

Royal Air Forces Association Hartlepool Branch

The Charity that supports
the RAF Family



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

September 2026

ARMED FORCES DAY

Hartlepool Armed Forces Day was held on Saturday 27 June on the parking area at the Royal Navy Museum. The day featured a static parade of veterans, live music and over a dozen stalls representing Armed Forces Veterans' and cadets Organisations.

The introduction was given by Lt Col Mike Facchini after six Standards were marched on and presented. Then Andy Cammas introduced the new Hartlepool Valour Centre, and then a civic welcome from the Ceremonial Mayor, Sue Little.

The formal parade finished with the National Anthem, and then stalls were fully open. Thanks to all who helped support the stall, especially in the high winds, and to those who contributed in any way.



NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026

The RAFA National Conference and Annual General Meeting will take place at Wyboston Lakes, Bedfordshire, over 17—18 October. All members are encouraged to take part on line or in person. Hartlepool Branch has a nominated representative, Vice Chairman Paul Rodway, who will attend in person.

As usual, the conference will discuss a number of resolutions which all members will have the opportunity to vote on. Resolutions and voting instructions will be published on the Branch Website.

The Conference is also a great opportunity to collect new or revised information and talk to senior members of the organisation. Paul will be attending a range of workshops over the weekend and sharing the results with members at the November branch meeting.

The Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA) is a membership organisation of serving and former members of the RAF, their families and dependents and all those supporting the aims of the Association. The Branch would welcome more ex RAF personnel and people who would be interested in supporting the Association in attending social events or assisting with collections in various locations. The Branch now covers an area from Seaham in the North to Whitby in the south excluding Stockton on Tees.

VETERANS NATURE WALK

A group of 18 veterans from RAFA and other organisations met at RSPB Saltholme for a guided walk. It was very hot day and extra precautions were taken. We had two guides, Christine and Phil, who helped us identify birds and dragonflies at two hides and various ponds and other points around the reserve. The walk finished at the café for lunch. Photo shows Phil (centre) describing the work of the RSPB at Saltholme to the group.



WINGS APPEAL

Our latest Wings Appeal Collection was held at ASDA on Saturday 15 August and raised an amazing £702. David Stacey presented a certificate to Helen Gillie, ASDA's community champion, in recognition of the event and the service provided to the Branch by the store.

The next collection at ASDA is on Friday 9 October; volunteers please contact Dave. Another two collections are booked at Middleton Grange shopping centre on Friday & Saturday, 11 & 12 September. Please come along and support us.

This year's Wings Appeal total stands at £3198.34. And counting.



INTER-BRANCH PRESENTATION

Vice Chairman, Paul Rodway, (photos centre) accompanied by Dave Stacey, visited Stockton & Thornaby Branch on 29 July to present them with their Wings Appeal certificate for collecting over £5,000 last year. Paul collected the certificate at the SNINE area conference in June, along with our own Branch certificate. We hope to organise joint branch events in the future.



BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL SERVICE

All veterans, serving personnel, families and friends of the RAF are all welcome to attend the Commemoration on **Sunday 13 September at 14:00**. This has been organised by Northumbria Branch and is great opportunity to meet with other branches and members as well as pay our respects to The Few. The event takes place at Northumberland Woodland Burial, Eshott, NE65 9QJ, one mile south of Felton on the A1. This is 54 miles from Hartlepool, via the Tyne Tunnel, so allow at least 1 hour 15 minutes for travel and remember to pay the toll on line within 24 hours of use.

THE NOT FORGOTTEN GARDEN PARTY

The Not Forgotten brought together more than 150 veterans, serving personnel, members of the Uniformed Services, and supporters at Hardwick Hall Hotel, Sedgefield, on Tuesday 28 July for a special Garden Party.

Four of our WRAF Hartlepool Branch members enjoyed welcome drinks and canapés before a traditional afternoon tea, live entertainment from Annie and Lloyd, games and a raffle.



The relaxed atmosphere encouraged old friendships to be renewed and new ones to be formed.

The Not Forgotten transforms the lives of veterans and serving military personnel living with injury, illness or isolation by bringing people together, lifting spirits and restoring dignity and confidence through a varied year-round programme of events.

In Memoriam

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

The Branch has not been informed of any members passing away this quarter.



WOMEN'S SERVICES MEMORIAL DAY

Yorkshire Air Museum held its annual Women's Services Memorial Day on Sunday 9th August – remembering and honouring female members of the armed forces, their service and sacrifice.

The event at Elvington near York, saw around thirty representatives of the RAF, Women's Services Associations and Royal British Legion take part in a parade across the Museum grounds and a wreath laying in the Women's Memorial Garden, followed by a service in the Museum chapel. Four WRAF members from RAFA Hartlepool Branch (pictured) took part in the event.



North Yorkshire's Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Countess Peel, unveiled a plaque to the Association of Royal Air Force Women Officers, in the company of Squadron Leader Fiona Morgan-Frise of the RAF. There was also a flypast by an aircraft from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

LOOKING FORWARD

Breakfast Club—First Saturday of each month at Brewers Fayre, Hartlepool Marina from 09:00. Pay on the day. 3 October, 7 November, 5 December. We have confirmed that only the play area is closing and our reserved spaces will continue. We will review the arrangement at the end of this year.

4 Seasons Lunch—Sambuca, Church Street, pay on the day, 21 November. Booking required.

Branch 80th Anniversary—30 October at Hartlepool Yacht Club. From 6 pm. Gala dinner, entertainment by The Jades, all for just £15 for members. **ONLY 5 TICKETS LEFT. SALES WILL CLOSE SOON.** Last call to welfare@hartlepoolrafa.com or 07751 032567.



Wings Collections—Middleton Grange, 11 & 12 September. Morrisons, Hartlepool 26 September. Tesco Hartlepool, 1 & 2 October. ASDA Hartlepool, 9 October, ASDA Peterlee, 4 December. Volunteers required for the last three dates, please.

Branch Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month from 7:00 pm
Committee @ 6:30 pm

We meet at
Ye Olde Durham's Social Club
St. Aidans Street
Hartlepool TS25 1SN
Free street parking at rear

Contact Details
Phone: 07751 032567
or website
www.hartlepoolrafa.com