

	<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>July 2011</b></p>

## **Speaker Secretary Notes July 2011**



Wg Cdr Richard Foster, a former colleague of mine from the Royal British Legion, was our guest speaker at July's meeting. Richard and I worked together for Leicestershire & Rutland, he initially as County Field Officer and then County Manager and me as The Community Fund Raiser. He spent most of his service career flying Helicopters; in fact he told me his first posting involved flying the Whirlwind, and doesn't that take you back? Unbeknown to me for some time Richard had been a flight commander in Northern Ireland and had been responsible for air security during a family funeral we suffered, I'm sure neither he nor I would want to repeat. But nevertheless it's a small world.

He said that he had served 35 years and 227 days in the Royal Air Force and was a life member of the RAFA Luxemburg Branch, although he does not attend very often. His first interest in the RBL was when, as a small boy, he heard stories, on his Grandad's knee, of the hardship and devastation that servicemen returning from the first and second world wars had endured. It had been explained to him how desperate their need was and how Earl Haig, along with others, had tried to improve their lot. One way of helping was to arrange for veterans to be able to obtain a Burton's suit enabling them to present themselves in an acceptable manner when attending an employment interview. That of course was 90 years ago and the Legion had been helping the serving and ex-service community ever since.

Throughout his service career interest in the Royal British Legion was always there, if perhaps on the backburner. When serving as our Air Attaché in Prague, the work of the Legion came to the fore again for Richard. During the Second World War many people from Czechoslovakia had served with the allies, creating their own fighter squadrons 310, 312 & 313 Sqn, as well as 311 (bomber/coastal) Sqn and 68 Sqn, night fighters, many giving their lives for the freedom we enjoy. On returning home they were met by the new communist regime who for reasons known only to themselves condemned the returning service personnel to hard labour, and in the worst cases death, for their RAF service during the war. This of course meant hardship for the families but through the Embassy diplomatic sources, the Luxemburg RAFA Branch were able to get help to these people. Richard also gave an example from his time in Czechoslovakia of one lady who had lost her brother during the war and was desperate to visit his grave. Whilst the Communists had refused to divulge the details, the new government under Vaclav Havel, released them. The family could not afford the costs of travel to Brussels to visit the grave, so Richard contacted the Royal British Legion and they paid for the whole thing without any fuss.

Richard was able to show that on his patch here in the midlands £1m has been spent in support of the service and ex service community since October 2010. This money had been spent on things such as electric mobility scooters, stairlifts, riser-recliner chairs, washing machines and fridges, as well as helping ex-service personnel gain employment in civilian life. Richard explained that he

spent much of his time visiting prisons, where ex service personnel were coming to the end of their sentence and needed help to readjust to society. Again the Legion is able to help. He said that the RBL did not work in isolation but with other service charities including RAFA and in Leicester the RBL HQ was shared by SSAFA Forces Help.

In answer to a question, Richard explained that Poppy Calls was a system where a trained tradesman will visit your home to do those little jobs that age does no longer allow you to do. For further information call 0800 032 0306.

The power of the Legion has been shown by its influence on the government with the Military Covenant. They also provide short and long-term care for ex-Service people and their dependants in seven care homes around the country. In fact, if you have served, or are a dependant of someone who has served in the Armed Services for only 7 days, your fist call for help and support is the Royal British Legion.

The main source of the Legion funding is from the annual Poppy Appeal, which has reached £35 million this year, enabling the RBL to spend £200,000 a day on welfare across the country..

In reply to another question, Richard was able to assure our members that Help For Heroes was not affecting the Poppy Appeal income and in many cases we were working with them to achieve our common objective, for example sharing the costs of the Personnel Recovery Centres.

Our speaker next month is a Branch member Tony Harris who is coming along to tell us something about the RAF Marine Craft Units and their Air Sea Rescue duties in the Second World War. Some time ago, light heartedly, I said that we had covered all aspects of the Royal Air Force with past speakers and I was looking in other areas. Tony pointed out that we had not heard anything about the RAF boats, so here will be your chance!



**Peter Hart**

## RAF Waddington International Air Show 2-3<sup>rd</sup> July 2011

**BRILLIANT, FANTASTIC, GREAT**, expressions which in themselves are no description of the astounding occasion which was the RAF Waddington International Air Show this year. The weekend event it is reported saw, about 65,000 visitors from across the country and beyond flock to the air base. With the brilliant weather came an influx of people and the gates were closed on the Sunday to all but advance ticket holders by about 11am.

It was the perfect weather for aviation photographers and aviators alike. The cloudless skies over Waddington made the individual aerobatic displays a thrill to watch, All our favourites on show, The Red Arrows, US Air Force Thunderbirds, Sally B B17 Bomber, Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. Many came to see the Avro Vulcan XH558, and were not disappointed as it gracefully took to the sky. Other highlights included the Falcons parachute team, and displays by the, Blades, [RN Black Cats](#), a [\\_DH Vampire Pair](#) , Tornado [GR4](#) and a Chinook helicopter all on the Flying schedule.



A full programme of entertainment included the RAF Cranwell swing band, and march past by the RAF Waddington pipe band. Static displays and continuing demonstrations by local organisations were to be found in the hangers. On the Sunday, in hanger 4 Carol Vorderman interviewed the Red Arrows Team and others as part of her work with the RAF Wings Appeal. A great day out for families with a fun fare, many exhibitions, flight trainers and the many retail stalls.



Thankfully for those of a certain age there was a seating area in the veteran's marquee, which provided a superb location to watch the Flying display. This refuge from the hot sun thankfully had catering facilities and a separate toilet area. This made the unenviable queues on the main site non existent for those fortunate enough to be in his area.

To put on an event such as this is a great team effort .**Well done RAF Waddington.**

**Derek Bury**

## History of the Avro Vulcan

The Vulcan was designed in response to a specification issued in 1947; a four engined nuclear bomber was required as the growing menace of the Soviet Union made itself felt. Avro's chief designer, Roy Chadwick began an unusual design based on a delta wing concept and in a matter of months later, the design had been submitted and had won the contest (along with Handley Page's HP.80 design - later to become the [Victor](#)). The design was changed before the familiar Vulcan layout was settled on; fins on the wingtips became a single conventional fin, and the nose was extended along with the addition of a distinct fuselage section as opposed to the near-flying-wing idea originally envisaged. Tragically, Chadwick was killed in an air accident later in the year, but Stuart Davies, his assistant, survived the crash and continued development on the Avro Type 698 design, taking over as head of Avro's design team.

To help gain data for the radical new design, several 'mini-Vulcans' were built; these were the Avro Type 707s. At one point the RAF wanted a twin-seat 707 for use as a Vulcan trainer, but eventually this requirement was dropped and only one such 707, the 707C, was built. Finally, in 1952, the first prototype of what would become the Vulcan (Type 698 VX770), was ready to fly. This was recognisably a Vulcan, but the wings were of a pure delta form with none of the now-familiar kinked leading edges, and there were several other detail differences in the aircraft's overall shape. Aircraft development in the 1950s was very different to modern-day development - whereas nowadays it seems most time and effort is put into complex computer simulations and making sure the flight control software is working before risking a first flight, in the days of the Vulcan's development, rather more primitive methods were used.

Many Vulcans ended up being scrapped, or burned as fire practice airframes. A few were preserved and sold to museums or private individuals. Unfortunately in early 1993, despite intensive public lobbying to keep her flying, XH558 the last Vulcan, was finally retired from the RAF and sold to David Walton who looked after it at Bruntingthorpe airfield in Leicestershire before selling it on to a company formed with the aim of returning her to the air.

taken from [www.thunder-andlightening.uk.co](http://www.thunder-andlightening.uk.co)

**Leicestershire & Rutland Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance**

## De Montfort Hall – Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Tickets on sale from 1st August either from De Montfort Hall box office - 0116 2333111 or from Michelle Greenwell on 0116 2616584

**Phil Mitchell**

### DATES for Your DIARY

3rd Aug 2011	Tony Harris	Air Sea Rescue
7th Sept 2011	Social Evening	
5th Oct 2011	Rutland Willows	Bypass Spitfire
2nd Nov 2011	Dan Stellmacher	Tornado Pilot
<b><u>30<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011</u></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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Wings Appeal Organiser Jim Tibbott Deputy Organiser Dave Craven

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Wings Appeal collection at the Co-op on the 16<sup>th</sup> July. Over £250 was collected in spite of it being changeable weather conditions and it not seeming to be very busy.

A few possible members made themselves known to us and were given all the relevant information and an invitation to attend our meetings. Time will tell!

#### NEW MEMBERS

We wish to welcome Richard Foster who has transferred his membership of RAFA from Luxembourg to Rutland Branch.

**Angie Humphreys**