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BELGIAN BRANCH NEWSLETTER

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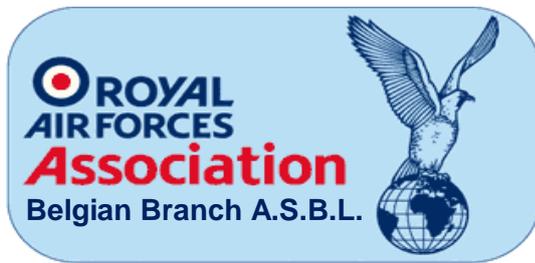
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NEWSLETTER NO 102

APR – MAY – JUN 2011

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THE ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION
Maison des Ailes – Rue Montoyer 1-B 33-1040 Brussels.
 Branch No: 0645
Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Hon Patron: H.E. Jonathan Brenton British Ambassador
Branch Honorary Co-Presidents:
 Air Marshal C Harper CBE MA FCMI RAF
 Sqn Ldr (Ret'd) E Hearn DFC*
Branch Hon Vice-President: Air Cdre S Dobb CBE MA RAF

BELGIAN BRANCH COMMITTEE – APR TO JUN 2011

CHAIRMAN	Robert (Dick) Whittingham (Gp Capt Ret'd)
VICE CHAIRMAN	Jon Hill (Gp Capt Ret'd)
HONORARY CHAPLAIN	Father Walter Peeters
SECRETARY	Flt Lt Hannah French
TREASURER	David Trembaczowski-Ryder (Wg Cdr Ret'd)
ASSISTANT TREASURER	Mr Charles Dumont
HONORARY WELFARE OFFICER (HWO)	Mrs Ghislaine Walkden
ASSISTANT HWO	Mrs Deborah Whittingham
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Mrs Brigitte Horton
NEWSLETTER OFFICER	VACANT

For a quick answer to any query, please email: rafa.belgianbranch@gmail.com

From: Group Captain R J Whittingham FRAeS, Royal Air Force (Retired)

Brussels

12 May 2011

Dear Friends,

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

In this edition, we focus on the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the actions arising from it, and highlight the programme of events in Belgium and elsewhere which are of interest to Branch members. Thanks to the inputs from Mr Léon Rubin and Gp Capt Mike Connor, we also have a moving remembrance of our dear friend Ghilly Hennessey who died in February, and a further extract from Sqn Ldr Edward Hearn's memoir covering the period 1935 to 1939.

The AGM was held as advised in Newsletter 101 on 22 March 2011: the minutes of the meeting are enclosed (pages 4 to 15). It was unfortunate that due to a number of unavoidable late cancellations, the numbers at the meeting were small. However, we definitely had a quorum, and the meeting made a number of important decisions regarding the future of the Branch. In particular, I would like to draw your attention to paragraphs 8, 21 and 24, where decisions were made to use Branch funds to enhance and encourage friendship (or 'comradeship' to use what is perhaps now a rather dated, but nevertheless appropriate, term) amongst Branch members, as well as to continue to support, to the best of our ability, the welfare of those in need. You will see the Committee's response to these decisions on page 20 in the 'Support for Friendship and Welfare' section. I would encourage all members to consider these offers carefully. With a little bit of effort and with relatively minor financial support, I am sure that we can really make a difference.

At the AGM we also noted with pleasure that the new UK Military Representative to NATO HQ, Air Marshal Christopher Harper had kindly agreed to my proposal that he become our Branch Honorary Co-President, along side Sqn Ldr Hearn. The Air Marshal brings a wealth of RAF experience to the Branch, and as an active RAFA member himself, he will be well placed to guide and support our activities. The excellent lunch following the AGM gave me the very welcome opportunity to say a warm thank you on your behalf to the retiring committee members, Mr Léon Rubin, Mrs Christine Worthington and Flt Lt Nicky Sinclair, and to present them with mementos of their outstanding service to the Branch.

Lastly, at the end of the Newsletter are the details of the Barry Horton Memorial Golf Tournament. The Duisburg Military Golf Club have most kindly agreed to allow us to use their facilities for the event once again this year, but please note that the date has slipped a week to Friday 8 July. This is our key fund-raising event of the year, so I would encourage all members to consider participation: after all, it is a super way to foster comradeship! Please respond to Gp Capt Jon Hill by 28 June. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Yours most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dick Whittingham". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



Belgian Branch
A.S.B.L.

THE ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION

Maison des Ailes - Rue Montoyer 1-B 33 - 1040 Brussels

-----**Branch N° 0645**-----

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

Honorary Branch Patron: H.E. Jonathan Brenton British Ambassador

Branch Honorary Co-Presidents:

Air Marshal C Harper CBE MA FCMI RAF; Sqn Ldr (Ret'd) E Hearn DFC*

Branch Honorary Vice-President: Air Cdre S Dobb CBE MA RAF

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BELGIAN BRANCH OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION NATO STAFF CENTRE – 22 MARCH 2011

Present:

Gp Capt (Ret'd) R Whittingham (Chairman)

Gp Capt (Ret'd) J Hill (Vice-Chairman)

Wg Cdr (Ret'd) D Trembaczowski-Ryder (Treasurer)

Mrs G Walkden (Honorary Welfare Officer)

Mrs D Whittingham (Assistant Welfare Officer)

Father W Peeters (Honorary Chaplain)

Mr J-P Blanckaert (Standard Bearer)

Flt Lt N Sinclair (Secretary)

Mr L Rubin

Mrs A De Norman

Mrs M Laden

Flt Lt H French

Apologies:

His Excellency Jonathan Brenton

Air Marshal C Harper (Honorary Co-President)

Sqn Ldr (Ret'd) E Hearn (Honorary Co-President)

General M Donnet

Air Cdre S Dobb (Honorary Vice-President)

Mr C Dumont (Assistant Treasurer)

Mrs B Horton (Membership Secretary)

Gp Capt (Ret'd) M Connor

Gp Capt (Ret'd) P Bedford

Mr P Pereira

Mr J Sutherland

Mr R Laumans

ITEM 1 – OPENING OF THE MEETING AND DEDICATION

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, and highlighted that the AGM would be an important opportunity to explore and agree ways to expand support to the membership. He was pleased to be able to announce that Air Marshal Christopher Harper the newly appointed United Kingdom Military Representative to NATO HQ had kindly accepted his invitation to act as Branch Honorary Co-President alongside Squadron Leader Edward Hearn.

2. At the invitation of the Chairman, the meeting stood as the Honorary Chaplain Father Peeters delivered the Dedication, remembering in particular those members of the RAFA Belgian Branch who had passed away since the previous AGM: Mrs Monica Bouzin, Mrs Joan Cordier-Morton, Mr Raymond Cornet, Mr Felix De Meulenaere, Capitaine (Flt Lt) Aviateur de Réserve Pierre-Jean Goemaere, Mr

Edouard Goossens, Mr Guy Hanze, Mr Dave Hencken, Mrs Ghislaine Hennessey, Captain Reginald Levy DFC, Mr Jean Parisse, Colonel Aviateur Fernard Piquin, Mrs Rahier-Rigot, Major Freddie Townsend OBE, Mr Jules L Verbeet.

3. The meeting noted the regrets of those unable to attend and offered particular condolences to the family of Raymond Cornet whose funeral was being held that day, with the Vice-Chairman and the Standard Bearer representing the Association and the Branch.

4. The meeting agreed the proposal from Mr L Rubin to discuss under Any Other Business the RAF and ELMS (Escape Lines Memorial Society) 'Home Run' re-enactment planned for August 2011.

ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE 2010 AGM

5. The Chairman noted that the minutes of the last AGM held on 11 March 2010 were published in Newsletter 98 in May 2010, and no comments had been received. He highlighted in particular paragraph 5 where "Following general discussion, the AGM agreed that the Branch should maintain its fund-raising activities, but invited the Committee to seek ways to provide expanded welfare support within Belgium such that overall Branch funds would be progressively reduced rather than enhanced."

6. The Chairman sought AGM approval of the minutes as published:

Proposed by Father W Peeters and **seconded** by Mr D Trembaczowski-Ryder.
Carried Unanimously

ITEM 3 – CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

7. In his Address (see text at Enclosure 1), the Chairman:

a. Noted the success of fund-raising events during the year, in particular the Barry Horton Memorial Golf Tournament, and highlighted the effective role of the Branch in representing the Association at events in Belgium and elsewhere. He noted with pleasure the outstanding support given by the Branch Standard Bearer Mr Jean-Pierre Blanckaert, and the activities conducted in association with Royal British Legion and Cometé Line colleagues.

b. In accordance with the wishes of the 2010 AGM, and following Committee discussion, he proposed that Branch funds should be used to support the 'friendship' as well as the 'welfare' aims of the Association, and that the Committee should be set the specific financial target to reduce Branch overall net assets by 50% within 5 years. He invited the AGM to consider these proposals in depth under later Agenda items.

c. Noted that the Duisburg Military Golf Club had very kindly agreed once again to host the Barry Horton Memorial Golf Tournament, but that this year the date had been slipped by a week to Friday 8 July.

d. Thanked Gp Capt Mike Connor for transcribing Sqn Ldr Edward Hearn's memoir such that extracts could be included within the Branch Newsletter enabling these fascinating glimpses of personal history to be brought to a wider audience: he invited more contributions from other Branch members.

e. Thanked all the members of the Committee for their outstanding dedication to the Branch throughout the year, and paid particular tribute to the invaluable support provided by those standing down from the committee: Mr Léon Rubin Newsletter Officer, Mrs Christine Worthington Assistant Welfare Officer, and to Flt Lt Nicky Sinclair Secretary (on posting).

8. In discussion following the Chairman's Address, there was general support for the proposed additional funding of activities in support of Association friendship and welfare aims: detailed proposals were taken forward under Items 6 and 7 (see paras 21 and 24)

ITEM 4 – APPOINTMENT OF BRANCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

9. The Chairman noted that the appointment of Branch Officers and Committee Members would be conducted in 3 groups as advised in Newsletter Number 101.

10. Officers not requiring Election. The Chairman noted that as Appointed Officers of the Branch, H.E. Jonathan Brenton, Air Marshal C Harper, Sqn Ldr (Ret'd) E Hearn, Gen M Donnet, Air Cdre S Dobb and Father W Peeters did not require election: he warmly thanked them for the time and energy they gave in supporting Branch activity.

11. Election of new Committee Members. The Chairman noted that the committee post of 'Newsletter Officer' remained vacant, but that Flt Lt French had very kindly volunteered to take over as Secretary. He therefore sought AGM approval for the election of Flt Lt Hannah French as Honorary Secretary:

Proposed by Mrs G Walkden and **seconded** by Father W Peeters.
Carried Unanimously.

12. Re-elect Existing Committee Members. The Chairman sought AGM approval, en masse, for the following Committee members seeking re-election:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| a. Gp Capt (Ret'd) R Whittingham | (Chairman) |
| b. Gp Capt (Ret'd) J Hill | (Vice-Chairman) |
| c. Wg Cdr (Ret'd) D Trembaczowski-Ryder | (Treasurer) |
| d. Mr C Dumont | (Assistant Treasurer) |
| e. Mrs B Horton | (Membership Secretary) |
| f. Mrs G Walkden | (Honorary Welfare Officer) |
| g. Mrs D Whittingham | (Assistant Welfare Officer) |

Proposed by Mr L Rubin and **seconded** by Flt Lt H French.
Carried Unanimously.

13. The AGM formally noted the following resignations from the Committee:

- a. Mr L Rubin
- b. Mrs C Worthington
- c. Flt Lt N Sinclair

ITEM 5 – TREASURER’S REPORT / APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS 2010

14. Following an invitation from the Chairman, Wg Cdr (Ret’d) D Trembaczowski-Ryder presented his Treasurer’s Report and the 2010 accounts at Enclosure 2, in which he:

- a. Noted that the 2010 Accounts had been published in Newsletter 101 in February 2011.
- b. Particularly highlighted that although the annual income was decreasing as membership reduced and the percentage of life members increased, the accounts were all in good health. The greatest expenditure aside from welfare was the production and distribution of the Newsletter, but that as this was the lifeline to members it was money well spent.

15. The Chairman congratulated the Treasurer for his excellent and comprehensive accounts statement. He sought the approval of the AGM for the 2010 Accounts as circulated (and as included at Enclosure 2), and for agreement that Committee Members had satisfactorily discharged their duties in accordance with Belgian ASBL legislation.

Proposed by Mrs G Walkden and **seconded** by Father W Peeters.
Carried Unanimously.

ITEM 6 – HONORARY WELFARE OFFICER’S REPORT AND PROPOSALS FOR 2011

16. Following an invitation from the Chairman, Mrs G Walkden presented her Welfare Report (see Enclosure 3) which was noted with appreciation by the AGM.

17. The Chairman thanked Mrs Walkden for her clear report and stated that the efforts of the Honorary Welfare Officer and Assistant Welfare Officer really did make a difference to the welfare of RAFA Belgian Branch members and their families.

18. Concerning the proposals for enhanced subsidies to further friendship as well as welfare amongst Branch members, he supported the Honorary Welfare Officer’s proposals, and suggested that the Committee should be empowered to authorise individual subsidies for the conduct of suitable activities up to a maximum of 50% of the overall cost plus transportation.

19. Mr L Rubin asked how the scale of the subsidy would be decided. The Chairman responded that he envisaged a sliding scale of support, with a flat rate per event available for all members, with additional welfare support determined by the Committee on an individual, confidential, basis. The Committee would decide upon the flat-rate discount dependent on uptake and funds available, and each welfare

case would then be carefully discussed by the Committee and receive a suitable additional discount. Levels of additional subsidies would remain confidential within the Committee.

20. Following general discussion, the Chairman sought AGM approval for the proposals as at Enclosure 3 and as above:

Proposed by Wg Cdr (Ret'd) D Trembaczowski-Ryder and **seconded** by Mrs A De Norman.

Carried Unanimously.

ITEM 7 – BUDGET FOR 2011

21. The Chairman noted that the proposed 2011 Budget circulated with Newsletter 101 had been overtaken by recent Committee discussion, and hence he invited the Treasurer to introduce a revised budget proposal to cater for Committee and AGM discussion.

22. In the light of discussion at the AGM, the Treasurer proposed reducing the capital held by the Branch by 10,000 Euro over the 5 year period as recommended by the Chairman, using a stepped approach outlined below, with exact annual figures reviewed and adjusted according to need:

- a. Year 1 reduce by €3500
- b. Year 2 reduce by €2500
- c. Year 3 reduce by €2000
- d. Year 4 reduce by €1000
- e. Year 5 reduce by €1000

23. The Chairman sought the approval of the AGM for the Committee to develop a budget for 2011 to reflect the decisions of the AGM under Item 6 showing a capital reduction of €3500 as per the above proposals, and for this Budget to be included in the minutes of the AGM as to be published in Newsletter 102.

Proposed by Father W Peeters and **seconded** by Mr L Rubin.

Carried Unanimously.

Secretarial Note: the revised 2011 Budget reflecting the above provisions is at Enclosure 4.

ITEM 8 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

24. Mr L Rubin advised that the RAF and the ELMS (Escape Lines Memorial Society) were planning a re-enactment of a World War II escape 'Home Run' on bicycles from Netherlands to Spain passing through Belgium on 11-12 August 11. Support was needed from Belgian volunteers and RAFA members may wish to assist (for example to accommodate RAF riders during their time in Belgium). It was agreed that further details would be included with Newsletter 102.

25. There being no other business raised, the Chairman thanked all attendees for a stimulating and useful AGM which had provided proper guidance that the Committee would now take forward, and adjourned the meeting.

11 May 11

Enclosures:

1. Chairman's Address.
2. Treasurer's Statement of Account 2010. (As circulated with Newsletter 101)
3. Honorary Welfare Officer's Report
4. Treasurer's Revised Budget for 2011.

ITEM 3 – CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The role of the AGM is to enable members to do a stock-take of our branch and its activities during the past year and to provide guidance to the committee on the priorities and activities for the coming year. Let me try and set the scene for that discussion and give you some thoughts and proposals of my own.

In 2010 we had good news with very successful fund raising events, in particular the Barry Horton memorial golf trophy in Jul which kept up our income stream at a good level, albeit a little down on 2009. For ceremonial events we were also able to play our part representing the Association, and sometimes the RAF as a whole, at a number of Belgian events including with Royal British Legion and Comete line colleagues. I would like to give a special mention to the outstanding support provided by our standard bearer Jean-Pierre Blanckaert: particularly pleased that he was able last year to participate in the Belgian armed forces memorial ceremony at the Cenotaph in London.

Sadly we have also been represented at a number of funerals of colleagues, most recently, Ghislaine Hennessey in January and Raymond Cornet today.

The committee has also attempted to follow the guidance from the AGM last year and to expand support given within Belgium such that overall branch funds would be progressively reduced. However, despite making some progress with the holiday scheme and being vigilant with the provision of welfare support, our net asset surplus has only been reduced a little from last year and we have not really managed significant change.

Following committee discussion, I would like to put two specific proposals to the AGM:

Firstly, that although welfare activities to provide help and support should remain our first priority, we should broaden our activities to include that other basic tenet of the association, the fostering of friendship amongst members (both full and associate)

E.g. our holiday scheme should be open not just to those with a welfare need, but to all members who would benefit from such companionship. One could imagine other similar activities: coach trips for the day, occasional lunches.

Secondly that we make the financial ambition more specific: I propose that we instruct the Committee to plan to reduce our overall net assets by 50% within 5 years (that is circa 10K Euro), and that they should prepare and manage a plan to that effect.

I should stress that I believe that we should maintain fund raising events as far as we are able, since they themselves are excellent mechanisms to foster friendship.

Success in this endeavour can, of course, only come if we can accept the increased administrative burden. I am now retired so have lots of time.... But we will be most

effective if the committee can be supported by other members, including our younger RAF serving colleagues. So we look for volunteers to run a particular event. Also work more with colleagues in other organisations e.g. Royal British Legion and Comete line. We will also review how to make more use of the European Area and national conferences, which are often held in pleasant holiday locations, as the basis for events to benefit more members.

For our events this year we have again planned the Barry Horton memorial golf tournament at Duisburg Military Golf Club (although I must advise that the club has had to slip the date a week to Friday 8 Jul) and our Vice-Chairman is sponsoring a golf tournament at his club at Overijse and will very kindly dedicated some of the income to RAFA.

We will announce details of ceremonial and social events and activities to accord with AGM guidance in the next edition of the Newsletter that we plan to issue in May. Talking of the newsletter a couple of extra points:

- A. You will have seen the slightly different format for number 101. It is, of course, a little more expensive to produce, but it does give us the opportunity to circulate via email rather than hard copy – so if you are an internet buff please let us know so that we can keep costs down.
- B. I am sure that you will all have spotted the extract from our Honorary Branch Co-President's memoir 'The Chronicle of a Passer By'. Very pleased to have the opportunity to bring highlights to our members: we will include further extracts in later Newsletters. I would like to add that this is not intended to be the sole prerogative of Honorary Presidents: I know that many have similar fascinating glimpses of personal history, so please send them to me so that we may share them more broadly.

Staying with the Newsletter, you will have noticed that Léon Rubin has stepped down as our newsletter officer after doing an outstanding job for many years. Léon, I will come back to this at lunch, but let me formally offer sincere thanks on behalf of the Branch for all that you have done for the Committee: since Edition 101, I now appreciate the amount of work involved! But since we are still looking for replacement, I should of course stress that it is very satisfying and interesting work! A volunteer is needed please: your chance will come under item 4.

I would also like to record our thanks to Christine Worthington who, due to ill health, has been unable to continue as Assistant Welfare Officer and has resigned. Again, our warm thanks for a magnificent effort over many years which has really made a material difference to the well-being of many of our members.

Lastly for the farewells, I would like on your behalf to thank our Secretary Nicky Sinclair who is posted back to a super job in London in May (on promotion) so, congratulations and very many thanks from us all for the enthusiastic and effective way in which you have supported the Branch: in my day in the Air Force it was performance in Secondary Duties that made the difference wrt promotion. Not sure that is still the case, but I mention it for Hannah French's benefit!

Last but by no means least, I would like to personally thank all the members of the Committee for their outstanding dedication to duty and their willingness to brave sometimes awful weather and challenging arrangements to devote time to the Committee, Jon, Walter, David, Charles, Ghislaine, Deborah, Brigitte and Nicky.

As I mentioned, we will return to my specific proposals concerning activities and budget under Agenda Items 6 and 7, but I open the floor for discussion concerning the general principles that I have outlined.



**ITEM 6 - RAFA BELGIAN BRANCH
WELFARE REPORT TO AGM 22
MARCH 2011**

Since the last AGM unfortunately Christine Worthington had to give up her activities as Assistant Welfare Officer due to ill health. Deborah Whittingham has been kind enough to take up her role and has been actively involved in all the association welfare activities.

We certainly owe a great thank you to Christine for the wonderful work she has been undertaking since 1999 when she first worked with Angela Shannon and later with me.

As was indicated in our Annual Case Worker Welfare Report for HQ, we have done 12 home visits and we had over 105 telephone, mail, postal and other contacts than visits to a dozen cases all around the country. We are in regular contacts with all of them – either by phone and/or visits.

Sadly we lost two ladies, widows of veterans with whom we were in regular contact for many years and who occasionally had financial support from RAFBF and from our branch.

On a financial basis:

- **RAF Benevolent Fund:** one lady has been a regular recipient of a RAFBF grant.

- From our branch funds we have covered:

- Christmas gifts as explained here under;
- The temporary stay in a home of one of our cases during the hospitalization and convalescence of his companion.
- A small gift toward our holiday scheme.
- Membership to RAFA for one of our paraplegic cases.

As far as visits, social contacts and other activities are concerned:

We are trying in the best possible manner to acknowledge queries and problems put to us.

- This year the traditional Christmas visits to members in Brugge and Ostend had to be postponed to the beginning of January due to the poor weather and road conditions. On these Christmas visits we have given small Christmas presents and financial gifts as indicated in the Treasurer report. These were greatly appreciated.

- As indicated above we are in regular phone contacts with these people and those who are occasionally referred to us.

Holiday scheme

In 2010 we had no participants to the usual scheme holiday in June in Ostend. However, further to a decision taken by the Committee it was agreed to try to organize a stay in Ostend later in the year and to invite any member to take advantage of a 10 day break in September. Further to the announcement made in the Newsletter Number 98 in May, we had one member who took advantage of this offer.

For the future, as explained by the Chairman in his report, the Committee wishes to renew and expand this experience and to offer to all members the possibility to take part in activities for the purposes of supporting Association Friendship as well as Welfare.

The Committee seeks your endorsement for the funding of such a scheme in 2011 to enable us to offer to members wishing to take part financial support depending on their individual circumstances up to a maximum of 50% of the cost of the activity plus support for transportation. For example, overall costs for a 10 day stay in Ostend half board in a single room, amount to approximately € 800 per person; € 550 per person sharing a double room. The proposed hotel is Three Star, situated near the beach and is very well kept.

In closing this report Deborah and I wish to thank all the members for their continuous support and for the financial help without which we could not give the help needed.

Ghislaine Walkden

Deborah Whittingham

Brussels 15 March 2011.

RAFA BELGIAN BRANCH A.S.B.L

REVISED BUDGET 2011

INCOME	Euro
Subscriptions	500
Donations	500
Wings Appeal	1,000
Interest	500
Social Events	<u>3,000</u>
Total Income	5,500
EXPENSES	
Wings Appeal – transfer to UK	1,000
Subscriptions – transfer to UK	400
Welfare and Social Support:	
Branch grants	4,000
Expenses	300
Christmas Gifts	2,000
Newsletters – printing	700
 Total	 <u>8,400</u>
Administration:	
Rent	50
Postage	300
Insurance	60
Bank Charges	70
Miscellaneous	100
 Total	 <u>580</u>
Total Expenses	<u>8,980</u>
Excess Expenditure over Income	3,480

IN MEMORIAM

Ghilly HENNESSEY

02/08/1924 - 18/02/2011



It has been most distressing news to learn of the death of our dear and devoted friend Ghilly. It happened so suddenly that it was indeed difficult to face the cruel reality. Ghilly's life has been so closely interwoven with her husband Tom's that it may be fitting to recall the eulogy written by Wing Commander Barry Horton, our Chairman at the time of his decease. He describes the personality of Tom, following their first 'encounter' in the days when Barry was the British Air Attaché in Brussels:

(The following is an extract from Newsletter Number 74 Jul/Sep 2003)

EULOGY – TOM HENNESSEY, MBE – UCCLE 29 JULY 2003

Dear Friends,

With Ghilly's permission, I should like to say a few simple words to honour the passing of my good friend, Tom Hennessey.

I first met Tom just over 14 years ago when I was a brand new Air Attaché at the British Embassy, resplendent in RAF uniform, complete with whiter than white pilot's wings and sporting shiny gold aiguillettes. I think it was Bob Walkden, the Chairman of the Royal Air Forces Association at the time, who introduced us:

"I'm very pleased to meet you, Sir", I said.

Tom looked me up and down.

"Oh aye", Tom said "and why's that then?"

A little flustered at this direct question, I betrayed a bit of my Yorkshire accent when I spluttered something about "being in the company of men and women who had served in the war before I was even born."

"You're not Yorkshire are you!" retorted Tom.

"Yes I'm afraid so: I said, "I was born in Bridlington, East Yorkshire"

"Oh well, we can't all be perfect" said Tom with a perfectly charming smile.

That is what's called being caught on the wrong foot. For, as most of you will know, Tom was born in Ashton-under-Lyne, near Manchester in Lancashire, on the 17th December 1912 to be precise, and a Lancastrian never misses the opportunity to remind a Yorkshireman of who won the War of the Roses.

That to me epitomised Tom Hennessey – a direct and honest man, with a mischievous sense of humour and who had a heart of gold. He was direct, as only a Lancastrian can be: had a marvellous knack of getting right to the root of a problem without mincing words unnecessarily. But the amazing thing is, that whilst you might feel somewhat bruised at the time, you knew that Tom was right, if somewhat abrupt, and the blow was always softened by the twinkle in his eye.

I don't pretend to know much about his life in Lancashire as a boy and a young man, but I believe that Tom trained in the cloth industry before he joined up in the RAF during the war. I know he desperately wanted to be one of the elite band of RAF aviators, and his heart was really in aviation; he had even flown solo before the war, but lady luck had decreed otherwise, and he was found to have an eye problem which precluded him from the more stringent demands of operational flying. Nevertheless, Tom joined the Provost Branch of the RAF – one of the RAF's policemen. Here he learned about three things that became key words throughout his life, and he fought against them to the bitter end – I'm sure his own children will recognise them – INFIDELITY, LAZINESS and SQUANDERING.

Just before the Liberation of Brussels in September 1944, Tom had been infiltrated behind enemy lines, was wounded and was hidden by the Resistance. It was therefore soon afterwards that lady luck redressed the balance when an exceedingly pretty young student of music, who was helping to take care of wounded members of the Allied forces, met Tom in hospital and eventually married him. I can only think that Ghilly was either completely bowled over by his good looks, or that she couldn't understand a word of what he said because of his Lancashire drawl. In any case, for the next nearly 60 years, Tom was to jokingly refer to himself as a "Prisoner of Peace".

After the war, Ghilly inherited a cinema from her parents, and so after a short spell working for Scotland Yard and living in England, they returned to Belgium and set up home in Brussels to do something completely different. So, whilst Tom used his police training to good effect to get round Belgian bureaucracy and occasionally providing the brawn in dealing with difficult customers, Ghilly provided the brains and the firm hand on the tiller, and together they made a large success of the cinema for 25 years, before Mr Delhaize made an attractive offer to lease the land

I'm not sure who influenced who more in this deep relationship based on mutual love and trust over the years, but I know that Ghilly kept Tom on a straight path, and taught him to deal sensibly with his clients and his creditors, although I'm sure that his police training helped enormously in the rough and tumble of Brussels life after the war: and whilst his police and military experience must have stood him in good stead when dealing with the awkward people, if necessary, Tom could even converse with the authorities and troublemakers alike using an extremely varied vocabulary in amazing colloquial French with a rather pronounced North of England accent. For his part, he taught Ghilly to speak the King's English better than most Belgians I've met, but with the most wonderful Lancashire dialect which she has kept to this day.

I know Tom always remembered the "camaraderie" of his 5 years in uniform during the war, and it was therefore only natural that he should become an active and probably founder member of the Royal Air Forces Association in Belgium. I know that he and Countess Françoise de Montgomery formed a formidable welfare team in Belgium, looking after the interests of Belgians and British former members of the Royal Air Force who were in need of

help with money, or filling in forms, or even to just provide strength, moral support and a sympathetic ear. Eventually, in a time of trouble for the RAF Association, Tom was asked by the British Embassy to take on the Chairmanship – a task he carried out for a number of years in his inimitable style with enormous success, when the Branch went from strength to strength. We all know that Tom was rewarded for all this work with the award of Membership of the Order of the British Empire or MBE, an award not lightly given, particularly for those Brits and Belgians living overseas. He retired eventually from this role as Chairman, and was offered Life Membership as a Branch Vice-President of the Association.

I shall not forget Tom; how could I. He has been a person to whom I became quite close – dare I say it – a sort of father figure and mentor – a fellow Northerner, albeit from different sides of the Pennines. A man with a simple, straightforward view of life who was admired and appreciated for what he did; a man who did not to mince his words – he was, after all, Lancashire born and bred – but a man with a deep understanding of people and with a loyalty and compassion second to none.

Tom, you leave behind not only a dear wife, a son Patrick, a daughter Mary, a daughter-on-law Anita and two grandchildren Cheryl and Christopher, but many, many friends in Belgium – witness the turnout today. Be assured, your presence will always be felt, and your counsel remembered in our everyday lives as well as in our difficult moments.

God Bless you.

As far back as in the Fifties, and even more during the Chairmanship of Tom, Ghilly helped him most efficiently in the many events, reunions etc. At every opportunity, Ghilly, who was entrusted with the 'RAFA Shop' ever up-dated with interesting items, succeeded in providing a fair in-flow of income for our Branch Welfare. She also contributed in maintaining contact with former Resistance survivors, in particular the Comet Escape Line.

Dear Ghilly, we will always remember you as smiling, pristine and shining with your immaculate halo of whiter than white hair.

Contributed by Léon Rubin

EVENTS CALENDAR

25 Jun – Laying of Wreaths and Act of Remembrance for those who gave their lives in Belgium in World War I and II. Brussels Commonwealth War Cemetery, Evere. See Royal British Legion www.britishlegion.be/events

8 Jul - Barry Horton Memorial Golf Trophy at DMGC: all Branch members encouraged to attend, see details on pages 27 and 28. Please complete and return attendance proforma by 28 Jun 11

17 Jul - Belgian Forces London Cenotaph Parade – representation by Branch Standard Bearer

11/12 Aug - 'Home Run'. Royal Air Force (78 Sqn) re-enactment of World War II escape line from Netherlands through Belgium and France to Spain. In association with the Comet Line and the Escape Lines Memorial Society. If you would like to participate in/support this event in Belgium, please contact the Chairman.

28 Aug - 60th Anniversary of the Tigelot Monument at Jalhay, Belgium to commemorate the sacrifice of Allied Airmen who gave their lives in the High Ardennes.

8 Sep – Ceremony at Geraardsbergen to inaugurate memorial to the Belgian pilot Colonel Remy 'Mony' Van Lierde DFC**.

12-21 Sep - Branch sponsored holiday at Ostend: Branch members encouraged to participate. See page 20 for details: apply by end June.

7-9 Oct - European Area RAFA Conference at Paphos Cyprus. Chairman will attend: others wishing to participate are invited to contact the Chairman and view the RAFA Cyprus website www.rafacyprus.co.uk.

15 Oct - Commemoration at Waasmunster of 70th anniversary of a crashed Hampden of 44 "Rhodesian" Squadron.

16 Oct - Belgian Air Force Parade at Cinquantenaire, Brussels, marking 65th Anniversary of foundation of Belgian Air Force.

22/23 Oct - Brussels: commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the first functioning of the Comète Line. Mass in Basilica on 23rd.

1 Nov - Belgian and RAF Memorial Belgian Cemetery at Evere

9 Nov - British Ambassador's Veterans Reception

11 Nov - Armistice Day

13 Nov - Remembrance Sunday: 12:00 hrs at Holy Trinity, Brussels, followed by lunch (organised by the Royal British Legion)

6 Dec - Branch Winter Lunch at the NATO Staff Centre: all members encouraged to attend. Event will be subsidised in accordance with AGM agreed guidelines.

SUPPORT FOR FRIENDSHIP AND WELFARE

This year's AGM agreed (see page 24) that the Committee should seek to find ways to dispense a defined portion of Branch Funds by subsidising activities which would offer opportunities to foster friendship amongst all Belgian Branch members and which would support the welfare of all members in need.

Accordingly, the Committee has agreed that the 'Ostend Holiday' scheme as offered in previous years should be subsidised for all members at a flat rate of a 20% discount, with additional subsidies available for those with particular needs to be determined by the Committee on a confidential basis. It is also envisaged that transportation costs within Belgium to and from Ostend would be met by the Branch Funds. Details of this year's package are in the panel below. To enable the Committee to conduct detailed planning and to ensure that the AGM's financial targets are met, **members are invited to contact the Honorary Welfare Officer (for details see page 2) by end Jun 11 to express interest.** Arrangements will be finalised by end July.

Additionally, it is planned that the Branch Winter Lunch on 6 Dec will be subsidised, and consideration will be given to subsidising attendance at the European Area Conference in Cyprus in October. The levels of support will depend upon the availability of funds within the AGM agreed guidelines.

If you would really appreciate an early Autumn break by the seaside, but are perhaps concerned about organisation, costs, transportation and/or who to go with, then the Branch Ostend Holiday Scheme could be just right for you!

Dates: Monday 12 September to Wednesday 21 September (9 nights)

Location: Hotel Glenmore, Ostend, 3 Star 5 mins from the sea (info@hotelglenmore.be)

Package: Half-board (breakfast and evening meal) for 9 nights.

Maximum Package Costs: 435 € per person sharing a double room: 575 € per person in single room.

Transportation: committee will arrange and pay for collection from and return to your home (in Belgium).

If you have any special needs regarding costs, transport, holiday duration, care, diet, please discuss with the Honorary Welfare Officer.

BRANCH ADMINISTRATION

The Committee believes that the RAFA Belgian Branch Newsletter is a key instrument to support the aims of the RAF Association and the needs of RAFA Belgium members. You can help enhance the value of the Newsletter by offering contributions of general interest concerning memories of the past as well as practical information to foster friendship and welfare of members today. Please forward your contributions to the Editor.

To help us cut our printing and postal costs, starting with the next edition in August, it is planned that the Newsletter will be also be available in electronic form for issue by email. If you are able to receive it in this way, and have not yet advised us, please let the Membership Secretary know (see page 2 for contact details).

The Chronicle of a Passer By

By Edward Harty Elliot Hearn

Editor's Note:

This second episode of our Branch Honorary Co-President's 'Chronicle' as transcribed by Gp Capt (Ret'd) Mike Connor, contains extracts from Part 1 Chapter 2 covering the years 1935 to 1939. Please see Newsletter 101 for the Contents List.

PART ONE – 1921-1939

"The Future is something which everyone reaches at sixty minutes an hour, whatever he does, wherever he is."

Clive Lewis

2. Folkestone Town, Tranquil and Apprehensive

On the first of April 1935, I reported to the Lord of the Manor's Office in tree-lined Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone. During the month before this date I had finished Primary School and won the top prize – the A.J. Hall Memorial engraved silver watch, presented each year to the most promising student. This achievement was countered by my failure to obtain a scholarship into the Grammar School a few months beforehand when I tripped on a catch question in the oral examination after passing the written test. I had given the wrong answer to the simple question, 'If there is a North East wind, to what direction does it go?'. I knew I had given the wrong answer immediately on leaving the examination room, but it was too late.

Each year, Lord Radnor took into his Land Agency Office a 'paid pupil'. The choice was made on the recommendation of the Headmaster of the Church of England St Mary's Higher Grade School. The failure of the Grammar School entry was, at the time, a great disappointment – as much to the Headmaster as to the pupil. No doubt the recommendation from the School to the Manor Office was by way of compensation, plus an incentive to treat the setback as an obstacle to be overcome. A 'paid pupil' meant a full six day working week on a salary of £6 and 10 shillings (£6.50) per year, or two shillings and six pence (12½ p) per week, this to include ten days holiday a year and the rest of the time out of bed, studying for a recognised qualification.

So, I entered the polished oak entrance hall to begin my new career and to be guided under strict discipline to earning a living under the supervision of the Agent. The Agent had a Cambridge degree, was tall and austere, carelessly but impeccably

dressed in the manner of the so-called 'landed gentry'. Being an Infantry Captain in the First World War, he continued to use that title on appropriate social occasions but, out of his hearing, was generally called 'GB' following his habit of addressing everyone by their initials. However, his official title was Agent to the Earl of Radnor, managing the Earl's Estates in Folkestone and Salisbury as well as the University Estates. His status was confirmed by his eighteen horsepower Vauxhall which had plush leather seating. It went without saying that the new entrant became known by his own initials – 'EH'.

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The permanent staff in the Office, no more than fifteen in number, comprised surveyors, architects, accountants, clerks and one secretary who coped with all correspondence using a wax dictating machine for the Agent's reports and letters. All these were concerned with their allotted tasks which, although appearing to be the primary concern of the will of the Agent, seemed to us pupils to be secondary to his desire to make sure that his students learned and kept to the traditions of the Office. Those self same permanent staff had, in the majority, gone through the mill of pupilage with the same inbuilt rigours. Even on some Sundays, our only free day, one of us would be asked to accompany the Agent and his wife to take part in a minor task on the Estate.

.....

I progressed from looking after the post book and putting stamps on correspondence, disbursing the petty cash, dealing with National Health stamps, the weekly wages book and the collection of rents (where home made parsnip wine was sipped with almost religious solemnity), to become an assistant in the Drawing Office where my aptitude for drawing was able to progress.

By the year 1938 I had established a place for myself, attaining responsibility under supervision for surveys, laying out of roads and plots on housing estates, the design of sewers and incinerators, infrastructure details and the preservation and construction of sea walls and groynes.

Those first three years in the new surroundings not only brought about a complete change in outlook, but also the fresh companionship opened up new horizons. The outside world had more meaning because of the interest fermented by office gossip and the discussions taking place in the new circle of friends in which I found myself.

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Then came the time when the Agent decided that the major development of the sea front was outside the capabilities of his own staff, so a gentleman named Pleydell Bouverie, Architect and distant relative of Lord Radnor, was appointed for the design of the major foreshore projects such as the columnless Rotunda building, boating pool and surrounding shopping area. The Rotunda was to be the first large span construction of its kind to be built in the United Kingdom.

The prime part of the new development was towards the eastern end of the shoreline and covered some ten acres of ground if one included the swimming pool, amusement park and miniature golf course. The full development included the building of a new sea wall and promenade extending over a mile to the western limit of the town.

Pleydell Bouverie was to design the main buildings and the work would be put out to tender. The sea wall, promenade and foreshore defence works were retained by the Agent for execution by the direct labour force.

Sticking out in the centre of this grandiose scheme was the Folkestone Pier – a Victorian structure pointing out half-a-mile into the sea. The Folkestone Pier was used for entertainment and fishing and was an attraction for the many visitors that packed the town in the summer. In a way, it was the watchdog to all that was about to happen on the sea front – Pleydell Bouverie’s complex plus the sea wall and promenade, and further works up on the Leas and through the pine trees lining the steep Road of Remembrance.

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By September 1939, most of the new development had been completed and opened to the public. It had transformed the whole of the vacant area to the east and created a promenade along the sea front from east to west, its creation being protected by the construction of new groynes.

The old Pier continued to function in the middle of this huge enterprise, but by now its principle use was for the enjoyment of weekend fishermen who occupied its farthest end on Saturdays and Sundays. Its mainly wood and iron structure required extensive maintenance, the finance for which, the Council had difficulty in finding. Sadly, the creation of the new sea front emphasised its dilapidated condition.

Because of the limbo period after the Munich crisis, little had been done to prepare us for the eventuality of war. When war was declared it took us by surprise. Besides which, we had been so heavily occupied during the previous two years, no time had been given to contemplating a world catastrophe.

The announcement came at the same time as I received news of my success in passing my first professional examination, taken externally at London University after studying with the College of Estate Management. I had also reached my full height of five feet and eight inches.

Within days of being confronted with the bleak news of war, our office routine was broken by an announcement from the Chief Surveyor that the Agent had two very important and confidential letters which had to be delivered in person to destinations in the ‘Big City’. It was very rare indeed for any office member or their families to visit London. Trips to the Capital were the prerogative of the Agent. It was then, as it is today, only an hour and a half train ride from Folkestone to London, but the cost (over forty times less than what it is today) was still the main determinant.

The Agent decided that such a rare privilege as an expenses paid journey should be fairly chosen by the toss of a coin amongst members of the staff. The coin would be tossed by the Chief Surveyor in front of the two staff members in turn. By elimination, one would remain and he would be the messenger. I, the youngest member of the staff, won the final toss, so it would be me who would carry the sealed envelopes to London.

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The Agent’s private room was along the corridor from the Drawing Office. A panel with red, yellow and green lights was fixed to the jamb of the large oak entrance

door. On pushing a button, the colour red meant 'go away', yellow 'standby' and green 'knock and walk in'.

The Agent must have known of the arrival of the prospective messenger because when I pressed the button the green light flashed on. I knocked, opened the door and walked into the 'presence'. The Agent, gaunt and ascetic, his great height masked behind the magnificent mahogany roll-top desk, turned his brilliant blue eyes from the two envelopes held in his hands. Without any preliminaries, and looking directly at me, he launched into his instructions.

The two letters contained highly confidential information and for this reason had to be handed over personally to the persons to whom they were addressed. Receipts for the two letters were to be obtained. The one addressed to Sir John Dill, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, was to be delivered to the War Office. The other, addressed to Sir Philip Sassoon, Member of Parliament for Folkestone and Hythe, should be taken to the House of Commons. Arrangements should be made to catch the nine o'clock fast train the morning after this meeting. This train would arrive at Charing Cross Station, London, at ten thirty in the morning. The two letters were to be delivered to the names on the envelopes and nobody else. After satisfactory delivery, lunch could be taken at Lyons Corner House opposite Charing Cross Station (where an adequate répas could be had for under two shillings (10p)). The first available train should be taken for the return journey to Folkestone. A verbal report should be given the following morning.

The no smile, dry and precise explanation from the Agent was impressive and left me in no doubt as to the importance of my mission. That the Agent considered me to be sufficiently responsible to carry it out gave me an unaccustomed air of assurance. I sensed his eyes following me as I made my way out of the room.

Arriving home, I was quick to explain to my parents that I had to go to London on the morning train. After giving an explanation to my astonished Father and Mother, there was an immediate reaction. I must be properly dressed, wearing my raglan overcoat and I could not possibly go to London without a hat. I must take the black homburg which my Father wore when out of uniform. My Father, the Merchant Marine Officer, was rarely at home and it was by chance that he happened to be there to give this important advice and help with the hat.

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At nine o'clock the next morning I was sitting in my third class compartment in the train bound for London. The two envelopes were safely housed in the jacket under my raglan overcoat. I put my hand there several times to make sure they had not been spirited away. The homburg rested on my lap and there it stayed until the train's arrival at Charing Cross Station.

London was a pleasant surprise. My Christmas visits with my parents had never taken place so early in the morning. There were shoe shine boys on the station platform and a pleasant aroma of coffee filled the steam laden air. Vendors of fruit, hot buns, sandwiches and newspapers were plying their wares amongst the noise of locomotives' sirens and guards' whistles. The bustle of the moving travellers mixed with

the coming and going of the porters gave the event an importance which I had not experienced before.

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Arriving at the War Office, I paid the driver and climbed the main entrance steps. I was met at the top with some commotion. I was pushed to one side with an angry gesture just as Viscount Gort appeared on the threshold. I easily recognised him as he had appeared regularly in photographs in the press during recent weeks. He was in Generals' uniform. Sensing that this was the moment to put my homburg in place, I donned it, but it was down over my ears before I realised that it was several sizes too big for my head. Under the brim I could vaguely see that the General had paused in his outward stride and was staring at my hat. In seconds, he was gone, the entrance was cleared and I found myself face-to-face with a grim looking porter who asked me what I thought I was doing on his War Office doorstep.

I explained that I had an important letter which had to be delivered to General Sir John Dill, Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Could I please be taken to him? With shock and disbelief, the porter angrily pointed out that it was he who delivered documents to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and would I please hand the letter over.

Warming to the occasion, I persisted in my demand. Grudgingly, the porter picked up his house phone and presumably asked for instructions. He put the phone down and with signs of growing exasperation beckoned me to follow him. This I did via a lift and staircase to the top floor where we both stopped before a massive oak door. The porter knocked, then opened the door to disclose an enormous room with two large oak desks set back-to-back against a far window. On each desk was a General's red-banded cap. It was evident that the two gentlemen facing each other across the desks were the owners of the caps.

On announcing the arrival of the messenger, instead of inviting the visitor into the room, one of the two Generals got up from behind his desk and came to the door. By this time, I was holding the homburg in my left hand so I could look the General eye-to-eye because our heights were about the same.

I took the envelope addressed to Sir John Dill out of my inside pocket, verified the name, and handed it over. The General listened attentively to the explanation for the delivery of the letter. He opened the envelope, read the letter, then read it again and put it back in the envelope. In an almost inaudible voice, he thanked me for coming to see him from Folkestone, smiled and ushered the porter and myself out through the door.

The porter's farewell was not so warm as that of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. He kept muttering to himself all the way down to the front door something about homburg hats and where they were supposed to fit.

Having accomplished the first part of my mission, I hailed another taxi and made my way to the House of Commons. On arrival there, I was greeted by a tandem comprising a policeman and an attendant who stopped me at the main entrance. I was told that the House was in session and it was out of the question to disturb Sir Philip

Sassoon. Despite all my pleadings and attempts at persuasion, the tandem was adamant with the only solution being the policeman's offer to deliver the letter personally to Sir Philip. The policeman also offered to sign a written guarantee for the receipt of the letter and promised to deliver it that very afternoon. Since my knowledge of policemen was greater than that recently experienced with War Office porters, I handed over the letter and obtained a receipt.

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The following day I arrived at the office a good half hour before my usual time of nine o'clock and found that the Agent was already there. I made my way along the corridor towards his room, pressed the button and got a yellow light. After standing there for a good five minutes, I had a strong desire to retreat to a toilet, but the green light suddenly came on. I knocked and again entered before the 'presence'.

Sitting uncomfortably on the edge of a side chair after being greeted by a formal, 'good morning EH', I launched into a hurried report on my mission – the handing over of the envelopes and the persons seen. I produced the policeman's signed receipt, paused, then apologised for not asking the General for a receipt. A quizzical expression appeared on the Agent's face. Then it suddenly lit up into a broad smile and I heaved a silent breath of relief.

Feeling much happier with myself, I returned to my colleagues in the Drawing Office and recounted my day in the City, emphasising the vastness of my expenses paid lunch. But I was unable to give an explanation as to the contents of the letters. It would seem that nobody except the Agent knew what was in the envelopes because the messages had been written in his own handwriting.

Fifteen days passed and it was rumoured that several senior army officers had been seen on the Leas in the region of the William Harvey Memorial. This rumour was later confirmed in a report in a local newspaper.

Not much notice was taken of this incident until the town was shaken by a tremendous explosion three weeks after the Generals' visit. The central part of the old Victorian Pier had been blown out of the sea leaving an enormous gap between the front and rear portions of the structure. Now, we in the office knew what must have been written in the letters and the results achieved, but we were not at all sure about the reasoning behind the blowing up of the Pier. Hearsay told us that the Agent had developed a fixation centred on the limb of the Pier. Stretching out into the Channel, it appeared to him to be an invitation for the enemy to establish a bridgehead for an invasion.

However, knowing his preoccupation with his grandiose foreshore development and his feelings concerning the domination of the dilapidated structure overlooking it, we silently thought it had been a good way to get rid of it. He, the Agent, remained silent.

Whatever the true reason, we in the Manor Office were suddenly confronted with the fact that there was truly a war and that we were only at the beginning of an unpredictable future.

To be Continued

From: Group Captain Dick Whittingham RAF (Ret'd), Chairman RAFA Belgian Branch



Memlingdreef 5
3090 Overijse

Tel: 02 657 7117

e-mail: dickwhittingham@skynet.be

19th April 2011

Dear Friends,

ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION - BARRY HORTON MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT – 8 JULY 2011

Following what has become something of a RAFA Belgian Branch tradition, I am very pleased to be able to advise that the President and Committee of the Duisburg Military Golf Club (DMGC) have once again very kindly agreed to allow us to hold our Barry Horton Memorial Golf Tournament and barbecue at the DMGC on the afternoon of Friday, 8 July 2010. As many will know, this is an event designed to be fun for all, but it is also the prime means by which the Branch raises funds for RAFA associated welfare activity in Belgium: last year thanks to your generosity we were able to provide over €2000 to support those in need.

The event this year will follow our normal formula. We plan two shotgun starts at 2 p.m. and at 4 p.m. Please register in the Club House 30 minutes before the start times. After the golf, there will be aperitifs at 6 p.m. followed by the prize-giving and then the barbecue at 7 p.m. and the ever popular tombola.

The all-inclusive cost per person this year will again be €45 but, if you are unable to stay for the barbecue, the golf-only cost will be €25. Alternatively, if you can only come to the barbecue, or if you are a DMGC member, the cost will be €25. These costs include aperitifs and wine and water with the meal. Please make payment to the RAFA CCP [Account BE12-0000-0482-0492](#) by **28 June 2010** clearly indicating **RAFA Golf** and the name(s) of participants.

This year, I am very pleased that Jon Hill, the RAFA Belgian Branch Vice-Chairman, has most kindly volunteered to be the Master of Ceremonies for the event and hence in order to assist with his planning, it would be most helpful if you could confirm your intentions to participate **by returning the attached form to him, at the latest by 28 June 2010**. We will also be seeking the help of participants in the provision of salads and desserts. Equally, if you have anything that you would be willing to donate as a tournament or tombola prize, we would be delighted to hear from you. If you've never played at DMGC, you can look it up on the internet at www.golf.be/duisburg.

Yours sincerely,

**ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION - BARRY HORTON MEMORIAL GOLF
TOURNAMENT – 8 JULY 2011**

From: (Name).....(First Name).....

Spouse/Partner (Name).....(First Name).....

(Address).....

(Tel No)(E-mail address).....

(Handicap(s)).....DMGC Member.....Yes/No

Participation*:

Golf and Barbecue Yes (€45)

Golf only Yes (€25)

Barbecue only Yes (€25)

Preferred tee time: 2 p.m. Yes/No*

 4 p.m. Yes/No*

Willing to provide*:

Salad for persons. Type of salad

Dessert forpersons. Type of dessert.....

Golf tournament/Raffle prize: Yes/No*

If yes, please describe.....

Donation in support of RAFA Belgian Branch..... €

* Delete as appropriate.

PLEASE RETURN TO:

email: hill.jonathan@hq.nato.int or

Post:

Jon Hill, Vanderweydendreef 13
3090 Overijse

BY 28 JUNE 2011 WITH PAYMENT TO CCP ACCOUNT BE12-0000-0482-0492 STATING
"RAFA GOLF" AND PARTICIPANTS NAMES IN THE INFORMATION SECTION OF THE
PAYMENT FORM