



## Association

### **8 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2013**

The headline news in this issue concerns the forthcoming 8 Squadron Families Day to be held on the Squadron on Saturday 1 Jun, and to which our Association members have kindly been invited for the giveaway cost of £5 a head. You will recall from the last newsletter and subsequent update that the ambition has always been to link that gathering to an unveiling of the Squadron's new guardian, a Hunter with its 'sand, sea and blood' flashes. The restoration project being done at RAF Barkston Heath has been an immense challenge, so it will come as no shock to discover that there have been some setbacks along the way; indeed, as I write XE620 is not in one piece. However, every effort is being made to get it ready for the day so that an official unveiling can occur. Should that plan be thwarted, then all is not lost as it would still be viewable, even if that means a trip to Barkston Heath. The Hunter restoration has been made possible, in the main, by the generous donation of time, effort and money from people who operated the aircraft, whether they had been fortunate enough to have served on 8 Squadron, or not. Accordingly, the weekend events, although primarily for 8 Squadron past and present, may also be attended by the stalwarts of the non-8 Squadron Hunter fraternity.

Other highlights of the weekend will be a Meet and Greet (Beer Call) on Friday 31 May on the Squadron, and a Ladies Guest Night on Saturday evening which will be held at the Assembly Rooms in Lincoln. Instantly the thought will have struck you about accommodation! We have provisionally booked 60 (single) rooms at RAF Cranwell. However, we are also taking this Newsletter as an opportunity to ask Association members who live locally whether they could offer a bed for a couple of nights for those of you who will be travelling from farther away. Members wishing to attend the events are asked to complete the form at the bottom of this Newsletter and return it, along with appropriate payment, to the Honorary Secretary **by 10 April**.

#### **Families Day weekend** (all times local):

Friday 31 May – 1600 – Beer Call at 'The Farmer's Stump' – Squadron bar.

Saturday 1 Jun – 1130 – Families Day (BBQ, BBMF and bi-plane fly past, static aircraft) £5 per head.

Saturday 1 Jun – time to be confirmed – unveiling of Hunter XE620.

Saturday 1 Jun – 1900 for 1930 – Ladies Guest Night, Assembly Rooms, Bailgate, Lincoln, cost £40 a head, but a £20 subsidy for 8 Squadron Association members will be applied.

#### **8 Squadron Association Website**

Steady progress is being made on the website ([www.8squadron.co.uk](http://www.8squadron.co.uk)) to open a 'members only' area which will be password protected. This will provide an improved level of security and help us achieve one of the aims of the Association 'to facilitate contact between ex-8 Squadron personnel.' When the members area is ready for use the secretary will send access details to those with an e-mail address.



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### **Charitable status**

The Association committee has investigated the possibility of securing charitable status for the Association. The key benefit of which would be the ability to claim Gift Aid from those members who pay income tax. However, with that benefit comes an administrative burden that, in our view, outweighs the potential gain. Accordingly, we will not be seeking registration as a charity.

### **Honorary Association membership**

In recognition of the tremendous support that our spouse/partner will have provided throughout our service, the Association committee has decided to implement a scheme of Honorary Membership. On the sad occasion of the demise of an Association member, the surviving spouse/partner will be invited to become an Honorary Life Member without the need to pay any further subscriptions. In addition to the invitation to join the Association, the surviving spouse/partner will be asked whether they wish an obituary (written by them) to be posted on the members only area of the website. Members without access to the internet will be sent a copy of any obituary received, unless they opt out of receiving them.

### **Message from the Officer Commanding 8 Squadron**

It is a great pleasure to be asked to write a few words for the 8 Sqn Association newsletter, especially since it is my first opportunity to do since taking up the reins as Sqn Commander in October last year. Furthermore, because I was the 8 Sqn Association Liaison Officer back in the late 1990s, I am very excited about being involved again, especially as we begin to look forward to our Centenary in 2015. But, first things first: we are very much looking forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to our joint families–reunion event over the weekend 31 May–2 June this year. It's a while since we last held such an event, but I am very confident that we will be able to bask in the late Spring Lincolnshire sunshine and enjoy what will be a wonderful couple of days. The precise details of what we are planning will be promulgated soon, but there will certainly be a beer–call on the Friday evening, and a ladies' guest night on the Saturday evening. Many of you will be aware of the recent changes that have been made to the Service's catering arrangements, which is making it very expensive to hold formal engagements in the Officers' and Sergeants' Messes, especially at weekends owing to civilian staffing costs. Consequently, although we will certainly be hosting the majority of the reunion weekend's events at RAF Waddington, it will be necessary to hold the dinner on the Saturday evening off–base at the Assembly Rooms in the Bailgate Area of Lincoln; we will endeavour to minimize the inconvenience and cost, whilst maximising the Service ambience and fun! We hope to provide coach transport from RAF Waddington to the Assembly Rooms, for those who need it.

The Squadron remains in fine fettle and, as ever, is populated by a range of faces that will be familiar to many of you, as well as new blood which always helps inject vivacity



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to all the Squadron does. We number around about 300 personnel these days (aircrew, groundcrew and military and civilian support staff), all of which makes for a vibrant Squadron which is fun to be a part of. We remain in demand as ever to support exercises around the globe, as well as operations such as Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR (on which the Sqn is currently embarked), which is a NATO counter-terror mission in the Mediterranean. I am particularly proud of my connections with the Sqn and the Association - your Chairman was my first Sqn Cdr, and oversaw my duties as the Association Liaison Officer. I rather have the feeling that I'm having to resubmit my homework this time around!

We look forward very much to welcoming you later in the year. If you can't make it to the Reunion, you will be very much in our thoughts.  
Uspiam et Passim

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**By 10 April please**

To:

Nick Byatt, Honorary Secretary, 8 Squadron Association, c/o 3 Meadow Road, Dunston, Lincoln LN4 2EF.

I \_\_\_\_\_ wish to attend the following events:

I will be accompanied by \_\_\_\_\_

31 May - The Beer Call

1 June - The 8 Squadron Families Day and enclose my payment of £5

1 June - The unveiling of the Hunter aircraft.

1 June - The Ladies Guest Night, and enclose payment of £20 (as an 8 Squadron Association member) and £40 for non- Association attendees. Dress for the event will be Mess Dress (which may now be worn by retirees), Black tie or a dark suit, equivalent for ladies.

I have the following dietary needs \_\_\_\_\_

I live locally and am able to offer \_\_\_ bed spaces for 1 / 2 night(s).

I would like a room to be booked at RAF Cranwell for \_\_\_\_ person/people for 1 / 2 night(s). Payment for the room to be made directly to the Mess receptionist on arrival (£15.03 per person per night).

I will be arriving by car and would like a vehicle pass for my vehicle:

Make \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Colour \_\_\_\_\_ Reg No. \_\_\_\_\_



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I understand that I, and my guest, will need to provide photographic identification at the Guardroom to obtain a visitors' pass.

I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_ made payable to The 8 Squadron Association.