

	<p><b>THE ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION</b></p> <p><b>Rutland Branch</b></p> <p><b>THE FLYING HORSESHOE</b></p>	
<p><b>Branch Newsletter</b></p>	<p><b>May 2011</b></p>	

## **May Meeting Help for Heroes**

The guest speaker at our May meeting was Carol Roome, Help for Heroes county coordinator for Rutland. Carol gave an interesting talk of the origins of the charity and spoke of the work they do for the injured returning service men and women. She explained the Help for Heroes 5 Key Messages that state: - It's about the men /women; It provides direct practical support; It is not political; It is about fundraising and It focuses on spending all donations received on helping our injured returning service personnel. The selling of H4H merchandise covers the administrative costs.

Carol was asked about the impact H4H high profile has had on other charities such as the Wings Appeal. Carol and others at the meeting agreed that all the charities work is vital and complimentary. Some felt that Wings focused more on welfare, and providing community support especially with families who are grieving.

The Uppingham Rotary Charity Band Concert held last month was a success and at the meeting cheques were presented one to speaker Carol Roome for H4H and one to our own Jim Tibbott for Wings appeal. The £880 that Wings received was appreciated.



**Kathryn Manderson**

## Annual Conference Eastbourne

Yet again we were very fortunate with the weather at Eastbourne. Just as at Blackpool last year, it was a lovely dry weekend with a sea breeze. There the similarity with Blackpool ended!!

Moving on! It was AM Phil Sturley's last conference as National President and, needless to say, he chaired the conference in his own unique way. (I am only a simple pilot!!)

Two messages were clearly given out by both the Central Council and the delegates. Firstly that the Association is on a reasonably sound financial footing, although new methods of fundraising will need to be added to reduce the reliance on legacy income. Secondly, and I believe much more fundamental, was the emphasis and pride in the fact that we are the largest membership-based Service organisation in the UK and that rather than being a charitable organisation we are a friendship organisation that carries out charitable work. A very important distinction I hope you will agree.

On the social front, we were entertained on numerous occasions by the magnificent Central Band of the RAF who played the whole range from jazz, through dancing to the playing of the Last Post during the drumhead service at the bandstand on the Promenade. The flypast by a Spitfire from the BBMF was a perfect ending to the service.

As a Branch we were technically well represented. Myself and Kathryn, Dave Craven and his team, AM Sturley, Sir John and Lady Sutton and our newest member who was 'recruited' during the conference and of whom you will hear more about at a later date!

At the conference servicemen and women from RAF Cottesmore received an award in recognition of their outstanding fundraising achievements in support of RAFA. The Sir John Baker Trophy was awarded in recognition of the Station for raising the second highest amount, nearly £20,000 of any RAF Station for the Association's Wings Appeal. This is a truly amazing achievement against a backdrop of uncertain times for RAF Cottesmore and its personnel, and emphasises the heart and resilience of the men and women of the Station. The award was received on behalf of the Station by the Officer Commanding RAF Cottesmore, Wg Cdr James Savage, accompanied by the Station's RAFA Liaison Officer (RAFALO) Chief Technician David Craven and fellow RAFALO's Corporal Tracey Wagoner and Senior Aircraftsman Neil Smith.



The amount raised is also testament to the generosity and support of the local community for what is a truly worthwhile cause.

The photo shows from left to right Cpl Tracey Wagoner, Chf Tech David Craven, Wg Cdr James Savage and SAC Neil Smith.

All in all it was a very friendly and enjoyable conference. The weather was good. The food was good and I am told the beer was good. Sadly, according to Kathryn, the shopping was very good also. You just can't win them all!!

**Duncan Manderson and David Craven**

## Impact of Our Early Summer

It has been reported that due to the early summer weather this spring that nature has become confused, the flowers destined for the Chelsea Flower show have bloomed ahead of time and strawberries have ripened early. The concern is that there may not be any strawberries left when Wimbledon begins! These latter concerns led me to look at the history of fruit and then to how our mothers dealt with this same issue albeit for different reasons, the impact of 'no strawberries' or as they knew it 'rationing' during the two World Wars.

Ancient literature tells of Strawberries and Raspberries being grown in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. Indeed Jelly and Jams were made and enjoyed in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, whilst the first Summer Pudding recipe was written down in 1845.

For Centuries society has been used to a variety of foods, so when war was declared what did we do?



When Britain declared war with Germany in September 1939, the government had already devised the Food Defence Plans, and had imported 55 million tons of food in readiness for war. A week after the war broke out; a separate government body known as the Ministry of Food was established, eventually employing around 50,000 officials under Lord Woolton.

In January 1940 the Ministry of Food started implementing food rationing. Everyone was expected to adhere to rationing, including the Royal Family. To improve availability of food people were encouraged to produce their own under a scheme called 'Dig for Victory'.

I always believed that the allotments we know today were the result of rationing in WW1 & 2. I was wrong. The history of allotments can be said to go back over a thousand years to when the Saxons would clear a field from woodland that would be held in common. In the late 1500s, during the reign of Elizabeth I, common lands used by the poor for growing food and keeping animals began to be enclosed dispossessing the poor. In compensation allotments of land were attached to tenant cottages. This is the first mention of allotments. The word 'allotment' originates from land being allotted to an individual under an enclosure award (Enclosures were used by richer land-owners to stop the poor grazing their animals on common land). It's possible to trace the origins of allotments back over 200 hundred years.

During the First World War Germany's blockade caused food shortages, which increased the demand for allotments. One source of land suitable for allotments but not large enough for general agricultural use was the land owned by railway companies. These parcels of land were often allotted to the railway workers and this is the reason that you will often see allotments by railway lines today. In WW2 Britain was blockaded again and food shortages followed. The pressure was greater than that of the First World War and even public parks were pressed into use for food production. Food rationing kept the demand for allotments and homegrown foods high until the end of the war although rationing continued until 1954.

Allotment and home food production is highly productive in terms of land use and during the war allotments were estimated to contribute have produced some 1.3 million tonnes of food from 1.4 million plots. Agricultural production generally is more efficient in terms of labour but not in terms of land usage.

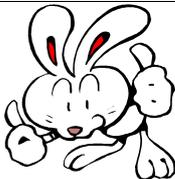
It is interesting that the Report of the last major inquiry into allotments, the Thorpe Inquiry in 1969, noted with concern that a good deal of allotment land was being taken over for other purposes. Since 1943, provision has continued to decline with a further halving of the total number of allotments.

The Branch web site is at [www.rafarutland.org.uk](http://www.rafarutland.org.uk)

In August 2010 The Leicestershire Allotment Society held their Centenary Celebrations. Some members had decided to discover and write the 'history of their plots. Some of our members I know have allotments, would you consider writing a history of your site, especially during the war years? The article could be placed in our magazine. Possible sources of material include: Council Records Council Minutes Church Records

**Kathryn Manderson**

### DATES for Your DIARY

1 <sup>st</sup> June 2011	Inspector Rutland LPU	The Role of the Police in Rutland
6th July	Richard Foster County RBL Manager Leics & Rutland	His role in the welfare work of the Royal British Legion in Rutland and its surrounding counties
3rd Aug 2011	Julia Thompson	Herbal Medicine
7th Sept 2011	Social Evening	
5th Oct 2011	Rutland Willows	Bypass Spitfire
2nd Nov 2011	Dan Stellmacher	German Tornado Pilot TBC
<b>30<sup>th</sup> Nov '11</b>	<b>Christmas Dinner</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2012	T B A	Happy New Year
1st Feb 2012	Tony Halliwell	Principal Welbeck The Defence 6th Form College. Cadets to be invited

Meetings are 1<sup>st</sup> Wed every month Venue: Cottesmore Sports & Social Club – 7.00 for 7.30pm

#### Branch Contact Numbers

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Peter Hart, Speaker coordinator, 01572 756750

**TBA.** Wings Appeal Organiser

#### Forthcoming Local Events

that may be of interest to members.

24<sup>th</sup> June The Central Band are having a 'Music for Heroes' concert at the De Montfort Hall in Leicester.

3<sup>rd</sup> July Waddington International Air Show – For details contact Derek Bury