



RAFA Caduceus Branch

Volume 2 of 2026

President's Address



June is a time when the natural world is at its prime: flowers in bloom, skies full of birds and song. At this time of brightness and cheerfulness, I would like to pause and think of the joy of small kindnesses and the importance of simple things. Being quiet can be a joy. For some it is a positive trait of a person who is mindful and present, has an inner peace, is thoughtful and deep thinking, an active listener. For others, being quiet can be a sign that all is not well, a sign of loneliness, isolation, suffering. If someone is overwhelmed, struggling, hurt or emotionally fatigued they may try to protect themselves by being quiet.

So, if you know someone who has become quiet, pause and think. Do you care? Do you want to help and do more? Are you the person who can reach out, make contact, gently, and let someone know they are not alone. It can seem daunting to say "I am here for you" but it can be even harder for someone who is quiet and in need to ask for help. Camaraderie is often portrayed as being loud and brash, but it is also being there when someone is in need. RAFA and the other Service charities spend a lot of time and effort supporting people. However, our small kindnesses and simple acts are important.

While we become aware of the joys and beauty of summer, please also be aware of those who you may be quietly losing contact with.

Air Cdre Steve Kilbey (Retd)
President of the RAFA Caduceus Branch

Chairman's Report



Welcome everyone to our latest newsletter, we hope that you find it both useful and informative. Just a reminder that we welcome contributions from members.

A few things have happened since the last newsletter:

We had 2 Branch members awarded Area Presidents Certificates. Neither could make Area Conference, so names and photos to follow.. but congratulations to them both, it's great to see their efforts on behalf of RAFA recognised.

We are delighted to announce our first mother and daughter branch members. Jess Kearley is currently undertaking basic training at RAF Halton and is going to become a medic. She's the daughter of Queens Nurse & former PM, Jo Reynard. It's great to see medical is in the blood. We can't wait to for updates as she progresses, so a huge welcome to her and others from her cohort.

Cenotaph 2026.. we've had lots of interest this year but sadly, because members have not attended in the past, our contingent has been reduced. This means we will have to carry out a selection process for members to attend this year and if you have expressed an interest you will be contacted shortly. A reminder for next year, irrespective of rank or trade, all veteran branch members are welcome to parade. We also have a very social time post parade.



Well done US, between the cadets and branch members we raised over £3k for Wings Appeal., Certificate on page 8.

We're already planning AGM 2027 and working with our serving members to make it work for everyone. We hope it'll be well attended as we want to go back to face to face, social events. RAFA was created to prevent social isolation of our RAF family and maintain links between veterans and our serving colleagues, so getting together remains true to our founding purpose.

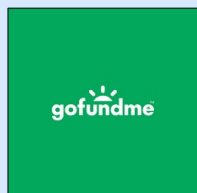
A big welcome to our latest volunteers Maggs and John. they've bravely stepped forward and will be helping the secretary & treasurer respectively. They've done a short pen portrait which you'll find on page 7..

Enjoy the read.. don't forget that you're all welcome to contribute to the newsletter and all input is welcome..

Nec Aspera Terrent

Paul M Newton
Co-Chair RAFA Caduceus Branch
Tele 07739422789

Go Fund Me



As many of you will know, every year we send out Christmas boxes to our RAF Medical Services colleagues who are detached to forward operating areas over Christmas as well as our members aged over 75. But with increasing costs, we need your help. Do you know a business that would sponsor our Christmas boxes or donate items we could include? If you do, please get in touch. We are also asking members if they will share details of our Go Fund Me appeal via their social media so we can reach as many people as possible who might be able to donate. Thank you.
<https://gofund.me/6f158d3a>

EASYFUNDRAISING

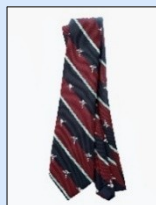


Don't forget you can sign up to Easyfundraising and raise money for us whilst you shop, all at no cost to you. From holidays and travel to your supermarket shop, everything you buy donates a % to the Branch.

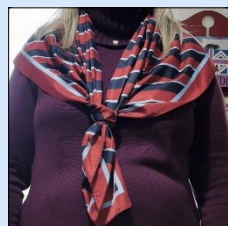
Sign up using the QR code displayed on page 14.

Ties and Scarfs

You can now purchase a Medical Branch tie and/or scarf on our branch website using PayPal.



Ties cost £17.50 and includes the Caduceus emblem.



Scarfs cost emblem as



£18.50 and include the Caduceus shown in the image.

Membership

Bosnia Commemoration - Sunday 14th December 2025



To coincide with the 30th anniversary of the Dayton Peace Agreement, the RBL held a commemorative event at the NMA to recognise those who served in the Balkans with the UN, NATO & latterly the EU peacekeeping operations. Many RAFMS personnel were deployed on these operations, with the majority supporting RAF & RN helicopter operations as well as manning the medical centre at Divulje Barracks in Split, Croatia, although others served across the region, usually attached to RAMC units. This was also where TMW first deployed, paving the way for subsequent operations. The ceremony, held at sunset involved various submissions, and was attended by a number of VIPs, including Gen (Retd) Michael Rose and former PM, Sir John Major Bt. Of special note were the video presentations from Veterans, including our own Curtis Young, who recalled events both at RAF Lyneham and in theatre whilst deployed with 845 NAS.

Subscriptions - Please Pay by Direct Debit - We all know how time poor we are these days, and that sometimes things "fall by the wayside" through no fault of our own. One of these things can be subscriptions to the various clubs & organisations we have joined, including RAFA. The Branch is regularly informed of "lapsed" members who have not renewed their subscription due to a number of reasons, specifically just not getting round to logging in and paying the fee. To avoid this, you can sign up to pay your annual subscription by Direct Debit to coincide with your renewal date, meaning one less thing to worry about. The Direct Debit guarantee ensures that you will not be charged any more than you have agreed, and you will receive advance notice before it is claimed. Signing up is easy, just log into the RAFA website and follow the link. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at markdenton@hotmail.co.uk.

Mark Denton
Membership

Treasurer

The Branch is registered with easyfundraising, which means you can help us for FREE. Over 8,000 retailers will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! All you need to do is sign up and remember to use easyfundraising whenever you shop online. It's easy and completely FREE! These donations really mount up, So far this year, easyfundraising has yielded us just over £180. So please sign up to support us at www.easyfundraising.org.uk. Our branch is registered as RAFA Caduceus (Medical Services) Branch.

William Morris. Treasurer

Pull up a Sandback

It would be nice if branch members wrote about their military experiences. To get us started William Morris, our branch treasurer has provided the following.

William Morris RAF - National Service 1960 - 62



Born just before the outbreak of war in 1939, William Morris grew up in the Rhondda and at 20yrs of age became a member of one of the final cohorts of young men to enter National Service. This was only three months before compulsory conscription was cancelled in December 1960. William served for a full two years as a National Serviceman, leaving the RAF as a Medic in September 1962. He was then obliged to transfer to the Reserves for the next seven years but was never called up to serve in the Armed Forces again.



In one aspect of largely 'hidden' Welsh history William as an RAF Medic, was actively involved in the UK government's vaccination programme in South-East Wales in January 1962. The programme resulted from a very serious epidemic of Smallpox which had erupted across Cardiff, Bridgend and the Rhondda. This Smallpox epidemic cost many lives before being brought under control. A photo of Cpl William Morris from Treorchy administering the vaccine was used by the government of the time.

Aged 86yrs at the time of this filmed interview for the Heritage Lottery Funded, Age Cymru Dyfed's National Service and Wales stories project, William looks back proudly upon his time as a RAF Medic 65yrs ago and concludes that if he could do it again he would do so "in a heartbeat".

This is part one of William's filmed recollections. Part two is also contained in his collection. The interviewer is Hugh Morgan and cameraman, Neil Davies. The recording took place at William's home in Rhydowen, West Wales on 8th December 2025.

Social Media



Our public page can be found at:

<http://www.facebook.com/RAFACaduceusBranch>

To join our private branch members only group search 'RAFA Caduceus Branch Group' request to join and answer the questions.



@rafacaduceus



@rafacaduceusbranch



You can always email us at rafacaduceusbranch@gmail.com

Editor



I hope you found William's "pull up a sandbag" interesting. I look forward to receiving your memories of working in the RAF Medical Branch. It can be anything you think members would find interesting. Please send your stories to me at:

rafagloucester@gmail.com

Lets finish off with some humour:

What do you call a doctor who fixes websites? A URL-ologist.

Two blood cells met and fell in love. But alas, it was all in vein.

Why don't yogurt and medicine get along?

One is probiotic, and the other is antibiotic!

Ray Bunnage
Communications Officer

Branch Volunteers

Steve Kilbey – President

To be elected -.Service Representative

Paul Newton - Chairman rafacaduceusbranch@gmail.com

William Morris – Treasurer
John Gouldie – Deputy Treasurer

Vivienne Newton – Secretary rafacaduceusbranch@gmail.com
Margaret (Maggs) Simpson – Deputy Secretary

John Radnedge – Welfare Officer john.radnedge@hotmail.co.uk

Ron O'Hare - Fundraising & Wings Appeal

Mark Denton—Membership caduceusmembership@gmail.com

Emma Wilkins— Safeguarding Officer

Kelvin Kettlety – Standard Bearer

Robbie Cormie – Cadet Liaison Officer

Ray Bunnage – Communications Officer rafagloucester@gmail.com

Pen Pictures of 2 new volunteers



John Gouldie. DoB 18/5/48. Place of Birth. Springs, Transvaal, South Africa. Childhood up to the age of 14, spent in South Africa and Northern Rhodesia. Emigrated to England in 1962 and settled on the Isle of Wight. Joined the Royal Air Force on 6/7/66. Basic Training at RAF Swinderby followed by Medical Training at MTE RAF Halton, Aug to Dec 66. Stationed at the following Units:

RAF Tangmere, Dec 66 to May 69. RAF Hospital Muharraq, May 69 to Jun 70. RAF Locking, Jun 70 to May 73. RAF Bruggen, May 73 to Sep 74, RAF Laarbruch, Sep 74 to Nov 75. RAF Mountbatten, Nov 75 to Nov 76. RAF Hendon, Nov 76 to Sep 78. RAF Wildenrath, Sep 78 to Sep 81. PMRAF Hospital Halton, Sep 81 to Sep 83. RAF Gatow, Sep 83 to Aug 86. RAF Northolt, Sep 86 to May 87. AMTE RAF Brize Norton, May 87 to Apr 90. RAF

Stanmore Park, Apr 90 to Feb 94. RAF Innsworth, Feb 94 to Aug 96. RAF Akrotiri, Aug 96 to Aug 99. GVMAP St Thomas' Hospital, Aug 99 to Sep 02. RAF Lyneham Sep 02 to May 03.

During my 36 years in the Service, I was also detached/ deployed to, RAF Manby, Harrier Force Gutersloh, Op Granby, Split and RAF Mount Pleasant.



Margaret E. Simpson (Maggs) b 1953. Retired Registered General Nurse. Mum of 2 girls + a son-in-law, grandma to 5 and great grandma to a new baby boy. Born in Glasgow, raised in Auchinairn, lived in England for 11 years and now in a wee hoosie at the bottom of my youngest daughter's garden in Peterculter. In April 1997 I joined 4626 Aeromedical Sqn, RAF Lyneham. Jan 2003 I transferred to 612 Medical Sqn, RAF Leuchars. Made Cpl 2000. Sgt 2006. 16 years in RAuxAF with

various camps including Salisbury Plain, Cyprus, America & once worked in Gibraltar Military Hospital theatres for 3 weeks over one Christmas/New Year. Took part in Nijmegen Marches 2001 and 2002. Called up 3 times 2003, Iraq, 2006 Iraq 2010 Afghanistan.

Sgt with 107 RAFAC 2013. 2023 Was member of RAFA in Aberdeen. Currently Member Deeside Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club. Meet up with SSAFA and Sight Scotland Veterans. Am a trustee at both Culter Village Hall and St Peter's Heritage Centre and Hall. Attend Peterculter Parish Church and Yarn and Yap at Culter Library.

Looking forward to being part of the RAFA Caduceus Branch.

