

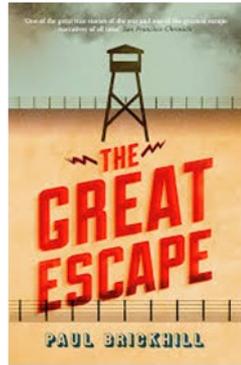


The Great Escape Commemoration

A letter from The Secretary
 RAFA Leicestershire Branch
 Sent 26th March

Dear All,

On behalf of the Leicester branch of Royal Air Forces Association, I would like to say a very sincere thank you to all who took part in the Wreath Laying Ceremony, at Victoria Park, Leicester, last Monday morning. Thanks in particular go to our comrades in Melton Mowbray and Rutland Branches, who supported us with their standards, to Darren Green, our bugler from Thurmaston Scout Band, and the Revd Suresh Kumar, the Minister from St Phillip's Church, representing not only the church but also the Commonwealth.



What a moving and emotional event, in the tribute to the gallant '50' murdered, 70 years ago.

We also had really good media coverage, BBC Radio Leicester, included us in their morning news bulletins, I did a live interview with Martin Ballard at 8.15am on the Morning Show. Barry and I did live interviews at the Memorial prior to the ceremony, and also again live interviews following the ceremony. BBC Television East Midlands filmed the whole event. And of course not forgetting the Leicester Mercury.

Thank you
 Best wishes
 Roy

Can you help the 2248 (Rutland) Squadron Air Cadets.

I am taking the liberty of using the RAFA Rutland distribution list to make a request for help for 2248 (Rutland) Squadron Air Cadets. I am sure I do not need to tell you of the value of the Air Cadet Organisation, after all they are now bigger than the regular service and auxiliaries combined and are therefore more important than ever for spreading the message to the wider community.

As you probably know, each squadron is supported by a civilian committee. The Committee is there to provide a link with the civilian community, to help and support to the Squadron and show an interest in its activities. In addition, one of its major roles is raising funds for the Squadron. It's important to realise that, although much of the ATC is funded from the RAF, if a squadron is to be really effective and provide challenges for the cadets, it needs to buy some of its own equipment and pay for some activities.

The Committee must include a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, all of whom are elected; the CO and Honorary Chaplain serve ex-officio. In addition we try to recruit parents to the committee and at present have two, who are very supportive.

However, I have now been chairman of the committee for 15 years and my wife has been secretary for the same time. We are both reluctant to go on until we have to give up and I would particularly like to see a smooth handover to new blood and to widen the background of the committee members. I am therefore looking for people who might like to join us to see how things are with a view to taking over a share of the work. I have to say that the task is not onerous. The Squadron is in good shape and we get excellent support from the great and good of Rutland, not to mention Air Vice Marshal Gary Waterfall, the last CO of RAF Cottesmore, who remains our president. We meet about 4-5 times a year, our finances are sound and our major event is the presentation evening in December for which the Committee has traditionally done the raffle, mulled wine and background organisation and which some of you have attended.

If anyone would like to help, or if you know someone who might be interested, please get in touch with me
 Andrew Griffin –
 at ajpgriffin@uwclub.net
 Tel 01572-822131.





THE RUTLAND FLYING HORSESHOE

Cranwell 1962

As mentioned previously the RAF whilst acting as your very concerned parent or guardian only gave you, as a Boy Entrant a small amount of your pay, with the balance being paid as a lump sum at the end of each term. Having completed my Boy Entrant training and blown a substantial amount of money during my leave I was now back in the real world. From being a senior entry, leading boy, I was now an SAC (Senior Aircraftman) in the real Air Force and posted to the RAF College Cranwell. I recall I was excited that at long last I would be let loose on real aeroplanes. You get very easily excited when your 18 years old. On arrival I reported, along with a number of other ex Boys, to the guardroom I recall that it was getting late in the day we were issued with bedding and directed to this three story block where we were to spend the night more like a stable.

The next morning, after a full English I reported to SHQ (Station Headquarters) collected my blue arrival chit and started on my rounds to see what this Air Force was all about. The first point of call was to my new section, the Electronics Block, or perhaps better described a wooden hut, a quick chat with my boss a Flying Officer Le Dour and sent off to complete the arrival process. As I toured the station I was fast learning that being an ex Boy Entrant was perhaps not the best of starts in this man's Air Force and when the opportunity came forget it; we were not that bad surely not, we must have grown up a little. Over the years the Boy Entrant's had not been welcome on units by anyone. They were considered to be just silly little boys who had to be tolerated. I suppose along with other boys from the 42nd entry, I lived up to the reputation. The first task I was given, along with another couple of newly posted Boys, was to take up the floorboards of the old station church. To complete this task we were given a number of nail extractors. The tools we were given were very primitive requiring a hand of solid mussel. When considering that each piece of board 6"x 2" contained 6 nails it was the most laborious task anyone could have been given and you should have seen the blisters. The only positive aspect of the task was that there had a J/T (Junior Technician) in charge and our work periods gradually become shorter and shorter which enabled us to be first in the mess queues.

This task lasted for about a month before we were recalled to the Electronics Centre. It had taken time, but we were about to get on with real work. How wrong can you be; we were greeted with, "Have you seen orders?" What are orders? They are those lists of instructions that appear on the Section Notice Board every week or so with all the necessary information for all to read and digest to enable the Unit to run efficiently. Not to be confused with standing orders which were in a big folder and had to signed that you had read and understood them. We had only been at Cranwell for a month but we featured with instructions to report to the Guardroom at 08.00 on Monday morning for a week of guard duties. This Air Force was getting better by the day. I can only remember one incident. Along with another couple of lads I was sent out to RAF Fulbeck to guard the airfield and the control tower it was very exciting. On this occasion we had a Cpl in charge. In the early evening we were enjoying the television and views from the tower when a small aircraft came into circuit and landed and taxied to the far side of the airfield and was

met by a car. The Cpl by this time was in a stiff panic, what do we do? I was sent off on my RAF bicycle round the perry track to intercept either the aircraft of the car it didn't matter which, but with perhaps two miles on my sturdy stead I had little chance of doing either. My colleagues during this time were busily trying to contact Cranwell and the Guard Commander or The Orderly Office or both. By the time I reached the far side of the airfield all was quiet no sign of either a car or aircraft. The cavalry arrived in the form of the Orderly Officer and the local Police Officer about two hours later. No idea what it was all about? It was interesting to speculate though.

I finally arrived at my section the Air Wireless Bay. Again things didn't go to well as I found myself on the VHF radio bench. I can't recall what task I had been given but I would imagine it was something insignificant perhaps to carry out a modification or another. One joyful afternoon carrying out my tasks diligently I managed to short out a large capacitor. A capacitor contains a charge, something like a battery with out any current. Although they work in completely different ways, capacitors and batteries both store electrical energy but the capacitor contains a large voltage. The result of my digression was to be thrown across the Radio Bay and clout my back on the bench on the other side of the bay. I was shipped off to visit the Medical Officer (MO) who said that I was OK but not to make a habit of it as sooner or later it may kill me. I really didn't like working in Radio Bays, after all the Air Force by its nature-involved aeroplanes. This may be the opportunity to introduce what aircraft were based at Cranwell in the early 60's. The main training aircraft were the Jet Provost Mk3 & Mk4 there were a few Vampires about along with Chipmunks and Valetta aircraft for training navigators. The Valetta was a Varsity with a nose wheel I also remember there was an Anson stuck at the back of one of the hangers that I didn't ever see fly. Following the capacitor incident I was given any gash job that came up. This resulted in the Boy Entrant to rear its head along with another BE from the radar bay we were having great fun with a box and a headset stuck in it, it kept us entertained for most of the afternoon until OC Elect Eng asked to listen to it, resulting in both Parky and I being posted to RAF Barkston Heath. Barkeston was a satellite of Cranwell with a line of Jet Provosts where the bad boys were sent, and was the most efficient area of the unit. If it wasn't we would not have survived and got away with what we did.

This has been extract from "**A fairies view of the Royal Air Force**".

Many thanks to all our contributors for some good stories and observations. I have received a first class story about the exploits of an American B17 which I will prepare for next months Horseshoe. Something to look forward too. Thanks to Derek for this.

Perhaps we can print your story month.
Peter

THE RUTLAND FLYING HORSESHOE

Many of you know my view of encouraging RAF Student Cadets to take part in RAFA and as Helen Gibson was our May speaker I would include a report from Loughborough DTAS Students.



Exercise Typhoon Exhibition Expedition



OCdt Goddard gets a bit wet from the river crossing.

During the first week of Easter leave, 5 Bursars from Typhoon Squadron went to HMS Drake for a week's Force Development and Adventurous Training. Museums visited include the Fleet Air Arm Museum, Cornwall's Regimental Museum and the Somerset Military Museum. Adventurous training took place in the form of Mountaineering across Dartmoor.

The first day's activity was mountaineering. We travelled to Oakhampton and set off for a day of micro nav, to improve our map reading skills. With each bursar navigating a leg, it was soon apparent that some people's observational skills were a little rusty resulting in a damp river crossing. Although the unnoticed bridge was only 300m away and the weather was glorious, we were still reminded of the potential consequences of poor navigation in not so favourable weather. The attention to detail was much improved afterwards!

On Monday we visited Cornwall's Regimental Museum. Situated in 'the Keep' in Bodmin the museum tells the story of the Cornwall Regiment from 1702 to its present day form in The Rifles. Inside we saw that the Regiment had taken part in most of the campaigns the British Army had fought in since its conception in 1702; and how it had evolved from the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry to the Rifles. An interesting part of this museum was dedicated to the late Harry Patch Britain's 'Last Fighting Tommy'. He served with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry in World War 1 but sadly died in 2009 as the last surviving soldier to have fought in the trenches.

Tuesday saw us visit the Somerset Military Museum. This told the story of the Somerset regiments and how together with the Cornwall Regiment they merged into the Rifles. We then went on to see how the Military bought aid to the civil community in times of need during the recent floods as well as the effect that the recent storms have had on infrastructure such as the Railway at Dawlish.

On Wednesday we had a second day of mountaineering on Dartmoor. This time we headed to the area north east of Princetown. It was clear from the outset that Sunday's lessons had been taken on board and more attention to detail was being taken. Although a blanket of fog was around us it didn't dampen our spirits but gave us a chance to practice navigation in some relatively dire conditions. Our progress was slower than Sunday's but we learnt a lot with some of us even contemplating doing our MLT course by the end of the day.

On our last day we visited the Fleet Air Arm Museum. Based on the fully operation Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton, the Museum tells the story of aviation within the Royal Navy past, present and future. Highlights included the aircraft carrier experience where we were 'flown' to HMS Ark Royal and given a tour of her flight deck and island. We were even fortunate enough to witness the 'landing' of a Blackburn Buccaneer and 'take-off' of a McDonnell Phantom (we didn't actually see this happen but the visual effects were quite good and gave us a great insight into the operations of a 1970's aircraft carrier).

The week was thoroughly enjoyed by all, with a wide range of both military knowledge and practical skills taken on board. Experiencing a week in the Officer's Mess at HMS Drake and the social interaction with serving Officers gave us a further insight into life as an Officer in the Armed Forces. Many thanks go to OCdt Griffiths for organising the visit and driving us around for the week and OCdt Horvath for sharing driving duties.

OCdt Goddard



The Gazette

Dates For Your Diary



7th May	Helen Gibson	RAFA Youth Community Manager
4th June	Sandy Saunders	Being a member of the Guinea Pig Club
2nd July	TBA	
6th August	Derek Bury	Quiz Night
3rd September	TBA	

RAFA Social Visits 2014

Sunday 25th May. D-Day Anniversary Duxford Air Show —Transport VAR MINI Bus from Oakham. Tickets purchased on line to obtain 10% discount on Monday 21st April – **No Refund** once booked. Payment to be made in full (£30.00per person) and details of outing at the next RAFA Meeting Wednesday 7th May. Places still available.

Wednesday 18th June - National Memorial Arboretum

A must visit to this popular location. Costs: **Entry to the venue is free** but donations are accepted. Volunteer private car drivers will be required for this visit .but help will be provided with transport and parking fee: Bookings now being taken.

Wednesday 16th July - Canal Boat Trip — From Pilling's Lock or Thurmaston Leicester (TBD) Includes stop off at a waterside pub for lunch or take a picnic Costs **(TBN) 12 places only**. Bookings now being take

If you wish to go to any of the above events contact me on 01572 755969 05 email derval.bury@yahoo.co.uk

Branch Meeting

Branch Meetings are First Wednesday every month Venue: Cottesmore Sports & Social Club 7.00 for 7.30pm

Branch Committee Members

President: Air Marshal Sir John M D Sutton KCB (Retd)

Chairman: Duncan Manderson, Pickwell Grange, Whissendine, LE15 7ER, 01664 474274

Vice Chairman: Gordon Diffey. Tel 01572 722068

Branch Secretary: Phil Marston, 12 Seaton Road, Uppingham, LE15 9QX, 01572 822731

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Editor Flying Horseshoe: Peter Hart, , Tel 01572756750 peterivy42@btinternet.com

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Wings Appeal Organiser :

Honorary Welfare Officer:

Membership Secretary: Angie Humphreys, email angelaandfrancis@talktalk.net

Meetings Coordinator: Bob Tacey, Tel 01572 812455, email taceybob@hotmail.com

Social Secretary: Derek Bury, Tel 01572 755969, email derek_bury@hotmail.co.uk

Standard Bearer: Francis Humphreys,

Christmas Dinner Organiser, Roger Hyde, Tel 01572 813547email g3zdw@btinternet.com