

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2009! I hope everyone has had a well deserved break this Christmas! As always, the Squadron has had a busy couple of months, so I know the staff and cadets have all had a well earned rest! But not for long, as we've already begun our New Year's activities which you'll hear all about in our next issue!

Let me introduce myself. My name's Alex Dutch and I've been on 241 Squadron for just over two years, and during that time I've been promoted to Corporal, completed my Gold Duke of Edinburgh Expedition, been on two annual camps, and been the IC of the winning Junior Drill team at Wing Field day (more about this later!).

Over the past few months we've had 12 Cadets complete their gliding scholarships, we've won the London Wing swimming and cross country Competitions, every Drill event at London Wing Field day, the Inness Sword and Elworthy Competitions and had cadets on TV as part of the Remembrance parades across London.

As well as all this the Squadron as always volunteered to sell poppies as part of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. After a hectic week of Door to Door collections, collections on Loughton High Street, and collections at train stations we managed to raise over £6000 for this appeal.

I would like to thank all the Cadets who contributed to the newsletter this month! There was a lot to include as we've been so busy!!

Lastly, don't forget to use our Squadron Webshop. It costs nothing, but for each item bought a small donation will be received from the company. This helps us raise much needed money for the Squadron.

Enjoy.

Cpl Alexandra Dutch (Editor)

The Lees Trophy Presentation - 8th December

By Cpl Alex Dutch

The Lees Trophy presentation was a huge success. As well as all the Staff and Cadets and parents on 241, in attendance was Air Chief Marshall Sir Glenn Torpy - The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Commodore Stewart – The head of the Air Cadets, most of the Head Teachers of the surrounding Schools, the Mayor of Redbridge as well as ex Cadets and staff from the Squadron and London Wing.

The Lees trophy is awarded to the best squadron in the country. It is a reflection of the sheer hard work, dedication and commitment to the spirit of the Squadron that every single Cadet, all members of Staff Members both Past and Present and The Civilian Committee has put into the Squadron.

It was a great evening, with presentations from staff and Cadets on what the Squadron had been doing over the past year, as well as the Lees Trophy being formally awarded at the end of the evening by Sir Glenn Torpy.



The Chief of Air Staff and The Cadet NCO Team with The Lees Trophy

At the end of the evening the Chief of the Air Staff remarked -

"You have formed an absolutely fantastic squadron. I have never heard such an impressive resumé of successes. I wish you all the best in your future careers and I am sure that your experience here will hold you in tremendous stead for the future. It just remains for me to say to enjoy yourselves and exploit the opportunities you are given."

Festival of Remembrance - 9th November

By Cdt Akshay Mandalia

On Saturday 08 November 2008 we were invited to attend the Annual Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. The festival commemorates those who lost their lives in the wars of the last century.

The day started with a long rehearsal in the morning and then lunch at the national art academy and then guests for the afternoon performance started arriving. Our job was to sell programmes in return for a donation. To do this we were joined by cadets from Army Cadet Units, Sea Cadet Units and some Guides and Scouts. When we'd finished we were all seated for the first performance.

The performance began with an opening address and the entrance of the Torch of Remembrance. In addition performers included Katherine Jenkins, Blake, Hayley Western, the Royal Air Force Band and The Royal Marine Corps Band.

The evening performance held more importance than the afternoon one, as The Queen, Prince Phillip, Prince Charles and Camilla were all in attendance, as well as many war survivors with their medals. Also this was on national television, so nobody wanted to mess up.

The performance was largely the same as the first one, however after the fall of the poppies, this time the parade at the end followed with three cheers for the Queen.

The show itself was fantastic with CWO Dent having the honour of representing the ATC at the Festival, in the presence of HM The Queen, the Prime Minister and other public figures. She carried the Corps Banner across the floor of the Hall and was seen by an audience of millions watching on the BBC.



CWO Dent marching across the hall at the festival of remembrance with the Corps banner

A number of our cadets were also selected to be part of the Muster during the two performances, alongside representatives from the Army, Navy, RAF, Royal Marines and Civilian Services. My favourite part of the show was The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines, their music was amazing and they were enjoyed by everyone.

I really enjoyed being part of this event. It was great to see CWO Dent march across the hall with the banner as I know it was something every cadet on our squadron was aspiring to do. I also got the chance to talk to some of the soldiers who had just got back from deployments overseas. Overall I think it was a fantastic experience and I learnt a lot from the event.

The Inness and Elworthy Swords

By Sgt Ross Davidson

On the weekend of the 19-21st September, 8 cadets from 241 attended the annual London Wing Inness Sword Competition, a military skills competition against 22 other of London Wings squadrons. Even before the event, there was a lot of competition as each squadron puts forward their best cadets, 25 of our cadets volunteered to be in the team this was finally whittled down to the final 8. Training got harder the closer we got to the competition and the week before, the 15 candidates left went to Crowborough to practise all the events including the obstacle course and orienteering. All cadets performed so well in training, it was hard for a team to be picked. However, the final team members were as follows:

FS Sandhu (Team IC)	Cdt Murphy
Cpl Dutch J	Cdt Thompson
Cpl Davidson	Cdt Gachette
Cpl Southcott	Cdt Shaw

Having a reputation and being unofficial favourites, from the night we arrived at Pirbright training camp, we could hear other squadrons talking about us. After the first day, we had managed to complete most of the events which were - The Command Task, The Obstacle Course, First Aid, Orienteering, Stretcher Run, Shooting and finally Drill. By the end of the day we had no idea of how we had done so far because we knew that we hadn't done as well as we would have liked on the command task and the orienteering. However, this was the least of our worries because we now had the evening activity – The Inness Sword singing competition! This was something none of us had trained for and I think I can speak for the whole team that it was something we had no talent for. We ended up singing a mix of 'Only Fools and Horses' and 'Stand By Me' and we came near the bottom. After such a great night we went to bed early so we would be ready for the last event, the Observation Task.

After waking up at 6am and having breakfast, we were one of the first to do the task where we had to examine 12 pictures and then had to answer questions on them to see what we had remembered. After this we relaxed while the other squadrons finished their events before competing in the Wing Commanders challenge (The Drill Sequence with a member of staff of each squadron also marching) and for the final parade and prize giving. We had a very good idea that we had won when our team leader, Flight Sergeant Sandhu had collected four of the 8 event trophies and we had come in the top 3 in all the other events bar the orienteering. We also came second in the Wing Commanders challenge. We were eventually told we had won and we had beaten last year's winners, 12F, by quite a large margin. We got presented the prestigious Inness Sword and took it home to celebrate.



The Inness and Elworthy Team

By winning the Inness Sword, 241 squadron would now represent London Wing in the Elworthy Sword, presented to the London cadet force by the former Lord Lieutenant of London, Marshall of the Royal Air Force Lord Elworthy. This is a similar competition but for all units in all three services in London. The team had to change a little because there were different age limits, and the team leader was unable to attend so I stepped in. Again we trained for this tournament at the squadron 3 nights a week. This competition was to be at Crowborough training camp, during the weekend of 3-5 October, and the events were - First Aid, Assault Course, Drill, Orienteering, Speed Marching and Shooting. The weather for this weekend was very different to the sunny weekend for the Inness

Competition - it was constantly raining so made everything a lot harder, especially the obstacle course as we had to crawl through puddles.

We were pretty confident we had done well in this competition and by the time we formed up for presentations, we all went up to get our winners medals for the 1st Aid, Obstacle course and speed march. We had tied first in drill but not given the prize for various reasons, which we as a team thought was unfair as we had lost points in uniform and we had just come off the obstacle course, and the other team did their sequence at the beginning of the day with clean uniform.

We were eventually told we had won the competition and were awarded the sword by the Lord Lieutenant of London, Sir David Brewer. So overall, our training had paid off and we had won two of the most important annual competitions on our squadron calendar in true 241 spirit.

The final team members for the Elworthy competition were as follows:

Cpl Davidson (Team IC)	Cdt Murphy
Cpl Dutch J	Cdt Bliss
Cpl Beveridge	Cdt Dutney
Cpl McCormack	Cdt Hargreaves

Wing & Region Field Day

By CWO Caroline Dent

After hard practicing and determination, the Drill Teams both junior & senior, Shooting Team, Banner Party and Aircraft Recognition Teams set off for the London Wing Field Day on Sunday 28th September.

The squadron was defending its position of the premier drill squadron in the wing having won the competition for the last two years! The team had 10 new members and a new SNCO IC so competition was fierce.

The Drill Sequence went really well, and after a long wait, the team was announced in 1st place and CWO Dent was judged the Best NCO giving her the opportunity to represent the Air Cadets at the Royal Albert Hall – Festival of Remembrance with the Air Training Corps Banner. This was no mean feat for such a new inexperienced team.

Along with this, Sgt James Simpole led his team of 4 cadets to be winners of the first Wing Banner Competition.

Cdt Alex Dutch, who has been newly promoted, led the Junior Drill Team. As we had entered a Senior Drill Team, we could only compete for honours. However when looking at the results, if we were entered the Junior Team they would have won and Cdt Dutch coming joint 2nd for Best NCO.

Despite best efforts, the Air Recognition Team came a close 2nd to a strong team from 6F Squadron and FS Sandhu came 3rd individually. Along with this, OC Sqn Ldr Godden came 1st in the Adult photographic competition.

Having done at Wing Level, we went along to the London & South East Region Competition at Carver Barracks with a full Senior Drill Team, 4 cadets for First Aid and provided half of the wings shooting team of 8.

The shooting team hit the roof, having the highest scores and winning, Senior Drill Team came 5th overall which was higher than last year. The Firsts Aid Team came 4th overall.

Being part of London Wings Team – London Wing came 2nd overall which is an excellent result.

It was a great experience for both myself and the more experienced Cadets, as well as the more junior Cadets. The Drill Team is already looking forward to next year and making 241 the Champions for the 4th Year in a row!!

Crowborough Field Exercise 14th November

By Cadet Yazmin Gachette

On Friday 14th November, Cadets of all abilities and ages anxiously sat in the minibus waiting for the familiar journey to Crowborough Army Training Camp to come to an end. On this particular weekend, the squadron were running a Field Exercise, and unlike the usual Recruit Crowborough, that pushes cadets to their maximum abilities, this weekend was more about Field skills. All cadets start on Phase 1 and progress to Phase 5 over their time on the squadron, with the phases becoming increasingly more difficult. This time with phases 1, 3 and 5 running, there really was a mixture of abilities. The people doing phase 1 were to have a good nights

sleep in the billets on the Friday night, whereas phase 3 and 5 began their weekend of military skills the minute they stepped off the bus in Pippingford Park forest.

Phase 1 cadets – the most junior, were taught things from scratch. After being split into two sections, the section commanders took the time in teaching the cadets how to: camouflage themselves properly in the field, how to store kit so that's its both practical and easier to carry, how to sort out their admin, and the correct dress for the field.

Phase 3 cadets on the other hand, began the weekend with a night exercise involving patrolling tactically around the forest. These cadets were fairly experienced in the field, and therefore could begin the field exercise straight away.

Phase 5 cadets – the most senior cadets, also began their weekend with a tactical night exercise. Each cadet had a chance to take leadership, and plan routes, as after completion of this exercise, they would have earned their "Phase V Flash."

The second night (Saturday 15th November) saw all cadets take part in a night ex. This went extremely well, with many of the junior cadets picking up on the skills they'd been taught in a relatively short time.

On Sunday, despite the fact we needed to get back to London and pack all the kit away, the day still involved activities for all phases. This was otherwise known as the Tab. It involves running/power walking from Pippingford Park Forest back to Crowborough Army Training camp, which is between 4-5 miles. Phase 1 had to tab back carrying rocket packs, phase 3 carrying bergens and phase 5 carrying webbing and bergens. This pushed some cadets to their limits, however, was extremely successful as all cadets passed this task.

Overall, all cadets came away with something from this weekend, whether it was a basic understanding of Fieldcraft or a Phase V flash!

RAF Aldergrove 25th October - 1st November

By Cdt Hollie Fox

Being one of only three cadets from 241 - Cadet Murphy, Cadet Mandalia and myself – I felt very apprehensive about this week long camp. It was also a long way from home – Northern Ireland – and none of us had been there before so we didn't know what to expect. On the plane there we got to know some other cadets, who seemed very nice; it looked like it was going to be a good week!

At last, we arrived, given our week's brief and off to bed. The week started with shooting, what a result! I got my region marksman, and 241 came home with 2 region marksmen! Monday was section visits to the air support unit, photography section and our Camp Photo! Tuesday was an off-base day. We went to 'Giant's Causeway,' a place where every rock told a story! Later in the day we went to the 'crack-a-ride' Rope Bridge which was rather scary, and around 50ft high, above a rocky sea! Wednesday, we had Sports all morning, and then the flight simulator, which was fun as we could practice movements that we are too junior to do in real life. Thursday was also another off-base day! We visited Belfast town, and went on a very long, cold open-bus tour. It was really interesting, and we got to see many things. After the bus tour we got to go into Northern Ireland's Parliament House, 'Stormont.' This was really interesting and I learnt a lot about Parliament. Friday, for me, was the best day! We visited the police air support section, fire section, bomb disposal section and we went swimming! Half way through the week, we had a palaver with our accommodation, the power had cut! However, we were transported to nicer, bigger accommodation, with girls having 3 per room, and boys having 2!

Evening activities were quite similar each day, including Sports, the cinema, and more sports! However, on Wednesday after our day to Belfast we had to improvise on Halloween outfits as we were invited to a Halloween party at Northern Ireland's biggest air cadet squadron, which I must say was tiny! Our night included apple bobbing, mummy-making and other party games. On Friday, each flight (A and B) had to create a piece of entertainment for the other flight. My flight, A flight, planned a bit of Michael Jackson, 'Thriller' dancing, and drama to describe the week at its best. B flight created 'Aldergrove X-factor' which was also very funny! We then received paper plate awards, our marksmen awards, camp photo and a CD that a member of staff had put together with photos on!

Overall, I think that the Camp was a really good experience, and even though 241 only had 3 cadets there, we won half the awards! 2 out of 4 marksmen and 1 out of 2 best cadets! Not bad really! We just proved to ourselves that 241 really are the best!

Beckingham Camp 26th Oct – 1st November

By Cdt Kiran Babla

The week started off even before we got to the Camp. We stopped off at an RAF station, and were each given a ride in a Search and Rescue helicopter – a Sea King. After the flight, we left for the camp, and arrived on the Sunday evening, only to find there wasn't actually anybody staying at the camp but us! We ordered pizza on the first night, and settled in for the adventurous week we had ahead of us.

The week started excellently. We woke up early, tired and moaning, but the full English breakfast kept us on our toes! We were then drove to an RAF station, where we were shown around to see what they do during the day, and the day finished with us actually being dropped off back to camp in a Merlin Helicopter, which was an amazing experience. And just a little note, only one of those flights cost around £40,000 for expenses, and we paid a miniscule amount of £60 for the whole week! Bargain, eh?

The rest of the week involved many activities. We were taken to RAF College Cranwell, and told many stories of how it came to be the College it is today, and the history of it. We got taken to a low ropes course in the middle of a forest, and a high ropes course later in the week, which tested our teamwork, and really got the group bonding together, and getting to know each other.



Cadets flying in a Merlin Helicopter

We went shooting twice during the week, one with L98 Rifles, and another at an electronic range, with dummy Automatic rifles, which accurately told you where you shot on the target. A few people received their Marksman badges, and many people just had the experience and fun of shooting tonnes of enemies, while standing up, *and* having the rifle in automatic mode!

Some time during the week, we were taken to Alton Towers, while some cadets had a flight in a King Air. The day was all paid for, and again, we got it for just £60! We were also taken to the nearest Cinema, which was a very good night! We did a Night-ex, which consisted of First Aid, Command Tasks and Navigation, all in one night. This, again, got people to trust each other and learn to listen to each other!

So overall, the week was fantastic. The food was all paid for, the accommodation at the camp, the trips, the movies, every single activity and trip – all paid for. For only £60, this week was amazing. It was an incredible camp!

Gliding Scholarships 13th – 17th October

Cadet Warrant Officer Ajvir Sandhu

As part of winning the Lees Trophy 241 Sqn was awarded a batch of Gliding Scholarships. Awkwardly placed in the middle of the school term, we managed to fill our places and on the 17th October 11 cadets went to complete their Gliding Scholarships at RAF Syerston, the Central Gliding School for the Royal Air Force. We were accommodated and hosted by RAFC Cranwell for the week, an experience enjoyed by all thanks to the fantastic facilities, accommodation and food.

The primary aim for the week was for everyone to complete a GS which meant achieving the 'Blue Wings'. There would also be the chance if there was enough time to go solo and earn the 'Silver Wings' and then possibly even further for the more rare 'Gold Wings' which signify that the bearer is a more advanced glider pilot who has a better understanding of the aircraft, has completed the extended syllabus and has achieved a further 5 solo flights to a satisfactory standard.

The 11 of us were each allocated an aircraft and an instructor. This course was slightly different in that the chance to fly the Vigilant powered glider was also available and 7 people were put onto this aircraft and the other 4 were on the conventional unpowered Viking. We were very lucky in the sense that the weather held up for us and the only time we were grounded because of poor weather was on Wednesday morning.

The first two days were spent going over all the basics needed to fly solo, which included take-offs, landings, circuit flying and emergency procedures. Those flying the Vigilant had the challenge of having to know more material because their aircraft had an engine and those on the Viking had the additional pressure of knowing that if they made a mistake it may not be possible to recover from it as there is no engine you can use to gain height again!

On Wednesday morning we all sat our respective tests that we needed to pass to prove that we understood the aircraft. The Viking pilots all passed theirs whereas the Vigilant pilots were not so successful! This added to the friendly banter between the two camps as each believed their respective aircraft was the better to fly. I was on Vikings and can assure you that they were the best. In the afternoon we began flying again and things were began to look up for the Viking pilots who had now all largely mastered the landings and were now just looking to refine their skills before the chance to fly their £30,000 gliders before most could drive a car. I was very lucky in that a small weather window opened and I flew solo on the last set of cables for the day, an experience which ranks high up as one of the best things I have done with the ATC.

Thursday was my final day of flying in which I completed the material to gain my Gold Wings. The remaining Viking pilots also flew solo and began to work towards the next stage. The Vigilant pilots by now had learnt all they needed to go solo. On Friday their instructors went through the final refinements and 3 from the 7 went solo and the remaining 4 were unfortunate to miss out due to time restraints. One of the other Viking pilots (FS Simpole) also completed the course for his Gold Wings and I managed to persuade the Duty Instructor to let me fly once more. I wasn't allowed to go solo again but so I went up with an Instructor and managed to find some thermals and stayed up for quite a while in pleasant conditions.

All in all, this was a fantastic week enjoyed by all. Everyone succeeded in coming home with a set of Wings and some now look forward to taking their flying with the ATC forward with a Flying Scholarship.



CWO Dent and FS Simpole in Vikings waiting to take off.

Recruiting

The next Recruit Course starts on Wednesday 4th March. This will be another big recruiting effort so if you have any friends or relatives who wish to join, bring them along.

Forthcoming Events

January

- 5th – Squadron Reopens
- 11th – L81 Shoot
- 23rd - 25th – Wales Adventure Training
- 28th – Flying
- 31st – Epping Forest Navigation Exercise

February

- 1st – ATC Sunday
- 7th - Epping Forest Navigation Exercise
- 8th – Duke of Edinburgh Planning day
- 13th – Epping Forest Night Exercise
- 22nd – L98 Shoot
- 22nd – Gliding
- 28th - Epping Forest Navigation Exercise

March

- 1st – Wing Football
- 4th – New Recruit Course Starts
- 6th - 8th – Wales Adventure Training
- 13th - 15th – NCO Course
- 15th - L81 Shoot
- 21st – Sainsburys Bag Pack
- 27th-29th – Recruit/Field Crowborough

April

- 1st – 8th -Wing Camp
- 15th – Flying
- 16th – L98 Shoot
- 18th – 19th Shooting Camp
- 25th – St Georges Day Parade
- 26th – McGrath Trophy Competition

May

- 1st – 4th Peak District Adventure Training
- 10th – London Wing Athletics Competition
- 10th – L81 Shoot
- 18th – L98 Shoot
- 23rd – 30th Basic Lakes

Promotions / Awards

To Corporal

Alex Dutch
Myles Webb

To Sergeant

Dominic Ishct
Josh Beveridge
Ross Davidson

To Flight Sergeant

Rhys Reeves Roberts
James Simpole
William Brown

To Cdt Warrant Officer

Ajvir Sandhu

Commissioned into the RAF VR(T)

Kristina Pisano

The squadron welcomes a new member of staff:
Adult Sergeant Faulkner

This newsletter has taken a fair amount of time to prepare. We would appreciate your views on it. Is it worth the effort? Have you enjoyed reading it? How can we improve it? Also if you have any other comments on the squadron we would love to hear them too. Please visit:

www.241squadron.com