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ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION GLOBAL BRANCH 1370

NEWSLETTER



The wise men of the Committee pondering the intricacies of the modern marvel known as Electronics.

N.B. The Chairman has a Brandy and Coke close by, the Vice-Chair a straight Coke and the Membership Secretary a straight Water (No Ice)

Registered Charity 1195404 (England and Wales)

BRANCH COMMITTEE E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Chairman

Mr. Steve Mullis

chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

Vice Chairman

Mr. David Routledge

vicechair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

Hon Secretary

Mr. Jonathan Percival

rafaglobalbranch1370.secretary@gmail.com

Membership Secretary

Mr. Gerwyn Thomas

members.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

Hon Treasurer

Mr. Richard Wiltshire

treasurer2.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

Welfare Officer

Andrew Bellamy

welfare.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

Social Events Coordinator

Mr. David Routledge

vicechair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

Wings Appeal Organiser

Mr. Graham Croft

wings2.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

Conference Delegate

Mr. Steve Mullis

chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

Branch Newsletter

Mr. Clive Simpson

rafaglobalbranch1370.newsletter@gmail.com

Webmaster

Mr. Kris Mercer

rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

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Cover photo shows the depth of concentration prior to the AGM.

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Here are the links to the Facebook video for the full recording of 2024 AGM

<https://www.facebook.com/david.../videos/913559660323879/...>

<https://www.facebook.com/davi.../videos/1151066942555040/...>

Disclaimer - The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the RAFA Global Branch, the Newsletter Editor, Branch Committee or membership and therefore should not be construed as such.

FROM THE EDITORS DESK

(A deck chair on a wet Skegness beach)

The AGM is over, all attendees have much lighter wallets thanks to the efforts of Mr. & Mrs. Mullis ably assisted by Carol Ann Peachey, whose strong arm tactics for extracting the very last penny are legendary. The hotel is awaiting a new delivery of beer. Apart from that we all had a great time.

The event was very well attended with 40+ members present. Unfortunately, due to personal circumstances, Sir Baz North was unable to be present. Technical difficulties hampered the streaming of the meeting on Zoom, as planned, even though our technical guru, Dave Routledge, did his best to rectify the situation ably hampered by the Chairman whose technical skills leave a lot to be desired. However it was live on Facebook and I will post the link on page 2 for those of you who have not managed to watch the spectacle yet.

We welcomed two new members to the committee. Jonathan Percival as Hon. Secretary and Andrew Bellamy as Welfare Officer.

RAF Coningsby hosted us magnificently on the Friday with tours of 29 Squadron and BBMF. Some of our RAF Regiment members had a party on Friday evening in their room and it is rumoured that the floor was covered in peanuts on the Saturday morning!! They know who they are and I will say no more on the subject. The accommodation and food was of a very high standard and the hotel staff were very friendly.....and tolerant. One notable absence from the AGM was our Treasurer, Richard. His excuse ..I'm getting married. A word of advice, the wife is always right even when she's wrong. All the very best to you both for a long and happy life together.

In order to try and elicit some response from members I am going to publish articles on favourite, or least favourite aircraft and Stations. This issue I have written one on the Beverley and if nothing else is forthcoming I will do one on the Shackleton in the next issue.....You have been warned.

VETERANS MOBILITY FUND

Applications to the reinstated Veterans Mobility Fund are now open.

The £2.52 million fund can support veterans with physical disabilities linked to their service to access mobility equipment not typically available on the NHS.

If you're eligible, you can begin your application today at

www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-help/veterans-mobility-fund/

Having been a Branch member since 2015, I have always wished I could attend, but due to circumstances, I couldn't. Circumstances have now changed; so, this year has been the first time I was able to attend. Last March I decided to go for it and made the booking. In September of 2023, I attended the Branch visit to Norwich and thoroughly enjoyed it, it was then with some trepidation, I was looking forward to attending the Branch AGM.

On the 29th of Feb, I headed up to Skegness, checked myself in to my room, dumped my bags, headed back to the lobby area where everyone was congregating, people kept introducing themselves, most of the names I immediately forgot. But was made most welcome by all. There was plenty of reminiscing time gone past, some banter and the Chairman, Steve, flapping around to ensure everyone knew what was supposed to happen, despite having sent out the agenda for the weekend, several times. After a pleasant evening, we turned in for an early breakfast on the Friday, before heading off to RAF Coningsby.

On Arrival at Coningsby there was a slight delay, while we waited for the rain, and instructions as to where the Car Park was. Eventually we were directed to the Car Park by our escorting Officer for the day, to await the Coach. Once the coach arrived and turned around in the lake that was the Car Park, we boarded, we were then handed Passes for the Camp. Once on the camp we were taken to a briefing room where we were given an overview of the Stations ongoing activities around the world. From there we were taken to a briefing room, from there we went to 29 Squadron where we were split into two groups. One group went to look at the Typhoons in their hangar whilst the other group were briefed by one of the Pilots about their Squadron Activities and a look at the typical Pilot flying equipment. After 30-40 minutes, the groups swapped over.

It was then lunchtime where, we encountered the Pay as you Dine system in the Officers Mess (whether we would have been in there if it hadn't been for, Centralised Messing, who knows) but the food was alright.

From there we went to the BBMF, where we were greeted split into four groups and toured around the hangar where all the available aircraft were still undergoing Winter Maintenance. The tour lasted just over two hours but was very informative. We then formed up for a group photograph in front of the Lancaster, which had to be taken by one of our own, Ex-Photog's as the Station's Photog, had managed to be unavailable.

We then returned to the hotel, had an early evening meal in preparation for the AGM itself. The AGM was followed by a raffle and an Auction, which raised quite a reasonable sum towards the Branch Wings Appeal.

The Saturday was a Free day to do as we wished, some headed home, whilst others went to The Lincolnshire Heritage Aviation Centre, at East Kirkby to see the Lancaster being refurbished to flight condition and many other exhibits. This was well worth the visit, whilst there a couple of us were introduced to the Owner, Harold Panton, and also a friend of a member, who is a revered Aviation Artist.

The Sunday morning after breakfast farewells were said and the remainder of the group all travelled to their homes.

A good weekend was had by all that attended, especially by me.



Marilyn Roman in front of "Just Jane" at East Kirkby



Aviation Artist Simon Atack with Dave Kelley in the shop at East Kirkby

Photos courtesy of Dave Kelley

Members Ramblings, Notices & Requests

IF EVER YOU ARE IN THE RICHMOND, N. YORKS AREA POP IN AND SAY "HI"

The Nutrition Hut will be based within the Richmond Swimming Pool and offer a range of refreshments.

David Routledge, who served for 14 years, has described how excited he is to start his new venture. The RAF veteran hopes to create a welcoming and friendly atmosphere. He said: "I want to provide a place where people can relax, enjoy a cup of coffee or a sandwich, and chat with their friends or family and to give back to the people who have supported me through my service and beyond."

"I think this cafe will be a great addition to the Richmond Swimming Pool. We have had a great reaction from people here over the last couple of weeks. From word of mouth there are now people popping in who have just heard about the lovely food. We try to keep the food healthy and affordable."

"Just this morning we have had 25 people in and it's only early. I even offer nutrition plans for the people using the pool."

He also intends to hire staff from the veteran community because he understands how hard it can be to find employment after leaving the military.

D-DAY 80

On Wednesday 5th and Thursday 6th June a series of events in the UK and France will mark the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Landings, when Allied forces risked and gave their lives for freedom and peace in Europe during the Second World War.

The city of Portsmouth will host a major national event featuring military musicians, an RAF fly-past and tributes from special guests, all of which will be broadcast live across the UK and the world. This broadcast could be a great opportunity for your branch to bring your local community together to raise funds for the Association - perhaps you could hold a Brew for The Few tea party that people could attend while watching the events on TV?

TESCO CHARITY BOOKING SYSTEM

Supermarket collections are still one of the most popular and successful methods of raising money for the RAF Association. Very often you can apply directly at your local store by speaking with their community or charity champion.

Tesco now has an online charity booking system, so branches will need to set up their own account and complete their own booking requests. Once registered with Tesco, you can log back into your account anytime to see how your applications are progressing.

Set up your charity account with Tesco

<https://royalairforcesassociation.cmail19.com/t/t-l-eydludl-tltuikiktd-x/>

Steve's recent activity around the AGM reminded me that I was delinquent in sending him an item I had promised for the newsletter. Suitably embarrassed, here goes!

I joined RAFA again last year; I am also a member of the Royal British Legion (RBL), specifically the East Coast USA Branch. Like Global it's more virtual than physical and it was that which led me to revisit RAFA. I had been a member for a few years, starting from when we lived in Canada and ending shortly after we arrived in the USA. If I'm honest, I rather lost interest as it felt like the organization was losing focus. Once I encountered Global last year, I rapidly re-joined. An excellent idea and group!

I live on the East Coast of the USA, in Waynesboro, Virginia. I work as an IT/telecom project manager, and I am also ordained as a Deacon in the Anglican Church (we operate like the CoE circa 1970). When I exchanged messages with Steve, I suggested that I would like to spend some time in the Branch and then, perhaps, offer my services as a chaplain for those for whom I could be of service.

As usual, I'm getting ahead of myself. First, some history. I joined the RAF in 1979 as an LTechST, that curious group who maintained the synthetic trainers (flight simulators). After the usual stints at Swindon and Locking, off I went to St Mawgan. The wheel turned and I found myself with the chance to "go commissioned" and also attend the Royal Military College of Science (RMCS). After that, it was Cranwell, Scampton (OC GRF), Ascension Island (OC Comms, May to Nov 1990), then Rudloe Manor (twice) and thence exit. During my 3 lovely years at RMCS I met and married my wife, then an aeromed nurse at Wroughton. We went on to have 3 children, and now have two Grandchildren.

After leaving I worked as a project manager in IT/telecoms, whilst training as a Church of England Reader (licensed lay preacher). I maintained that Office in Canada when work took us there, and also in the USA when we got here, in 2005. A change in canonical allegiance brought an unexpected opportunity to be ordained Pleasing as that was and is, it also brought to an end the 10 years I'd spent with the Chaplain Corps of "USA version" of the RAF Air cadets; there's only so much time in anyone's week!

I would be delighted to hear from any other US-based members who want to get in touch. Getting back to my first contact with Steve, if you feel the need to talk to the Padre, please feel free to contact me. I use padreabd@outlook.com for RAFA and RBL emails.

I am strictly a worker-Priest or, very strictly, a worker-Deacon! That means I have to toil for Caesar a solid 40 hours per week to pay the bills, but I do read the email first and last each day and I'll get back in touch as fast as circumstances allow. All welcome, in the classic Padre manner.

Thanks for letting me be a part of the Global Branch; it's a real pleasure to be around RAF people again, even if it's somewhat virtual!

VETERANS AFFAIRS



<https://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/>

Life can be tough when your military career comes to an end. Many veterans and their families struggle with painful injuries, mental trauma, loneliness, isolation, sleepless nights, disability, inaccessible homes, and poverty.

It can be hard for veterans to ask for help. To believe that there are people who really understand what they're going through and can support them in their darkest moments.

That's why I need your help to reach out to them today. Together, we need to let every veteran know that they're not alone. That they don't just have to "crack on". That help is here from people who know what they're going through.

Will you help reach veterans and their families in your local area and letting them know we're here for them?

Across the UK in every city, town and village, there are people who served to keep us safe. I want to make sure each and every one of them knows that help is on hand. That, thanks to you and everyone else in this fantastic community, we're here whenever they need us. For as long as they need us.

It might take years for someone to make that first call. But together we can make it easier for them to reach out. Will you make sure that every veteran knows about our services?

VETERANS CARD

Judging by the number of conversations on Facebook I assume that all those who applied have, by now, received their card.

IF YOU ARE AN RAF VETERAN

You can apply online to the RAF Benevolent Fund for financial help up to the value of £750. If the assistance you require is greater than £750, then there are other ways they can help. Please call the RAF Benevolent Fund on 0300 102 1919 or make an enquiry for help online. Take a look at some of the things they can support you with financially:

Please note, small grants are usually made within two weeks of an application being received into the Fund's welfare team. At times when the team are experiencing heightened demand for support, applications may take a little longer to process.

If you're struggling to cover day-to-day living costs, we're here for you. We can provide financial support that includes help with household essentials and priority bills. For those of pensionable age and on a low income, we may be able to offer regular financial assistance through a quarterly income supplement. We may also be able to help with home care or care home costs once your council has carried out a care needs assessment.

Our advisers can provide information on benefits and help you to claim what you're entitled to.

If your application is for £750 or less, this can be made through our online application form.

Applications for over £750 should be made and will need to involve a caseworker.

Grants and financial assistance are means tested so we'll look at your income when considering eligibility.

WELFARE BREAKS

We offer a range of breaks to help you get away from the stresses and strains of daily life. From breaks by the sea to country retreats, you're sure to find the right break for you. We also offer individuals and couples with care needs the opportunity to apply for a care break at a selection of venues.

If you have a disabled member of the immediate family, we can also provide accessible holidays in both in the UK and abroad through the Disabled Holiday Trust.



Are you a Veteran?

**Do you feel you would like to make changes?
Would you like to gain confidence and
improve your relationships?**

JWWN-V is an outreach programme working on behalf of PTSD Resolution, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (charity no. 1202649) that helps veterans, reservists and families

JWWN-V creative innovative programme is about:

- Exploring your emotional needs and how to get them met
- Identifying your strengths and skills
- Ways to develop calming strategies
- Setting and achieving goals for change
- Increasing your confidence
- Improving your relationships

17th April 2024- 5th June 2024
(Every Wednesday evening for 8 weeks)

18.30-21.00

**Woughton on the Green Pavilion
Newport Road
Milton Keynes
MK6 3EA**

Come and join us!

For more information or to register, please contact

Carmen Kane 07812030869.

carmenkane1@hotmail.com

Chris Elliott 07940898794 647

chris@gmail.com

Pauline Bentley 07970728714

paulinebentley48@hotmail.com



UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2024

27th April Newark Air Museum

12th June RAF Cosford Museum

29th June Armed Forces Day (not a branch visit, just in case anyone wishes to host an event locally)

30th June. Armed Forces Day volunteers required in Richmond, N. Yorks, to help with the Global Branch Gazebo.

13th August Royal Armouries Leeds

28th September National Memorial Arboretum, by which time the branch stone should be in place.

10th November Remembrance Sunday

For those members who are not on Facebook I would draw your attention to the following from Dave Routledge....Ed.

Hi everyone after chatting to a few of our members at the AGM, there's a view that on our socials we don't always need to go to military establishments.

To that end I propose that we plan a visit to Cardiff in that there Welsh Wales... and I have looked at a tour of the Principality Stadium which for you older members costs £13.50 and £16.50 for us youngsters and of course the retail therapy, I have looked at a Brewery tour at Brains, but cant see anything on their website, Gerwyn Thomas or Daryl Harries any insider knowledge?

I'd be interested in the your thoughts.

Thoughts please to vicechair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com

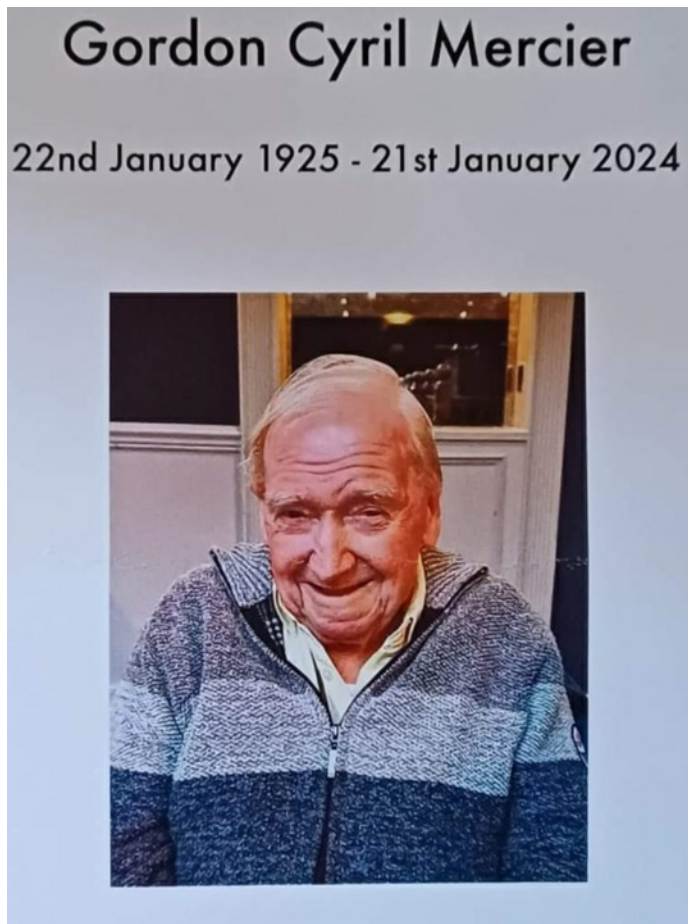
GORDON CYRIL MERCIER

Eddie Mansfield

Today I had the honour and privilege to be standard bearer for Gordon Cyril Mercier who flew with 51 Squadron as an Air Gunner on Halifax bombers in which he did 39 sorties back in 1944. He left the RAF in 1947 and worked in engineering.

He loved to do shooting in civilian life and was a member of the Global Branch of the Royal Air Forces Association and was also a member of the Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfast Club in Redditch which he enjoyed going to each month. He passed away at home the day before his 99th birthday. He was well loved by all his family and friends and the crematorium was packed. I was referred to attend the funeral today by Steve Mullis and I carried the Wrekin and Wellington Branch standard but I am also a secondary member of the Global Branch. Thank you Steve Mullis for asking me to attend today. I was accompanied by the standard bearer of Redditch Branch Royal British Legion Mr Gerry Marsden.

Eddie Mansfield



Many thanks for attending Eddie, as you know I was at the AGM. Steve and I had thought about travelling to Redditch but the distance was just too great to have got back to Skegness in time for the AGM....Ed.



A few photos in 29 Sqdn hangar courtesy of Paul and Jo Phillips



ABINGDON AIR & COUNTRY SHOW

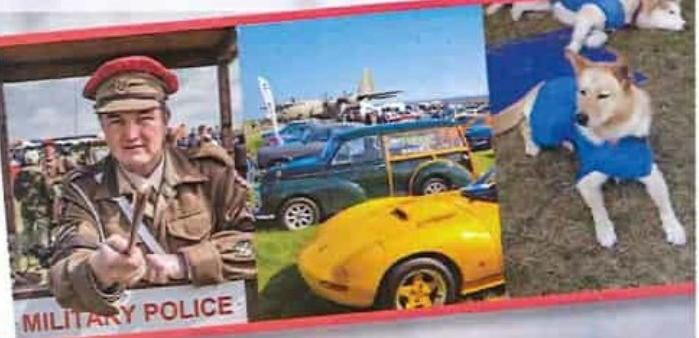
SATURDAY 18TH MAY 2024

**FLYING DISPLAYS & STATIC AIRCRAFT
GROUND ATTRACTIONS · FREE CAR PARKING
DOGS ON A LEAD ARE WELCOME**

Copyright: Fyne Associates.

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM OUR WEBSITE:

ADULTS (16+)
£21 IN ADVANCE
SENIORS (65+)
£11 IN ADVANCE
CHILDREN (5-15)
£7 IN ADVANCE
UNDER 5s FREE



CAR PARKS ARE OPEN 7.30AM · SHOWGROUND OPENS AT 10AM
SHOW CLOSES 5.30PM · AIRFIELD CLOSES 7PM

ABINGDON AIRFIELD, DALTON BARRACKS, OXFORDSHIRE

From the A34, take the Hinksey Hill junction & head towards Boars Hill.
Follow the AA signs to Honeybottom Lane. Please remember to purchase a ticket online.

WWW.ABINGDONAIRANDCOUNTRY.CO.UK



Always a great day out. The Global Branch Gazebo will be there staffed by some friendly faces and Steve Mullis.

FAWLEY SHOW

FEATURED AT

ARMED FORCES DAY



FAWLEY

-22ND JUNE 2024



...WE NEED YOU

to help make this great day into the biggest and best Show ever in Fawley and show our appreciation of our armed forces!

Live music all day into the early evening, a bar, food and side shows.

Fawley Show is inviting as many living history displays as possible, as well as all manner of classic and vintage, cars, trucks and military vehicles and other displays.

It's FREE TO ENTER and you can camp overnight if you wish on the Friday night

(no BBQs though - sorry!).

Timings: 11am - 7pm Sat 22.6.24



Venue address:
Gang Warily Recreation
Centre
Newlands Road,
Fawley,
Southampton,
SO45 1GA

GET IN TOUCH NOW!


EMAIL: fawley.show@gmail.com to register your interest

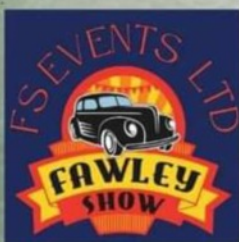
and we will send out the form in due course.

Call 07526507053 (Graham)

or 07770760631 (Helen)

- we'd love to hear from you!

 Fawley Show SO45



ARMED FORCES DAY
SHOW YOUR SUPPORT



If any of you are in the area on this day, please pop in and say "hello" to those of us from Global Branch who have been "voluntold" to attend. You may also catch a rare glimpse of a fossil from the MT age called Steveanicus Colemanius.

Chairman's Ramblings



The group gathered in front of BBMF Lancaster following a great day out at RAF Coningsby.

Well, that's another AGM weekend completed and now thoughts of the branch committee, will hopefully, turn towards deciding on a location for 2025.

Interesting comments were made by various members at Skegness and will be taken on board when any decision is made, but please remember that we try and make any decision that will allow as many members, new & old, as possible to attend, based on price, facilities available, location, disabled friendly, ease of booking, flexibility, plus of course something for our members to do apart from attending the actual AGM. We will let you all know as soon as any decision is made. All I will say now is that there are currently two totally different venues being prepared to be presented to the committee at our next meeting.

Another thing that cropped up at the AGM was that obviously branch members have various opinions on different subjects that are not usually discussed at Committee meetings. Why not I hear you ask? Simple answer is that members have not raised any question or points to be discussed by your committee, if we don't get anything to discuss under "any other business" then you will never be able to get an answer to your questions or valid points.

We are not mind readers, so if you have something you would like discussed by the committee, then please send that question to any of your committee members well in advance of the next meeting, the date of which is easily found at the end of the Committee minutes which are loaded onto the Facebook page & the branch website monthly. The branch currently looks

to have a fairly busy year ahead of us, with attendance of the Branch Gazebo at the Abingdon Air Show, 18th May, the Fawley Armed Forces Day, 22nd June & Richmond's Armed Forces Day in Yorkshire on the 30th June raising money for this year's Wings Appeal.

I also understand that planning is afoot for a visit to Cardiff including a tour of the Principality Stadium, a possibly return social visit to the RAF Cosford Museum. Also awaiting confirmation of a date is the dedication of our branch stone at the National Arboretum. You will be advised of any details as soon as we have them. I hope to see as many of you good folks at these events. Well, that's all for this month folks, stay safe but never quiet.

Hasta La Vista



The welcoming party testing the drinks before the “mob” arrive.

THE BLACKBURN BEVERLEY

As aircraft designs go, the Blackburn Beverley would never fall into the 'aesthetically-pleasing' category, the term brutal may be the most appropriate adjective to describe the 35-tonne transporter.

But, as one of the largest aircraft ever flown by the RAF, it forms part of the service's distinguished past, and the recent news that the last surviving example is facing the possibility of being scrapped should sadden all those interested in military history.

The Beverley served Transport Command for around a decade starting in 1956, No. 47 Squadron the first unit to receive one of the 49 built – two prototypes plus 47 operational aircraft.

It was in effect an enormous box for transporting equipment with a large tail boom, each side of the tail plane possessing a large fin and rudder. Access for freight was initially by rear opening doors with a hand-pumped hydraulic ramp, starting life as the GAL.60 Universal (General Aircraft Ltd), the first prototype built at its factory in Feltham, Middlesex, before their merger into Blackburn Aircraft.

It was soon decided that Hanworth Aerodrome near to Feltham was unsuitable to test the new aircraft, so it was dismantled and transported 200 miles north to Blackburn's Brough base and reassembled,

The prototype flew from East Yorkshire on June 20, 1950 before it was officially unveiled at the Farnborough Air Show later that year; there it carried out a slow flypast, performed a short landing and then impressed all present by reversing down the runway.

A bright future for the aircraft appeared assured with testing undertaken at RAF Boscombe Down where it demonstrated its ability to transport heavy loads, with an order for a second prototype made.

The GAL.65 now possessed a 36 ft. cargo bay with a modified tail boom which could also carry a number of troops, and the rear ramp and doors were replaced by a clamshell operation. Along with improved access, the engines were upgraded to Bristol Centaurs, furnished with reversible-pitch propellers allowing for short-landing distances; along with military equipment, it could now carry around 130 personnel.

A competition among the Brough workforce to name the new aircraft saw the nearby county town of East Yorkshire win the accolade, and by late 1952 a pre-order for 20 of the aircraft from the Air Ministry was received, several months before GAL.65 had even flown.

There were further delays with the first production Blackburn Beverley, XB259, taking off on January 29, 1955, the first operational aircraft arriving at RAF Abingdon in Oxfordshire in March 1956.

Initial assessment could be described as mixed with Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Freer describing it as “like something out of the Ark, but a superb supply dropper”. But it was effective at carrying large bulk loads and landing on rough strips of land as well as typical runways, its short landing requirements (310 yards) with a full load a major plus point when operating overseas.

The Beverley was operated by Nos. 30, 34, 47, 53 and 84 Squadrons, along with No. 242 Operational Conversion Unit, serving in a number of countries including Aden, Kenya, Malaysia and Brunei.

However, it was designed more for transporting equipment with its passengers very much seen as secondary: two locations on the plane for troops to travel in meant those in the upper passenger area had to jump through a hatch in the boom to depart while those in the cargo area could exit through side doors in a more traditional manner.

One particular feature that definitely fell into the after-thought category was the aircraft's toilets, located in the tail beyond the hatch the troops used to depart the plane. A serviceman using the facilities departed the toilet not knowing that the hatch had been opened, falling 20 feet to his death; modifications were immediately made to ensure the toilet door could not be opened while the hatch was in use.

The most notable accident involving a Blackburn Beverley, however, occurred just a few months into its RAF service, the infamous Sutton Wick air crash on March 5, 1957. The transporter XH117 was carrying members of Nos. 47 and 53 Squadrons, and RAF Police and their military dogs, and had just taken off from Abingdon around 10.40 am heading for Akrotiri in Cyprus, when problems with one of its engines soon became apparent, forcing the pilot to shut it down before heading back to the airfield. On its final approach, No. 2 engine failed to respond to throttle inputs and the aircraft began to lose speed and height.

Realising he would be unable to reach the runway at Abingdon, the pilot attempted an emergency landing in a field but the total loss of power made the aircraft uncontrollable, hitting trees and cables before crashing at Sutton Wick, two miles south of Abingdon.

There were 15 on board killed, two civilians on the ground, along with eight RAF police dogs. Four of those on board were thrown clear and survived (one later dying) along with one of the police dogs. The inquiry into the crash discovered that a valve in the fuel system had been installed the wrong way round, leading to the engines being starved of fuel.

Eight other Beverleys were lost in service, two were written off, with the last remaining example, XB259, spending 20 years at Fort Paull, the former military museum near Hull which closed in 2020, just 18 miles from where it was built in Brough.

When Fort Paull shut, XB259 was purchased by a private buyer, Martyn Wiseman, with the support of an anonymous benefactor, with plans to take it apart and reassemble it at another site. The price of moving the Beverley, however, has proved prohibitive, and the aircraft was offered to a number of museums free of charge, but

the transports costs, believed to be around £100,000, have proved problematic.

Solway Aviation Museum has launched a crowdfunder, Save the Blackburn Beverley Aircraft, with an initial target of £60,000 to dismantle and transport the aircraft to Carlisle.



LETS 'AVE A LARF

WORKSHOP TOOL DESCRIPTIONS

DRILL PRESS: A tall upright machine useful for suddenly snatching flat metal bar stock out of your hands so that it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, denting the freshly-painted project which you had carefully set in the corner where nothing could get to it.

WIRE WHEEL: Cleans paint off bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprints and hard-earned calluses from fingers in about the time it takes you to say, 'Oh sh –'

SKILL SAW: A portable cutting tool used to make studs too short.

PLIERS: Used to round off bolt heads. Sometimes used in the creation of blood-blisters

BELT SANDER: An electric sanding tool commonly used to convert minor touch-up jobs into major refinishing jobs

HACKSAW: One of a family of cutting tools built on the Ouija board principle... It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes

MOLE-GRIPS: Generally used after pliers to completely round off bolt heads. If nothing else is available, they can also be used to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

OXYACETYLENE TORCH: Used almost entirely for setting on fire various flammable objects in your shop. Also handy for igniting the grease inside the wheel hub out of which you want to remove a bearing rack.

TABLE SAW: A large stationary power tool commonly used to launch wood projectiles for testing wall integrity.

HYDRAULIC FLOOR JACK: Used for lowering a car to the ground after you have installed your new brake shoes, trapping the jack handle firmly under the exhaust.

BAND SAW: A large stationary power saw primarily used by most shops to cut good aluminium sheet into smaller pieces that more easily fit into the trash can after you cut on the inside of the line instead of the outside edge.

TWO-TON ENGINE HOIST: A tool for testing the maximum tensile strength of everything you forgot to disconnect.

PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER: Normally used to stab the vacuum seals under lids or for

opening old-style paper-and-tin oil cans and splashing oil on your shirt; but can also be used, as the name implies, to strip out Phillips screw heads.

STRAIGHT SCREWDRIVER: A tool for opening paint cans. Sometimes used to convert common slotted screws into non-removable screws and butchering your palms

PRY BAR: A tool used to crumple the metal surrounding that clip or bracket you needed to remove in order to replace a 50p part

HOSE CUTTER: A tool used to make hoses too short

HAMMER: Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a kind of divining rod to locate the most expensive parts adjacent to the object we are trying to hit.

UTILITY KNIFE: Used to open and slice through the contents of cardboard cartons delivered to your front door; works particularly well on contents such as seats, vinyl records, liquids in plastic bottles, collector magazines, and rubber or plastic parts. Especially useful for slicing work clothes, but only while in use.

"Arrrgh BASTARD!!" TOOL: Any handy tool that you grab and throw across the workshop while yelling 'Arrgh BASTARD!!' at the top of your lungs.



THE DATES FOR THE AGM 2025 ARE 25TH FEB - 4TH MARCH 2025

Location for the AGM 2025 is **Benalmadena,**
Costa Del Sol, Spain

The hotel of choice for the Global Branch is the **Medplaya
Hotel Bali, Benalmadena, Costa Del Sol, Spain.**



Date of AGM to be either evening of Friday 28th Feb or
Saturday 1st March 2025 TBC

Possible days trip out, at nominal extra cost,

Day Trip to Gibraltar including War Tunnels Tour (By Coach)

Day Trip to Ronda (By Coach)

English Cemetery in Málaga with trip to local aircraft museum.
By Local Train & bus

Local Spanish Market (Bus ride or taxi)

EARLY BOOKING IS ADVISED AS PRICES CAN CHANGE DAILY & RARELY GO DOWNWARDS!!!!

PLEASE READ ALL OPTIONS BEFORE MAKING ANY DECISIONS

Medplaya Hotel Bali, Benalmadena, Costa Del Sol, Spain

Prices quoted for 2 people sharing unless stated

THE FIRST OPTIONS via **GATWICK** are with TUI Other airports
MIGHT be available with TUI but currently are not, BUT things do
change.

No DDC discount available!!! & NO SINGLES OPTION!!!

<https://www.tui.co.uk>

London Gatwick Tue 25 Feb 2025 14:10 - 18:00 British Airways

Malaga Tue 04 Mar 2025 18:50 - 20:45 British Airways

FULL BOARD

£ 657.12 pp (as at 29.03.24)

ALL INCLUSIVE

£736.08 pp (as at 29.03.24)

No Singles Option!!! No Singles Option!!! No Singles Option!!!

<https://www.nhs.tui.co.uk>

London Gatwick Tue 25 Feb 2025 14:10 - 18:00 British Airways

Malaga Tue 04 Mar 2025 18:50 - 20:45 British Airways

FULL BOARD

£ 606.00pp (as at 29.03.24)

ALL INCLUSIVE

£685.08 pp (as at 29.03.24)

No Singles Option!!! No Singles Option!!! No Singles Option!!!

**MUST BE BOOKED BY PERSON WITH BLUE LIGHT CARD + NHS
EMAIL ADDRESS**

Prices are based on 2 people sharing
Price are based on with myjet2 & includes £25 discount with DDC &
Flying from **BIRMINGHAM**

<https://www.jet2holidays.com>

Birmingham Tue 25 Feb 2025 10:30 - 14:30

Malaga Tue 04 Mar 2025 15:30 - 17:35

FULL BOARD

£ 664.50 pp (as at 29.03.24)

ALL INCLUSIVE

£ 734.50 .pp (as at 29.03.24)

<https://www.jet2holidays.com>

SINGLES PRICE!!! SINGLES PRICE!!! SINGLES PRICE!!!

Birmingham Tue 25 Feb 2025 10:30 - 14:30

Malaga Tue 04 Mar 2025 15:30 - 17:35

FULL BOARD

£ 819.00pp (as at 29.03.24)

ALL INCLUSIVE

£ 883.00pp (as at 29.03.24)

Prices quoted for 2 people sharing unless stated
Prices are based on Full Board; other options are available.
Price are based on with myjet2 & includes £25 discount with DDC &
Flying from **MANCHESTER**

<https://www.jet2holidays.com>

Manchester Tue 25 Feb 2025 10:25 - 14:25

Malaga Tue 04 Mar 2025 15:40 - 17:55

FULL BOARD

£ 644.50pp (as at 29.03.24)

ALL INCLUSIVE

£ 712.50pp (as at 29.03.24)

SINGLES PRICE!!! SINGLES PRICE!!! SINGLES PRICE!!!

<https://www.jet2holidays.com>

Manchester Tue 25 Feb 2025 10:25 - 14:25

Malaga Tue 04 Mar 2025 15:40 - 17:55

FULL BOARD

£ 797.00pp (as at 29.03.24)

ALL INCLUSIVE

£ 861.00pp (as at 29.03.24)

<https://www.Booking.com>

Possible 6% cashback after the stay is completed via Blue Light Card or DDC on hotel stay only.

Ideal for those living in Europe.

Not currently practical for those living in UK as flights via Easyjet etc not currently available.

FULL BOARD

€755 or £645 prices are for 2 people NOT per person. Flights would need to be added.

ALL INCLUSIVE

€915 or £782 prices are for 2 people NOT per person. Flights would need to be added.

Please note I FULLY accept that you might be able get flights from different airports and possibly with different companies, I have tried to get a balanced view across with board so it includes singles and couples BUT please remember if you find a different route etc you MUST base it on arriving at the hotel on 25th Feb & departing around the 4th March because all trips etc will be based around those dates.

If any one has any question on these details please **EMAIL me on chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com and I will "attempt" to answer them for you**

Please ensure you put yourself as going, maybe, or can't go on your invitation you have been sent