



Editorial

Many thanks for your contributions. This month we have been given an article from Air Vice-Marshal (Ret'd) Michael Harwood CB CBE MA which has taken up much of the centre pages and gives food for thought.

The Speaker was Squadron Leader Mark Hinde, RAF Battery Commander, 49 (Inkerman) Battery, RA, St Georges Barracks, MOD North Luffenham. I thought that this presentation would appeal particularly to our armourer's and how wrong I was. The only thing I seemed to have got right was that Mark was the first and only RAF Officer in this role. He told us a little of his background and although based at MOD North Luffenham he lived with his family in Essex. His Military background was that of a Fighter Controller with a number of Ops tours in Afghanistan to his credit and he was the Officer in charge of the military involvement at the 2012 Olympics; how diverse is that.

He now commands 49 (Inkerman) Battery Royal Artillery and is the only RAF Officer in command of an Army Sub-Unit Working alongside 16 Regt RA but OPCOM JTGBAD HQ (RAF High Wycombe). The joint chain of command for the Battery is both RAF & Army. Mark arrived here in January on a 2 year posting to bring a Land Environment Air Picture Provision (LEAP) into service.



Chinook helicopter lifts a piece of LEAP equipment

His Mission: To provide a near real-time Air Battlespace Situational Awareness to Formation HQs the set up involves a good selection of both army and RAF personnel in this independent sub unit.

Mark explained that the programme for LEAP was for Technical Field Trials during March & May 13, with

Operational Field Trials taking place in July 2013 with an In Service delivery date of September 2013. So we will shortly expect to see convoys of large vehicles around our roads and as they pass you going through Oakham you can tell all around you, "That that was a LEAP that just past". Never say you don't learn anything at RAFA.

70 years of Dambusters history commemorated in events

70 years ago the Royal Air Force planned an audacious raid that was crucial to the outcome of World War II. To mark this anniversary there were public events held across the country during May.



BBMF Lancaster flying over Derbyshire as part of the Anniversary celebrations.



Two GR4 Tornados of 617 Squadron.

Photographs kindly supplied by the Secretary.

Membership Secretary

Welcome to new members to our Branch:

Mr Aaron Veal of Oakham, Mr Lloyd Channing-Bates of Barnack, Dr Croft of Castle Bytham transferred from another Branch.

Lapsed Members

As at 30 April the Area has 1078 Ordinary members and 372 Associate members who have not yet renewed this year. It is incumbent upon all of us to try and recover these lapsed members. Once again we are asked to make every effort to personally contact those of their members who have not yet renewed. It should not be forgotten that a personal visit or phone call to someone who has not yet renewed their membership may highlight an underlying welfare problem.

Sadly this month we announce the death of Mr Hubert Lee of Oakham.

Armed Forces Day 2013 – National Event – Nottingham June 29th

Nottingham has been chosen as the host city for this year's National celebrations for Armed Forces Day on 29th June 2013. We hope that as many members and RAFA Branch standards as possible take part in the parade. A copy of the programme for the day can be found at this website along with full details, including special hotel offers for those attending the event from further afield, can be found at:-

<http://www.mynottingham.gov.uk/>.





THE RUTLAND FLYING HORSESHOE



Air Vice-Marshal (Ret'd) Michael Harwood CB CBE MA (1971-1976) retired in July after 34 years' service. As a Royal Air Force pilot (principally on Harriers), he flew, instructed, and also tested innovative tactics and new equipment. Extensive time in the Gulf has been complemented by tours at the Permanent Joint Headquarters at Northwood and the RAF HQ at High Wycombe. At the Joint Services Command and Staff College, he was responsible for stretching senior military and civilian specialists in their understanding of strategy and the art of war. Finally, he headed the British Defence Staff in the United States and represented the UK in the United Nations' Military Staff Committee

Aged 15, my head crashed to the school desk in frustration, and then came the chilling realization that my thoughts were no longer private. "Yes, Harwood? Is there something we should know?" It was time to confess all, befuddled by Bannockburn 1314, Agincourt 1415, Spanish Armada 1588, Gunpowder Plot 1605, Yorktown 1781, Waterloo 1815, and all the dates for British monarchs... "What is the point of learning all these dates?" My History teacher's expression would have been well recognised by Charles Dickens: it was a repetition of that scene between Oliver and Mr Bumble. The best he could do was stammer: "Well, because you might want to be a History teacher one day..."

Many years would go by before I returned to history, finally mature enough to devour its richness, to use it to understand, to inspire, warn and frame, yet always trying to avoid our potential to misemploy it as a strait-jacket rather than a hand-rail. Over 30 years after that defining classroom event, I took the unusual step of initiating a conversation with a senior Chinese military official, to hear his cultural perspective before embarking on a demanding deployment overseas. Rather than focus on my imminent 9 months' tour and the recent past, his discussion ranged over several hundred years. This ability to think quite so strategically was enlightening and refreshing but, he confessed, a relatively recent phenomenon.

"The Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976 had a profound effect on me", he said. These were key dates in his own history, during which time only one book could be studied: 'Quotations of Chairman Mao Tse-tung' (AKA 'The Little Red Book').

I trust I am not betraying his confidence by repeating his view that such a policy led to a perceived inability to face a competitive and confusing world. "You don't know what you don't know" he mused. If I am

honest though, my own experience may have felt free and unlimited but the reality was that I did not look too closely at 'alternative models' either. When one is blissfully ignorant of being in a rut, digging deeper is inevitable. 34 years' service in the military has allowed me to witness all sorts of reasons for man's propensity to swing between periods of tension, confrontation and deadly armed conflict. Reading one book would not help leaders in our interdependent nations. That said, reading many books and all speaking at the same time also has its disadvantages. In the earliest days of America's nationhood, free of the declared tyranny of King George III, Thomas Jefferson, key architect of the extraordinary *Declaration of Independence*, wrote these despondent words: "I regret that I am now to die in the belief that the useless sacrifice of themselves by the generation of 1776 ... is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons, and that my only consolation is to be that I live not to weep over it."

In my line of work, I had to learn quickly that it is easy to fight but much harder to keep the peace. I found no easy solutions and no panaceas. Every situation had to be examined on its own merits, in its own context. I was always grateful if I could call on quick-reaction units and the support of thoughtful, capable allies (especially those who were unafraid to speak their minds). And, fundamentally, to challenge myself "Why do you really think that?" any time I was starting to feel dogmatically certain about something.

It was the United States Air Force that introduced me to the wonders of networks. It was the professional warrior's answer to a strategic weakness also found in civilian life: the philosophy of "all politics is local" We simply could not afford military units 'doing their own thing', especially with aircraft. The USAF-fine-tuned

Combined Air Operations Centre would have been recognised by RAF personnel controlling the Battle of Britain in 1940. However, modern-day technology is all the more effective at sharing scarce assets across vast areas. No more the individual pushing an aircraft model across a table, now there are multiple high-definition screens showing real-time imagery and colour-coded blips that can provide all the information anyone could want with a mouse-click. High tech does not bring perfect insight – it can be a siren voice and our nemesis - but woe betide those who do not exploit its benefits and mitigate its risks.

And yet history had taught me that on the 5th of June 1944, General Montgomery surprised onlookers by his decision to go to bed early. Many within General Eisenhower's Supreme Headquarters for the Allied Expeditionary Force were understandably agitating about how nearly 3,000 boats and over 150,000 personnel, for the first day alone, would survive the dreadful weather, let alone enemy action, before those D-Day landings. The truth was that Montgomery knew that he now had no control over that moment in time and need not jump at every new snippet of information as it arrived. He also knew that in view of the days to come, it was better to get some sleep and rise refreshed, ready for another day of hard planning. Master time, and the use of time, and your presence will forever make all the difference.

I have learned much about *speed* and *quick thinking*, but especially about *tempo*. It is not enough to be fast, one has to be faster and/or smarter than one's adversary. As people started to believe they understood the limitations of 'Hard Power', much-argued terms such as 'Soft Power' and 'Smart Power' entered the lexicon. I have pondered, as loose talk could be heard before being properly thought through, on the production of neat, linear models

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that failed to grasp the character of warfare and the context of the moment. It has struck me that the world, and life, is pretty chaotic, made less so at intervals by the fine work of noble people. *Si vis pacem, para bellum* ("If you wish for peace, prepare for war") seemed sensible to me. Not that I believe war is the answer, simply that I know a question will be thrown our way and some, either people on our side or not, will consider fighting a potential solution. We must prepare. Much as I adored flying, its logic and its magic, I was more fascinated by our purpose rather than simply our technique. A decisive experience was therefore the realisation that no amount of training could ever prepare me for Service life. Especially as a leader, I had to find ideas and philosophies that could form the basis of making sense of any new situation as and when it arose. My old History teacher would not be surprised to hear that I found what I needed in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* by T E Lawrence. An exemplary thinker and man of action, I feel he captures the essence of what makes an individual fit for leadership and higher command: "Nine-tenths of tactics are certain, and taught in books, but the irrational tenth is like the kingfisher flashing across the pool, and that is the test of generals. It can only be ensured by instinct, sharpened by thought, practising the stroke so often that at the crisis it is as natural as a reflex." In

effect, Lawrence introduced me to the concept of *immersion* – the importance of diving deep into the waters of a particular subject-matter. He understood his fellow Arabian warriors and he understood his enemy; I suspect the only thing he could never fathom was Whitehall. My military challenge has been the sheer breadth of topics in which excellence has been required: not just the tactics and technologies of sailors, soldiers and airmen, but cultures, and relationship-building, and effective ways of communicating with my own people, my bosses, allies and the taxpaying public.

Generating and especially re-generating that thing we call 'success' has merited close study – too easily do we forget that it can be fleeting and not our ever-present right. The RAF uses the acronym RISE to sum up the core values required, believing these will help us achieve success:

Respect: Mutual and Self Respect

Integrity: Integrity Always

Service: Service Before Self

Excellence: Striving for Excellence.

Unashamedly,

I say that these form part of my RAF DNA.

They have helped me survive those 'dark places' one faces, either literally as I thundered down a cloud covered valley at night at 500mph, or when dealing with the impact of untimely death. Those values are demanding

and have required constant willingness to change and even to challenge doctrine itself developed from seemingly compelling and bloody experiences.

But even then 'it's not that simple'. A UK Special Forces General once described the three factors influencing success. Rather than focus on Intelligence, political will, education or planning, he mischievously uttered: "luck, opportunity and unfairness".

I trust you see the twinkle in his eye, but there is also wisdom therein for those who seek 'comprehensive armour'. I have a thousand defining moments, with doubtless more to come, and a non-destructive belief that sometimes 'there is no answer'. I would still like to think I'm nine-tenths of the way there, perhaps, if I work hard enough. Yes, the 'irrational tenth' could either defeat me or crown me victor. The great thing is that today is another day, ready for better history to be written. I am defined by the belief that it is never too late to learn, from my own and others' experiences. If we approach each day with intelligence, resolve, a shunning of mediocrity, the courage to take risk (never pretending it is not there), and an ever-present sense of humour, future generations might just be grateful we existed at all and present-day colleagues might even like working with us.

RAF Cottesmore!!!!!!!!!!!!



Every picture tells a story

Many thanks to Frank Haynes for some thoughts and pictures of RAF Cottesmore



Group Captain Waterfall speaks at the final Senior Citizens Party at RAF Cottesmore, 2010. He endeared himself to me by introducing his wife as 'The current Mrs Waterfall'.



Group Captain Gerry Waterfall, station commander, returns to base after taking part in the 18 Harrier formation to mark the statue of Harrier ops at RAF Cottesmore. My kind of peace.



The Gazette



Dates For Your Diary

3rd July	"Call My Bluff" Quiz Evening	Derek Bury
2nd October	RAF High Wycombe, it's history as HQ Bomber Command,	Group Captain Mark D HEFFRON DACOS A1
4th December	Christmas Dinner	Greetham Valley Golf Club

What's on Forthcoming Events



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)

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Vice Chairman: Gordon Diffey. Tel 01572 722068

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