



LASER NEWS

Journal of the Air Cadet Headquarters London and South East Region



'Magnificent' LaSER Squadron Wins Top Award



Air Commodore Stewart with Sgt William Brown, Sgt Jay Bhadresha, Cdt Max Hinds, Sgt Rhys Reeves-Roberts, and Cpl Ross Davidson

241 (Wanstead & Woodford) Squadron of London Wing have been named as the best Air Cadet Squadron for 2007/8. Group Captain Hakin OBE RAFR, Commandant for London and South East Region delivered the news to the Squadron on Monday 8 July after a nail-biting wait.

The Lees Trophy is awarded annually to the Best Squadron in the Air Training Corps, and was presented by Air Marshall Sir Alan Lees in 1949. For this year's competition, the Squadron was inspected by Commandant Air

Cadets, Air Commodore Ian Stewart BSc RAF and Sqn Ldr Pete Atkins from HQ Air Cadets. The Air Commodore inspected a Guard of Honour, and then toured the Squadron with his Escort Cdt FS Aj Sandhu, where he saw cadets demonstrating a range of activities as well as being briefed by cadets on their participation in activities over the preceding year.

After meeting the Civilian Committee and Cadet NCOs, he took the formal salute from the Squadron formed of over 150 cadets and recruits on parade – before making several

presentations in front of the assembled Squadron and guests. The presentations included 6 BTEC in Public Service Awards, and 42 BTEC in Aviation Studies results - a total of 74 GCSEs! - as well as numerous cadet awards. The staff were not left out either – CI Richard Croxon received a Certificate for Meritorious Service for serving as an Adult Member of Staff for the last 20 years, and Mrs Ellen Day received a Defence Council Letter of Appreciation for her sterling work as Sqn Treasurer over the last 25 years.

Continued on page 2

LaSER Life Saver

Cadet Christopher Tuohy, from 444 (Shoreditch) Squadron has been awarded the equivalent of the Queens Award for Brave Conduct – one down from a Life saving Medal.

He received a Meritorious Service Clasp from St John Ambulance - a

very rare accolade - for acting to assist the victim of fight, not knowing whether he could be attacked himself.

Christopher is just one of many cadets and staff from across the Region who have recently been recognised for their life saving achievements.



Cdt Christopher Tuohy receiving his award from Journalist, Broadcaster and Former MP for Tatton, Mr Martin Bell OBE

Summer 2008

In this issue

"Magnificent" LaSER Squadron Wins Top Award	
LaSER Life Saver	1
Commandant's Message	
Project YOU	2
Air Cadets return from the Sun drenched tropical island	3
Supersonic Cadet	
282 to the land of Oz...	4
Kent Wing's Cadets help at Record Breaking Airshow	
LaSER Cadet Passes Out of RAF Halton	
LaSER Squadron Wins Best Overseas Expedition Award 2007	5
Sporting Achievements	
Region Sports Update from Flt Lt Sally Rattle	6
LaSER Cadets called to the Tower	
Sevenoaks Civilian Instructor Qualifies as Local Mine Leader	
LaSER Leaders Complete Basic Expedition Training	7
Shoreditch Supports The City Salute	
LaSER Media Competition	8



Commandant's Message

I can see from the stories in this edition that the Squadrons heeded my last message to live the motto "Venture Adventure" during the summer.

I have just completed the round of visits to Royal Air Force Stations who have been hosting Air Cadet Summer Camps. It has been a chance for our cadets to see the RAF at work and it may convince them to seek careers in the Service; it has also been of general benefit with London cadets

marching along Hadrian's Wall and Kent cadets flying the LaSER flag in Scotland at RAF Leuchars to mention two specific examples!

I would like to thank those volunteers who gave up their time to take cadet parties to Stations.

As we approach the season of Wing and Region Field Days, Corps competitions and the Inter Wing Sports Programmes, I know the cadets of LaSER will give their best as they compete to be the very best they can.

The ACO is committed to recruit more cadets and I know that in LaSER our mixture of adventure, discipline, respect and fun as well as new imaginative recruiting initiatives and high quality adult volunteers are the right mix to ensure our Organisation grows.

No Deviation.

Gp Capt Hakin OBE RAFR
Regional Commandant
LaSER

Project YOU



With a summer of stories about youth crime, the Regional Commandant, Group Captain Les Hakin OBE RAFR, has announced LaSER's support for Project YOU – an initiative designed by the Metropolitan Police to help young people find engaging and challenging activities through youth organisations.

Following a highly successful trial in Croydon, Project YOU aims to bring together a variety of organisations – including the Air Training Corps, and other uniformed youth groups – in attempt to divert young people from crime and anti-social behaviour.

“Over a million young people in London are facing difficult choices at the moment”, explained

Sqn Ldr Tony Kelly, the Regional Training Officer.

“As an organisation, we can help train them, instill leadership and citizenship qualities in them, and show them how they can achieve personal goals through their efforts.

Air Cadets all across the country are showing that young people can be role models, and hit the headlines for the right reasons – and we're delighted to help Project YOU extend this participation all across London!”

For more information on Project YOU see:
<http://www.met.police.uk/you/index.html>



'Magnificent' LaSER Squadron Wins Top Award

Continued from page 1

241 Sqn has represented London and South East Region in this competition before, having won the Morris Trophy in 2002 and 03 (for the second placed unit). This year's work took them one stage further, to become – in the words of the Regional Commandant - A magnificent Squadron!

Officer Commanding 241 Squadron, Squadron Leader Jerry Godden stated: "This was a team effort in which every cadet, from those with a couple of weeks

service to seven years have played their part and worked like Trojans to achieve this major milestone in the Squadron's history”.

For one of 241's Civilian Instructors, the achievements of the Squadron were mirrored by her own success. Kristina Pisano, a former CWO on 241 Sqn, is now looking forward to a three week expedition to South Africa, her prize as one of the 15 finalists in the Duke of Westminster Award, an annual competition organised by the Cadet Vocational Qualifications Organisation (CVQO). Whilst in South Africa, Kristina will undertake an environmental awareness course in Kwa Zulu Natal and a cultural project working with and teaching orphaned children.



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Air Cadets return from Sun drenched tropical Island



During the expedition

344 (Fulham) Squadron has become the first ever Air Cadet Squadron to visit the island of Sri Lanka. 15 cadets, supervised by 5 members of staff departed the UK on the 1st April 2008 for an adventure of a lifetime.

The expedition lead by Flt Lt Tony Piedade spent 14 days in Sri Lanka's central and South West Region experiencing the rich culture, religion, wildlife, and most importantly travelling through its jungle.

The team began their trip by visiting the Elephant Orphanage – watching the elephants being bathed and getting into the water to bathe them – before going to see a locally organised cultural show with traditional dancing and singing.

The trip quickly gathered pace from then which saw the expedition team take part in a mountain biking tour, visit to the Kandy War Graves in support of

the War Graves Commission and a visit to a large tea plantation.

The team then moved on to the trekking phase of the trip with saw them explore deep into the Sri Lankan jungle over a three day period. Expedition Leader Flt Lt Piedade said:

“The trip was amazing, there was so much variety, we packed a lot in. The jungle trek was by far the best and most exciting element of the trip, the heat and humidity made it very tough going but there were plenty of river crossings, some of them waste deep to cool us down. The most frustrating thing were the constant leech bites, they got everywhere!”

Following the jungle trek the team had a rest day to catch up with much needed laundry and prepare themselves for the Community project. The project involved the renovation and decoration of a local school building which housed upwards of

300 hundred students. During this part of the Expedition the group was met by Lt Col Anton Gash, Military Advisor based in Colombo. Lt Col Gash was impressed with the group's performance and dedication to the project and said “despite this being towards the end of a very tiring expedition the group is working at full speed, it's amazing to see so much going on at the same time,

all being choreographed by the staff members.”

The expedition proved a huge success and the squadron were recently visited by the outgoing AOC, Air Commodore Moulds who showed a keen interest in the expedition plans from the outset and wanted to get a first hand account from the expedition team.



The group outside the school they assisted renovating



Supersonic Cadet

Cadet Sgt Jonathan Kinahan of No 2137 (Harlow) Squadron Air Training Corps, was on cloud 9 after being named the winner of the Essex Wing Presidents Prize.

Set up by the President of Essex Wing, AVM P S Collins CB AFC BA RAF (Ret'd), who commanded No 111 Squadron RAF when it was flying Lightning aircraft, the winner receives a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to fly in a Tornado F3! Jonathan and the two runners up, Cadet Sgts Francesca Jordan of No

2243 (Basildon) Squadron and James King of No 1341 (Thundersley) Squadron, visited RAF Leuchars as guests of No 111 Squadron RAF. The cadets were given a guided tour of 111 Squadron RAF and its role as an Air Defence Squadron operating the Tornado F3 fighter aircraft.

On the Thursday morning, Jonathan had a full briefing from the pilot who would be flying him on a routine training mission, before his flight in the Tornado F3 fighter. John also got the



Jonathan after his flight

opportunity to put the aircraft through its paces with some high speed aerobatic manoeuvres before getting some fuel on board, courtesy of a VC 10 tanker aircraft during his 1 hour 20 minute sortie. After the flight, Jonathan said:

“There was very little sensation as we accelerated at low level over the sea to 1.2 times the speed of

sound, and then climbed to high level. It was a fantastic flight I'll never forget!”

All 3 cadets are hoping to join the RAF as pilots, and really enjoyed the opportunity to meet with the personnel from 111 Squadron RAF and see first hand what life in their chosen careers is all about.

282 to the land of Oz...



The group on board one of the Navy ships

Cadets and staff from 282 (East Ham) Squadron, led by Sgt Chris Booty ATC, have recently returned from an action packed trip to Perth in Western Australia – where they got to know the Australian Air Force over two weeks of exploration and ceremonial duties in 50°C temperatures!

The first few days were concentrated with meeting the Australian Air Force cadets and participating in their programme - including training sessions in Western Australia's band, learning ceremonial sword drill, and an evening session of field craft and a night navigation exercise out in the Australian outback!

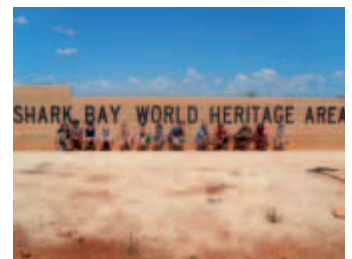
When the ceremonial duties were over, the cadets headed north on a 1200 mile journey through the bush and sand dunes to Shark Bay National Park, where the group stayed in outback lodges and visited the heritage site of Monkey Mia, where wild dolphins came up to the beach for the cadets to feed! The next stop was another national heritage site called Coral Bay, home to the Western Australia coral reef. This was a chance to witness the beautiful coral reef. The group went on a snorkelling cruise and learnt much of the history of the reefs and its fragile environment.

“I have never seen anything so beautiful as the coral reefs, so much colour and variety of fish, absolutely amazing!” said Cadet Sergeant Andrew Simon.

On returning to Perth, the cadets finished off with a visit to HMAS Stirling, a naval base off the coast of Perth.



Preparing for their field craft exercise



The cadets at Shark Bay

The Australian Navy took the cadets on a kayaking course out to Seal Island where they mingled with the seals and after, they went on a tour of all the ships that were docked and finally on to the SAT range for a session of marksmanship training.

The cadets and staff from 282 Squadron would like to thank the Australian Air Force for a once in a lifetime opportunity and for being such welcoming hosts.



Kent Wing's Cadets help at Record Breaking Airshow

Well over 200 cadets and Staff from Squadrons across Kent Wing were in action on 7 and 8 June in support of the 2008 Biggin Hill International Air Fair.

For over 15 years, Kent Wing has supplied cadets to help Air Displays International (ADI) to run the annual event at this famous former RAF fighter station.

Cadets carry out a variety of roles including helping at the points of entry, providing security for the aircraft in the static park and collecting for RAFA.

2008 saw a record-breaking attendance of over 70,000 people on the Sunday of the two day show.

The Air Cadets liaison officer, Flt Lt Richard Turner RAFVR(T), commented that "to see cadets return year after year to support this major Wing event is great.

It is the biggest public event in the Wing's calendar". These views were reinforced by Cdt Sgt Jennie Collins from 412 (Gravesend) Squadron who was interviewed on LBC Radio from the show!



Cadets collecting for RAFA



Enjoying some of the flying displays



Sgt Jennie Collins from 412 (Gravesend) Squadron during her live interview for LBC radio

LaSER Cadet Passes Out of RAF Halton



AC Dan Everest with his very proud mother

Aircraftman Dan Everest, of 1343 (East Grinstead) Squadron, chose his career after joining the Air Cadet Organisation when he was 14 years old.

His cadet career lasted over 4 years, by which time he had risen to the rank of Cadet Warrant Officer and had represented his squadron in the shooting and aircraft recognition teams. He recently passed out of RAF Halton after 11 weeks basic training, and now begins his trade training!

Flying Officer Jackie Pelling – Dan's delighted Mum – said: "The graduates put on a brilliant parade. I am so proud of Dan and what he has achieved, and I'm sure that he will continue to do well once he has completed his trade training for the RAF Police. There are so many opportunities for teenagers once they join the Air Cadets.

Dan has taken advantage of most of those opportunities and he is now living his dream in his full time career."

LaSER Squadron Wins Best Overseas Expedition Award 2007



Cadets from the expedition team collect the Shackleton Trophy from Air Chief Marshal Sir David Parry-Evans

Air Chief Marshal Sir David Parry-Evans presents the "Shackleton Trophy" to Cadets from 358 (Welling) Squadron, who won the trophy for the best overseas expedition.

Flt Lt Dave Hill RAFVR(T) led an expedition to Peru during 2007 and it is the second occasion that Flt Lt Hill has won the trophy with an Air Cadet Team. The Squadron also received the "Lavender Trophy" for the best overseas expedition undertaken in 2007 for a LaSER Squadron.



Sporting Achievements



ICdt FS Loveland proudly shows his Corps Blue

Flight Sergeant Peter Loveland, from Camberley, helped the Corps Rugby team to its first victory since 1993 by scoring a try in the 14-7 win over Warrington Colts.

The Corps side took the lead in the first half in difficult and windy conditions, but despite their best efforts could not stop Warrington from equalising early in the second half.

ICdt FS Loveland then scored late on near to the posts, which was easily converted.

Through his efforts, he was awarded the coveted Corps blue, the first at 1075 (Camberley) Squadron for more than 10 years.

This is yet another accolade for ICdt FS Loveland who has been Surrey Wing's Dacre Sword representative for the past two years and is the current Lord Lieutenant's cadet for Surrey.

He has also continued his sporting triumphs by recently winning gold at the Region athletics meet in the high jump – another 'Blue' for his collection.



Region Sports Update from Flt Lt Sally Rattle

Region Athletics:

The year's athletics competition couldn't have been closer – with just four points separating first and second place.

Results were as follows:

- 1st place: Kent Wing**
(242 points)
- 2nd place: London Wing**
(238 points)
- 3rd place: Essex Wing**
(222 points)
- 4th place: Middlesex Wing**
(214 points)
- 5th place: Surrey Wing**
(200 points)
- 6th place: Sussex Wing**
(167 points)

The competition also saw some new records – congratulations to the following cadets:

100 metres Girls B
Cdt E Tele 1312
(Southend on Sea)
Squadron, Essex Wing

Old Record – 12.95 (2006) /
New Record – 12.61 (2008)

Long Jump Girls B
Cdt E Tele 1312
(Southend on Sea)
Squadron, Essex Wing

Old Record – 4.79m (2000) /
New Record – 5.10m (2008)

Discus Girls A
Cdt L Prinsloo 1312
(Southend on Sea)
Squadron, Essex Wing

Old Record – 19.75m (2006) /
New Record – 22.81m (2008)



The Cross Country team

Cross Country:

Cadets from across the Region have proven their running skills placing second in the Corps for their combined efforts! Special mention to the Junior Women's team placing first and the Junior Men's team placing second:

Awarding of the Junior Woman "Sports Council Cup" went to:

- Cpl Sophie Trotter 461 Squadron (Sussex)**
- Cpl Shona Main 344 Squadron (London) (1st)**
- Sgt Emily King 253 I Squadron (Essex)**

Awarding to the Junior Men coming 2nd place:

- I/FS Daniel McNeil 1838 Squadron (London)**
- I/Cpl Justin Evans 173 Squadron (Kent)**
- I/FS Daniel Clarke 173 Squadron (Kent)**
- I/Cpl Carl Grounds 1218 Squadron (Sussex)**





LaSER Cadets called to the Tower

Air Cadets from 344 (Fulham) Squadron attended a special event at the Tower of London on Sunday 18th May 08.

Invited by the RAF Regiment Association, the London Wing cadets joined a detachment of



gunners from the Queens Colour Squadron and the veterans, for a Church Service and Parade held annually within the grounds of the Tower in full view of the tourists, hosted by the former RAF Regiment Warrant Officer Bob Loughlin, currently a Yeoman Warder at the Tower.

Group Captain Steven Brereton-Martin CBE, The National Chairman of the RAF Regiment Association said, "I am delighted to see the Fulham cadets. Their presence here today, truly gave meaning to the phrase, RAF Regiment, Past, Present and Future".



The Cadets at the Tower



The Cadets, Tower Yeoman, member of the RAF Regiment and Veterans pose for a picture outside the Royal Chapel

Sevenoaks Civilian Instructor Qualifies as Local Mine Leader

As a member of staff during the Kent Wing Adventure Training Week at Llanbedr Adventure Training Centre, CI Ginette Leeder of 2158 (Sevenoaks) Squadron Air Training Corps recently underwent assessment to become a Level 1 Mine Leader.

This qualification is held by only a very few people in the entire Air Training Corps, and the dedication and effort required to develop her personal skills to the level required was no small undertaking. She completed both days of assessment with an excellent report from her assessor, showing her

competence in managing groups underground and her ability to use a rope to secure individuals when necessary. CI Leeder can now take groups of 10 cadets on Level 1 trips (which require no vertical ascent/descent) into a variety of disused mines in Wales.



CI Leeder and some of the Sevenoaks Air Cadets prepare to enter a mine

LaSER Leaders Complete Basic Expedition Training

Eighteen staff and cadets from three Squadrons in London and South East Region (LaSER) are celebrating the completion of the Level 2 Award in Basic Expedition Leadership (BEL). The group – from 228 (Bromley) Squadron, 444 (Shoreditch) Squadron, and 1921 (Lewisham) Squadron – have been working on their training since January.

Led by Flt Lt James Dyer (OC 228 Squadron), a qualified Mountain Leader and recognised National provider of the BEL course, and taught by qualified staff from the three participating Squadrons, the course has covered the

responsibility of outdoor leadership – from First Aid, to effective group management – and all the required planning, navigating and camping skills in between. The qualification – which requires a further thirty hours of personal development and voluntary service to complete – is the basic requirement to lead groups in the outdoors. For the Air Training Corps, it is an essential part of a Squadron's staff development, and all three Squadrons are now making progress with their planning for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition season – where the newly trained staff and cadets will be putting their skills and leadership to the test!



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Shoreditch Supports The City Salute

The band of 444 (Shoreditch) Squadron came out in force to help support injured servicemen and women by taking part in the City Salute, held outside St Paul's Cathedral in Central London the evening of Wednesday 7th May.

The City Salute was a military pageant organised by the people of the city to show their admiration and to give thanks to the Armed Forces and the sacrifices they make. With Royal patrons in the form of Princes William and Harry and celebrity presenters such as Jeremy Clarkson and Ross Kemp it was always going to be well supported. It included an RAF fly past of Chinooks, Typhoons and Eurofighters and a performance by the band of HM Royal Marines.

The 444 Squadron band performed in Paternoster Square before the



The band performing in Paternoster Square

main event to entice the crowds and had an attentive audience including the Naval contingent of the main parade. After a rousing performance they assisted with charity collecting for SSAFA and Help the Heroes. Two cadets, Cpl Rebecca Dessurne and Cadet Layesha Kinsella were interviewed

by a BBC reporter about why they had volunteered to help and if people were donating.

Cdt Kinsella reported, "People have been quite generous. We wanted to help the charities and this is an exciting experience to be involved in".

LaSER Media Competition

Calling all sharp-shooters and budding journalists! Entries for the 2008 LaSER media competition are now being accepted for the following categories:

Photo Competition (Cadet entry)

Any photograph taken by a cadet detailing any event involving cadets.

Photo Competition (Staff entry)

Any photograph taken by a member of staff detailing any event involving the ATC.

Press Release Award

Any press release that professionally portrays an event or report from an individual unit of the ATC which a professional, commercial newspaper, periodical, magazine or journal must have previously published.

The press release and proof of that publication must be provided as supporting evidence.

Wing and Squadron newsletters are NOT included in this definition.

All entries must be from the 12 months preceding September 2008.



All entries need to be sent to RHQ for the attention of the Media & Communications Team by 12th September 2008.

More details are available from your Wing MCO



One of the prizes on offer!



- Editorial control retained by Regional Commandant LASER.
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