

## Postcard from Bournemouth

Dear All,

I must apologise for the delay in this postcard arriving but the British Post Office ain't wot it used to be!!

Flight to the UK this time was a first for me, as I flew "Ryanair". Despite all the rumours it was a very good flight, the only disconcerting moment was the fanfare they play for arriving on time. I thought they were meant to arrive on time, must be getting cynical in my old age.

Due to the National Police Force holding their annual conference in Bournemouth, we had had to change our hotel venue from the sea front to slightly more in land. Nice hotel even though it meant we were sharing with about 20 "females" on a pole dancing weekend. Oh joy! And quiet sleep filled nights, I think not!!!!

Anyway back to the Conference. After a 20 minute taxi ride from the airport amicably solving the worlds' problems with the Iranian driver, I spent the next few hours being accosted by various branch Presidents, Chairmen and Delegates all professing to support our branches nomination for Vice Chairman etc. Taking a quick count on fingers and toes, the nomination was in the bag. I think some speak with forked tongue!!

The following morning, breakfast was taken with the certain committee personnel who felt the branch was not conforming to correct procedures, when informed that in the past the same procedures had been followed by himself, breakfast continued in a somewhat quieter mode.

The Area Conference followed its normal routine, with excellent reports from Serving Personnel & from certain members of the Central Council. We then came to the election of the new area committee members. Sixteen delegates listed as present to cast their vote in the secret ballot. (17 delegates listed on minutes circulated in June)

The first vote was for Bob Gauci as Chairman, carried unopposed.

Next came the vote for Vice Chairman between Bob Hunt and myself. 14 votes were entered we were informed. It was then requested if there were any other votes, magically a further vote or votes were found or cast. Winner by a close margin was Bob Hunt, the incumbent Vice President.

The final vote for two positions of Vice President was between 4 nominees, with Malcolm Mason & Mrs Beryl Dennett Stannard being successful.

I must learn to take more combination of fingers and toes with me next time. Partially due to this strange ancient method of circulation voting that seems to be prevalent within the area, the branch has decided to propose 7 resolutions concerning the set up and voting methods of future Area Councils. (Watch this space for future updates!!!).

Finally it was decided that the 2010 Autumn Area Conference would be held in Gibraltar. Good chance for our members to attend. Details to follow in future newsletters.

The following day was main RAFA Conference, held in the Bournemouth International Conference Centre (BICC). It always makes me proud to see the number of delegates and members of all ages who make the effort to attend these conferences. From the smallest to the largest branches, from the youngest ATC cadet to the more senior members of the Association, one and all they are there to show that RAFA means a lot to them.

With the early session being taken up with the various reports from different areas of the Association and a lengthy but highly interesting report concerning the current RAF and its deployments, the morning flew by.

With a fairly non controversial set of resolutions before the delegates it was almost certain which way most resolutions were going to go. Some were due to fail on technicalities, some on old fashioned views. Both reasons for failure which must be addressed in the future, if this Association can continue to drag itself out of the 1920's.

Both the Friday & Saturday evenings were spent at the BICC for various gala dances etc, spreading the word of the Benalmadena branch.

Sunday morning dawned a typical British early summers day.....wet. For the first time in attending annual conferences it meant an indoor church parade. I & many others were really disappointed with this as it is always very uplifting to see 1,000 ex service personnel of all ages marching along the seafront. Oh, well there is always next year in Blackpool.

Wish you were here

Lots of love

Steve Mullis

Branch Delegate