

**RANCH
MEMBERSHIP**

200

**ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association**

The charity that supports the RAF family

RAFAGEN

**THE NEWSLETTER & MAGAZINE OF THE LETCHWORTH, HITCHIN &
DISTRICT BRANCH (including Stevenage)**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SPECIAL 2025/26



Branch Registered Charity No. 1071536

Association Registered Charity No. England 226686 Scotland SC37673

Patron His Majesty King Charles III



RAFAGEN

The official newsletter and magazine of the
ROYAL AIR FORCES' ASSOCIATION
LETCWORTH , HITCHIN & DISTRICT
BRANCH OFFICIALS FOR 2025/6



Hon. President Viscount Lord Trenchard

Chairman:- Rev. Canon Lindsay Dew

Vice Chairman:- Jim Box

Secretary:- Marie Mahoney

(Contact:- secretary@rafa-lethworth.org.uk)

Treasurer:- Ken Needham

Wings Appeal Officer:- Vacant

Membership Secretary:- Ken Needham

Branch Padre:- Rev. Canon Lindsay Dew

Contact details :- Tel :- 07545 878082

Email :- lindsaycharlesdew@gmail.com

General Committee:

John Airey: John Tunesi: Elliot Needham:

Bernard Drummond: Umesh Sachania (co-opted)

Branch R.A.F.A.L.O. Vacant

For Welfare Contact:-Branch Secretary

Email :-secretary@rafa-lethworth.org.uk

Or direct to RAFA Head Quarters

RAFAGEN is compiled and edited by Ken Needham

(email kwn056@btinternet.com Telephone 07564 947308)



**VISIT OUR
WEBSITE**

rafa-lethworth.org.uk

NEWS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



I hope that in the next few pages I will give you all the details you need to know about our Annual General Meeting due to be held on Wednesday 25th February 2026, and that we see you there on the day.

The present Chairman has already confirmed that all of the present Committee members are willing to stand for re election, but that doesn't mean that you can't put your name forward for any of the positions. We would like to see new faces with maybe new ideas.

Officers of the Committee are Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Wings Appeal Organiser. Others are General Members of the Committee, but could get an appointment to help run the Branch.

The other appointments we make from the whole of the Committee are :- Media Officer; Publicity Officer; ATC Coordinator; Conference Representative; Standard Bearer; RAFAGEN Editor; NAAFI BREAK

Host: Not all these additional appointments are always filled, but we would like them to be.

The Committee meets every two months (January, March, May, July, September, November). The meetings are held at the Letchworth Par 3 Golf Centre. (Home of NAAFI BREAK). Coffee supplied.

The only requirements that are needed to hold any position on the Committee is that you are a fully paid up member of R.A.F.A., and a member of this branch. You can be a Full or Associate member.

As the Branch is a Charity, it needs to have Trustees, and in our Branch these consist of, the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, and Wings Appeal Officer.

The Branch is affiliated with 1066 Squadron Hitchin Air Training Corps, 248 Squadron Letchworth Air Training Corps, and we hoping to join with 955 Squadron Stevenage Air Training Corps in the near future.

If any member wishes to put forward a Resolution for inclusion at the A.G.M., this must be forwarded to the Branch Secretary, in writing, before 18th February 2026.

At the meeting, members will be issued with a booklet containing Officers reports and financial statements. If you cannot attend, and would like a copy, please make your request to the Branch secretary on
secretary@rafa-leitchworth.org.uk

**RAF HENLOW Christmas
Cracker Jokes.**

What is the best Christmas
present in the world?

A broken drum - you just can't
beat it!

**RAF HENLOW Christmas
Cracker Jokes.**

What do angry mice send each
other at Christmas?

Cross Mouse Cards!

HAVE I CHANGED THAT MUCH?

Can you recognise our second mystery uniformed airman? Answer in the next issue of RAFAGEN



Our mystery member as a young airman pictured in the Winter Issue of RAFAGEN was Bernard Drummond. Bernard is a regular contributor of stories and is a regular NAAFI BREAKER

REMEMBRANCE DAY

By Bernard Drummond

This will always be the most important day in the year. There is one date however that sticks in my mind. And that is the 28th June 2012.

This was a long awaited unveiling of The bomber Command Memorial in Green Park London. 67 years since the end of WWII in 1945.

Why such a long delay before the heroes were honoured?

There were 125,000 volunteers who served in Bomber Command during WWII with an average age of 22 years. 55,573 of these men died in action. They were denied recognition of their loss, and the bravery of those who survived. Most of whom were wounded and were prisoners of war.

At the end of the war there began a furore surrounding the bombing of Germany. These vocal critics were seemingly forgetting the air raids by the Germans upon Britain, causing death and destruction to cities and population of London, Coventry, Liverpool, Bristol and many other ports and towns.

In the final year of the war in 1944 our Prime Minister, the leader of our nation, Winston Churchill, is recorded to have pressed Bomber Command to crush German resistance by the 'Carpet Bombing' of eastern Germany. In his words, his wish was to deliver a 'Basting' to the Germans during the retreat of its armies.

When the Air ministry demurred, Churchill is recorded to have told them in no certain terms to get on with the job. He wrote "I asked them whether Berlin and no doubt other large cities in Eastern Germany should not now be considered especially attractive targets, I hope this is under consideration. Pray report to me tomorrow what is going to be done". Bomber Command was then issued with a clear and unambiguous charge to execute one big attack on Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Chemnitz and other East German cities which will cause the residents to evacuate in large numbers hampering the movement of enemy troops. This was in February 1945. The reported horrific loss of life in Dresden perhaps prompted Churchill's astonishing U-turn of six weeks later.



In a brief letter to Chiefs of staff he said "The destruction of Dresden remains a serious query against the conduct of Allied Bombing." Therefore

laying the blame of the death and destruction of the East German cities of which he was the architect, squarely at the doors of Bomber Command and the American Air force. Needless to say, these letters and other recorded comments by the Prime Minister were only made public years after the war had ended.

As much as I admire the leadership of Winston Churchill during these closing times of the war and the burdens of everything that was then occurring it is a pity that he seemed to have forgotten that Germany had begun the mass bombing of Britain. In particular the raid on Coventry on the 14th November 1940. On this night over 500 bombers of the Luftwaffe dropped 30,000 incendiary bombs, 1,000 high explosive bombs. 300 delay fuse bombs and 50 landmines on the city.

St Michael's Cathedral and virtually all the buildings in the centre of the city were destroyed. 568 people were killed and over 800 seriously injured.

It was a national disgrace that it took 67 years to honour the lives lost or to those badly wounded in Bomber Command during the raids on Germany. Many parents, siblings and children of the 55,573 fatalities, never had the chance to observe the unveiling of the memorial on 28th June 2012.



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Information supplied by Membership Department of The Royal Air Forces Association

Frank Turner of Letchworth Garden City

**WE MAY HAVE 200 MEMBERS BUT
WE STILL NEED MORE**

**RAF HENLOW Christmas
Cracker Jokes.**

What did sea say to Santa?

Nothing - It just waved!

Membership application forms available on the Royal Air Forces web site

rafa.org.uk



**Protect the RAF community
by leaving a gift in your Will**

Request your free Will guide



COMMITTEE NEWS

January 2026

First Committee of the New Year, and all members present. Lot to talk about this meeting, mainly in connection with the Annual General meeting next month. The present Committee all confirmed that they were willing to put their names forward for re-election, but are looking forward to others joining them.

Most of the time was making sure that everything was in order and ready for the A.G.M. (Don't want to go it wrong)

Other items discussed was to confirm everything was ready for our New Year Lunch, which of course it was.

Looking forward to the next big event, the Chairman reminded everyone present that we had entered the Branch's 80th year since it was formed as the Letchworth Branch. Other towns included added later. The Committee offered a few suggestions on how we should celebrate, but the Chairman said he wanted to hear from our members. This was to be a Branch event so all members should have a say.'

This anniversary function will not be the only event during the year, but again we ask that branch members would like to come up with something they would like to do or go.

The agenda was complete, and coffee cups empty, so it was time for the Chairman to call time.

See you all in March, that is if you are re elected.



Dear Lindsay

I am delighted to confirm that Letchworth/Hitchin Branch has raised £1,180.28 for the 2025 Wings Appeal, an achievement that truly stands out in today's challenging fundraising environment. This success reflects not only the generosity of those who gave, but also the determination, creativity, and resilience shown by you, your branch members, and the volunteers who worked tirelessly to make it happen. Every pound raised represents countless hours of planning and commitment, and I am deeply grateful for everything you've done to deliver such an impressive result.

Over the past year, we have seen a sharp rise in demand for personal support and emergency assistance, alongside an increase in younger, working-age veterans seeking help. Many individuals now face multiple, complex challenges, encompassing financial hardship, long-term health conditions, social isolation, and mental health challenges. Your efforts have given hope and reassurance when it mattered most.

Enclosed is your branch's final statement of income and expenditure for 2025. Please pass this to your branch treasurer. All approved expenses will be paid directly into your general bank account by BACS transfer, and any welfare rebate will be paid into your branch welfare account in early January. If your branch supported RAFATRAD activity during the year, these amounts are included in the rebate calculation.

Thank you once again for everything you do. Your commitment makes a real difference. Wishing you, your branch members, and your loved ones a very happy Christmas.

Yours sincerely,

Liam Clark-Brown

Associate Director of Group Marketing, Fundraising & Trading

(For accounts see next page)

Royal Air Forces Association2025 Wings Appeal

Branch Name: Letchworth/Hitchin

Final Statement of Income and ExpenditureIncome

Street Collection £361.18

Premises £609.67

House to House

Home Collection Boxes

Royal Air Force

ATC Squadrons

Air Shows

Brew for the Few

Other Sources £209.43

On Line Giving

Total Gross Income £1,180.28Margin allocated to
branch from event/SOB income* £0.00**GRAND TOTAL** **£1,180.28**
INCOME (including
Grand Draw / Event]Expenditure

Printing & Stationary

Advertising

Postage

Other Items

Total Expenses £0.00Allocation of Net Income

Branch Welfare Acc £0.00

Balance to Welfare £1,180.28

Total Net Income £1,180.28Event income rebate
allocated to Branch Welfare Acc £0.00*A rebate of up to the full amount of the
event income displayed will be allocated in
the same proportions as the Allocation of
Net Income above.



DIMPLES Bar & Cafe.

Willian Way,

Letchworth Garden City. SG6 3JH

Open Tuesday - Sunday

The home of the Branch NAAFI

BREAK



Again the Branch was invited to the R.A.F. Henlow Annual Veterans Christmas Lunch, and again it was one not to be missed. Our thanks go to The RAF Henlow Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess, RAF Henlow Officers Mess, and The RAF Benevolent Fund, for helping to make this lunch the event of the year. A special thanks go to Station Warrant Officer (Katy to her friends) and her helpers for organising it all.





SEE YOU ALL NEXT YEAR – HOPEFULLY



2025 GALLERY



2025 GALLERY





ARMED FORCES DAY

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT





The RAFAGEN is produced every quarter and sent to members of the Letchworth, Hitchin & District branch of the Royal Air Forces Association via email.

If you would like to tell your story in RAFAGEN or have any comments about the magazine, the branch or the Association, we would like to hear from you. It can either be by hard copy through the mail, (any photographs will be returned immediately) to Ken Needham 68 Broadwater Avenue, Letchworth Garden City, Herts SG6 3HJ, or via email to kwn4180056@outlook.com

NAAFI BREAKS for the next few months are as follows :-

Wednesday 28th January 2026

Wednesday 25th February 2026 (**Annual General Meeting**)

Wednesday 25th March 2026

Wednesday April 29th 2026

Should you wish not to receive the regular issues of RAFAGEN, would you please advise the branch secretary on secretary@rafa-leitchworth.org.uk, who will arrange for your address to be deleted from our list.

