



RAA

'Nil Satis, Nisi Optimum'

Newsletter No 1



Welcome, to all of our members no matter wherever you are. This is the first of many newsletters in this format , that will keep you up to date on any information, news or events that are being planned in the future. This is your association and therefore, we value your thoughts and ideas that enhance how we operate. We are just an email away, so please email any query to the address in the footer.



Royal Air Force Scampton Home of the Red Arrows

A really big thank you to the Red Arrows Team for hosting, supporting the association and, the fantastic ISP. It was truly appreciated by every member I am sure and very entertaining. The team was very open and accommodating, taking time out of their busy schedule to afford us the opportunity to have our AGM at Scampton. A special thank you to the Heritage Centre and Mess at Scampton who made our stay very welcoming.



President's Foreword

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Red Arrows' Association,

It gives me great pleasure to provide this foreword to this long-awaited RAA Newsletter and to provide an update on the direction which we, as your Committee, are seeking to take the Association over the next year or two. I firstly, however, wish to start by expressing the sincere condolences of the RAA Committee following the tragic loss of Cpl Jonathan Bayliss in the accident which occurred at RAF Valley on 20 March 2018. We recognise what a terribly difficult time the past few months must have been for Jonathan's family, for the current Team and, indeed, more widely for the Red Arrows' family, of which I know we all feel a part.

I know that I speak for most, if not all of you, when I say that we all feel very privileged to have been part of the history of the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows. That is why I am determined, in my role as President of the Association, to ensure that the friendships made and memories which were realised during our service with the Team, remain alive and cherished.

Your Committee, which in addition to myself, comprises Mark Northover (Vice-President), Craig Rouse (Treasurer), Ian Blake (Secretary) and now our newly appointed Communications' Manager, Paul Fitzgerald, met face to face in London on 28 April this year; Nikki Wright (Public Relations), who is also a member of the Committee, joined us by telephone for the morning session. Paul is keen to assist us with taking the RAA forward and he brings significant skills and experience in the field of communications. He has been working primarily on modifying our website to ensure that we remain closely in touch with you, the Association members, and provide you with relevant information regarding the Association.

Finally, I will say that I was delighted that we finally managed to pull together the re-union and AGM at RAF Scampton on 7 September this year and it was wonderful to see so many Association members and their guests in attendance. We are indebted to the many personnel on the station who were involved in the planning and delivery on the day and, of course, to the current Team for facilitating and putting on a fabulous display.

Brian Hoskins

Gp Capt (retd)

President RAA

Vice-President's Update

Dear Association Members,

I can honestly say how overwhelmed and encouraged the Committee was to receive so many constructive responses to the surveys that were issued in February; thank you to the significant proportion of the Association membership which provided such comprehensive and informative answers which have been invaluable in helping us gauge your preferences and to develop our strategy for the future. Clearly, when asking such a broad range of questions, targeted at a wide age demographic which is dispersed across all corners of the UK as well as overseas, responses were always going to be wide and varied. However, after some detailed analysis, we were able to identify several key themes and preferences, some of which I will outline below.

A majority of our members would like to see reunions arranged on a regular (preferably annual) basis. Maintaining contact with former friends and colleagues, as well as retaining links to the current team, features highly on our membership's priorities. Although, as I have mentioned above, our members are geographically dispersed and travel, particularly for some of our more aged members, increasingly becomes a challenge, Scampton/Lincoln features consistently as the preferred location for RAA events. Recognising, in accordance with recent Defence announcements, that the future of RAF Scampton and, therefore the home of the Team, is now uncertain, Scampton for now at least, represents a focal point for many who have served in more recent decades. RAF Scampton/Lincoln currently offers the best opportunity to maintain links to the Team and its current members. It also benefits from a reasonably central location thereby facilitating travel and Lincoln offers good options for overnight accommodation, if required. In terms of a broad itinerary, our members expressed a preference for a visit to the sqn, ideally with the opportunity to see some flying activity, with an informal BBQ or buffet-style refreshments also a popular proposal. The Scampton/Lincoln option also allows those with additional stamina to enjoy the charms of the city centre later into the evening...

Having said that Scampton offers the most convenient and popular choice of location for the majority, it is nevertheless recognised that travel is increasingly difficult for some of our members. To mitigate for that we are seeking to establish a couple of regional coordinators/area reps in order to facilitate the possibility of occasional get-togethers, on a more local basis, for those that cannot travel longer distances. We will keep you posted of that initiative via the RAA website.

Amongst the other issues which the Committee discussed at the face-to-face meeting in April, was an aspiration to grow the Association membership which has stagnated over the past couple of years at around the 250 mark. We have therefore set ourselves growth targets for the next couple of years and we wish to particularly increase our appeal to current Team members and those who have recently left, where our numbers are not as healthy as they might be. With the appointment of Paul Fitzgerald as our Comms Officer, we are seeking to improve the information available via the RAA website which is also in need of modernisation; this is also a theme which featured in the responses that you provided to the survey and hopefully, those of you who have visited the website recently will have seen some changes for the better.

Finally, thank you for the positive feedback you provided in terms of your recognition for the efforts of the RAA Committee; it is appreciated and I can assure you that we will continue work, as a matter of priority, to refine plans for and deliver RAA events in the future to best meet the aspirations and preferences of you, the Association membership.

With best wishes to all,

Mark Northover
Gp Capt
Vice-President RAA



Treasurer's Report

Dear Membership.

May I start by saying that the finances of the Red Arrows Association (RAA) are very, very healthy.

For members that are not aware.

The RAA were very fortunate, and very grateful, to receive a substantial bequeath from the estate of Mr Owen Ernest Beverley several years ago. Your committee made a conscious decision not to use the money for at least twelve months after receipt, to ensure the Association would not be subject to challenge from others who may have had a vested interest in Mr Beverley's estate. This I am pleased to say did not happen and hence the Committee were able to make the decision, approximately eighteen months ago, to begin to use the funds on behalf of the Association.

I have been asked on several occasions, "What are the RAA going to do with the money in the account"? The answer to that question is mainly up to the RAA membership, however, I would say from a Treasurers perspective, this money allows the RAA Committee to operate with a great deal of flexibility when it comes to being able to finance reunions and provide other things on behalf of the membership. An example of this are the ties. The Committee were able to go to market and buy enough ties for the current and future membership without having to generate more funds to do this. However, we as a committee are very cognisant that this flexibility should be available for future members serving on the RAA Committee; the current Committee see the Association as a long-term venture, so consideration must be given in allowing the Committee in ten years' time to have the same level of flexibility as the current Committee in providing a service to the membership. Having spoken to the Solicitor, representing Mr Beverley's estate, on several occasions during the process of settling the estate, he made it quite clear that the RAA should be the recipient of this bequeath and not other organisations or worthwhile causes, of which there are many. I might add we never understood why the RAA; the only conclusion we can come to is that he met a member of the RAA at a display, somewhere on the south coast, and he was impressed enough to want to make the substantial donation he did.

Lastly, for those not able to attend the AGM. In my report at the AGM, I stated that the RAA accounts had never had an independent review carried out on them. This review is something the Committee have been very keen to take place for some time, to give you the membership, the confidence that your funds are being managed in a diligent and competent manner. I therefore, engaged a UK national accountancy company to carry out this independent review.

The company is called Lovewell Blake and they have just responded by saying:

"Dear Craig

We have carried out our review and put together an Income & Expenditure account for your approval, which is attached. We have not noted any matters which have given rise to any concerns."

The reason why they did not carry out a full audit is because we are non-profit making; we only have one account and we only have a small volume of income and expenditure. It was Lovewell Blake who recommended that an Account Review was the type of inspection the RAA needed given volume of transactions that move through the account. To this end that is what they did.

I hope this has given you an insight into the way the RAA funding is being used and why, and that we as the committee take our responsibility very seriously.

Regards.

Craig.



Secretary

Membership currently stands at just over 240, we shall be looking at ways to increase our membership over the next couple of years.

Website

The website is soon to be given an upgrade. We are building a bank of suitable photographs from the very able and proficient Bryan Nimmo, the majority of photographs on this newsletter is a testament of his outstanding skills. We are also keen (if you have any) of sourcing, Gnat, Black Diamonds and of course, Red Arrows photographs. All photography will of course be credited to the author of the photograph. We shall also have separate pages for Gnat, Black Diamonds, Memorabilia and anything else that may enhance or be of interest to the association.



Area Co-ordinators

We are in the process of investigating the feasibility of appointing two area co-ordinators. One for the Southern parts of the membership and one for the Northern part. We hope to furnish you with more information about the appointees and their role in the next newsletter.

Upcoming Events/News

Next committee meeting will be in:
London
on the:
19th January 2019



Photography by: Bryan Nimmo



Vistors

It was nice to see Oli Wheeldon at Scampton. Oli is a member of the association and brought his Yellow Gnat along so that members could reminisce on the aircraft that they used to serve/work on. A big thanks Oli. It was most appreciated.

One new owner

As I understand, this gleaming Gnat once belonged to Pink Floyd front man David Gilmour

Vistors

A quick top-up before departing!



What is wrong with this Gnat?

Yellow Gnat photographs By: comms@redarrowsassociation.co.uk

Newsletter by Paul Fitzgerald