



The newsletter of the 202 Squadron Association



202 Sqn Jupiter HT1 positioning for RAF100 flypast, 11th July 2018

Number 39

Winter 2018

The President's Piece

I'm pleased to report that, in this very important Remembrance Year, the 202 Squadron Association was again well represented at the Whitehall Cenotaph veterans march past. Fifteen members marched past the Cenotaph on 11th November in remembrance of the fallen. It was a very poignant occasion, and despite the weather forecast being one of "cats and dogs, and frogs and toads", in the event, the weather cleared, and it was a pleasant day. All those marching enthusiastically booked a place for next year. We should have some room for more next year, so any others of you who'd like join in, please let me know.



Joan and I had the privilege of attending the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall, on the Saturday evening, and what an emotional experience that was, including as it did much reference to the Centenary of the formation of the Royal Air Force, but, of course, emphasis on the 100 Years since the end of the Great War; truly memorable.

Finally, I haven't had a rant of late about maintaining our membership numbers. Now that the Squadron is a fairly small unit at RAF Valley, we have a limited pool of current serving members of 202 Squadron from which to recruit. You're no doubt in touch with old mates who served on the Squadron but aren't members of the Association. Have a go at them and get them to join; you'll make Ian Stephenson a very happy man.

In Comradeship

Pete Chadwick

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Update from the Chairman

Dear Members,

I write this update at a time of sorrow, as we have recently heard that Dave Angela, a stalwart of 202 Squadron Association, has died. You will all have your own memories of Dave but my favourite one of him, is him sat at a table at an Association Reunion towards the end of the evening, surrounded by colleagues from the 'Met' era, with banter flowing fast and furious, and much attendant good humour. I intend to attend his funeral along with others from the Association, and we will formally mark his passing by laying a wreath on his coffin. I have written to Caroline on behalf of the Association to express our condolences.

Since the last Mucky Duck, the Association has been involved with, or organised, several events across the country. The Association Membership remains very healthy, with around 151 Member – thanks in no small part to Ian Stephenson's unstinting effort. However, as our President notes elsewhere in the 'Duck', there are many more ex-Squadron people out there who we should be encouraging to join, especially as, despite our substantial numbers, the generally low attendance at Association events continues to be

of concern. If anyone has ideas about how to reverse this trend, please let me know.

On 19 May, many of the ex-SAR Members of the Association attended a 'SAR Reunion' organised by the 22 Squadron Association. The event was 22 Squadron Association's annual reunion but invitations to attend were also issued to ex-SAR personnel from both 84 and 202 Squadron Associations. There were some 120 people at the dinner and the event was a great way to catch up with old friends and colleagues. It was suggested at this event that either 84 or 202 Squadron Association might want to organise a similar event for 2019.

As you know, the 202 Squadron Association comprises Members who served in both the 'Met' and 'SAR' incarnations of the Squadron. Your Committee is very clear that we are not a 'pure-SAR' Association. Nonetheless, at a recent meeting, the Committee agreed that we would invite personnel from 22 and 84 Squadron Associations to attend our 2019 Reunion. We took this decision for several reasons. First, despite Geoff's best efforts, attendance at our annual reunions has been declining over the last 3 years. Second, the recently reformed 202 Squadron will host us for our 2019 Reunion at RAF Valley, and show us their new SAR aircraft. Given that 202 Squadron is now the RAF's sole remaining SAR unit, your Committee felt it appropriate to invite the other ex-SAR Associations to attend this event. And finally, we felt it only proper to reciprocate the hospitality shown us by 22 Squadron Association! Geoff will soon be circulating details of the 2019 Reunion. I implore you to attend.

This year also marks 100 years since the formation of the Royal Air Force and the end of World War I. Pete Chadwick has written separately about the latter event and the Association's presence at the Cenotaph. As part of the activities to celebrate the RAF's 100th birthday, a group of some twenty Association Members and partners attended an event in the North-East on 23rd June 2019. The day's events began with a train being named 'The Spirit of the Royal Air Force' to mark the 100-years. One of the names that had been considered for the train was 'The Spirit of 202 Squadron', given the Squadron's long-standing connection with the North-East generally and

Durham specifically. One table in each carriage of the 'Spirit of the Royal Air Force' train now has a table with a 202 Squadron cover (photographs of the event are available on our website). The train was then driven from Newcastle to Durham, so that we could attend a Service of Thanksgiving in Durham Cathedral for 'A North-East salute to the Royal Air Force at 100'. The Order of Service specifically acknowledged '202 Squadron, whose service to the North-East in proving air and sea rescue we recall with gratitude.' The Service was followed by a march past of the uniformed attendees, and a reception afterwards in the Dean's House.



Our Annual Reunion at Cosford was better-attended than last year's, so I'm hoping that it marks a reversal of the downwards trend of previous years. We had tickets to the Cosford Air Show that entitled us to use the Squadron Associations' tent, which meant that we could watch the show in some comfort. There was certainly much rotary interest the show, with a yellow Sea King and Wessex forming part of the static display. The display included a sequence by a Sycamore and a yellow Whirlwind. The dinner at the Shifnal Hotel was as good as those we have had there previously. The guest speaker was Group Captain Chuck Norris, the Commandant Defence Helicopter Flying

School and Station Commander of RAF Shawbury, and an ex-202 Squadron pilot and flight commander. Chuck gave us an update about the progress of the new flying training system. Thanks, as always, to Geoff Bakewell for organising another spectacular weekend's entertainment.

We also had a 202 Squadron Association stand in August at an Historic Helicopters' event at their Chard base. Not only is there a RN Wessex and a yellow Sea King in their static park, but they are the operators of the only Whirlwind flying in the UK, as you can see from the photograph. The event was also noteworthy for 2 slight mishaps: the Whirlwind's hot start; and (not at the same time) the awning of Geoff's caravan being uprooted and hurled over the top of his caravan. Historic Helicopters has invited us to hold an Association event on its premises and we are giving consideration to using it for an Association 'day-only' event.



Most recently, at his own initiative, Ian Stephenson organised a 'local' Association day-event at Farnborough. (I highlight 'local', as some Members travelled from Northumberland and Norfolk to the event!) We had a splendid Sunday lunch and then a personalised tour of the Farnborough Air Sciences Museum. Some 20 Members and partners attended this event and it was so successful that Ian has already started organising a similar event for next year. Poignantly, Dave and Caroline Angela attended this event.

As part of our efforts to counter the dwindling numbers at our Annual Reunions, we want to offer more of these 'day-only' events across the country, so Members don't need to travel to a central location; however, to do this, we need people with ideas, initiative and enthusiasm to organise such events. Please let me know if you are willing to take on this responsibility.

Following the refurbishment of our website by Dave Allen (and his predecessor Mike Hamill), you might have noticed that we are deliberately broadening the content of the webpages to include not just 202 Squadron specific updates but also items of broader rotary or aviation interest. We want the website (and the Association generally) to be of use to our Members, so if you have anything you want to share or advertise please send the details to Dave.

Finally, on behalf of you all, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all the Committee Members without whom none of the above activities could take place. Given the nature of the weekend's activities at Cosford, we were unable to hold an AGM. The Committee has met regularly, including scrutinising our accounts (ably managed by Brian), but we are conscious that Members need their say! To that end, there will definitely be an AGM as part of the 2019 Reunion. And if any Members want to volunteer to serve on the Committee, in any capacity, please let me know.

I look forward to seeing you at Valley in March 2019 (slight plot-spoiler!).

Yours,

Steve



News from 202 Squadron

Season's Greetings from 202 Sqn! What a tumultuous year this has been at Valley/Shawbury!

Back in January Flt Lt 'Pob' Johnstone held the reins for about a month between Sqn Ldr Andy McGreevy departing the fix to head up a Service Inquiry and Sqn Ldr Ally McDowell taking command of the Sqn. Sqn Ldr McDowell has a front line SAR background with Sea King time on 22 and 202 Sqn as well as time working in SAR Force HQ at Valley. More recently she qualified as a QHI and instructed on 60 Sqn at Shawbury prior to this posting. We ceased flying the Griffin at the start of the year as the number of Sqn personnel became too thin on the ground to sustain the flying requirements prior to the MFTS hand over. We were losing people to postings and for re-training on the new aircraft in preparation for the new contract commencing on 1 Apr 18. 202(R) Sqn also dropped the (R) by order of the new AOC 22 Gp, AVM 'Bunny' James, whom many of you will know.



Our new aircraft, the Airbus H145 Jupiter HT1 commenced flying early in the year at Valley with the Ascent Rotary Wing Fielding Team (RWFT). Three

Jupiters have been purchased under MFTS for use at Valley and 29 Airbus H135 Juno HT1 helicopters are now at Shawbury. These twin-engine glass cockpit aircraft are fantastic for the pilots, with Helionix avionics making both cockpits almost identical and very user-friendly. The main problems so far have come on the rear crew and cabin side. Anthropometric restrictions prevent some aircrew from being able to carry out certain tasks. Harness types, wet fit floor and C of G issues are also being worked through. The long and short of it for us at 202 Sqn is that we have not been able to function as a maritime/winching unit yet this year and we will have to wait until these problems have been resolved before we can get back to doing the kind of flying that we are expecting and begin to test and adjust an over water syllabus. Patience is a virtue we're told!



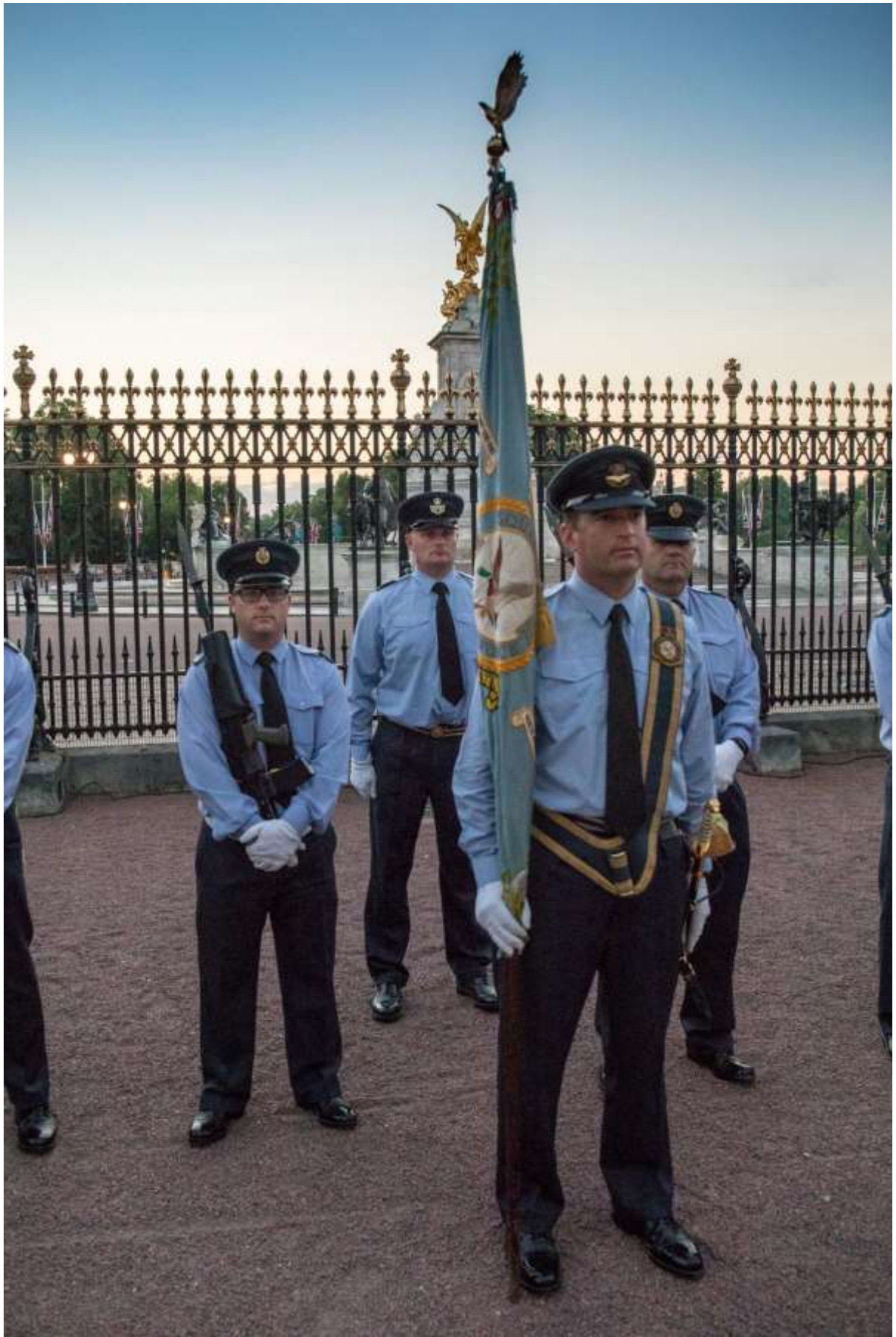
Meanwhile we have kept ourselves ticking over with qualifying the crews on an overland syllabus which has included General Handling, Instrument Flying, Confined Areas and Sloping Ground. So far we have 4 military and 2 Ascent pilots, 3 military and 5 Ascent rear crew and 3 Ascent Ops staff at Valley with

a few military guys detached to Shawbury for the time being. Almost all Cobham staff retained jobs with Ascent on the 1 Apr 18 changeover.



On 28 May we were delighted to have AVM 'Bunny' James officially open our new building under the name of the 'Bullock Building' in honour of MAcr Bullock GM and his sacrifice all those years ago. Shortly after the Sqn Standard Party (consisting of myself as the Standard Bearer, MAcr Linfoot and FSs Seward and Cooper) set off on another arduous visit to Gibraltar to represent the 202 Sqn in the annual Queen's Birthday Parade. All went swimmingly and we even managed to find some brown uniform for the occasion! On a brief respite from parade training I found myself wandering the streets of Gibraltar whereupon I stumbled into the church in town and happened upon the large plaque commemorating 202 Sqn personnel based in Gibraltar who were lost in the Second World War. The list was long and sobering, reminding me of how fortunate we all are today.

Within a few weeks we had yet another opportunity to show off our drill and ceremonial prowess for the RAF 100 Parade in London on 10 July 2018. What an occasion that turned out to be! The feeling of parading the





Standard down the Mall in to the Buckingham Palace forecourt in front of the Queen and CAS (and a few other people) was unparalleled. It was just about worth the 9 previous days in barracks at Halton hurrying up and

waiting to carry out hours of drill practice in the heat wave! We didn't get to see the flypast though as we couldn't look up!



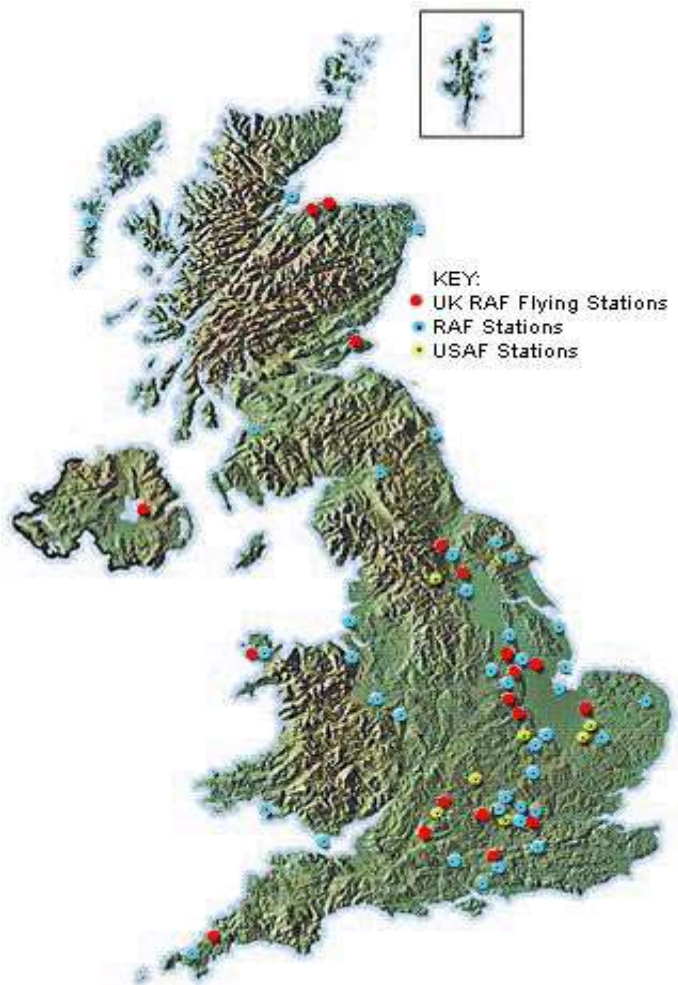
Fast forward a few months of slow progress with the aircraft to our first students arriving under MFTS in November. 9 RN Observers are with us now to carry out an introduction-to-navigation course. This is not intended to be our normal business, but it offloads Shawbury in the short term and gives us something to do. In fact, as I write this in December, I am off to drive 2 sorties to Welshpool and back to Valley today – it's great to be getting back in the air more regularly. Hurrah!

With winching trials on the horizon for us and some other aircraft clearances hopefully coming through in the next 6 months, we are gradually gearing up towards operating as we're expecting to. We look forward to welcoming those of you who can make it to the Annual Reunion up here at Valley in March 2019 and we wish you all a very happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

Nadolig Llawen!

Flt Lt Josh Ryznar

Serving ex-202 Sqn personnel: where are they now?



RAF Lossiemouth

TYPHOON FGR4

RAF Linton-on-Ouse

TUCANO T1

RAF Woodvale

TUTOR T1

RAF Cranwell

PREFECT T1

RAF Barkston Heath

TUTOR T1

RAF Benson

PUMA HC2

CHINOOK HC6A

TUTOR T1

RAF Akrotiri

GRIFFIN HAR2

RAF Shawbury

JUNO HT1

RAF Brize Norton

GLOBEMASTER C1

RAF Odiham

CHINOOK
HC5/HC6A

Plus others flying mahogany bombers in various HQs.

Sorry for the slightly out of date map!



Editor's End

My sincere thanks to those who have made time to contribute, in particular for the images which I personally feel are crucial to the bringing the text to life; this year's crop is particularly eye-catching, so let's hope for more of the same next time! Until then, Happy Christmas and all good wishes for 2019.

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