



THE ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION

Rutland Branch

THE FLYING HORSESHOE

Branch Newsletter

November 2008



A POEM FOR THE SENIOR CITIZEN

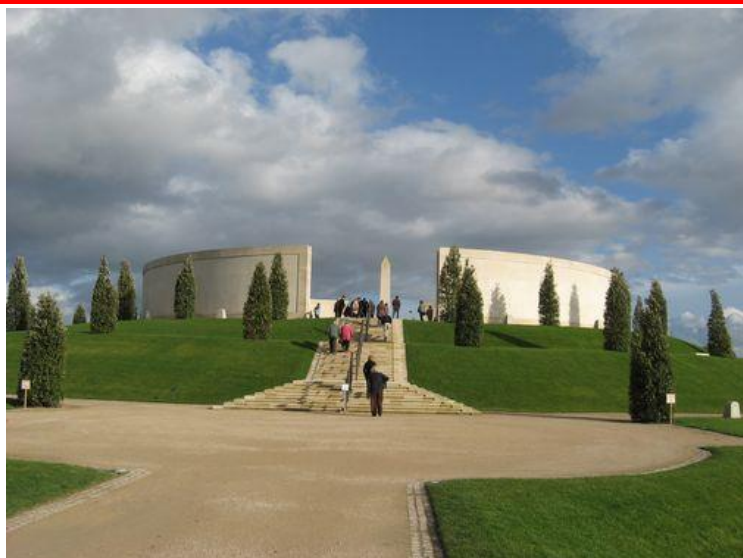
When an old man died in the geriatric ward of a nursing home in North Platte , Nebraska , it was believed that he had nothing left of any value. Later, when the nurses were going through his meagre possessions, they found this poem. Its quality and content so impressed the staff that copies were made and distributed to every nurse in the hospital.

One nurse took her copy to Missouri . The old man's sole bequest to posterity has since appeared in the Christmas edition of the News Magazine of the St. Louis Association for Mental Health. A slide presentation has also been made based on his simple, but eloquent, poem. And this little old man, with nothing left to give to the world, is now the author of this "anonymous" poem winging across the Internet.

Crabby Old Man

<p>1 What do you see nurses? What do you see? What are you thinking when you're looking at me? A crabby old man, ...not very wise, Uncertain of habitwith faraway eyes?</p>	<p>2 Who dribbles his food and makes no reply. When you say in a loud voice "I do wish you'd try!" Who seems not to notice the things that you do. And forever is losing a sock or shoe?</p>
<p>3 Who, resisting or not lets you do as you will, With bathing and feeding The long day to fill? Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see? Then open your eyes, nurse you're not looking at me.</p>	<p>4 Who, resisting or not lets you do as you will, With bathing and feeding The long day to fill? Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see? Then open your eyes, nurse you're not looking at me.</p>
<p>5 I'll tell you who I am. As I sit here so still, As I do at your bidding as I eat at your will. I'm a small child of TEN with a father and mother, Brothers and sisters who love one another</p>	<p>6 A young boy of SIXTEEN with wings on his feet Dreaming that soon now a lover he'll meet. A groom soon at TWENTY , my heart gives a leap. Remembering, the vows.....that I promised to keep.</p>
<p>7 At TWENTY-FIVE, now I have young of my own. Who need me to guide and a secure happy home. A man of THIRTY my young now grown fast, Bound to each other with ties that should last.</p>	<p>8 At FORTY, my young sons have grown and are gone, But my woman's beside me to see I don't mourn. At FIFTY, once more babies play round my knee, Again, we know children my loved one and me.</p>
<p>9 Dark days are upon me my wife is now dead. I look at the future I shudder with dread. For my young are all rearing young of their own. And I think of the years and the love that I've known.</p>	<p>10 I'm now an old man and nature is cruel. Tis jest to make old age look like a fool. The body, it crumbles, grace and vigour depart. There is now a stone where I once had a heart.</p>
<p>11 But inside this old carcass a young guy still dwells, And now and again my battered heart swells I remember the joys I remember the pain. And I'm loving and living life over again.</p>	<p>12 I think of the years, all too few, gone too fast. And accept the stark fact that nothing can last. So open your eyes, people .open and see. Not a crabby old man. Look closer....see.....ME!!</p>

Remember this poem when you next meet an older person who you might brush aside without looking at the young soul within....we will all, one day, be there, too!



Sunday October 26th.

'The National Memorial Arboretum is just off of the A38, south-west of Branston where Carol and I stayed for the weekend.

Entering the car-park is enough to stir the emotions and make one realise even more the tragic losses made by so many in conflict. It is a vast area covering 150 acres and every square inch is devoted, in one way or another, in dedication to those who lost their lives. It is not finished but much has been done in the years since it opened, memorial after memorial has been laid in remembrance of various divisions and units of the forces. The main memorial is vast, and is gradually being covered with the

names of those who gave their lives for the country.

The large area devoted to the RAF has many plaques and trees devoted to bases, groups, squadrons and individuals. As it has been said, 'The trees mean so much, they are not just trees but to us they are our friends and comrades'. There were veterans walking, or being wheeled around, wearing their medals with pride. We did not ask but knew that all would have stories of the horror that they experienced. You could see the sadness in their eyes as they stood before their own service memorial remembering those comrades that stood, and fell alongside them.

The visit was an emotional experience, they made the ultimate sacrifice and that cannot be forgotten'

Albert Radcliffe

“THE SMELLY VICTOR B2”

It occurred to me that we must all have some recollection of strange aircraft faults. I'm sure we could fill in a few column inches by our various recollections, so to start the ball rolling here is mine. During pre flight tests it was noticed that a strange odour was emanating from the radome of this aeroplane. Not the usual smell of burning insulators, but a real “Pong.”

Much of the Navigational Bombing System (NBS) associated with the search or H2S side of this equipment was mounted on a frame inside the radome and the Navigational Bombing Computer (NBC) was within the body of the aircraft. The equipment was duly brought to the Electronics Centre for investigation. I had just moved from the Indicator Waveform Generator bench to the Transmitter Receiver bench and this is where the problem was discovered.

An earwig had somehow found its way into the waveguide system and was somewhat fried to say the least. So possibly this was the smallest creature to cause a major investigation??? Unless of course someone knows otherwise.

Here is another snippet which should amuse our readers

In the Vietnam War, the pilot of an F4 (Phantom) called air traffic control to request an emergency landing as he was rapidly losing power. He was informed by air traffic that a B52 (Stratofortress) was already inbound as one of his engines had failed entirely.

The Pilot of the F4 came out with this little gem. “Oh I see one of those highly dangerous 7 engine landings.”

Francis (Standard Bearer)



PARA'S ON PARADE IN OAKHAM

On Wednesday 10th September the Band of the Parachute Regiment provide a twilight display of music and marching in Oakham Town Market Square.

After the marching display the band performed the Beating Retreat Ceremony. This formal procedure requires the beating of the drums and the parading of soldiers heralding their return to barracks. The lowering of the colours and the mounting of the guard is also part of the retreat.

During the event many local dignitaries and Oakham residents showed their appreciation and support. A collection was made in aid of the Army benevolent Fund.

The band is based at Colchester, its remit to provide support for the airborne units of the army and the remainder of the Armed Forces as required.



2248 (Rutland) Squadron

Air Cadets

cordially invites:



Rutland RAFA Members

to the Squadron's Annual Presentation Evening

on Thurs 11th December 2008

1915hrs for 1930hrs

at Squadron HQ

Penn Street

Oakham

R.S.V.P – Sqn HQ
01572 723624
by 2nd December 2008



Brew for the Few 2008 - RAF Coningsby

On the 2nd September 2008, to mark the launch of the 2008 Wings Appeal and commemorate the RAF's 90th anniversary, a special Brew for the Few was held at RAF Coningsby. Some 600 members and guests attended and enjoyed an aerial display as a World War II Spitfire took on the state-of-the-art Euro fighter Typhoon.

The RAF Shades of Blue Orchestra, the dance band of Band of the RAF Regiment, played a varied range of music throughout the afternoon. Special guests on the day included former WW11 Spitfire pilot John Down, 91 and Battle of Britain air gunner Albert Gregory, also 91. Another guest was RAF veteran Harry Tomblin, who, like the RAF, was celebrating his 90th birthday. During the event, the RAF Coningsby Station Commander, Group Captain Stuart Atha paid tribute to the help the Association provides and thanked them for their work & support.

Area Newsletter

STAMP COLLECTING

I would be obliged if you could mention in the next NL when printed that I am collecting used **British & Foreign postage stamps** all year round in aid of RAFA Wings Appeal, and would welcome members' support by bringing along to the meeting stamps with approx. one quarter of an inch of envelope left around the stamp. If not attending the meeting hand to any committee or phone me and I will happily collect. Many charities collect this way so we might as well give it a whirl!

Angie Humphreys

CARTRIDGE COLLECTION

The RAF Benevolent Fund can now convert your used inkjet printer cartridges into money which helps to fund our valuable welfare work. Recycling also helps to conserve our planet for the future. The Fund receives £1 for each inkjet printer cartridge we recycle! 'Empties' to **Peter Thomas** please - **No Epson or Laser cartridges thank you.**

BRANCH NOTES

The **Flying Horseshoe** is prepared by the end of each calendar month. Contributions can be sent to either:

Phil Marston at 12 Seaton Road, Uppingham, LE15 9QX (joyphilmarston@btinternet.com) or
Derek Bury at 39 Lonsdale Road, Oakham, LE15 6LP (rafarutland923@yahoo.co.uk).

It is your newsletter and needs your support. If there is anything you like or dislike (colour/font etc) please let us know.

All meetings will be in the **Cottesmore Village Hall Sports & Social Club** until further notice.