



LASER NEWS

Journal of the Air Cadet Headquarters London and South East Region



Triumphant Year for LASER Air Cadets

London and South East Region Air Cadets conclude the year with some remarkable achievements.

The Corps coveted Lees Trophy was awarded to 1083 (Uxbridge) Sqn for their high standards and enthusiasm throughout the inspection schedule.

The LASER's year of successes got off to a glowing start in May 04, with the personal achievement of Cadet Warrant Officer Tara Sarikadilar, 21, of 1159 (Edmonton) Squadron who was awarded the Dacre Brooch, Corps top award for a female cadet. (see P2)

LASER Squadrons were awarded

1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th in the tri-service competition.

The gruelling team competition consisted of an obstacle course,

first aid, command tasks and a drill competition judged by rather an exacting group of Drill Warrant Officers from all three services.



Kent Wing Banner Party at Biggin Hill Chapel

Rain drenched Pirbright Army Garrison was the venue where four LASER Squadrons battled for the Greater London Cadet Forces Elworthy Trophy, against units from the Army Cadet Force and the Sea Cadets Corps. 862 (Sunbury) Squadron were the overall winners.



Air Cadets inspected by tri-service WOs

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2020

Headquarters Air Cadets has ordered LASER Region to implement a strategic study into the future of our organisation.

Formed in 1938, during one of the bleakest periods of our country's history, the Air Defence Cadet Corps, was renamed the

Air Training Corps, in February 1941.

From those embryonic stages, thousands of air cadets have been afforded the opportunities, vocations and self-development through practical interest in aviation, preparation for both service and civilian lives, and

being involved in countless community projects and charity work to make a positive impact in the community.

The study, which will examine all aspects of Air Cadets, is being lead by Group Captain L Hakin, Regional Commandant, LASER.

Winter 2004 In this issue

Regional Commandant's Message	
Dacre Brooch 2004 Award	2
Expedition - Essex to Ecuador Region	3
Chaplain's Message	
Kent Wing Banner Dedication	4
LASER	
Band Competition	5
LASER Cadets at Nijmegen	
Essex Air Cadets at Southend Air Show	6
LASER	
Swimming Gala	7
ACO Adult Staff	
Recruitment Campaign.	
LASER Contact Details	8

• Laser Air Cadets continue to be awarded flying and gliding scholarships. Many congratulations to the following cadets;

CWO M Cox, 1083 Sqn
F/Sgt K Goyns, 82 Sqn
F/Sgt Pludowska, 82 Sqn
Sgt S Lambert, 82 Sqn

• Cadet Warrant Officer Carlie Pavitt, 18, of 27F (Chingford) Squadron has been named the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Greater London. Carlie said; "I feel honoured to have received this award and feel that all the hard work has finally paid off."

Regional Commandant's Message

As we come to the end of another year of success, achievement and reward for the cadets of LASER, I must pay tribute to all of the adults involved in the Region, who help make us the finest youth organisation in the County.

Uniformed, civilian, volunteer or civil servant, all of you must be immensely proud to see your young people, our cadets, excel in all endeavours. We aim to stretch and mould our cadets into good citizens, as we chase the ideal enshrined in "Venture Adventure".

As we approach Christmas it is timely for us too, in the Air Cadet Organisation, (AOC), to pause, reflect and consider the servicemen and women of the Royal Air Force, abroad on peace support operations. We should hope for their continued safety and swift return to their families and friends back home.

Notwithstanding the heavy commitments placed on our parent service, it does find the time and resources to support the ACO, especially during our RAF Annual Camps, here in UK and overseas. I know that our cadets and staff alike find the



camp extremely rewarding.

To all members of LASER, adults and cadets, whatever your unit in the Region, whatever your religion or beliefs- I wish

you and your loved ones a Happy

Christmas, an enjoyable holiday and a safe 2005. LASER "No Deviation"

*Group Captain L Hakin
Regional Commandant*



TARA— Corps' Tops

A LASER cadet has been recognised as the top female Air Cadet for 2004.

Tara Sarikadilar (left), 21, of No 1159 (Edmonton) Sqn, Middlesex Wing, was informed of her pinnacle achievement in May 04. She joined the Corps in 1997.

Tara's citation reads, "all the courses she attended, were won and earned by hard work. She is smart, intelligent, personable and efficient. A delightful young woman who will succeed in all her endeavours". The judges noted that her Air Cadet service contribution as "almost impossible to quantify".

Tara has since joined the RAF as Admin/Sec and having passed her initial recruit at RAF Halton to continue her trade training.

The presentation of the award will take place in December 2004. Tara is also expected to read one of the lessons in the forthcoming Air Cadets thanksgiving and dedication service at St Clement Dane in February 2005.

Germany Summer Camp 2004

Fourteen cadets from the LASER Region took part in an experimental Summer Camp at US Airbase Ramstein, in Germany in early July 04.

Facilitated by the HQ UK Support Unit at Ramstein, the camp understandably had an American flavour.

Highlight of the week was the

"escorted" tour of the US Air Base. From operational flying to fire-fighting it was an eye opener to most cadets.

Other leisure activities included visits to local town, German Air Museum and holiday theme park.

HQAC are currently evaluating the feasibility of future camps at Ramstein.



Cadets inside the cockpit of a US Galaxy

Venture-Adventure...

From Essex to Ecuador

Seventeen cadets and staff from 241 (Wanstead & Woodford) Squadron, recently returned from a three-week trip of a lifetime to Ecuador, South America.

The main objectives of the expedition were to climb the highest active volcano in the world, Cotopaxi, at nearly 6,000m high, spend a week exploring the Amazon jungle and work with the homeless children who live on the streets of Quito, the capital city.

The expedition team had spent two years in detailed planning, brushing up their mountaineering skills, getting themselves even fitter and raising £28,000 towards the trip.

The expedition started with a 22-hour journey from London to the Quito located 2800m high in the Andes Mountains. Acclimatisation phase of the expedition saw the team climb first the Pasochoa, at 4300m and the second Guagua Pichincha, an active volcano at 4,675m.

In the evenings the team worked with local charities cooking and distributing food to the homeless children who live on the streets. The cadets made friends with the kids and one evening they played a football match in the street, cadets from Woodford against street kids from Ecuador. The street kids won!!!

Following further training on the glacier the plan was to summit Cayambe, a snow covered Volcano exactly on the equator. This is the only place on the Equator that has snow.



Location- Cotopaxi mountain, Height 5350m, Time 0200 hrs!

The Summit attempt was due to start at midnight but when the team prepared to set out there was a full blizzard howling and they had to wait it out in the hut.

Eventually at 4 am they made an attempt, but just an hour later were forced to return by the terrible weather.

The team by now in peak fitness and training had the final objective of Cotopaxi in it's sight. They advanced to a base camp at 4800m and prepared to set off at midnight at what appeared to be excellent weather. By midnight, roped together with three on each rope, they set off on the 12-hour climb. After two hours of good progress, true to form the weather conditions changed, blizzard blew in and at 5350 m high there was no choice but to turn back. They arrived back at the base camp disappointed but fully accepting that in the sport of mountaineering, you don't win- the weather wins!

The next stage of the expedition saw the team relocated to a collection of huts on the top of a 100m cliff overlooking the jungle canopy. The members of the team took part in night trekking in the jungle to experience the wildlife and day trekking through dense jungle sometimes wading up to their chests along rivers in deep gorges. A cave full of bats was a bonus.

The final day lead to the challenges of white water rafting. Following a couple of hours of training the team set out, six to a raft, to ride over 30 miles of white water rapids on one of the tributaries of the

Amazon river. After the exhilaration of the rapids, the team drove back to the capital where the team spent the last day mountain biking in a clouded forest.

The expedition team list

Sqn Ldr Chris Day
Fg Off Nick Harvey
AWO Lee Morris
ASgt Tom Jerome
CWO Jason Reuben
FS Paul Fothergill
Sgt Marcus Hart
Sgt Tom Henry
Sgt Matt Gilford
Sgt Charlie Barnes
Cpl James Grant
Cpl David Zealander
Cpl George Moore
Cdt Sam Porter
Cdt Nick Faber
Cdt Tom Cruddace
Cdt Joe Clarke-McGheey



Amazon jungle trek with local guide

Christmas Message from the Regional Chaplain

As I approach my 25th Christmas as a Chaplain in the Air Training Corps, I am immensely grateful for the opportunity over the years to bring a Christian ministry into the Corps.

During the past year I have, as usual, arranged our annual service for the Region at St. Clement Danes, the RAF Church, I have inducted new Squadron

Chaplains into their Squadrons, attended Summer Camp at Gibraltar including preaching to the camp and regular congregation at King's Chapel, firing on the Simulated Arms Trainer and singing in a karaoke competition live on Gib TV with other staff and cadets. I have attended the Region Field Day, a Wing Dinner, dedicated a new Wing Banner, led prayers at a Squadron Annual Inspection, written items for the Air Cadet

magazine and given presentations at our Annual Chaplains' Convention. There are also many committee meetings and Councils one is involved in.

In every one of these there is the opportunity of prayer, of offering what we are doing to God and seeking his will. I am grateful not only for the opportunities that I have but the opportunities of service enjoyed by all the 100 or so Squadron and Wing Chaplains in our Region, who have a closer pastoral relationship with cadets in their squadrons.

When Jesus of Nazareth was born some 2000 years ago in Bethlehem he came as God to immerse himself in the everyday life of that time, to bring the divine into the human, to show to people then and now that all life is sacred and should be lived in the service of God and one's fellow human beings. Let us rejoice in his birth and the continuing presence of

God in the person of the Holy Spirit.

My good wishes and prayers for a holy and happy Christmas and for strength to meet the challenges of the year ahead to all who serve in our Region and who read our newsletter.

Rev Christopher Miles
Region Chaplain
cmiles@supanet.com



“ Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea , to Bethlehem to register with Mary who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child ”

(from Luke 2 v v 4 ,5)

Kent Wing Banner Dedication at Biggin Hill

Biggin Hill Chapel was the venue for Kent Wing's Banner Dedication Service and Parade.

The ceremony was attended by the Regional Commandant Group Captain L Hakin and other invited dignitaries and guests.

The service was officiated by regional Chaplain Rev Christopher Miles, Kent Wing

Chaplain and his deputy, Rev David Barnes and Rev Maurice Hewitt, respectively.

Picture right shows; the banner bearer Sgt Tom Haley, with the escorts Cpl Sarah Ling (L) and Sgt Nicola Moran (R), handing over the old banner safely into the hands of the Kent Wing Chaplain for the lodgement ceremony, whilst the Officer Commanding Kent Wing, Wing Commander Andy Simpson looks on with pride.



RAF Uxbridge hosts the LASER Region Band Competition

Once again on a fine September morning bands from London and South East competed to decide who were the best musically.

Many of the established names as well as some new ones made an appearance at this event to make it a day to remember.

As with all band competitions in the Corps they are separated into three main events. The Fanfare Competition, Percussion Competition and Full Band Competition.

The Fanfare Competition saw a new name this year from Kent. They were going against

Edmonton from Middlesex, to see who had the ultimate fanfare.

Even with the lack of numbers, both teams gave performances worthy of a royal venue, but the eventual winners were Sheppey from Kent Wing.

Percussion Section saw the biggest number entrance in any of the sections. Two well established bands were up against each other.

Southend on Sea (Previous Corps National Champions for Full Band) and Reigate the holders of the trophy, they were joined by Deal from Kent and Heston and Isleworth from Middlesex.



Band Competition in full swing

The section produced some amazing performances, which if you were the judging could have only made day even more difficult.

All the bands showed amazing control over the instruments, but only one winner could go forward to Halton.

The judges decided to award the prize to Reigate, meaning they retained the trophy.

The final section and the climax to the morning was the Full Band Competition, putting the holders Edmonton against Herne Bay of Kent.

The two bands put together performances that would have won many of the previous years competitions, but this year the

Highlands of Kent proved to have the winning formula with the trophy going back to Herne Bay. This being only the second time

it had gone to Kent Wing in the history of the trophy.

Three other competitions were decided on the day, Solo Bugler, Drum Major and Turnout. Edmonton collected all of these prizes for Middlesex Wing. Corps Director of Music who judged the event finished the morning by congratulating the cadets and the supporters on a fantastic morning of music

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Air Cadet Pipers at the ready

ACP 1 – Core Values

When did you last read through ACP 1; Ethos, Core Values and Standards in the Air Cadets Organisation?

If you had you will be familiar with the following key words of ACO's Core values; Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence.

The Regional Commandant LASER, reminds us that it is called ACP ONE with good reason and he expects every adult members of his formation to be fully acquainted with its contents.

The ACPI, provides clear corporate guidance for all ACO staff on performance of duty, setting sound examples and putting the safety and welfare of the cadets above all other consideration.

Our regular work in the community and the public perception of our link to the RAF, places particular obligation on all

staff, both on and off duty, to set and live by the highest standards of social and moral conduct.

“Leadership is at the heart of our business” says the Regional Commandant. The core values can be achieved through good leadership, which “inspires, underpins and enables all the other qualities, values and capabilities of the ACO”

LASER cadets at Nijmegen 2004



LASER Air Cadets were well represented in the 88th annual Nijmegen March, in Holland.

The cadets joined more than 1200 British servicemen and women, to take part in the 100-mile four-day event, which was

first held in 1909 to improve the fitness of the Dutch Army.

Air Cadets made up nearly 50% of the British Service contingent, which was jointly headed by Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Jon Chitty.

Despite the torrential rain resulting in muddy rest areas, the marching contingents' resolve were boosted by collective singing and the route lining by the local Dutch who supplied cadets with refreshments and much appreciated cheers and applause.

Places for the LASER Wing marching contingents are highly sought after and cadets are required to attend preparation/ planning work and progressive fitness training to convince the selectors of their personal commitment, teamwork skills, and their resolve to succeed.



Peak fitness + Team effort = Sense of Achievement!

19th Southend Air Show - Flight thrills for Essex Air Cadets

What does an average teenager do on a May Bank holiday weekend? Oh, watched telly and played games on the PC!

Not if you were an Air Cadet from Essex! You would have worked hard at the Air Show and your reward would have been flights in multi-million pound helicopters such as the

Chinook and the Lynx.

Essex Air Cadets were in full force to support the Southend Airport's Open Day as part of the Famous Air Show.

The airport opened its gates for the static displays of aircrafts, vintage cars, military and civilian emergency vehicles and equipments



Hook-up inside the Chinook



Flight experience thanks to Royal Navy

The cadets joined by HM Customs and Excise personnel took up a fundraising challenge to pull the 60 tonne Vulcan Bomber 300 yards down the run-way.

The Air Shows had many attraction for the cadets. Displays included the Red

Arrows, Harrier jump-jet, Tornados bombers and the RAF Falcons Parachute Display Team.

An Essex Council spokeswoman said, "the Southend Air Show is increasing popularity in the region (LASER) and is a good opportunity for youth organisations to be involved"

38th Annual Region Swimming Gala a Success

Over two hundred cadets, staff and parents attended the ever popular LASER Region Gala at the Spectrum Leisure Centre in Guildford on 2nd October 2004.

The principle guest was Group Captain L Hakin, who presented

the main trophies to the winners. in his capacity as the President of the LASER Sports Council.

The Chairman of the Council, Squadron Leader Roger Doust and Flight Lieutenant Andy Skinner, the Council Secretary with the help of volunteers and friends, ensured that the complex order of event worked well.



President of the LASER Sports Council presents one of the trophies

The team competitive spirit was all too evident with spectators and other team members making their support heard around the large competition standard swimming pool.



LASER Cadets eagerly wait for the announcement of final team positions. (Spectrum Leisure Centre Guildford, Surrey)

All six LASER Wings were well represented through out the competition, and the judges applied exacting rules in accordance with the Amateur Swimming Association.

In presenting the various trophies to the teams, the President acknowledged the high standard of turn-out and the many cadets' individual acts of effort in not letting their team down.

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Air Cadets launch national campaign to recruit adult volunteers

A major campaign to increase the number of adult volunteer staff in the Air Cadets will roll out in February 2005. The campaign is called "Challenge Yourself – the Next Generation Needs You" and has been developed after a period of internal and external research.

Air Cadets Regions, Wings, Squadrons and Volunteer Gliding Schools are all requested to participate in the threepronged Adult Recruitment Campaign.

Adverts will be printed in regional/ provincial newspapers during the month of February. Adverts will also appear in a number of professional titles such as Police Federation, the Nursing

Times and the Times Educational Supplement.

News releases with adult instructor themes should be prepared by Wings and Squadrons in readiness for release to the local media throughout February 2005. Each Squadron is advised to issue at least two media releases during the month to raise the profile of the campaign and spread the message. The stories can be locally generated, perhaps focusing on the fact that the squadron is seeking more staff or squadrons may wish to use a humaninterest story.

In addition to these, HQAC will supply 5-6 template news releases, which can be adapted for local use. These will be distributed soon but will also be

available as downloads during January from the ACO website www.aircadets.org.

Wing and Squadron CCOs are requested to make full use of community radio opportunities, particularly those offered by the BBC. Advice on radio can be found in ACP50, Chapter 6.

To support Local initiatives Squadrons will be supplied with campaign publicity literature in the form of flyers, posters, folders, car stickers and CDs in December/early January. (The literature will also be available as Pdfs in print quality format from www.aircadets.org.)

Posters should be put in sports centres (changing rooms), work places, community centres etc. The folders can be used to create packups for potential new recruits who come forward as a result of the advertising/media campaign or to parents and associates who may be persuaded to help.

In order for the campaign to succeed it is vital that all Squadrons make a concerted effort during February. Novel ideas, such as a "parents on parade" evening or engaging a local celebrity/news presenter in the campaign should be employed.

The Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Jon Chitty said, "this is the first time a nationally orchestrated campaign has been run and if we all pull together we can make a difference"

For further information contact; CCOLASER@rafcom.co.uk



Draft Poster—for the campaign



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