

May 2011



Newsletter

1861 Squadron

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Message from the CO

Welcome to our spring edition of 1861 Squadrons newsletter.

It is 1861 squadron's and the Air Training Corps 70th anniversary this year and we plan to celebrate this as we go through the year. As I write we are going through a time of change. We have lost some staff while gaining new volunteers, while our cadet numbers are broadly the same as in the last edition of the newsletter we have amongst us some new faces – **Welcome to you all.**

We are also impacted by the Strategic Defence and Security Review in that the armed forces and in particular the Royal Air Force are changing in personnel numbers, structures, bases, equipment and ultimately recruitment, I believe it has never been more of an advantage in being an air cadet than now if you wish to join the RAF, with service knowledge, opportunities to visit RAF stations and meet RAF personnel you have can make career choices and understand what qualifications, experience and attitudes the RAF are looking for in potential recruits.

The Review of the Cadet Forces will be publishing their interim report in the summer of this year I'd like to thank everyone for taking the time to respond to the survey from the Ministry of Defence.

Not all is doom and gloom!

Thames Valley Wing have organised camps such as adventure training in North Wales in May and a two week camp at Pirbright at the end of August, with a further adventure training camp in the lake District later in the year.

The squadron has a designated training area now for fieldcraft and adventure training which we can use in the spring/summer evenings and weekends, as a squadron our cadets are regularly gaining places on training courses and small bore shooting is starting to gather pace. We have a busy spring and summer before us, please take every opportunity and participate in gliding, flying, sport, shooting, adventure training, parades and fieldcraft.

We would like to thank all the companies who have made donations to the Squadron over the last few months:

Peter B. Ledbury Ltd, The Bear Hotel, The India Shop, Dolphin Gallery, W H Smiths, Blanchards, Cleggs Chemist, Textiland, Heart to Heart, Neater Cleaners, Yummy Thai, House of Spice, Sylheti Spice, The Motorists Centre and Wantage Buildbase.

1861 (Wantage) Squadron

As of 1st May 2011
 1 Officer, 2 SNCOs, 1 Service Instructor,
 7 Civilian Instructors, 2 Staff Cadets and 32 Cadets

Officer Commanding	Flt Lt Nigel Furlong RAFVR(T)
ATC Adult SNCOs	FS(ATC) Matthew Jefferiss Sgt(ATC) George Winship
Service Instructors	SAC(T) "Pat" Paterson
Civilian Instructors	Mr Russ Aitkin's Mr Sam Buttle Dr Evelyne Godfrey Mr Rupert Neve Mr Mark Packham Mr Stuart Pettifer Mrs Claire Walte
Staff cadets	scFS Joe Mann scFS Amy Winship

Flights

Victor	Valiant
Sgt Riggs	Sgt Cameron
Cpl Bulpin	Cpl T Griffin
Cpl B Griffin	Cpl Lane
Cdt Butcher	Cpl Ross
Cdt Cameron	Cdt Bale
Cdt Casey	Cdt Batten
Cdt Frank-harries	Cdt Beckett
Cdt Halas	Cdt Buttle
Cdt Laney	Cdt Clark
Cdt Miles	Cdt J Griffin
Cdt Morgan	Cdt Hewerdine
Cdt Percival	Cdt Mackellar
Cdt Pettifer	Cdt Moldovan
Cdt Pinhol	Cdt Neve
Cdt Tokelove	Cdt Riggs

Squadron Repaint

On the weekend of the 19th and 20th March 2011, cadets, parents, officers and friends came together to give the HQ and grounds a long overdue make-over. Cadets and officers had removed all the notices and boards on the previous Thursday, enabling a deep clean of the walls followed by a few coats of Magnolia, kindly donated to the Squadron by Wantage Buildbase in East Challow.

While the hall was being transformed work was going on outside. Hedge cutting, weeding and even bulb planting transformed the grounds while the outside of the building received a fresh coat of wood stain.

Thanks go to the following people who gave up their time to help out:

- FLT Nigel Furlong
- Martin Lane
- CPL Phoebe Lane
- CPL Josh Bulpin
- C.I Sam Buttle
- SGT George Winship
- Tish Winship
- FS Amy Winship
- CDT Adam Frank-Harries
- CDT Ian Frank-Harries
- Dave Frank-Harries
- CPL Benjamin Griffin
- CPL Thomas Griffin
- CDT Jacob Griffin
- Tim Griffin



Squadron Awards Evening

The Swan was the venue for the 2010 Awards Ceremony, held on the 9th December last year.

The Mayor, Mr. Jim Sibbald attended and kindly presented the following awards.

Award of CWO Certificate – CWO Sam Buttle

Highest rank a cadet can attain in the ATC.

Award for Adventure Training – Cdt Cpl Phoebe Lane

Awarded to the cadet who has excelled at AT activities – this includes DofE expeditions, night hikes, hiking etc.

Award for Aviation Excellence – Cdt FS Joe Mann

Awarded for enthusiasm, knowledge and promotion of aviation subjects and activities within the squadron.

Drill Star – Cdt Sgt Stuart Cameron

Awarded to the cadet who demonstrates high standards in drill both as an individual and as a member of a drill squad.

Award for Fieldcraft – Cdt Ian Frank-Harries

Awarded to the cadet who has excelled at fieldcraft activities - this includes TLC, field skills training and exercises.

Award for Sports – Cdt Adam Pettifer

Awarded for enthusiasm, attendance of sport activities, both squadron and Wing and sportsmanship.

Best Junior Cadet – Cdt Brandon Neve

Awarded for the most promising cadet to join 1861 sqn in 20010.

Best Cadet – Cdt Sgt Jordan Riggs

Awarded for enthusiasm, attendance, all round good cadet.

Unrewarded Effort – Cdt FS Joe Man & Cdt FS Amy Winship

Awarded to the cadet who is always the volunteer, who is always there and gives a 100% in everything they do.

Award for Leadership – Cdt Sgt Jordan Riggs

Awarded to the cadet who is always there, who carries out their role as a cadet NCO, displays and uses leadership skills.

Best Flight – Valiant Flight

The cadet flight

Cadets award – Sgt Lewis "Squirrel" Tyrrell, RAF

This is an award by the cadets for a member of staff who has made a difference to the squadron.

Arthur Symonds Trophy – Civilian Instructor Phil Davies

Awarded by the OC to a member of staff or cadet who has made an outstanding effort and or impact to the benefit of the squadron.

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award

Cdt Henry Batten, Cpl Benjamin Griffin, Cpl Thomas Griffin, Cdt Rarish Moldovan

Wing Blue – Swimming

Cpl Benjamin Griffin, Cpl Thomas Griffin, Cdt Adam Pettifer, Cdt Sam Tokelove

Finally, thanks go to the Civilian Committee for providing the buffet and organising the raffle which raised £92.00 for the Squadron.

Paddle sport and Climbing Experience

On Saturday the 4th of April 5 Cadets travelled to Pangbourne Water Sports Centre. Corporal Thomas and Benjamin Griffin, Cadet Adam Pettifer, Cadet James Cameron, Cadet Luke Casey and C.I Pettifer. An early start meant a quiet bus journey to the Water Sports Centre. We arrived there at around 9am.

We were given a brief of the day and then split into two groups. Cadet Benjamin Griffin, Cadet Adam Pettifer and Cadet James Cameron were in A group and started off with Climbing. Corporal Thomas Griffin and Cadet Luke Casey were in B Group and started off with canoeing. The sessions were 3 hours long! Canoeing started off with some basic techniques and after a bit of practice most pairs were working well together. We canoed round into the mill pond with friendly competition between the canoes. After a game on the water which involved people swapping canoes we worked on our stern rudders before going off on a long trip down the River Thames. Half way down a water fight broke out!! Our instructor said we had to wait for his signal before we could start but the temptation was too much for a couple of girls and they started before. As a result of this they were targeted by every canoe.

Up until now we had been canoeing downstream so we now had to go upstream. Corporal Thomas Griffin's canoe and C.I Pettifer canoe broke out into a race with Corporal Thomas Griffin and partner making it back first just. After a lengthy lunch we changed activities. In the climbing Cadet Adam Pettifer and Corporal Benjamin Griffin had made it up the most difficult climb so the challenge was on.

After a warm up on the easier climbs we moved on to the more difficult climbs. Cadet Luke Casey almost got to the top on one of them and Corporal Thomas Griffin got to the top. The reason that one of the climbs was so difficult was that it had a big overhang. Cadet Luke Casey and Corporal Thomas Griffin made it up to the overhang without any difficulties. But both Cadet and Corporal just couldn't make it pass the overhang. Sadly we didn't get a second chance so we received some spirited banter from the two who got up. After a little rest we got on with cleaning up the building before a final parade where we all were presented with level 1 paddle power sport certificates. We then packed our bags before heading home.

A great experience and it could be coming up more often and we all recommend you going on it. Thanks to C.I Pettifer for driving us there and back.

CPL Thomas Griffin



Promotions!!!



CPL to SGT– Jordan Riggs and Stuart Cameron

CDT to CPL– Thomas Griffin, Benjamin Griffin and Phoebe Lane

Well done to all the cadets. For the SGTs they all took a turn at being a SGT before they were chosen and for the CPLs there was a Senior Cadet rota. All of the Cadets shone out and fully deserve their rank.

Off-road Cycle Day

On Sunday the 5th of April 4 cadets took part in the wing off-road cycle day. The aim of the day was to teach them how to ride off-road properly. The four cadets were Cdt Luke Casey, Cdt Steven Clark, Cdt Rollo Pinhol and Cdt Bailey Riggs. All of the cadets enjoyed their day and got a lot out of it.

Thanks to the wing staff who ran it and C.I Aitkin's who took them there and back.



Newbury Field craft weekend

Newbury field craft weekend took place at Greenham common in a place called bunker farm. When we got there we had a safety brief and a talk about the types of things we were going to be doing. First we split into 2 groups, one did radio and the other learnt some personal hygiene. Around 12:00 we were given a ration pack and taught to cook and keep ourselves full.

We then moved on to some camouflage and concealment and basher building. After a quick snack and a talk on movement we moved on to Patrolling and hand signals. Another quick break then on to the Ops (observation posts) and sentry duties. By now it was getting dark so we set up our bashers for the night and had a warm ration pack tea before heading out into the night. After a night hike and navigation exercise we bedded down in the cold bashers. In the morning around 6:00 we were all up and brewing up our meals before a day of patrolling and navigation after a morning brief and kit cleanliness check. After a hard weekend we had an overview and a few tips before heading back in a patrolling fashion. Thanks to Newbury Squadron for the weekend and we recommend people wanting to go on a TLC or just get a basic knowledge of field craft to apply for courses like these.

CPL Benjamin Griffin

TLC 1!!!

On the 9th of April a group of cadets from Wantage Squadron attended the Wing field craft event, TLC (Tactical Leadership Course). The group comprised of 5 cadets doing the basic course, 2 Corporals on the intermediate and our 2 Flight Sergeants teaching on the basic course. On the basic course were Cdt Riggs, Cdt Clark, Cdt Pinhol, Cdt Casey and Cdt Morgan. On the intermediate course was Corporal Thomas and Benjamin Griffin and teaching was Flight Sergeant Winship and Mann.

After a quiet bus journey, picking up an Abingdon Cadet along the way, we arrived at Bramley where we were driven down into training base B. We were briefed about the base and the weekend before having a kit inspection and then we were given our Ration Packs and settled down for the night. In the morning we had breakfast before meeting up with our instructors. The intermediate team built bashers and set up a camp and a harbour area before moving on to a bit of revision of patrolling. The basic team had lessons about patrolling and concealment. We then had a lesson covering stealth at night and day. This covered the whole day and we then had tea before preparing for the night exercise. The night exercise was about reconnaissance and information collecting. After the night exercise ended the basic group retired to G50 the hanger and the intermediate and Advanced prepared to spend a night out under the stars. With each member of the 2 teams taking a turn at sentry duty we slept well. In the morning the intermediate teams split up into twos and led the basic teams for the afternoon exercise. The afternoon exercise involved capturing all the enemy staff and collecting the enemies half of the beacon.

The exercise was a success and after a final parade sitting down we collected all our kit and left for home.

Thanks to all the staff that ran the event and Sergeant Winship who took us there and back in the minibus.



Moonraker

On the 12 March 2 teams of 5 entered into the 10 mile night hike in Slough. The course was a 2.5 mile loop around the hills of Slough.

2200h-The first team, Team A, was sent off then immediately called back to base for a team photo and communications check before setting out into the darkening woods.

2215h-For team B the start was very pleasing and they were on the correct path. Team A set out into the night almost straight away losing themselves by going a fair way in the wrong direction.

2250h-Team B were quite happily walking in the right direction when they came across an open field without any of the White markers.

2300h-After a long debate they ended up at the check point skipping 5 of the instructions and turning up on time. Team A were lost by this point and had figured out that they were going in circles and had been since they started.

2320h-Team B by this point were strolling upon a hill counting steps and nearing a huge monument. This was also the last point of reference before we reached base so we stopped for a quick snack before taking bearing and setting of again.

2335h-Team A were lost again after finding their way back onto the route half an hour earlier. Team B were at base and enjoying a cup of soup and a hot dog. Setting out on the same route as Team A, who were heading out on to check point D. Unknown to team A was this would be there last check point.

2400h-Team B were storming though the woods until they came to a cross of paths which wasn't listed on the map after a healthy debate in which Sgt Riggs scared away all the roosting birds, they were on the correct path heading toward the Penultimate check point. Unfortunately bad news awaited team A, according to the time sheet they were to slow and needed to up the pace or quit, so boldly they quit and got a lift back to base to await the arrival of team B. After rolling in triumphantly. a bite to eat straight back to the mini bus on the way to the Squadron.

0200h-We were bedding down in the Squadron after what most cadets described as a fun event and a great team building exercise.

Team A	Team B
Cdt Henry Batten	Sgt Stuart Cameron
Cpl Phoebe Lane	Sgt Jordan Riggs
Cdt Luke Casey	Cpl Josh Bulpin
Fsg Amy Winship	Cpl Benjamin Griffin
Cdt Ian Frankharris	Cpl Thomas Griffin

Unsung Wantage Heroes Honoured

Two unsung Air Cadet volunteers from Wantage have been awarded top Commendations at a glittering Thames Valley ceremony for their work supporting local Oxford youth.

The awards were presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire, Mrs Mary Bayliss JP, at Edward Brooks Barracks near Abingdon on Thursday 9th December 2010.



The two recipients were volunteer Flight Sergeant Matt Jefferies and Cadet Sergeant Chris Matthews. Both parade with the Wantage based 1861 (Wantage) Squadron who meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at their Headquarters located on Icknield Lane.

In addition to his service as the Training Officer with Wantage Air Cadets, Flight Sergeant Matt Jefferies has risen to prominence over the last 2 years as the Radio Communications Officer for cadets across Oxfordshire and Berkshire and is the driving force behind the areas highly successful Radio Communications training and support. In the last year he has helped cadets achieve 30 Cadet Communicator badges, trained 20 Staff to Basic Communicator level and issued 24 Squadrons with standardised and fully operational radio equipment.

Cadet Sergeant Chris Matthews went solo on his gliding scholarship course going on to achieve a rare advanced gliding certificate before going on to be awarded his full graded pilot wings. Chris has also completed an Air Cadet Pilot Navigation Training Scheme with the Royal Air Force flying from the home of the Harrier – RAF Wittering. In addition to his aviation skills he was also a key member of the Wantage Air Cadets organising and delivering cadet training on weekend activities as well as parade nights, and instructed cadets in aviation subjects for their leading and senior classification exams with considerable success.

Wing spokesman, Squadron Leader Mark Trevena, said: "Both Wantage heroes have worked quietly and tirelessly, displaying endless commitment and dedication to the Air Training Corps. Indeed, they have all been an inspiration to us all; not only in Thames Valley Wing, but also for their local work with local Air Cadets and their wider support of the community. We congratulate them on their achievements."

More information can be found out about the Air Cadets at www.aircadets.tv.

5a side football

On Sunday the 17th of April a team of 6 cadets from Wantage Squadron took part in the Wing 5a side tournament. After an early morning we arrived in RAF Benson. We were briefed about the day before getting changed and the games started. We were the second game to be played with the games being 5 minutes long without a half time. In our first game a solid defensive performance from CPL Thomas Griffin and a blinder in goal from CDT Henry Batten gave us a 0-0 draw. This draw was actually against the team who ended up winning the tournament. After a long break we played our second game. Sadly a few mistakes cost us dearly and we lost 3-0 but we vowed to win our next game. Our last game was against a team who had lost their previous two. We played well and two goals from CPL Thomas Griffin gave us a 2-0 to give us 6 points from a possible 9. 1 for a loss, 2 for a draw and 3 for a win. We expected to be in the plate but because of time issues they dropped the plate and only had the cup. We missed out on the cup by 2 points but we enjoyed the knock out stages and mingling with other squadrons. The cup was won by Brize Norton in the girls as well as the boys. After a quick clean up we had final parade then left for home.

Thank you to FS Jefferies for taking us their and well done to the team. CDT Henry Batten, CPL Thomas Griffin, CDT Rollo Pinhol, CDT Luke Casey, CDT James Cameron and CPL Benjamin Griffin.

CPL Thomas Griffin

We need your help!

The Air Training Corps is just not for teenagers! All staff on air cadet squadrons are volunteers, often parents of cadets or ex-cadets themselves. If you are interested in training or teaching young people in adventure training, aviation subjects, sport, target shooting, aero modelling, organising the Duke of Edinburgh's award on the squadron or back office roles such as managing stores, office administration, planning training programmes, events and activities then please come along. You do not need any specific qualifications as we will provide free training. All we ask for is your time and enthusiasm. The RAF offers training courses and qualifications to all staff in a number of the training syllabus subjects from airframes and aircraft engines, sport coaching and mentoring to adventure training qualifications.

It has always been the policy of the ATC that all staff members, whether uniformed or civilian, are security and CRB checked.

Dickensian Evening

Wantage Market Place was transformed on Friday, 3rd December 2010 for the annual Dickensian evening celebrations. Air Cadets were there with a combined recruitment and fund raising stall.

A big thank you is owed to the committee members who made it happen and to the cadets who represented the squadron on a very cold night. £95.00 was raised for the Squadron.

1861 Squadron Civilian Committee

The Air Training Corps is structured in such a way that as well as the military influence there is an allied civilian structure. In fact the Civilian Committees are the backbone of the Corps and determine the running of the ATC from squadron level through to representation on the Air Defence Council.

Each ATC squadron has a civilian committee. This comprises of parents and friends of the squadron. Their role is to ensure the squadron maintains direction, assisting the Commanding Officer and raising funds.

Fund raising is vital as although each squadron is allocated a small sum towards its administration costs, all other expenses must be paid for from non-public funds and, therefore, have to be met by the squadron itself. Other than flying, gliding, shooting and some sport, all other activities are supported through fund raising.

Many parents and friends get a great deal of enjoyment, pleasure and fun out of assisting as members of the Civilian Committee. The civilian committee meets to their own timetable, usually once every two months, under the direction of a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

We're always looking for parents or friends of the squadron who are keen to get involved either by helping out from time to time, or by joining the civilian committee.

Current members of the Civilian Committee are:

Chair – Louise Preece	Betty Fletcher
Secretary – Dave Harries	Sabine Furlong
Treasurer – Martin Lane	Tim Griffin
Dot Ashmore	Jenny Hannaby (Honorary Member)
Patricia Ashmore	Joanna Morgan
Cath Davies	Val Paddock
Rob Davies	Tish Winship

Squadron Open Evening & Grand Draw

On Wednesday, 3rd February 2011 the Squadron hosted an open evening. The cadets prepared a number of displays, including Duke of Edinburgh, Field Craft, Radio Operator, Gliding, and the Civilian committee laid on a buffet.

The main event was the Grand Draw which was compered by the Mayor, Mr. Jim Sibbald. Over thirty prizes were on offer kindly donated by members of the Civilian Committee and the following local businesses: Peter B. Ledbury Ltd, , Bear Hotel, The India Shop, Dolphin Gallery, W H Smiths, Blanchards, Cleggs Chemist, Textiland, Heart to Heart, Neater Cleaners, Yummy Thai, House of Spice, Sylheti Spice, The Motorists Centre (Wantage).

The grand draw raised £231.42 for the Squadron.

Calendar of Events

6-8 May 2011 – Duke of Edinburgh's Award Bronze practice expedition, Bramley

8 May 2011 – RBL Sponsored Walk on the Ridgeway, Harwell

15 May 2011 – Inter Squadron athletics competition, Tilsey Park

17 May 2011 – Classification Exams

20-21 May 2011 – Cadet First Course, RAF Brize Norton

21 May 2011 – Wantage Charity Ball, Wantage Civic Centre

28 May to 4 June 2011 – Adventure Training Camp, North Wales

4 June 2011 – Harwell D-Day Memorial Parade

5 June 2011 – Supplementary Drill Course, RAF Benson

12 June 2011 – Publicity and recruitment tent, Wicklesham Lodge Farm

17 June 2011 – Cadet NCO courses, RAF Brize Norton

9 July 2011 – North American Officers BBQ, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom

15 July 2011 – Cadet NCO courses, RAF Brize Norton

5-7 August 2011 – Tactical Leadership Course, Bramley

6-13 August 2011 – Summer Camp, RAF Cosford

2-5 September 2011 – Airborne Forces March, Arnhem, Netherlands

Contact Information

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Thames Valley Wing website: <http://www.aircadets.tv/>

RAF Air Cadets website: <http://www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets/>

Interested in joining?

You can visit us at the above address on Tuesday and Thursday from 19:15 to 21:45 hours. To avoid a wasted trip, please make contact with us before you arrive to make sure that we are on site at that time as we occasionally visit local RAF stations.