



## The Demise of The RAF VC-10's

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2013 was a very sad day for the UK aviation enthusiast, as one of the most graceful aircraft to fly in the Royal Air Force made a landmark final operational sortie. The Vickers VC-10 may have been nearly 50 years in RAF service, but time cannot diminish the appeal of this queen of the skies, a statement sheared with the Comet, and the affection in which it is held and Friday 20th September 2013 will have been a sad day indeed. The last two remaining RAF aircraft ZA147 and ZA150 conducted their final air-to-air refuelling sortie, before carrying out a number of flypasts at RAF establishments and other select locations – a sombre occasion, I am sure. With both aircraft now back at Brize Norton, it will not be long before we will be saying goodbye to the glorious VC-10 for good – yet another much loved RAF type which is confined to the aviation history books.

But perhaps all is not lost for us, as I understand that one of these aircraft will remain in a taxiing condition at Bruntingthorpe in Leicestershire which opens its gates to the public a couple of times a year. We will keep our eyes open and let you know the open days for 2014.

I have a little, VC10, story. During the mid sixties I was posted to the Transit Aircraft Servicing Flight (TASF) at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus. At that time it was a very busy place with on average of a dozen or so military and civilian aircraft staging through each day. The Flight was divided between two sets of people the Technicians who controlled the aircraft and the Movement staff (Movers) who looked after the cargo and passengers. On this bright sunny Saturday morning a VC10 arrived about 10.00hrs from Singapore followed about an hour later by another one from Aden. Normal procedures were adopted where the aircraft was met by the technicians who carried out the turnaround servicing led by an NCO, the Pinkie, who carried a clipboard with Pink forms indicating the aircraft

requirements hence his nick name the pinkie. When the aircraft was ready for departure the form was signed off by the captain and the Pinkie.

He also spoke to the aircrew via the roving lead on the aircrafts arrival and departure.



Back to the story you will recall that we have now two VC10s parked on our dispersal one had arrived about an hour before the other. Unfortunately the first aircraft developed some small snags (faults) and it looked as if its departure would be delayed. The second VC10 was running to time and departed an hour and a half after its arrival. The first aircraft was still being fixed, which wasn't taking as long as expected. Forty five minutes after the first aircraft had departed the second one was ready to board. I was the Pinkie on this aircraft and was chatting to the crew on my headset as the passengers boarded, looking forward to my lunch. We had started number 3 & 4 engines moved the steps away and started 1&2 I was waiting my instructions from the flight deck to remove the chocks. When suddenly the engines were cut and through my headset I was told to put the steps back in. When the door opened it was not a member of the cabin crew that was peering out of it but the captain. Shouting that he had never before carried standing passengers and he wasn't starting now. You see the Air Force tried it long before Ryanair thought of it.

Apparently what had happened was that the movers had moved VIP passengers from one aircraft to the other and had somehow miss counted so the first VC10 had departed half empty and the second one overfilled? Not sure how it was resolved but the aircraft left about an hour later with its correct number of passengers.

**Perhaps you were there!!**

## DAFTLAND

We live in a country called Daftland  
The England we knew is no more  
Where sensible people do ludicrous things  
Or risk breaking some Daftland law.

In Daftland we've police dogs  
with muzzles  
Less the villain has cause to complain  
And to steal from a shop and say  
'sorry'  
Means you're free with no stain to  
your name.

You had better leave lights on  
in buildings  
When you lock up and go home at  
night 'cause the burglars might hurt  
themselves entering  
And there's no way you'll be in  
the right.

When speaking be wary in Daftland  
As some terms that you've used all  
your life  
Now have connotations unintended  
And you'll end up in all sorts of strife.

We elect politicians in Daftland  
To give us the laws of the land  
Yet eight laws in ten now come from  
abroad  
The whole thing has got out of hand.

The borders are open in Daftland  
And of migrants there's no keeping  
track  
Just a few of the thousands illegally  
here  
Will ever be caught and sent back.

The exception to this is the hero  
Who fought for this land in the war  
He's old and he's sick, he might cost  
us a bit  
So he's not welcome here anymore.

When the history is written of  
Daftland  
Historians may just recall  
That the craziest people in Daftland  
are the public who put up with it all

Supplied by the Secretary.



## THE RUTLAND FLYING HORSESHOE

### Letter to the Editor:-

RE: RAFA Rutland Flying Horseshoe - October 2013

Thank you for this, was an good read. I am currently away on detachment on the RAF Police dog section in the Falklands but will hopefully look to come to one of the get together s on my return in April.

Regards Dan Hill.

*It's nice to know we have at least one reader. Peter*

## RAFA Rutland Christmas Dinner Greetham Valley Golf Club

**Wednesday 4 December – 7.30 for 8.00**

£22.00 per person (including gratuity).

### MENU

**A) Homemade celery and stilton soup** with fresh garlic croutons

or

**B) Assiette of starters** to include Smoked salmon rosette, Sliced pork fillet with apricot sausage, Red onion and brie tart.

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### From the Carvery

**C) Roast breast of turkey, Horseshoe of honey and mustard baked ham Roast sirloin of beef** all served with roasted potatoes, a chipolata, Yorkshire pudding, seasonal vegetables and pan gravy

or

**D) Filo parcel filled with feta cheese, wild mushrooms & leeks** served with a timbale of Couscous and a tomato & basil coulis

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**E) Traditional Christmas pudding** served with lashings of homemade brandy sauce

or

**F) Assiette of Desserts** to include Chocolate truffle cheesecake, Traditional Christmas pudding with brandy sauce, Homemade yuletide ice cream.

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**Coffee, tea and chocolate mints**

### **RAFA Rutland Christmas Dinner Return Slip 2013**

Name	Starter (A or B)	Main (C or D)	Dessert (E or F)

Please complete the above with names of those attending (guests and friends welcome) together with the menu choice for each person. Send together with your cheque (payable to 'RAFA Rutland') as soon as possible, but **no later than 22 Nov** to: Roger Hyde, 25 The Pastures, Cottesmore, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 7DZ. Alternatively at the November Branch meeting. Enquires: Tel 01572 813547 or email: [g3zdw@btinternet.com](mailto:g3zdw@btinternet.com)

**Raffle prizes would be appreciated, the more the merrier.**

# THE RUTLAND FLYING HORSESHOE

## Station Commander RAF High Wycombe Group Captain Mark Heffron (UK)



The speaker at the October meeting was Group Captain Mark D Heffron who gave a first class presentation on the current state of Royal Air Force and background information on RAF

High Wycombe.

On arriving to take up the post of Officer Commanding Administration Wing at RAF Cottesmore in 2003 Mark transferred his RAFA membership from Shetland to Rutland. Although currently Station Commander at RAF High Wycombe he has remained a Branch member in Rutland. He left RAF Cottesmore in 2005 to take up the position as Military Assistant to Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe.

The RAF is due to reduce in numbers to 33,500 by 2015 when there will be a further Defence review and the numbers could reduce further to some 32,000. The reserve forces are being increased and there will be 25,000 less civil servants under the MOD umbrella. RAF High Wycombe, situated at Naphill in Buckinghamshire, is the home of the Royal Air Force's HQ Air Command. It was formed on 1 April 2007, when the RAF's Personnel and Training Command and Strike Command merged. The creation of a single Command, with a single fully integrated Headquarters, will better equip the RAF to provide a coherent and coordinated single Air focus to the other Services, MOD Head Office, the Permanent Joint Headquarters and the rest of MOD.

RAF High Wycombe is an administrative support unit located in the village of Naphill, approximately 3 miles from the town of High Wycombe. Its mission statement is "To enable HQ Air Command and other units parented by RAF High Wycombe to meet their operational output through the provision of essential support" At the time of the presentation, there are 12,500 (one third of the RAF) parented by RAF High Wycombe and the Station Commander is outranked by 35 Senior Officers. There are also 850 married quarters in and around the

area. Perhaps it does deserve the speakers statement of it being the 'RAF's Premier Station'.

Group Captain Heffron finished his presentation with a brief history of RAF High Wycombe from its inception in 1938 and its use as HQ Bomber Command during the Second World War. There was a 'lively' question and answer session followed by a vote of thanks from Gordon Diffey.

**Phil Marston**

## September Wings Appeal



Once again members of the branch were out in force again during this year's Wings Appeal period. From door to door collections, street collections and a day of collections at the local Co-Op great efforts were made to gather donations.

As the Wings Organiser for the branch I would like to say a very sincere congratulations and thank you for what was a sterling effort in what are quite austere times financially for many. I can announce that the grand total for this year's collection came to just **over £1200** which is magnificent.

Several lessons were learnt this year which will hopefully enable us to exceed this year's total. Measures such as applying for a pitch at the 2014 Rutland Day which was one of our main competitors this year may help. Once again would like to add my sincere thanks and I look forward to your continued support"

**Dave Craven**

**From:**  
**"A.J.& P Griffin" Uppingham.**

Date: 05/10/2013

To: 'Phil Marston'

As you may recall, I organise the **Uppingham Poppy Collection**. We are currently short of someone to do the house to house collection for the Ayston Road. I would be very grateful if you could use your RAFA contacts to see if we can find a volunteer; it isn't a very demanding patch.  
Best Wishes **Andrew Griffin**

**The Royal  
British Legion  
Oakham Branch**



We have received the attached invitation to the Remembrance Parade. Please could you mention that I would appreciate the ladies of RAFA meeting in the Church Hall to organise tea, coffee and biscuits for the parade after the service and wreath laying, as in other years. Further details at the November meeting or if they wish to phone me on 01572 756120 to discuss final plans to arrange this.

Thank you, **Angie Humphreys**

## REMEMBRANCE SERVICE - 10 NOVEMBER 2013

On behalf of Air Vice Marshal N. J. Sudborough CB, OBE, JP, the President of the Oakham Branch of the Royal British Legion, I write to invite you and/or your organisation to take part in the Parade and/or Church Service for the above event.

The Service will be at 2.30pm in All Saints Church, Oakham and the Parade will assemble at 2.00pm in the Market Street, Oakham.

The Lord Lieutenant, Dr L. Howard OBE JP will take the salute at the March-Past at the Crown Walk in the High Street, Oakham, after the Service. The Parade will end in Rutland County Council car park with a March-Past of the Standards.

Light refreshments will be provided at the Oakham All Saints Church Hall afterwards, kindly provided by the Royal Air Forces Association Ladies, to whom grateful thanks.

If you intend to lay a Poppy Wreath after the Service a donation of £25 to defray the cost of the wreath will be much appreciated and will go towards the Poppy Appeal Fund. (**Cheques payable to The Poppy Appeal**).

**Please reply by 1st November 2013, indicating the numbers of those wishing to attend in order to assist the Church wardens in making arrangements for seating within the Church.**

*Yours faithfully*

*Fit Lt G W Kirk AE, RAFVR (Ret'd)  
Parade Commander Branch No BRO11  
Registered Charity*





# The Gazette



## Dates For Your Diary

6th November	Adrian Walker	LOROS
4th December	Christmas Dinner	Greetham Valley Golf Club

## What's on Forthcoming Events

### Membership Secretary

### 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

**Treasurer:** Gordon Diffey. Tel 01572 722068

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

**Speaker Coordinator:**

**Wings Appeal Organiser** Dave Craven: Tel 01572759134, email davecraven@hotmail.com

**Honorary Welfare Officer:** Christine Ward, Tel 01572755856  
email christine.e.ward@hotmail.co.uk

**Membership Secretary:** Angie Humphreys, email [angelaandfrancis@talktalk.net](mailto: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 813547 email g3zdw@btinternet.com