunday April 14. Another key event for Gordon will be the Battle of the Atlantic Remembrance Service and Parade at Liverpool in May. Below is Gordon's list of the Events he attended in 2012. Due to injury he was unable to parade the Standard at the funeral of John Grant – the Lee-on-Solent Standard Bearer for many years.

9 th March	Blind Veterans UK Chapel, Brighton
22 nd April	St Georges Day Parade, Worthing
4 th May	Eastchurch Aviation Pioneers Commemoration Parade
12 th May	HMS Ocelot 50 th Anniversary Parade
21 st June	Service of Thanksgiving, Admiral Sir Raymond Lygo, Chichester Cathedral
30 th June	Armed Forces Day Parade, Littlehampton
1 st July	Armed Forces Day Parade, Worthing
15 th July	Battle of Britain Annual Parade, Capel le Ferne
15 th September	Brookwood Military Cemetery
9 th November	Royal British Legion Annual Poppy Appeal Concert, Frimley Green
11 th November	Lee-on-Solent FAA Memorial Royal British Legion Memorial Church Service, Wisborough Green

Yorkshire Branch Standard – Ron Summers

Ron Summers, who lives in Scarborough, was for 13 years the Standard bearer for the Yorkshire Branch. His first Event was in September 1999 and he has kept summaries of every parade – over 120 plus events attended and over 6000 miles travelled. He retired from carrying the Standard in 2012 to have an operation on his knee but not before having an active 2011. Here are some of the Events he attended that year. **Harry Booth's funeral (FAA), Leeds:** Harry was awarded the DSM for bravery when he went to the aid of a badly burned shipmate during an attack on HMS Colossus (Pacific) and was seriously injured as a consequence of his action. **Armed Forces Day, Scarborough:** a very successful event that had an interactive programme scheduled throughout the day, starting at 1200hrs and finishing at 1615hrs with a parade of 32 standards (along the seafront to St Nicholas Gardens) accompanied by a battalion recently returned from service in Afghanistan. A service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance followed. **Eden Camp** (a very popular modern history museum) **Malton:** A Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance for the military and civilian personnel involved in the conflicts of the last 100 years and an afternoon parade of 72 Standards marching to music played by the Yorkshire Band. **Rededication of the Commemoration Stone: Horsforth** to honour HMS Aubretia (the

ship that salvaged the Enigma Machine from U-Boat 110) and to thank the Townsfolk who in the dark days of 1940 collected money to purchase the ship. **The November Remembrance Day Service, Garden of Remembrance Scarborough;** attended by over 200 people with the presence of 14 Standards. A total of 330 miles recorded for these five Events.

John Grant – Solent Branch

John crossed the bar September 16 2012 aged 83. He was an outgoing, up front, vibrant personality who leaves a huge hole in the hearts of all those friends and colleagues that knew him. He enjoyed life to the full and embraced one hundred percent the comradeship of the Fleet Air Arm community. At RNAS Culdrose he first met the love of his life Pattie on a blind date, he knew he had found his soulmate and it remained that way for the rest of his life. He was also fiercely proud of his family.



He passed the Royal Navy Artificer

Apprentice entry examination at the age of 15 and was invited to report to HMS Daedalus for 3 months induction training. John joined the Royal Navy, together with 179 other young men, in January 1945, aged 15yrs 11mths. At the Royal Naval Artificer Training Establishment (Torpoint Cornwall), he mastered a range of basic engineering skills then took advanced engineering training at HMS Condor. Here he also honed his skills as a sheet metal worker. Apprenticeship complete, he was promoted to Aircraft Artificer 5th Class (1948). He achieved rank of PO at RNAS Culdrose (1949) where he worked on piston engined aircraft. His Fleet Air Arm career then took him to RNAS Stretton (1952), Lossiemouth (1953) and Ford (1956) before going back to HMS Condor as a Chief Petty Officer Instructor (1958). His next move in 1963 was to the air engineering workshops at RNAS Brawdy. In 1966 he was offered a 'married accompanied' to Singapore where he worked with Rolls-Royce engineers at the Engine Holding Unit, RNAS Sembawang.

After 22 years service John retired from the Fleet Air Arm, purchased a house in Fareham and joined the Civil Service as a Professional & Technology Officer, working for MOD (Navy).

In later life he was a pro-active, enthusiastic member of the Fleet Air Arm Association and was awarded National life membership for his services to the Association. He was also a founder member and former Branch Chairman of the Solent Branch and its principal Standard Bearer for 20 years. When he had to retire from active duties, he still offered to 'unfurl the Standard' at funerals such as his caring for his comrades. When Branch Chairman he instigated reforms, which made it easier for the Branch to function, when key members retired. He also kept in contact with his fellow apprentices from the

Cochrane Division. There will be a lot of unforgettable memories when members of the Solent Branch remember: cruising, holidays in Scotland, Schnapps at a ski lodge in Schonach Germany, pints in Ballykissangel and Taranto and Burns Night dinners. John certainly enjoyed life to the full.

The FAAA National Standard was presented at his funeral (September 29) – a fitting tribute to a man who had given so much of his time throughout his life to others.

A tribute to John was read out by Bill O'Brien at the funeral – some will recognise the link with this copy. The picture of John was taken at the Guildhall (London 2009 – The Fleet Air Arm 100th Anniversary celebration). This followed the parade from St Paul's Cathedral.

Essex Branch Standard

– Harry Bass

Over the past 20 years Harry Bass has been the Chairman of the Essex Branch and since July 2002 the Branch Standard Bearer, having taken over from Peter Roalf who stepped down for health reasons. His Standard 'duties' are now mainly "Crematoriums and Cemeteries", and the Remembrance Sunday and Armed Forces parades when possible.

Harry is a regular visitor to Normandy and the Standard goes with him. His contact is Rod Bedford, Chairman of the Royal British Legion Somme Branch.

The Essex Fleet Air Arm Standard has been paraded at Remembrance services and parades at the Normandy Beaches – Gold, Juno, and Sword, and the 'Atlantic Wall' – not forgetting the Pegasus Bridge parade at Caen where so many lost their lives. Harry particularly remembers the Parade on June 5 at Courseulles-sur-Mer, Juno Beach. There were "hundreds of people, dozens of Standards" there but he found a space about half way down the column and joined in. He was approached by a standard bearer who spoke to him in French – he said one word "English" and shook his head. The Standard Bearer walked away only to return with the Parade marshal (see picture) who looked at the FAAA Standard, Harry's lapel badges and medals, then beckoned with his finger to follow him. Harry was led to the head of the column and invited in sign language to lead the Standard bearers. Harry has been invited to take the Standard over to France again this year. Not bad for an 87 year old World War 2 Veteran (seconded to a RAF Squadron for the D-Day invasion and on return to the Fleet Air Arm to serve in South East Asia during the war against Japan) who said: "things are a little slower now – ageing does cause me to lower my sights".



The Tamworth Standard – Douglas ‘Doug’ Heath

The Tamworth FAA standard was ‘laid to rest’ in an 18th Century Unitarian Chapel. But the Standard is still in use, due to the efforts of its Standard bearer Douglas, ‘Doug’ Heath who continues to parade the Standard on ‘special’ parades and funerals.

Tamworth has a local hero who, for almost 60 years had remained virtually unknown. In October 1942, Able Seaman Colin Grazier, from Two Gates Tamworth, along with First Lt Tony Fasson and NAAFI canteen assistant Tommy Brown were aboard HMS Petard off the coast of Egypt, in battle with German Submarine U-559. The submarine was forced to surrender and its crew captured. The three men volunteered to search the submarine for information that might be useful to the war effort. The sub was sinking. Lt Fasson and Colin Grazier swam to the submarine, went on board and handed items to Tommy Brown, and then returned to retrieve more. Sadly the sub sank with the two men still on board. Both were recommended posthumous awards – the George Cross. Tommy Brown received the George medal. The code books they retrieved enabled Bletchley Park’s code breakers to crack the Enigma codes and the Battle of the Atlantic was won.

There is now an annual Colin Grazier Memorial Service which comes under ‘special’ for the Tamworth Standard. Tamworth has a monument (unveiled in 2002) to the memory of the 3 men with a sculpture and a memorial plaque. Last year’s Memorial Service, the 70th Anniversary Parade, the laying of a wreath, Last Post and march to the local RNA (both arranged, as always, by Doug and sponsored by the Tamworth Herald) was a great success.

Birmingham Branch Standard – Alan Breward

Alan Breward, who this year has become the Birmingham Branch Chairman has for almost six years been the Birmingham Standard Bearer. It could almost be said that wherever Alan goes the Standard goes, plus there is always a photograph to record the Event. The reader will find the photographs posted to the Web (vianlky.phanfare.com/5638007). Alan is also a Host for ‘general public visitors’ attending the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas and there are occasions when he unfurls the Birmingham Standard. For example he has been asked to Parade on March 22 2013 for 849 Squadron (see the Donation Section). Alan is seen here at the Falkland’s Anniversary Service RNAS Yeovilton (2012). His next visit to St Bart’s will be to attend the Palm Sunday Service (March 24) – a special service for ‘Associations of the FAAA’. Standards will be paraded before and after the service and during the congregational Palm Sunday procession around the churchyard. Prayers will also be offered for those who have ‘crossed the bar’ and for Associations who wish to have Standards blessed.

Editor: The Birmingham Standard was dedicated in the Nautical Club on October 5 1975 with a Drum Head Ceremony. It was the first Fleet Air Arm Association Standard. The Greater Manchester Standard followed and the first National Standard was dedicated in 1989.



Angus Branch

The Angus Branch was formed in 1993 and its Standard is still kept at the original Branch meeting place – the Royal British Legion, Scotland, Arbroath Branch. At one time its Standard bearer was Des Mardell (now a Daedalus Branch Member). The Standard Dedication in 1996 was held in Saint Margaret's Church, just inside the main gate at HMS Condor. Bill Groves was the Standard Bearer at that time. The Angus Branch dropped out of membership of the National FAAA in February 2006 and became The Fleet Air Arm Association, Scotland. The Standard is now carried by Flight Sgt Sheree Robertson, a member of the local 2422 A.T.C. In February 2004 this Standard and the National Standard was present at the Tri-Service Memorial Dedication, Palace Barracks Holywood Belfast. Ken Pryce (Vice Chairman) carried the Angus Standard and Des Mardell the National Standard transported by Fred Wadley the Chairman of the Association at that time. The Memorial was dedicated to 'those who had fallen' in conflicts other than Two World Wars. The Memorial Custodian and creator of the garden, Albert Owens was awarded the MBE for his efforts. There is a website, which is well worth a visit: palacememorialgarden.co.uk. Also for those who have Airey Fairley 12 there is further information on P4.

Isle of Wight Standard – Peter Campbell

Although the Isle of Wight Branch was disbanded in its 20th year there is still a Fleet Air Arm presence on the island. Rather than 'lay up' the Standard, Peter Campbell a Life Member of the Fleet Air Arm Association and for the past 5 years a Member of the Daedalus Branch, has continued to parade the Standard at Remembrance Parades, Armed Forces Day Parades, Naval and Social Events when invited, and at the Funerals of Ex Members of the Fleet Air Arm. The Standard was

bought 23 years ago for approximately £600 and the Standard bearer for those 23 years has been Peter. If Peter is unable to attend he makes arrangements with either the Sea Cadets or the RNA to parade the Standard. He also receives support in kind from the RNA and Sea Cadets and visa versa. Other interests include Membership of the Raleigh Aircraft Apprentices Association, the RNA, British Legion and SAAFA who advise Peter of FAA Veterans in need of help and the formation of a small Group called IOW FAA Veterans to make a contribution towards the provision of a Fleet Air Arm Wreath for Remembrance Day and to support the maintenance of the Standard. Peter is not only a member of the Raleigh Aircraft Apprentices Association; he is also the Secretary, Treasurer and News Letter Editor. Its members joined the FAA in 1943 at the age of 15 at Seafield Park Daedalus Lee-on-Solent and signed on until the age of 30.

Editor: Not bad for an 85 year old.



Memory Lane

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848 NAS – the first Operational Helicopter Squadron in the Royal Navy Malaya January 1953 to November 1956 Gerry Hutson Solent Branch

Sixty years ago in October 1952, at very short notice, the Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy formed its front line helicopter squadron (848) for service in Malaya to support the hard pressed Army during the Malaya Emergency. So urgent was the need for troop carrying helicopters in Malaya that within seven weeks of the 10 Sikorsky S.55s (HRS-2 variant) arriving as deck cargo at Southampton docks, 848 Squadron was operational in Malaya. This included a 4 week sea voyage on HMS Perseus, which styled itself as the Royal Navy's first helicopter carrier. Every opportunity was taken by the pilots to operate the helicopters – most pilots had had little experience in flying them before embarking. The S.55s were demonstrated at every opportunity to Army and RAF Units en route as most of these had never seen a helicopter before and senior officers were to experience the use of them at close quarters. I saw 848 fly onto HMS Perseus whilst serving in HMS Triumph and was later to join them in Singapore at RNAS Sembawang.

The Senior Pilot had flown out ahead of the Squadron to organise a training clearing in the jungle, plus operational supplies and fuel. A senior RAF officer tried to restrict 848 by saying that they were fine flying over the sea but might get lost over the jungle and that they should wait six months. At this time, the RAF had just three S.51 helicopters





out there. However diplomacy by the CO saved the day. It became known to Sir Gerald Templer that 848 was ready for operations – a CASEVAC (casualty evacuation) for SAS troopers brought this fact to his attention.

848 NAS successfully pioneered the parachuting of troops from a helicopter. The first drops were made using a dummy. Further drops were then made by SAS volunteers. Initially the SAS elected to drop into bamboo but this could be rather painful, so they chose to snag the parachute canopy at the top of the tall trees – often up to 200ft in height. US Observers (Malaya) credited 848 Squadron with being the first to use helicopters for parachuting operationally.

The Squadron's biggest lift was Operation Commodore (May 23 1953). Over 1000 troops were lifted in the first 24 hours. During the period May 23-31, flying hours totalled 153.45, 453 sorties were made, 1623 troops and 35460 lbs of freight were lifted and ONE casualty evacuated. The number of aircraft used was nine S.55s. The RAF was extremely short of S.51s so had one Dragonfly there for part of the time in an observation role. Indeed on many troop lifts there was a RAF officer there in an observation role. Close co-operation between the RAF and 848 was demonstrated many times. On one occasion a downed RAF S.51 Dragonfly (December 1953) was dismantled by a joint RN and RAF crew. Lt Cdr Roy Hawkes using his S.55 flew the sections out to the nearest road with only the engine causing a slight problem.

Later Lt R 'Tubby' Leonard became the first 848 pilot to lift out a stripped down S.55 – 'J' WV197 using 'K' WV198. (K-Kilo is the only survivor of 848's helicopters. It is now in a museum near Carlisle, after a varied life since Malaya. Only five helicopters made it back to the UK).



CASEVACs were often extremely dangerous and required a high degree of skill by the pilot who often relied on his observer to talk him down. One well publicised CASEVAC by a S.55 had the 848 pilot balancing two wheels of the helicopter on a roughly built platform while his rotor blades were only inches away from the steep mountainside.

Setting up jungle forts was essential to the Army strategy in taking the action to the terrorists. These were often difficult to build in remote locations and required the use of bulldozers to clear landing strips. First these had to be stripped down to permissible loads for a S.55, then flown in and rebuilt. On one occasion it was a bulldozer that had to be stripped down and flown out again. The RAF did a splendid job re-supplying the forts by air drops and 848 had the job of flying out the retrieved parachutes. 848 were often referred to as the 'Jungle taxi Service' as without them changing over personnel, evacuating wounded and taking many supplies it would have been impossible. On one well publicised event a senior RAF officer had to be rescued from a remote jungle fort for operational reasons. 'Navy rescues RAF' were the headlines in the newspapers. 'Well replied the Naval pilot, the RAF do not fly at night'. This was however the first operational night flight although all the pilots qualified at RNAS Sembawang for helicopter night flying.

In our 4 years of operations not one of our squadron personnel or helicopters was fired on. We think that it was due to three main reasons. We mostly flew in pairs and help could be quickly summoned and the CTs (Communist Terrorists) could be swiftly encircled. Attention was drawn to their jungle camps and food plots. The final reason – I think it became known that we often patched up the wounded CTs and air lifted them out for treatment. However I do not think that the Army ever got over the shock of us in Jungle Green Clothing with our naval hats turning up in the most unlikely places.

During our four years of operations prior to fully handing over our role to the RAF, 848 lifted over 41 000 troops and over 819,710 lbs (370,000 kg) of stores to operational bases. When one considers that the S.55 in the hot and humid environment of Malaya could only lift 4 fully armed troops (or 5 Ghurkhas) or 1250 lbs of stores, this was no mean achievement. It was a source of pride for 848 NAS when many requests CASEVAC flights stated 'Navy Preferred'. This rapport with the Army was repeated later during the Borneo campaign when many of the Army officers from the Malaya days were more senior by then.

Editor: In the next issue of the Airey Fairey there will be a 'follow up' article related to the Westland Whirlwind helicopters which were sent out to 848 during the Malaysian emergency in 1954 for evaluation.

848 Naval Air Squadron now provides trained pilots, aircrew, engineers and technicians for the two front-line squadrons of the Commando Helicopter Force. Each year upwards of 200 qualified personnel pass out of the RNAS Yeovilton-based squadron and into its sister units 845 and 846, allowing them to continue their operations around the world. The squadron is expected to train up 60 pilots and aircrew and 150 maintainers. In addition, the squadron is regularly committed around the UK on support of maritime operations and commando training.

Moonless Night

Peter Wells Southdown Branch

Editor: Peter Wells CAF (A/E) crossed the bar in 2009 but his stories can still be told. Thanks go to Alec Braybrooke for providing the copy.

The story is true, but more importantly it records the fact that six men lost their lives on a dark and cold November night. I would like to think that it lifts them out of that unread eternity of statistics and, if only as the tiniest of parts, into FAA History. The official record reads:

Fairey Gannets XA 414 and XG 798 from 813 Squadron Culdrose took off from RAF Ballykelly on a night exercise and when flying in close format struck a hill 11 miles north of Greencastle, Co. Donegal 27 11 63.

Lt J H Griffiths	Lt P Maycock	Lt C G C Halley	killed in XA 414
Lt C J Blanchett	Lt P L Martin	Lt P R Yulley	killed in XG 798

Wednesday November 27 1963, at just after 7pm, in Northern Ireland the night was dark and overcast. All that could be seen by the six crewmen of two Naval ASW Gannet Anti-Submarine aircraft, taxiing out to depart from RAF Ballykelly (HMS Sealion to the Navy) for a night exercise with submarines out of Faslane, were the blue perimeter track 'glim' lamps, the horizon glow of the duty runway lights and their illuminated cockpit instruments. Clearance from the Ballykelly tower to line up and take off was received – a few seconds later the two aircraft climbed out to the southwest turning right to head north over Lough Foyle. It was less than thirty minutes later, that both aircraft struck a hill north off Greencastle in County Donegal (Southern Ireland). All six airmen were killed.

At about 9pm my good friend Paddy came to tell me the tragic news and that 819 Squadron had been directed to staff the initial protection of the crash site. The CO and the Chief Tiff elected 'yours truly' to be in charge and Paddy was to be my number 2.

It was only the second time since 1922 that a party of British uniformed serving personnel had crossed into the republic of Southern Ireland. We were of course, unarmed. The Irish police escorted us all the way to Greencastle and up to the crash site, where we established our HQ in a RN 15 cwt van. The debris was spread over a wide area with the bodies of the six airmen still lying amongst the wreckage. It took at least 30 minutes to walk around its perimeter.

We decided to set up two two-man patrols, one walking clockwise, the other anti-clockwise and with eight people available, this enabled us to operate a simple two-hour two-man watch system.

On the top of the hill it was pitch dark. Looking down the hill, the only lights were those of our torches and the 15 cwt van. At the eastern end of the site we could just see the twinkling lights of a small village a mile or so away. I took a place around 3am on one of the first patrols. Not only was it dark, but it was also B. cold. I was very glad when just before 5am Paddy appeared out of the dark to take over the next watch, commenting

that he sincerely hoped that the main team, expected to arrive later that day, had had enough sense to bring some spare torch batteries. I retired to the relative warmth of the van hoping that in our haste to leave, we hadn't forgotten something a lot more important than torch batteries.

I was rudely awakened, by someone shouting 'Chief Chief! It was pitch dark. I immediately thought "What's gone wrong? Had someone found the stress of patrolling the wreckage of two crashed aircraft and the remains of their crews too much and freaked out?" Grabbing my 'Duffle Coat' I scrambled out of the van and demanded to know what all the fuss was about. "We're being invaded" was the reply. Stupidly I asked, "Who by?" "Don't know – Come and see" was the reply as I was led to the eastern end of the hill. My guide lifted his arm and pointed down the hill – coming out from the village and up the hill, obviously heading in our direction moved a string of flickering lights. We were, unarmed, in a country in which certain factions took great pleasure in shooting at us across Lough Foyle, exploding bombs in the most awkward of places and had joined the British army just to obtain a uniform and a rifle. Were some locals considering us as very unwelcome guests? To give the impression of unworried normality we kept the patrols walking round the crash site while the remainder of us assembled as a group alongside the van.

The first to crest the hill was a middle-aged man wearing a long dark heavy coat and carrying a large torch. He walked towards us, his torch effectively blinding us from seeing those behind him. With a broad Irish accent he said, "We are not here to intrude but at this time of the year this is not one of the friendliest of places in Ireland and we thought you might be in need of some good old fashioned Irish hospitality. It's a bit early for this" he said as he pulled a bottle Bushmills Irish whisky from one of the pockets in his voluminous coat, "but you can keep it for later". Behind him we could dimly see five or six other people, both men and women, carrying not only their torches but boxes wrapped in towels and some well packed carrier bags from which they produced eggs, bacon, tomatoes, mushrooms, toast, flasks of tea and coffee, a dish of butter and a pot of marmalade. They had even brought plates and eating irons! Not the meal we had expected. It was certainly a lot better than the RAF Ballykelly bag meals we had been given!

Other than our thanks at that moment in time we never did get the chance to express our appreciation to the residents of that little village and thank them for their kindness and hospitality. They must have been up very early that morning to prepare their gift and arrive at the top of the hill in time for breakfast.

And... I thought very deeply about my earlier fears and suspicions.



HMS Bulwark – Villefranche Bay 1969

Editor: My thanks to Allen McGregor (Daedalus Branch) for providing the photograph and related detail and Peter Roalf (Essex Branch) for additional information

In Spring 1969 HMS Bulwark (often referred to as The Rusty B) left Portsmouth Dockyard, having had a refit on her return from the 1968 Arctic exercise – Polar Express, to take part in the Olympic Express exercise. HMS Bulwark was to visit **Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Salonica, Venice, Villefranche** and **Toulon**. Amongst the ship's company were members of 845 Squadron and 41 Marine Commando group and the ship's Captain, Captain J.A. Templeton – Corill (who would later become a Rear Admiral and Flag Officer Malta).

It was at the port of Villefranche that the Rainier family was invited aboard for lunch (it is thought by the Captain who had a villa in the Villefranche area and moved in 'higher circles' having been the British Naval Attaché (Moscow) in the past).

Assembled on deck were: from left to right in the picture, Peter Nixon (Chairman Channel dash), 'Tomo' Thompson – Firesuit man during flying operation, Allen McGregor (in charge of Ships Landrovers (Driver)) and lurking in the background Lt Alan Rock who was later to become Chief Pilot of London Air Ambulance (sponsored by the Daily Express). The Captain is listening intently to Princess Grace who is asking about 'our role' on the Flight deck. Allen would hasten to add that he did not perform the duty of Firesuit man but was 'dressed up' so that he could explain to the visitors the function of fire rescue. A short story but as Allen says: "I hope this brings back some happy memories. I know for me it recalls a very happy period in my life".

A TV film crew from Yorkshire TV embarked at Toulon to shoot a documentary titled 'Captain RN' – An investigation into the reasons why men go to sea in peacetime? Now there's a thought. The date of release was 05 08 1969 – just before the ship was decommissioned at Devonport Dockyard late 1969.

Editor: Villefranche has become an important port over the years due to some extent because of its bay that reaches a significant depth only a short distance from shore. As well as being a 'docking area' for the Royal Navy it was the home port of the USA 6th Fleet (1948 to 1966) and since 1980 has become the most visited cruise ship port of call in France.





Naval Aviation 2011-2012

Steve Chinnock MBE, Yeovil Branch

On the 29th May 2011, I was driving along the seafront at Lee-on-Solent with my wife and a family friend. Suddenly through the morning mist, I saw an aircraft carrier at anchor in Stokes Bay. As always, at the sight of one of these magnificent ships, I felt a twinge of excitement. “It must be the ARK ROYAL” said our friend. “No way” I replied, “too big and the wrong colour”. It proved to be the very latest and last of the ‘NIMITZ’ Class, the ‘GEORGE H W BUSH’ (CVN 77). At almost 100,000 tons, Portsmouth Harbour could not accommodate her. What a magnificent sight she was, embodying the very ultimate in carrier versatility and fighting power. At that time America had around twenty attack carriers available for operations worldwide should they be needed. Each NIMITZ class carrier operates up to ninety aircraft in a variety of roles to cover every eventuality. Thus, each one is probably better equipped than the entire current Fleet Air Arm. When it comes to Naval Aviation, our American cousins are the best in the world.

If the fourth ARK ROYAL (the last fixed wing carrier, paid off in 1978) had been available for the Falklands war (1982), with her early warning GANNETS, PHANTOM fighters and BUCCANEER bombers, I have no doubt at all that the outcome would have been more biased in our favour.

How ironic, it was that the UK, who pioneered the operation of aircraft from ships, had decided to phase out the fixed-wing element for at least twelve years. Other nations have recognised the potential of this form of military force. The Japanese Navy, analysing the TARANTO success, devastated the Americans at Pearl Harbour with their carrier-borne squadrons. The French have long been a player in the game – their latest carrier CHARLES-DE-GAULLE, operates the very effective Super Etendard ‘RAFALE’ fighters together with early warning ‘HAWKEYE’ aircraft. India is also continuing the trend, but, aware of the increasing capability of the Chinese Navy, is also enlarging its submarine fleet. China, forging ahead to join the aircraft carrier nations, has established a ‘string of pearls’, all around the Pacific and Indian oceans. She has been building ports and shipping facilities to service a much enlarged ‘state of the art’ fleet of surface ships and submarines.

Time and time again, an operational fixed wing carrier on station has been able to produce a better strike rate than shore based RAF units sometimes operating from many hundreds of miles away. In the early seventies, BELIZE, then British Honduras was saved from attack, by her neighbours who did not want her to gain independence, by two Buccaneers from ARK ROYAL which overflew the area in a show of strength.

Against this backdrop, the Royal Navy will be hard pressed to repeat past glories in the event of confrontation. We desperately need a carrier capability as soon as it is achievable.

My twenty eight years in the Fleet Air Arm from 1952 to 1980 saw many exciting developments. I have no doubt the modern generation of FAA personnel are every bit as good, if not better than we were. One can only hope that the powers that be have the will and determination to provide them with the tools necessary to fulfil their very important task.

Awards and Donations

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The Dr Rotman Silver Salver

Chairman Arnold Thompson presented the Fleet Air Arm Association, Dr Rotman Silver Salver to Leading Air Engineering Technician LAET (AV) Hawker at the formal ceremonial divisions at Sultan (June 29 2012). The Guest of Honour at the parade was Honorary Commander Dee Caffari MBE who presented the other awards and prizes. The personal trophy was presented prior to Divisions in the Newcomen Hangar. Members from the Southdowns, Solent and Daedalus Branches were present at the ceremony.



The Honours Board associated with our award carries a record of the award winners and is situated within the Air Engineering School. The expectation is that LAET Hawker, seen here receiving his trophy, “should do very well in his career.”

Editorial: Further details of the day are given in the TAGA article that follows.

TAGA Trophy Presentation 2012

Bill Jones

The Telegraphist Air Gunners Association (TAGA) Trophy Presentation at HMS Sultan took place on June 29, for the second time, on the Parade Ground during Ceremonial Divisions – not in Newcomen Hangar. As a consequence, it was less intimate than we in TAGA have been used to and it was a longer ceremony. The whole of HMS Sultan was involved – consequently the ceremony took longer and included considerably more presentations. This might not have mattered had the heavens not opened, as the final presentation was being made, drenching those not under cover with driving rain. Starting earlier than usual, created a difficulty in making up the presentation party, but we got by, with three members of TAGA, Bill Durrant, Harry Gee and myself, supported by two Associate members, Bert Arnell and Peter Murray.



The worthy recipient of the Telegraphist Air Gunners Trophy this year was AET Harris of 845 Squadron. In the absence of the last Chairman of our Association, as Secretary



of Southern Branch, I made the presentation. Last year's recipient was AET O'Hara 848 NAS. Those of us privileged to be involved over the years have become used to being greeted and treated with great respect by the modern Fleet Air Arm – this occasion was no different: along with the Trophy Winners, and their guests, the Presentation Parties were entertained to lunch by members of the Engineering Training Staff in the Warrant Officers, Senior Rates and Senior NCO's Mess.

I could not help thinking back to earlier times when things were different! The TAGA Trophy was first presented to Captain Esplin Jones, Commanding Officer of HMS Daedalus, in 1989, by Les Sayer, the Telegraphist Air Gunners Association's then Chairman. It has been presented annually to the Air Engineering Technician assessed as being the best during Phase 2A and 2B training during the preceding year. In the early years the presentation party consisted of 10 members of TAGA plus the current Chairman, who made the presentation.

Since its inception the ceremony has customarily been performed at a Passing-Out Parade of the Air Engineering School (concurrent with the presentation of certificates and prizes to high achievers in other stages of training) and always took place where the engineers did their training. Following the closure of HMS Daedalus (1996) the Engineering School transferred to HMS Sultan and prior to 2011, the presentations took place in Newcomen Hangar. These occasions, although typically naval, seemed to have about them an air of informality, as of a family gathering – an intimacy that was totally lacking in the Ceremonial Divisions of June 29 2012. There seems no doubt that the TAGA Trophy will continue to be presented annually – hopefully there will be TAGA members supported by Associate members to officiate for some years to come. My hope is that it will revert to being exclusively an Engineering School affair.

Editor: The TAGA Trophy will continue to be presented annually. The silver medallions presented in the past to the successful AET will be replaced by glass paper weights – arranged on behalf of the TAGA by the FAAA.

RNAS Riders 400 mile Memorial Challenge

In March 2013 a team of 14 members of 849 Naval Air Squadron cycled from RNAS Culdrose to the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) at Alrewas. Over 5 days they 'pedalled' their way across eight counties, cycled 400 miles, through rain, snow and gale force winds to join serving and past members of 849 Naval Air Squadron, along with families and friends, gathered at the NMA to mark the 10th anniversary of Operation Telic and to pay their respects to six Royal Navy aircrew and an American Navy exchange officer (who was based on HMS Ark Royal). The Aircrews died when their Sea King Airborne Surveillance and Control helicopters collided over the Northern Gulf. Near Arctic conditions at the NMA forced part of the service into the memorial chapel. Invited guests and squadron comrades from 2003 read tributes to the crews of 'Redrat 34 and Redrat 35'. After the service those attending moved to the Fleet Air Arm memorial where the memorial plaque to the seven, along with the Anniversary Bench, was dedicated to the 'Redrat' crews who never returned. It is also hoped that the sponsored 'ride' will raise both awareness of all those members of the FAA who have made the ultimate sacrifice since World War 1, (no fewer than 6000) and raise money

for three charities – the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC), the NMA Appeal, and the Fly Navy Heritage Trust.

The website for the charities is: www.justgiving.com/teams/OpAardvark

The Memorial bench inscription reads:

“In memory of seven 849 Naval Air Squadron A Flight aircrew of Redrats 34 and 35
Who lost their lives on Operations on 22 March 2003
The Eyes of the Fleet dimmed briefly but remain open, alert and ever vigilant.
They will not be forgotten”.

Launch of the 2012 uk4u ‘square stockings’

The uk4u’s ninth annual Christmas Box campaign was launched by ITV’s Daybreak breakfast presenter Lorraine Kelly OBE. Chairman Arnold Thompson was there at the invitation of uk4u and to represent the Fleet Air Arm Association. The FAAA has on an annual basis donated £500 to help fund the charities activities. 2012 was no exception.

Many will have seen Lorraine’s spectacular launch. She agreed to join the Royal Marines to zip wire from Wellington Arch in central London. Allan Simms a trustee of uk4u was there for support and was suitably dressed as Santa Claus.

The white box Lorraine was launching was a ‘special’ in recognition of the Queen’s Jubilee. The Boxes are affectionately known as ‘square stockings’ by the Armed Forces. To avoid any delay to the personal parcels sent by families and friends, the boxes are not posted through the British Forces Post Office. The delivery is carried out by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) which encourages members of the public who wish to support the troops to donate through uk4u. The boxes ‘go out’ to troops serving in Afghanistan, the Falklands, those serving in submarines, and troops who are serving overseas throughout the World. The 2012 target was 20000 boxes.

The uk4u website address is www.uk4u.org. It is a comprehensive website that carries contact data and much more. There are News bulletins, reports on promotional Events – including the 2012 launch from Wellington Arch and details on sponsorship.

If you wish to make a personal contribution by post the address is: The Old Granary, East St West Chiltington, RN20 2JY. For further Information: Tel: 01798 812 081.



Fly Navy Heritage Trust

Over the last eighteen months the number of Supporters donating to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust (FNHT) has doubled and now stands at 1200. The growing Membership contributes £30,000 a year to keep the Historic Flight aircraft flying. The Supporters' Marquee at RNAS Yeovilton (2012) was well attended and the Trust's Trailer, selling merchandise and 'signing up' new members, raised over £13,000. The final figure for fund raising activities 2012 reached the grand total of £650,000.

Given the vital role that the Fleet Air Arm played in the Battle of the Atlantic (BOA) it is fitting that the Trust is to hold two Charity receptions in May one at London aboard HMS Illustrious and the second at Liverpool. All proceeds to the BOA Appeal will go towards keeping the Swordfish Flying. As a tribute to all who gave their lives in the icy waters of the North Atlantic, the Swordfish will fly past Liverpool Cathedral and along the waterfront, from Princes Parade to Kings Parade on May 26 2013 – the day of the 70th Battle of the Atlantic Commemorative service.

Fund raising and membership support is vital, if the Historic Flight Aircraft are to be preserved for future generations. The Fly Navy Heritage Trust also supports the FAA Museum (RNAS Yeovilton) and the FAA Memorial Church. Below is the Swordfish on display at Goodwood.

Contact details: FNHT RNAS Yeovilton, Ilchester, Somerset BA22 8HT



Editor: The Fleet Air Arm played a vital role in the Battle of the Atlantic providing cover for the convoys (mid Atlantic gap and the Russian convoy routes). At that time there were 36 Naval Air Squadrons flying Swordfish, Martlets, Albacores, Fulmars and Sea Hurricanes. They flew, over a six year campaign, from the pitching decks of escort carriers and converted merchant ships. The Swordfish was the only aircraft that could fly from the short decks of Merchant Aircraft Carriers and have the fuel and weapon load to be viable. It also had an anti-submarine role. Its dawn to dusk patrols over wide areas kept the U-boats submerged – thus reducing their ability to attack the convoys.

FAAA Branch News

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Bristol Branch

Eric Pitt

The Bristol and District Branch was formed in 1994 following an offer from the RBL Patchway Branch, of a meeting room. At that time, Eric Pitt and the late Reg Veale were members of the Cotswold Branch. At the inaugural meeting (May 9 1994) of the Bristol and District Branch, 14 Members elected Eric as Chairman and Reg as secretary. The Branch was to reach top membership of 81 in April 2004. Its first priority was to purchase a Standard before the '50th Anniversary of VE' day parade (May 8 1995). Due to some generous donations the required sum of £1000 was reached in time and the Standard was blessed by the Rev. Barry Penn of St Chads Church Patchway. Details of the Branch formation were given at the Nautical Club Birmingham (June 3 1995). The Standard was dedicated at the National FAAA reunion, HMS Daedalus (Lee-on-Solent) on June 11 1995. Their standard is still regularly paraded by the current Standard Bearer Ron Sandry (see AF21 Page 8).

The Bristol Branch ambition was, and still is, to support the Royal Navy Historic Flight (RNAS Yeovilton) in its endeavour to preserve a part of the country's Naval Heritage. Their first visit was on July 19 1995. Since May (1994), the Branch has raised for the 'Flight' about £12000.

On March 29 1996 the Branch was entrusted with the HMS Daedalus 'Paying off Pennant'. Following preservation tests at the South West Area Council (Bath) the Pennant (measuring 'in feet' 8 x 6), was neatly folded and placed in a case ready for presentation to Commander David Hobbs (Curator of the FAA Museum). Also present, Lady Jane Fox-Robinson (whose late husband was a Chaplain at HMS Daedalus). The Commander thanked the National FAAA for a 'unique and magnificent gift'.

Editorial: 'Victory in Europe' (VE) Day. The May Day Bank Holiday was moved from the first Monday in May to May 8 in 1995 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the ending of the Second World War.



Members of the Bristol Branch at RNAS Yeovilton, July 2012, seen here handing over a £1000 donation to support the RN Historic Flight.

Armed Services Day at Littlehampton and Worthing Peter Colston and Brian Bingham, Ford Branch

Armed Forces Day was a busy day for the Ford Branch. Brian Bingham (Chairman) had 'beseeched' the Ford members to attend the Littlehampton Armed Forces Event (a day of Remembrance followed by fund raising for chosen charities). Peter Colston (Secretary) was one of 10 Ford members who mustered on the green at Littlehampton seafront at 0730am in pouring rain and a strong wind, to erect the FAAA marquee. Fortunately the rain had stopped by the time Arnold arrived with the marquee (delayed in Chichester due to traffic congestion). Its erection commenced in near gale conditions but there was time left to help Arnold arrange the FAAA history photograph boards and to enjoy Blenda Bingham's bacon 'sarnies' and sausage rolls. Gordon Appleby also 'lent a hand' before he left to change and collect the FAAA National Standard in time for the parade and Drumhead Service.

Gordon was later to leave to attend the Worthing Parade for the muster and service held in Steyne Gardens on the seafront at Worthing. Here it was a cloudy but windy day which fortunately remained dry with some sunshine. Some 30 plus standards were paraded and led by the FAAA National Standard. Peter Colston was one of six FAAA members attending this event – all but one was from the Ford branch. The low turn out from Ford was due to the support for the local venue at Littlehampton. Peter was still to move on after the Parade – he returned to Littlehampton to assist in the de-rigging of the marquee.

During Peter's time away the Littlehampton fund raising was underway. Debbie (who turns out 'on the day' with the Ford Branch) was rattling the 'tins'. Alongside the marquee Blenda and her sister were working hard for their chosen charity. They had a display of bedding plants and filled hanging baskets which they had to replenish during the day; such was the success of the stall – a reward for the many hours spent 'potting up' the plants and making the baskets. The FAAA marquee and plant stall was not the only attraction – there were many events throughout the day to keep the 'crowd' entertained. Quote from Brian "...our collection tins were made up to some nice round figures – All in all a good day".



Editor: The picture was spotted in a local newspaper by Dave Perrott (Ford) who most years is on 'gate duty' at Shoreham Air Display.

Picture courtesy of the Worthing Herald:

www.worthingherald.co.uk

The Ford Airfield Remembrance Garden (2012)

Peter Colston

I wonder how many readers are aware of the Remembrance Garden at Ford? Those who served at Ford will, remember the two sites – Swordfish (the main one) easily recognizable today and now the open prison and, on the Yapton side of the airfield, Anson (the smaller one) which has completely disappeared. When permission was given to demolish and build a housing estate on the Anson site, it was agreed to plant a Remembrance Garden. This garden is now under the care of Ford Parish Council and it is well cared for. The Garden is always beautiful. On three sides it has stone walls and to the front, an evergreen hedge and wrought iron gates. Within this area are many trees and flowering shrubs and a well kept lawn with a plinth in the centre giving the history of the airfield. The stone walls are built so as to create places for plaques and two seats. The centre wall has a plaque dedicated to ‘The Fleet Air Arm, Royal Naval Air Service and Royal Marines’. This is where



the wreaths are laid. To the left of the gates is a plaque dedicated to the RAF, Royal Flying Corps and Commonwealth Airmen and to the right a plaque dedicated to the Civilian Support Staff and Army Police. Above each is flown the appropriate ensign.

An annual Remembrance service, conducted by two padres at the Garden, follows the parade by Scouts, Guides, Cubs and Brownies from Arundel and the local villages (eight standards in attendance). For many the Service at the Remembrance Garden was no exception to previous years but for our Branch (Ford) there was a significant difference. Our Association wreath was to be laid by John Cromby (Ford Branch) an ex Junglie. Unfortunately he was taken to hospital on the previous Monday. He asked if his young grandson could lay the wreath instead and we were pleased to agree. Thomas Cromby age six wearing granddad's medals went with his dad and did us proud. John was discharged from hospital on December 2.

Editor: Wreaths were also laid by The British Legion, RAF Association, HM Prison Ford, Police, County and District Councils, the Parish Councils of Ford Yapton, Climping and Middleton and Scout and Guide troops.

A day out with the Solent Branch Alan Key

The Solent Branch visited London on Wednesday 29 August primarily for a tour of The Houses of Parliament. Setting off early (8am) from the Lee-on-Solent social club our group of 47 was expectant of a great day in London; we were not to be disappointed. We arrived in good time at the Houses of Parliament and had a group photograph taken before going through rigorous security checks and receiving our individual passes complete with neck lanyard (nothing spared)! Then it was into the coffee shop for cakes, pastries and drinks whilst we



waited for our turn to go through to the assembly hall. Our party was divided into three groups for the tour – departing ten minutes apart. Each tour was expected to be about 70/75 minutes to go through the building and the upper and lower chambers. Our third group were enjoying it so much that they took more than two hours to explore the history of the British Parliamentary system and the wonderful portraits. Next it was a walk to the embankment quay to catch the water taxi down the river to Greenwich for our visit to the RN College and hospital that is now a museum. The ride took about 40 minutes passing St Paul's Cathedral, HMS President, HMS Belfast, Canary Wharf, The Globe Theatre and Tower Bridge – complete with the logo for the Para Olympics opening on the same day; the torch was due to pass the College at about 6pm.

HMS Ocean was berthed at Greenwich as the command post for the security in the capital during the Olympics and Paralympics. We had a wonderful tour of the College buildings with their superb ceiling and wall paintings. The dining room has been left in the layout it would have been when in full operation as a naval hospital and the sailors skittle alley in the basement of the main building has been restored to full operational use. Obviously we all had a go at skittles – some of the balls weighed a ton, how the recuperating sailors of the 1800s managed is a wonder!

On completion there was time to visit the cafe for tea, coffee, more cakes and some of the cafe's own beers brewed on site.

We departed for home (5pm) for our prearranged dinner (approx. 7.15pm at the Hampshire Hog, Clanfield) after a super day out. It was a fairly long trip back via Kent; many roads were closed because of the Olympic Torch passing through London on the last part of its journey to the Olympic Stadium.

Taranto Night with the Solent Branch

The Solent Branch annual Taranto Night dinner was held at HMS Collingwood. One hundred and sixty three people sat down for Dinner that night. The Chairman Paul 'Pedro' Pedrick hosted guest speaker Cdr. Ken Jones RN Rtd – the last incumbent Commander of HMS Daedalus before it closed



and currently the CEO of HMS Warrior. HMS Warrior launched in 1860 and completed in 1861, was the pride of Queen Victoria's fleet and in her time, the ultimate deterrent.

Yeovil Branch's Twenty Fifth Birthday year

Bob Ridout

Twenty Twelve was an enjoyable year of activities and entertainment. It was also a 'special' year it being our Twenty Fifth Birthday. To celebrate, I organised a weekend trip to Eastbourne (April 27-30). It was booked through our local coach tour company – my son-in-law being the driver. The price was very reasonable and the celebration was well supported by the Branch. We travelled to Eastbourne on the Friday and Saturday was a time for some to explore Eastbourne others got out the bus pass out and went to Brighton for the day and this gave our driver a 'bit of a break'. As I had previously contacted the local RAFA, on Saturday evening some of us decided to go to their club. Here we were made 'most welcome'. On the Sunday our first stop on the coach trip was Hastings. Then on to Rye, a beautiful and an interesting place to wander around and one that quite a few of us had never visited. On Monday it was time to go home, but not before we had visited Winchester for lunch and an opportunity to shop etc.

At our June meeting we had a visit from a Yeoman Warder of the Tower. It was a very entertaining evening with the talk typical of an ex army sergeant major He brought along some of his regalia which was 'worth a few thousand'. In October, the club where we meet laid on a Trafalgar night dinner to which we were invited to attend. Again, this was a very entertaining evening. Finally at our December meeting a part subsidised Christmas dinner and 'draw' was organised at our local 'Table Table' restaurant (The Airfield Tavern).

This year (2013) monthly slots are 'fully booked'. Our Talk will be given by the Crewkerne Town crier. One evening has been set aside for Members talks and we will have the regular 'games evenings' (Skittles, Beetle Drive and Card Bingo).

HMS Daedalus 2012

A step back in time – Terry Gidman

We (the Gidmans and the Murrays) arrived at the Lee-on-Solent Memorial, at what we considered to be in good time for the TAGA Memorial Service, but we were far too early. Peter Murray and I decided to walk as far as the main gate of HMS Daedalus, leaving Margaret and Jenny in the car – it was quite cold and windy. On reaching the gate, what a shock! It was wide open and manned by two naval ratings, so we introduced ourselves. The main road along the seafront by the Memorial was closed, traffic was being diverted through the old air station and the ratings were controlling traffic flow. The Memorial service is administered by HMS Sultan, where the two ratings were based.

The air station holds fond memories for both Peter and I, so we asked if we could have a quick trip down memory lane. This involved a walk past the guardroom, NAAFI block, sick bay, school and the messes in which we had spent lots of time. On returning to the gate Peter decided to go for his camera while I chatted to the ratings. It turned out that although based at RNAS Yeovilton, they were on their POs' course in avionics at HMS Sultan. Quite a coincidence as Peter is an ex Chief Radio Mechanician, but the course is now more maths and physics than hands-on. Many months down the line, on successful completion of their course, they both hoped to be allowed to train on the F35 fixed wing fighter as so far they had only worked on helicopters. When we told them we had been at Yeovilton working on Sea Vixens, they were all ears, unable to believe how different things used to be but life moves on and things change. As we left we wished them well with both their course and F35 aspirations, thanked them for allowing us to wallow in nostalgia for a few fleeting moments and left having learnt something of what life is like in today's Fleet Air Arm.



Daedalus Revisited – Peter Murray

My first encounter with HMS Daedalus was 53 years ago. During my Killick's Course at HMS Ariel (Worthy Down). I heard a lot about a place called Daedalus and wondered what it was like. I did not have long to wait to find out. Immediately after completing the Killick's course I was drafted in 1959 to Daedalus, where I spent a couple of years doing the Mechanician's Course. I thoroughly enjoyed my time there and those were the days when Lee-on-Solent still had its Tower with the Ballroom. In fact I well remember seeing Wilfred Pickles 'Have A Go Joe' show in Lee Tower. The Mechanician Course proved to be invaluable both in my service career and later in civilian life. So my memories of Daedalus are fond and strong.



I was delighted when in May of this year for the TAGS Memorial at Lee-on-Solent, Terry and I found the main gates of Daedalus and that the Ratings kindly allowed me into Daedalus with my camera. Oh! – what a shock I got. It was almost like a ghost town, left as if abandoned in haste. Only furnishings had been removed, otherwise all the buildings were fully intact. There were many signs of dilapidation and neglect but it was exactly as I remember it, but without the people and the hustle and bustle of activity.

I walked past the guard room turning right, with the NAAFI on my left, down past the sick bay to look at my old mess block, Grenville. Then there were of course Duncan, Exmouth, Cunningham, and Blake blocks. Looking through the windows of these blocks it seemed to me that given a team of painters and decorators the whole place could quickly be brought back to life. It was sad and felt eerie. Such a shame to see Daedalus abandoned in this state. Perhaps it would have been better had it gone altogether. Nevertheless I thoroughly enjoyed this unexpected return visit to HMS Daedalus.

'Time marches on, everything changes and nothing is forever except memories.'

Future plans for HMS Daedalus

The former HMS Daedalus site between **Stubbington** and **Lee-on-Solent** is expected to undergo a huge regeneration. The site was designated as one of 11 enterprise zones around the country by the Government last August (2011). The 400 acre site is split over the boundary between 2 Councils. More than a million square feet of employment space could be created on the airfield. The hope is to attract around 3,700 new jobs over the next 14 years – mainly in the aerospace and marine industries. The local councils have agreed to limit the height of any planned large manufacturing buildings to be built close to homes in Stubbington, to nine metres and to limit the use of the airfield to 40,000 flights a year. Currently the runway is used by a variety of flying and gliding clubs and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's helicopter.

The Squadrons

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Duke of York Falklands Anniversary visit to RNAS Yeovilton

The Duke of York, who saw active service onboard HMS Invincible as a RN helicopter pilot with 820 Naval Air Squadron in the Falklands War, visited the Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton to attend a Service of commemoration at the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church St Bartholomew's. Serving Airmen from the Navy alongside Falklands Veterans – some who had also served with the Prince during 1982 – paid their respects to fallen comrades. The Fleet Air Arm Falklands Veterans found the date June 14 poignant because it coincided with the Argentinean surrender 30 years ago. The service was conducted by Rev Tudor Botwood and Tina Cullen Verger at St Bartholomew's organised the Event. Tina had served as a Wren Engineer during the Falklands War. She saw the Wessex, Sea King and Harrier squadrons departing from RNAS Yeovilton at the rush to the South Atlantic. She recalled the day she heard the radio announcement that the Atlantic Conveyor had gone down. *"I saw the look on everyone's face, it was all a bit surreal really. Not very pleasant, we worried a lot about the people we knew."*

Warrant Officer Aircrewman John Sheldon (at the time a PO with 846 Naval Air Squadron) spoke of 3 Sea Kings from the squadron lost during the war, killing fellow aircrewmen, PO Ben Casey and Cpl Doc Love. Lieutenant Commander Phil Thornton who was with Prince Andrew in 820 NAS on board HMS Invincible recalled the end of the war *"..... a memorable moment when the Ship's Commander Air came over the intercom, after 89 days, and stood us down from flying stations. It was my 23rd birthday and the first time since the war started that we sat down in the Wardroom for a mess dinner."*

The last words go to Commander Nick Foster, a Pilot who served on board the MV Atlantic Conveyor in 1982 who summed up his feelings for the day:

"I was a pilot in 845 NAS and on the Atlantic Conveyor when two Exocet Missiles hit us. I lost some of my sailors that day and my thoughts were of them today as we remembered the War." Later that day the Duke of York (Patron of the FNHT, the FAA Museum and the RNHF) met the Trust's Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Museum Director at the museum where he saw the new Falklands Exhibition and the new addition to the RNAS Yeovilton itinerary – the Wildcat AH 1. At his final stop, the Royal Navy Historic Flight he took a flight in the iconic Swordfish.

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The Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church St Bartholomew's

St Bartholomew's was once the Parish Church of Yeovilton village, now it is known as the Fleet Air Arm Church St Bartholomew's (affectionately known as St Bart's) and has become the spiritual home of the Fleet Air Arm. It has also been the home of the 'old' Fleet Air Arm Association Standard.

Since 1940, when RNAS Yeovilton (HMS Heron) was commissioned, the Royal Navy has always enjoyed a close friendship with the Yeovilton Parish. Before the opening of a Royal Naval cemetery on the South side of St Bart's in 1942, fifteen victims of air accidents were buried in the Parish Churchyard. The cemetery is beautifully maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and has its own Memorial. In the Church are Books of Remembrance that contain the names of ex-service personnel whose ashes are interred in the cemetery.

When the Church became structurally unsafe in 1988 and funding for its repair not available, the Royal Navy purchased St Bart's from the Diocese of Bath and Wells for £1. National and International appeals raised the £300,000 needed to fund the restoration work. The church was re-opened in 1993 as the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church

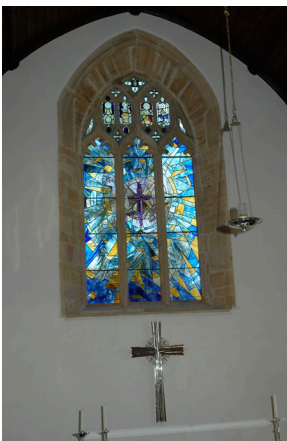
St Bartholomew's. This change of ownership from Parish Church to Military Church saved an important historical building from destruction and neglect.

The majority of St Bart's was built in the 13th and 14th Centuries and many medieval features still survive – a stone altar top (or Mensa) buried under the Chancel floor during the restoration in 1992 (restored to its rightful place in 2009), octagonal 15th Century font, a rarely seen wafer oven and chimney and a holy water stoup by the west door, just to name a few.

In its Memorial Chapel lies the Fleet Air Arm Roll of Honour: six volumes dating from 1912 recording all the names of the men and women who have died in the service of the Fleet Air Arm.

The stained glass window in the Memorial Chapel was given by HMS Daedalus to commemorate the dedication of the church. It includes the crests of the Royal Naval Air Stations in commission at that time. The chapel is enclosed by an oak and glass screen presented by the New Zealand Fleet Air Arm Association whose crest is engraved on the glass. In this Chapel is also the first National Fleet Air Arm Association standard which was 'laid up' on September 4 2002.

A recent addition to celebrate the Millennium has been a stained glass window named 'Resurrection Light'. It was created by a local craftsman and made of quality English glass.



*The Millennium window
'Resurrection Light'*

Also on display at St Bart's is a 'coat of arms' tapestry created by Jackie, (wife of David Gaskin, Daedalus Branch). It was made to mark the Centenary year of Naval Aviation. The initial contact with the RNAS Yeovilton Centenary team was arranged with the help of FAAA Yeovil Branch member Dave Clarke. Commander Bowker helped Jackie with the content of the piece. It took about six months to embroider and complete the coat of arms which incorporated three types of aircraft: a biplane, helicopter and the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II. Jackie and David presented the tapestry to Rev Ron Martin on October 9 2009 at the St Bart's service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance. The Church has on view a wide range of 'kneelers' embroidered by Members of the various Fleet Air Arm Associations. These in themselves reflect a wealth of history and a feel of 'ownership'.



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Tina Cullen the Verger at St Bartholomew's was at the church to receive Members of the Fleet Air Arm Association on their visit in 2012. They were to discover that the Church is not only the spiritual home of the Fleet Air Arm but a building of historical interest and for the bereaved it is a place of focus.

Editor: This is only a very brief summary of what St Bart's can offer the visitor. Visitors are always welcome. On Sundays there is a Eucharist Service but if you are making a special visit, you are advised to telephone in advance to avoid disappointment. For the locals a special message, "The Chaplaincy are looking for someone to come and open the church for an afternoon a week, to host visitors and to generally make the church available for the public – a car is necessary." Anyone interested can call or email Tina Cullen: Tel: 01935 455257 (Chaplaincy), Email: Yeovilton-chaplaincy-verger@mod.uk. The telephone number for the FAA Museum Curator is: 01935 841471

Junglies make the French Connection

Exercise Corsican Lion was the name of a UK and French Amphibious Exercise off the coast of Corsica (renamed ‘Barbary Coast’ for the week). Sea Kings from Commando Helicopter Force were to deploy ashore Royal Marines from the Rapid Force Task Group (RFTG) alongside their French counterparts, to work as part of the new CJEF (Combined Joint Expeditionary Force) to form a specialist amphibious fighting unit that could take part in a range of sea and land operations.

The UK group with up to 3000 Sailors and Marines from the UK’s RFTG and French Naval Forces and Marines from the 2nd RiMa Regiment, met up in the Northern Mediterranean before heading towards the exercise area. Corsican Lion is the first major naval exercise to test the maritime element of the new United Kingdom and France combined force (CJEF). The French Carrier Strike group based around the nuclear powered Flagship FS Charles De Gaulle, carries up to 40 fixed wing aircraft; a mixture of fighters, bombers and reconnaissance planes.

The Junglies from HMS Illustrious took this first encounter with the French carrier to get acquainted with her flight deck and to learn valuable lessons for future operations when the UK’s own Queen Elizabeth class carriers come into service.

Lieutenant Will Orme, a Sea King Pilot was the first Junglie to touch down on the French super Carrier. “It’s an awesome size ship; it’s like a small airfield at sea. Flying onto her between the waves of fixed wing taking off and landing is pretty tight, an insight for our future Carrier operations”.

Although the main training objective is to prove that the two countries can work side-by-side, it also offers the chance to integrate each others equipment and communications. Corsican Lion comes under ‘Cougar 12’, the Royal Navy’s two month deployment to the Mediterranean. Working together gives the UK and France the flexibility and capability to conduct military strike and intervention operations whilst supporting cross-government needs by conducting regional engagement, maritime security and evacuation, delivering humanitarian aid or carrying out disaster relief. Further exercises of the CJEF will take place over the next two years as the Royal Navy moves towards a fully operational Anglo-French force.



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Junglies go back to their roots

In March 2013 seventeen members of 845 Naval Air Squadron (NAS) went to Borneo to retrace the footsteps of their former comrades who ‘cut their teeth’ in the jungles of Borneo during the incursion of Communist forces from Indonesia.

Co-ordinating the visit was Lt Charlie Peschardt who said before the group left: *“The group will be taking part in a battlefield tour of Borneo as part of the squadron’s commitment to honouring their heritage and as the finale to the 845 NAS 50th Anniversary celebrations of becoming a Commando helicopter squadron. 16 Junglies were killed during the action, and a memorial at Nanga Gaat was erected to honour these heroes of the Jungle. This memorial will be the focus for today’s members of 845 NAS who will refurbish it and pay their respects. The visit is also an opportunity to help ‘Rebalance Lives’ as life on the frontline is extremely busy – with operations in Afghanistan, maintaining readiness for UK contingency operations and transferring to the Merlin helicopter, the visit to Borneo will no doubt help maintain morale at its current peak.”*



Image © crown copyright

The 12 day trip began with acclimatisation and an introduction to Jungle Survival in Brunei and to prepare the group for a river expedition inland to Kapit District where the Nanga Gaat memorial is sited. The group also visited the local population to re-establish past links with 845 Squadron. This was underpinned by providing support to a community prior to holding the memorial ceremony at Nanga Gaat. Before heading ‘home’ to RNAS Yeovilton, the team had some leisure time to visit a number of tourist sites and to climb Mt Kinabalu aided by local guides – they were soon to realise that they had underestimated the arduous task ahead. The trip was part sponsored by the Fly Navy Heritage Trust. More to follow in AF23.

Malaysia in the 1960s

The formation of a newly independent Commonwealth country (Malaysia) which included the large island of Borneo was regarded by the Indonesian Communist President Sukarno as Indonesian territory. Following a rebellion in Brunei (December 1962) President Sukarno decided to ‘confront’ Malaysia and the British Commonwealth. The Commando Carrier HMS Bulwark was already steaming at full speed from Mombassa in Africa, towards the expected flare up in Borneo. On board were landing crafts and helicopters (including 12 new Wessex Helicopters assigned to 845 NAS) to support the troops assembled. Together with other Jungle Squadrons, 845 NAS were soon in action transporting troops from Singapore to Borneo to help quell the rebellion in Brunei and the subsequent Indonesian-inspired insurrection. It was the vital and unswerving support and can-do attitude that naval personnel provided during this campaign that endeared them to the troops on the ground. The helicopters helped to maintain frontier strong points and inserted troops at locations where they could ambush Indonesian Forces. They were also used in highly secretive operations across the border to attack Indonesian bases, sometimes with wire guided anti-armour missiles. It was the troops from this campaign that coined the moniker ‘Junglies’ which is still coveted by serving and retired personnel.

Changing a gear box in a Rock Hangar in Bardufoss

Sheltered from the freezing conditions of Northern Norway, engineers from the Commando Helicopter Force prepare to carry out a gear box change for one of the Sea King helicopters that has been taking part in a 4 month training exercise. The difficult task took place inside the austere surroundings of what is known as a 'Rock Hangar' located inside one of the granite hills that surrounds the Royal Norwegian Air Force base Bardufoss. The Rock Hangar was carved into the hills by prisoners from a concentration camp at Bardufoss during the Second World War. It was designed so that aircraft could enter directly from the runway



Image © crown copyright

through an enormous amour-plated door into a horse-shoe shaped tunnel, which was specifically arranged so that aircraft could be re-fuelled, re-armed and repaired in one of the many servicing bays along the tunnel. Once the aircraft had been repaired or re-armed they would depart directly onto the runway via another massive door.

Royal Navy Lynx XZ720

One of the most battle-hardened helicopters in recent Royal Navy history now enjoys pride of place in the Fleet Air Arm museum at RNAS Yeovilton. It has been restored as a memorial to all those who have flown and maintained the agile Lynx. Lynx XZ720 has a proud history of frontline combat Maritime service over four decades. She saw action in the Falklands (HMS Alacrity) especially when a bullet from an Argentine gun boat smashed through the windscreen just missing the pilot. During the Gulf Campaign on board HMS Gloucester (1991 216 Flight)) her pilot was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross when the helicopter and her crew carved a place in history by sinking or damaging five Iraqi gunships with Sea Skua missiles – see the tally on the fuselage. Searching for a mine at night, under the dubious light of parachute flares the crew spotted a Russian-built landing ship on its way to resupply Iraqi forces – two missiles were fired and as a consequence her pilot had to miss two surface-to-air missiles. To avoid disaster the pilot flew the agile helicopter within 20 feet of the sea. The enemy missiles passed just 180 feet away. XZ720's restoration back to her 1991 Gulf War state was completed by the Lynx Operational Support Team, at RNAS Yeovilton. The Lynx's history has made her a prime candidate for this honour.



Image © crown copyright

High in the sky above Helmand

847 Naval Air Squadron have once again deployed to Afghanistan to provide the critical task of protecting troop movements in and around Helmand province. They fly the small and highly agile Lynx helicopters that are perfectly suited to being the 'eyes in the sky' whilst giving protection to the larger Chinook helicopters as they shuttle the troops to where they need to be in the area of operation and during troop moves. This protection also 'frees up' the Apache attack helicopters for other tasking. The Lynx helicopters in Afghanistan belong to the Army, but the crews that fly and operate them are Royal Navy. The helicopters travel in pairs. Their crews have seen a real change in the pace of operations since the last time the squadron was deployed to Afghanistan. As the numbers of troops are reduced, air moves are less frequent and reconnaissance flights for future operations are fewer. In spite of this, they are still required to be at the ready and equipped with the latest in military hardware.

The Lynx helicopters used in Afghanistan look different to the traditional type seen flying around the skies in the UK. They have bigger engines to cope with the harsh climate in the Afghan desert. The engines fitted are the same as the new Wildcat helicopters, which 847 Naval Air Squadron will start training on when they return home. They will be the first military team to train in these new helicopters.



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'All the Bells'



HMS Heron (Yeovilton)



HMS Seahawk (Culdrose)

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The ceremony of 'All the Bells' echoes a long British tradition with bells being rung to celebrate historical events. Two examples of which were the Queen's Coronation in 1953 and the end of the Second World II in 1945. The London 2012 Festival – All the bells project is no exception. This project made it possible for everyone in the country to be part of a work by Turner Prize-winning artist Martin Creed – to ring 'All the bells' in the country as quickly and as loudly as possible. All were to start at the same time – 12 hours before the Olympic opening ceremony and to ring non-stop for 3 minutes. This gave a link with the London Cultural Olympiad.

On the day (July 27 2012, at 0812 precisely), throughout the country individuals, communities and organisations rang many kinds of bells. At the same time bells were rung ashore and afloat by the Royal Navy and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary across the UK and overseas. At RNAS Stations Yeovilton, (HMS Heron) and Culdrose (HMS Seahawk) the ship's bells were rung and those of the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church in Yeovilton village and St Augustine's the Yeovilton Air Station church.

The RNAS Yeovilton Chaplaincy team leader Chaplain Tudor Botwood said, "It's a wonderful project that unites the country and the Royal Navy ... and it was brilliant to hear the church bells rung so early in the morning."

Editor: St Bart's is one of the few military churches to house a fine ring of six bells. The latest bell – a gift from the Royal Naval Guild of Bellringers was a gift in 1993 and the oldest was made in Exeter in 1435. More details can be found on the St Bart's website.

Peggy's had Yeovilton 'sewn up for 50 years'

Peggy Caren celebrated in 2012, 50 years as a tailoress for the RNAS Yeovilton, at a special presentation by Commander in Chief Fleet Admiral Sir George Zambellas KCB, DSC. Peggy was 23 when she started in 1962, having learnt her suit-making and tailoring skills at Parsons & Shutes Tailors of Yeovil. She applied for the Yeovilton job after seeing the advert for a 'High-class tailoress'. She still has her original contract. 'Her' shop was situated in one of the original WWII green Nissen huts that have long since been demolished. In those

days, the skies around RNAS Yeovilton were full of carrier-based Sea Vixen fast jets, on which Peggy's husband Malcolm was serving. Her first jobs were uniform alterations, stitching medal ribbons and sewing on badges – often with the advice from Malcolm as to where badges should go. "I (Peggy) charged thruppence for a badge and I would take about five pounds a week. Sailors' uniforms were called monkey suits; there were no fly buttons or zips back then, you had a hell of a job taking it off over their heads. Few sailors had a chest full of medals when she started. Nowadays they could have three or four and some have as many as 10 or 12!"

It doesn't matter if they are a sailor or an admiral, marine or a general; everyone is treated alike. The shop is packed with uniforms of every rank and service. Customers come from military bases across the South West, all seeking the service and charm of Peggy's little shop.

Admiral Zambellas, one of her regular customers said that "Peggy is part of the Yeovilton family, everybody is thankful to her dedicated service".

As Peggy looked across at her fellow tailoress of 27 years she said "We can be so busy, but I wouldn't change it for the world." Peggy's fondest and most rewarding time was during the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002, when she prepared all of RNAS Yeovilton's uniforms and medals for a big parade at the Air Station. She remembers the long hours it took to prepare the uniforms, when she and Brenda worked late into the night and took extra work home at the weekends. Their reward – front row seats in the main stand. They watched the parade with pride and joy knowing they had sewn all the medal ribbons and badges.

Any suggestion of Peggy taking it easy or retiring her needle and thread is dismissed straight away. "I love working here and I would like to carry on for as long as I can."



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RNAS CULDROSE SAR 60 Celebrations

As part of the 'SAR 60' celebrations to mark 60 years of the Royal Navy Search and Rescue service, 'Rebel Brewery' of Penryn near Falmouth in Cornwall are brewing a special beer with the help of 771 Naval Air Squadron, based at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose. It was Leading Aircrewman, Gaz Kneeshaw's, idea. Making a 'home brew' is a hobby of his and when looking for information he 'came across' Rebel Brewery based at Penryn. He then suggested that 'a brew' would be a good way to raise money for charity. The hope is that during 2013 SAR 60 fundraising will raise over £60,000 for three charities; Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charities, CLIC Sargent (in memory of Sir Macolm Sargent) and the South West Hospice. Proceeds from the beer are expected to help SAR 60 to achieve its aim.

During the first brew of the uniquely named, 'Rebel Rescue Ale', sailors from the squadron helped out by mixing Barley grain into the 'Mash Tub' to produce the expected sweet golden liquid that will give the beer a light golden colour and have a fruity aroma. At around 4% the beer will make a great accompaniment to light meals and summer drinking.

Rob Lowe, Managing Director of Rebel Brewery said, "We're really impressed that Culdrose have taken this on. All the bars and messes on the base have agreed to stock the beer. Every penny over the cost of making the beer will go to the 771 Squadron charities. The design of the beer label has been given over to the Squadron – their input is crucial..."

The label has already been approved by senior officers at RNAS Culdrose. The eye catching design proposed has an iconic Red and Grey Search and Rescue Sea King against a blacken sky (characteristic of many Squadron rescue callouts). After the initial brew the brewery will run two to three batches a week to support sales to the public for the rest of the year; either online or in local shops and supermarkets in Cornwall.

Editor: CLIC Sargent (a merger of two Charities) is the UK's leading cancer charity for children and young people, and their families. There is a website if more information is required.



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The chief pouring the barley into the Mash Tub



LAET Collins stirring the barley

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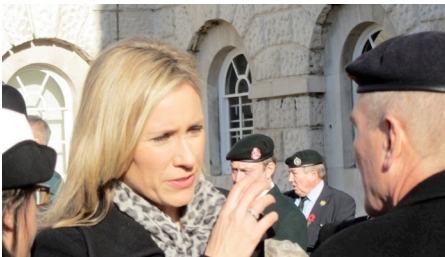
The Remembrance Day Cenotaph March Past 2012

This year (2012) the weather was good (sunshine all the way) and the FAAA were almost at the front of the parade. Representing the FAAA were nine full members, two Ordinary members and a 'friend' of the Murray's. The main march and post-march gathering at the Embankment FAA memorial went well. There was a long wait before we 'formed up' to march to the Embankment but fortunately the weather was good and we had time to mix. After the laying of the wreaths there was time for 'up spirits'.



The two ladies in the picture were from the Yorkshire branch. They were present, at the unveiling, of the monument on the June 1 2000 by his Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

Also present at the Embankment was a Deputy Head Teacher with some of her pupils from the Windale Primary School. The children had studied and thought about war, the experiences of not only the enlisted but also those family members left behind. The children expressed their feelings through poems. The poems were assembled in a book and brought to London for all to share.



Sophie Raworth was at Horse Guards Parade after the march to take the opportunity to talk to some of the veterans as they returned from the parade.

Members who have 'crossed the bar'

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June 2012 – March 2013

Jessie Andrews (nee Hendry) L/WRN (SDO)	Bristol & District Branch.
Maurice Carter EA1 (A)	Ford
Anthony Cleever LREM (A)	Ford
William Crofts NAM 1 (AE)	Great Yarmouth/Daedalus
Richard C Cronin S/A (A)	Birmingham
William Davis AM (A)	Bristol & District
John Grant CPO	Solent (Life Member)
Terry Greenslade AM (E)	Birmingham/Bournemouth
Eric Gunthorpe NAM (AE)	Daedalus
Albert Horne POAM (A)	Ford
Eddie Jenkins LAM	Hitchin (Founder Member)
George Keggen PO REL (A)	Ford branch
Roy Lepper A/POA (TAG)	Daedalus/Kent
Walter (Wally) Matthews AM (L)	Birmingham
Ronald Norfolk LAM (A)	Essex
Donald ('Don') Noel Patrick PO (AF) (E)	Birmingham
Sheena Mewha (nee Williams) L/WRN AF(AE)	Bristol & District
Peter Moody PO AF (AH)	Daedalus
Tom Perkins AA1 (AE)	Solent
Douglas 'Roy' Scadden Air Fitter (E)	Kent

In memory of those whose relatives or friends have contacted the Association.

William Davis AM (A)	FAA
Lt (A) Morley Wheeler RNVR	FAA
Ronald Norfolk LAM (A)	FAA
George Sly PO (AM)	FAA
Ronald James (Taff) Symonds CPO A/c Mechn.	FAA

May those who have 'crossed the bar' rest in peace.

The Fleet Air Arm Memorials

Alrewas Staffordshire	The National Memorial Arboretum
Eastchurch	The Eastchurch Aviation Pioneer Memorial
Lee-on-Solent	A tribute, to those with no known grave
London (Embankment)	The Fleet Air Arm Memorial
RNAS Yeovilton	The Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church, St Bart's



List of Accoutrements

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ON SALE FROM THE TREASURER – May 2013

ITEM	Cost (Incl. P&P)
Gold Wire Blazer Badge	£15.00
Silk Blazer Badge	£ 9.50
Tie	£ 9.25
Beret Badge	£ 9.25
Ladies Head Square	£11.75
Member's Lapel Badge (Gilt)	£ 4.75
Member's Spouse/Association Lapel Badge (Chrome)	£ 2.75
Life Lapel Badge	£ 1.75
Baseball Cap	£ 8.25
Plastic Medal Holder (Large)	£ 5.25
Plastic Medal Holder (small for Miniatures)	£ 3.75
Car Stickers	£ 1.75
Membership Cards	£ 0.00

ITEMS BOUGHT TO ORDER

Short Sleeve Pilot Shirt	£ 16.25
Long Sleeve Pilot Shirt	£ 16.25
Sweaters, Acrylic	£ 19.50
Sweater, Lambs wool	£ 27.50

Colours Available: White, Navy, Red, Light Blue, Maroon, Black, Grey, Bottle Green.

White and Light Blue not available in Lambswool

Sizes when ordering: Sweaters 32" to 59" in 2" stages.

Shirts, S, M, L, XL, XXL.

Prices may change due to an increase in VAT (2013)

ORDERS TO THE TREASURER

Cheques made payable to the **Fleet Air Arm Association**.

Money with order please to:

Michael Worship, 3 Arundel Drive, Fareham, Hants, PO16 7NP

Items will be ordered by ME, and sent direct to you by the supplier, who will invoice me.

This is to safeguard against non-Members of the FAAA purchasing these items.

Berets can be obtained from:

Baun & Co. Naval Tailors & Outfitters, 14, Queen Street Portsmouth. PO1 3LH.

Tel. 02392 822045. Cost £9.00 plus Post & Packaging (last known).

FAAA Branch Details

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BIRMINGHAM – 2nd Thursday at 1200 Noon
The Nautical Club, Bishopsgate St. Birmingham B15 1ET
Secretary – Sue Halladay 0121 3572783

BRISTOL AND DISTRICT – 2nd Monday at 2000
The Royal British Legion Club, Rodway Road,
Patchway, Bristol
Secretary – Eric Pitt 01179 241803

COTSWOLD – 1st Friday at 2000
18 Commercial Road, Gloucester
Secretary – Mike Humphries 01453 547436

EASTBOURNE – Last but one Thursday at 1200
Odd months only. The Moorings, Pevensey Bay
Secretary – Barry Simons 01825 872539

ESSEX – 2nd Thursday at 2000
RAFA Club, Chelmsford
Secretary – Peter Roalf 01279 431599

FORD – Last Thursday at 1930
The Sportsman, Littlehampton, West Sussex
Secretary – Peter Colston 01903 715139

GREATER MANCHESTER – 1st Monday at 1300
Ex Servicemen's Club, Stretford
Secretary – Jim Buie 0161 8653435

GREAT YARMOUTH – 2nd Monday at 1400
Conservative Club, Gorleston
Secretary – Mike Denton 01493 664177

HANWORTH – 1st Wednesday at 1200 Noon
R.N.A. Club, Park Road, Hanworth
Secretary – Terry Lowden 0208 9483979

HITCHIN – 2nd Wednesday at 2000
The Sun Hotel, Hitchin
Secretary – Don Rice 01480 812346

KENT – 4th Monday at 1900
R.N.A. Club, Church Hill, Ramsgate
Secretary – Mike Foote 07789 080258

NORTH EAST HANTS – 4th Tuesday at 1230
The Brewers Fayre, Aldershot
Secretary – Mike Pomeroy 01276 502358

SOLENT – Last Thursday at 2030
Lee-on-Solent Community Centre
Secretary – Peter Westbrook 023 92580158

SOUTH DOWNS – 4th Wednesday at 1130
The Restaurant, Shoreham Airport
Secretary – Gerald Prince 01273 302387

WATFORD – 2nd Sunday at 1100
Carpenters Park Community Hall, Herts
Secretary – Peter Murray 020 8428 2621

WREKIN – 1st Friday at 2000
T.S. Wrekin, Donnington, Telford
Secretary – Gareth Price 01902 773197

YEOVIL – 3rd Tuesday at 2000
The Old Barn Club, Old Barn Way, Yeovil
Secretary – Bob Ridout 01935 424148

YORKSHIRE – Last Saturday at 1300
New Headingley Club, Leeds
Secretary – Albert Firth 01924 525656

DAEDALUS – Headquarters Roll, No meeting place
Secretary – Peter Roalf 01279 431599

Always contact the Secretary in case the meeting has
been cancelled or moved.

