



HEREWARD

The Newsletter of

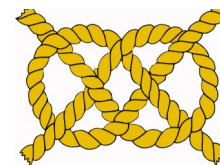
No. II (Army Cooperation) Squadron Association

**II (AC) Sqn
Association**

April 2012

Issue 22

No. II (Army Cooperation) Squadron Royal Air Force Celebrates 100 years as a Flying Squadron. *Anniversary Special*



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Plans for the Squadrons Anniversary weekend are now well advanced and include both the formal and informal being designed to cater for the serving Squadron, Association, families and friends.

The highlights of the weekend include the Presentation of a new Squadron Standard at which Lord Stirrup will officiate, with the day following being a fun packed day designed to cater for all. This will be a great opportunity to catch up with old friends while making new acquaintances with the serving Squadron.

Progress in allocating more dining places for the Anniversary Dinner has also been fruitful and it will now be possible to accommodate all those Association members who have already indicated their desire to attend.

With the returns from Association members who wish to attend now in, the next step will be to mail out the tickets, car passes, location maps and detailed instructions for the weekend.

However, as a start, details of the weekend activities for those attending are also included at the final page of this newsletter.

*"Thanks to modern
technology... history now
comes equipped with a
fast forward button."*

Gore Vidal



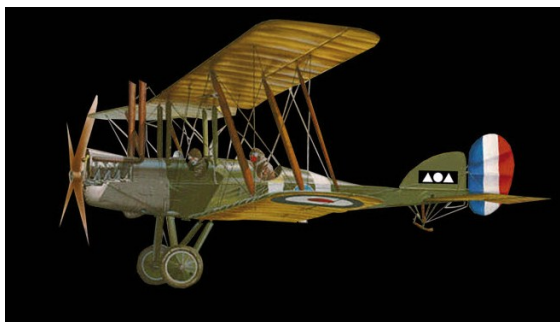
STOP PRESS

The Association congratulates Wg Cdr Nick Tucker-Lowe, OCII, on being awarded the Distinguished Service Order in the Operational Honours List for his services in leading the Sqn on Operation Ellamy last year.

STOP PRESS



A Proud and Distinguished History



No II Squadron was formed at Farnborough on 13 May 1912 as one of the original Squadrons of the Royal Flying Corps. After training on a number of types it moved to France in August 1914 as part of the British Expeditionary Force and later standardised on BE 2s. Flying from many locations in France during WWI the Squadron provided the vital reconnaissance information needed by the our ground forces on the Western front.

On 26 April 1915, 2Lt Rhodes-Moorhouse was wounded and, subsequently, awarded the very first RFC VC of the war. In March 1918, the Squadron's second VC was awarded to 2Lt Alan MacLeod, a Canadian pilot serving with the Squadron.

In April 1917, the Squadron was re-equipped with FK 8s before finally returning to the UK in February 1919. On the 1st February 1920 it was deployed to Ireland for Army Co-operation duties returning to Digby in 1922, operating from various locations in England until April 1927 when it left for China returning to Manston later in then year having spent its time in China based at Shanghai race course! It moved on to Hawkinge in November 1935.

During this period it flew Bristol F2b Fighters, Atlas, Audax, Hector and finally Lysander aircraft with which it was equipped at the out break of war in 1939, being primarily utilised on the dangerous activity of inserting agents into enemy held territory. It added some Tomahawks in August 1941 before re-equipping in April 1942 with Mustangs. After D-Day the Squadron moved to France, being re-equipped with Spitfire XIVs, advancing with the Army into the Netherlands in November 1944.

At the end of WWII, the Squadron remained in Europe on fighter-reconnaissance duties as part of the Second Allied Tactical Air Force. In December 1950 its Spitfire XIVs and PR XIXs were replaced by Meteor FR9s which were supplemented with Meteor PR10s in March 1951. Swift FR5s were flown from March 1956, being replaced in March 1961 by Hunter PR10s. Conversion to Phantom FGR2s took place at Brüggen in December 1970 and the Squadron moving on to Laarbruch on 1 April 1971 where, in April 1976, it was re-equipped with Jaguar GR1s.

The Jaguars were replaced in January 1989 by reconnaissance Tornado GR1As and in January 1991, following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, 6 aircraft deployed to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, as a joint II (AC)/XIII Squadron reconnaissance detachment. Over 120 low level night reconnaissance missions were flown searching for Iraqi Scud launchers, in addition to other reconnaissance tasks, a situation that was to be repeated in 2003!

On 1st December 1991 the Squadron relocated to its present home at RAF Marham and subsequently continued to deploy to the Middle-East as part of the force employed to enforce the Iraqi Southern No-Fly Zone where, in 1999, it dropped its first bomb in 'anger' since the end of WWII.

2001 saw II (AC) Squadron lead into service the upgraded Tornado GR4A as well as the introduction of the RAPTOR reconnaissance pod. This year also saw the end of the Squadron RLC, with all Sqn RLCs being reorganised into a single Tactical Imagery-Intelligence Wing, which celebrated its 10th Anniversary on the 1st April 2012.

In 2003 the Squadron deployed again on operations against Iraq, both to Ali Al Salem airbase in Kuwait as part of the Combat Air Wing with a specific responsibility for low level Scud hunting operations in the Iraqi western desert and to Al Udeid airbase in Qatar. In May 2003, following the end of what was termed 'combat operations' the Sqn returned home, only to be re-deployed back to Kuwait again just three weeks later!

It has since been deployed on operations on an annual basis, deploying in April 2010 for the first time for a very busy tour at Kandahar airbase in Afghanistan and then in April 2011 to Gioia del Colle in Italy, as part of the NATO force employed to enforce the 'No Fly Zone' over the skies of Libya.

As it prepares once again to deploy on operations, it also celebrates its 100th Anniversary, having been formed at Farnborough as part of the RFC on the 13th May 1912 - the first and thus now the oldest fixed-wing Squadron in the world, with a record of service truly 'Second to None'.





Squadron Update

II (ARMY COOPERATION) SQUADRON UPDATE

MARCH 2012

The Squadron deployed to Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada in the middle of February, when the UK was experiencing blizzards, to be greeted by clear skies and sunshine which later, resulted in some slightly burnt and surprised faces. No doubt the weather was planned specifically to aid our Pre Deployment Training and those same burnt faces are less likely to make the same mistake again!

The Nevada tourist board claims "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas" but let me assure you that the Squadron contingent is more than willing to share the news of the many continued successes and ultimately the close bonds forged that unite us all on the Sqn when preparing for the future.

However, we must first step back from the Vegas experience and highlight that prior to the deployment the Squadron was privileged to be awarded the freedom of Swaffham and on a snow covered Sunday in February proudly marched the colours to Church. This honour was bestowed on us after our activities in support of operations over Libya last year and as a result of activities in Afghanistan the year before. It has been many years since it was last given to a group; it is normally isolated to specific individuals who have added to the community. We must all consider ourselves very privileged to be selected, a true team effort.

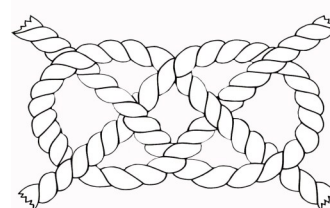
The preparation for the 100th Anniversary continues at pace. We are pleased to confirm that the HAS bash (all ranks party) organised for all is gaining in momentum and the activities before, during and after will be eventful for those that we hope can attend.

We look forward to welcoming you all and would like to take the time to remind those that perhaps have not yet sent in their returns, to do so with haste; it will be an epic event to be uniquely shared by all serving and past members of Shiny Two.

The Squadron is now about to embark upon block leave for the Easter period. Our focus on return will be set to a number of things equally at first before the main effort falls to the continued preparation for future operations. On behalf of the serving Squadron I would like to wish all members of the Association, their families and the wider Shiny Two family a Happy Easter.

Wing Commander Nick Tucker-Lowe

Officer Commanding II (Army Cooperation) Squadron





OBITUARIES



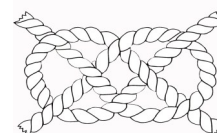
It with great sadness that we have to inform you of the recent deaths of two Association members:

Sqn Ldr Philip Crawshaw, Flight Commander from the Swift/Hunter days, who died in March after a long illness and Sqn Ldr Bill Pike who served with the Sqn as a Phantom pilot in the early seventies.

Our sincere condolences go out to their families.



Squadron Memorial



Plans for the Squadron Memorial have now been submitted to the National Memorial Arboretum for approval.

Prior to this it was necessary for the actual design and wording to be approved by the RAF Ceremonial Wing. That having been done, it is now hoped that the NMA will soon give their seal of approval to what promises to a very fitting and appropriate Memorial to what many believe to be the oldest fixed wing Squadron in the world.



Details of the fund raising efforts so far are shown below and although much progress has been made there is still more to do if we are to be in a position to place the order for the Memorial with the stonemason in time to have the finished article ready and in place for unveiling and dedication on Wednesday 5th Sep 12 when it is hoped as many Association members as possible will be able to attend a very memorable occasion in the Sqn's already illustrious history.

Further details to follow.

Memorial Fund Raising and Donations

Fund raising for the Squadron Memorial continues with a total of £6,500.00 donated so far and promises of a further substantial donation from one of the Squadron's partners in industry. However, there but still much to do before we reach the required target of £12,000.00 needed before we can see the Memorial unveiled in the Royal Air Forces area at the National Memorial Arboretum.

All members of the Association are encouraged to assist the effort by either making a personal donation or by seeking sponsorship.

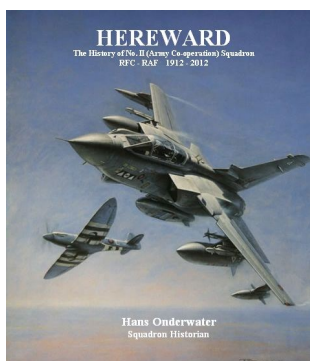
Members of the Association who have already donated together with a number of private benefactors are listed below and to whom the Committee extends its grateful thanks.

Ross Colwill, Phil Jones, Gerry Knight, Don Nutbrown, Steve Raine, Ian Sharples, Sam Toyne, Richard Long, Ken Clarke, Robin Peirce, Kevin Fahey, Steve Cockram, Deryk Maddox, John Mitchell, Brian Meadley, Bill Pike, Doug Reich, Mike Shaw, Fred Trowern, Norman Wilkinson, Suzie and Pete Wooldridge, Roy Boles, J Shrubsole, Roy Turner, L Izzard, D French, P Chadburn, L Jeffrey, Pamela Austin, Gary Walker, Andrew Aves, Mr N Frost, H Frost and Sons Ltd, E J Aves Farms Ltd, Alexander Gray, Martin Baker Ltd, Duke Harry (His Grace the Duke of Grafton) - Euston Estates, Steve Gruner, "IIJags" Reunion 2011.

(Sincere apologies to any Donors who I may have omitted to mention. You will be included in the next edition. Ed.)



II(AC) Squadron History—Third Edition

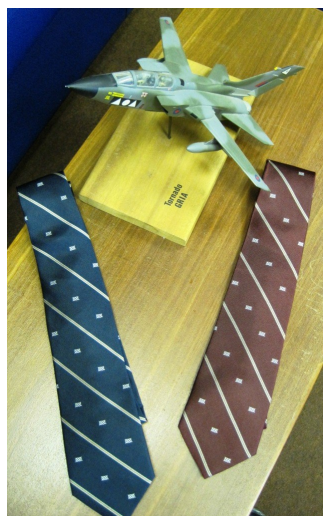
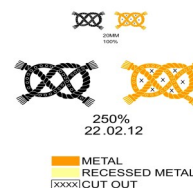
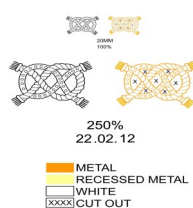


It is hoped to launch the new Squadron History in September 2012, with pre-orders being taken at the Centenary weekend in May. The price is expected to be about £15 + p&p.

Sqn Lapel Badges and Brooch

Many requests have been received for the Association to have its own Lapel Badge/Brooch and at last a source has been found which will not break the Bank!

The following examples are currently being considered and once decided, it is hoped to have stocks in place ready for sale at the Sqn Anniversary Open Day. The examples show the design with and without colour.



Squadron Ties

Sqn ties are available in blue and in red, priced at £17.50 each inclusive of postage and packing. Applications via the Association Treasurer. Contact details can be found on Page 6.



Hereward

Do you have an article that you would like to see in the next Edition of Hereward?

Please contact the Editor with the details

Back Copies

Back copies of "Hereward" are available from the Editor whose contact details can be found on Page 6.

SHINY TWO WEBSITE

www.twosqnassoc.co.uk

The Association Website is well worth a look and the Webmaster is always looking for interesting items and articles to add to those already published. Please do contact Clive if you have anything you wish to add.



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Centenary Events Update

The outline programme for the Squadron Anniversary weekend are detailed below. Returns from Association members who wish to attend the celebrations have now been received and a letter giving further detailed timings, directions, tickets and car passes will be in the post to those members in the very near future.

The formal Anniversary Dinner has been the cause of some angst but following a certain amount of juggling and by utilising both Mess dining rooms, the Mess has been able to make more dining spaces available, enabling all those who have indicated they would like to attend to be included. Again more details to follow.

1500hrs Fri 11th May 2012 - Presentation of Sqn Standard.

ACM The Lord Stirrup will present the new Standard to the Sqn during a ceremony that will take place on the Station Main Parade Ground, situated opposite Station HQ. Car parking will be outside the main gate on the 'Black Top' car park although limited disabled parking is available adjacent to the parade ground.

1930hrs Fri 11th May 2012 — Anniversary Dinner

The formal Anniversary Dinner will be held in the Officers Mess and will include senior guests and the majority of surviving previous Sqn OCs. Dress for non-serving guests is black tie or ladies equivalent. The RAF Band will provide music during dinner and the evening will culminate in a firework display.

Parking will be in the Officers Mess car park.

1100hrs Sat 12th May 2012 — Association Annual General Meeting

This will take place in the 31 Sqn Conference Room situated in the II(AC)Sqn flying site and will be the chance for Association members to air their views on how they see the Association developing and what they would like to see the Association doing in the future. Refreshments will be provided following the meeting and waiting facilities will be available for those partners of any Association members present while the meeting takes place.

1300hrs Sat 12th May 2012 — Sqn Open Day and HAS Bash

The Sqn Open Day will include a variety of aircraft on display and various family activities. A Spitfire from the BBMF in Squadron colours will be just one of the visiting aircraft on display. Food and other refreshments will be available throughout the afternoon with the afternoon merging into the HAS Bash, this including live music and a bar. Facilities will be provided throughout for the older members of the Association who may simply wish to sit and chat with ex colleagues over a cuppa.

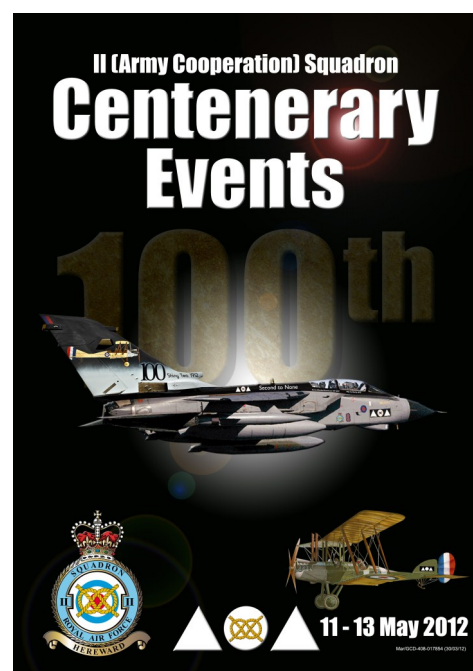
For Saturday's events it is hoped to have the Station rear entrance/exit open, which being closer to the Sqn site, will ease access. Car parking will be within the site itself.

1430 Sun 13th May 2012 — Service and Standard Laying Up—Ely Cathedral

The afternoon will begin with flypast by a Spitfire of the BBMF, in Sqn colours this being followed at 1500hrs by the service in the Cathedral.

Light refreshments will be provided in the Cathedral following the service.

Car parking in Ely is limited and guests are advised to arrive early in order to ensure they can park in sufficient time to make their way to the Cathedral for the flypast.



Centenary Events Summary

11 May

Presentation of Sqn Standard
Sqn Anniversary Mess Dinner (Officers' Mess)
RAF Marham

12 May

Association AGM
Sqn Families and Friends Day
Evening 'HAS Bash' Party
RAF Marham

13 May

Service of Dedication
Ely Cathedral

