

# TEAM BRIEF

The Official Magazine of the MAMS Association Electronic Issue No 10



## CHAIRMANS NOTES

First of all I would like to wish all are members a Happy New Year in this first edition of Team Brief for 2012. I am pleased to see that we have seen a steady flow of new members over the last 6 months with our membership now reaching over 500. This year will see many changes within the Movements Branch/Trade. Our days of Lyneham being the home for 1 AMW are numbered, as the MAMS Teams pack up for the final time to take up residence in the previous TCW building next to GEF at RAF Brize Norton by the end of February 12. With this move, nearly 70% of the trade will now be stationed at Brize, scattered over all areas including Air Movements Squadron (AMS), 1 Air Mobility Wing (1 AMW), Defence Movements School (DMS), Joint Air Delivery Test & Evaluation Unit (JADTEU) and 4624 Sqn RAuxAF. In the old days we would have a career with postings around the globe now you could well have a career solely at RAF Brize Norton!!.

In November we saw a very successful 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Movements WO & SNCO's Top Table Luncheon held for the first time in its new home in the Sgt's Mess at Brize and with the great organisation from Sgt Robbie Collins and the welcoming Mess staff it was a smooth transition of venue which I am sure has secured its future. On the social side following on from the Associations successful Ladies Guest Night last year, we are holding a Meet & Greet Beer & Curry Night in 4624 Aux Sqn Bar (The Swamp) on Sat 12<sup>th</sup> May. I hope to see many of you, both old and new members, there for a beer or three. Please check on the Website for more details.

On our recent holiday, my wife Sue and I saw an ideal MAMS Bar in St Maarten in the Caribbean.



I hope you enjoy this edition of Team Brief, remember we can only produce this magazine with your help so please keep those articles coming in to our Editor JC (Contact details are on the website [www.rafmams.co.uk](http://www.rafmams.co.uk))

Best wishes to everyone

Yours

Tony Geerah

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### **Please see below from 45E Flight:**

During our limited spare time in Afghanistan, we are carrying out a physical challenge for our chosen charities. Our aim is to complete a run and separate cycle from Camp Bastion to RAF Brize Norton (5660km) and also bench press the weight of the entire fleet of the RAF's C17 aircraft (7 aircraft at 923,729kgs total ) within the timeframe of our tour. As you can imagine, this is a lot of exercise to undertake, so any donations for two very worthy causes would be gratefully received.

The link below is our team page for the charity challenge we are undertaking whilst on our Op Herrick phase. Our two charities are RAF Benevolent Fund and Help for Heroes and links to donate to either charity is on the below page.

<http://www.justgiving.com/teams/BastiontoBrize>

Many thanks

Lanners

Lanigan CM

Cpl

## Membership

I would like to start by wishing you all a very Happy New Year and hope that all those bad heads are now history. Secondly, I would now like to thank Tim Ketcher and Pauline Andrews for standing in as Treasurer and Membership Secretary respectively whilst I went on my detachment to Afghanistan, Camp Bastion as the Joint Movements Unit WO working alongside many 1 AMW (formerly UKMAMS) personnel. A good time was had by all, well as good as you could make it in 49.9 deg C of heat. By the time you are reading this 1AMW will be well in to their move from Lyneham to Brize, the end of an era but also the beginning of the next.

We continue to recruit new members and since the last Team Brief Steve Goral of 1AMW has joined, nice to see regular personnel joining, Steve please pass the word around. John Cockayne who served on UKMAMS on various Teams between 1976 and 1984 and still live in the local area. Jon Harris who is still serving and currently on 1AMW 44 MAMS B Flight. Jon has served at many units at home and abroad but this would appear to be his first tour at Lyneham. Another blast from the past, well for me anyway is from Clive Hall. Whilst not a new member he has updated his contact details. Thanks Clive, it does not seem like nearly 34 years ago that you were instructing AC Beaumont U/T Mov Op at the RAFMS as was. Woody Harrison has joined, he is currently a SNCO Instructor at the DMS and served on UKMAMS between 1995-97 and again 2003-2006. Stephen George who served at Gutersloh between 1969-71 on the Air Movs Sqn and is now a Director at a Ford dealership. Duncan Grant who completed the Officers Movs Course in 1968 and completed tours in Sharjah and various appointments in the MOD. He is now fully retired, apparently we must ask Ian Berry, Ian Envis or Bob Dixon so if there is a story there please let us know. WO John McCarthy currently still serving at AMS Brize Norton as WO Pax Plans (originally WO Day Pax). Graham Caine has joined us from Australia as the RAAF does not currently have a similar association of 'Movers' probably due to the fact that they have only just introduced a dedicated Movements Trade in to the RAAF rather than pulling from Supply specialities, sound familiar? Graham is hoping to visit the UK and will try and attend one of our reunions/Meet and Greets. Donald Armstrong who spent time on JHSU at Odiham and Gutersloh with tours at Brize and Ascension and is now working for Air Canada.

For those of you who receive a hard copy of the Team Brief and who do not continue to donate the original £6.00 membership fee, now is the time to remind you that there is an annual charge of £5.00 due by the 1 Apr 12. Cheques are to be made out to the UKMAMS Association and sent to the RAFMAMS Association, 5 Ludlow Close, Chippenham, Wilts, SN15 3UG.

Once again Happy New Year and all the best for 2012.

Steve Beaumont

## 1AMW Charity – Kajiado Child Care Centre (CCC)

Having arrived on the Wing in April this year, I found myself being nominated with taking over responsibility for the 1AMW Charity, Kajiado CCC based in Nairobi, Kenya.

The Kajiado Child Care Centre has been around since 1983, and UKMAMS/ 1AMW have been involved with it since its inception, thanks largely to the characters who were based in Africa at the time, but also due to the dedication of the movements staff back at Lyneham who have worked for many years in liaison with the Hercules fleet to get support out there.

I consider it a fairly difficult concept, raising money for a charity with whom you have no personal involvement, but, as luck would have it, the RAF Permanent Air Movements Detachment (PAMD) staff based in Nairobi were operating a 'RiP' of 4 Rifles personnel who have been doing operational training in Kenya and needed 1AMW Movements staff support for 5 days. Utilising this opportunity, in a gap in the flying programme, I managed to get myself over to the Centre with my team, 5 people in total, to see Kajiado CCC and what their goals are.



Their aim is to support disabled children in Africa, where the differences in culture and expectation has meant many do not receive the necessary support or equipment to allow their parents to give them the development that they need from a young age, particularly when it comes to Cystic Fibrosis sufferers. Kajiado offer schooling, integration with able-bodied children, support groups

for parents, and equipment to provide them with the same opportunities as unaffected children giving them the same start in education and upbringing. Previously, 1AMW have supported this charity by sending out books, wheelchairs and other equipment by utilising the regular requirement for aircraft in Africa and flying indulgence freight out to them through the organisation of the PAMD staff. This has reduced greatly in recent years due to the higher demand for aircraft space, and we have been less able to support the charity. Therefore there is now a focus on providing 2 new aspects of support to them, the first being, obviously funding.

I am hoping to encourage 1AMW team members to focus their charity fundraising efforts towards Kajiado, and by doing this, allow them to purchase local equipment and workforce staff to improve the facilities available in situ. In addition to this, I am aiming to offer up the voluntary services of the team members who are needed a few times a year to support Army Exercises in Kenya to provide manpower and physical



assistance to the centre itself, building play areas, painting classrooms and generally contributing to the quality of life that the schoolchildren experience.

Due to the limitations of time for our visit, all we organised a 5-a-side football tournament between us and the children, which obviously allowed them to have 10 in the team (!). I think that both the children and my team enjoyed this immensely and it is hard to quantify the benefit that this



experience offers, but all of my team have subsequently offered up their services to fundraising having been personally affected by meeting the children and their staff.

Fg Off Spencer

OC A Flt

1 AMW

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## RAF NORTHOLT



*Ready To Carry Or To  
Fight*

In my wanderings, whilst wearing the blue uniform, I happened to stay at RAF Northolt, located in the London borough of Hillingdon.

It's a fascinating place, with a wonderful history of aviation, situated as it is close to London Heathrow (LHR) airport.

Legend has it that an official, on drawing up the original plans for an air field in 1913, held the map upside down and requisitioned the land South and West on the wrong side of the railway. That's why, if travelling to RAF Station Northolt by tube train, (Central Line) from London, don't get off at Northolt Park, travel onto Ruislip Gardens, two stops further on. The nearest stop, to the camp main gate.

The Royal Flying Corps. (The predecessor to the RAF) Started flying from here in 1915, and the airfield has the longest history of continuous use as an RAF Station.

Because of its close proximity to LHR, and having a runway that's oriented similar to one of LHR's, There have been a few occasions when pilots have made mistakes whilst aligning up to land at LHR.

This was in the days before Instrument Landing Systems, (ILS) and Global Positioning Systems (GPS)

As a result, in October 1960, a PAN AM B707 with 41 passengers landed on the short, 1 mile long Runway of Northolt by mistake.

The aircraft was stripped of none essential equipment and fuel, and later took off for LHR, on landing the pilot was sacked.



Also a LUFTHANSA B707 attempted to land at Northolt on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1964, but was dissuaded by a Red signal flare, fired by a member of Northolt's Air traffic control. In an attempt to dissuade further instances of this happening and to assist pilots to identify the correct airfield (In good weather) the letters "NO" for Northolt and "LH" for Heathrow were painted on two gasometers situated on the approaches to each airfield.

The Pan-Am B707 taking off from RAF Northolt 25<sup>th</sup> October 1960

The history of the airfield is long and full of interesting and important information, too long to give it

The recognition that it justly deserves here.

If I may just mention two things that I came across that took my interest. During the Battle of Britain in 1940, the Polish 303 Squadron, flying their Hawker Hurricane's from Northolt recorded 125 victories against the German invaders. Altogether by the end of 1945 they had notched up 297 enemy aircraft destroyed as well as many damaged.



The Polish War Memorial at RAF Northolt

In 1946 whilst the London Heathrow airport was being built, just 6 miles south west of RAF Northolt, the airfield was loaned for civil use, and by 1952 Northolt was the busiest airfield in Europe.



What was I doing there? Well the memory is sketchy for the summer of 1980, although I remember; that I had to look after some visiting American airmen, and I visited the Air movements section often.

There was lots of propping up of the officers mess bar that I recall.

Outside the Officers Mess after the summer ball



I also billeted with a padre who was a splendid companion

These days Northolt has been identified as a "Core Defence Site" and has a varied number of lodger units

based there including; The Queens Colour Squadron RAF Regiment. The Central Band of the Royal Air Force. The British Forces Post Office. 32(The Royal) Squadron. 600 (City of London) Sqn. Auxiliary Air Force. The



Royal Navy Presentation Team. The Polish records office and the No. 621 Explosive Ordnance disposal Sqn. Royal Logistics Corps.

Facilities are available to private civilian aircraft operators, with prior permission only, and 24hrs notice during the restricted airfield opening hours.

A very busy RAF Base.

Gerry



## FROM THE 540

By Ian Berry

### 1967 – 45 YEARS AGO...

#### FEBRUARY

Winnipeg – Exercise Brightwater. Fg Off John Furney plus 5. Recovery of personnel and equipment of 19 Lt Regt RA and 1Bn Somerset & Cornwall Light Infantry Regiment from Canada to UK.

Nassau – Exercise Winter Sun. Sqn Ldr Bill Jacobs, Fg Off Nigel Sanders plus 5. Positioning of personnel and equipment of 45 Cdo RM from UK to Bahamas.

#### MARCH

West Raynham – Exercise Cold Winter. Plt Off Charles Clark plus 2. Recovery of 1 Sqn (Hunters) from Norway to UK.



Villacoublay – Special. Fg Off Robbie James plus 2. Handling of Special Argosy task 4556 in France.

#### APRIL

Vaerlose – Exercise Aristomenes. Plt Off John Beadman plus 5. Recovery of

22 SAS to UK and members of Danish Army and Home Guard back to Denmark.

Gutersloh – Exercise Ascent/Amersham. Fg Off John Dunn plus 4, Fg Off John Furney plus 1. Recovery of 17/21 Lancers from Libya to Germany.

### 1972 – 40 YEARS AGO...

#### FEBRUARY

Honington – Exercise Pirate Trail. Flt Lt Chris Twyman, FSgt Don Wickham, Sgt Dave Barton, Cpl George Lynes, SAC Tony Gale plus 1. Deployment of 12 Sqn (Bucaneers) to Denmark.

Stockholm – Exercise Galo. Fg Off Steve Richmond plus 3. Deployment of Royal Naval Hovercraft Squadron personnel and vehicles to Sweden.



## **MARCH**

Incirlik – Exercise Dense Trail. Fg Off Alistair Gallagher, FSgt Chas Dalgleish, Sgt Dave Bernard, SACs Hugh Curran & Troop Smith plus 1. Recovery of UKLF personnel from Turkey to UK.

Kuala Lumpur – Special. Fg Off Brian Clucas, FSgt Taff Thomas, Sgt Ivan Gervais, Cpl ommy Blues, SACs Bob Ford and Bob Thacker. Transfer of firefighting equipment to Labuan to cover Queens visit and recovery of Rubb Hangar from Masirah to UK.



**TOMMY BLUES – IVAN GERVAIS – AOC 38 GROUP – BRIAN CLUCAS**

## **APRIL**

Majunga – Operation Sedburgh. Flt Lt Gerry Keyworth, FSgt Bob Hope, Sgt DK Henderson, Cpl Jimmy Jones, SACc Tim Newstead & Ian Place. Withdrawal of UK Detachment from Madagascar to UK.



Lossiemouth – Exercise Bold Dame. Flt Lt Charles Collier, FSgt “Chomper” Lamb, Sgt Merv Corke, Cpl Keith Simmonds, SACs Taff Eynon & Fred Kitts. Deployment of 809 RNAS (Buccaneers) and 849 RNAS (Gannets) to Karup, Denmark.

**FAIREY GANNET – 849 RNAS**

## **1977 – 35 YEARS AGO...**

### **FEBRUARY**

Bodo – Exercise Katherine Wheel. Fg Off Forbes Paterson, FSgt Terry Hoy, Sgt Trev Edwards, Cpl Lionel Earnden plus 2. Deployment of 41 Sqn (Jaguars) from Coltishall to Norway.

Gibraltar – Exercise Locked Gate. FSgt Bert Wilford, Sgt Mac Bernhardt, Cpl Guss Cobb, SAC Colin Pay plus 1. Recovery of elements of UKLF to UK.

### **MARCH**

Karachi – Special. Fg Off Rod Elliott plus 5. Reforce of Air Movs Masirah and delivery of Red Cross supplies to Pakistan.

Athens – Special. Sgt Terry Mulqueen plus 2. Transfer of load during airframe change at Athens.

### **APRIL**

YumDum International – Special. Sgt Mick Day plus 2. Recovery of 1Bn QLR and 20 Fld Sqn RE from the Gambia to UK.

Leuchars – Operation Transor. Sgt Dave Wilkin plus 2. Recovery of personnel and equipment of 57 Sqn (Victors) to Marham.

## **1982 - 30 YEARS AGO...**

### **FEBRUARY**

Wittering – Exercise Short Stretch. Flt Lt Guy Blyth, FG Off John Buchanan plus 26. Field deployment during Lyneham Taceval.



## **AH TACEVALS... HAPPY DAYS!**

Andros –  
Special. WO  
Reg Carey plus  
5. Recovery of a  
Royal Navy Lynx  
Helicopter from  
AUTEC back to  
UK.



### **MARCH**

Coltishall – Exercise Jude Stay. FSgt Syd Avery plus 5. Recovery of 54 Sqn (Jaguars) from Sardinia to UK.

Wittering – Exercise Alloy Express. Flt Lt Ian Drake plus 11. Deployment of personnel and equipment of 1 Sqn (Harriers) from UK to Tromso.

### **APRIL**

Gibraltar – Operation Corporate. FSgt Ian Berry, Sgt Tony Dunphy, Cpl Chris Thistle, Reforce of Gib Movements Squadron to handle increased workload.

Amman – Special. Sgt Derek Barron plus 2. Delivery of power packs to Jordan.

### **1987 – 25 YEARS AGO...**

### **FEBRUARY**

Bardufoss – Exercise Snow Goose. FSgt Brian Goswell plus 3. Deployment of 41 Sqn (Jaguars) to Norway and recovery of 1 Sqn (Harriers) to Wittering.

Trondheim – RMWD 87. Flt Lt Mike Stepney, FG Off Mark Stephenson, SAC Bob Roberts. Travelling route with weekly resupply Hercules.

### **MARCH**

Lisbon – Exercise Night echo. Fg Off Simon Fletcher plus 3 (inc 2 RAuxAf). Recovery of elements of BAOR back to Germany.

Harare/Mombasa – Special. Fg Off McKay plus 2. Delivery of freight to MAT in Zimbabwe and recovery of RN freight from Kenya to UK.

## **APRIL**

Cape Canaveral – Exercise Pale Flax. Wg Cdr Richard Mighall plus 3. Deployment of RN freight and personnel to Florida.

Kuala Lumpur – Exercise Nelson’s Glory. Flt Lt Chris Goss plus 3. Recovery of freight and pax of UKLF to UK.

## **1992 – 20 YEARS AGO...**

**n.b. Information for this period in the F540 is poor...**

## **FEBRUARY**

Oman – Exercise Rocky Lance. Deployment of 1Bn Green Howards to Thumrait.

McCord AFB – Exercise Trumpet Dance. Deployment of 1Bn Gloucesters to Fort Lewis, Washington State, USA.

## **MARCH**

Santiago – Deployment of support equipment to Chile for an Air Show.

## **APRIL**

Belgrade – UNPROFOR. Deployment of 24 Field Ambulance to Serbia as part of UN Protection Force.

Sigonella – Exercise Damsel Fair. Deployment of No 9 Fleet Clearance Diving Team to Sicily.

## **1997 – 15 YEARS AGO...**

## **FEBRUARY**



Kuantan – Exercise Green River/Game Toucan. Flt Lt Curry, FSgt Al Salisbury, Sgt Al Randle, Cpls Scouse Armitage & Stu Beange, SAC Dax Mellor. Deployment of SBS and 2 x LRICs to Malaysia.

## **LRIC – LONG RANGE INERTION CRAFT (SBS POOLE)**

Tacoma – Exercise Trumpet Dance. Fg Off Connor, WO Ian Berry, FSgt Walke, Sgt Tim Pyne, Cpl Ian Robinson, SACs Paul Crake & Andy Waite. Deployment of 1BNKOSB and recovery of 1Bn RRW in Washington State, USA.

## MARCH

Dakar – Special. Flt Lt Roofe, Cpl Malia. Recovery of components of a crashed HS748 from Senegal back to UK for investigation by Farnborough.



Brazzaville – Operation Determinant. Sgt “Hoss” Wall. Deployment of 1 Para Bn Belgian Army to Congo and rescue of ex-pats from Zaire.

## OPERATION DETERMINANT – CONGO & ZAIRE

## APRIL

Harare – Exercise Nyanga Stone. Flt Lt Roofe, FSgt Al Salisbury, Cpl Gary Beynon & SAC Thompson. Deployment of RM to Zimbabwe.

Brunei – Exercise Setia Kewan/Nyanga Stone. Flt Lt Arnold, FSgt Martyn Turner, Cpl Craig Fitches, SACs Owen, Brookes & Crafts. Recovery of Royal Marines from Brunei and redeployment to Zimbabwe.

## 2002 – 10 YEARS AGO...

## FEBRUARY

Ramstein – Operation Telic. FSgt Dave Drake, Cpl Owen, SACs Evans & Hackett. Palletisation of explosives and Seafox system for loading to a C17 and onmove to Kuwait.

Prestwick – Operation Telic. FSgt Rip Kirby, Cpl Owen & SAC Fitzpatrick. Preparation



and collection of Storm Shadow missiles from Prestwick utilising Hercules Mk3 and transferring to C17 at Brize Norton for onmove to Kuwait.

## STORM SHADOW MISSILE

### MARCH



Davis Monthan AFB – Special. FSgt Geordie Rochester, Sgt Stenhouse, Cpl Andy Westgate & SAC Pickersgill. Preparation and palletisation of AGM65 Maverick Missiles in Arizona and load to Tristar KC1 and C17 aircraft.

### AGM65 – MAVERICK MISSILE

Freetown – Operation Keeling. FSgt Ian Dixon, Cpl Marshall, SACs Eastaugh & Jones. Recovery of passengers and freight of 1Bn Royal Gurkha Rifles from Sierra Leone to UK.

### APRIL

Shaikha Isa – Operation Telic. Sgt Cam Paterson, SAC Jane Bevan. Rotation of TLAM (Tomahawk Missiles) between Bahrain and UK.

Pristina/Ghedi – Special. FSgt Steve Burke, SACs Mileham & Bevan. Delivery of explosives to Kosovo and Italy.

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One from Tony Saw

Here is a photo to get guys thinking, I think it was I mid 90's at Wittering, I was Flt/Sgt MSF 20 sqn Harrier deploy to New Zealand for and air show

no c130 available so they got this company, who when they bought it forgot to change the colour scheme





### **1AMW – Nottingham Half Marathon**

Kajiado is a children's care centre for children with physical disabilities. The charity care for children through a treatment programme which will eventually allow the child to be rehabilitated to their full potential, thus allowing them to access mainstream schooling.

There are currently a total of 80 physically challenged children residing in the centre, receiving treatment, schooling and rehabilitation.

Whilst on task in Nairobi, our 1AMW teams find time to visit Kajiado and offer their help at the centre, as well as presenting them with our latest donations.

1 AMW have been active supporters of Kajiado for many years. The wing has raised funds through loose change collections from inbound passengers as well as various other sponsored events.

The most recent of these fundraisers took place on the 11th September and involved 11 members of 1AMW beginning a journey to Nottingham far too early for a Sunday, to take part in the Robin Hood half marathon. Each team member wore CS 95 and carried 22lb burgens. We started off at the slowest person's rate for the first few miles, but in true military style, the team revealed their competitive edge. The team split down into small groups as a few team members broke away and sped off into the distance, but we were all determined not to let the army team or the man dressed as Scooby Doo beat us. At the 6 mile point, enthusiastic and charitable thoughts were replaced by the burn of sore feet and aching muscles as we hit the hilliest part, Wollaton Park. But we pulled together and the encouragement from the many

supporters helped us forget about the burn and blisters. We were particularly grateful to those spraying runners with water guns and hose pipes to cool them down! We finally came to the last few miles so we decided to go for maximum effort all the way to the finish line putting aches and pains to the back of our minds. Despite the combination of the hilly route around the sites of Nottingham and the sweltering summer heat, we all completed the 13 miles in an honourable time - and we beat Scooby Doo.

All money raised will help Kajiado to build a new disabled toilet block attached to the children's classroom. We raised a total of £1336. Many thanks to everyone who supported and sponsored us.

SAC Charley Smith

### **THE PENGELLY TROPHY 2011**

The Pengelly Trophy is the annual 6-a-side football tournament competed for by Logs (Mover) tradesmen and Movements Qualified Logistics Officers. The competition is named after a former director of RAF Movements, Air Cdre Pengelly, and has taken place every September since 1994. After a number of late-notice withdrawals, 14 teams were ready for kick-off on Sat 3 Sep. First there was a series of qualifying leagues with the winners, runners up and 2 x 3rd placed teams with the highest points going forward to the quarter-finals of the trophy. The remaining teams would compete for the newly presented Founders' Plate. The Plate was commissioned and presented this year by the 3 officers who devised the competition in 1994, all of whom were officers on Brize Norton's Air Movements Squadron at the time, Flt Lts Marshal, Valentine and Firth.

The leagues produced some good games with Brize A-Shift, Brize B-Shift and Brize C-Shift winning their respective leagues; the draw was then made for the Trophy and the Plate. Following the quarter finals of the plate, Brize AMS days beat KJ's (1AMW) 3-2 and 4624 Sqn won 4-0 against DMS. The final was not looking like it would be a close thing either until Flt Lt Will Andrew scored late on to give AMS Days a chance of a late comeback, but it ended with 4624 Sqn lifting the plate after a 5-3 win.

In the trophy, the two semi-finals were Brize A-Shift v Brize C-Shift and Brize B-Shift v The Hatters (1AMW). The first match was a very close contest that was finally won by A-Shift after a nerve-racking penalty shootout, with B-Shift winning the second semi-final 4-1.

A-Shift were looking like the bookies' favourites for the final, but got off to a slow start following their epic semi-final. The match looked like it would go to form with A-Shift leading 2-1, when in the last minute FS Tug Wilson hit an unstoppable shot, from just inside the opposition's half, to take the final to penalties. The B-Shift goalkeeper, SAC Kai Merrett was the hero on the shootout with a string of fine saves that won it for B-Shift. For the trophy presentations B Shift were ecstatic while of course A-Shift were somewhat despondent, but all of the players departed for a well attended social evening in the AMS bar, The Vent.

Thanks need to go to the 3 referees, without whom the tournament could not have taken place and to Sqn Ldr Andy Marshal, Sgt Buggsy Felstead and Cpl Benny

Benstead for helping organise the tournament, Sgt Triggys Triggs for putting on the refreshments, and to Gp Capt John Bessel for presenting the trophies. Finally big thanks need to go to Total Aviation for sponsoring the event and providing a number of footballs.

Flt Lt Tom Cousins - ProjO

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The following is an extract from Gerry Davis and his memoirs; this is so long that it has been broken down into 3 parts.

## **PART 2**



I arrived at **Benson** at the same time as the ARGOSY Squadrons were being formed. Joining one of the three Air Movement shifts, I met up with some old buddies from **St. Mawgan**, Geoff Bear and Brian Kent, who I also later followed to **Cyprus**.

I really lapped up my three years there, lovely countryside, great beer and all those nearby hospitals full of nurses. I really got into first aid whilst there and spent many a lesson down by the Thames.

It wasn't long before I was sent to **Kidbrooke**, on the Movements Course. Out of the 30 or so on the course I was the only one who had done any Air Movements. Didn't help much, I still only came about tenth in the class, but hey the free tickets to the West End shows was a good perk.

I took my driving test at **Henley-on-Thames** in a Triumph Roadster, great passion wagon. Unfortunately, on starting off from the car park I exited via the "No Exit" sign and failed the test. Still I passed it on the second attempt.

I also took out a F1629, you know, as you do to help out, driving the 120000lb fork lift, three tonners, J2's etc. That was until an unfortunate incident made me hand it in.

This arose whilst I decided to sod off down town one night. Well there was nothing on!!! Yep I know I was on duty, so what? Well unfortunately a lorry arrived during the course of the evening, and the shift Sgt. got called out to drive the forklift. We were the only two who could drive. He wasn't best pleased and I really didn't want him shouting at me like that.

The SAMO had a chat with me, and I promised to be a good lad. Oh yeh, I gave him my F1629. He was a lovely old timer, and said to me "listen, Davy boy, I'll hang onto it until the wind blows over for a bit, then you can have it back".

So that was the start of a year looking after the Freight Shed. The Sgt. by the way was really miffed, because he had to do all the driving for a while.

One winter, it snowed really heavily; it was about 6ft. deep outside the section. So there we were (back on shift, by the way) I was chatting to our DAMO, who was a lovely Polish gent, who walked a bit lopsided, must have been the weight of all his medals, when the Section door burst open and in sprang the Station Commander. He, to put it politely, seemed angry.

He demanded to know where the SAMO was, and a loud oration emitted from the Groupie, at the top of his voice, demanding to know why all his troops were not outside snow clearing.

We spent the next fortnight trying to help out. It wasn't too bad in the daytime as the Beverly's from **Abingdon** kept us entertained by dropping bails of straw, which didn't seem to please the powers that be. They even hired those Tarmac laying machines, which have loads of flames emitting from the bottom.

I had several detachments, to lots of different places, some of the winter ones in Europe weren't too warm.

One summer lunch time I took a bunch of Movers to Wallingford, to sample some of "The Brown nectar" in my old Hillman Minx. On retuning to camp I stopped at a junction, went to move forward and one of the rear wheels fell off. Wasn't it lucky that I had joined the RAC. The other 4 made their own way back.



Somebody you should know was there at the time Reg Carey. Most of the Officers and Senior NCO's were ex aircrew. One of the DAMO's was an ex Signaller, so was one of the shift Cpl's. They seemed to be big mates, must have been on the same Sqn. at some time or other.

That Cpl. by the way never got his hands dirty, I met lots like him who seemed to excel in getting away with doing nothing all the time.

I also took the plunge whilst there, and got married on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1965



Nearing the end of my three years at Benson, I was told that I had been posted to Germany. Then it was changed, and I was informed that I was going to **NEAF MAMS**, at **Akrotiri**.

I got married on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1965 and I was in Cyprus on the 15<sup>th</sup> May. Like everyone else, married chaps had to wait 3 months before their wife's could join them.

So another walk around with a blue chitty, I got to Air Movements, to find that the MAMS Twynham hut was at the end of the Movements Buildings. Only thing was there was nobody there!!

Yep, NEAF MAMS at that time consisted of lonely old me. It had just been formed and I was the first to arrive. It took about two weeks for the two teams to get together.

So during this wait, the Sgt. chappy, PA to the SAMO, thought that he would task me as his personal lackey. You know the sort, seemed to have a permanent chip on his shoulder.

We eventually got sorted out and operations started. So the three months passed and my wife came out...Whoopee. I got a first floor flat in **Limassol**, and a fortnights leave.

Wait a minute! Malc Porter knocked on our door after three days, on a Friday, and informed me that the unit had been posted to Nicosia. Report for duty on the Monday morning.

So off we go together in a taxi the 70 miles up the road, scout around and we both found our private accommodation. Back to **Akrotiri**, got a three tonner organised and off we go again, back to **Nicosia**. Yep you guessed it another blue chitty. We were just getting the Section building sorted when off we go for the first of two 3 months detachments to **Nairobi**.

Remember the oil lift? My poor wife didn't know what she had let herself in for. In the middle of **Nicosia**, not knowing anybody and abandoned on her own. So after 3 months in **Nairobi**, having had to write to my wife by ordinary mail, costing a fortune at the time of one shilling and three pence to post the letters (no, mobile phones hadn't been invented yet).

We came back and the other team took over, and off they went to Nairobi. So when all this was over the powers that be decided to send us back down to **Akrotiri**. In between doing my bit on the oil lift we used to load up Hastings with fresh meat for **El Aden** and go with it.

This one time we had just finished loading the meat, which was well dripping blood by now, when the techs announced that the A/C was U/S.

So the 2 i/c tells me to nip down to MT to collect the land rover. Those of you familiar with **Nicosia** would know that MT from the pans was miles away. So off I trudge, in the sweltering heat, dressed for flying, with long trousers, long sleeved shirt and tie, eventually getting there sweating me cobs off.

On presenting myself at the MT window asking for the land rover keys, the MT Sgt. duly charges me for being improperly dressed.

On my second time in Nairobi, the poor wife got really upset, we had a chap on compassionate leave, because his wife was heavily pregnant. So she went round to his house to ask if he knew if there was any mail for her. "Yes" he said, but he didn't know that she would be coming round to his house. The poor dear got a taxi to camp, went to the army postal office and the Lance jack wouldn't give her the big pile of mail for her as she didn't have an authorisation chitty. She was beside herself, and didn't know where to turn for help. I don't want to be seen as a whinger but, there were many incidents like this when we poor cannon fodder didn't seem to matter.

The morale at times was none existent, every one, except me, seemed to want to get off MAM. There was this one chap, who was Anglo Indian (yes I do remember his name!!). He was a lovely little fellow, but he had had enough and wanted out.

He spoke to the Boss who refused his application. So that was alright then! I think the Boss was getting worried as so many wanted off. Until a trip to **Israel** came up.

The O/C said "Make sure all of your passports are up to date". "Mine ain't Sir"!! said the young LAC. "Cos its ran out". "WHAT"!!! said the O/C. "Get it renewed now, immediately"!!!

"No thanks", said the little fellow. "I'm Indian and there isn't an embassy here in Cyprus"!!! So off he goes to Station Air Movs.

We had a Flt. Sgt. who got himself posted off to **Episkopi**, he and the Boss didn't see eye to eye. Boy did they fall out. Must have been something to do with the chiefys only task on the Sqn. being saluting all the a/c off the pan, and he refused to wear shorts.

We had one special character; a Flight Sgt. He had the nickname "Bo Diddly". Those of you who knew him have witnessed some of the pleasures of the human species, and wondered at the joys of meeting him. Those of us who had to work with him, have never fully recovered from the experience. I must admit after 44 years, I'm down to only one tablet a day, and the nightmares still persist. I can still see that twitching moustache even now and I don't think anyone ever saw him without his beret on.

Well, where do I start?

He had a lovely lady wife!, who was left some money - well she didn't believe it, so they had it sent out to **Cyprus**, duly counted, and then sent back.

He had his car shipped out there, can't remember what sort, but it had metal hubcaps on it. Well, somebody (no names no pack drill) put some pebbles in one of them.

Honest it made a lovely sound. Only "Old Bo" thought that there was something seriously wrong with the motor.

We set off on one mission, well it started off being only to **EI Adem**. When there we lost the officer, who had to go to Malta. The Sgt. and the two lads had to go onto Tripoli. Bo and me were tasked to go onto **Bengazi**. Only thing was his wife was in **Akrotiri** Hospital after being ejected from a bus, breaking her ankle. Some filthy rumour persisted that she was partial to a portion of laughing juice. Which was totally unfounded!!!

So that left me on my lonesome at **Bengazi**, to turn round a BEVERLEY with masses of stuff to offload.

Whist on the subject of **Bengazi**, we seemed to go there an awful lot. The first time, the two lads and I were billeted in one of the Army camps, originally built by the Italians, before the war. We had to sign for an old decrepit bed, walk miles to a hut with it, which the door didn't shut or fully open, and the roof was FULL of holes. Gave a wonderful view of the stars though. After our successful whinge, we, from then on stayed in, what could loosely be described as "Hotels".

"Old Bo" was a stickler for service etiquette. Like. "Don't call me chiefy, it's Flt. Sgt. to you". "O.k. chiefy" I use to say, for some reason it used to turn him red with rage.

When off duty on detachments, he use to try and be friendly, but just didn't know how to. One time in **Bengazi**, the Sgt, the two lads and I thought that we would go fishing off the sea wall. "Can I come with you Corp"? he said, "Nope", I replied. "Oh go on Corp" he whinged. "Don't call me Corp" I said. So we decided to have a vote.

"Hands up all those who want to have a lovely day with the Flt. Sgt. Sorry old chap your on your own". Well this did not deter "Old Bo", he commenced to follow us at about 30 paces behind. So we all decided to run.

Soon after starting off we heard this loud screech from behind. Stopping and looking back, "Old Bo" was hopping about on one leg clutching one of his feet. Unfortunately he had ran onto a large nail, which had gone through his bondu boot into his foot. In his uncontrolled jumping about he hit his head on an overhanging palm tree, stabbing himself.

So there he was clutching both his head and his foot, shouting at us to stop laughing - no chance! It didn't take long before us four recovered; lots of ale helped.

Many incidents happened in hotels, throughout the Middle East. Another time in Bengazi, it rained, boy did it rain, after a liquid supper, got me head down in this Hotel. Went to pull the curtain to, and the great big wooden pelmet came off knocking me out. I woke during the night soaking wet as the room was flooded, but hey we were two stories up.

At Akrotiri one night we had to load this Hastings; we couldn't wake any of ASF to put the trolleyjack on for lighting. So "Old Bo" got his torch out for us and demanded that we start.

Well after a bit, there was a voice at the door, "What's going on hear?" said this voice. Well "Old Bo" shone his torch on the Station Commanders face. Stood bolt upright, hit his head on the baggage rack, pushing his cap badge into his forehead. Blood was pouring down his face, trying to give the CO an explanation. He refused to go to sick Qtrs. as he was in Charge. I could go on and on, but you might get bored.

We had this lovely Northern Irish LAC who we nicknamed "Shamus", his Nan kept sending him Mars bars. Anyway, we were on our way to **Jordan**, when we lost an engine in the Beverley. We had the rear doors off and were carrying a gert big LOX container and a lightening Pack-up Kit. So we diverted to **Beruit**.

Funny when we landed I counted the engines and all four were there.

Anyway into this Hotel we went. The nighttime entertainment was Scottish country dancing. The next night they kicked Shamus and me out of this Hotel and we had to make our way to this other one. On the way we were chased by a sword yielding Arab, don't ask me why? When we checked in off we go to the room, knackered, get into the double bed, which had a long electric lead hanging down from the ceiling as a light switch. "So" I said to Shamus, "You ready for the light off"? "Yes!" he said. After which we were both electrocuted. Both screamed like banshees. No one came to our rescue

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Lita and I had a lovely bungalow in **Ayos Dometrios, Nicosia**. At the entrance gate there was a large thick, arched grapevine; that was until our golden Labrador Kim chewed his way through it. Our landlord wasn't too pleased. Not even after giving him a crate of cans and a bottle of malt.



Nearby lived both Brian Kent and Malc Porter. Brian recounted the incident that happened one night to him, when there was a fierce exchange of shooting, going on between the Greeks and Turks, outside his house.

The next morning he had to make his way past a dead Turk, who lay in the road for quite some time. This incident is also recalled in Dawn French's book, (page 51). As you know her dad was in the RAF.

We had interesting neighbours, one side was two randy US sailors the other was a minister of the Cypriot Government. He often used to come in for coffee and a chat. Always on his own! He went off on a trip to Geneva, leaving his "Hostess" Egyptian lady friend behind. Well she took a fancy to a handsome young Greek policeman. All the local gossips couldn't wait to tell him when he got back, which resulted in her being unceremoniously and very loudly ejected.

Me being me, invited him in for a chat and asked him " where his wife was" (as he referred to her). We knew where she was as we had seen her in the city. He said, that due to her parents ill health, she had gone back to Egypt.

Yeah right!!

There was this lovely fellow, on **Nicosia** Air Movs., who was a great cricketer and fond of curries. He had his girlfriend flown out to live with him. He got friendly with an RAF policeman (UGH) they dossed down in his spare room, which as you know is not kosher. Anyway he wasn't entitled to any allowances, which resulted in him having one or two spending power difficulties.



He had an unfortunate incident, when he became tour-ex. He sent his PE's down to **Akrotiri**, for shipping to UK. Well, he was met in the cargo shed, by my very good oppo. Geoff Bear, who started to assisted him to offload. This didn't quite go to plan as a large group of MP's turned up and promptly started to unpack the lot. We exchange Christmas cards for many a year, until his final posting came through. God bless, Smudge, my old friend.

Back to **Akrotiri**. We had a fitter Cpl. on the section. Nice chap. He was a class 1 Referee, and was constantly in demand for all the International football games. He absolutely refused to be treated as an Air Mov. coolie. A constant battle between him and the boss over his "Terms of duties" ensued. Resulting in his departure.

The other team Cpl. eventually got his wish and went back to a peaceful life in stores. Ken Grant got promoted and took his place. Now, one night Ken went home to **Limassol** for a peaceful night in, when his neighbour, another RAF bod, who excelled in sinking many gallons of chemical brown fluid had another go at rearranging his lady's features. Well Ken being the nice lad that he is thought that he would pop over to see if he could help and have a friendly chat. It didn't quite work out like that.

For some unknown reason, this bod took exception to the intrusion and an exchange of knuckles took place. The silly bugger didn't know what he had taken on. So as Ken was teaching him the finer points of "the old one two", one of this blokes ears flew off. Well how the bloody hell was Ken to know that he had a false ear!!!! The swine called the MP's. Ken might have mentioned, that the bread and water wasn't too bad.

Lita being on her lonesome, for a good part of our 3 years out there, took up nursing again at the RAF Hospital on the Akrotiri peninsular.

I got to work one day when the Boss told me to report to our Task Manager, Flt. Lt. Harry Pollard at **Episkopi**, who incidentally retired as Sqn. Ldr. 5 Years later we were to become great friends and colleagues (another story). I had to replace two Cpls. who were dispatched from duty quite quickly. Well an incident happened at the joint Movements set up, whereby these two, one RAF one Army, became friends, their wives became mates.

They became over friendly with each other's wives. See where I'm going with this?

Well one of the ladies refused to go back to her old man, so a punch-up took place in front of all the upper brass. Gosh it was awful there, I had to endure it for 6 bloody weeks.

Having left **Nicosia**, as I mentioned, guess where we used to do the odd detachment. Well as I was the sole driver of the Massey Ferguson tractor forklift, lovely little machine.

I was told to drive it to **Nicosia**, for this "task"!! All on my own, in the blistering heat, without stopping. There was no covering on this thing mind!! Took about 5 hours. Remember the roads were not as they are now. Guess what happened when the exercise was over. Yep another 70 or so miles back . Yep that was bloody hot too...

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Another time when we were on our way from **Akrotiri** to **Nicosia**, we got stuck behind an overloaded lorry full of sacks of potatoes. This was beginning to piss me off, as we could not get by, for miles. So out I gets, runs up to the lorry and I thought that I might help it on its way, a bit faster by reliving it of some of its load. So I touched one of the sacks, very gingerly.

Gosh do you know that it fell into my arms. So what was I to do? They made excellent chips I can tell you.

Another detachment, this time to a desert outpost up the coast **from EL Adem**, called **Got al Afraq**. Playing war games. There was absolutely nothing there, no buildings, nothing.

It's where we lost an ARGOSY. The one that on take off did a sharp bank at very low level and hit a pile of drums, stacked up as a makeshift shower.

The aircraft cartwheeled for quite a distance. Unfortunately there were no survivors. There were a few paratroopers on board, as I recall, who had been captured by the defending Rockapes, their punishment was to be sent back to El Adem, as POW's.

There was a rush to do the trim sheet and manifest, which didn't take long and off they went. There were many trips throughout the **Middle East**. Lots of diplomatic mail tasks, some of the regular ones to **Istanbul** and **Tehran**. Boy could I tell some interesting tales of these trips. You would be amazed at what was classed as "Diplomatic Mail". Quite an eye opener.

It was always interesting reading my pay chits. Every time we went anywhere the overseas allowances changed. I could not make head or tail of it.

There are a couple of Senior NCO's worth a mention, who I had the privilege to serve under on NEAF MAMS, both of whom had a 20<sup>th</sup> century outlook, who took an interest

in their subordinates, who were excellent organisers, and dam good all rounders - Flt Sgt Rocky Hudson, Sgt Tony Harris.

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My last detachment, just days before being Tour-ex, was at **Kingsfield**, when over, I had a few hours left to help Lita do the final bits of packing, before the off.

Eventually Tour- Ex, with my final tour of duty posting being granted to **Lyneham** Air Movements. As I wanted to keep my hand in as it were in preparation for Civvy Street.

I was always amazed at the compilation of the then MAMS teams. I don't know what it is now, but then, it consisted of an officer, a Flt. Sgt. a Cpl. and two Airmen.

We were blessed with some SNCO's who had just completed the movements course. Had not worked on aircraft before, did not have driving licences., (which I had difficulty in understanding) I was only a Cpl. Anyway, so what did it matter?

These are my personal views. I did however find my time on MAMS a good insight for the challenges that were to come.

On boarding the Britannia for good old Blighty, Lita and I witnessed a punch up at the base of the aircraft steps, in front of all the passengers, by two (known to us) Air Movers.

Next Air Movements **Lyneham**.

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## **Tactical Supply Wing “Bergathon”**

29 September 2011

The Bergathon challenge, set by TSW has been running for over 15 years, and all the competitive elements from RAF (and Joint) tactical units are spurred to enter and attempt to beat the long-standing champions; 22 Ghurka Sigs who are based at Stafford.

The challenge involves a team of 6, split into 2 groups, who take turns to race round a 10km route, three times each, whilst carrying a bergan of 35lbs, and rifle, for a total of 60km per team. Between the laps there is a competitive element of shooting on the DCCT (laser range) at 100, 200 and 300m respectively. Each 'miss' gains the team a 10 second penalty on their lap time.

So, in early June this year, No 1 Air Mobility Wing (AMW) decided to put a team together and nominated me to organise the event and ensure that our team was appropriately trained.

As it is primarily a charity event, raising money for RAFA and Donna Louise Trust Children's Hospice (based in Stafford), some teams are light-hearted competitors, simply there to raise money and reach completion of the event - not to be scoffed at, many a military person would struggle to complete this! Not so for 1AMW however,

their hugely competitive nature ensured that if they were going to enter, they wanted to be 'in it to win it!'

Fortunately for us, the drawdown of RAF Lyneham meant that there was now a vacant airfield, a circuit of which was almost 9.5km – perfect for training. Many a morning was spent enduring the monotonous route with nothing to look out for except the now very peaceful, Fat Albert free Wiltshire countryside and the air traffic control tower which was over 2/3rds of the way round.

As part of the training, one of the officers taking part, Flt Lt Jack Holt, OC B Flt decided that a good practice for the competitive element (and another way to raise some charity money for a good cause) would be to enter the Nottingham Half Marathon in September. Not enough to simply compete, we would do the event with just over half the weight required for the Bergathon (22lbs) on our backs. A beautiful day, with a good turn out of 12 competitors who all completed the event, this stood us in good stead for the TSW challenge ahead of us.

The night before the event came around, and we headed up to Stafford to be there for the appallingly early start (0515!) and try to get some rest – some got more than others however due to the call of the bar for pre-Bergathon drinks! Dawn on the day of the event, and, having been warned of an extremely warm day that was due, there were lots of water stations being set up – a very ominous sign.

The 1AMW 'A' Team; split down into 2 groups of 3 consisting of:

Flt Lt Jack Holt, Sgt Jeff Aston, and Cpl James Cook and

Flt Lt James Tucker, SAC Stu Nunn, and SAC Robert Waitimas

who managed to complete the course in a highly impressive 6 hours 22minutes which, resulted in (cue the drum roll) a magnificent 1<sup>st</sup> place finish – the first RAF team to achieve this in over 10 years!

Equally inspiring, the 1AMW second team, consisting of

Sqn Ldr Shona Rankin, SAC Monica Holubecka, SAC Candi Heys and

Sqn Ldr Ben Caves, Flt Lt Mike Trewhella, and Sgt James Eade also completed the course in a highly competitive time giving them 4<sup>th</sup> place out of the 18 teams.

Also worthy of mention were all the other movements and RAF Lyneham competitors who participated and helped raise funds for the two worthy charities.

(Thanks to the author Flt Lt Fran Spencer 1AMW)

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That's it for this edition, if you want anything to be added to the Team Brief then send it in to me at [editor@ukmams.co.uk](mailto:editor@ukmams.co.uk)

All the Best

John Conduit