



# The AnyFace Association Newsletter Q1 2024



## Membership Update

As always, we are absolutely delighted to welcome the following members to the AnyFace Association. A great mix of specialisations and aircrafts represented!

**Gavin Hall.** Gavin was a Sea King Mk 2 AEM (R) on 849 A Flt from 1988 to 1990 and now resides in New Zealand.

**Harry Seaford.** Harry was a Gannet observer on 849 HQ, B & D Flts.

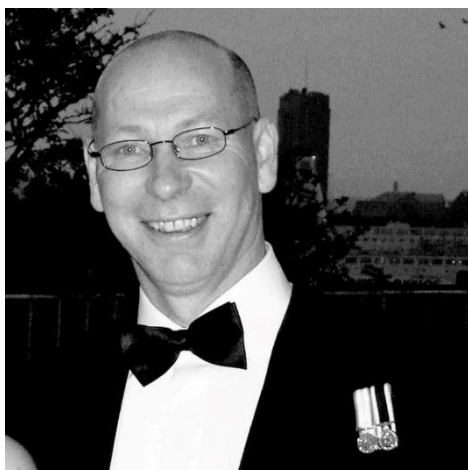
**Craig Howe.** Craig was a pinger pilot on Sea King 6 and Merlin Mk 1 (we won't hold it against him!) and later became an Intelligence Officer supporting the SKASaC detachments in Camp Bastion, Afghanistan in 2013 & 2014. After 23 years in the RN Craig transferred to the RAAF and has recently taken up the position of Executive Office of 462 Squadron based at RAAF Base Edinburgh in Adelaide.

**Anthony Tite.** 'Titus' was an observer on Sea King Mk2 & Mk7 serving on 849 B and then A Flt in the 90s. He was the CO 854 NAS from 2007-2009 and led the first deployment to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan in May 2009.

**James Firth.** James is a Merlin Crowsnest Observer and received his wings in 2022. He is currently on 820 NAS.

## Committee Update

Following the AGM, we are delighted to formally welcome **Jan Cox** (left) and **Ed Macintyre** (right) to the AnyFace Committee. Their contributions to the Association have already been felt. Their biographies can be found at the link below.

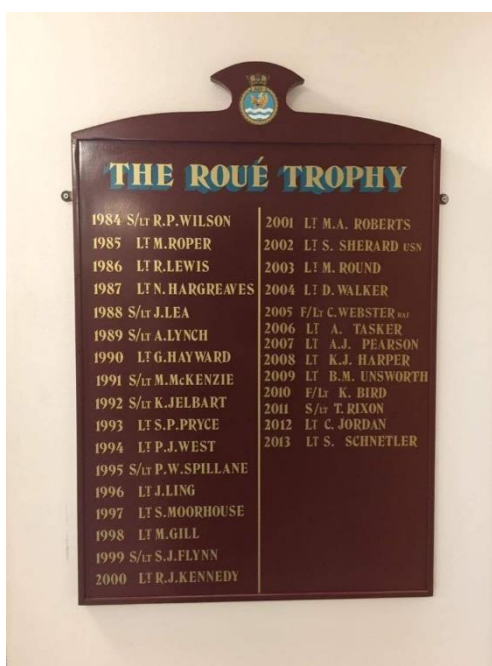


[Committee Members | anyface association](#)

## Recent events

In our last newsletter, we reported on the 824 NAS Wings parade held at Culdrose in December. Unfortunately, I was unable to receive the official photographs from the event before the newsletter was published, but I'm now very pleased to include a photo of the newly re-introduced Roué Trophy being presented to the best ASaC observer of the year.

The Roué Trophy is awarded in memory of Lt Cdr **David Roué**, who was killed on 6 March 1981 when two Sea Kings of 820 NAS collided in poor visibility while operating from HMS Invincible. Thank you to CO 824 NAS, **Chris Jones**, for re-introducing the Roué Trophy to Crowsnest training. It was very poignant that David and Gill's daughter Kate could be there to present the trophy to Lt **Harrison Redwood**.



Left: David Roué and HRH Prince of Wales during Ex Red Dragon in 1972

Top: Some notable previous recipients of the Roué Trophy!

## Future Events

### **National Memorial Arboretum meet up – 6 August 2024**

Details below from **Jan Cox**.



It is intended to schedule an event at the National Memorial Arboretum for Association Members and their guests on Tuesday 6 August 2024. The Arboretum was the idea of Commander David Childs RN CBE, who, having been inspired by a visit to Arlington Cemetery and the National Arboretum in Washington, believed a year-round national centre of Remembrance was needed here in the UK to ensure that we never forget.

This AnyFace get-together will be an opportunity to remember the unique contribution of all who have served and gave the ultimate sacrifice. In particular, for this occasion, those who served with the 849 Squadron and the wider Fleet Air Arm 'Eye in the Sky' Community.

The event will start at midday at The Redrat Memorial Bench. The bench was unveiled on 22 March 2013 by 849 NAS to mark the 10th anniversary of the tragic loss of the crews of Redrat 34 and 35 over the North Arabian Gulf. At the Redrat bench, words of Remembrance and the laying of a poppy wreath will be followed by splicing the mainbrace (personal hipflask). The remainder of the afternoon will be taken at leisure for personal remembrance in the peace and tranquillity of the Arboretum grounds. If there is sufficient interest, an evening dinner can be arranged.

All those interested in attending this event are to contact **Jan Cox** at [jancox1@msn.com](mailto:jancox1@msn.com) with the subject heading "AnyFace NMA" as soon as possible.

Accommodation and Arboretum entrance should be arranged by those wishing to attend. Assistance and information on accommodation is available from Jan at the above email.

### **Cenotaph Parade, Whitehall – 10 November 2024**

The Royal British Legion has requested AnyFace numbers by 1 May 24. We had 14 on parade last year, and it would be great to have the same (if not more) this year. If you are interested in taking part, I'd appreciate it if you could RSVP at the following link by **28 April 24**.

[Cenotaph Parade 2024 | AnyFace Association](#)

### **AnyFace Reunion 25 – Watch this space!**

Planning is underway, and further details will be provided in the next newsletter.





## Latest Dits

### **Will the Gannet fly again?**

For a number of years, we have been tracking the restoration of **XL500** by Horizon Aviation Services at St Athan, hoping that she will become airborne again.

**Alexander 'Sandy' Ellin**, was the squadron AEO when Gannet XL500 was received at Culdrose and was instrumental in putting the aircraft back together and getting her painted for static display purposes.

Sandy has provided the following update, *'I was idly leafing through the August 2023 edition of Pilot magazine where they always have a section on Aircraft Registrations. Included in the list was G-KAEW which was the civilian registration given to XL500 when she went into private hands in Wales. She is noted as being "Permanently withdrawn from use". A note in the text mentions that she is now on display at the South Wales Aviation Museum at St Athan. The CAA G-INFO database records that the date she was de-registered as being 30 May 2023'*.

But there is some better news from **David Moojen** regarding Gannet **XT752**.

*'As a result of interest expressed at the Association AGM, I have been asked to provide a brief update on the efforts to return Gannet XT 752 to this country from the USA. Ex-Ganneteers can skip the first paragraph, as they will have read it all before!*

*XT 752 is a Gannet TMk5 designed for type conversion and engine handling training for pilots entering the AEW world to fly the Gannet AEW3. The airframe is essentially a Gannet A/S MK4 aircraft, but with no A/S equipment fitted, and a duplicate set of flying controls fitted in the centre cockpit. The power plant is an Armstrong Siddeley Double Mamba unit comprising two turbo prop engines mounted side by side in one casing and driving contra-rotating propellers through co-axial drive shafts. This unusual arrangement gave twin-engine reliability with no asymmetric handling problems when flying on one engine. A conventional twin-engine layout, with engines mounted on the wings, would have resulted in an aircraft too large to operate from RN carriers.*

*With the decommissioning of HMS Ark Royal and 849 NAS at the end of 1978, XT752 was placed in storage first at RNAS Culdrose and, later, at RNAS Lee-on-Solent. She was sold off, along with other redundant airframes, in the mid-1990s, being bought by an American collector of former FAA aircraft, Wally Fisk. After being air-freighted to Canada, and transported by land and sea to the USA, XT752 joined Wally's collection at an airfield near Minneapolis. She was brought back to flying condition, and displayed regularly at her home airfield, and made at least one visit to the major airshow at Oshkosh. She was subsequently acquired by an English collector, resident in the USA, who continued to display her, but with the intention of eventually flying her back to the UK.*

*In the late 90s, while attempting the flight back to the UK, XT752 suffered a loss of power on one engine, and diverted to Goose Bay, Greenland. There she languished for at least two years, the subject of litigation over ownership, and repair and hangarage costs. Eventually, she was transported back to the USA, where she spent more time in a hangar, before being bought by Tim Manna and John Sessions. Tim owns and operates several warbirds in the UK.*

*The aircraft now resides at New Richmond, Wisconsin, and is being restored to flying condition. Currently, she is awaiting initial ground runs and test flights, which are due to be carried out by John Beattie (ex FAA), to prepare her for the flight back to the UK.'*

And finally, **Richard Scott** has recently visited the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tuscon, Arizona and snapped a couple of pics of **XL482** - I don't think she will be flying again anytime soon! I'm sure many of you will have flown this aircraft and perhaps were involved in its last flight across the pond?



## The Bellhop and History of AEW

**Simon Watts** has kindly given the association permission to publish his recent articles on the Bellhop and the history of AEW in the FAA and RAF. I know a few members contributed to these articles which Simon was very grateful for. Simon's biography is below, along with the links to the articles.



Simon Watts, MBE FREng. Simon was a deputy Scientific Director and Technical Fellow in Thales UK until 2013 and is a Visiting Professor in the department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering at University College London. He received an MA from the University of Oxford in 1971, an MSc from the University of Birmingham in 1972, a PhD from the CNAA in 1987 and a DSc from the University of Birmingham in 2013. He joined Thales (then EMI Electronics) in 1967 and worked on a wide range of radar and EW projects, including the Searchwater 2000AEW radar for the Mk.7 Sea King ASaC. His particular research interests are airborne maritime radar and sea clutter. He is author and co-author of over 80 journal and conference papers, two books on sea clutter, various book chapters on clutter and several patents. He has also published two books on the history of airborne maritime surveillance radar. He

was appointed MBE in 1996 for services to the UK defence industry. He holds Fellowships of the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Institute of Engineering Technology, the Institute of Mathematics and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

<https://www.anyfaceassociation.com/post/the-bellhop-radar-relay-for-an-aps-20-by-simon-watts>

<https://www.anyfaceassociation.com/post/airborne-early-warning-for-the-faa-and-raf-from-ww2-to-the-present-day-by-simon-watts>

## Admin Director Update

### Request for help

#### **Bob Beese**

Some of you may have seen a piece in the recent FAAOA News Sheet from Bob's brother Pat, who is trying to connect with those who knew Bob. Bob was a member of the Association and passed away in 2022. He was a pilot on 849 B Flt from 1965 -1968. Please let me know if you knew him and would like to connect with Pat.

#### **Skyraider on display?**

This year, our member **Keith Childs** celebrates 70 years since joining 849. Keith was an engineer on B Flt from May 1954 to May 1956 and then on HQ from October 1958 until January 1960. He would like to visit a Skyraider, but the aircraft at the FAA Museum is no longer displayed. If anyone is aware of a Skyraider on display in the UK, please get in touch.

#### **Membership Fees**

A reminder that 2024 renewal fees for Full and Associate members (who joined before September 23) are being collected.

I'd be grateful if you can BACS transfer £10 to the AnyFace account by 1 April 24

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Ref: Surname 24

#### **AnyFace Association Tie**

We still have a handful of AnyFace ties left in stock at £15 (including p&p). You can order yours via the form here [AnyFace Tie order form](#).

And thank you to our 'handsome' model from down under **Arthur 'Chalky' White**. It was lovely to see him and his wife Cindy a couple of weeks ago in Canberra!



Yours aye,

Serena, Admin Director