



# NEWSLETTER

Vol 7 Issue 3 Jul — Sept 2023



Sir John Baker Trophy winners 2022



Registered Charity 1195405 (England & Wales)

## Branch Committee E-Mail Addresses

Chairman – **Mr. Steve Mullis**

[chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Vice Chairmen – **Mr. David Routledge**

[vicechair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:vicechair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Hon Secretary – **Mr. Andrew Thomson**

[secretary.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Membership Secretary – **Mr. Gerwyn Thomas**

[members.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:members.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Hon Treasurer – **Mr. Richard Wiltshire**

[treasurer2.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer2.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Welfare Officer – **Group Capt (Rtd) Mrs. Nick Loveday**

[welfare.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:welfare.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Social Events Coordinator – **Mrs Irene Thomson**

[social2.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:social2.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Wings Appeal Organiser – **Mr. Graham Croft**

[wings2.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:wings2.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Conference Delegate – **Mr. Steve Mullis**

[chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Branch Newsletter – **Mr. Clive Simpson**

[newsletter.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

Webmaster – **Mr. Chris Mercer**

[rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

## The Cover:

### Your Chairman & Editor Wing Walking 2023

Page Information	Page
Contact Details plus	2
Your Chairmans Ramblings	3
Global's Dirty Half Dozen + 2 Flew Again 2024	4
Armed Forces Weekends 2023	5
Members Ramblings, Notices	6
"Wokka Wokka" 2023 Ducks AF & V Breakfast Clubs	7
Visit to Elvington Thursday 25 May 2023	8
Annual RAFA Conference 2023	9
Annual RAFA Conference 2023	10
AGM 2024 RAF Coningsby	11
AGM 2024 Proposed Programme	12
RAFA Wings Appeal Pins	13
What every member needs!!	14

<https://rafa.org.uk/>

Have YOU logged in yet?

We're here to help: 0800 018 2361

ROYAL AIR FORCES Association

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We're the charity that supports the RAF community

Manage consent

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.

# Your Chairmans Ramblings

## PLEASE TAKE NOTE:

The password to access the members only pages of the Global Branch website at <https://rafa1370.org.uk/> is going to be changing in the near future. You will be emailed with the new password!!!

Well here we are, just halfway through the year and in all honesty I think we have had enough happening to last is for the whole year already.

On a personal front I am certain that the events going on with Julie & myself only matches what many of you are also going through.

So on the important front ..... our RAFA Global Branch!!!

After a brilliant AGM weekend at RAF Odiham the branch got presented with an Area Presidential Certificate plus being the Branch Newsletter/Media Profile Winners for the second year running. Hopefully we might be lucky to win the National title as well again. I, personally, was also honoured to be nominated for an National Presidential Certificate, which will be presented in October at the National Conference.

May was a massively busy month which saw 8 members/supporters of the branch take to the top wing of a Stearman Bi-plane for a Wing Walk raising over £7k for the branch's Wings Appeal. Just a week later the branch descended on the Yorkshire Air Museum at Elvington. A good day was had by all who attended and it is definitely on the list for a return visit but I understand that Cosford will almost certainly be next for a visit since it is years since we have been there. I trust you will all make the effort to join us there.

The start of June saw the Area Conference being held at RAFA HQ in Leicester. A very interesting Saturday was spent with various presentations and a very convivial evening meal in great company. The less said about the 12 hours spent at the Leicester Infirmary on the Sunday the better!!!!

June also saw the sad passing of one of our younger members, John Lawrence. He had fought an 18 month battle against cancer, which unfortunately was a battle he was not destined to win. The end of the month saw David Routledge & myself attending the funeral of this brave 41 year old. RIP John.

2023 promises to be a 5 star year for the Global Branch but whilst it is worth remembering that whilst your committee is always here for all our membership it does always help if you are here supporting us.

I am pleased to announce though, as you might also be, that this is hopefully going to be the last newsletter with myself as editor. The next edition will have a new editor with Clive Simpson taking over the reins. I trust that you will support him by sending in your likes and dislikes as this newsletter relies on YOU the membership for its content. Just look at Page 6 & you will understand.

**Non Nobis Sed Vobis**

## Global's Dirty Half Dozen + 2 Flew Again



May 17th 2023 saw branch members & supporters of the branch, along with friends and family, arrive at RFC Rendcomb for the Global Branch's Wing Walking experience. Branch members Damian Harriss & Craig McMurrough were there for the second time doing aerobatics, The rest, led by Chairman, Steve Mullis, were braving it for the first time.

The Wing Walkers have raised a total of £7,587 for our Wings Appeal Preparations are already in hand for another 6 to partake in 2024



# Armed Forces Weekend 2023

Three consecutive weekends in June saw branch members, ably assisted by wives and members of the ATC out representing the RAF Association whilst collecting for the Wings Appeal 2023. Raising over £1,000 for the branch's Wings Appeal 2023 meant it was 3 well worked days out. With Wings Week still to come in September, along with the money raised by the Dirty Half Dozen, 2023 looks as if it could be a record year for the Global Branch on the fundraising stakes.



All set and ready to sell those "Wokka Wokka" 2023 Ducks at the Thatcham Families Fun Day raising nearly £600 on the day.



Clive Simpson, Ian Whitehill, Steve Coleman along with Steve Mullis showing true colours at Fawley



Cadets & Staff of 201 (Macclesfield) Sqn RAFAC, including Spike Elliott, took part in AFD, they also used the event to raise funds for RAFA.



Successful first ever day at Fawley Armed Forces Day, near Southampton. Over £325 added to the Wings Appeal. Many thanks to Clive Simson, Ian Whitehill & Steve Coleman.

## Members Ramblings, Notices & Requests

Yes folks, here is the first page dedicated to YOUR stories, memories, antidotes indeed whatever you want to have put in YOUR newsletter. BUT this obviously relies on YOU sending ME what you would like included.

If I receiving nothing then there will be a BLANK PAGE. This month, because once again I have received not one item you get a blank page

Members have requested more local information on other branches etc well it is down to you to send this in.

Remember it is YOUR newsletter, I only put it together & without YOUR input you only get what I consider to be important!!!

## Wokka Wokka Ducks 2023

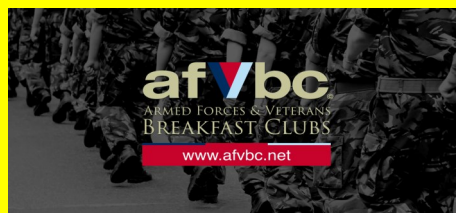


### Presenting the 2023 "Wokka Wokka" RAFA Ducks

Pleased to announce that I currently have stock of this year's Wings Appeal "Wokka Wokka" Ducks!!!

If you want a set, they cost just £8 for a Squadron of three ducks plus £3-50 p&p (UK PRICES)

Contact Steve Mullis via [chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:chair.rafaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com) to order yours now!!!!



Now a regular place in the diary for many is a visit to their local Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club. Why not checkout your local one? For about £6 you get a substantial breakfast with unlimited tea/coffee. Venues vary on price & content. The link to find YOUR local club is [www.afvbc.net](http://www.afvbc.net)

**Newbury Thatcham Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/412987076263828>

**St Helens Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1175542099273689/?ref=share>

**Wakefield Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/115048932216843/?ref=share>

**Dewsbury Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/976048345748584/>

## Visit to Elvington Thursday 25 May 2023

Late May saw the first ever Global Branch visit to the Yorkshire Air Museum at Elvington. Despite lower than hoped for attendees, Elvington proved to be a location well worth a return visit by the branch. All who attended agreed that it was certainly a hidden gem in the world of Air Museums.

Two enjoyable evenings were spent in pleasant company before and after the visit for those members who had travelled up from the south of the country.

Hopefully, next time we return to Elvington, more of those members who live in this “northern outpost” of the country will join us “southern softies”!!!!





# Annual RAFA Conference 2023

## **RAFA Annual Conference 2023 will be held at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole, The NEC Birmingham, Pendigo Way, Birmingham, B40 1PP 14 to 15 October 2023**

Any individual wishing to attend Conference, in any capacity, MUST register using the process set out in section 8 below.

**Please see section 9 below about the costs of attending Conference.**

### **Registering your place for Conference**

To register your attendance, please complete the online booking form on our website here: [www.rafa.org.uk/conferences](http://www.rafa.org.uk/conferences) by 29 September 2023. Here you can register yourself and any guests who wish to attend the Conference. A registration form is required for each guest. Please note, this year accommodation will be booked directly through the RAF Association. This will be done via the registration form.

When registering, you will be asked to confirm whether you are attending in an official capacity (e.g., as a Branch delegate, Standard Bearer) or privately as a member or a guest. On successful registration you will receive a confirmation email from the Association. On your arrival, we will book you in and give you an identification badge and lanyard.

Please note that you do not require a ticket for the event. Your badge and lanyard will provide you access to the venue and evening functions and refreshments. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact our Customer Engagement Team on 0800 018 2361 (Mon-Fri, 0900-1700) and they will be happy to take your details over the phone.

### **9 Booking your accommodation**

**All accommodation bookings must be made directly with the RAF Association. The Hilton Birmingham Metropole has over 790 rooms with 20 accessible rooms. The Association has negotiated a reduced rate for a 24-hour residential rate for delegates at £235 per person (if sharing a room, the second person would pay an additional £125). If you are sharing a room, payment should be made for all occupants by the lead guest. The price includes your meals (Saturday lunch, dinner, and Sunday breakfast), accommodation (Saturday night) and car parking and connection to the venues Wi-Fi.**

**In addition, refreshments will be available over the weekend and each bedroom offers an en-suite bathroom, TV, hairdryer, tea/coffee, and biscuits. Anyone who does not require accommodation, the day rate is £100. This includes lunch, dinner and parking. Anyone who will not be attending the gala dinner will be charged a day rate of £55 which includes parking. Accommodation can be booked when registering at [www.rafa.org.uk/conferences](http://www.rafa.org.uk/conferences).**

If you need any support to complete the form or to make payment, please contact the Customer Engagement Team on 0800 018 2361 (Mon-Fri, 0900-1700)

**Additional Nights:** If you require additional nights, these are to be arranged directly with the Hilton Birmingham Metropole. To book additional nights at Hilton Birmingham Metropole, please telephone 0121 780 6262. Please inform us if you are booking additional nights.

## Annual RAFA Conference 2023 (cont'd)

**Car parking:** Hilton Birmingham Metropole has over 600 car parking spaces available on site and we have negotiated free parking for all those attending the Conference; however, you will need to provide us with your registration when you register for Conference.

**Blue Badge Parking:** There is a secure VIP and Blue Badge car park directly outside the venue. To gain access you will need to confirm that you are a Blue Badge holder and provide us with your relevant car registration in advance (when you register for Conference). Please note, the Association does not have exclusive use of this car park, places will be on first come first serve basis.

**Mobility aids:** Please note that Hilton Birmingham Metropole is unable to provide mobility aids such as wheelchairs or scooters. If you require any mobility aids, then please bring these with you.

Transport from Birmingham Airport and International Train Station: The venue is well-connected with Birmingham Airport and Birmingham International Station only 5/10 minutes away by taxi.

**Any member of the Association is welcome to attend the Annual Conference at their own expense.**

Accommodation: your accommodation will be available from 1500hrs on the day of your arrival, please note rooms will not be available earlier.

**Marketplace, Saturday 14 October:** The marketplace will be situated within the Balmoral room and will open from 1100hrs to 1800hrs. The stalls will give members and guests information on how we can support branches and help the RAF family. There will also be the chance to buy products from our Association shop.

**Lunch & Refreshments, Saturday 14 October:** will be available from 1200hrs in the Balmoral room. This will give delegates, members, and guests the opportunity to meet before being seated at 1245hrs for the opening ceremony at 1300hrs in the Sandringham room.

**Annual Reunion Gala Awards Dinner, Saturday 14 October:** This will take place in the Kings Suite from 2000hrs and will be a formal dinner and awards ceremony. The evening will include live music.

**Sunday Service, 15 October:** A Sunday service will be held within the Arden room at 0930hrs. Standards of dress for the Conference weekend

Conference attendees are invited to dress in a jacket and tie for Conference. Serving personnel attending as RAFALOs are advised to wear No 2 working dress (with long sleeve shirt and tie). Officers on duty taking part in the ceremonial events will be wearing No 1 HD with medals. Saturday 14 October (Gala Awards Dinner): This is a Black-Tie Dinner; therefore, the recommendation for serving personnel attending as RAFALOs is No 5s for Officers, WOs and SNCOs, No 4SD (or lounge suit/black tie if preferred) for ORs. For members and guests, Black-Tie or Lounge Suit with medals (if appropriate) and ladies equivalent.

**Sunday 15 October:** Attendees to the ceremony are advised to wear a jacket and tie with medals (if appropriate) and the ladies equivalent. Serving personnel to wear No1 HD with medals.

# #AGM2024

## Location, Location, Location

#AGM2024 is going to be held at: RAF CONINGSBY on the dates of 29-02-24 to 03-03-24

The hotel is the Southview Park Hotel, Skegness, which is part of the Parkdean Holiday Resorts. ( [www.southviewparkhotel.co.uk](http://www.southviewparkhotel.co.uk) )

They are able offer us a special price for early booking with prices from £130 - £250 for 2 nights based on 2 people including breakfast through to £195 - £375 for 3 nights based on 2 people including breakfast depending on the type of accommodation running from twin, double, king size, superior twin, superior double through to a suite.

There are also 3 disabled twin rooms available at £150 for 2 nights and £225 for 3 nights.

There is no discount for single bookings unfortunately but then again there isn't when one books at a Premier Inn.

Possibly the biggest problem is that the company and indeed the hotel do NOT offer a cancellation policy and that the cost of the stay must be paid at the time of booking.

### **MOST IMPORTANT. MOST IMPORTANT. MOST IMPORTANT**

Please DO NOT attempt to try and book any accommodation via their website or vis booking.com as the dates we require are not currently on there.

The details for booking your accommodation at the Southview Park Hotel, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE25 2LA are as follows:

01754 896060

option 5

Now you should get to talk to a human being!!!

Booking for the RAFA weekend Feb 2024

Dates 29th Feb - 3rd March 2024

Remember to state if you are booking for 2 or 3 nights

Type of room you want to book

They will require your name, address, telephone number & email address

Payment card details

Check-in is from 16.00hrs but "could" be earlier if your room is ready.

PLEASE remember that the cost of the stay must be paid at the time of booking. I will also be adding an event linked to our Facebook page, please use it.

I have added a provisional agenda on the next page!!!

**AGM 2024 @RAF Coningsby**  
**THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 – SUNDAY 3rd March 2024**

**Provisional AGM Weekend Itinerary**

**1. THURSDAY 29th February 15.00hrs + Check into hotel**  
(Southview Park Hotel, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE25 2LA)

**2. THURSDAY 29th February 20.00hrs** Meet & greet at Southview Park Hotel  
A chance for branch members to meet RAFALO's etc from RAF Coningsby & from RAFA Coningsby and District, Mablethorpe/Sutton & Boston branches.

**3. FRIDAY 1st March 07.00hrs - 08.45hrs** Breakfast at hotel  
Transfer from hotel to RAF Coningsby, Baxter Cl, Coningsby, Lincoln LN4 4TG. (25 miles, Transfer Time 40 mins approx.)

**4. FRIDAY 1st March 2024**

0930 – Arrive at the main gate, park cars in the main carpark.

10.00 – Tea and coffee in the BBMF tea bar or similar

10.30 – Group splits into 2

One group tour BBMF, the other visits the Typhoon Display Team and one Typhoon Squadron.

12.00 – 12.15 – Official Photo in front of the Typhoon or similar.

12.15 – Travel to Officers Mess for lunch.

12.30 -13.30 – Officers Mess lunch, to be paid individually at time of purchase.

13.30-15.00 – Groups switch over.

One group tour BBMF, the other visits the Typhoon Display Team and one Typhoon Squadron.

15.15 - 16.15 – AGM. (If AGM not being held on RAF Coningsby, then AGM in hotel @ 20.00hrs

16.30 – Depart to the hotel.

**5. FRIDAY 1st March 20.00hrs** Evening meal in hotel

If AGM not able to be held on RAF Coningsby, then AGM in Trafalgar Suite in hotel (No Charge)

**6. SATURDAY 2nd March 08.00hrs – 10.00hrs** Breakfast in hotel

**7. SATURDAY 2nd March**

**POSSIBLE CHOICES**

Go Karting Global Branch Championship

<https://kartworldextremeleisure.co.uk/>

Details to follow for anyone interested. OR

Visit to Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre @ East Kirby for Just Jane OR

Free Time OR

Depart hotel/venue for home.

**8. SUNDAY 3rd March 12.00hrs** Depart hotel/venue for home.

£1-50 each plus £1 for P&P UK Prices Maximum of 6 pins per posting  
 Overseas prices on request Orders to [chair.raflaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:chair.raflaglobalbranch1370@gmail.com)

<b>VULCAN</b>	<b>HURRICANE</b>	<b>LANCASTER</b>	<b>SPITFIRE</b>
			
<b>RED ARROWS</b>	<b>WINGS</b>	<b>RAF 100</b>	<b>CAMEL</b>
			
<b>LIGHTNING 35B</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>E3D Sentry</b>	<b>CHINOOK</b>
			
<b>REGT BEAR</b>	<b>LIGHTNING</b>	<b>TYPHOON</b>	<b>PILOT BEAR</b>
			
<b>TORNADO</b>	<b>FALCONS</b>	<b>SEA KING</b>	<b>PHANTOM</b>
			<p>PHANTOM BADGE                  Suggested donation £1.50</p>  

# What EVERY member needs

**CHALLENGE FOR 2023**  
**NOW IS THE TIME TO GET YOUR**  
**RAFA HOME**  
**COLLECTION BOX!!!!**



Its so simple folks, just get one of these home collection boxes and just pop your odd change into it. Come Battle of Britain Week 2023, count it up and bank it for the Global Branch's Wing Appeal.

Remember it doesn't matter where you live in the world, money is money & it all adds up no matter what the currency!!!!

Contact the Chairman now to ask for one of the boxes and get collecting the easy way. Don't wait for it to come in post, have a look in your pocket today and see how much shrapnel you have in there now!!!

In 2020 & 2021 we raised over £1,000 despite all the problems we have had with Covid 19, so I am hoping that in 2023 we can improve on that with more people having boxes!!!

Reference renewals of your membership of RAFA. Many memberships will be coming up for renewal over the next month or so. Please take a few minutes to check out that YOUR details are correctly held with RAFA HQ so that hopefully you will receive your membership card etc when you renew. If you currently receive the Air Mail magazine then you can assume your address is correct.

You can easily check this out, and the date your renewal is due, by logging on the portal at <https://rafa.org.uk/> and then going to My Details & My Membership. If they are incorrect you can change them online.

If you are unable to log on due to not having a password. Use the Contact form at <https://rafa.org.uk/contact/> to request one.



Help raise FREE funds for RAFA Global Branch 1370 whenever you shop online!

We currently have just over 123 people raising over £1,724 since we started using it. Imagine how much we could raise if ALL our members were to join!!!

It doesn't cost you a penny more to use easyfundraising BUT it will raise money for the branch for FREE!!!

Use easyfundraising to shop with over 4,000 big name retailers including John Lewis, Very, Uswitch, GoCompare, Just Eat, Expedia, and ASOS – when you shop, you'll raise a free donation for RAFA Global Branch 1370 every time, it's that easy!

Please help support us:

[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/rafaglobalbranch1370/?utm\\_campaign=raise-more&utm\\_content=fb5](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/rafaglobalbranch1370/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_content=fb5)

## Could YOU do a Wings Collection in YOUR town?



Have you ever thought about spending a few hours, come September, doing a collection in your town/village for the Wings Appeal. If you DON'T have a local RAFA branch in your vicinity then maybe you could help us raise a few more pounds towards this year's target.

If you think you can help please contact Graham Croft so that he can organize the paperwork & equipment for you. Just email him with your details on

[wings2.rafa.globalbranch1370@gmail.com](mailto:wings2.rafa.globalbranch1370@gmail.com)