

BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Branch Annual General Meeting was held at Ye Olde Durhams Social Club on Monday 13th February, 2023 at 7:00pm. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the 15 persons present and the Royal Air Forces Association Dedication was read by Vice Chairman, Paul Rodway, and a minute's silence was observed.

Yearly Reports were presented to the Meeting and were accepted by all., A new auditor, Mr Terry Philips DLI, was appointed. All Branch Officers agreed to remain in post and were re-elected without opposition. Branch Treasurer, Dave Stacey, has been looking after the Wings Appeal since the retirement of David Hinde, and cannot continue this role alongside his other branch duties. Our social secretary, Hazel Davis, has volunteered to take on the role of Wings Appeal Coordinator. Thank you, Hazel.

At the end of the meeting Area Representatives, Allan Myers and Paul Abbott, from Crook Branch, addressed the meeting. They described the new arrangement which divides Branches and Clubs into geographic clusters.



NEW LOOK TO BRANCH EVENINGS

The Branch Committee will meet at 6:30pm followed by a members social evening from 7:00pm.. Bring along some nibbles for a pooled supper. Activities will include raffles, beetle drives, quiz, dominos etc, Come along and join in the fun.

The first of the new format evenings took place on Monday 13 March and we welcomed some visitors from other Branches. The Chairman passed on information with regards to forthcoming events, and a request was made to members for help at fundraising events.

APOLOGY

The photograph used in the September 2022 issue of the newsletter, showing the Queen and Prince Charles was incorrectly referenced. The Branch humbly apologises for this error and thanks the originator for belated permission to use the image.

BRANCH VISIT TO RAF LEEMING

The Branch, together with other RAFA North East Branches, received an invitation to visit RAF Leeming on Monday 12 December 2022. The visit was arranged by Branch Vice Chairman, Paul Rodway, who unfortunately was unable to attend on the day. Dave Stacey and Peter McGraghan represented the Hartlepool Branch for an enjoyable and informative visit. Flight Sergeant Simon Milner 34 Squadron



RAF Regiment hosted the visit and took the guests to the base RAFA Kidz Nursery which provides nursery places for RAF serving members' children. This was followed by a trip to Joint RAF/Qatari Air Force Training Squadron where they were given details of the Squadron's role and aims and an opportunity to look very closely to the new Hawk T2 Training Aircraft used by the Squadron.

Photograph shows Dave and Peter alongside the Hawk T2 Aircraft.

Lunch was provided in the Sergeants Mess during which Station Commander Group Captain Gareth Prendergast joined the party circulating to chat to most of the visitors. After lunch the guests were shown the Station's Museum. Members of RAF Regiment 34 Sqn provided a display of old and current small arms. The programme concluded at the 90 Tactical Communications Squadron's Museum which displayed an interesting history of the RAF's Signal and Communications from its early days to modern day communication equipment and systems.

RAFA Hartlepool wishes to thank RAF Leeming for their hospitality and providing a most informative day.

WRAF BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The WRAF AGM was held on 18th February this year. Maggie Lawlor, Pauline Cantrell-Stephenson and Joan Geeson from Hartlepool Branch travelled to Cambridge to attend. They were joined by many other ex-WRAF members who had travelled far and wide to attend. Some members joined via Zoom from the comfort of their own living rooms. Sir Dusty Miller, an honorary WRAF, and guest speaker Lucy Lewis, ex-Army and the first female bomb disposal expert, were also present. Once the formal business of the AGM was successfully concluded, Lucy enthralled everyone for 45 minutes by sharing her experiences living on adrenaline when faced with both an unexploded bomb and by being the only female at a Regimental Dinner. I'm sure we all silently wondered which we'd rather face as well! The AGM Gala Dinner in the evening lived up to its usual expectations with lots of nourishment, high spirits and a substantial sum raised for the WRAF via an auction and raffles.



VISIT TO 473 SQUADRON HARTLEPOOL AIR CADETS

The Branch was invited to attend the 473 Squadron Hartlepool Air Cadets' Annual Presentation Evening on Thursday 15 December 2022. Branch Chairman Steve Davis and Branch Treasurer David Stacey attended. OC 473 Sqn, Flying Officer Jamie Waite, addressed the cadets and parents outlining the Squadron's and cadets' achievements for 2022. During the evening Steve and David were invited to present some of the awards to the Cadets. Flying Officer Waite thanked the Branch for their donation of £400 which was



used to purchase two computers for the cadets' development training programmes.

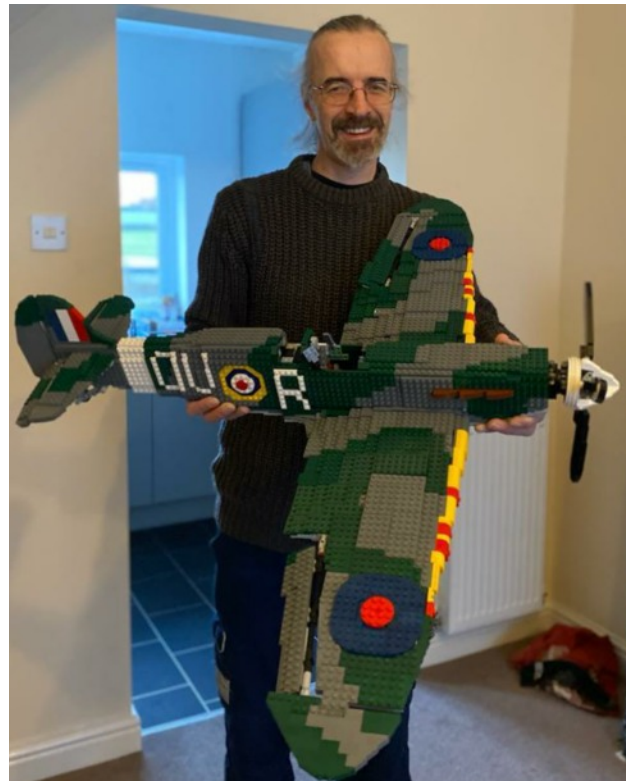
Photograph shows Steve (L) and David (R) together with the cadets holding their trophies, certificates and the two computers donated by the Branch.

SPITFIRE Mk L

Do you remember LEGO? It has been making a comeback recently and the son of a Branch member has built a model Spitfire entirely from Lego. The model is around 1/12 scale and has working parts including undercarriage, control surfaces, engine and rotating propeller. Shaun, pictured with his model, found the plans on line and produce a series of short videos to demonstrate his 'mystery build', which took him just over two months. If anyone would like to see the model or build stages, look on YouTube.

The final stage video link is:
<https://youtube.com/live/gjTWpRt2880?Feature=share>

Shaun is the elder step-son of branch Vice Chairman, Paul Rodway, and has two generations of RAF service behind him, growing up on married quarter sites.



In Memoriam

The Branch marks with sadness the passing of these Members. We will remember them.

Thankfully, we have had no reports of Branch Members passing away during the last Quarter.



LOOKING FORWARD

BRANCH AND PUBLIC EVENTS

ANZAC Remembrance Ceremony - Sunday 23 April. Newcastle & Gateshead Branch have invited us to take part in the annual event at Chevington Cemetery, (3 miles south of Amble) from 14:00hrs. Will anyone who wished to attend, please inform the Branch Chairman, to coordinate transport.

Branch Meeting - 24 April. Due to calendar clashes with Easter and the Coronation, the regular meetings for April and May are suspended and an alternative date has been decided for a single meeting to cover both months. Time and place are unchanged.

Armed Forces Day - Saturday 24 June. As part of the commemoration, a Drum Head Service will be held at the Heugh Battery, from 11:00, time TBC.

Tall Ships Event - 6 to 9 July. The Branch will have a stall in the 'Armed Forces Village' area on each day of the event and we are looking for volunteers to help run the stall. Any members who are interested please contact Hazel. A duty shift will not be longer than 4 hours on any day.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Breakfast Club: First Saturday of each month from 9:30am. Brewers Fayre, West Quay, Hartlepool. Pay on the day (£5.00 instead of £9.50) - all you can eat buffet breakfast. May's breakfast club coincides with the King's Coronation, and will be a special event. Dress up for the coronation, toppers and tiaras are us

Four Seasons Lunch: Saturday 20th May at 1:00pm. Sambuca, Church Street, Hartlepool. £8.95 three course special lunch. Book early for seating.

Garden Party: Saturday 22 July at 2:00pm. 14 Oxford Street, Hartlepool. Theme TBN. Tickets £5, limited numbers.

For all social event bookings, please contact social secretary, Hazel Davis, on 01429 551193 / stepinout@live.co.uk



The Branch will continue with Wings Appeal fund raising and arrangements are in progress with local stores for collection days. This work cannot continue without people to help run the stalls and engage with the public. We hope to have some collection dates very soon and will be looking for volunteers for a half day to help with the fund-raising.

We may need to call on people at short notice so please contact Hazel (details above) to discuss availability.

Contact Details

Phone: 07907 874654
or web site
www.hartlepoolrafa.com

Branch Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 7pm. Committee meeting at 6:30pm

We meet at
Ye Olde Durham's Social Club
St Aidans Street
Harlepool TS25 1SN

Free street parking at rear