



August RAFA Meeting

We apologise to those of you that were expecting to hear from Air Cdre Gary Waterfall CBE RAF the Typhoon Force Commander at the August meeting.

I had the following email from Gary at the last minute:-

Peter,

With much regret I am afraid that I will have to withdraw from my visit to Cottesmore on Wednesday evening. Unforeseen work related commitments result in a decision that I have not taken lightly I can assure you. Please pass on my apologies to all and I look forward to the opportunity to return to Cottesmore perhaps in October. Please pass on my kind regards to all. With kind regards and apologies once more.

Gary Waterfall

**THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN
 SUNDAY 15th. SEPTEMBER 2013**

The Melton Mowbray Branch of the RAFA will be holding their Annual Battle of Britain Parade and Evening Service on Sunday 15th September 2013. They welcome the presence of our standard, escorts and members at the morning parade, plus a wreath layer if possible. A detail of the arrangements follows.

A Wreath Laying Ceremony, to be held at the Melton Mowbray Town Estate Garden memorial at 11.15 a.m. and the evening Dedication Service at Sage Cross Chapel at 6.00p.m. The parade will form up at 10.45am in Park Road.

Wreath Laying Ceremony

The short service will commence at 11.15 a.m. After the Service, the parade will return to Park Road where a salute will be taken in Nottingham St. by Air Commodore Griffin then it will be dismissed. All Officials, Guests, and Members of Organisations are invited to the RAFA Headquarters at 24 Asfordby Road, Melton Mowbray.



The Royal Air Force Museum is Britain's only national museum dedicated wholly to aviation. With a world-class aircraft collection, integrated with special exhibitions, films, interactive, artwork, engines, missiles, photographs, uniforms, medals and research and education facilities, the Museum takes an innovative approach while keeping with tradition. While offering an insight into aviation technology, it focuses on the people who made it possible from daredevil early aviators, through wartime heroes, to the thousands of Service men and women whose contribution shaped the world we live in today.

The London site is situated on what used to be RAF Hendon. It holds over 100 aircraft in five themed aircraft halls. The museum at Cosford, is acknowledged as one of the leading public attractions in the Midlands and displays over 70 aircraft. It is home to the National Cold War Exhibition which focuses on the Cold War story from a national, international and social/political angle, as well as cultural perspectives. Plan a day out to remember at the Royal Air Force Museum.



Souther Field Airfield, Georgia, USA – World War II

The following has been forwarded to us from the RAF Museum and HQ would be grateful if we could publicise this to our members. So here we go.

South Georgia Technical College in Americus, Georgia is celebrating its 65th anniversary this year. Our college was built on the site of a World War I and II Air Force Training base known as Souther Field. We celebrate the rich aviation history that our college was founded on and still have a vibrant aviation maintenance and avionics program. Souther Field was also where Charles Lindbergh first soloed. We were able to host convocation a couple of years ago and had Eric Lindbergh, grandson of Charles Lindbergh, as our featured speaker. This year we will be hosting an event to celebrate our 65th anniversary as an educational institution as well as the rededication of an original hangar that has been redesigned into classroom and lab space. That hangar is 75 years old. We would love to have an individual from the Royal Air Force that was stationed here during World War II to come and be a part of this celebration. We realize that may be a challenge. Do you or the museum have information or contact information for individuals or their families who might have been stationed here? If so, do you know of any who would be interested in coming and be in good enough health to be a part of this event? Or do you have any speaker's that could come and speak about this proud history.

I would appreciate any information that you could share with us. The celebration is tentatively being planned for the first part of October 2013. Thank you,

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 South Georgia Technical College
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THE RUTLAND FLYING HORSESHOE

You may be interested in this article I picked up from the Flying Tigers Magazine.



Enthusiasts who were lucky enough to be in the *right place at the right time* at this years Duxford Flying Legends Air Show were treated to a tantalising glimpse of one of the most exciting restoration projects in the aviation world and as you can see from the picture above, it is progressing quite nicely. Emerging from the ARCO hangar just long enough for some aircraft shuffling to take place, **Bristol Blenheim G-BPIV** is looking remarkably close to taking to the air once more and as the only aircraft of her type in Europe, she will undoubtedly become a firm favourite with Air show goers. In a week where we saw P-51C Mustang *'Princess Elizabeth'* crated up and returned to the states and rumours abound that recently restored TFC Thunderbolt *'SNAFU'* may be heading in the same direction, news of the advancing Blenheim project is most welcome and something very much worth looking forward to.

The Bristol Blenheim was an extremely advanced aircraft at the time it entered RAF service in 1937, possessing better performance than most of the fighter aircraft of the day. Unfortunately, the RAF were still operating bi-plane fighters at that time and the Blenheim basked in a false sense of security, as it soon found out when it came up against the modern monoplane fighters of the Luftwaffe. At the start of the Second World War, the RAF had more Blenheim's in service than any other aircraft (*some 1090 aircraft*) and it was tasked with performing the majority of their offensive bombing operations in the first months of the conflict, suffering heavy casualties in the process. The brave Blenheim crews would press home their bombing attacks despite

being hopelessly outclassed by their Luftwaffe adversaries and a great many stories of their unbelievable valour under fire exist in RAF records. The restoration of this magnificent and extremely important aircraft will serve as a fitting tribute to these brave Blenheim crews, but this will not be the first time that this aircraft has served in this role. First restored by a small group of skilled engineers, the Blenheim made its first post restoration flight in May 1987, but tragically crashed on a golf course at Denham just four weeks later. The restoration team decided that they still wanted to see a Blenheim in the air, so work on a second airframe began soon after, mainly carried out by the same engineering team and after a further five years of dedication and hard work, G-BPIV triumphantly took to the air once more and regained its place as the worlds earliest RAF WWII bomber still flying.

This time, she flew for many years on the UK Air show circuit, enjoying a superb record of serviceability and becoming a firm favourite with enthusiasts and Duxford regulars alike. Unfortunately, tragedy was to strike again and in August 2003, the aircraft sustained significant damage during a landing accident at Duxford and she has been lurking in various hangars ever since. In a real case of *third time lucky*, a veritable industry has grown up around this aircraft, determined to return it to the skies once again and it now appears that the fruits of their labours are close to being realised. The two previous aircraft have flown as Mk.IV versions, but in a really exciting development, it was decided that the current aircraft would be completed as a short nosed Mk.I version of the Blenheim, which really does look significantly different and extremely attractive. Although she is looking at quite an advanced stage now, the engineers at the Aircraft Restoration Company will still have significant work to complete on the engines, hydraulics, electrics and flight controls, before we can even start to think about a first flight, but this tantalising glimpse of G-BPIV over the Flying Legends weekend will certainly revive interest in this project and keep UK Warbird enthusiasts watching developments at Duxford with great interest. .

The 2013 Silver Jubilee Birmingham Tattoo

The 2013 Silver Jubilee Birmingham Tattoo will take place at the NIA, Birmingham on Saturday 30th November at 6pm and Sunday 1st December at 2pm.

Over 1,000 military musicians and other performers will line up for this year's special 25th Birmingham International Tattoo.



The RAF Association is delighted to be able to offer a limited number of discounted tickets to our members. Instead of the normal £25 per ticket, members can pay just £15 by booking them through CHQ. If you would like to purchase tickets, please call Rishi on 0116 2688785 and you will be able to pay with credit or debit card over the phone. We regret that we are unable to accept cheque payments for these tickets.

From the massed marching bands to the spectacular displays, this year's event has something for everyone and, with only two performances to choose from, tickets are already selling quickly so reserve your place soon.

Mark Sutton

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the death of our Presidents son Mark Sutton in an accident in the French mountain resort of Chamonix.

The Chairman has written to Sir John and Lady Angela on behalf of member's expressing our condolences.

Mark, 42, a former Army officer who worked in the City, was killed instantly when he hit a mountain at 155mph just 20 seconds after he jumped from 10,800ft wearing a wingsuit designed to help him glide during his descent. The family are in our thoughts at this time.

Peter

Halton Trenches

Back in the 1800s, a 3000 acre estate in Buckinghamshire belonged to a member of the de Rothschild family, of banking fame. Used as a place for hunting and fishing, it was in 1880, when Alfred de Rothschild decided to build a grand house, in the style of a French Chateau, not as a day to day home, but as a grand venue for lavish parties 5 or 6 times a year. Many famous people of the time would attend these extravagant affairs, and among his friends was Lord Trenchard. It was in 1913 that an aircraft first landed on the estate and perhaps that marked it out for the future.



When war broke out in 1914, and the British military were looking for places to train the thousands of new soldiers entering the army, Alfred volunteered his estate for such use. After all, he did not use it as his home, so acted out of patriotic duty to do what he could to help the war effort. By the end of WW1, thousands of troops, buildings, earthworks and all the detritus of the training grounds would have meant a fortune for the government to pay to clear the land and return it to the original owner. What they actually did was to agree a price for the entire estate, including the grand Halton House, and purchase the whole thing. Even by the values of the time, they got a bargain, paying far less than the actual worth of the land.

After the war it became home to the school for RAF apprentices, a role it filled throughout WW2 and beyond. Today it is the first bit of 'home' for all new non-commissioned entrants to the RAF. It still covers the 3000 acres, and Halton House is home to the Officers Mess. Secondary to that main role, the grand surroundings make it something of a regular venue for film makers to hire out, but more on that in a moment.

In 1914, the Kitchener Army was in need of land to train. Alfred Rothschild loaned some land to the Army and training began, which included teaching trench warfare. This land now forms part of RAF Halton. Station staff conceived the idea of the reconstructing the trench systems, seeing the value as a training exercise. The MOD Historic Environment Advisers provided historical support and documentation, ensuring accuracy of reconstruction and adequate recording of discoveries. The project would provide useful work for Servicemen Awaiting Trade Training (SATT) recruits, continuing their physical development and team-working in an interesting way that produced an educational and ethos asset that is part of the history of the site. The recruits were directed over a period of seven months using the methods that would have been employed back during World War One, including digging and riveting the trenches by hand. The trenches are now part of The RAF Halton Heritage Centre and have brought a piece of RAF Halton's history to life. Visits to the trenches are being made available to local schools and civil organisations for educational purposes.



The site is the only one of its kind in the UK to this standard and you would have to travel to France or Belgium to find something remotely close. The trenches were originally used by the 21st Division before they deployed to frontline in France number of future avenues for the use of the site are being investigated. The site will primarily make up part of the RAF Heritage Centre and will be made available to schools and civil organisations to visit for educational purposes. Certainly, it will be a lot closer and accessible to organisations than travelling abroad. Separately, enquiries have been made for documentary filming.

Throughout Babington Woods and the lower slopes of Wendover Woods, extensive evidence can still be seen of the military activity that was undertaken in the area during the First World War. Learning to dig trenches was an important part of a soldier's basic training before he was sent to the front and evidence of this remains in the form of long connected shallow ditches, the remains of once deep excavations

Specific mention should be made to Warrant Officer Phil Lister Initial Force Protection and Training Flight, Corporal Russ Barber Military Provost Guard Service and the Servicemen Awaiting Trade Training Flight, who have developed the project from its inception.

The aim behind this project was always to create a 'living museum' where people from the services, and the local community alike, could come and learn about the heritage of the area and RAF Halton in general. Furthermore, it will be a place where people can reflect on those that undertook their training here at RAF Halton before going on to the war on the continent, never to return. Another aim was to ensure that Servicemen Awaiting Trade Training understood the significance of WW1 before they began the project and how every family at the time was affected by the War, they were keen their sacrifice was not forgotten. The trench project was a way of ensuring that future generations have an opportunity to understand the conditions endured by their ancestors in securing our Nation's future. This will benefit so many people from an educational point of view and give a place to remember those who came through here in the early 1900s and did not return from the Great War.'



Gordon Diffey Sep 2013



The Gazette



Dates For Your Diary

4th September	Monthly meeting to prepare for Wings Appeal.	Dave Craven
2nd October	RAF High Wycombe, it's history as HQ Bomber Command,	Group Captain Mark D HEFFRON DACOS A1
6th November	Adrian Walker	LOROS
4th December	Christmas Dinner	Greetham Valley Golf Club

What's on Forthcoming Events

15th September	Battle Of Britain Parade	Melton Mowbray
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Membership Secretary

No new members this month

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: Contact Peter Hart: See above.

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

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