

COMMITTEE 2016/2017

President.

Bob Perkins
(01582) 699976

Welfare Officer.

Joyce Smith

Standard Bearer.

Ernie Bounds
(01582) 603966

Chairman.

John Gilmour
(01582) 560887

Wings Appeal

Organiser.

Graham Horton
(01582) 616949

Committee Members

Ken Draper
Marie Scrivener

Vice Chairman

Bryan Rawlinson

Membership

Secretary.

Susan Stone
(01582) 658976

Marisa Gilmour
(01582) 560887

Non Committee

Posts.

Branch Chaplain:

Position Vacant

Treasurer.

Susan Stone
(01582) 658976

Social Secretary.

Marisa Gilmour
(01582) 560887

The Branch meets on the second and fourth Thursday of each month (December excepted) at Dunstable Conservative Club, High Street North, Dunstable at 20.00. Further details are available from;

John Gilmour - Chairman
18 Montague Avenue, Luton, LU4 9JG

01582 560887
rafadunstable1@btinternet.com

The Association Headquarters address is;

41 Wembley Road
LEICESTER, LE3 1UT

Per Ardua

Spring 2017

Dunstable Branch
(Incorporating Luton)

Branch Website: www.rafadunstable.co.uk



The National Memorial Arboretum

Our Eagle and Globe stands proud at the National Memorial Arboretum. If the opportunity arises, as it may if Glynn Winterbottom arranges a trip this year, why not visit our memorial and all the other memorials that are on site.

To find out more about the National Memorial Arboretum visit their website at <http://www.thenma.org.uk> for a list of events throughout the year

Annual General Meeting 2017.

The Annual General Meeting for 2017 will be held on Thursday 9 March at the Dunstable Conservative Club commencing at 20.00 hrs.

Nominations for committee posts or resolutions for discussion should be submitted, in writing, to the Secretary by no later than Thursday 2 March.

Nominations should be proposed, seconded and the nominated mem-

ber should sign to agree that they accept the nomination.

Resolutions should be signed by the submitting member.

Members that have renewed their membership before the AGM will be eligible to vote.



The Official Dedication of the Royal Air Forces Association.

In friendship and in service one to another, we are pledged to keep alive the memory of those of all Nations who died in the Royal Air Force and in the Air Forces of the Commonwealth. In their name we give ourselves to this noble cause. Proudly and thankfully we will remember them.

The Object Of The Royal Air Forces Association.

Is to promote, through the comradeship engendered by its members, the welfare by charitable means of all serving and former members of Her Majesty's Air Forces, their spouses and dependants together with widows and widowers and dependants of those who died whilst serving or subsequently.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris was appointed Commander-in-Chief RAF Bomber Command.

Voice of America (VOA) began broadcasting.

The Japanese defeated Allied naval forces in the Battle of the Java Sea. 70 ships (392,161 tons) were sunk and 12 ships (86,919 tons) were damaged by U-boats during February 1942.



Hurt my arm this morning and
was in hospital for an x-ray.

As I was sitting waiting to be seen,
the lad next to me says,
"Fair fa' yer honest sonsie face!
Great chieftain o' the puddin' race!"

I turned my head round to the lady
sat on my other side and she said,

"Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous
beastie, O, what a panic's
in thy breastie!"

Being
Scottish

Surprised, I said to the next doctor
walking past, "here mate is this the
psychiatric ward?" He says,
"no, sorry, this is the Burns unit."



February 1942 Events

Admiral Thomas C. Hart, set up the ABDA "Combined Striking Force" and placed them under the tactical command of Dutch Rear Admiral Karel Doorman.

Rear Admiral Karl Dönitz ordered the U-boat fleet to use an improved version of Enigma.

The Reichcommissar of Norway, Josef Terboven, appointed Vidkun Quisling as the new Ministerpresident of the National Socialist regime in Norway.

Major General Joseph W. (Vinegar Joe) Stilwell was appointed Commanding General of all U.S. Army forces in China, Burma, and India as well as being appointed the Chief of Staff of the Army of the Republic of China.

The U.S. Asiatic Fleet commanded by Admiral Thomas C. Hart ceased to exist as a functioning organization.

U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the War Shipping Administration.

The Japanese began to cross the Jahore Strait in the first stage of the assault on Singapore.

The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff held its first formal meeting to coordinate military strategy during World War II.

The Kriegsmarine conducted what became known as "The Channel Dash." The battle cruisers, Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen, and a number of

other smaller vessels transited the English Channel.

Roosevelt authorized the removal of alien and citizen Japanese from the West Coast.

Grand Admiral Erich Raeder had his final interview on Operation Sea Lion with German Chancellor Adolf Hitler and got him to agree to a complete "stand-down."

Japanese paratroopers landed near the oil center Palembang, Sumatra.

Lt. General Arthur E. Percival surrendered to Lt. General Tomoyuki Yamashita as Britain's "impregnable fortress" at Singapore fell.

An ABDA naval force made an abortive attempt to intercept the Japanese invasion force bound for Palembang, Sumatra.

Japanese forces landed on Bali and occupied the capitol city of Den Pasar.

The Japanese conducted a large bombing raid on Darwin, Australia in what became known as the "Pearl Harbor of Australia."

Philippine President Manuel Quezon, his family, and other officials were evacuated from Corregidor.

A cable from U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordering General Douglas MacArthur's evacuation from the Philippines reached MacArthur's Philippine headquarters on Corregidor Island.

National Presidential Certificates.

To coincide with the New Year Honours List, the following have been awarded National Presidential Certificates:-

	<u>RAFA Branch</u>	<u>Area</u>
Bill Paterson	Ormskirk	Northern
Mr & Mrs Kelsey	Littlehampton	South East & Eastern
Mike Davis	Poole	Wales, Midlands & Southwest
Gordon Watson	Cranwell	South East & Eastern
Mr & Mrs Latin	Morecombe & Lincs	Northern
Mike Facey	Neath	Wales, Midlands & Southwest
Terry & Beryl Dennett Stannard	Sud-Ouest	Overseas
Mr & Mrs Sach	Colchester	South East & Eastern
Pauline Skellon	RAFA Concert Band	Wales, Midlands & Southwest
James (Jim) Brandon	Bodmin	Wales, Midlands & Southwest

South East & Eastern Area Presidential Certificates

In conjunction with the New Year's Honours List, I am pleased to announce that these have been awarded to:-

- Lez Fishmam (Bedford Branch)
- Patricia Hayes (Abbots & Kings Langley Branch)
- Jim Hallam (Thurrock Branch)
- Sgt Roy Jameson (RAF High Wycombe)
- SAC Vicky Smith (RAF Northolt)
- Frank Svensek (Dartford Branch)
- Team Sudbury (Sudbury Branch)

Our congratulations go to all recipients.

**Remembering The 50 Officers Murdered By The Gestapo,
Following "The Great Escape".**



**Flying Officer John Porokoru Pa-
tapu Pohé**
(Service No 402894) RAF

No 51 Squadron – (Also known by his Maori name of Porokoru Patapu) Born at Wanganui New Zealand on 10th December 1921. He became a POW (No 2433 on 24th September 1943 after being shot down in a Halifax II, JN901. Recaptured near Gorlitz and murdered on 31st March 1944 by Gestapo Agent's Walter Lux and Wilhelm Scharpwinkel. Cremated at Gorlitz.



**Pilot Officer Bernard W. M. Schei-
dhauer**
(Service No 306649) RAF

No 131 Squadron – Born at Landau on 28th August 1921. He became a POW (No 655) on 18th November 1942. Recaptured at Saarbrucken and murdered on 29th March 1944 by Gestapo Agent Leopold Spann. Cremated at Saarbrucken.



Pilot Officer Sotiris Skanzikas
(Service No 213) RAF

No 336 (RHAf) Squadron. Born in Greece on the 6th August 1921. He became a POW (No 1822) on 23rd July 1943. Recaptured at Hirschberg and murdered on 30th March 1944 by Gestapo Agent Walter Lux but his place of cremation remains unknown.

Wings 2017

Our Wings Appeal Organiser, Graham Horton, has been a busy person over Christmas and New Year. An evenly planned programme of collection periods have been arranged at supermarkets, stores, carnivals and Armed Forces Day.



Volunteers are always sought to assist on these dates, especially for Dunstable Town Centre on Friday 15th September and Saturday 16th September. Why not come along and lend a hand, it will be very much appreciated.

The year has started off well with £948.98 being collected at Tesco's at the end of January.

The up to date list of collecting periods is as follows:

- MARCH :-** Sun.12th. ASDAWigmore.
- APRIL:-** Sat.8th/Sun.9th . ALDI Sundon Park.
- APRIL:-** Fri.28th./Sat.29th. MORRISONS Houghton Regis.
- MAY:-** Sat.6th. "MAYFAYRE" Houghton Regis.
- JUNE:-** Sat.24th. "ARMED FORCES DAY" Harpenden.
- JULY:-** Sat.8th. "CARNIVAL" Houghton Regis.
- AUGUST:-** Sat.12th./Sun.13th. B&M Store, Dunstable.
- SEPTEMBER:-** Sat.2nd. "HOUGHTON ROCKS" Houghton Regis.
- SEPTEMBER:-** Fri.15th./Sat. 16th. DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE

These are the dates that have been confirmed. Members will be given more details nearer the dates, and informed of any changes or additions to the list. Just contact Graham for more details.

RAF Amputee 'Reaches for the Sky'

A Royal Air Force airman who lost a leg in a motorcycle accident has become the first amputee to fly solo in a Spitfire since WWII aces Douglas Bader and Colin "Hoppy" Hodgkinson.

Sergeant Alan Robinson, an aircraft engineer based at RAF Waddington, was awarded The Spitfire Scholarship and undertook two years of pilot training before taking to the air for his historic flight. Sgt Robinson said:

"I've achieved a childhood dream. It has been an absolute privilege to fly such an iconic aircraft and to meet some of the veterans who flew Spitfires during the War. I can't conceive how they went from a trainer aircraft straight into a single seat Spitfire."



Following his accident, Sergeant Robinson received rehabilitation therapy at Headley Court and was eventually able to return to his old job as an E3D Sentry aircraft engineer with No. 8 Squadron. He said:

"My squadron management at the time looked after me very well and the rehab has been fantastic. Since losing my leg I have been promoted so the RAF must still think I've got a

lot to offer. Having an amputated leg doesn't stop me doing the work I was trained to do. The leg is just a means of getting me to the aircraft and my prosthetic leg does that now.

The Spitfire Scholarship, awarded by The Endeavour Fund, draws inspiration from Group Captain Sir Douglas Bader DSO DFC, who flew during the Second World War and amassed 20 individual aerial victories despite losing both his legs in a flying accident in 1931. His story was immortalised in the book and film 'Reach for the Sky'. The scheme is intended to motivate those who have a disability to go on to achieve great things and prove ability rather than disprove disability.

Phil O'Dell, Rolls-Royce Chief Test Pilot and a fellow Spitfire pilot, said: "This is a remarkable achievement by Alan. Not only has he overcome the odds to solo the Spitfire, but he trained to do it in a way that would be familiar to the young men who took to the skies in the Second World War. For those of us who are professional pilots, with many years of experience and training, what Alan has done really brings home the incredible effort and bravery of our predecessors in the Spitfire cockpit."

*Editor: Flight Lieutenant Peter Lisney
Image courtesy of Boulton Flight Academy*



Lieutenant Rupert J. Stevens
(Service No 47341) RAF



Flying Officer Robert C. Stewart
(Service No 130452 RAF)



Flying Officer John G. Stower
(Service No 107520 RAF)

No 12 Squadron – Born in London England on 21st February 1919. He became a POW (No 712) on 14th November 1941. Recaptured at Rosenheim and murdered on 29th March 1944 by Gestapo Agent Johann Schneider. Cremated at Munich

No 77 Squadron – Born in London England on the 7th July 1911. He became a POW (No 1279) on 27th April 1943 after being shot down in Halifax 11, DT796. Recaptured near Sagan and murdered on 31st March 1944 by Gestapo Agent's Walter Lux and Wilhelm Scharpwinkel. Cremated at Liegnitz.

No 142 Squadron – Born in Argentina on 15th September 1916. He became a POW (No: 836) on 16th November 1942 after being shot down in Wellington 111, BK278, QT:C Recaptured near Reichenberg and murdered on 31st March 1944 by unknown Gestapo Agents and his place of cremation remains unknown.

Date For Your Diary!!

2017, is an important year for us all. With lead up to the RAF 100 celebrations we have a small celebration of our own. On 13 October 2017 the branch will have achieved 70 years. With so many branches closing or going to Registered Members Groups we should be proud of our achievement.

To mark this occasion plans have been made to celebrate the event with a meal at the Chiltern Hotel on Friday 29 September. The cost of the evening will be £25 per person which, may be paid by monthly instalments, if you so require. A non-refundable deposit of £5 per person will be re-

quired on booking. As members, you will have the opportunity to book before invitations are forwarded to other groups and dignitaries.

We hope that Air Marshal Sir Barry (Baz) North, our proposed new National President, will be our guest of honour

To book your reservation send details and deposits to John Gilmour at 18 Montague Avenue, Luton, LU4 9JG or speak to him or Marisa at any of the meetings.

We are looking forward to having an eventful evening so don't be disappointed, book early.

Operations Room.

Thursday 9 Feb - **Branch Social**

Thursday 23 Feb - **Branch Social**

Thursday 9 March - **Branch Social**

Thursday 23 March - **Branch Social**

Thursday 13 April - **Branch Social**

Thursday 27 April - **Branch Social**

Thursday 11 May - **Branch Social**

Thursday 25 May - **Branch Social**

Thursday 8 June - **Branch Social**

Thursday 22 June - **Branch Social**

Friday 24 March - Spring Dance with Jim Knight

Friday 21 April - Entertainer to be arranged

If you can make it, it is in your best interest to attend Branch meetings, when possible, to hear about future plans between newsletter issues. Items of interest for all members are always being arranged, so keep in touch with your committee or attend meetings.

Dances.

Friday 17 February - St. Valentines Dance with Chris Columbus.

RAF Typhoons Monitor Russian Aircraft Carrier

Typhoon aircraft from RAF Coningsby have been monitoring the Russian aircraft carrier, Admiral Kuznetsov, as it sails through UK waters on its way home to Russia from the Eastern Mediterranean.

The RAF aircraft have been part of a wider ongoing operation that is being conducted in conjunction with the Royal Navy and our NATO allies to monitor the Russian carrier and its accompanying vessels as it passes through the waters of Western Europe on its way home.



Wing Commander Stu Smiley, Officer Commanding Operations Wing RAF Coningsby said "Whilst the British public are familiar with our role escorting Russian long-range aviation, on this occasion we launched to monitor the Russian warships as they transit near to our sovereign waters".

The air operation was planned and is being controlled by the UK Joint Force Air Component, based at RAF High Wycombe. Air Vice Marshal Steve Shell is commanding the Air Operation and said: "The

operation to escort the Russian Task Group is part of our routine activity to ensure the integrity of UK airspace and waters; the air elements were smoothly and professionally coordinated by the UK JFAC."

The Kuznetsov was sent to the Eastern Mediterranean to participate in Russian military operations in Syria but suspended flying operations after two aircraft were lost in accidents. The aircraft carrier has now been ordered home following the end of operations against rebels in the Syrian city of Aleppo.

The Russian Carrier has been slowly steaming back to Russia and its passage through the English Channel in International shipping lanes is entirely routine. The Secretary of State for Defence, the Right Honourable Sir Michael Fallon MP, however, said: "We are man-marking these vessels every step of the way around the UK as part of our steadfast commitment to keep Britain safe."



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