RFAA SOLENT BRANCH NEWSLETTER **Spring 2013**

Dear Friends,

I fear the Spring Newsletter is running a little astern of station (again, I hear you mutter) but Spring itself seems to be running a bit late this year…..and I am only trying to keep in tune with the season! Actually, Steph and I have a lot on at the moment as we prepare to move house. We are staying around Salisbury but moving off of a steep hill and reducing the size of the garden (quite) a bit. Allied with that, many of you will be aware that I have been beset by shingles for the past 6 months, which has complicated some eye problems I already had. Please, no flowers; this is just by way of explanation for my current state of distraction!!

A month or so back, many of us (and I mean many) enjoyed an excellent lunch at The Old Ship at Swanwick. It was a great pleasure to greet some new faces including Roy Elliot (not sighted by me since Retainer in 1974). I was also delighted to take delivery of an unusual item bound for the RFAA Archive in the form of an embroidered silk handkerchief dating from Christmas 1962 and featuring RFA Eddycliff. It was given to a young lady by a young engineer, but alas, she married someone else who came across it after her death and it has now been framed. Thank you Mr Peter Gagg (and Allan Sturmey who made it happen).

The next event is the RFAA AGM and RFA Reunion on Friday 24th May at the Liner Hotel in Liverpool. It is a marvellous venue and I hope as many as can will be there to support our national effort. The Reunion is the major annual fund-raiser for the Association.

Locally, the ruling Junta met recently to tweak the programme and have come up with a plan for a summer cruise or some-such after we muster on 10th July near Emsworth for our Summer Banyan chez the Stuart Pearces. The committee will be joined for the first time by Andy August who is joining us as a co-opted member with a view to relieving Jack H-J as Almoner (keeper-in-touch). Welcome to the corridors of power Andy! I can also announce that we have again booked the Royal Maritime Club at Portsmouth for our Christmas Lunch on 11th December 2013, following the great success last Christmas.

If you haven't tried one of our events, please do consider coming along; you're bound to bump into an old friend, or even an enemy who might have improved in the intervening years! This is how the programme is currently shaping-up:

24 May	RFA Association AGM and RFA Reunion at the Liner Hotel, Liverpool
10 Jul	Summer Banyan at Westbourne, Emsworth PO10 8UB. Details to follow.
Aug	Canal Boat Trip, Chichester. TBC. Details to follow.
4 Sept	Pre-AGM Committee Meeting : please let us have your thoughts.
11 Sept	Solent Branch AGM – at The Ship Anson, Portsmouth
16 Oct	Social Lunch : Central – West: Sir W Tyrell, Rufus Stone, New Forest SO43 7HD
10 Nov	Remembrance Sunday. RFAA Wreath-laying at Marchwood (& lunch TBC)
11 Dec	Christmas Lunch – Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth

With best wishes to all, Aye, Brian