

Honoring those who served  70 years later: in their own words

RAF Mildenhall, UK

# MARAUDER

Oct. 15, 2004

RAF Mildenhall 70th anniversary Special Edition

Vol. 17 No. 41



1934 - 2004



1934  
1944  
1954  
1964  
1974  
1984  
1994  
2004

# MARAUDER

VOLUME 17, No. 41

OCT. 15, 2004

PROUDLY SERVING IN EAST ANGLIA SINCE 1943



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◆ Servicemembers and their families are encouraged to submit any articles which inform, educate or entertain *Marauder* readers, including stories highlighting individuals for exemplary service or unique unit training.

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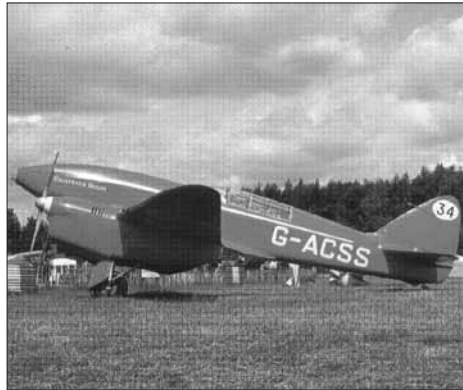
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COURTESY PHOTO

## FEATURES



### 70 years of history

RAF Mildenhall celebrates its 70th anniversary next week. Squadrons and units around base share their history as it relates to being here. Part of the 70th history includes the London to Melbourne race. Sixty-three entries from 13 countries took part in the 11,000 mile race, won by the DeHaviland Comet in two days, 23 hours and 18 minutes. *(For more information, look through the 70th anniversary Special Edition.)*

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### ECAMP inspection is coming

The Environmental Compliance Assessment and Monitoring Program is Monday through Oct. 22.

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### B-ACR celebrates 52 years of goodwill

The British-American Community Relations Committee celebrates 52 years of community relations in the local area.

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### Editorial

Col. Richard T. Devereaux, 100th Air Refueling Wing commander, reflects on the history of the U.S. Air Force at RAF Mildenhall and the good relationship during that time with the local community.

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### Editorial

Sqn. Ldr. James Savage, RAF station commander, talks about the rich heritage, teamwork and cooperation between the British and American members here.

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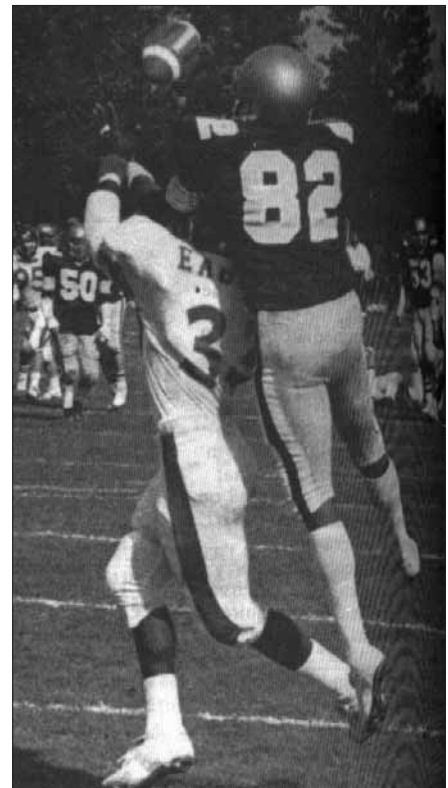
### Brits Bits

Maggie Cotner, 100th Air Refueling Wing community relations advisor, tells of some of the community events held by the British-American Community Relations Committee over the years.

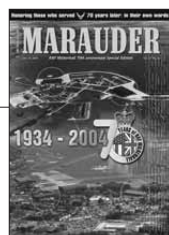


### Health & Fitness

The history of the RAF Mildenhall Marauders football team is relived by a former team player. *(For more information, see Page 34.)*



COURTESY PHOTO



## On the Cover

Two aerial views of the base show how it has changed over 70 years. *For more information, look through this Special Edition of the Marauder. (Graphic by Gary Rogers)*





# Reflecting on 70 years of ‘special relationship’

By **COL. RICHARD T. DEVEREAUX**

*100th Air Refueling Wing commander*

Seventy years ago, Mildenhall was the center of attention for the international press, London high society and large crowds from across the country as King George V opened the Royal Air Force’s newest, most modern bomber station.

Less than a year after opening, RAF Mildenhall hosted another great event, the first ever full-scale review of the Royal Air Force — the service that would eventually preserve the freedom of the free world over the skies of England during the Battle of Britain.

However, the battleground for RAF Mildenhall’s bomber crews throughout World War II was not the summer skies of the Battle of Britain; it was the cold, dark and terrifying skies over occupied Europe. During this conflict, RAF Mildenhall’s record was exceptional, its crews playing a major part in the bombing offensive, a record-breaking part in the D-Day landings, and an indirect but pivotal part in the Battle of Britain. Except for a brief period when the station’s concrete runway was installed, its crews flew and fought continuously throughout the conflict.

RAF Mildenhall’s association with those World War II RAF crews remains a source of enormous pride to us. It was a tremendous privilege for me to host the Mildenhall Register Reunion earlier this year and meet so many of the station’s RAF veterans. Hearing their stories is a reminder of the legacy that we, as part of the U.S. Air Force, have inherited from our RAF forefathers at this great station.

Of course, many British personnel still play a vital part in our mission today, as we employ some 560 Ministry of Defence civilians and nearly 110 direct-hire British nationals — we could not do our job without them. Indeed, many of them know far more about RAF Mildenhall than us transient military personnel will ever know, and the continuity and expertise they offer is invaluable.

Since our arrival at RAF Mildenhall in 1950, we have also inherited the support of a warm and welcoming local community. Many generations of American men and women



**COL. RICHARD T. DEVEREAUX**

have made close and lasting friendships with their British hosts. I am also continuously struck by the countless memorials across East Anglia to our U.S. Army Air Force forebears. I recently visited the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich and was moved by the dedication of its British staff to provide a living memorial to one part of our U.S. Air Force heritage.

Our countries not only have a special relationship at the national level; we who have

been able enough to serve at RAF Mildenhall are most fortunate to have enjoyed an equally special relationship with our local British hosts. It’s a relationship that feels like family. The local community is as much a part of RAF Mildenhall’s history, and as much a part of the great achievements of the base, as the men and women who have served here. It is a great honor for me to be able to celebrate the special anniversary of such an historic and proud RAF station. I know of no other U.S. Air Force base with a greater continuous operational history than RAF Mildenhall.

## RAF Mildenhall: Rich heritage of teamwork, cooperation

By **SQN. LDR. JAMES SAVAGE**

*Royal Air Force station commander*

RAF Mildenhall formally opened on Oct. 19, 1934, for the start of a landmark in aviation history, the Great Air Race. The widespread interest in the air race underlined the excitement created by the new and exotic field of aviation. RAF Mildenhall’s history now spans nearly three quarters of the first century of manned, powered flight.

Over that time, the station has seen aviation advance enormously. The winners of the air race took nearly three days to complete their journey from Mildenhall to Melbourne, a sensational time in those days. Only 40 years later, the SR-71 Blackbird made the 3,479 mile journey from New York to London, en route to RAF Mildenhall, in just one hour and 55 minutes — an average speed of 1,817 mph.

I am tremendously proud of the station’s RAF heritage but since 1950, RAF Mildenhall has been home to a wide variety of different U.S. units whose achievements have also been remarkable. Those units have drawn inspiration from the feats of their World War II forebears, and are rightly proud of their inheritance. The station’s current host unit — the 100th Air Refueling Wing — traces its East Anglian heritage back to the 100th Bombardment Group, which flew from Thorpe Abbots during World War II. The group became known as the “Bloody Hundredth” due to some particularly costly missions, even though its overall loss rates were broadly representative of the entire U.S. 8th Air



**SQN. LDR. JAMES SAVAGE**

Force in the strategic bombing offensive against Germany.

More than 40,000 young Americans perished in that campaign, fighting not to defend their own homeland but protecting the values of freedom and democracy and helping to liberate a subjugated Europe. Without their sacrifices, western Europe would have endured decades of oppression, and Britain would have remained isolated off a dark and hostile Continent.

Of course, World War II marked the start of a great and enduring alliance between our two nations. America’s commitment to Europe’s freedom and security continued after World War II as her forces stationed here provided a shield against communist expansion.

There is no doubt that the many tens of thousands of U.S. Airmen who served at RAF Mildenhall throughout the Cold War were prepared to die, if necessary, to protect us and the values we hold dear.

Fortunately, a major war never came, but RAF Mildenhall played a conspicuous role in many other operations, from post Cold War conflicts and peacekeeping operations to the delivery of humanitarian relief.

A great many of the base’s Airmen have also left a lasting impression on RAF Mildenhall’s local community. Even today, many are still engaged in local voluntary work, a great deal of which goes unsung, whether it is delivering meals on wheels, supporting local schools, churches and youth sports teams, or hosting thousands of special needs athletes over the 23 years of the Joan Mann Special Sports Day.

Over 70 years, RAF Mildenhall’s British, Australian, Canadian, New Zealand and American Airmen and women, and the civilians who have supported them, have all played their part in the defence of the values our nations share, and in the life of the local community that has welcomed them. RAF Mildenhall’s tradition of teamwork, cooperation and service embodies, in microcosm, the strength of those alliances over the decades. I, too, am proud to celebrate this landmark.



# ORM: Valuable tool is more than just common sense

By Lt. Col. John A. Glaze

67th Special Operations Squadron commander

OK, I accept operational risk management is a boring topic to read about in the paper. After all, we talk about it a lot around our workplace, and in actuality, very few weeks pass in which you don't hear the phrase ORM.

But here are a few known truths:

◆ ORM is talked about by leadership and safety because it has proven its mettle in combat and at home station. We all ought to be using it at home as well.

◆ ORM is more than just common sense. It's an effective decision-making tool to be used by Airmen at all levels to increase operational efficiency by identifying and mitigating risk, thereby increasing the probability of mission success.

◆ ORM is also a valuable tool for maintaining combat readiness in peacetime and ensuring combat success when at war. Each and every Airman, aircraft and piece of Air Force equipment is currently playing an important role in the Global War on Terrorism.

In fact, for that reason, one could say ORM is defending our homes, families and nation. Now, more than ever, every Airman must know how to manage risk to protect our limited and valuable resources to ensure our mission success and possibly our safe return home. Thought of in that way, it doesn't hurt to review the ORM approach, does it? But you're thinking to yourself, "ORM is just plain common sense."

Well yes, common sense is a critical element in managing risk; however, common sense is only an ingredient and not the process as some tend to think.

In 1996, the Air Force endorsed ORM as the approved process for managing risk. Unfortunately, many Airmen have been slow to adopt ORM. However, ORM is a proven and simple six-step process, guided by four principles, easy to learn and apply, not only at work, but in our everyday lives.

So now you're thinking, "OK, I'll use it already, but how do I remember this stuff?"

The answer is we just have to remember ORM by using ORM.

Its purpose is to minimize risk to an acceptable level based on the benefits of a particular mission and to manage risk so a mission can be accomplished with the minimum amount of loss. Think of it like this: if we use ORM, there's a better than even chance we won't lose it (aircraft, mission, friend — you fill in the blank).

The goal of ORM is not to eliminate risk. ORM accepts "risk" as inherent in what Airmen do, especially when it comes to flying combat aircraft.

We all know if the decision to launch aircraft was based on the absence of risk, the Air Force would never get off the ground.



PHOTO BY KAREN ABEYASEKERE

**Cutting it fine:** Senior Airman Travis Fry, 100th Maintenance Squadron aircraft structural maintenance, trims a bell mouth assembly (air refueling pod extended tunnel assembly) for a MC-130P Combat Shadow refueling pod. Because ASM personnel have identified the hazards and risks associated with each task they perform, Senior Airman Fry ensures he is wearing the correct personal protective equipment when working on equipment such as this.

Instead of trying to eliminate all risk, Airmen need to concentrate on identifying and limiting "unnecessary risk" — common sense tells us that. However, after unnecessary risk has been limited, risk still remains and must be addressed.

For instance, if you're teaching your child how to ride a bicycle, you obviously wouldn't risk teaching him or her around heavy traffic. Considering chances of success are better on a smooth surface vs. gravel or uneven ground, does a possible skinned knee outweigh the benefit of personal pride and sense of accomplishment gained from riding a bike for the first time? Limit risk by lifting training wheels higher over time, limit time over target surface, start with small distances between parents, and have a first aid kit and a reward handy.

Decision makers at the appropriate level must weigh the costs and benefits of each mission and make tough calls. However, always making the conservative decision is not the answer.

But seriously, failure to accept risk when benefits outweigh the cost is risk aversion — a syndrome which can render a leader and or an organization powerless.

As our chief of staff, Gen. John P. Jumper, recently wrote, "The Air Force cannot become so risk averse that we jeopardize the mission." On the other hand, proceeding with missions when the costs outweigh the benefits will lead to more unnecessary mishaps, damaged equipment, injuries and deaths. The latter is simply not a cost we can afford to pay. If ORM limits that, then it's obviously worth remembering how it works.

The Air Force needs professional Airmen with

common sense and the capability to make wise decisions, and more than that, they need Airmen who understand ORM so wise risk management decisions are made at the appropriate level.

Ultimately, effective use of ORM may mean the difference between mission success and failure, and in some cases, life or death.

Common sense is an important part of the risk management process, but we cannot rely solely on common sense to ensure mission success.

When it comes to managing risk, we all need to understand and apply the ORM process.

## ORM process

- ◆ Identify the Hazards
- ◆ Assess the Risk
- ◆ Analyze Risk Control Measures
- ◆ Make Control Decisions
- ◆ Implement Risk Controls
- ◆ Supervise and Review

## ORM principles

- ◆ Accept no unnecessary risk
- ◆ Make risk decisions at the appropriate level
- ◆ Accept risk when benefits outweigh the costs
- ◆ Integrate ORM into Air Force Doctrine and Planning at all levels



## NEWS BRIEFS

### Quarterly awards

The Team Mildenhall quarterly awards are Oct. 27 at 3 p.m. in the Galaxy Club.

Uniform is service dress for award nominees and uniform of the day for others attending.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Richard Burrell at 238-5185.

### Deputy IG position

There is a vacancy for a deputy inspector general for the 100th Air Refueling Wing. Applicants must hold the rank of master sergeant or above with a minimum of 10 years service. They should also have strong writing, organizational and personal communications skills.

The person hired will be responsible for carrying out the IG mission for all RAF Mildenhall partners and four geographically separated units.

Duties will include developing and providing briefings to commanders, staff and newcomers; and providing training to investigating officers.

Prospective candidates should notify their supervisor before applying. The projected start date is Nov. 15.

For more information, call 238-5768.

### ANG vacancies

The Alabama Air National Guard has part-time vacancies for members planning Palace Chase, Palace Front or separating from active-duty. There are vacancies for the following Air Force specialty codes: 1N0X1, 2A0X1B, 2A6X2A, 2A333B, 2A6X1A, 2A7X1, 2A7X3, 2F0X1, 2R0X1, 2T31X1, 2T3X1, 2S0X2, 2S0X2, 2W0X1, 2W1X1, 3E4X3, 3E5X1, 3E5X1, 3P0X1, 4B0X1, 4D0X1, 4N0X1 and 6X0X1.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Vonsetta Roberts at 312-358-9191 or e-mail [vonsetta.roberts@almont.ang.af.mil](mailto:vonsetta.roberts@almont.ang.af.mil), or call Staff Sgt. David Coram at 312-358-9190 or e-mail [david.coram@almont.ang.af.mil](mailto:david.coram@almont.ang.af.mil).

### CGO council holds conference

The European region Company Grade Officers' Council is hosting its annual conference Oct. 27 to 30 at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

The conference is open to all CGOs stationed in the European theater.

For more information, call Capt. Jason Simmons at 480-8761.

# ECAMP begins Monday, runs to Oct. 22

**R**AF Mildenhall's Environmental Compliance Assessment and Management Program inspection begins Monday and runs through Oct. 22.

The purpose of the inspection is to identify areas of non-compliance and to achieve increased awareness of environmental standards.

ECAMP inspectors come in to perform "spot checks," said Dave Nutt, 100th Civil Engineer Squadron environmental program manager. Their findings, other than "positive," can range from substandard performance in management practices to one of three main environmental findings: minor, major and significant health or environmental hazards.

Inspectors will debrief the senior leadership daily, and findings of health threatening conditions, if they exist, will be acted upon immediately, Mr. Nutt said. Otherwise, units have 90 days to put matters right, he said.

The external ECAMP team, made up of active-duty and civilian military members from throughout the Air Force, inspects Team Mildenhall every three years. The base also performs its own internal ECAMP inspections between the external inspections.

ECAMP inspectors often find units "positive," but in other units they find common points of noncompliance, said Karl Kunas, 100th CES. He provides the following "tips" for units to check to ensure compliance.

#### Hazardous material:

- ◆ Ensure Hazard Communication Program training is documented on Air Force Form 55.
- ◆ Ensure AF Form 3952 hazmat

authorization paperwork is current and available for all hazmats, or verify the hazmat is exempt for small quantities and consumer-type use.

◆ Ensure materials are properly stored.

◆ Ensure combustibles, like paper, rags and cardboard boxes, are not stored inside flammable lockers.

◆ Ensure material safety data sheets are readily available.

**Hazardous waste:**

◆ Ensure hazwaste training is documented on AF Form 55 and a training certification is provided to the hazwaste storage area.

◆ Ensure accumulation point(s) are secure and waste containers are closed.

◆ Ensure appropriate hazardous waste profile sheets are available at accumulation point(s).

**Organizational fuel tanks:**

◆ Ensure tanks are properly marked: fuel type, "no smoking" signs, and visible from 50 feet and from each approach.

◆ Ensure unattended tank components are secured, including dispensing nozzles, power sources, hatches and other access points, and low-point drains.

◆ Ensure secondary containment areas are free of standing water. Place a 100th CES service call when emptying is needed, and make note of the work order number.

For more information, visit the environmental issues folder under 100th CES on the shared drive, or call 238-5836 or 238-5831.

*(Information courtesy of the 100th Civil Engineer Squadron.)*

## RAF Mildenhall 70th anniversary schedule finalized

**R**AF Mildenhall's 70th anniversary celebrations begin Sunday. Events highlighting the base's history over the past 70 years are open to all Team Mildenhall members and run through Oct. 23.

◆ Sunday at 9:30 a.m. — Remembrance service at the chapel combined with Protestant service. All are welcome, and a reception follows the service.

◆ Tuesday at noon — Luncheon in the Galaxy Club ballroom to celebrate U.S. and U.K. alliance.

◆ Wednesday at 2 p.m. — Plaque presentation by 100th Air Refueling Wing commander to Mickey's T-Bar for more than 50 years of contribution.

◆ Wednesday at 4 p.m. — Tops in Blue "tailgate" party near air traffic control tower and base operations complex. Activities include food booths and static displays of aircraft, hardstands and ramp. Buses will travel back and forth between food area and static displays.

◆ Wednesday at 7 p.m. — Tops in Blue performance at Bldg. 610.

◆ Thursday at 1 to 2:30 p.m. — Historical panel discussion including local residents who have lived and worked around the base over the past 70 years; includes stories, questions and answers.

◆ Thursday at 2:30 a.m. — Historic burial of a time capsule next to Middleton Hall; capsule includes items from past to present, to be buried and opened on the 100th anniversary of the base.

◆ Oct. 22 at 6 p.m. — Dinner with 1940s theme in the Galaxy Club ballroom.

◆ Oct. 23 at 9 a.m. — 5K, 1K 100-yard fun runs near Hangar 528.

◆ Monday through Oct. 22 — Pop-up trivia: questions e-mailed throughout the week, with prizes at the end; scavenger hunt: clues and hints to areas of historical significance e-mailed, with prizes at the end; presentations to local Department of Defense Dependents Schools on the history of RAF Mildenhall; historical movies "The Lion has Wings" and "Target for Tonight" shown during lunch at the Galaxy Club and during family night dinner at Middleton Hall.

For more information, contact Lt. Col. Marion Heard at 238-8508.

*(Information courtesy of Lt. Col. Marion Heard.)*



# One of Air Force's oldest flying units is still going strong

The 95th Reconnaissance Squadron is one of the oldest flying units in the Air Force. Dating from World War I, the 95th RS continues its service in Europe and the Mediterranean region that began in 1918. The 95th RS began as the 95th Aero Squadron at Kelly Field, Texas Aug. 20, 1917, flying Nieuport 28s. After completing training, the 95th departed for France.

During the course of the war, the 95th AS served in support of the French Sixth and Eighth Armies and the First Army of the American Expeditionary Force. It was during this time the 95th AS adopted the emblem of the kicking mule on a blue surround to mark its aircraft. The blue surround represented the units arena of operations, while the kicking mule symbolized the units striking power. Throughout the war, the 95th AS transitioned to fly Spad XIII's followed by SE-5s.

The squadron saw its share of famous flyers meet their end. While flying with the 95th AS. Maj. Raoul Lufberry, famous ace and inventor of the Lufberry Circle maneuver, died in action while commanding the squadron. Quentin Roosevelt, son of Teddy Roosevelt, also was killed in action with the 95th AS.

By the termination of hostilities, the men of the 95th received credit for the destruction of more than 35 enemy aircraft and 12 balloons while conducting 230 combat patrols.

The inter-war period saw the 95th AS moved, redesignated and inactivated several times. The squadron began operating diverse aircraft, like the MB-3, Fokker D-VII, PW-8, PW-9, P-1, P-12, P-26 and A-17 aircraft.

The 95th AS became the 95th Pursuit Squadron on March 14, 1921. The kicking mule motif was officially approved as the unit emblem on March 4, 1924, while the unit was

stationed at Selfridge Field, Mich. The 95th PS became an attack squadron in 1935 and on Oct. 17, 1939 became the 95th Bombardment Squadron. The squadron found itself flying anti-submarine patrols along the west coast of the United States in B-18 Bolos and B-23s on the eve of World War II.

When the war began, the 95th BS was training into the higher performance B-25 Mitchell medium bomber. During early 1942, the squadron received credit for sinking the first enemy submarine, a small Japanese submarine, caught on the surface off the Oregon coast. The squadron quickly found itself in the thick of battle. The 95th BS contributed more than one-third of the crews that flew on Col. Jimmy Doolittle's Tokyo raid.

The unit changed aircraft yet again as it prepared to move overseas for combat. This time it was the temperamental B-26 Marauder, unaffectionately known by its crews as "the widowmaker." The 95th BS went to Algeria and entered combat against Rommel's forces in the Tunisian Campaign, where crews bombed German supply depots, bridges, roads and troop concentrations. After the North Africa Campaign, the 95th BS followed the Allies into Italy basing in Sardinia and Corsica, then moved into France in September 1944. Immediately after VE Day, the 95th moved to Linz, Austria, for occupation duty and actually liberated a concentration camp as the first Allied arrivals to

the region. The 95th BS's wartime total included 601 combat missions in 28 months of operations.

After a short period of inactivation, the 95th BS re-activated in 1952 for the Korean War. This time the 95th BS went to combat in B-26 Invaders flying light bombardment, night intruder and reconnaissance missions. Following the Korean War, the 95th BS flew B-66 bombers in Japan until 1958 when it once again inactivated.

The 95th BS re-activated in October 1982 as the 95th Reconnaissance Squadron flying the U-2/TR-1 at RAF Alconbury in the United Kingdom. When operations ceased at RAF Alconbury in 1993, the existing 922nd RS flying the RC-135 Rivet Joint and Combat Sent aircraft at RAF Mildenhall was renamed the 95th RS to retain the more historic unit. The 95th RS continues to operate from RAF Mildenhall, as well as Souda Bay, on the Greek island of Crete.

Today's 95th RS and Detachment 1 belong to the 55th Wing headquartered at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, Neb. The squadron continues to support national and theater commanders with swift intelligence data. The 95th RS remains today as the Air Force's oldest combat unit. With 30 campaign and unit citation streamers, it is also one of the most decorated squadrons still in existence.

*(Information courtesy of the 95th Reconnaissance Squadron.)*



COURTESY PHOTO

**Blast from the past:** This World War I era aircraft once belonged to the 95th Pursuit Squadron.

## The best never rest!

# High standards of past have become 727th AMS traditions today

The 727th Air Mobility Squadron inherited its history from the 627th Military Airlift Support Squadron. The 627th MASS was activated at RAF Mildenhall on Dec 27, 1966, and its mission was to provide command and control, logistics support, and aircraft and passenger services for Military Air Transport Service and commercial aircraft.

These aircraft were primarily C-124 Globemasters and C-141 Starlifters — both brand new aircraft in the mid '60s.

The 627th MASS rapidly established itself as one of the top units in the Air Mobility Command, and earned the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award in 1968, just two years after activation.

When the first C-5A Galaxy flew from the United States to Europe in 1970, the 627th handled the mission.

On Aug. 1, 1983, the 627th MASS was deactivated and remained so until the Air Force called upon its support at RAF Mildenhall again on Jan. 15, 1993.

In May 1994 the then new C-17A Globemaster II flew its first operational mission to Europe, and the 627th MASS was the squadron to receive it.

Air refueling had become an iatrical part of the Air Mobility Command's mission by 1994, so July 1 of that year the 627th MASS was redesignated the 627th Air Mobility Support Squadron to more properly reflect its mission.

The squadron continued it's winning ways, capturing the AMC Headquarters En Route Unit Effectiveness Award for 1995 to 1996, and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award from 1997 to 1999.

The unit 627th AMSS was renamed the 727th Air Mobility Squadron March 15, 2001.

The squadron carries on its tradition today supporting the mission and providing first-class service in passenger service, and freight and aircraft handling.

*(Information courtesy of the 727th Air Mobility Squadron.)*





# 'By day or by night'

## 488th IS maintains tradition of providing critical information to tactical warfighters, decision-makers

The 488th Intelligence Squadron is responsible for a variety of missions that provide critical intelligence to tactical warfighters and national decision-makers. It provides tactical intelligence to NATO, allied forces, U.S. national decision-makers and the men and women in the cockpits.

The 488th IS performs this mission as part of an integrated electronic combat team.

The squadron traces its lineage back to June 1967 and Det. 1, 6985th Security Squadron at RAF Upper Heyford. It was designated the 6988th Electronic Security Squadron in June, 1980, to honor a unit based at Yokota Air Base, Japan, which was inactivated in 1972. The unit moved to RAF Mildenhall in August 1970. In 1974, Det. 1 of the 6985th Security Squadron was redesignated as the 6954th Security Squadron.

The last redesignation was Oct. 1, 1993, when it became the 488th IS.

In August 1979, the 6954th Security Squadron was redesignated as the 6954th Electronic Security Squadron to coincide with the redesignation of U.S. Air Force Security Service as Electronic Security Command.

In June 1980, the 6954th Electronic Security Squadron was redesignated as the 6988th Electronic Security Squadron to honor the original unit.

In November 1990, with the deactivation of the 6916th Electronic Security Squadron, Hellenikon Air Base, Greece, the 488th IS assumed responsibility for all Electronic Security Command RC-135 support to the U.S. European Command. From October 1990 to March 1991, the squadron conducted operations from OL-RH 6988th Electronic Security Squadron, Hellenikon AB.

In October 1991, the 6988th Electronic Security Squadron was resubordinated to the A.F. Intelligence Command.

On Oct. 1, 1993, the 6988th Electronic Security Squadron was redesignated the 488th IS as part of the ongoing restructuring of Air Force Intelligence and the Air Force Intelligence Command as a field operating agency.

On Feb. 1, 2001, the Air Intelligence Agency was realigned under 8th Air Force at Barksdale AFB, La. This realignment placed Air



COURTESY PHOTO

**Milestone:** Members of the 488th Intelligence Squadron celebrate 1,000 successful contingency missions. Today, the squadron maintains a tradition of providing critical intelligence to tactical warfighters and decision-makers throughout the Air Force.

Intelligence Agency under Air Combat Command.

On Oct. 1, 2002, the 488th IS was realigned from the 67th Information Operations Wing to the 55th Wing, currently at Offutt AFB, Neb. The realignment placed all RC-135 assets under one wing, reinforcing the nose to tail importance of this weapons system.

*(Information courtesy of the 488th Intelligence Squadron.)*

# Aussie pilot's supreme courage earns him place as RAF Legend

In November 1942, Flight Sgt. Rawdon Hume Middleton, an Australian pilot, posthumously received the Victoria Cross in one of the most extraordinary displays of courage in the history of the RAF.

On a mission to the Fiat works in Turin, he struggled to haul his aircraft over the Alps. He soon realized he might not have enough fuel to return home but decided to press on to make his attack. Over the target, flak tore into the wings and a shell exploded in the cockpit, destroying Middleton's right eye and ripping the flesh from the bone above it. He was also hit in the chest and leg.

The second pilot, Flight Sgt. Hyder, took control as the aircraft plummeted and then pressed on with the attack, despite his own wounds. However, when he recovered consciousness, Flight Sgt. Middleton insisted he should take control so Flight Sgt. Hyder's wounds could be treated. With a badly damaged aircraft and several injured crewmembers, Flight Sgt. Middleton determined neither he nor his crew should fall into the hands of the enemy. He knew he had little chance of landing his aircraft in England, even if the fuel lasted, but he was determined to struggle back as far as he could to give his crew the chance of escaping by parachute.

A long journey lay ahead, with an icy cold wind blowing through the shattered windscreen onto his open and terrible wounds. Barely



COURTESY PHOTO

**True hero:** Royal Australian Air Force Flight Sgt. Rawdon Hume Middleton was killed in action Nov. 29, 1942, prior to finding out he was selected for commissioning. Middleton Hall, the officer's club here, was named after him.

able to speak and losing blood every time he did, he nursed the aircraft over the Alps and across France, a journey of around four hours. Approaching the coast, the aircraft was hit again but Flight Sgt. Middleton mustered the strength to take evasive maneuvers.

As they crossed the English coast only five minutes of fuel remained. Flight Sgt. Middleton was too weak to jump so, assisted by two other crewmembers, he flew a parallel course along the coast to allow the rest of the crew to bail out to safety. Flight Sgt. Middleton refused to attempt to crash-land in order to avoid civilian casualties on the ground, so the aircraft eventually crashed into the sea killing all onboard.

The bodies of the two colleagues were recovered the next day, but Flight Sgt. Middleton's was not recovered until February 1943. He was buried with full military honors in the cemetery at St John's Church in Beck Row on Feb. 5. On Jan. 13, it was announced he was to be awarded the Victoria Cross, one of only 32 awarded in the entire RAF during the War, and one of only 19 in Bomber Command. The remainder of his crew were also decorated with other awards. Flight Sgt. Middleton's citation concluded: "His devotion to duty in the face of overwhelming odds is unsurpassed in the annals of the Royal Air Force."

*(Information courtesy of the 100th Air Refueling Wing history office.)*



# 70 years and still flying high



COURTESY PHOTO

**Careful with the cookie:** A rare color photo shows the loading operation of a 4,000-pound "cookie" bomb onto a Wellington Bomber. One of RAF Mildenhall's Wellingtons was the first to drop such a large ordnance during operations March 31, 1941. The Wellington was the mainstay of the Royal

Air Force's Bomber Command until the four-engine heavy bombers — the Stirling, Halifax and Lancaster — were introduced. These and other aircraft, along with the men and women assigned to fly, maintain and support them, have played a huge role in the 70-year history of RAF Mildenhall.

## Local residents cite Mildenhall to Melbourne race, triple royal visit as heralding start of modern base

BY MATT TULIS AND 1ST LT. ROSAIRE BUSHEY

100th Air Refueling Wing public affairs

For several people who live in the area, or currently work on the base, the early years of the base evoke strong memories. The events that started RAF Mildenhall are forever engrained in their minds — an air race, a royal visit, grass airfields — a war where the price was paid, in no small measure, in an unassuming Suffolk farming community.

Begun in 1931, construction at Mildenhall was completed in time for the base to host an event that drew a crowd of 70,000 people — the MacRobertson Air Race.

Sponsored by a candy manufacturer, Sir MacPherson Robertson, the 11,000-mile air race from Mildenhall to Melbourne, Australia, offered a

prize of £10,000 and drew 63 potential starters from 13 nations.

"I don't know what day it was, but whatever day it would have been, nobody went to school and all the village turned out," said Bill Haylock from his home not a mile from the end of today's RAF Mildenhall runway. "The old lads ... were standing by the gates shouting 'this way to the aerodrome' and charging a shilling to get in."

"There was misty, drizzly rain in the morning," said Henry Skipper, 78, who grew up and lives in Beck Row. "We were out there about 5:30 a.m. — you can imagine a sleepy village — we'd never seen so many people in all our lives. For about three weeks prior to that, the aircraft were here practicing and flying around."

Both gentlemen remember the sights and sounds of "society" coming to town for the great air race in 1934 and the royal visit of 1935.

"I know it was October when the Mildenhall-Melbourne air race started, and that meant the fields had been harvested. I remember distinctly, with my father, going to the top of the village onto a stubble field. We guided in and parked somewhere

between 12 and 20 private aircraft, little monoplanes, but I



See 70 years, Page 16







## 70 years, from Page 15

remember one of them was a tri-plane ... and we stood open-mouthed at this thing,” Mr. Haylock said.

“But to the air race itself, the whole village was grid-locked with ... I don’t like the term ‘nobility’ ... but the upper echelon of society had wine and dined in London that evening in their clubs and their smart restaurants and they came down to see the takeoff — this was a great thing you know. Everybody knew about it, the whole country knew about it because it was pioneering.

“ ... Of course, ... the high society section of British society ... they came down to see this take off and they came in their evening suits. They got out of their chauffeur-driven cars, and they stood many of them on the perimeter of the airfield. That was one thing I prided myself on that they didn’t have as good a seat as I had because I was up one of the tallest pine trees.

“The newspapers all had maps showing likely flying paths to Melbourne, and we used to stick pins in each day ... but of course they were falling by the wayside and some fellas lost their lives doing it. The air race was really something,” said Mr. Haylock.

“In 1935, King George V officially opened RAF Mildenhall as an RAF station,” said Mr. Skipper. “And here at that time were King George V; the Prince of Wales, who became King Edward VIII; and the Duke of York, who became King George VI. So, we actually had three kings of England here at the same time.

“I was at school then, and we were taken up as a class from the school to go up and see this happen. We stood roughly where Mickey’s T-Bar is now. They had the RAF Band and that type of thing there,” he said.

At the time, the base was mostly tents, and the aircraft were bi-plane bombers, said Mr. Skipper.

Some of the first military aircraft at the station were, in Mr. Haylock’s words, “ ... lumbering open-cockpit biplanes and open-gun position Handley Page Heyfords — lumbering, 120 mph, with a tail wind.”

The aircraft, however lumbering or large, have only ever been part of the story, as the station changed life in a rural Suffolk village.

“The airfield did become part of the village. Because it was RAF, the children, the dependents — they all intermingled. There were married quarters, but a lot of the families lived off base as a lot of the Americans do now. And they attended local schools, and it boosted ... it boosted them



COURTESY PHOTO

**Jubilee review:** The station hosted three men who were or would be King July 6, 1935. Here King George V is accompanied by his two sons, the Prince of Wales who would become Edward VIII and the Duke of York who, as George VI, would visit the base several times during World War II. This colorized photo is a replica of one that originally hung for many years in the RAF Officers’ Mess and was presented as a gift to the U.S. Air Force from the officers of Headquarters Group No. 3 Bomber Command, stationed at the base from 1936 to 1967.

and it boosted the shopkeepers income, it boosted just about all the ancillary trades, if you like.

“Of course, it was novel for us children to go to school one morning and find in the desk next to us someone talking with a totally different accent because they were the sons or daughters of serving Airmen, and it made quite a difference for the choice the village girls had in a boyfriend — which wasn’t much help to us guys really ... ”

Outside the classroom, the base caused other changes such as providing more jobs for women and changing the face of the type of jobs available to the men.

“It (the base) supplied jobs, you see; there was a change. Just about every male in the village was a farm hand, because the demands on the farms were great. So along comes the military base, and now a lot of the males — they become batmen, waiters in the officer’s mess, stokers.

“Let’s not forget the stokers — these are the fellas, of course, who kept the central heating system going, which was solid fuel fired. And then of course, there was the garbage ... there was a tremendous boost to

local employment, and they were jobs that were sought after because many of them were sheltered.

“You’re not working in the field in the middle of November — you’re indoors.”

As the base grew and Prime Minister Chamberlain met with German Chancellor Hitler, Mr. Haylock believes the PM gave Britain 15 months to prepare as best it could for the coming hostilities.

When the war started, RAF Mildenhall was to be a key part of that great undertaking.

“Early on in the war, they did a lot of mine laying and leaflet dropping,” said Mr. Skipper, “laying the mines for the shipping in the North Sea. Then of course, as the war went on, the raids got to be more or less every night — weather permitting. With no runway, they were restricted by landing and taking off, especially with a heavy load.”

The station was hampered at first by a grass airfield, and it wasn’t until 1943 that the first concrete airstrip was laid down — strong enough to allow the units flying from the station to drop the heaviest bomb loads of D-Day.





# Airmen fly Square 'D' from yesterday to today

BY 1ST LT. BENJAMIN CARROLL

351st Air Refueling Squadron

Whenever people see KC-135R Stratotankers from RAF Mildenhall, they invariably ask about the "D" on the tail.

From foreign ambassadors to pilots of aerial refueling receiving aircraft to local school children, it's one of their first questions.

Flying the Square "D" is a way of honoring the Airmen of the 100th Bombardment Group from World War II. The 100th Air Refueling Wing is currently the only operational Air Force unit allowed to display this unique piece of Air Force history.

Although the 100th BG never flew from RAF Mildenhall, the group did fly B-17 Flying Fortresses out of Diss, about 30 miles east of the base. Nicknamed the "Bloody Hundredth," due to the unit's abnormally heavy losses of aircrew and aircraft, the storied group flew from Thorpe Abbots.

Because thousands of planes would fill the skies daily over Suffolk, there needed to be a method to distinguish different groups of similar bombers from each other. Radar and satellites aid aircraft crews today; while back then, the pilots had only their eyes. To aid in verification, large letters and shapes were painted on the tails of B-17s, B-24 Liberators and other bombers.

Three U.S. Army air bombardment divisions

were located in England — the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Air Divisions. Aircraft from the 1st Air Division flew letters outlined by triangles, and 2nd Air Division aircraft used circles. The 100th BG, part of the 3rd Air Division, flew its letter outlined by a square.

The 100th BG was assigned the letter "D," since it was the fourth group assigned to the 3rd Air Division. Sister bombardment groups of the 3rd Air Division, the 94th, 95th and 96th BGs, had been assigned the letters A, B and C, respectively.

Originally, the group flew a black "D" outlined by a white square. In mid-1944, the Army Air Force changed the B-17's paint scheme from olive drab green to a polished aluminum finish. To enhance the contrast and visibility of the formation aid, the Square "D" changed to the black square with a white "D," which is still seen today on the 100th ARW's KC-135s.

Thus, the Square "D" flew on the tail, upper



COURTESY PHOTO

**Charge of the 'Bloody Hundredth':** B-17 Flying Fortresses, from the 100th Bombardment Group, fly in formation during a bombing raid in World War II. The Square 'D,' clearly seen on the tail, continues flying today on all KC-135R Stratotankers assigned to the 100th Air Refueling Wing here.

left and lower right wings of the 100th BG aircraft. It was a necessary part of group identification immediately after takeoff and became a recognizable identification of the group, which continues today.

Every time people see the Square "D," they can remember and honor all the history.

For more information on the "Bloody Hundredth," go to [www.100thbg.com](http://www.100thbg.com) or visit the 100th BG museum at Thorpe Abbots. Further information can be found at other bomb group's sites and [www.usaaf.com](http://www.usaaf.com).

# 3rd Air Force trained, equipped, ready for any operation

BY DR. WILLIAM ELLIOTT

3rd Air Force historian

The U.S. Air Force began its presence in England in 1943 in the form of 8th Air Force, the largest air unit ever committed to battle. Eighth Air Force departed England for the United States after the Allied victory in World War II. In response to the Cold War, and to continue American presence in England, 3rd Air Force was activated at South Ruislip, near London, May 1, 1951.

Third Air Force's mission until 1966 was to conduct tactical, logistics and support programs in England. This mission focused on the use of F-84 Thunderjet and F-86 Sabre fighters from the 81st Fighter Bomber Wing, RAF Bentwaters, and the 20th FBW, RAF Wethersfield.

With the Korean War and emerging Cold War, Strategic Air Command bomber units deployed on a regular rotational basis to England. The 1960s saw fluctuations in the Air Force presence in the United Kingdom as support squadrons were eliminated and many RAF bases were returned to the Air Ministry.

In 1972, daily operational control of U.K. tactical units was transferred to U.S. Air Forces in Europe at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. It was during

this time that 3rd Air Force headquarters moved to RAF Mildenhall.

In 1986, F-111 Aardvark aircraft from RAFs Lakenheath and Upper Heyford, fueled by tankers from RAF Mildenhall, attacked suspected terrorist targets in Libya as part of Operation El Dorado Canyon.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, 3rd Air Force played a major support role, deploying half its combat aircraft, several thousand vehicles, approximately 50,000 tons of munitions and tons of supplies and material.

In 1996, USAFE deactivated 17th Air Force at Sembach AB, Germany, and transferred responsibility of all U.S. Air Force units north of the Alps to 3rd Air Force.

As a result of the changes, 3rd Air Force grew substantially, taking on Ramstein AB and Spangdahlem AB and five geographically-separated units.

Third Air Force is currently one of two numbered air forces in USAFE and is responsible for missions and servicemembers in England, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey and Iceland.

Third Air Force also serves as Headquarters European Command's single point of contact with Her Majesty's Government within the United Kingdom.



**From 1934 to 2004, RAF Mildenhall's proud heritage stands tall in East Anglia**

**J**n 1929, the people of Mildenhall learned the outlying area of their town had been chosen as the site of a new-style RAF bomber base. With the local community suffering through a crippling agricultural depression, the news of the airfield offered local people the hope of relief in terms of new employment.

Actual construction work on the base began in October 1930 as crews from a firm in Ely began building the base's first facility — the office for the resident engineer.

The initial phase of construction lasted more than three years, and many of the buildings built during the initial phase remain in existence today.

Numerous locals were employed by the London-based construction firm that took over the building contract in 1931. However, the hangars were built by the firm of Redpath Brown, which brought its own

walk on the trail, they can refer to the plaques located at each site for a brief history on the buildings.

For additional historical information on RAF Mildenhall, refer to the "History of the 100th Air Refueling Wing and RAF Mildenhall," available at the 100th ARW history office in Bldg. 562.

*(Information courtesy of the 100th ARW history office.)*



special workforce down from Newcastle, some 230 miles north of this area, to build them.

These hangars were built during the initial stages, and because of their size and quality of original construction, they continue to serve the needs of today's U.S. Air Force and Navy.

With this in mind, the 100th Air Refueling Wing developed RAF Mildenhall's Heritage Trail highlighting a varied selection of the base's more significant structures. As folks take the

**START**

**FINISH**

**Out of gas—go back to skoppette**

**Go to BXtra—spend \$200**

**Building 562: Built in 1933 as the Station Headquarters**  
This building hosted the station commander and staff. The plaque in front commemorates King George V's Royal Review of the Royal Air Force July 6, 1935. Today the building houses the 100th Air Refueling Wing headquarters.

**Building 239: 1937 to 1967 HQ RAF Bomber Command**  
Command's Headquarters 3 Group. The headquarters controlled a number of RAF bomber stations in East Anglia. In June 1972, Headquarters 3rd Air Force took up residence in the building, where it remains today.

**Building 442: "Airmen's Mess and Club Complex."**  
Built in 1931 for 343 Airmen. Inside, the building possessed a barber's shop, mess and a club. With the expansion of the station in 1939, this building was replaced with a larger one. Today, it serves as the base post office.

**Bldg. 425: Built in 1931 as the original " Sergeants' Mess."**  
This facility accommodated 69 members and also provided recreational and dining facilities. The small western wing was added in the 1939 expansion of the station. Today, the building serves as the base library.



**Bldg. 136:** The first building constructed on RAF Mildenhall.

**Bldg. 427:** Built in 1931 to accommodate single Airmen.

**Bldg. 424:** Built in 1931 as Airman pilots' quarters."

**Bldg. 436:** Built in 1939 as the dining room (and British AAFES equivalent).

**Bldg. 443:** Built in 1931 as the sick quarters.

**Bldg. 528:** "A" type aircraft shed.

**Bldgs. 511 and 512:** Constructed in 1931 as moto transport maintenance sheds and yard.

**Bldg. 506:** Astro (dome) building.

**Bldg. 501:** Type C guard house.

**Bldg. 464:** The Officers' Mess.

**Bldg. 546:** Built in 1931 as the crew room and locker room.

**Bldg. 545:** Built as the main store and maintenance workshops.

**Bldg. 554:** Originally built as the station armory.

**Bldg. 539:** "C" type aircraft shed.

**Bldg. 474:** Base chapel.



# U.S. Naval Air Facility Mildenhall remains oldest partner unit, celebrates 40 years

## Small unit remains anchored in tradition

By **TECH. SGT. KELLEY STEWART**

*100th Air Refueling Wing public affairs*

**A**s RAF Mildenhall celebrates its 70th anniversary, one of Team Mildenhall's partner units celebrates 40 years here.

The Naval Air Facility Mildenhall officially moved here July 1, 1964, from RAF West Malling, Kent, to increase efficiency in cargo and passenger transportation, but the unit can trace its history back to 1942 and RAF Hendon in London.

There, Fleet Service Squadron 76 supported the aircraft assigned to U.S. Naval Attaché Activities in the United Kingdom and northern Europe.

Now, the Naval Air Facility's 24 Naval Aviators and Sailors support bases and ports around the European Theater. They also deliver cargo and mail to any ship or submarine operating in the north Atlantic and Baltic Sea area with two UC-12M Hurons.

To accomplish its mission in fiscal 2004, the unit flew between 15 and 21 missions a month. Flying approximately 1,038 hours, more than 430 passengers were flown around the theater, and the unit transported about 57,000 pounds of cargo.

Chief Petty Officer Kevin Gray, administration leading chief petty officer, said he is surprised by the number of people who don't know about the Navy on RAF Mildenhall.

"We support the fleet," he said. "We're the people behind the stage curtain. We do an important job, and a lot of people don't realize it."

Either by air or land movement, support for Navy by NAF Mildenhall personnel is evident throughout this area of responsibility



**Back in the day:** An R4D8, the Navy's version of the C-47, sits outside Hangar 538. The Naval Air Facility is the longest continuous American presence on base, having moved here July 1, 1964. Currently, NAF Mildenhall flies two UC-12M Hurons.

and the Navy as a whole, he said.

A lot has happened in the 40 years the

Navy has been here, but one event that stands out in the mind of Chief Petty Officer Gray is the terrorist attacks on the United States Sept. 11, 2001.

"I was the duty guy, and I didn't leave for three days," he said. "It was the saddest time in my Naval career."

The saddest time, he said, because of the uncertainty and stress of not knowing what was going to happen.

Tony Courtenay, a cargo handler and heavy equipment operator, has worked for NAF, Mildenhall, for 35 years. He used to work under the base for a water company, and he applied for his current job when the company's contract expired.

The biggest challenge he has faced is

finding some of the places in which he has to deliver supplies. He said he goes to at least one "strange" place a day.

"One place was on the other side of Ipswich," Mr. Courtenay said. "When I got there, there were all these satellites up, and I had to wind my way through the satellites."

He was delivering parts to Sailors at a British Telecommunications Satellite Station where they were working for a while.

The Naval Air Facility's commander is very proud that his unit holds the distinction of being the longest-serving unit at RAF Mildenhall, as well as being proud of his Sailors.

"My feelings are those of pride — pride in our rich heritage, tradition, service and people," said Cmdr. Kenan Shaffer, NAF, Mildenhall commander, "They (the Sailors) have remained professionally committed to getting the job done, consistently maintaining flexibility and resourcefulness over the years of continual change."

Although no one knows what the future holds, Naval Air Facility, Mildenhall, is ready to achieve more milestones.





# 52 years of 'good relations' strengthen community

## Mildenhall B-ACR Committee responsible for quiet successes, goodwill in local community

By CAPT. SHANE BALKEN

100th Air Refueling Wing public affairs

It's difficult to measure the success of an organization when the unit of measurement is "keeping good relations" and a "happy working environment" as your yardstick. For 52 years this vague and difficult mission to gauge has been the role of the RAF Mildenhall British-American Community Relations Committee as its members have worked diligently to widen contact and understanding between U.S. military families and local British residents in the surrounding communities.

And, if you've been keeping track of the B-ACR's success over the years, the positive mileage it's made far out-distances any negative setbacks, said Maggie Cotner, 100th Air Refueling Wing community relations advisor.

Mrs. Cotner has worked at RAF Mildenhall since 1992 and prior to that at RAF Bentwaters for six years. Her vast experience in working with people and solving problems has had a lot to do with the B-ACR's success.

"Initially when the committee was first formed, its job was to translate the visiting U.S. forces to the local community, and to help Americans toward a greater understanding of the area and people among whom they would be living and working.

"A lot of what the committee does today is behind-the-scenes, tackling bad information and rumors and then setting the record straight. Our British members come from a variety of backgrounds and areas, and have many different skills, so they're able to help us stay in close touch with our local community," Mrs. Cotner said.

When the U.S. Air Force was first invited to set up bases in the United Kingdom, the world was a vastly different place. Although Americans and British had mixed freely in the theater of war, both governments knew that a long-term, resident U.S. force would have a completely different impact on the local area than a temporary force in a crisis situation, added Mrs. Cotner. After prolonged discussion, the Ministry of Defence decided to establish the British-American Community Relations Committee throughout the country.

RAF Mildenhall's B-ACR consists of both American military and British members and is co-chaired by Col. Richard T. Devereaux, 100th Air Refueling Wing commander, and Jane Lewin Smith. Air Marshal "Black" Robertson, a retired RAF three-star general, is the U.K. coordinator for British-American community relations. He oversees the chief community relations advisor and eight individual base community relations advisors scattered throughout England.

Air Marshal Robertson said since 1952 the changes in the world have greatly affected the way in which the organization operates.

"The media in general, television in particular and lately the Internet, mean that people are now much better informed. Travel has also become much cheaper and easier. Thus, today a much larger proportion of the

British population has first-hand experience both of America and Americans. Knowing each other better has assisted the development of Anglo-American relations through the auspices of the B-ACR Committee."

In addition to Air Marshal Robertson's responsibilities with each installation's B-ACR Committee, his primary responsibility is to keep MoD ministers and officials abreast of any significant developments in terms of relations between U.S. and British organizations and individuals. While it's not a full-time job for the air marshal, he certainly sees the role of his organization, and of the various committees, as critical to the success of the U.S. forces' mission here.

"It's worth remembering that in the early years of the Mildenhall committee, a large proportion of the population knew all about the military, either through wartime experience or through National Service. Today things are vastly different. There is considerably less direct knowledge of the U.K. military, let alone the U.S. military.

"It is interesting that even where government decisions to intervene militarily overseas are unpopular, this tends not to be reflected in public apathy towards the military."

The air marshal cited reasons such as skill, discipline and courage that instill trust and respect in the public toward the military. But the small size of the military and lack of direct contact with the general public remains an obstacle for U.S. visiting forces when dealing with the court of public opinion.

"This is why local relations are so important. It's primarily at the local level the military and the population at large come together. Good local relations can therefore make a world of difference," added the air marshal.

And keeping those "good relations" has been what it's all about for the RAF Mildenhall B-ACR Committee. Ken Thompson, a local businessman, has been involved with the B-ACR for 14 years. During his years of association with the base he said

the last four have probably been the most important for the committee.

"Since Sept. 11 the changes that have happened with the base have been very significant for the local community. The closure of Waterworks Road and the role the B-ACR has taken has considerably helped lessen the blow for the locals," said Mr. Thompson. After the closure of the public road that bisects the base, public transportation was no longer available for British residents living inside the new perimeter. The B-ACR paid for taxi cab fares for British residents who didn't own a private vehicle and were unable to carry out daily-travel routines. The B-ACR is also influential in helping pass local legislation concerning the base.

Mr. Thompson said the construction of the roundabout next to the Bird in Hand inn was requested by the base commander several years ago to help ease the traffic congestion onto base. Jack Haylock, B-ACR chairman at the time, helped work with local councillors to get the road improvement built faster than normal. The B-ACR also raises money throughout the year and gives to several worthwhile causes for Americans and British.

But most importantly, the B-ACR is a forum for anyone to address their problems or concerns.

"I always tell people 'you're among friends' when addressing issues within the committee," said Mrs. Cotner. "We pride ourselves on helping people and getting things done. There is no good meeting in a forum like ours if people aren't going to say what they think."



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN MEGHAN GEIS

**Pilot for a day:** Olivia Grosvenor was RAF Mildenhall's sixth pilot for a day. The British-American Community Relations Committee funds the program and several other community relations programs within the local communities.





# Former CRA recalls time spent with ‘Mildenhall family’

By **KAREN ABEYASEKERE**

100th Air Refueling Wing public affairs

**S**ixteen years flash by in 90 minutes when you're in the company of Joan Abbs. Talking is one of the things she does best — and she should be good at it — she used to do it for a living.

Once you start listening to her recalling experiences and enjoyment of her time here, you completely forget to look at your watch.

Ms. Abbs spent 16 years as the 100th Air Refueling Wing community relations advisor, from 1976 to 1992, and witnessed many changes, including 12 wing commanders and at least as many RAF station commanders. She was here during the time of the SR-71 Blackbird and saw the wing change from the 513th Tactical Airlift Wing to the 513th Airborne Command and Control Wing, to its final transformation as the 100th ARW. And she was even here when the *Marauder* was known as the *Traveller*.

Along with that, she says one of the highlights of her career here includes the dedication of the chapel windows by His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, in 1982.

“One of my treasured memories is of being invited to the reception at the officers’ club in Prince Charles’ honor when he was here dedicating the stained glass windows in the chapel. In the chapel I was seated near the Lord Lieutenant and the Equerry (a personal attendant of a member of the British royal family), so I had a very good view of him,” Ms. Abbs recalled.

“At the reception, the Prince was brought around to each group and introduced to everyone,” she said. “I remember shaking his hand — you had to say ‘Your Royal Highness,’ and not ‘hello,’ or ‘how do you do’ — but he was fabulous.”

Ms. Abbs said the Americans obviously enjoyed meeting Prince Charles, and they came out in force for the event.

“They had all the planes — including the (SR-71) Blackbird — lined up on the flightline for his visit. He was the only person I knew of, apart from the pilots, who was allowed to sit in the Blackbird,” she said.

The Blackbird was a particular favorite of Ms. Abbs, and she was overjoyed when two became stationed here in 1982.

“I remember it was so exciting, just seeing them take off. ‘Spy corner’ was set up around that time for plane spotters wanting to watch it, and that area’s been popular ever since. When the SR-71s first arrived, only very special people were allowed to go in the



**JOAN ABBS**

whenever they deployed and when they finally left,” she said.

Working as community relations advisor, Ms. Abbs got to know a lot of people, both on-base and in the local community. One of those was chief inspector Eric Hunt (now retired), who was the inspector for the Mildenhall and Lakenheath area both on- and off-base from 1970 to 1981.

“I don’t know of anyone more dedicated to the job than Joan,” said Mr. Hunt.

“She was a very forceful person, and she got a lot of things done. I’ve known her since she started working at RAF Mildenhall, and my wife and I have remained friends with her ever since. Joan has always been a goodhearted woman and often opened her home up to Americans at Christmas for drinks and food,” he said.

Other memorable occasions for both Mr. Hunt and Ms. Abbs included Air Fete, one of Ms. Abbs’ favorite times of the year, when she got to see all the aircraft she loved, including her absolute favorite aircraft, the Vulcan.

“My heart used to miss a beat when I saw it perform at the Air Fetes,” she reminisced, adding what wonderful displays the Air Fetes always provided, with performances from the Red Arrows, the French Mirage team and the Italian Tricolore.

“Though, I remember a particular sad year when there was a terrible crash and a Tricolore pilot was killed,” she recalled.

A plane went down over Beck Row, very near to a caravan park. Thankfully, no one else was injured, but the pilot was killed

immediately, said Ms. Abbs. Working for 16 years on the base meant Ms. Abbs saw many changes during that time. “One thing I noticed when I first started was there were many Vietnam veterans working at RAF Mildenhall,” she said. “Over the years the troops gradually got younger, especially the colonels — even the generals got younger,” she said, adding, “or perhaps I just got older!”

As the focus of the Air Force changed when the Cold War ended, so the role of the base changed, moving from the 513th TAW finally to the 100th ARW. “We had many different tenant units, though the wing itself didn’t fly. But the focus was always ‘the Mildenhall family,’” she said.

Part of her job to help the “Mildenhall family” was to talk at newcomers’ briefings, sharing information about the base and local community, and answering any questions new people might have.

She was also secretary to the Anglo-American Community Relations Committee — now known as the British-

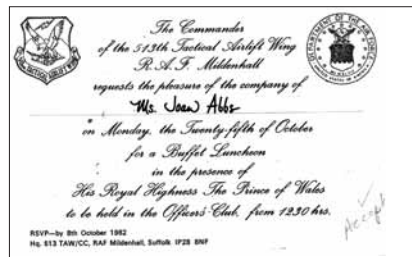
Community Relations American Committee — and arranged many events with them, including cricket and softball matches and trips to Newmarket Races.

Having been retired now for 12 years doesn’t mean Ms. Abbs has been sitting around twiddling her thumbs — quite the opposite in fact.

“I’ve been doing voluntary work at the Theatre Royal in Bury St. Edmunds and spend a lot of my time as a member of the Bury St. Edmunds Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society,” she said. “I’m also taking a computer course and am a very keen swimmer. That’s in addition to traveling — I went to Australia last year for the rugby world cup. I’m a very big rugby fan as well.”

As well as all that, she spends as much time as possible at Newmarket Races. “When I retired, everyone got together and bought me a year’s membership to the Newmarket Races, and I’ve kept it up ever since,” she said.

With all that going on, it’s a wonder she ever had time to go to work. But Ms. Abbs said she has precious memories of her time at RAF Mildenhall and still treasures all her photos and momentos that she’s always proud to share with others, reminding her of the happy days with her “Mildenhall family.”



**Invitation to royalty:** Joan Abbs’ invitation to dine with the Prince of Wales at the Officers’ Club Oct. 8, 1982.





# 352nd SOG: 10 years as part of Team Mildenhall

BY TECH. SGT. KELLY MORGAN

352nd Special Operations Group historian

**O**n Feb. 17, 2005, the 352nd Special Operations Group will mark 10 years since the official move from RAF Alconbury to RAF Mildenhall, and during this past decade, the 352nd SOG has earned a laundry list of accomplishments.

Administratively assigned to Air Force Special Operations Command, the 352nd SOG is the air component for Special Operations Command Europe and U.S. Special Operations Command's combatant force covering the European Command's area of responsibility spanning three continents, 91 countries and 20 million square miles.

The squadrons assigned to the 352nd SOG include the 7th Special Operations Squadron, 21st Special Operations Squadron, 67th Special Operations Squadron, 321st Special Tactics Squadron, 352nd Operations Support Squadron and 352nd Maintenance Squadron.

Unit operations accomplishments range from noncombatant evacuation and search and rescue operations to humanitarian assistance and direct actions missions, with a decade of heroism:

◆ 1995: Airmen from the 352nd SOG continued to support combat and peacekeeping operations in the Balkans during their move here, with rotational deployments to southern Italy, which ended in 1999.

◆ April 1996: When trouble erupted in Liberia, 352nd SOG Airmen conducted non-combatant evacuation operations, rescuing and evacuating civilians from the Monrovia airport amidst heavy gunfire. For infiltration of European Command's European Survey and Assessment Team and the evacuation of 30 Americans and 26 nationals from 11 different countries during a 13 hour mission, 7th SOS "Quiet Professionals" earned the coveted MacKay Trophy, and the 21st SOS was selected as the Lt. Gen. William H. Tunner and Cheney Awards winners.

◆ July to November 1996: When terrorists bombed the Khobar towers in Saudi Arabia, killing 19 U.S. servicemen and injuring more than 400 others, the secretary of defense tasked the 352nd SOG with supporting recovery and security operations. On their return, the group's Airmen also deployed to Africa and conducted Operation Guardian Retrieval, a critical logistics support mission to Uganda.

◆ March 1997: The 352nd SOG conducted NEO Operation Guardian Assistance in Kinshasa, Zaire, then returned to Africa in June to conduct NEO Operation Firm Response, rescuing 56 civilians in Congo. Again, the 7th SOS earned the historic MacKay Trophy.

◆ March 1997: 352nd SOG Airmen flew from Brinidisi, Italy, to provide combat search and rescue during the evacuation of noncombatant Americans from Tirania, Albania, during Operation Silver Wake.

◆ July 1997: The 67th SOS provided aerial refueling for MH-53Js as U.S. forces prepared for possible noncombatant evacuations from Cambodia.

◆ September 1997: When an American C-141 and Luftwaffe Tu-154 collided off the coast of Namibia, the 352nd SOG aided in search and rescue for survivors and wreckage during Operation High Flight.

◆ June 1998: The 352nd SOG deployed 50 Airmen to Dakar, Senegal, and conducted NEO evacuations for Operation Shepherd Venture as part of contingency planning in response to the deteriorating situation in Guinea-Bissau. Operations from the 7th SOS operators received another Lt. Gen. William H. Tunner Award for their actions.

◆ Aug. 1, 1998 to July 31, 1999: The group earned its second Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, with Valor, for participation in Operation Allied Force, the 79-day air war over Serbia, and Operation Joint Force, which directly supported the Dayton Peace Accords.

◆ June 1999: While flying in support of Operations Allied Force and Northern Anvil, group air refueling efforts aided the rescue of a downed F-117 pilot in Serbian Territory and earned Lt. Col. James Pankau and his crew the 1999 Brig. Gen. Ross G. Hoyt Award.

◆ June 1999: Participating in Operation Allied Force, the 7th SOS facilitated the largest psychological operations leaflet campaign since World War II. This event marked the first time MC-130H Combat Talon

IIIs were used in a major theater conflict; it required aircrew to fly above 25,000 feet, unpressurized, while dangerously close to enemy surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft artillery.

◆ 1999 to 2002: The air refueling capabilities of the 67th SOS's MC-130P Combat Shadows provided group flyers with the legs necessary to implement unique special operations weapons systems such as the MH-53 Pave Low VI helicopter, and EUCOM's "Quiet Professionals" supported Operation Northern Watch, the enforcement of the northern Iraq no-fly zone, on numerous occasions.

◆ March 2000: 352nd SOG members joined 3rd Air Force units to participate in Operation Atlas Response, which provided victims relief from flooding in Mozambique, Africa. Group Airmen joined a 700-Airmen Joint Task Force, more than half of whom came from Team Mildenhall.

◆ Aug. 1, 2000 to July 31, 2002: For actions during this time, the 352nd SOG earned its third AFOU Award with Valor. The unit successfully deployed two teams of pararescuemen and combat controllers on a no-notice civilian rescue to the North Sea, which directly saved the lives of two British fishermen. In another event, aircrew from the 67th SOS flying MC-130P Combat Shadows provided refueling for two Iceland-based search and rescue HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters when they rescued a Spanish fisherman in the northern Atlantic Ocean. In May 2002, two MH-53M Pave Lows conducting local training missions diverted and rescued two critically injured personnel off the capsized yacht Persuader 450 miles off the Cornish coast in the Atlantic Ocean, earning the 21st SOS aircrew aboard another Cheney Award. Two MC-130P Combat Shadows along with one 100th Air Refueling Wing KC-135R supported the two Pave Lows, proving it takes a team to garner success.

◆ Post Sept. 11, 2001: Shortly after terrorists struck at the heart of the United States, 352nd SOG Airmen deployed and began engaging in the Global War on Terrorism. Group special operators planned and executed the first precision airdrops in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. The group led the first tactical and humanitarian assistance supply airdrops to allied forces on the ground in direct confrontation with the Taliban. For their efforts conducting the first combat operations in the newly declared war on terrorism, the 7th SOS again received the Lt. Gen. William H. Tunner award.

◆ 2002: Airmen from the 352nd SOG began flying in support of Operation Northern Watch and Operation Enduring Freedom, and throughout the year, they also conducted three dramatic sea rescues and two NEO operations in Africa.

◆ September 2002: While engaged in a successful organizational readiness inspection, 352nd SOG Airmen deployed from the deployed location to rescue 450 civilians from the war-torn Ivory Coast during Operation Autumn Return and quickly responded to another African crisis through Operation Shepherd Century by forward-deploying Special Operations Command Europe forces to Cameroon. For operations beginning with OEF in 2002 and ending with two NEOs, the Air Force Association awarded the 7th SOS a Citation of Honor.

◆ 2003: The group deployed again in support of the Global War on Terrorism and actively participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Special operations forces in northern Iraq defeated 11 Iraqi divisions and aided the quick cessation of major combat operations. Once again, 352nd SOG aircrew garnered major awards. For establishing the first USAF aircraft stationed in Iraq, two 21st SOS aircrews earned the Cheney Award. For valor during an airlift mission, a 7th SOS aircrew earned Air Mobility Command's Gen. P.K. Carlton Award for Valor. Soon after returning back to home station, group components supported U.S. security concerns in war-torn Liberia during Operation Shining Express.

The 352nd SOG continues to deploy in support of America's national interest when called upon, and the history is yet to be written. Only a few short months remain until the 352nd SOG celebrates its 10th anniversary here, an air station steeped in aviation history, an air station the "Quiet Professionals" are proud to call home.



# Heartache, high jinks, hercules hijacking:

## All in one day's work for lovesick sergeant

By Capt. Shane Balken

100th Air Refueling Wing public affairs

Truth is always stranger than fiction, and as RAF Mildenhall prepares to celebrate 70 years of history this month, one of the most bizarre events to ever take place here recently marked its 35th anniversary completely unnoticed.

Maybe it's fitting that way, seeing as no one noticed 23-year-old Sgt. Paul Meyer take off in a C-130E Hercules unassisted and without authorization as he tried to make his way back to Langley Air Force Base, Va., May 23, 1969.

Based on data from the unclassified aircraft mishap report, Sgt. Meyer, described as a "model Airman," was an assistant crew chief assigned to the 316th Tactical Airlift Wing at Langley AFB. A newlywed, Sgt. Meyer was married just eight weeks prior to his 120-day temporary duty to RAF Mildenhall.

Three months into his deployment, he requested his supervisors let him return home to help his wife settle a problem. According to the narrative description from the aircraft mishap report, the two bases coordinated to have a court action against Sgt. Meyer's wife deferred until he returned to Virginia from his normal rotation June 15.

Details of the court action remain unknown, but regardless of the problem, it was serious enough to push Sgt. Meyer past his emotional breaking point. The night prior to hijacking the C-130, Sgt. Meyer went out drinking in Freckenham with friends and was said to have behaved erratically.

He ran away from his group, only to be picked up later by the Mildenhall village police and charged with drunk and disorderly behavior. He was turned over to the security police on base and detained in the law enforcement office.

A man on a mission, Sgt. Meyer escaped from both the security police and his first sergeant. He then ran over to the base officers' quarters where he snuck into his commanding officer's room and stole the keys to a government vehicle.

From the hallway of the BOQ, he telephoned the fuels dispatcher under the assumed name of "Capt. Epstein," and he requested fuel for a C-130 aircraft, tail number 37789, on Hardstand 21.

Dressed in flight clothes, Sgt. Meyer drove the government vehicle to the flightline unnoticed and made his way to the

maintenance control office where he ordered an additional 10,000 pounds of fuel, topping the C-130 off at 60,000 pounds.

The Airman on duty said he was not suspicious of the request and saw no reason to contact operations for the mission change, as Sgt. Meyer frequently showed up prior to scheduled flights three to four hours early.

Sgt. Meyer then walked around the aircraft, removed the chocks, climbed into the Hercules, flashed the taxi lights several times, and moved the throttle near maximum power.

Seeing Sgt. Meyer in the pilot seat with the engines on, an on-duty crew chief went over to the aircraft to inspect the situation. The Airman, not realizing Sgt. Meyer's intent for flight, stepped aside as Sgt. Meyer frantically waved him out of the way as the Hercules taxied toward the flightline.

So how did Sgt. Meyer start the plane and get it airborne in the first place without aid?

A local newspaper asked the same question during an interview with a U.S. Air Force spokesman at the time who was quoted saying, "That wouldn't be too difficult. Having seen the flying crew at work, he would be familiar with the controls."

But the hijacking high jinks wasn't limited to just Sgt. Meyer. Extracts taken from the radio conversations between the RAF Mildenhall control tower, the central security control office and Col. Kingery, former 513th Tactical Airlift Wing commander, read more like a bad chase scene from a "Smoky and the Bandit" movie:

CSC: This is CSC ... that plane an unauthorized taxi, isn't he?

TWR: Yeah, go ahead.

CSC: OK, now we have a report that there is an airplane unauthorized taxi, is that correct?

TWR: Uh, negative.

CSC: OK, now, hold the line. OK, now, uh, we had a report that a crew chief who, uh, taxied one of the plane's from Hardstand 21. Is that correct?

TWR: Uh, negative also. Stand by one.

CSC: Report (garble). Hello, tower?

TWR: Uh, Mildenhall tower. That '130 is up.

CSC: Yes, well, was that an authorized takeoff?

TWR: Uh, affirmative.

CSC (Security police net): Garble ... an unauthorized takeoff. Garble ... Security 9 and 10 stop him at all cost. It's a crew chief, a Sgt. Meyers; that's the one we had in here earlier. He's a nut, psycho ward. Mildenhall Police number 1, Mildenhall police control, he's up in the air. Mildenhall Police number 1, Mildenhall police control ... (garble).

Command post notifies Col. Kingery  
CP: OK sir, we've just had a crew chief take off with one of the aircraft, a C-130.

CK: Took it off?

CP: Yes, sir.

CP: We just got it, just this second, Col. Kingery. Uh, according to the people down in maintenance, this guy acted like he was off his rocker earlier this evening. Nobody even knew he was out on the aircraft until it started taxiing.

CK: (Expletive.)

CK: Where in the (expletive) did he take off from?

CP: Hardstand 21, sir.

CK: I'll be (expletive).



An F-100 Super Sabre from RAF Lakenheath and another C-130 were scrambled to track down Sgt. Meyer but neither was successful, as both aircraft reportedly lost radar contact with the stolen C-130.

In his last recorded words, Sgt. Meyer made radio contact through a high-frequency phone patch to his wife in Virginia. During their conversation, Sgt. Meyer told his wife he thought he had enough gas but wasn't sure if he was going the right direction.

"Well, you just settle down now, Paul, and you just do everything you are supposed to do and you come home, if that's what you want to do. I'll get the water all ready," said Mrs. Meyer.

"Honey, I love you an awful lot, and I hope I make it on back there to you here today. However, I'm not exactly sure I'm coming the right way, but I'm sure telling ya I'm doing my level darn best," replied Sgt. Meyer.

But the lovesick sergeant's daring flight was not to be. The C-130 crashed at sea approximately 20 miles northeast of Alderney Island in the English Channel, according to the official accident report.

Formal search efforts were suspended May 27, 1969. The aircraft impacted the water with such force, immediately followed by an explosion and flash fire, that Sgt. Meyer's survival was "most improbable" according to the investigation findings. Search crews found aircraft wreckage, but Sgt. Meyer's body remained lost.

Truth is stranger than fiction, and in 70 years of RAF Mildenhall history, it doesn't get much stranger than this.





# Community relations:

## From 'brightening up Mildenhall' with flowers to granting young 'pilots' Make-A-Wish dreams, British and American friends make a difference

By **MAGGIE COTNER**

*100th Air Refueling Wing community relations advisor*

**T**he Mildenhall British-American Community Relations Committee has been active in a myriad of different ways since its inception. Although its principal aim is to tackle, and solve, local issues of concern, there is always a need to merge our two communities in any positive way we can.

Community relations is not about facts, it's about people's perceptions of what's going on. I've found that when trouble brews, it's usually in the gap between what's happening on the base and what local people think is happening. It's in that black hole that rumours start, anxieties breed and demons proliferate.

Increased positive interaction between the base and the local community is an effective remedy, and the B-ACR is constantly looking for ways to facilitate that.

Many years ago we started the "Brighten Up Mildenhall" campaign. It was our B-ACR that began putting up hanging baskets in the town, placing large pots filled with flowers outside St. Mary's Church, and planting spring bulbs.

It's the B-ACR that funds our superb Pilot for a Day programme. In consultation with Make a Wish U.K. and local children's hospices, we invite a terminally sick child and family to RAF Mildenhall for a day.

We dress the child in a specially tailored miniature pilot's uniform, have them sworn in as an honorary lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force — they have to swear to have fun and laugh a lot — and then they visit squadron after squadron, where they're allowed to climb inside some of our aircraft, sit in the pilot's seats, practice landing a plane in the flight simulator, and so on. The whole family has lunch with our 100th Air Refueling Wing commander, and at the end of the day they depart laden with gifts, photos and a video of the day.

Two of those little ones have since died and

each has asked to be buried in their pilot's uniform. We were privileged to attend their funerals.

After the first Persian Gulf war, we had enquiries from local British schools asking how teachers could help the American children in their care whose parents had been deployed into the combat zone.

The B-ACRs on both bases got together and set up a teacher's forum, in which both British and American teachers could meet and discuss such issues.

We've met many times over the years, wrestling with such problems as students bullying in schools, or the provision of extra help for special-needs children, and we have created and funded a useful colour booklet written by American children in British schools for children who are considering following in their footsteps.

In order to raise the funds necessary to finance these projects, we hold a Casino Night each spring at the Riverside Hotel in the town. B-ACR member Ken Thompson hires a professional company to set up roulette, blackjack and poker tables, which are manned by volunteers, and the admission ticket entitles participants to a buffet supper plus £500-worth of playing chips. More chips can be purchased throughout the evening at a cost of £5 for £500, and the winner at the end of the evening is the one who's amassed the greatest "fortune" — last year it was in excess of £400,000 — and the prize was a magnum of French champagne, donated by B-ACR member Martin Drake.

Some five years ago we held the final "Messiah Experience." This was a popular annual event that combined a volunteer choir from the base with singers from the surrounding community, under the direction of an orchestral conductor from Cambridge. He taught the choir six choruses from Handel's "Messiah,"



FILE PHOTO

**Excellence in community relations:** Col. Jonas L. Blank Jr., former 100th Air Refueling Wing commander, accepts the Ambassador Award from Raymond Seitz, U.S. Ambassador to the Court of St. James, while councillor Jack Haylock, RAF Mildenhall Anglo-American Committee chairman, looks on in June 1992. Mildenhall, which earned the award for the second consecutive year, was recognized for the best community relations of any large base in the United Kingdom. The committee's "Brighten up Mildenhall" campaign was one of the main reasons it earned the award.

which we then performed, accompanied by a professional orchestra, as part of the Thanksgiving Service in Ely Cathedral, as well as in the base chapel in mid-December. Unfortunately, after only eight years, our conductor was snapped up by an orchestra in London, and we were never able to replace him.

Until the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, we were able to fly local British civilians on our air refueling aircraft at the discretion of the wing commander. We did so monthly, as part of the B-ACR's "VIP for a Day" programme. Each month we targeted a particular group in the local area, like shop assistants, charity workers, postmen, and so on. They were collected in the morning by a B-ACR member and driven onto the base. They joined the crew in base operations for the weather briefing, then enjoyed the refueling flight as they were able to lie down in the belly of the aircraft and exchange waves with the fighter pilots as aircraft were refueled only feet below them. After landing, they had tea and cake with the wing commander, were presented with a sweatshirt that bore the words "I flew with the 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall."

Sadly, those days are now gone, but the B-ACR continues to work hard to keep that special relationship strong and to nurture the friendship between our two nations.



FILE PHOTO

**Dreams still come true:** Lloyd Coulson became an honorary "Pilot for a Day" in May 2003. The British-American Community Relations Committee funds the program to allow Team Mildenhall members the opportunity to "make a wish" for youngsters suffering from chronic illness.



PHOTO BY KAREN ABEYASEKERE

## Lessons in fire prevention

Firefighter Nick Headland, Suffolk County Council fire service, community fire safety, demonstrates the effect and dangers of pouring water onto a grease pan fire. Members of the Suffolk Fire Service were here Oct. 7 as part of Fire Prevention Week. Other events included 100th Civil Engineer Squadron fire department members taking Sparky the Fire Dog and a fire truck to the child development center and youth center to talk with children about fire safety.

## EVENTS

### Bone marrow donor drive

A bone marrow donor registration drive is Oct. 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the BXtra.

For more information, call Master Sgt. Ray Boone at 238-8958.

### Trick or treating hours

Trick or treating hours Oct. 31 are from 5 to 8 p.m. in all base housing areas.

For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Craig Reeves at 238-7147.

### Native-American Heritage Month

The 29th annual veteran's "Pow Wow" is Nov. 13 in Northampton. Tickets cost £13 including transport and entry, or £3 for entry only. Deadline for sign-up and payment is Nov. 5.

For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Jeannie Crosby at 238-4722 or Tech. Sgt. Jesse Clemons at 226-3278.

## EDUCATION

### Adult scholarships available

Applications are available for adult scholarships at the education office.

The Mildenhall Officers' and Civilian Spouses' Club sponsor these scholarships.

Completed applications must be returned no later than Nov. 22.

For more information, call Julie Bracken at 01842-829984.

### Central Texas College

Central Texas College is offering criminal justices vocation-technical courses on-line. Classes and schedules can be viewed at [www.europe.ctcd.edu/de\\_state.htm](http://www.europe.ctcd.edu/de_state.htm).

For more information, call 238-3473 or e-mail [charles.richardson@europe.ctcd.edu](mailto:charles.richardson@europe.ctcd.edu).

## FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

**Self defense and personal safety training** is Tuesday from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

A **Hearts Apart** luncheon is Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The luncheon is for spouses of deployed, temporary duty or remote members.

Spouses attending their luncheon are invited to bring their children.

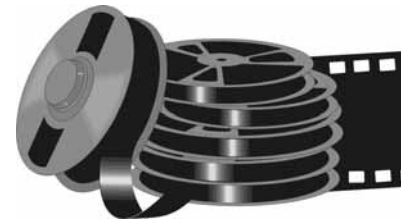
**Becoming a "love and logic" parent class** is Oct. 22 and 29 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The class provides parents with practical techniques to help adults achieve respectful and healthy relationships with children.

For more information on the above three classes at RAF Mildenhall, or to sign up for any FSC classes, call 238-3406.

**Parents and teens class** is every Wednesday from 1 to 2 p.m. at family advocacy, RAF Lakenheath.

The class is designed for parents of 10- to 18-year olds and focuses on helping parents build and maintain a relationship with teenagers.

For more information, call 226-8070.



## At the movies

### LAKENHEATH

Today

6:30 p.m. "Black Cloud" (PG-13) A Native-American boxer faces personal challenges as he comes to terms with his heritage while fighting for a spot on the U.S. Olympic boxing team. (Stars Eddie Spears and Julia Jones)

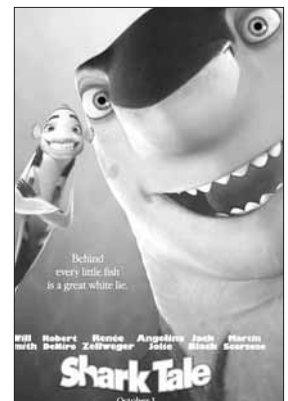


10 p.m. "The Village" (PG-13)

Saturday

Noon "Shark Tale" (PG) Oscar is a fast-talking little fish who dreams

big. But his big dreams land him in hot water when a great white lie turns him into an unlikely hero. At first, his fellow fish swallow Oscar's story hook, line and sinker, and he is showered with fame and fortune. It's all going along swimmingly, until it starts to become clear that Oscar's tale about being the defender of the reef is all wet. Oscar finds out that being a hero comes at a market price when his lie threatens to make him the catch of the day. Now he has to tread water until he can get the scales to tip back in his favor again. (Animated. Stars voices of Will Smith, Robert De Niro and Angelina Jolie)



3 p.m. "Black Cloud"

6:30 p.m. "The Terminal" (PG-13) An immigrant fleeing the war that ravages his Eastern European home finds himself stuck in the terminal of one of New York City's airports when the time of his landing coincides precisely with the point at which the war causes his nation of origin to no longer exist, so his passport and paperwork are no longer valid. (Stars Tom Hanks)

10 p.m. "Harold and Kumar go to White Castle" (R)

Sunday

Noon, "Shark Tale"

3 p.m. "Black Cloud"

6:30 p.m. "The Manchurian Candidate" (R)

Monday

6:30 p.m. "Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story" (PG-13)

Tuesday

6:30 p.m. "Shark Tale"

Wednesday

6:30 p.m. "Black Cloud"

Thursday

6:30 p.m. "The Village"

The RAF Mildenhall theater is currently closed until further notice.



# The longest yard

## RAFM Marauders relive gridiron glory days

BY CAPT. SHANE BALKEN

100th Air Refueling Wing public affairs

When it comes to reminiscing about the “good old days,” some things in life weren’t always so good. Just look at living and working conditions, medical care and life expectancy during the past 100 years as an example.

But when it comes to talking about old sports teams — well that’s another story.

Anyone associated with the base before 1994 could most likely describe some memory or story about the past base football teams and the emphasis and excitement around the football season.

Prior to 1994, every base in the U.S. Air Forces in Europe command had a football team in either the large or small league.

“During the mid ‘80s, there were 32-main operating bases, and about 75,000 people in U.S. Air Forces in Europe,” said Master Sgt. John Baker, staff historian in the USAFE historian office.

American football teams from bases, such as the RAF Chicksands Chicks, RAF Greenham

Common Pirates and the RAF Bentwaters Phantoms, are now just fond memories for some of the people who followed the teams.

Reggie Stuckey, an Air Force retiree and civilian contractor at RAF Lakenheath,

was stationed here from 1984 to 1987 and again from 1991 to 1994. Mr. Stuckey



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN BILL DOWELL

**A season to remember:** Xavier Richardson made the front cover of the *Traveler*, predecessor to the base news magazine *Marauder*, for the season opener in 1986. Richardson made an interception during a scrimmage game in the photo.

played football and basketball for the base Marauder teams and said the emphasis placed on the football season was felt by the entire base.

“It was really a family event for everyone involved,” Mr Stuckey said. “I still run across some of the guys who used to play and they say the same thing. After the games the teams



PHOTO BY TECH SGT. TOM COCCHIARO

**Grudge match:** A Marauder defender takes down a Lakenheath back in the home opener for RAF Mildenhall in the 1986 season. The Marauders lost the game to the Eagles 17-0.

and their families would always get together at the club for dinner and socializing. It was a lot of fun.”

Home football games were played on Sundays at Ford Park complete with base cheerleaders and squadron booster clubs selling food.

“We were pretty good during the years I played but the real powerhouse teams were Bentwaters, Alconbury and Lakenheath. It was like playing against Nebraska’s college team. They had some phenomenal players,” said Mr Stuckey.

He also added the grudge match games between RAF Lakenheath and the base were always good games to watch.

Alan Freitag, an Air Force retiree and former public affairs officer for the base, said the football matches were more than just games for the base but added an American cultural element many British weren’t used to during that time.

“American football was relatively new to the British, so we hosted several media before one game to orientate them. The head coach, who was also the base commander and a colonel, Bob Whitson, brought his chalkboard with him and drew Xs and Os to explain the game. The game was played in the rain and mud, and, although I think we lost, the local media loved it,” said Mr Freitag.

Teams were made up of volunteers from both the officer and enlisted corps, and in

1986, the base roster consisted of 56 men.

But, like most things, all good things eventually come to an end. The U.S. Air Force drawdown in Europe and the cost of running the football program were two main reasons the football league ended after the 1994 season.

“For me, those were really some of the best times in my Air Force career. It provided a real sense of camaraderie and friendship. There was nothing like it. Sports carried over into the entire military community and made the base really close,” said Mr Stuckey.



PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN BILL DOWELL

**Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar; all for Mildenhall stand up and holler:** Throughout the football season, the entire base was involved in games and other events, including volunteer cheerleading squads.