



# The Fleet Air Arm Association



Airey Fairey

Issue No.17 – Summer 2009





## **THE FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION**

<i>Patron</i>	Admiral Sir Raymond Lygo KCB
<i>President</i>	Vice Admiral Sir Adrian Johns KCB, CBE, ADC
<i>Honorary Vice President</i>	Rear Admiral Simon Charlier ADC
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<i>Chairman</i>	Brian Bingham

The Fleet Air Arm Association  
c/o The Royal British Legion  
Allenton Branch  
Chellaston Road  
Derby  
DE24 9AF



# Fleet Air Arm Association

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## Executive Committee

Chairman	Brian Bingham (Ford)	01903 770295
Vice Chairman	Arnold Thompson (Daedalus)	0239278 6443
Treasurer	Michael (Ben) Worship (Solent)	01329 284917
Secretary	Robert Bird (Essex)	01473 682709
Standard Bearer	Barry Simons (Eastbourne)	01825 872539

## Committee Members

Terry Lowden (Hanworth)	0208 9483979
Barry Simons (Eastbourne)	01825 872539
Bob Ridout (Yeovil)	01935 424148
George Rose (Greater Manchester)	0151 6251432
Doug Wyatt (Watford)	01442 265121

## Ex Officio Members

Membership Secretary	Arnold Thompson (Daedalus)	0239278 6443
Magazine Editor	Margaret Gidman (Watford)	01923 676619
Federation Representative	Len Owen (Derbyshire)	01332 514030
Daedalus Branch Secretary	Arnold Thompson (Daedalus)	0239278 6443
Web Master	Ray 'Happy' Day (Daedalus)	01934 626440

## Websites

- The Fleet Air Arm Association website [www.faaa.org.uk](http://www.faaa.org.uk)
- The Fleet Air Arm [www.fleet-air-arm.com](http://www.fleet-air-arm.com)
- Fleet Air Arm Museum [www.fleetairarm.com](http://www.fleetairarm.com) (Yeovilton RNAS) 01935 842600

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Front Cover picture - an artist's impression of the aircraft carrier of the future. Download from Royal Navy Photographic Image Database [www.royalnavyimages.co.uk](http://www.royalnavyimages.co.uk) The Photographic Image Database (Royal Navy Photographic Specialisation). Once you have registered, you can look at all recent photographs that have been taken. Acknowledgement must be made if the photographs are used.

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## Editorial

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W elcome to Issue 17 of the Airey Fairey as expected there has been plenty to report. The Magazine has six key sections – Centenary Events, Memory Lane, Donations and Fund raising, Branch News, Yeovilton Squadrons and the Obituaries.

Rather than allow the Centenary Events to dominate the copy (for some this will not be news) I have set aside items for Issue 18 (including The Royal Garden Party). This leaves space for copy from Members to be included in their appropriate Sections and keeping news current.

There has been a steady flow of Branch copy from our Members and this flow of information is much appreciated. Press releases for the Squadrons based at RNAS Yeovilton (the photographs used here are Crown Copyright) are a welcome update of their activities.

I have had a request (forwarded by the Webmaster) for information related to the Falklands War (see Page 18) and some personal requests following the AGM at Market Bosworth.

As you read the Magazine you will see that it has been a busy time for our National Committee and the National and Branch Standard bearers. In the case of the Standards there will be more detail of their activities in Issue 18 when all the reports are assembled.

I would like to thank everyone for the support that they have given me in providing copy for the Magazine. I hope the reader will enjoy the wide range of copy that this feed back gives. Special thanks go to Brian Bingham and Arnold Thompson for keeping me ‘up to date’ with all their visits and Ray Whitehouse for his continuous flow of photographs. Terry (hubby) still continues to help me with the essential checking of the facts, proofing copy and accepting that time is needed to bring the Airey Fairey to print (no mean task!).

The Centenary Events will come to an end releasing space and time for the material I have recently received from Bournemouth, Isle of Wight, and Daedalus to be processed.

BUT as always – remember the AIREY FAIREY, your Magazine needs you. Branch News is essential and the feature articles are always of interest. Without copy there is no magazine.

My telephone number is 01923 676619 or you can pass any information you might have through your Branch Secretary.

Enjoy the magazine

*Margaret*

# FAAA News in Brief

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## National Standard Events

This year the National and Branch standards are very much in demand. As of July 4th the National Standard has been paraded at seven known events with a further five expected. Major highlights to date have been the two Sheppey events and the Parade after the Memorial Service at St Paul's Cathedral. The Chairman and others met Commodore Westwood – the Assistant Chief of Staff (Aviation), at the Weymouth and Portland Armed Forces day. He was delighted to see them. Attending the event was our National Standard, the Bristol Standard carried by a Sea Cadet and the Yeovil Branch Standard. In support were 7 members of the Association (Bristol (3), Yeovil (1), Ford (1), Daedalus(2)).

## Membership Report

At the Hanworth meeting in July (2009), our Membership Secretary Arnold Thompson, reported that the number of serving members had increased by 128 to bring the total number for the Daedalus Branch to 289 and rising. A large increase in work for Arnold but it is excellent news.

At Sheppey (July 26th) Peter Roalf was presented with his Life Membership Certificate for his services to the Association. More copy related to the presentation of the certificate at Sheppey in Issue 18.

## National Secretary

Following the resignation of Ray Whitehouse the Chairman asked our new Secretary Robert (Dicky) Bird (approached by Peter Roalf to consider the post) to attend the Hanworth meeting to introduce himself. Dicky joined as an Artificer in 1953 and left in 1983. Most of his service time was spent on Commando Squadrons, 845, 846 and 848, a stint on MARTSU and the Field Gun Crew (twice). He is a busy man - Secretary of the Ipswich RNA and the Ipswich Sea Cadets.

## North Weald Air Britain Fly In

Chairman (Brian Bingham) and Vice Chairman (Arnold Thompson) attended this Event with our display. Peter Roalf (Essex) and Les Hutchins (Hitchin) were also there to assist them over the 2 days. Two new members were recruited. Donations from the public amounted to £51.

Our tent used for displays has been retired and a new one (3m x 4m with ground bars) has been purchased.

## FN100 Centenary Display

In July our National Chairman (Brian) attended the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton RNAS (Somerset) for the opening of the Centenary display by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. The Museum is well worth a visit. [www.fleetairarm.com](http://www.fleetairarm.com)

## Watford Branch Lottery Grant

A Lottery grant will enable the Watford Branch to attend the unveiling of the FAA Memorial at the Arboretum in September. Key player for the Lottery application was Peter Murray the Membership Secretary.

## AGM Market Bosworth 2009

The AGM held at Market Bosworth was a great success. Our thanks to Barry and Dorothy for all their hard work and the organisation required to make the weekend a happy one. In fact so successful was the choice of venue that Barry has booked it, at no increase in price, for next year's annual gathering of the Fleet Air Arm Association. Barry who almost retired at the AGM has agreed to continue. **Remember applications for the 2010 AGM meeting (9th - 11th April 2010) have to be with Barry by 18th October 2009.**



The proceedings of the AGM, at which our President Sir Adrian Johns was present, have been recorded in the minutes sent to the Branch Secretaries but below are some requests and details of the weekend itself.

Audrey Bell (Daedalus Branch) celebrated her 80th birthday and wishes to thank everyone for signing her birthday card which will be 'treasured always as a memory of that day'. Peter Roalf wishes to thank all (in particular the ladies) for the assistance, care, attention, understanding and help that they gave to his wife Pearl and consequently himself. On the Sunday Peter and Pearl with friends Brenda and Dave Ascott visited Tamworth RNA to meet Douglas (Duggie) Heath (Daedalus Branch) and his S/ms. Duggie is gathering together information related to his RNA/FAA days (more to come in later Issues).



The majority of the Members spent Sunday at the Black Country Museum for a step back in time (19th and early 20th Centuries). They strolled through the open air site where historic buildings and features have been brought together to vividly recreate a past way of life. Some waist lines suffered - 'fish and chips' the old way. Definitely for all, a memory lane trip – one, your grandchildren would enjoy just as much as the adults. Others also went on the Dudley Canal to see the limestone caverns, and some became miners for an hour – a walking tour with lamps (sorry torches). A welcome addition was the old Trolley buses that gave a lift to the foot sore. Thanks to Ray for arranging this educational and very enjoyable trip.



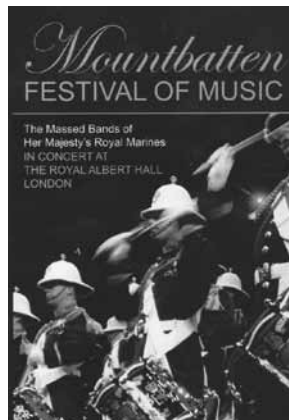


## Mountbatten Festival of Music

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### A night to remember – Fred Good, Watford Branch

On Thursday 19th February a group of us (Watford FAAA) went to the Royal Albert Hall to celebrate a number of things. My wife Beryl and I were being treated to a night out by our dear friend Mary McCarthy. This was her way of helping us celebrate our 60th Wedding Anniversary. We were there to enjoy the music of the massed bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines – the theme this year for the Festival was the celebration of 100 Years of Naval Aviation. We were also looking forward to seeing Mary's Grandson, Musn. Andrew (Andy) Mears (HMRM Band Scotland) in action – especially as he was to perform a Jazz solo (Georgia). Andrew plays both the Tenor and Alto Saxophone. His composing skills were also reflected in the musical arrangement of 'Round Midnight' – composed by American Jazz pianist Thelonious Monk, and played on the vibraphone by Musn. Phil Trudgeon.



The climax of the night was a new composition which won the competition (launched in July 2008) to 'produce an original piece of music to accompany a film celebrating 100 Years of Naval Aviation'. It was open to all Musicians. The Fly Navy Heritage Trust proposed and sponsored a national competition and received 97 applications. Sixteen full scores were submitted. The winner was former Warrant Officer Royal Marines Michael McDermott. The piece is appropriately named Daedalus. It cleverly included the bugle call 'Hands to Flying Stations' and we were there for its world premiere performance.

We were accommodated in a box, which made us feel rather special. I am not often lost for words, but I couldn't find one word, in my vocabulary, which was adequate. It was such an emotional, joyful, uplifting, proud, happy, tear-jerking experience – one I shall always be glad to cherish.

### Kismet?

I (Fred) expect many reunions have been made this year but the Albert Hall had yet another twist to it for me. In February, Terry Lowdon phoned me. A Member from Hanworth was looking for a Ray Thomas (our Chairman). Phone numbers were exchanged – job done. Or was it? There were a number of doors I could have used to enter the Albert Hall but went through the nearest one. I met two chaps wearing FAAA blazers. One of them was the Member from Hanworth. He had spoken with Ray for the first time in 50 years – he used to be his mess Killick. That's fate for you.

## Eastchurch – Service of Thanksgiving for 100 years of Naval Aviation

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Arnold Thompson Vice President FAAA

Our journey to Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey, after a very pleasant drive through the garden of England culminated when officials directed us on 1st May 2009, to the car park set aside for veterans and guests.

Several such official guides were on hand to direct you to the centre of the events – the Pioneer Memorial just opposite the gates to the Church. Several villagers and visitors were already congregating around the memorial as were members of the Associations, sporting their blazers displaying the Association badges with their medals shining in the sunlight. As the time for the start of the service approached the village ‘square’ was filling with camera crews and photographers jostling for position.

The Service started with the Guard, a contingent of Fleet Air Arm Trainees from HMS Sultan marching to a spot in front of the memorial followed by the National Standard of the Fleet Air Arm Association paraded by Don Armstrong Rich of the Eastbourne Branch. The Parade was called to attention as the VIPs, which included Sir Raymond Lygo KCB and his wife, Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, the Mayor of Swale Council, The Chaplain of the Fleet, the Venerable John Green QHC, and Commander Max Snow, arrived. The guard then gave a general salute which was taken by Sir Raymond, after which the parade was stood at ease.





The Mayor of Swale then gave a welcome address, which was followed by the service, a reading by the Reverend Barry Birch, the Rector of Eastchurch and Cdr Snow who gave his family reminiscences – his grandfather served in the Royal Naval Air Service and saw action during WW1 and was then transferred to the fledgling Royal Air Force and his father became a Naval Pilot and saw action during WW2 and then his own career as a Naval Pilot. Peter Roalf, Essex Branch laid a wreath on behalf of the Fleet Air Arm Association. After the Blessing by the Chaplain of the Fleet, Rear Admiral Charlier gave a short speech on the early days of flying and what we owed to the

people of Eastchurch and those early aviators and that the ethos had been carried through to today's Fleet Air Arm. A flypast which included GR7 and GR9 Harriers and a historic Sea Vixen followed. The Guard and Standard Bearer were marched off, and the service came to an end. We all made our way to the village hall where refreshments had been laid on and everyone could sit down and relax. A number of the veterans were interviewed by reporters and camera crews. Thanks must go to Swale Council for the organisation of the event and the staff at the village hall for the provision of food and drinks. It was a very good day to begin our centenary celebrations.

*Editor: The Sheppey Events have shown the importance of Sheppey and its links with 'early flight', Members of the FAAA and others who served at that time. Apart from the Cenotaph in November and Taranto (usually commemorated at Branch level), there appears to be no 'Public gathering' in the annual calendar for the Fleet Air Arm Association. After the two Sheppey Events some may think that this should be a consideration?*



## Further Centenary Events 2009

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Other key Centenary Events to be reported in Issue 18 are The Royal Garden Party July 9; Sheppey July 26; Memorial and Dedication Service at the Arboretum September 11; HMS Illustrious visit to Liverpool September 18-21; The Royal British Legion Ceremonies November 07/08.

## Visit to HMS Illustrious

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Terry Gidman Watford Branch

At 0815 Saturday 9th May 2009, 25 members of Watford FAAA were eagerly awaiting the coach to Greenwich. Seventy five minutes later we were there and, after a short stroll through the mostly quiet streets, were confronted by the sight of HMS Illustrious. There she was, in her awe inspiring glory, moored just upstream of the Royal Naval College. Standing there, all that could be heard, apart from camera clicking, was, 'Will I be able manage the short ferry ride and climb those steep steps'. Fears were soon allayed, by a very pleasant lady lieutenant who checked our names and assured us we would have no problems. At 1100 hours we boarded the ferry, along with several other groups, for the short sail to the 'Illustrious'. Onto the lighter, up the ladder and we were aboard – for most of our group the first time aboard an aircraft carrier for nearly fifty years and for others 'never'.



We were divided into smaller units and introduced to our guides for the tour. Along the hangar deck we went, took a quick look at the Harrier and Helicopters ('eyes' of the ship when a greater tracking range is required) and other more familiar aspects of ship's hangars, with everyone commenting on how much smaller She is than the 'Ark Royal' or the 'Eagle' of the sixties. Down ladders, along passages to the Communications Centre, where there are installed more screens and computers than seen at a television outlet! Not surprising, as this is the nerve centre of a modern warship and battles can be won and lost here. More passages and ladders to the Machine Control Room which controls everything to allow the ship to operate, engines, propellers, electricity, fresh water and the like. Next, it's the flight deck, a hive of activity even though the ship was moored. Helicopters were being manoeuvred into position ready for the afternoon flying display. But what is this! No catapults, no arrester wires but a ski jump, one can only dream of how it used to be.

Into the island, 'I'll bet that's where they sign the A700s' said a colleague as we passed one office full of manuals, then down more ladders and we were back in the hangar. Here, counted, checked, our thanks and goodbyes said to the crew members who were our guides for this memorable but 'all too short visit', we left Illustrious behind.

After lunch we were treated to a flying display, showing various aspects of naval helicopter operations – a display which was greatly appreciated by the crowds gathered alongside the Thames. The journey back to Watford and the Branch meeting the following day were dominated by the 'Illustrious', the stories of the previous day and the memories of 'how it used to be'! All would have loved to have had more time to chat with the crew and explore this great Aircraft carrier.

## Greenwich Displays May 6th – May 10th 2009

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The Illustrious was anchored off Greenwich for five days where She was used to host various festivities including a gala dinner ‘on board’ ship. The Ship’s helicopters took part in Aerial displays – including the Flypast over the Illustrious on May 7th when she flew the Royal Standard during the time HRH Prince Andrew and other dignitaries were ‘on board’. Her crew were also released to help with the organised activities in the Park areas close to the College.

The static display in the grounds of the old Naval College included a small number of aircraft including the Harrier.

Anyone wishing to know more about the new Aircraft carriers went to the information tent, where not only were there details of the structure of the Carriers but statistics related to the expected daily running requirements once the ship became operational. The Commercial Groups involved in their construction were also detailed.

Schools took the opportunity to bring their students to look around the display area where Service personnel were always willing to answer their questions.

At the meeting point, we (Watford Group) met Lt Zena Wynn-Jones. She was responsible for the organisation of the FAAA Groups wishing to ‘board’ Illustrious. This gave us an opportunity to thank her for making the arrangements for the Group visit. For Fred Good, it was an opportunity to ‘put a face to the name’ on the e-mails.







# St Paul's Service of Thanksgiving – Friday 8th May 2009

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As seen through the eyes of Anne Mumford – FAAA Hitchin Branch

When Tom informed me that he was applying for tickets for the Service of Thanksgiving in Celebration of the Centenary of Naval Aviation 1909 – 2009, I gave the subject little thought. It was a long way ahead and acceptance was not guaranteed, so when the official invitations arrived a feeling of apprehension came over me. What would I wear? Would I get through the day? Could I cope with London? After all, my days as a naval wife were long past and, as a rating's wife I was never invited to anything as grand as this. Now the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope KCB, OBE was requesting the pleasure of our company!

Tom's attitude was 'not to worry' the dress code was clear – for him **the** 'blazer, badge and tie' were acceptable anywhere. So with the help of my Daughter, I managed to pull together what we considered to be 'Day Dress, Hats optional'.

Travelling to London with the commuters was something I hadn't done since I lived and worked there as a twenty two year old in the latter 1960s. However, meeting our Son at the station, on his way to work, made the journey more enjoyable, and the hustle of it all was not quite so overwhelming.

On arrival at Kings Cross, Tom said we were too old to mess about with the underground and hailed a 'Fast Black' (London Taxi) to take us to St. Paul's. The journey through London was an experience in itself. London on a busy Friday is still a nightmare – but with a London 'Cabbie' using his skills and the restricted bus lanes one felt safe. We soon had St. Paul's in view.

The approach roads were decked with pristine 'White Ensigns' and the flavour of the day began to unfold, as did the weather, it started to rain! Under the shelter of the brolly and with time in hand, we made our way into Paternoster Square, adjacent to the Cathedral and found a cafe for some light refreshment. Every building was a sea of blue and gold – it seemed as though the whole of the Navy was in town.



At the Cathedral we presented our invitations, proved our identity and were escorted to our seats in the front nave. There were lots of veterans and wives present, but the Cathedral seemed awash with uniforms displaying gold rings of all numbers. Naturally being organised by the Royal Navy and with such a large congregation, it was necessary to be seated early – some forty five minutes before the service started. Not as bad as it sounds. We had time to relax and listen to some

wonderful music by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines, Portsmouth (Royal Band), followed by the Cathedral organ.

Just as I was at peace and relaxed having observed how all the other ladies were dressed, there was a nudge on my arm. It was Tom pointing at the order of service. It read – 1054 His Royal Highness, The Duke of York is received; 1055 His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales and Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Cornwall are received; both at the Great West Door.

As a staunch Royalist I had mixed feelings, on the one hand I was overwhelmed that I would, at last, be seeing the Royals in person and at the same time petrified because they would be coming down the aisle from the Great West Door – we had the first two seats in from the aisle.

At 1100 we stood as a fanfare was sounded and Their Royal Highnesses were escorted by the Dean and Chapter to their place under the Dome. Then the service conducted by the Dean, The Right Reverend Graeme Knowles began. We had three well known 'matelot' hymns; *O God Our Help in Ages Past* during which the Queen's Colour of the Fleet Air Arm was presented at the Dome Altar; *Eternal Father Strong to Save* during which there was a collection for the Fleet Air Arm Benevolent Trust and *Thine be the Glory*, when the Queen's Colour was returned. There were readings by Naval dignitaries (including a bible reading by Rear Admiral Simon Charlier – Chief of Staff (Aviation and Carriers) and Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm) and a poem, *High Flight* by John Gillespie Magee, read by the actress Kristin Scott Thomas – the daughter of a Fleet Air Arm pilot who died in a Sea Vixen in 1966. During the Service there were selected pieces beautifully sung by The Cathedral Choir. The 'Still', provided by HMS Illustrious, was piped and the Books of Remembrance normally kept at the FAAA Church at Yeovilton, were brought forward and placed on the Dome Altar in a replica of a burial at sea. These books contain a Roll of Honour – listed are every one of the 6,749 personnel who gave their lives throughout the 100 years of Naval Aviation.

Following the National Anthem, it was knee knocking time as the Royal Party came towards us and then we made our way out of the Cathedral. Though windy, the rain had thankfully ceased and from the Cathedral we were able to watch the parade led by the Royal Marine Band, the Queen's Colour escorted by the Royal Guard, followed by a contingent of officers and men from HMS Heron and HMS Illustrious, the Standards including those of the Fleet Air Arm Associations and the Veterans.

Now it was time for the reception. There were three venues – The Guildhall, Skinners Hall and Merchant Taylor's Hall. We were at the latter, where the reception was hosted by Rear Admiral Tony Johnstone-Burt, Commander Joint Helicopter Command – a very good choice for Tom who spent most of his service on the Queen's Flight at Lee on Solent





and Helicopter squadrons on board HMS Victorious and at Culdrose.

Merchant Taylor's Hall is magnificent, lots of silver and gold. Immaculate waiters and waitresses met your every need when serving delicious food and wine that seemed never ending (shame I'm almost T-Total). What I found amazing was the friendliness of all the serving personnel, right up to the Rear Admiral. It was so different to the Navy Tom served in when we were Rationed Ashore(R.A) at Culdrose.

However every good thing must come to an end, so at 3-30pm (sorry 1530 hrs.) we left the reception and hailed another 'Fast Black' to Kings Cross, caught the train and arrived home, tired but exhilarated by our day out, a day that I will never forget. Mindful also that had Tom not served in the Fleet Air Arm and more importantly not joined the Fleet Air Arm Association we wouldn't have had the opportunity to attend the Remembrance Service.

That's how I saw the event, so as you Navy types say.

Yours Aye – Anne Mumford.

## The Guildhall Reception

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Two of the guests at the Guildhall, Larry and Doreen Golding – Pearly King and Queen – Old Kent Road and Bow Bells, seen outside of the Guildhall. They were at the time talking to two very tall United States Marines who had also been at the Reception.

Larry volunteered aged 16 for the RN in 1942. He trained as a pilot in 1943 and joined the British Pacific Fleet in 1944-45. His Pearly suit decoration has a naval theme to include anchors and the FAA badge. Doreen is also a Barker in the Variety Club of Great Britain (she arranges outings for children with special needs). Larry has been a London Cabbie.

Henry Allingham was introduced to HRH Prince Charles on this occasion. Sadly Henry who was a member of the Daedalus Branch is no longer with us – he crossed the bar in July 2009. There will be further copy in Issue 18.





# Memoirs of Frank Connor

S/WRT 1940 -1946

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**F**rank Connor (long serving Member of the Greater Manchester Branch – treasurer for 16 years) crossed the Bar in August 2008. With his wife Molly he recorded his time in the Service. This is an abridged version of his ‘story’. It is both a tribute to Frank and to others who served at this time.

*Frank joined the Royal Navy on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 1940 at the age of 19 years and did ten weeks training at H.M.S Raleigh. It was the first time he had been away from home – a unique experience for him. Following training he joined H.M.S Drake, Devonport Barracks (October 1940) –a huge frightening Barracks where I experienced many Air Raids and was ‘used’ for fighting fires around the area!*

*On January 1<sup>st</sup> 1941, with 50 new Recruits and a few experienced older Naval Personnel he left the Barracks to arrive at Newcastle Station at 6am, cold, hungry and miserable but was soon to be billeted in houses near by (the families were great). His Naval destination was Walker Naval Yard where ...* On arrival at the yard we were awed by the sight of the largest ship I had ever seen. It was a stupendous sight. Rising up from the Dock Side was HMS Victorious. When we boarded Her it was a most memorable occasion. Jobs were allocated; I was on an eight barrelled Pom Pom Anti-Aircraft Gun, on watch both day and night. Attacks by German planes were numerous and could at times be seen in the night sky. We were not allowed to fire as we would have given away the position of our ship. I was later to be transferred to the larger guns over in the 4.5 Turret. Soon we were to very efficiently shoot down our first German Plane on the way to Scapa Flow.

*In March the ship left Walker Dockyard and sailed to the Firth of Forth in Scotland to take on Squadrons Fighters and Bombers prior to joining the Home Fleet and the Russian Convoys. Frank would have been ‘on board’ when the ship was ‘working up’. HMS Victorious was commissioned in May 1941. In May 1941 (Scotland) crates containing Fighter Planes were taken on board. These planes were to be assembled on approach to Malta in readiness to ‘fly them off’ for the defence of the Island. However ....*

En route we were urgently recalled to Scapa Flow with all the crated planes in the Hangar. Here we picked up nine Swordfish and six Fighters – all we had room for – and sailed out to chase the Bismarck with the battle ship HMS King George V, two Cruisers and nine Destroyers. On entering Scapa Flow we were ordered ‘away Boats Crew’. This was one of my duties when in harbour so I was handed an envelope and ordered to hand it to H.M.S Hood which was slowly getting underway and moving. We came up astern and I vividly remember a Chief Petty Officer hanging over the guardrail and reaching out to take the envelope from me – we waved and parted company. We were the last to approach HMS Hood – she was blown up by the Bismarck three days later. Only three survivors, the Chief was not one of them. These ‘vivid’ memories still remain.

We sailed in the North Atlantic to the Denmark straits. I can recall the weather was awful. I had to hang on to the Wingtips of Lt Cdr. Edmonde’s Swordfish in a gale whilst waiting for the weather to clear before the Planes could take off – armed with Torpedoes to attack the Bismarck.



They were heroes every one of them as they went into the black storm filled Arctic. They found the Bismarck, attacked and hit her with one torpedo. At the time we were not credited with the hit but History has proved we were responsible for the Home Fleet to catch and destroy her.

***The torpedo opened up a fuel tank on the Bismarck. The trailing oil was sighted by a Catalina.***

I also have memories of being on the Wheel Chocks of the planes – Fifteen of them, all revving up their engines at full throttle – and having to pull your chocks from the plane prior to take off and somehow manoeuvre yourself back to the side of the Flight Deck – all this in Arctic conditions and a 60mph wind blowing. On many occasions our Pilots took off on dangerous missions, in appalling conditions, with a grin and a wave, never to return and the waiting, after operations, for the return of the planes was a nightmare. Pilots and Crews we all knew would never return. Some landed mortally wounded to die or be killed on crashing. The Flight Deck was no place for the timid, truly the most dangerous place you could be on.

***Lt Commander Esmonde was in command of 825 Squadron and was awarded the DSO for his determination and courage during in the hunt for the Bismarck. He was later to become the first Fleet Air Arm Pilot to posthumously receive the Victoria Cross, the Supreme award.***

On our way back to Scapa Flow we were attacked by German Planes, one destroyer was sunk.

The first Russian Convoy we escorted was picked up round Iceland. A large Convoy protected by destroyers, six Cruisers, three battleships and Aircraft Carriers. During these terrible trips we saw ships disappear and sink, attacked by aircraft and U Boats, whilst facing atrocious weather – freezing cold and needing Arctic clothing to survive. The worst experience you could imagine. During an attack on the Tirpitz, which we severely damaged, we lost three aircraft. Whilst escorting a Convoy to Malta, which had to get through at all costs to save the Island, we were attacked all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. I watched the carrier Eagle sink on our starboard side. We also received a hit by a bomb which failed to explode. Cruisers Manchester and Cairo were sunk. Indomitable our sister ship hit. During these attacks I was in A1 turret firing at the attacking planes.

***Following the invasion of North Africa, in December 1942, HMS Victorious was 'lent' to the American navy and for a while became USS Robin.*** Our first encounter with the Jap Suicide Bombers was experienced when we attacked cover landings against the Japanese Island of Okinawa. We were lucky again. But the attacks were frightening.

Then home for a refit before returning to join the The British Pacific Fleet. We joined up with the Yanks for a full scale attack on Japan itself. My job was Fleet Air Arm Bomb



*Swordfish ranged on deck prior to the Attack on the Bismarck in the Atlantic (1941)*

and Ammunition Party. We fused the bombs and belted up the Ammo for the planes. After being attacked and hit by a Suicide Bomber and two near misses, many on board were killed and wounded. I was on the Flight Aft when the suicide Bomber hit forward. We were sixty miles off the coast of Japan when the Atomic Bomb was dropped.

Our orders were to sail away from Japan at full speed not knowing the reason why until we heard on the BBC of the raid and the Japanese surrender. We were based in Australia for several weeks before sailing for home and Portsmouth 27th October 1945. I was demobbed January 1946.

The HMS Victorious Association is worldwide and has 100 plus members. Their reunion is held in October each year. Its Members receive newsletters and a journal, 'Flat Top', twice yearly.

If you wish to join the Association, the Secretary and Treasurer (temporary) is Michael Humphries, who is always looking for new Members.

Email [michaelhumphries@btinternet.com](mailto:michaelhumphries@btinternet.com), telephone 01453 547436.



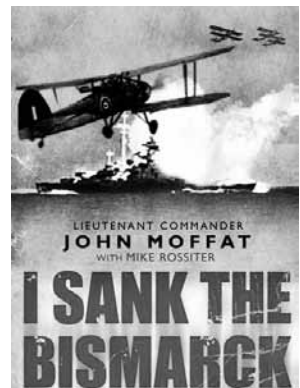
*HMS Victorious Leyte Gulf 1945 with Corsairs and Sea Otter aboard and the Captain addressing the Ship's company re awards.*



*HMS Victorious in 1966*

## I Sank The Bismarck

Lieutenant Commander John Moffat with Mike Rossiter 'I sank the Bismarck' tells the personal story of a carefree boy who joined the Fleet Air Arm, trained to be a pilot and later became involved in one of the most decisive naval battles of the Second World War. It also looks at what was happening in the early stages of the Fleet Air Arm's war during the period when John was doing his training. 'I sank the Bismarck' is published by Bantam Press. The hard back is being offered to FAAA members at a reduced price of £14.99 including postage and packaging – usual price £16.99. ISBN 978-0-593-06351-4. To obtain a copy call Bookpost plc. 01624 677 237.





## Coronation Fleet Review 1953

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Barry Simons Eastbourne Branch

*“It was interesting to read Ray Thomas’s article on the Coronation Review fly past. I was based at RNAS Ford where it was decided to reform 890 Squadron, using ARS staff who had some considerable experience with Attackers, for the Spithead fly past. The jets taking part were led by Rear Admiral Couchman flying a Vampire. It was an impressive sight to see them take off and form up. But more impressive was the skill of Rear Admiral Couchman. When leading the Squadron in he had a burst tyre but very quickly saved the day by parking his aircraft on the grass. It could have been a chaotic end to the day for the aircraft following!”*

Barry kindly lent me his Souvenir Programme ‘Review of the Fleet by Her Majesty The Queen.’ The Programme sets out the arrangements for the Fleet over the period June 9th – June 16th 1953 and includes a complete listing of ships attending, a chart showing their positions and times etc. for the Events. Purchase price? One shilling and six pence - 7.5p. Profits from the Programme sale went to naval charities.

The review of ships at Spithead will always be remembered with pride, and to refresh the memory..... In command of the Review fleet assembled at Spithead was Admiral Sir George Creasy KCB, CBE, DSO, MVO. The assembling of the Home Fleet, Reserve Fleet and HM Ships began on June 9th, took 3 days. Two birthdays were celebrated (Duke of Edinburgh (10th) and the official birthday of HM The Queen (11th). On both occasions, the ships present were dressed overall and a Royal salute was fired at noon. On June 13th there was a display of Naval Aircraft at R.N Air Station Lee on Solent.

The evening before the Review (June 14th) - the ‘people’ moved into position. Board of Admiralty embarked in HMS Redpole and HM The Queen was received, at the South Railway jetty prior to embarking in HMS Surprise. As the Royal Standard was being broken there was a Royal Salute by the Naval Saluting Battery. HRH The Duke of Edinburgh arrived later that evening.

Finally we come to the day of the Review! The Board of Admiralty and other Senior Officers are received by HM The Queen for a reception (Forenoon). Members of the Royal family are received at 2.35pm (Times were in this format rather than say 1435).

At 3pm, preceded by Trinity House Yacht Patricia, HMS Surprise left the Jetty, escorted by HMS Redpole, and arrived at Spithead at 3.30pm to a Royal Salute from the Fleet then entered the Review Lines. There were nine main lines and two additional lines for representatives of the Merchant Navy. The Review was scheduled to finish at 5.10pm (approx.) and, the Fly Past of the Fleet Air Arm took place at 5.35pm. On the evening of this momentous and memorable day, HM The Queen and party moved to HMS Vanguard for the Illumination of the Fleet and the Fleet Firework display. At 12 midnight the illumination ceased and the Review was brought to a close.

**SEVEN Aircraft carriers were disposed in Line F. Can you name them?**

## The Appleton Plaque

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Jim Buie – Secretary Greater Manchester FAAA

At the annual service at St Cross Church, Appleton Thorn, Warrington in May 1995, Greater Manchester Branch were presented with a bronze plaque commemorating shipmates who had lost their lives during the Second World War. Our associate member Shipmate Derek Leigh had discovered the plaque in the grounds of the churchyard.

It was thought at the time that the plaque was related to HMS Blackcap. This proved not to be the case. The plaque related to the years 1940 – 44 and HMS Blackcap was not commissioned until 1942. Nor did it apply to Merchant Navy Personnel. So I wrote to the Navy News, who published a note in their 'Over to you' column (July edition 1996). Within two days of publication, I received a telephone call from a shipmate in Gosport. He knew every one of the sixteen names mentioned. They all related to HMS Norfolk, most of whom had lost their lives in the action against the Scharnhorst, at North Cape. My informant gave me the name and address of the HMS Norfolk Association archivist, S/m Ken Moth who lives in Norwich. Ken was delighted to hear of the discovery. The plaque was handed over to S/ms Ken Moth and Jim Cafferty at our branch meeting in August 1996.

Following the Annual Reunion of the ship's company, further information came to light. After returning from the Scharnhorst action, HMS Norfolk went into Palmers Yard in Newcastle on Tyne for repair. The ship's chapel had been damaged in the action and the Chaplain Ken Matthews, (the prime mover in the formation of the HMS Norfolk Association) asked the yard to make the plaque, which was subsequently placed in the chapel. The plaque has now been mounted on an oak base and it is the intention that this be placed in the Dockyard Chapel in Devonport.

Membership of the Norfolk Association, which had previously been limited to those who had served in the ship up to 1945, has been extended to 1950, the date of de-commissioning.

*Editor's note: The story of the plaque (inscription below) is still NOT complete. Can you solve the mystery of 'how the plaque came to be in St. Cross churchyard'? If YES Jim would like to hear from you.*

Between the years 1940 – 44 the following men gave their lives while serving in this ship. To keep their memory alive, their friends have helped to make this place for those who come after.

JAMES FLYNN	S. FRANKS
BEN MEYRICK	JOHN MICHEL
WILLIAM LANCE	DOUGLAS KIDDLE
CHARLES HARRIS	CECIL LUCE
PHILIP NIGHTINGALE	DAVID JACKSON
WILLIAM LYNCH	CHARLES PARINI
LESLIE SQUIRE	HAROLD TOZER
MICKY WEST	JOHN VAN DE KASTEELE

## Vice Admiral Sir Adrian James Johns KCB, CBE, ADC

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I joined Dartmouth in 1973. I was inspired by flying but it was not the reason I joined the Navy, I joined to go to sea. I suppose I was still inspired by the sight of those ships at Navy Days and that is what I wanted to be part of; the flying came along a bit later when I was doing my Sub Lieutenant's course. Our appointer appeared one day, there were about a dozen of us on my course, he said 'Right you



lot I've got to get you sorted out for your specialisations. I want one hydrographer, three submariners and two aviators, and the rest of you will be seamen...hands up the aviators. I looked round and to my amazement no one had moved, so I put my hand up and then another followed suit. 'Right you two will do!' So it was almost accidental that I got into flying, but I was delighted. I thought as everyone else did, that aviation was going to be too difficult, too tricky and a long stony old path. Nothing could be further from the truth; today I tell all the youngsters coming through to volunteer to fly, just go for it. If you don't pass the aptitude test... well – 'C'est la vie'.

Whilst at Dartmouth another event happened that further prompted my interest in aviation. We all went up to the top field, to see a couple of helicopters arrive. First a Hillier turned up from Culdrose; it flew over and landed. A Midshipman got out. I waited for 'a grown up' to appear but to my surprise he had driven this thing up solo. There he was, with his wings, and I thought that was pretty good, that really impressed me. One of the saddest things today is that people are that much older when they join and subsequently much older when they qualify. I remember frontline Pilots and Observers as Sub-Lieutenants and Midshipmen – you just do not see it these days, I regret that.

I commanded my first ship as a Lieutenant, and then a further two ships as a Commander. I remained an aviator all through that time but it's less likely that someone is going to be able to do that today.

I had many high points during my time in the service; one of the best has to be based in Hong Kong and, as a Lieutenant, commanding a Minesweeper ... that was fantastic. It was a married accompanied. Suzy and I went out there with two and a half children and came back with three and a half. One of our daughters was born there, and still lives and works there she is very much into the Far East, just loves it.



My time in command of HMS Ariadne was very special too; it gave me the opportunity of taking a ship around the world, a complete circumnavigation. We went out through Suez and back through the Panama Canal. We went through four canals during that commission – the other 2 being Kiel and Corinth – which has to be some sort of record.

Taking a ship into live operations has to be somewhere up there as special. This happened in Ocean during the Gulf war in 2003. That operation was very different from the Falklands and other recent conflicts but never the less it was the pinnacle of everything I had been trained to do...to command a ship in a war situation.

Whilst I was in Hong Kong, the Falklands was happening and I actually volunteered to go down there. I couldn't believe how they were going to have a war without me in it! The most defining moment for me at that time was when the Sheffield was sunk. We happened to have divisions in Hong Kong that day, everyone in whites all spic and span... the Captain stood up and said 'I have to tell you that HMS Sheffield has been sunk in the Falklands'. It was a very poignant moment. We had lost ships through collision, grounding and goodness knows what else, but this was the first one, in my experience, lost to enemy action. I knew people in that ship. Suddenly the penny dropped with me...that is what we were in the Navy for, that may sound a bit naive but I didn't think that at the time.

I told that story to Henry Leach one day as we were walking around the Falklands exhibition in the Royal Naval Museum. In his very upright and erect way he said 'We lost six ships didn't we...we used to lose six a day in the last War. Ships are there to be lost and we had anticipated that we might lose up to twelve or fourteen'. It was quite an eye-opener. He and his team had thought their way through something that I had not even begun to imagine at that stage.

Another defining moment was nearly losing my own ship on rocks. This was in Ariadne; we were on trials out of Rosyth, doing full forcing rates on the boilers. You do it on one side at a time. We had done the starboard side the day before and all was well. There was a worsening weather forecast but I decided that as it was going to take about four hours we could crack it during the forenoon before the sea got too big – particularly as the ship would be going through the water at some 28/29 knots. All seemed to be going well...until the port boiler blew up! There was a catastrophic explosion across 114 of the fire tubes. Standing on the bridge we heard the sound and could even feel it through the ship, even though the weather was getting worse. We lost all power and were being blown onto a lee shore. We could only get one of the anchors away at first, and we dragged it. We had put out all nine shackles but there we were dragging it merrily across the sea bed, being blown towards the Isle of May...there were 40 knots of wind and still increasing. Eventually the wind got up to about 60/70 knots before we succeeded in letting go the port anchor as well which stabilised the situation. I had called for emergency assistance from Rosyth but it was too rough for tugs to come out from there to our present position. I remember standing there entranced on the bridge as we were gently moving on to the beach and thinking 'this isn't how it's going to end'. It was peoples' lives that concerned me most of all but everything ended well. The astonishing



thing was no one was injured, particularly in the explosion, which thankfully was contained within the boiler. I got commendations for the boiler room crew; they were brilliant and shut everything down very quickly, isolating the boiler within minutes. Fortunately the damage was limited thanks to their quick reactions and professionalism.

I had three Leander class frigates; Jimmy in the first and I commanded the next two. They were wonderful ships and when you think of the Type 23 today, big ships with about 160/170 people on board.

We had these tiny little Type 12 Leanders with 260/270 people crammed into a little sardine tin, it was fantastic. I loved being First Lieutenant, I knew everybody's name, their football teams, their wives names...you became absolutely intimate in the way those ships ran, I absolutely loved it. As a rule I think aviators do very well in General Service; when I was driving Campbeltown, my First Lieutenant, Op's Officer and my Principal Warfare Officer were all aviators, plus the three Flight Officers, so we had seven in total...that was real quality!

I leave Post on the 15th July (2008) and will be handing over to Vice-Admiral Alan Massey. My final date leaving the service is not until November (2008) I think. So I am being cast adrift on the 15th with nothing to do and no one to tell me what to do! I will certainly want to work when I finally finish...I think it's good to stay active. I'd certainly want to continue working for a little while if only to earn some money to keep Suzy in the lifestyle to which she has become accustomed!

*Sir Adrian Johns was interviewed by Ray Whitehouse in 2008. This copy is an extract from the interview. Sir Adrian, President of the Fleet Air Arm Association was appointed Governor of Gibraltar in 2009.*



## The Wessex 5 in the Falklands War

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**H**arry Benson, was a pilot in the Falklands war. He is now writing a book on 'The Wessex 5 in the Falklands war'. He would like members of 845, 847 and 848 Squadron Flight Ground Crews – in particular SMRs and other Engineers, who were either in San Carlos or Port San Carlos at the beginning of the Falklands War, or on board the Conveyor or the Causeway to contact him. He has spoken to pilots and aircrewmembers who recognised that they could not fly the Wessex without the help of the guys on the ground. He now wants to give the 'guys on the ground' an opportunity to tell their story.

Contact details: email [harry.benson@virgin.net](mailto:harry.benson@virgin.net) Tel 0117 924 1480



# 11 YEARS AT MACH 3+

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Reconnaissance System Officer Major George 'G.T.' Morgan



In the late 1950s it became quite clear that, because of advances in Soviet defensive missile technology, that a new approach to gathering airborne surveillance products must be explored. Altitudes in the upper 60 and 70 thousand foot range were no longer a guarantee of safe passage over hostile environments.

The U.S. Government, through various agencies, tasked various Manufacturers to propose solutions to this problem and the proposal submitted by the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation (more specifically by the Advanced Development Programs division of Lockheed) was selected.

A vehicle capable of flying at altitudes above 80,000 feet and at speeds in excess of Mach 3 was Lockheed's answer.

Mr. Clarence "Kelly" Johnson and his hand picked team of engineers were virtually sequestered at a Lockheed facility in Burbank, California called the "Skunk Works" (named by neighbours who had to suffer through the smells of the smelting processes associated with the new metals being developed). Security and 'need to know' was the name of the game during the design and manufacture of the SR-71.

Kelly and his team had to virtually invent and develop engineering capabilities that up to this time were unknown. Metals that could withstand the tremendous heat envelope associated with the SR-71 and numerous other technical challenges were tackled and successfully implemented to achieve success.



The SR-71 first flew in 1964. Testing was done primarily at a dry lake in the state of Nevada. Operational sorties began in 1968. The aircraft were home based at Beale Air Force Base in Northern California. Overseas locations used regularly during the period of operations were located in Okinawa and in England RAF Mildenhall.

During the period 1970 – 1978, I was fortunate enough to have been involved in over 250 operational missions. Most of these missions were in South East Asia. Other missions included flights to the Mid-East and to other classified locations. The typical operational sortie would last approximately 4 – 6 hours. During this time frame the SR-71 could photograph over 100,000 square miles of terrain. I was also given the opportunity to set a speed record. I currently hold the World Speed Record for manned jet aircraft. On July 28th, 1976, we established this new record by flying at 2200 mph.

The preparation for the speed run was quite simple. It was only necessary to beat the existing record speed by 10% and SR-71 crews all flew at speeds well in excess of this 10% on a routine basis. However preparation was required. The route and the planned speeds had to be developed and loaded into the astroinertial navigation system. Fuel load, times, etc. had to be verified. In order that the trackers on the ground could not only find us but that they could stay locked onto us, we had to paint a large white cross on the bottom of the aeroplane and be prepared to dump a small quantity of fuel. The speed record was verified by Federation Aeronautique Internationale who scored the record at 2194 mph but the aircraft was actually flying at 2200 mph. The pilot on the day was Captain Eldon Joersz and Reconnaissance System Officer Major George ‘G.T.’ Morgan later to become (Lt Col Master Navigator). During the same period but with a different crew the SR-71 set an altitude record of 85,126ft – just 10 per cent more than the existing record.

## 100 Years of British Naval Aviation

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Christopher Shores

Published in association with the Royal Navy, 100 Years of Naval Aviation, by Christopher Shores, is an eloquent and well researched account of the history of the early Royal Naval Air Service and Fleet Air Arm through to the present day. It chronicles Naval aviators’ involvement in two World Wars and other conflicts worldwide, and the crucial developments in the technology of ships, aircraft and weaponry that made victory possible. Price £35.00 from all good bookshops, The Fleet Air Arm Museum – Yeovilton [www.fleetairarm.com](http://www.fleetairarm.com) or direct from [www.haynes.co.uk](http://www.haynes.co.uk) and other on line book shops.  
ISBN 978 1 84425 661 7.



## Fly Navy Heritage Trust (FNHT)

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There was quite a gathering of FAAA members at Yeovilton Air Day to witness the presentation by Brian Bingham (National FAAA Chairman) of a cheque for £5000 towards the future maintenance and naming of the Historic Flight Seahawk 'Daedalus'. Rear Admiral Terry Loughran CB – Chairman of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust (FNHT) – was there to receive the cheque. Some FAAA Branches regularly hold local fund raising events for the FNHT – Hitchin, Bristol and Essex events have been reported to the Editor. There could be more.

For the Trust raising the funds to maintain the Historic Flight is a continuing challenge. Individuals can help in a small but important way by joining the FNHT Supporters Club (Membership starts at a minimum of £20 per year). If sufficient serving and retired members joined, it would provide a regular income to help the Trust ensure the long term well being of the Flight.

Admiral Sir Jonathon Band GCB, ADC, on his last visit to Yeovilton as First Sea Lord, pledged his enduring support to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, by joining the Trust Support group and urging everyone who has served with the Fleet Air Arm to do the same. *"It is your Trust – and it needs your support," said Admiral Band. "We all have a part to play in safeguarding our Naval aviation heritage."*

Contact the FNHT website for more information – [www.royalnavyhistoricflight.org.uk](http://www.royalnavyhistoricflight.org.uk)



One fund raiser you might like to support is the purchase of Wadworth 6-X beer with its subtle taste of Pussers rum. Suitably labelled **Swordfish**, specially brewed for the centenary year, and launched by the FNHT in May, it has become a very successful beer. When first launched at a major national pub chain it sold out on the first day it was launched! Its sale has now been taken up by other pub chains and the bottled version is on sale at **Tesco**. It can also be purchased direct from the Brewery Tel 01380732277. Samples of the beer were available at Yeovilton Air Day in July.



# The Doctor Rotman Salver

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## Leading Air Engineering Technician Award

An annual presentation by the FAAA for the Leading Air Engineering Technician of the Year has now been agreed with HMS Sultan. The award will be a ten inch silver salver engraved with the FAAA crest together with suitable wording. There will also be a small trophy for the candidate to keep. The first award and Presentation will take place some time in October 2009 at a Passing Out Parade at HMS Sultan. HMS Sultan staff will nominate the Technician to receive the reward. They will look for a student with a good 'all round' performance in both academic and community work using both course results and 'feed back' from the squadron or unit in which the candidate is serving.

In following years it has been suggested that a joint event be arranged with the Telegraphist Air Gunners Association who have a similar Award (Best Air Engineering Technician) to make a larger event in years to come. Families are invited to the passing out parades. Some of them travel many miles to see their son/daughter, husband/wife being presented with their rewards. The presentations are followed by 'tea and biscuits' which gives the invited guests an opportunity to mix and to speak with the staff at HMS Sultan. The FAAA representative will be invited into the Warrant Officers and Senior Rates Mess for lunch with the award winner and his family – a unique experience for the youngster. The salver and five small trophies has to date cost approximately £1300. Additional costs will be incurred for engraving the small trophies throughout the coming years.

## Fleet Air Arm Memorial

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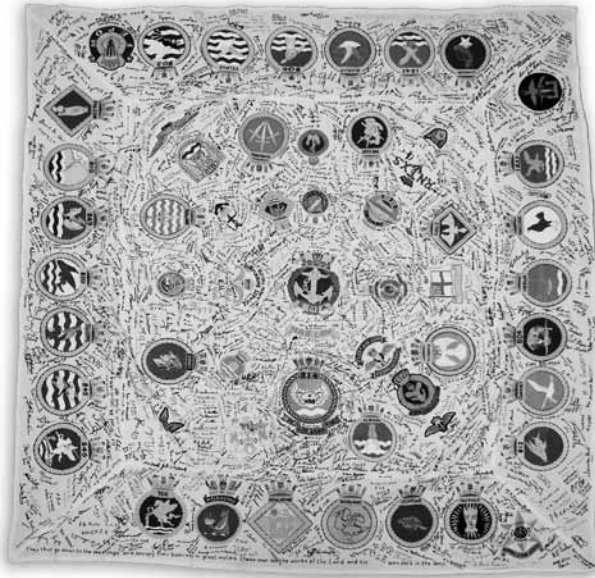
The Fleet Air Arm Memorial dedication at the National Memorial Arboretum will take place on September 11th 2009. Funds have been pledged by the FAA Associations and generous sponsors in order that a plinth of Portland stone supporting a Granite aircraft carrier can be set among an avenue of existing oaks in the Naval section of the Arboretum. Later, ships and associations will be able to place individual commemorative plaques on up to 30 spaces around the base. Our National Treasurer Ben Worship is seen here presenting Lt Cdr. M (Mike) F L Purse RN with our (FAAA) contribution of £5000 towards the development of the Memorial. The Chairman of the FAAOA, Rear Admiral Scott Lidbetter is confident that all the funds necessary to complete the project are available but, as yet he does not have the final cost figures. Any surplus money will be used to enhance the Memorial (e.g. a plaque explaining the history of the FAA, maintenance of the memorial, etc.).



## Peter Roalf's embroidered cloths

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**P**eter Roalf – Essex Branch- changed a hobby into a ‘money spinner’ for FNHT. He started by creating a cloth with the badge of the Royal Naval Association Harlow – around which the members were invited to sign their names. In 1984 the Harlow branch became affiliated with 814 Naval Air Squadron, whereupon Peter added the Squadron Crest and other badges representing various ex-Service Associations, Aircrew Flying Badges, and the Ship's Crests of the Carriers in which he served during nearly 28 years of service. All this time, Peter invited service and ex-service individuals to sign the cloth, which he subsequently embroidered into the fabric.



When Rear Admiral Tony Whetstone suggested that signatories be invited to make a donation to Naval Charities, Peter spliced in a border, to which he added Crests of Naval Air Stations and Squadrons where he had served.

There are a considerable number of notable signatures on this ‘larger’ cloth, including; Countess Mountbatten of Burma, Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Lewin, Admiral Jock Slater, Admiral Sir Desmond Cassidy, Admiral Sir Ray Lygo, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, Admiral Ian Garnett, Rear Admiral Tony

Johnstone-Burt, Captain Eric ‘Winkle’ Brown. There are in excess of 900 signatures.

A smaller cloth is being worked specifically for the Historic Flight and it has plenty of space for new signatures!

Perhaps one day these cloths will find a permanent home at the FAA Museum at Yeovilton Somerset. This year at one event the cloths raised £600 for the FNHT – nice one Peter! Our thanks go to Nick Foster (Event Manager – FNHT) who has provided electronic copy of the cloth.



## uk4u Christmas Box (2008)

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The National Fleet Air Arm Association donated, on behalf of its members, £500 towards the purchase of gift boxes for all ranks, away from home at Christmas, engaged on overseas operations. The registered Charity uk4u provides these unisex boxes. They are packed with many useful, amusing and seasonal gifts.

The admin costs are only 2.5% of income – the charity is ‘without employees and the three trustees do all the necessary work without payment’. This year 24,500 boxes were produced, with a retail value in the ‘region’ of £60 per box. Seen here the AGM (2009).

The Patron is the Duke of Westminster and Allan Sims, one of the Trustees, is an ex 849 squadron (1960s) member.

Those wishing to make their own personal contribution should go to the uk4u website (picture is a download from the site), or contact:

The Old Granary, East St., West Chiltington, RN20 2JY. Tel 01798 812 081





## Branch News

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### Isle of Wight Bill (Peter) Campbell

In 2003 the Isle of Wight FAAA Branch was disbanded and seven of the remaining Members joined the Daedalus Branch. Bill Campbell – one of the seven – was the IOW Standard Bearer in 2003 and agreed to continue to parade the standard jointly with the RNA and the British Legion. Over the last six years some of the ex IOW FAAA Members have met together for lunches and to raise each year a small sum of money to purchase for Remembrance day a wreath, to lay on behalf of FAA Personnel who died in the service of their country. The fund also supports the Standard at Parades, Events, and Funerals (Ex FAA) Personnel on request.

Bill who joined the FAA as an Artificer Apprentice in 1943 and left to Pension in 1968, is now 81 years old and has been ‘running’ on a pacemaker for seven and a half years. Consequently he is finding it physically more difficult to act as Standard bearer. Fortunately the services of a Sea Cadet have been offered, to perform this function, if required. Bill’s objective has always been to keep the FAA in the public eye (press reports, contact with the local Civic and Political leaders etc.) and was greatly honoured when the FAA Association made him a Life Member. After Bill left the RN he was employed at Britten Norman Bembridge, producing the BN Islander. When British Hovercraft took over he transferred to Cowes to work on the N6 and N7 Military and N4 Civil Hovercraft.

In 2008 the Standard was paraded in conjunction with the IOW RNA and IOW British Legion on nine occasions – at Veterans’ Day, Battle of Britain, British Legion Poppy campaign parades, 5 Memorial services in October and November and the funeral of Ex FAA Pilot Lt McLaughny on November 13th. He was aged 77 and served in 806 Squadron flying Seahawks.

Bill has a further ‘service’ interest – the production of a Quarterly News Letter for the Raleigh 43 Aircraft Artificer Apprentices Association. Currently the Membership is about 70. Approximately twenty of the Members meet monthly at Lee-on-Solent.

*Editor note: The article above is in recognition of a group of people on the IOW – RNA, the RBL and FAAA members – who jointly parade to ensure that those who died in the service of their country so long ago are still remembered.*



## Essex Branch

Essex Branch has accepted as an Associate Member USAF Lt Col George T Morgan (1961-1986) joint world speed record holder for manned jet aircraft. His final post in the USAF was Base Commander at RAF Wethersfield (Essex –Finchingfield). Whilst there he became a fully paid up Associate Member of Harlow RNA – there being no FAAA Branch at that time. His Grandparents were from Wolverhampton. George (on the LHS of the picture) is very proud of his English blood and that being an Associate has enabled him to wear the FAAA blazer badge.



## Armed Forces Day

Members of the FAAA and their standards (where possible) will have been present at the regimental 'return parades' which have been a big success this year throughout the country.

At the Watford parade for the return of the Anglian (The Poachers) Regiment, standing proudly, as they marched by, was 87 years old George Bayliss (Beds and Herts Regiment) from the Royal Hospital Chelsea (seen here with Babs Sandwell Watford Branch). He was in Italy in 1944 on the Monte Casino March. He survived to tell the tale despite narrowly missing being killed by a mine. He now spends his retirement at The Royal Hospital Chelsea attending the Church and greenhouse where he is responsible for the growing of flowers. Definitely a survivor!





## RNAS Ford (H.M.S. Peregrine) 'Re-visited' Ford Branch – Ray Whitehouse

On the 18th June, over one hundred and twenty members of the FAAA and their guests attended a reunion and 'open-day' at the old Royal Naval Air Station at Ford in West Sussex. The reunion was held in celebration of the One Hundred Years of Naval Aviation and to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the 'hand-over' to the Prison Service in 1959. The FAAA guest of honour was Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, Chief of Staff (Aviation & Carriers).

Most attending had served in the Fleet Air Arm at Ford during the forties and fifties and for several this return to 'Peregrine' was their first in over half a century. Others had strong family connections. For one guest it was an opportunity to visit where his father had been wounded during the devastating air raid in August 1940.

The day commenced with a 'Remembrance and Celebration' Service at the local church of St. Mary's, Clymping. The service was led by the Naval Chaplain, Reverend Monsignor Paul Donovan, and the Honorary Assistant Bishop of Chichester, The Right Reverend David Farrer, gave the address. After the service guests visited the official war graves section of St. Mary's where many of those killed in August 1940 and in later years are buried.

The Governor formally welcomed us in the Prison Chapel and replies were given by Rear Admiral Charlier and the FAAA Chairman Brian Bingham. A splendid buffet lunch, prepared by the prisoners, was followed by the afternoon programme of walking tours, several historical exhibitions and 'Life at Ford' presentations by prison staff. During the course of the day twenty-two of our members attended 'one to one' recorded interviews giving their experiences and memories of their time serving at Ford. Two shipmates who had adjoining bunks 51 years ago on HMS Albion failed

to recognise each other until their names were called for interview! The interviewers were prisoners completing specialist training as part of their educational programmes at Ford. Edited transcripts will become part of the official local Authority archives and used by schools, colleges, and researchers in the future.

*Thankyou Ray for making this enjoyable day such a success.*





## Greater Manchester RNAS Burscough (HMS Ringtail)



In April 2009 a tree planting and service in memory of Lt Teddy Key took place at RNAS Burscough Lancashire at the HMS Ringtail Memorial. This was at the request of Teddy's wife (Marion) and daughter (Rosslyn). Standard Bearer Len Milward together with seven members of the Greater Manchester Branch, members of FAA Officers' Association, Royal British Legion, Chairman of the parish council and local people attended.

The local Vicar conducted a short service which ended with the strains of 'Hearts of Oak' as a flypast of micro lights from West Lancashire Microlight School flew over twice in formation, before giving a waggle of their wings, as Teddy's widow and daughter planted their tree and scattered some of Teddy's ashes. Honorary FAAA member Lawrence Critchley, who was mainly responsible for the erection of the Memorial to those who had served on HMS Ringtail, was responsible for the flypast and the local arrangements on behalf of the family. After the ceremony the party moved to the Bull and Dog Pub which was well known to aircrew and navy personnel.

Lt Teddy Key – a World War two Navy pilot who served with 1772 Squadron at RNAS Burscough (HMS Ringtail), Lancashire was 86 when he died. Some years earlier Teddy compiled and published a book covering the history of 1772 Squadron – 'The friendly squadron' – profits from which were donated to the Historic Flight. The site for HMS Ringtail was acquired in 1942 and finally commissioned as HMS Ringtail in 1943. Squadron 1772 was formed in 1944. RNAS Burscough was closed to flying in May 1946 – having been 'host' to a wide range of aircraft including Seafire, Corsair, Barracuda Swordfish, Firefly and Hurricane. It housed training units working up for embarkation aboard aircraft carriers. The hangars were retained for storage by RNAS Stretton once the squadrons had left but it was relinquished in 1957. The site is now the home of a large industrial estate and private housing but some buildings still remain – in the main, the hangars (not necessarily in the same location).

The Manchester Branch also sponsors a Trophy and certificate in memory of HMS Ringtail. It is awarded annually to the best infant pupil at Lordsgate school. The original Lordsgate school was demolished to make way for the airbase and the new school built by the navy. Among those who attend the annual Memorial service on November 11th to lay a wreath at the Memorial are two pupils and their Head teacher from this school. If you wish to attend the Memorial please arrive by 1040 hrs.



## HMS Blackcap



Members of the Greater Manchester FAAA joined with other fund raisers to help their padre Elaine Chegwin Hall vicar of St Cross Appleton Thorn and her husband Peter to raise funds to provide a kitchen and toilet facility for the Congregation. The group also had support from a BIFFAWARD Award. In March 2009 their hard work was rewarded, the Blackcap Galley was realised and it was officially opened by the Bishop Keith Sinclair of Birkenhead. The Galley has been dedicated in commemoration of HMS Blackcap. Why HMS Blackcap? St Cross Church was built in 1886 by Edgerton Warburton of Arley Hall, 3 miles away. He also built the village school and the vicarage which is bigger than the church. The church has links with the FAAA and the Royal Naval Association because during the war there was a Royal Naval Air Station – HMS Blackcap – in the village. There are war graves in the church yard and a War memorial outside the church. Inside the church are the Royal Naval Flag, pew cushions and plaques donated by the Greater Manchester Fleet Air Arm Association.



At the rear of the church is a graveyard which is still in use. The original graveyard has become full and a new extension has been created on a piece of land adjacent to the old one.

Outside the church is the Thorn Tree which is an offspring of the Glastonbury Thorn. The legend is that Joseph of Aramathea brought his staff to this country and put it into the ground on Wearyall Hill in Glastonbury. From this staff a Thorn tree grew. A cutting from this tree was brought to Appleton Thorn by a Norman Knight and planted there. Each year the tradition of “Bawming the Thorn” takes place around St. Peter’s Day in June. Children from the local primary school re-enact the planting of the original Thorn Tree, dance around it and “Bawm” it (i.e. adorn it) with flowers and ribbons and sing the “Bawming Song”.

Regular ‘Blackcap Services’ are held at the Church and the Church has now become a meeting place for those who served at HMS Blackcap.

*Editor : My thanks to George Rose (pictures provided) and Jim Buie (Hangar Gen).*

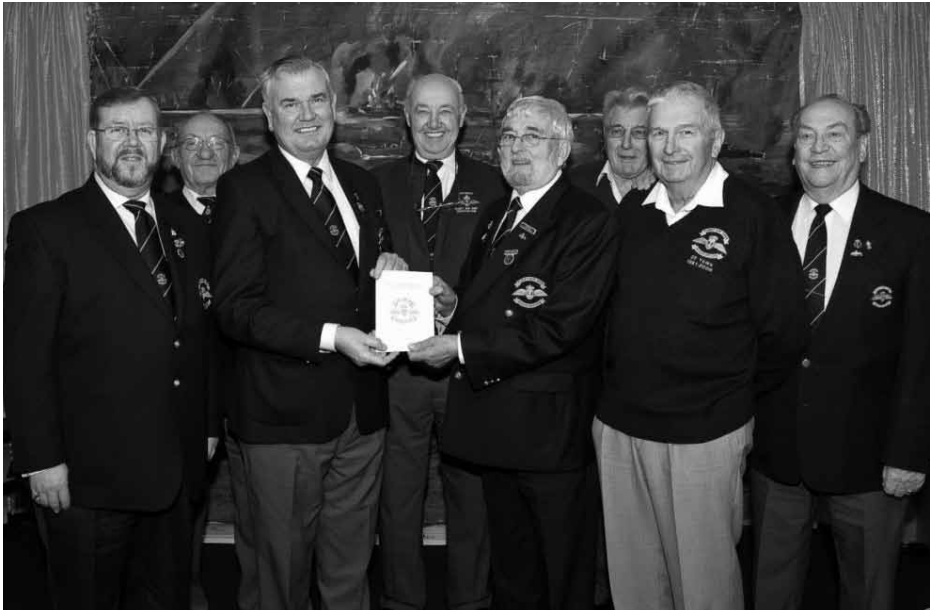


## A new Branch for the FAAA Kent Branch – Mike Foote (Secretary)

In June 2008 Peter Nixon (Ex Chock head) and Mike Foote (Ex Greeny Daedalus Branch) both Committee Members of Ramsgate RNA and Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Channel Dash Association, were wondering why Kent did not have a National, Fleet Air Arm Association Branch in the county – Kent being the birth place of Aviation and Naval Aviation.

In early August they looked into the possibility of starting a Kent Branch and contacted the FAAA Secretary Arnold Thompson. He advised them to attend the next General Meeting at Derby (October 2008) where they would be able to address the National Committee and put forward their proposal to form a Kent Branch.

At the meeting in Derby, Peter and Mike explained how they proposed to base the Branch in Ramsgate and to recruit members throughout the county. Monthly meetings would be held at the Ramsgate RNA Club. Once a quarter, to accommodate members from outside the Ramsgate area, the meeting could be moved to a venue anywhere in the county. The FAAA Committee gave them their full support and wished them every success.



*Peter receiving the Kent Certificate from Brian Bingham and the National FAAA Committee – Mike is front left.*

It was agreed that Peter would stand for Chairman and Mike for Secretary and that the launch would be held in the New Year. Peter arranged a Press Release using a known freelance journalist and it went out in the local papers early January 2009.

The inaugural meeting was held on January 30th 2009; the attendance was 14 of which 10 joined the Branch. A committee was elected, Peter Nixon (Chairman), Mike Foote (Secretary) and John (Dinger) Bell (Treasurer). The following day Peter and Mike attended the FAAA Committee meeting at RNA Hanworth to report on the Kent Branch inaugural meeting and the Committee gave them a generous grant of £200.00 to help establish the Branch. Since then they have held monthly meetings in Ramsgate and membership is up to 16. Recruitment is now growing at a steady rate and Kent Members like other FAAA Branches are now attending many of the Centenary Events. The future for the Kent Branch is looking good.

For more information go to: <http://fleetairarm.channeldash.org/FAAA3.html>.

## Watford Branch Hertswing Big Band

The Watford branches of the FAAA and RNA meet on a regular basis to enjoy an evening's entertainment by the 'Hertswing Big Band' led by band master John Davis who joined the Band in his late teens. The Watford based band was founded in 1965 by a group of players from the Kodak Concert Band Harrow. One of the founder members was the late Pat McCarthy (ex TAG 1943-1946) who was also secretary of the Watford FAAA and the husband of Social Secretary Mary McCarthy. Pat played the trumpet. The band has 17 members, and is primarily a rehearsal band and does not do many paid gigs. The first gig for charity was requested by Mary as a tribute to Pat when he crossed the bar in 2001. Mary took on Pat's role of 'Music minder'. She has a Wardrobe especially 'developed' to keep the music in order and attends the Band rehearsals. The Band has made over £2000 for the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association (BLESMA) and Watford Peace Hospice. At their latest Big Band evening there was additional entertainment from a Dixieland Jazz band in which some of the Band Members play. It is always a lively evening, at the end of which the question is always 'When's the next concert Mary'?



## Jungly Squadron provides help in Norwegian Helicopter rescue

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The Commando Helicopter Force (CHF), based at the Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton, Somerset provides training facilities for service personnel requiring arctic training in the mountainous, frozen and wind swept environment of Bardufoss, Northern Norway. Whilst standards of living accommodations are good, the base is frequently battered by



relentless Arctic and Siberian weather, seeing wind chill adjusted temperatures dip to 50 degrees below zero on a regular basis. Lieutenant Commander Steve Doubleday RN from Wells in Somerset is the Commanding Officer. In addition to training pilots and aircrewmembers, he is kept extremely busy ensuring the base is administered effectively for the 400 visitors who attend training. This year (2009) the Servicemen and women of CHF celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the 'Junglies' being based at Bardufoss.

This year has seen circumstances where a Sea King helicopter of the CHF was involved in an extremely challenging rescue of a passenger from a crashed aircraft.

It was whilst Lt Cdr Doubleday was conducting a snow landing sortie around Bardufoss that he received a request from the Norwegians to assist in the location of a civilian aircraft, believed to be a Squirrel helicopter. Lt Cdr Doubleday had been involved in several reactive tasks before, in both peacetime and conflict and was extremely keen to assist. Further information was received about the location of the missing aircraft and as he proceeded to the area, Bardufoss Air Traffic Control requested he assume the role of 'On Scene' Commander.

As the helicopter headed to the area, flying conditions gradually deteriorated with reduced visibility and low cloud. The route led the crew up a major valley and over a very large frozen lake, which was covered in heavy snow – flying became more challenging as visual references that assist the pilot gradually disappeared; everything was simply white. However, after much perseverance the aircrew spotted a dark object on the valley floor.

Pressing on, it soon became clear that the object was indeed a small helicopter. Badly damaged, with all 3 rotor blades missing and its tail boom damaged, debris was scattered around the aircraft.



Despite the size of the Sea King, extreme weather conditions and the slope of the ground, a decision was made to land close to the downed helicopter. On landing it was apparent that the pilot had been killed in the crash, however, there were a number of footprints around the aircraft, which indicated a possible survivor. Whilst relaying this information back to additional search aircraft the crew were informed that a man has been spotted running out of a log cabin on the banks of the frozen lake. He turned out to be the passenger of the stricken helicopter.

Lt Cdr Doubleday remained with his helicopter on the ground, waiting for the police to complete their compilation of evidence before flying the body of the pilot back to Bardufoss. After the gruelling sortie Lt Cdr Doubleday said, 'Today my crew demonstrated their considerable ability and skill in a tremendously hazardous environment. I am extremely proud of them; my only regret was that we could not help the pilot'.

## 847 Naval Air Squadron return from Afghanistan

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**847** Naval Air Squadron, part of the Commando Helicopter Force based at RNAS Yeovilton, is preparing to take a well earned break following a successful 7 month tour in Afghanistan. Based at Camp Bastion, the squadron carried out a wide variety of tasks ranging from Support Helicopter escort, reconnaissance patrols to 'top cover' for ground convoys using the Mark 7 version of the Battlefield Lynx. There is now a greater sense of security and stabilisation around the District Centres within Helmand, providing a base line for further development.



More than 70 squadron personnel took part in the deployment between September 2008 and April 2009 – returning to Yeovilton and a 'Homecoming' Party in May 2009. For many, the deployment was their second and in some cases third operational tour in as many years. The pilots achieved excellent flying rates; resulting in just under 2000hrs flown. This was made possible by the excellent maintenance work by the Squadron's aircraft engineers and its support personnel.

As one half of the squadron returned from Afghanistan, the other half are already deploying to the Indian Ocean to join the Royal Navy's TAURUS 09 amphibious deployment. 847 are now looking forward to deployments to Kenya and Norway later in the year.

## Herrick 10 Door Gunners

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**845** and 846 Naval Air Squadrons (NAS), working closely with the Sea King Project Team, have developed a new defensive capability to help minimise the increasing threat to aircraft in Afghanistan. The fitment of an additional, 'Port Mounted 7.62 General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG)' provides greater aircraft defence when airborne, particularly whilst exposed at vulnerable Forward Operating Bases and when flying at low level. Mounted directly behind the left hand pilot's seat, at the Port Door, it has increased the firing arcs of the aircraft which had previously been extremely vulnerable.

Not only does the new weapon bring a greater defensive posture to the aircraft, but an entirely new crew dynamic. 'Junglies' have traditionally operated as 3 man crews, two pilots and an aircrewman. With the new weapon, a fourth member of the crew has been introduced: a role specific 'Door Gunner'.

These personnel are selected from Commando Helicopter Force (CHF), outside of the aircrew branch. Once chosen, Gunners undergo an intensive training package including ground and air gunnery, aircraft familiarisation and procedures as well as completing an aircrew medical.

The Door Gunners currently serving on HERRICK 10 include a Naval Airman Aircraft Handler from 847 NAS, a Leading Airman Aircraft Handler who is normally employed as an Assistant Manpower Controller from 846 NAS, a Royal Marine Signaller and a Lance Corporal Royal Marine Driver from the CHF Head Quarters. The diversity of trades makes for an interesting addition to an extremely dynamic cockpit environment. Personnel usually not directly involved in the operation of aircraft are now having a considerable impact on the defensive and offensive capability of the

aircraft and the safety of passengers.

Mne. Frank commented, 'The draft has given us the opportunity to experience challenges that we would never have experienced in our usual jobs. We all feel a tremendous sense of pride and honour to be able to play such an important role in Op HERRICK 10'.



*Left to Right – Mne. Frank, LA (AH) Andrew, LCpl Lock, NA(AH) Asbcroft*



## Junglies' return for champagne and medals!

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On the 23 of October 2008, servicemen and women from RNAS Yeovilton were recognised for their bravery during recent operations in Afghanistan.

More than 90 members of 845 and 846 Naval Air Squadrons and Commando Helicopter Force Headquarters were presented with Operational Service Medals (Afghanistan) for their efforts in the Kandahar and Helmand Provinces.



*Personnel of 845 and 846 NAS with their medals*

The opportunity allowed the presentation of the Joint Commander's Commendation (JCC) certificate to Lieutenant Ben Daniel RN of 846 NAS, for his role as handling pilot whilst under fire from a Taliban position in Helmand Province. His cool, calm and collected actions ensured that the safety of the aircraft and crew were not compromised, and that ultimately their combat mission was a success.

The ceremony was covered by regional television and radio as well as in the national press, where Lieutenant Rich Sturman RN of 846 NAS received praise for his heroic efforts in recovering a badly damaged aircraft back to Camp Bastion. His Sea King aircraft lost half of the undercarriage and portions of the rotor blades when it ran into trouble during a night landing in the desert. Lieutenant Sturman and his crew nursed the stricken aircraft back to base where engineers constructed a sandbag platform so that the helicopter could land safely without rolling over.

The guest of honour and presenting officer was Rear Admiral S Charlier RN (Navy Command HQ, Chief of Staff (Aviation)) who commented, 'I would also like to thank families and friends sitting here today; without whose support the excellent work being carried out in Afghanistan could not be done'.



## Squadrons based at Yeovilton

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The Joint Aviation Group (JAG) is the HQ organisation overseeing all UK helicopters in Afghanistan. Joint Helicopter Force (Afghanistan) (JHF(A)) is the main fighting arm of this organisation. JHF(A) is a tri-Service organisation operating Sea King Mk4 and Lynx Mk7 from the Royal Navy, Apache AH64 from the Army and Chinook CH47 from the Royal Air Force. 845, 846 and 847 Naval Air Squadron's are based at RNAS Yeovilton, and are part of the Commando Helicopter Force which maintains year round commitment to provide Sea King and Lynx aircraft, crew and engineers to the front line. 845, 846 and now 847 Naval Air Squadron personnel continue to support Operations in Afghanistan. Some will return from a well earned rest and recuperation for amphibious training with HMS OCEAN, cold weather training in Norway and re-deployment to Afghanistan.

845 and 846 Naval Air Squadrons primarily provides 3 Commando Brigade of the Royal Marines with tactical troop transport and load lifting helicopters. Together with all elements of the Commando Helicopter Force, both Squadrons operate the Sea King Mk 4+ which has a clear cabin space to minimise weight and to maximise the size of cargo carried. It is capable of carrying underslung loads of up to 6000 pounds such as 105mm guns, Land Rovers and air defence missile systems. 26 troops can be accommodated in the cabin. The Mk4 + has a comprehensive self defence suite to detect and deter anti-aircraft radar, missiles and guns.

## 100 years of Naval Aviation

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On 7th May 1909, the Admiralty took a bold and visionary decision to place an order for the first Naval Aircraft. The latest generation of Naval Aviators from the Commando Helicopter Force celebrated their historic birthday whilst serving on Operations in Afghanistan.

Royal Naval and Royal Marine aircrew and engineers serving as part of the UK Joint Aviation Group were joined by Rear Admiral George M Zambellas DSC for a commemorative photograph and a slice of birthday cake outside their hangar at Kandahar Airfield. Whilst at the same time CHF personnel were also cutting an elaborate cake prepared by Chef 'Hilly' Mountain at the old Naval College at Greenwich. As it happened some FAAA Members from Watford, who were waiting to board HMS Illustrious, were there to give a hand.

Colonel John McCardle Royal Marines, from Bruton, who is currently Commander of the UK Joint Aviation Group and is responsible for all UK helicopters in Afghanistan, said: 'It was important to mark the occasion of our centenary and capture the significant contribution of the Fleet Air Arm to current operations in Afghanistan, where Naval aviators can be found flying the Harrier GR9 along with Sea King, Lynx and Chinook helicopters. 100 years on, and the men and women of the Fleet Air Arm continue to serve their country with distinction, continuing in the finest traditions of their forbears and demonstrating their 'can do' ethos on a daily basis in this most demanding environment'.

## Members who have 'crossed the bar'

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### Members who have passed away 2008 -2009

Issue 17 includes the names of those who were known to have crossed the bar after the printing of Issue 16. The dates 2008-2009 are still relevant. There are some short summaries of 12 of our Members to follow.



Stan Allet	POAM(E)	Wrekin
Henry Allingham	AM1	Daedalus
Andrew Colvin	S/Lt (AE)	Birmingham
Stuart Crawford	POA(TAG)	Daedalus
Vincent Doddington	A/LAM(L)	Daedalus
Alfred Epps	AA1	Solent
Patrick Hamblin	NAM	Hanworh
Sidney Hamilton	AA3	Greater Manchester
Alan Hyde	AA2(AE)	Essex
Andrew Linsley	Lt (Obs)	Yorkshire/Daedalus
Stanley Macfarlane	BEM CAF(AE)	Essex
Charles McIntyre	ERA(MW)	Bristol
Peter Mowlam	AM(A)1	Essex
Norman Perriman	AM(O)1	Bristol
John Powell	NAM1	Hitchin
Leslie Sayer	DSM MBE CPO(TAG)1	Essex
Ronald Smith	PO(AH)	Birmingham
Reginald Veale	LAF(E)	Bristol
Robert Worth	AM(A)1	Bristol
Peter J Wray	NA(AH)	Derbyshire

*May all who have 'crossed the bar' rest in peace*



## Short Summaries

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### **Stan Allett POAM(E) Wrekin Branch**

Stan Allett crossed the bar at the age of 92. He served from 1940 to 1946. He served on HMS Formidable in the Far East during the war against the Japanese.

### **Stuart Crawford POA(TAG) Daedalus Branch**

Stuart Crawford crossed the bar on 21st June 2009. He was Treasurer of the Telegraphist Air Gunners Association for 23 years and saw service (1942 – 1945) on the escort carriers HMS Smiter and HMS Premier.

### **Vincent Alfred Doddington A/LAM(L) Daedalus Branch**

Vincent Doddington served in the FAA from 1942 to 1946, on 768 squadron and at C&M Nairobi. He crossed the bar on January 9th 2009 at Bexhill on Sea.

### **Patrick Hamblin NAM (A&E) Hanworth Branch**

Served in the FAA from 1942 to 1946 on HMS Illustrious, He crossed the bar 27th December 2008 at Reading.

### **Alan Hyde A.A2(AE) (Essex Branch)**

Alan Hyde passed away on 19th February 2009 at the age of 76. He joined the navy in 1949 as an Artificer Apprentice. He was on the staff of Heron Flight in the days when they ran the 'Swordfish'. Whilst stationed at Yeovilton, as a keen 'sportsman', he ran and also played soccer for the Navy and was at one stage the football team manager. In later years he became a keen golfer and did the ground work to form the '49ers' group of 'Tiffies'. Four of the entry attended his funeral. Alan was a member of the Essex Branch for 4 years until illness prevented him from attending.



### **Lt. Andrew Linsley RN Ret'd (Yorkshire and Daedalus Branch)**

Andrew Linsley crossed the bar on 14th January 2009. He served in the Royal Navy for sixteen years from 1959 to 1975, prior to that he trained and served in the Merchant Navy. He initially joined the FAA for pilot training but later transferred to the Observer training pipeline. Over the next few years he saw service in a number of RN Squadrons mostly flying helicopters. In 1969, Andrew was appointed as FDO2 for HMS Hermes last commission as a fixed wing carrier. After Hermes, he served as Staff Officer in 845 Commando Helicopter Squadron before taking his last appointment at Seaford Park running the Dunker Training facility. During this appointment, he became one of the Navy's leading experts in Sea Survival, in particular helicopter-ditching procedures. There will be many aircrew that will remember and be grateful for the first class training they received from him.

After the Royal Navy Andrew worked in several jobs in the oil industry based at home and abroad mainly specialising in health and safety procedures until he decided to take a completely new role...and bought a fish and chip shop! In his own words, 'I went from flier to fryer'.

In later life, Andrew turned his considerable talent, enthusiasm and drive into voluntary work for Naval Aviation Heritage, in particular the RN Historical Flight. He organised a mobile shop, which he trailed to every major air display in the UK selling RNHF 'goodies'. He was also a knowledgeable naval historian and talented speaker giving regular talks and presentations on various aspects of FAA history. These activities, it is estimated, generated over £25,000 for the Historic Flight and greatly raised the Flight's profile in the eyes of the general public.

### **Stanley Arthur Macfarlane BEM Essex Branch**

Stanley Arthur Macfarlane BEM (known as Black Mac) – CPO(Air) AE. Mac joined the Fleet Air Arm in June 1943, served for twenty-seven years, and was awarded the BEM just prior to retiring in 1970. He saw service during the Second World War and afterwards saw service at RN Air Stations Stretton, Lossiemouth, Culdrose and Sembawang. His sea service included commissions in HMS Implacable, HMS Theseus (on 807 Sqdn. during the Korean War), HMS Bulwark and HMS Eagle.



In 1958, he was selected as President of the Chief's Mess at HMS Daedalus a position he held until 1961 and again for the two years prior to his retirement from the Navy in 1970.

A keen sportsman he was at one time Hockey umpire to the Fleet Air Arm. As well as being a keen member of the FAAA association he was also a Standard Bearer for the Harlow Branch of the RNA. Mac died on Thursday 8th January 2009 at Harlow he was aged 84 years.

### **Peter Mowlam AM(A)1 Essex Branch**

Peter Mowlam crossed the bar on 26th August 2009. He served from 1945-1947. He joined at RAF Gosling and trained at RAF St Athan and served at HMS Hornbill (R&D) unit and HMS Vulture (741B).

### **Reginald Albert Stanley Veale L/AF (E) Bristol Branch**

Reginald (Reg) Veale crossed the bar 15th January 2009 at the age of 86. He served in the Fleet Air Arm from 9th March 1943 to 8th July 1947. A Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving for his life took place at St. Mary's Church, Almondsbury (near Bristol) where Eric Pitt (Bristol Branch Chairman) spoke of the time when as Chairman of the Cotswold Branch he welcomed in 1993 a new Member (Reg) to the FAAA. The following





year Reg and Eric discussed the formation of a Branch in Bristol and with the help of the RBL, who offered the use of a meeting room; they held the inaugural meeting on May 9th 1994. The 17 prospective Members elected Reg as secretary – a post he held right up to his death. He was also responsible for the Bristol and District Quarterly newsletter. In January 2002 he was made a Life Member of the Branch and the National FAAA.

Eric Pitt has many personal memories of Reg and spoke at the Thanksgiving Service of the time when Reg joined HMS Pembroke – he received a travel warrant and a Postal Order for 4/- (shillings) – his 1st day's pay and amongst items he was told to pack were a gas mask, razor and ration book. After training he saw service with 190 Squadron RAF at Lee-on-Solent. In 1945 he joined the escort carrier HMS Arbiter – having reached Australia on the cruise ship Empress of Scotland – which was heading to Ponam Island.

Whilst with the Bristol Branch Reg, supported by treasurer Bill Davis had been a great Fund raiser, both for the RBL and RNHF who when approached in 2000 by Reg with the support of Rolls Royce, agreed to call Swordfish NF389 City of Bristol. Another highlight was the entrustment in March 1996 of the HMS Daedalus Paying Off pennant to Reg for presentation to the FAA Museum at Yeovilton (June 1998).

A further tribute by Eric was recorded in Bristol's Spring 2009 Newsletter – 'Reg's death was a great loss to Daphne, family and friends alike and especially to our Branch'.

At the funeral were the Bristol Branch Standard presented by S/M Ron Sandry and the Royal British Legion (RBL) Patchway Standard presented by Steve Sollars. Donations if wished were for the RNHF

On his poppy wreath were the lines of the submariners' prayer, which he used on many occasions when laying wreaths:

*"There are no roses on a sailor's grave, no lilies on an ocean wave. The only tribute is the seagulls sweep and the teardrops that a sweetheart weeps".*

### **Robert Worth AM(A)1 (Bristol Branch)**

Robert Worth passed away in June 2009. He was a member of the Bristol Branch for 11 years. He served from 1945 to 1947 and was aboard the Colossus class Light Fleet Carrier HMS Glory when She was in the Far East. Aircraft on board at that time would have been the Barracudas and Corsair IVs of 837 and 1831 squadron. Robert was also a member of the HMS Glory Association.

### **Peter John Wray NA(AH) Derbyshire Branch**

John Wray crossed the bar in 2009. He served in the 1950s on HMS Ocean, HMS Illustrious and possibly HMS Indefatigable and spent some time in Korea and Malta.

## The Fleet Air Arm Memorials

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### **The Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church**

The former Parish Church, St. Bartholomew of Yeovilton village was declared redundant in December 1988. The Church has a special association with the Fleet Air Arm; it was the Station Church, and the scene of many Naval weddings and Christenings. Since 1942 the churchyard has contained Military War Graves, and in the same year the Royal Naval Cemetery, which adjoins the churchyard was established. Nearly one hundred Servicemen and women have so far been laid to rest at Yeovilton.

The church has now been rededicated, St. Bart's is now the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church and the future of the Church and Cemetery is assured.

### **The Fleet Air Arm Memorial Lee-on- Solent**

Situated on the corner of Marine Parade and Richmond Road, the Memorial pays tribute to all those members of the Fleet Air Arm who lost their lives during World War 2.

As well as the annual Remembrance Service each November, the Telegraphist Air Gunners Association holds their annual service on the third Sunday in May.

### **The Fleet Air Arm Memorial – London**

His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales and His Royal Highness Prince Andrew, unveiled the Memorial on June 1 2000. The Memorial stands as a tribute to those who pioneered Naval Aviation in the last century, and commemorates over 6000 men and women who have died while serving in the Fleet Air Arm and its predecessor, The Royal Naval Air Service. The Memorial is situated on a site alongside the Ministry of Defence's main building on London's Victoria Embankment

### **Remembrance Day at the Cenotaph**

The Royal British Legion has allocated 36 tickets to the Fleet Air Arm Association for the Cenotaph Parade. There is no shortage of volunteers and priority will be given to those with Full Membership. Doug Wyatt is, as always Marshall for the Event and is negotiating on 'our' behalf. Following the Cenotaph Parade, it is hoped that Members will remain in line to march to the Fleet Air Arm Memorial and after the dismissal, a venue close to the Memorial can be arranged where all Members who have travelled to London to attend the Parade, can congregate and 'recharge the batteries' before returning home.





## The National Memorial Arboretum

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The National Memorial Arboretum is located in the heart of the country within the National Forest near Lichfield. It comprises of 150 acres of trees and memorials devoted to the concept of Remembrance. It is here that the Dedication Ceremony of the Fleet Air Arm Memorial will take place on September 11th 2009. The Memorial – a plinth of Portland stone supporting a Granite aircraft carrier is set among an avenue of existing oaks in the Naval section of the Arboretum.

The Arboretum is located between Birmingham and Derby, just off the A38 north of Lichfield and south of Burton on Trent.

The Arboretum is open between 9am and 5pm. Entry is free. Donations are welcomed to help with the maintenance of the site. There is a large car park with a parking charge of £2.00 per car. Guided tours of varying length can be arranged for which there is no fixed charge, but donations are appreciated. Alternatively you may choose to purchase a self-guide. Facilities for disabilities (wheelchairs and electric scooters) are available from the Visitors centre, but notification required.

Location address for those with navigation aids is Croxall Road, Alrewas, Staffordshire DE13 7AR Details can be checked by ringing the National Memorial Arboretum Telephone number: 01283 792333.

The picture gives an indication of the shape of the Memorial.

*Editor: Aircraft Carriers at Spithead in 1953 were HMS Eagle, HMS Illustrious, HMS Implacable, HMS Indefatigable, HMS Indomitable and the Light Fleet type HMS Perseus and HMS Theseus*



# List of Accountments

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## ON SALE FROM THE TREASURER – June 2009

ITEM	Cost (Incl. P&P)
Gold Wire Blazer Badge	£12.00
Silk Blazer Badge	£8.75
Tie	£8.50
Beret Badge	£8.50
Ladies Head Square	£11.00
Member's Lapel Badge (Gilt)	£4.25
Member's Spouse/Association Lapel Badge (Chrome)	£2.00
Life Lapel Badge	£1.25
Baseball Cap	£7.00
Plastic Medal Holder (Large)	£4.75
Plastic Medal Holder (for Miniatures)	£3.25
Car Stickers	£1.25
Membership Cards	£0.00

## ITEMS BOUGHT TO ORDER

Short Sleeve Pilot Shirt	£15.00
Long Sleeve Pilot Shirt	£15.00
Sweaters, Acrylic	£16.75
Sweater, Lambs wool	£25.00

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.

## 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 Tuesday at 2000  
The Nautical Club, Bishopsgate St. Birmingham  
*Secretary – Doc Halladay 0121 357 2783*

**BOURNEMOUTH** – 4th Friday at 1930  
Bournemouth Flying Club, Bournemouth Airport  
*Secretary – Mrs Jo Towler 01202 303135*

**BRISTOL AND DISTRICT** – 2nd Monday at 2000,  
The Royal British Legion Club,  
3 Durban Road, Patchway, Bristol  
*Secretary – Maurice (Bill)  
Sage 01179 760832*

**COTSWOLD** – 2nd Monday at 2000  
18 Commercial Road, Gloucester  
*Secretary – Mike Humphries 01453 547436*

**DERBYSHIRE** – 4th Wednesday at 1200  
The Royal British Legion Club, Allenton, Derby  
*Secretary – Roy Pym 01332 701993*

**EASTBOURNE** – Last but one Thursday at 1200  
Odd months only, Marine Hotel, Eastbourne  
*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 01798 874977*

**GREATER MANCHESTER** – 1st Monday at 1300  
Ex Servicemen's Club, Stretford  
*Secretary – Jim Buie 0161 865 3435*

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

**HANWORTH** – 1st Wednesday at 2000  
R.N.A. Club, Park Road, Hanworth  
*Secretary – Terry Lowden 0208 948 3979*

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

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

**NORTH EAST HANTS** – 4th Tuesday at 2000  
Albert Social Club, Albert St, Fleet, Hampshire  
*Secretary – Mike Pomeroy 01276 502358*

**SOLENT** – Last Thursday at 2030  
Lee on Solent Community Centre  
*Secretary – Peter Westbrook 023 9258 0158*

**SOUTHDOVNS** – 4th Wednesday at 1915  
The Restaurant, Shoreham Airport  
*Secretary – Alec Braybrooke 01273 505187*

**WATFORD** – 2nd Sunday at 1100  
Carpenters Park Community Hall, Herts  
*Secretary – Fred Good 01923 445832*

**WREKIN** – 1st Friday at 1930  
T.S. Wrekin, Donnington, Telford  
*Secretary – Dennis Blackburn 01952 415423*

**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 525626*

**DAEDALUS** – Headquarters Roll,  
No meeting place  
*Secretary – Arnold Thompson 023 9278 6443*



