

# 1475 (DULWICH) SQUADRON ATC

*United Kingdom's Best Squadron 2010/11*

## COMMANDING OFFICER'S END OF YEAR REPORT 2011

BY

SQUADRON LEADER KEVIN MEHMET MBE RAFVR(T)



The Royal Air Force Fund Poignard

1. Friends, supporters and well wishers have asked me how 1475 Squadron was going to follow the monumental achievement of winning the Sir Alan Lees Trophy. I began last year's report with my response that we would just build on the successes that we had achieved and move on. When I wrote that, I had no idea of what 2011 had in store for us. Of course, it was the 70th anniversary year of the founding of 1475 Squadron, and to mark the occasion we would simply replace the Squadron Colour which had served us well over the past 20 years. So much for best laid plans! 2011 proved to be another historic year.

2. In February, I was approached by the London Borough of Lewisham and informed that a motion was being prepared to be put before the Council to grant 1475 Squadron the Civic Honour of Adoption. This is, all but in name, being granted the Freedom of the Borough. To fully appreciate the significance of this one has to take into account that of all the TA units, Sea, Army, Police, St John's Ambulance cadets, Scouts and Guides Groups, sports clubs and other youth organisations, veterans' clubs and associations, not to mention the schools in the Borough, 1475 Squadron is the only organisation to be accorded such an honour. This really is "a big deal" as one of my cadets put it. I was invited to attend the full Council meeting on Wednesday 29th



June 2011, on my good lady wife's birthday, to witness the motion of Civic Honour of Adoption being proposed by the Mayor, Sir Steve Bullock and seconded by the Representative for the Reserve Forces and Cadets, Councillor Pauline Morrison. The motion was passed unanimously. I was then invited to respond on behalf of the Squadron. The Motion and my response are annexes to this report. The Council then set a date for the presentation to the Squadron of the illuminated velum scroll for Wednesday 2nd November 2011. Once again, deviating from my normal practice of covering the Squadron's achievements in chronological order, I had to mention the Civic Honour Adoption first because of its huge significance. Whilst winning the Lees Trophy was

a tremendous and historical achievement for the Squadron. The Adoption recognises 70 years of loyal and dedicated service, over and above any other organisation, to the London Borough of Lewisham in particular its young citizens. Put in to context this has to be the greatest single honour bestowed on No 1475 Squadron since its founding in on 12th June 1941.



70th anniversary cake being cut

3. However, the Civic Honour of Adoption is just one of three magnanimous honours we received during our 70th year. I shall report on the other two below, but already one can see that 2011 has been another land mark year for 1475 Squadron.

4. In all my years of service in the Corps, I cannot think of another unit who holds similar honours and appointments: two Certificates of Merit, the RAF Benevolent Fund's Poignard, The Lord Mayor's Patronage, the Civic Honour of Adoption and the privileges that go with that, the Lord Mayor's Banner, the Haberdasher's Company Banner, the Lees Trophy, and on top of all that being appointed a centre of excellence by Commandant Air Cadets. These certainly mark out 1475 Squadron as a remarkable and an outstanding unit.



#### THE LEES TROPHY (BEST SQUADRON COMPETITION)

5. Our reign as the United Kingdom's best squadron came to an end in July when the results for the 2011/12 championship were announced. We enjoyed our time as the nation's best and were grateful for the opportunities that the status of champion squadron afforded us. These included congratulatory receptions in the Squadron's honour, prizes and grants being made to the Squadron. However, the Lees is now in the past. A noted honour on record; one we are extremely proud of, but we must now move forward and deliver the Corps syllabus of training to our cadets. Business as usual!



The Sir Alan Lees Trophy

6. Considering what we do and how we do it, 1475 Squadron is a most effective and efficient unit and a remark made to me by the Assistant Regional Commandant illustrates this. According to London and South East Region's assessment of squadrons' staff to cadet ratios, 1475 Squadron is the most efficient in LaSER. That is praise indeed, but the reality is that it is the Squadron Cadet SNCOs who carry out a great deal of the training and the administrative tasks. Of course that is as it should be. The Squadron is very fortunate to have a team of such talented and gifted NCOs and I record my gratitude to them here.

#### PERSONAL : MBE

7. In the 26th year of my command of 1475 Squadron and the 31st year of serving Her Majesty's Commission as an officer in the Royal Air Force Volunteer (Training Branch), I was made a MBE (Civil Division) in the Queen's Birthday Honour's list for services to the City of London and young people in South East London. It is a truly tremendous honour to be so recognised and I was overwhelmed by the congratulations and best wishes I received from many a quarter. The touching and flattering tributes came from the Royal Society of St George, The Haberdashers' Company, The World Traders' Company, The Lord Mayor, The Mayor and the Chairman of Lewisham Council, The Chief Commoner, members of the Court of Common Council, the Curzon Club (the Squadron's League of Friends), the RAF Benevolent Fund, the Squadron Committee and even the Marylebone Cricket Club! I must record here that whilst my MBE recognises my service to the City and young people, I could not have achieved any of the things cited for the award without the support of my Committee, my Staff on the Squadron especially my deputy Flt Lt Matthew Impey and my two officers Fg Off Richard Wash and Flt Lt Tom Hawkins, and more so my Cadet NCOs and the loyalty and hard work of each of my cadets over those many years. This is as much their award as it is mine. In the same list, the Squadron President, Air Marshal Sir Christopher Harper was made a KBE and on behalf of the Squadron I record my congratulations and best wishes to him on his knighthood.



8. Also, in March, I was honoured by being appointed an Ambassador for the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund in recognition of the work I have been doing for the Fund over the past few years. There are 14 Ambassadors and our role, very broadly, is to represent the work and interests of the RAFBF to the wider public. Judging from the reports we have received from the Fund, we seem to be doing a good job in that direction.

9. In June the Trustees of the RAF Club marked the ATC's 70 anniversary with a dinner in honour of the volunteer staff of the Corps. I was most fortunate to be invited to represent 1475 Squadron. It was a delightful and a most enjoyable evening.

10. In October, I was invited as the guest of honour to the City of London (Islington) Academy's annual prize giving evening which was held at the City University. It was a privilege to address the pupils and their parents and a delight to present their prizes. Just a month earlier, I was invited together with six cadets to represent 1475 Squadron at the Academy's official opening by HRH The Earl of Wessex. The cadets were in uniform and made quite an impact. The cadets greeted the Prince and engaged him in conversation. The purpose of the cadets' presence was to introduce the "*cadets concept*" to the school. It is the intention of the Academy to set up a cadet unit in the near future.

## PHOTOGRAPHER

11. Mr David Griffiths continues to provide the Squadron with an excellent photographic record of our activities and achievements. Our landmark events; the Civic Honour of Adoption, the presentation of the new Squadron Colour, Aldermen's (Lord Mayor's) Banner, the Lord Mayor's Show, the Lord Mayor's Guard of Honour, the 2011 Christmas Concert, and sports events, have all been skilfully and beautifully recorded for posterity. We are very fortunate to have Mr David Griffiths as our appointed photographer and I am most grateful to him for giving up his time freely to support the Squadron so generously. In particular his coverage of the two presentation parades was outstanding. It is a tremendous privilege to have him on board. His prize winning work, greatly admired by all who see it, has given the Squadron a professional edge in media communications and public relations. All our press releases have been supported with his photographs. The pictures in this report are his. Mr Griffiths's work can be seen at:-

<http://www.pacific-groundstar.com>

12. The two cameras given to us by Mr Griffiths have been put to good use. Cadets are encouraged to use them to learn and improve their photography skills as a project. One aspect of this initiative became quite clear and that is how good Mr Griffiths's work is and how much our budding cadet photographers need to learn! I record my thanks to Mr Griffiths here on behalf of the Squadron.

## MEMBERSHIP

13. The Squadron is in excellent shape and fulfilling its commitment to provide its cadets with great opportunities. We concluded the year with a strength of 115 cadets. The October 2011 recruit intake gave us 22 Probationer Cadets who, subject to completing the recruit training course satisfactorily, will be enrolled in the New Year. Managing a unit of this size is a challenge, in particular the availability of space in our HQ and staffing levels. For the most of 2011 just two members of staff have been available to run parade evenings. Again, the effectiveness of the Squadron NCOs and a clever training programme has enabled the Squadron to maintain its training commitment. Flt Lt Matthew Impey, my 2nd in command departed for India on a two year's contract in July and my other officer, Fg Off Richard Wash is only able to attend when his shift work permits which is usually twice per month. However, we have had new staff joining the Squadron. In September Mr Emmanuel Amoa-Sakyi was appointed a Hon Civilian Instructor and we have another, Mrs Narin Baykas's application in the pipeline. Also, we have a number of Cadet SNCOs, who have expressed an interest in becoming adult instructors when

they reach the upper age limit for cadet membership. So in the coming year, the staffing situation should improve. I am delighted to report that the continuing effectiveness of the Cadet NCOs has contributed greatly to the success of 2011. Also, we still continue to receive excellent support from our RAF liaison officer, Flt Lt Paul Taylor RAF.

14. This year Cadet Warrant Officers Stephen Coulstock, and Sarah Crane retired having reached the upper age limit of 20 years. I thank them for their long service and wish them well in their future careers and look forward to welcoming them back to 1475 as staff soon.

## TRAINING

15. The training programme this year was dominated by our 70th anniversary commemorations and celebrations too. A great deal of time was devoted to ceremonial duties. However, our principal aims namely sport and band training were not neglected. On reflection, the programme was varied to stimulate interest in the cadets and to get the best out of them. All elements of the programme are designed to develop in the cadet: confidence, courage, communication skills and team working. Our usual sport and band training together make up 50% of the programme. In addition to the standard ATC syllabus of training, we were able to include visits, public speaking sessions, leadership and personal development packages. The usual November air cadet classification examinations sitting was postponed until March 2012 because of the demands made on the Squadron over the Adoption and 70th anniversary celebrations. I am confident that we will have excellent examination results.

16. In June, ten cadets passed No 25 Cadet NCO Course and celebrated their success with a graduation dinner at the RAF Club. The Course Leader, Corporal Qendrim Vitia presided over the dinner. The Guest of Honour was The Rt Hon The Baroness Garden of Frognal and the Principal Guest was Mr Ian Smith RAF (Rtd) (a former Vulcan Bomber Pilot), from the Institute of Directors. Mr Sam Webber, the Media Communications Member of the Squadron Committee, attended as a special guest and spoke about the value of leadership training in the modern world. The ten cadets were promoted to the rank of Cadet Corporal. In November, 26 cadets were selected to start their six months of training as No 26 NCO Course. I wish them every success.



No 25 NCO Course Graduates

## AIR MARSHAL'S PRIZE

17. Last year marked the affiliation of the Squadron to the Worshipful Company of World Traders and the inaugural presentation of the “*Air Marshal's Prize*.” The affiliation was the initiative of the widow of the late Air Marshal The Lord Garden (or simply “Tim” as he liked to be called!). In memory of her husband, The Rt Hon The Baroness Garden of Frognal instituted through the World Traders Company a prize to be awarded to the 1475 Squadron cadet who produced the best Leadership essay on the NCO Course. The award, which is a solid silver cup with a prize of a silver fountain pen suitably inscribed this year went to Cadet Corporal Haveline Santillan. The prize was presented by the Baroness personally at the graduation dinner of No 25 NCO Course on 11 June 2011 at the Royal Air Force Club.



## CAMPS

18. The Squadron undertook weekend camps with one in February, and two in March. Two of those camps were for basic expedition training in preparation for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. In April,

we were in Crowborough on Easter Camp where 26 cadets completed their practise and qualifying Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions.

19. In the summer 34 cadets attended annual camp at RAF Brampton from 20 to 27 Aug 11. A fantastic time was had by all. In spite of the increased demands on the RAF, the station still managed to provide an excellent camp for the cadets. It was a pity that bad weather prevented cadets flying, but nevertheless the camp proved to be an exciting experience for the cadets.

20. Cadets Cpl George Azzopardi, Cpl Beatrice Chequer, Cora Goldie, FS Zeenat Shah, and Cpl Nicholas Smith were selected to attend the Outward Bound Trust's 21 days long Classic Course at Ullswater in the Lake District. The course develops leadership skills through a series of adventurous activities and expeditions. The skills gained on the course are effectively used on the Squadron. The Classic Course candidates pass on those skills to the junior cadets by assisting the staff in running the Squadron Basic Expedition Training (BET I & II) courses. Two cadets completed the Nijmegen March (that is marching 25 miles per day for four days!) and were awarded their medals in the summer. In all we had 65 Cadets away on camps this year.

## FLYING

21. Our policy ("*if we can get it, we'll grab it!*") to take whatever flying we can is still pretty much the order of the day and throughout 2011 we have done rather well, but could do better owing to our size, especially when one allocation was cancelled due to poor weather conditions. We managed 55 air experience sorties and 30 gliding. 2012 should see our allocation increase.

## SPORT AND COMPETITION

22. When I joined the Squadron in November 1972 aged 14 years, I became immediately aware that sport and sportsmanship was a strong feature of 1475 Culture. I am happy to report that the sporting culture of yesteryear is still very much alive today. Sport is the platform on which we deliver our leadership and personal development initiatives to our cadets. 25% of Squadron training is devoted to sport. That of course pays dividends as not surprisingly we do rather well on the sports field as a result. Also, sportsmanship is encouraged and developed in our cadets and from that flows good manners, control, self-discipline and awareness that there is more to sport than just winning; although true to our motto we do *strive to win!*

23. The Squadron's sporting calendar starts in February with the Five-a-Side Competition which for operational reasons were not held this year. However, the next big event for the Squadron was the London Wing Athletics Championship in May. The Squadron Athletics Squad (*The High Wood Harriers*) under the command of Cdt Flight Sergeant Zeenat Shah and managed by Cdt Flight Sergeant Andrea Riofrio won the London Wing championship. The Squad consisted of 38 cadets making up the five teams competed against 23 squadrons. Twelve of our cadets went on to represent the Wing at the Region championship winning their blues.



24. In September, again under the command of Cdt FS Z Shah, this time as Captain of Swimming, the Squadron Swimming Squad comprising 24 Cadets, making up the four teams won the championship with a staggering 38 points lead, beating 20 Squadrons in the process.

25. We were set to take, what in 1475 we refer to as, the "*Grand Slam*" – that is to say the winning of the three major inter-squadron sports competitions; Athletics, Swimming and Cross Country. The last time that was achieved was in 1996 and it was 1475 that did it! We were excited by the prospect of doing it again and in November, when 20 Cadets comprising the five teams took on the challenge.

However, we were placed sixth out of 23 in the championship. A most disappointing result, but a fair one. So, here's to next year!

## CEREMONIAL

26. Our ceremonial calendar started in February when the Squadron provided the four cadets to carry the ecclesiastic maces at the national thanksgiving church service at the Central Church of the RAF, St Clement Danes to mark the ATC's 70th anniversary. A week later, ten cadets led by Cadet Flight Sergeant Zeenat Shah supported the RAF Benevolent Fund's annual presentation and reception for the Livery Companies and business at the Imperial War Museum, London. During the presentation both the Fund's Controller, Air Marshal Sir Robert Wright and the Marketing Director Mr Dean Benton remarked and commended 1475 Squadron for its excellent fund raising activities and its support for the Fund. Citing the £40K+ raised by 1475 Squadron for the Fund to date, Mr Benton, expressed the RAFBF's gratitude to the Squadron for being such excellent supporters of the RAF's leading charity. At the reception that followed our ten cadets circulated amongst the guests and confidently chatted to them. Again, 1475 Squadron Cadets put the Air Training Corps in the best possible light.

27. In February six cadets represented the Squadron at the Worshipful Company of World Traders annual Tacitus Lecture delivered by His Excellency Herr Georg Boomgaarden the German Ambassador entitled "Dealing With a Changing World - Germany's Role In the Global Economy" to a packed audience of some 600 plus attendees, across the world of international government and business, at the Guildhall, London. After the lecture, the cadets mingled with the guests at the reception and did a magnificent job in representing their Squadron, the ATC and the Royal Air Force. In the vastness of Guildhall, the six cadets looking splendid in their uniforms stood out and conducted themselves superbly as Ambassadors of the Corps. It was a very proud thing to see.

28. In May I attended a dinner held at the House of Commons and hosted by Honourary Group Captain Bill Walker, President of Air Cadets Gliding and former MP to commemorate the ATC's 70th anniversary. About 200 staff and cadets from all over the UK were invited to enjoy a delightful evening of excellent dining in the company of the Chief of the Air Staff, the C-in-C Air Command, AOC 22 Gp, Commandant Air Cadets and the Regional Commandants. 1475 Squadron, as the Lees winners, managed to get invitations for five of our cadets to attend the dinner.

29 Also, in May to mark his posting to India for two years, the Squadron staff hosted a "dining-in" evening to "dine-out" Flt Lt Matthew Impey.



Members of the Squadron Committee, staff and senior cadets were invited to attend the dinner held at the Mess of the University of London Air Squadron RAF, Knightsbridge, London. The Squadron's own appointed *chef de cuisine*, Mr Julian Parker put together a superb



five course meal which was most competently served by a team of four SNCOs who volunteered their services. It was a very special evening and Flt Lt Impey was reminded in my address that the purpose the evening was to wish him well and to entice back him after his two years in India because such dinners were waiting for him!

30. In June six Cadet Senior NCOs represented the Squadron at the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers' annual service of thanksgiving and reception at Haberdashers' Hall. On 12th June, the Squadron was paraded to commemorate the founding of the Squadron in 1941. The day before at the

RAF Club, the 10 cadets from No 25 NCO Course, along with their parents and invited guests, celebrated their graduation.

31. In April, a formal application was made to the College of Arms for the Squadron Badge to be recorded on the college rolls and our three trees design to be recognised as the official badge of 1475 (Dulwich) Squadron of the Air Training Corps. In August, the Garter King of Arms and Inspector of Royal Air Force Badges, Thomas Woodcock, authorised the badge and a grant was made to the Squadron in the form of an illuminated painting depicting the badge. 1475 Squadron is the first air cadet unit to be accorded this privilege. Following our parent service tradition, a copy of the illuminated painting was made to be presented to the Royal Air Force Club to hang there in the hall of badges. The presentation will be made by the Squadron President, Air Marshal Sir Christopher Harper. The original hangs in the Squadron HQ.



Badge Authorised by the College of Arms

32. In November the Squadron was invited to provide three cadets to be screen tested to take part in a short film about the work of the RAFBF. Cadet Flight Sergeant Zeenat Shah was selected and will be filmed being interviewed about her understanding of the work of the Fund in January 2012. The film will be used to promote the Fund to the wider population, especially the young.

33. Ten cadets from the Squadron supported the RAF Benevolent Fund's Battle of Britain Gala dinner where 350 guests marked the anniversary of the great battle. Battle of Britain veterans joined the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton, and representatives from the RAF Benevolent Fund and Royal Air Forces Association on the evening of September 22nd in the striking setting of the Banqueting House, Whitehall, London. The Gala Dinner, raised around £70,000 for both charities' important work in supporting serving and former RAF personnel.

34. On the evening of Wednesday 2nd November, 350 invited parents and guests witnessed a spectacular flood lit presentation parade to receive two honours at the London and South East Sector Army Cadets Training Centre, Holly Hedge House, Blackheath. The Squadron, formed up in four Flight consisting of 60 armed cadets and a Support Flight of 22 cadets welcomed the First Warden, now Master, of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers, Mrs Deborah Knight, as the Guest of Honour and His Worshipful The Mayor of the London Borough of Lewisham, Sir Steve Bullock, as the Reviewing Officer for the presentation ceremony of the new Squadron Colour and the illuminated velum scroll conferring on the Squadron the Civic Honour of Adoption.

35. The Parade, masterfully commanded by Cadet Flight Sergeant Zeenat Shah, greeted the Guest of Honour and the Reviewing Officer each with a General Salute. Music was provided by the Crystal Palace Band under the baton of Mr Michael Gray, Director of Music. After the inspection, the old Squadron Colour was



marched off to make way for the new. Sir Steve then stood aside and allowed Mrs Knight on behalf of the Haberdashers' Company to present the new Squadron Colour to Cadet Flight Sergeant Samuel Anson who received it on behalf of the Squadron. The new Colour is emblazoned with the shields from the coat of arms of the London Borough of Lewisham, to signify the Civic Honour of Adoption, and the Haberdashers' Company to signify our affiliation. Following a dazzling display of drill and ceremonial,



described by the L&SE Regional Commandant Gp Capt Les Hakin as “...*the best squadron parade...*” he had been to during his time as Regional Commandant, the Squadron and guests retired to the Drill Hall for the Civic Honour of Adoption ceremony. The Mayor, Mrs Knight, Cllrs Pauline Morrison and Chris Maines spoke in glowing terms of the Squadron and its outstanding achievements, before Sir Steve Bullock presented me with the Silver Casket containing the Civic Honour of Adoption Scroll. Guests included Lt Gen Sir Robert Fulton, representatives from the City of London, the Haberdashers, Dyers and World Traders Livery Companies, RFCA, the ACF, SCC, St Johns, Police Service and the RAF Benevolent Fund, the DL of Lewisham, the MP for Lewisham, Councillors, The Ven Canon (Air Vice-Marshal) Robin Turner CB DL former Chaplain-in-Chief RAF our Senior Squadron Chaplain who blessed the new Colour, Commandant L&SE Region Gp Capt L Hakin and the Assnt Rgnl Commandant, and other distinguished guests. It was a spectacular event; one described by General Sir Robert Fulton as “*a most ambitious parade but brilliantly executed.*” After the ceremony, there was a delicious buffet supper for the parents, guests and the cadets. In his address to the parents and guests, the Mayor described the parade as “*...faultless in drill, smartness and execution. The drill and ceremonial was of the highest standard.*” It was worthy praise indeed and what a night to remember. Another proud and historic moment in 1475’s history. One guest and friend; a former chairman of the Squadron who had seen a good few of our parades remarked “*...nobody does it better.*” I thought that was touching.

36. Just ten days later on Lord Mayor’s Show, 1475 Squadron was back on parade but this time at the Guildhall for another presentation; the Aldermen’s Banner. The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor, Alderman David Wootton on behalf of the Aldermen of the City of London presented the Banner to Cadet Sergeant José Suarez who received it on behalf of the Squadron. The presentation of the Aldermen’s



Banner, to be paraded whenever the Squadron is on duty in the City, was a personal gift from the Aldermen to the Squadron, on the occasion of our 70th anniversary, in recognition of 25 years of dedicated service as the Heraldic Banner Bearers to the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs and senior Aldermen of the City of London on the Lord Mayor’s Show. This honour is unique. The only other formation that has been so honoured by the Lord Mayor is the Pike and Musketmen of the Honourable Artillery Company and with 404 years of seniority over 1475 Squadron, it is not difficult see the significance and the magnitude of the Aldermen’s gesture. 42 Cadets were formed up in two Flights as a guard of honour under the command Cadet Flight Sergeant Samuel Anson to receive the banner in front of the Aldermen and Sheriffs. Another honour given to us was that of being supported by the Pike and Musketmen of the HAC for the presentation at Guildhall and later being given the privilege of parading the new Banner on the Lord Mayor’s Show with the HAC. The Squadron works closely with the P&M



HAC with regard to carrying the heraldic banners on the Lord Mayor’s Show so it was a touching tribute to be supported in such a manner for the presentation of the banner.

37. After the presentation, the Squadron deployed as usual as the Haraldic Banner Bearers to the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs and Aldermen of the City of London, but on this occasion we too had a (*the Lord Mayor’s*) Banner to carry as well. However, our day on the Lord Mayor’s Show did not end there.

38. This year being our 70th anniversary and to mark the occasion, 1475 Squadron was invited by the Lord Mayor to provide the Guard of Honour for his return journey to Mansion House. For the occasion we decided to parade the Guard with our trademark heraldic banners rather than carrying weapons. We were supported by the band of the RAF Regiment based at RAF Cranwell. A remark from the Pageantmaster that this was the best Guard of Honour he had seen for a long time said it all really. After the Lord Mayor's inspection, the Squadron Guard of Honour was led to its dispersal



point at Guildhall by the RAF Regiment Band, playing, especially for us, the Squadron Quick March: "Standard of St George." It was a wonderful and moving occasion to march ahead of my cadets and behind our parent service.



Added to that, this year with kind permission from the Pageantmaster, I was assisted as a Marshal on the Lord Mayor's Show by one Cadet Sergeant Elizabeth Mehmet ATC of No 228 (Bromley) Squadron ATC. Sergeant Mehmet proved herself to be a most helpful "Apprentice Marshal" and I am grateful to her for her assistance.

39. The following day, 13 November, Remembrance Sunday, the Squadron Band consisting of 74 cadet bandsmen led the London Borough of Lewisham's annual Remembrance Day parade much to the delight of the public. This year for the first time, we were exercising our "right, privilege and distinction of marching through the streets of Lewisham with our new Colour flying and Band playing." Following the parade, the Squadron's NCO Cadre went for what has now become the traditional curry luncheon to celebrate another remarkable year for the Squadron.

40. The Squadron annual dinner, our ladies guest night, once again took place jointly with the Curzon Club (the Squadron's League of Friends) on 8th October at the RAF Club. 60 Members of the Curzon Club, Squadron and invited guests enjoyed an entertaining evening. Music was provided by the



Curzon Club Quartet led by Miss Victoria Barnes and a piper, Lance Sergeant Alex Gordon from the 1st Bt Scots Guards. Our guest of honour was Deputy Richard Regan Chief Commoner of the City of London and accompanied by his lady wife Anne. Our principal guest was Wing Commander Paul Hewson MBE with his lady wife representing the Controller of the RAF Benevolent and our special guest was Deputy Robin Sherlock Immediate Past Chief Commoner and his wife Caroline. The Rt Hon The Baroness Garden of

Frognaal, was also there. It was an honour to have as our guests three serving officers from the RWRR, and the RAF and guests who travelled all the way from Ireland and the Netherlands, just to be with us.

41. We closed the year with our, now renowned, biennial concert; The sixth Jack Lane DFC Memorial Christmas Concert in aid of the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund on 7th December at the Central Church of the RAF, St Clement Danes. Once again, Miss Ann-Louise Straker, superbly supported by her son James and daughter Victoria along with other professional singers and the Croydon

Male Voice Choir, performed a series seasonal songs to a very appreciative audience. Judging from comments received, it was our best concert to date. Although the ticket sales were down from the previous concert, we did manage to raise £6000 for the RAFBF. It nevertheless proved to be a most successful evening. I was delighted to welcome to the concert Air Marshal Air Robert Wright, Controller RAF Benevolent Fund and Lady Wright, Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Barbara Cooper and three Regional Commandants; Gp Capts Les Hakin, John Middleton, and Dick Allen. 1475 Squadron cadets did a superb job in hosting the event. If any event that puts the wider Corps in such a good light, it is the Cadets on duty at our Jack Lane concert. We have now developed a national reputation with this event. At the Corps anniversary dinner in June at the Palace of Westminster, I met an officer from Scotland who asked what squadron I was with. I replied 1475 Dulwich in London, to which he remarked, “*ah yes, you do the concerts.*” That has happened on many occasions from Devon to Wales to Blackpool!



42. At the concert, Air Marshal Sir Robert Wright, Controller of the RAFBF was awarded 1475 Squadron Full Colours in Extraordinary and made a Honorary Member of the unit in recognition of his support for the squadron. It is not often we get to overwhelm Air Marshals, but on this occasion, Sir Rob assured me that he was.



Sir Rob in Squadron Colours

## BAND

43. The band is still at its maximum size in terms of the ratio of bandmen to instruments. All cadets in the Squadron are also bandmen and because we have more bandmen than instruments, the Squadron now practises the Band by Flights. The full Squadron Band can barely fit into the parade Square. The flight Band system also allows us to hold competitions between the two flights. The programme of expenditure will continue through 2012 to acquire new instruments and replace some of the old ones. The band is still a very popular activity much enjoyed by the cadets.

## RAF BENEVOLENT FUND

44. Over the past ten years, 1475 Squadron has demonstrated a sustained commitment to support the work of the RAF Benevolent Fund and I can report here that there will be no change in that policy. The Fund’s motto, “*The Debt We Owe,*” meant a great deal to our late patron, Jack Lane DFC which inspired him to support the Fund most generously. We continue to follow Jack’s example of generosity and benevolence. He and his peers fought for the freedoms we enjoy. The Royal Air Force is still doing the same today. The Fund is at the heart of the RAF family and our cadets feel very much part of that family and proud to be so. That pride and belonging was demonstrated clearly earlier this month when we deployed 40 cadets to collect for the Fund at the British Military Tournament, Earls Court, London. They went about the arena in pairs with their collection buckets cheerfully and enthusiastically collecting for the “*Debt We Owe*” and managed a total of £3537.65 in 1 hour 30 minutes. The cadets’ approach to their task received glowing commendations from our Army counterparts. 1475 cadets’ “*turnout, attitude, and conduct were exemplary*” noted an Army full Colonel. With the Benevolent Fund at the heart of the RAF Family, I like to think that we at 1475 Squadron are an artery.

## AFFILIATIONS

45. The Squadron continues to enjoy and benefit from its affiliations particularly with the Haberdashers’ Company and the World Traders’ Company. It was particularly touching to receive our fourth Colour (and the second) from the Haberdashers’ Company. I attach to this report the citation from the Master Haberdasher for the presentation of our new Colour. It is a good testimony of the

Squadron's standing in the community and succinctly puts into context what 1475 Squadron is about. I am also grateful to the Prime Warden and Clerk of the Worshipful Company of Dyers for the excellent support and encouragement we receive from their Livery.

46. Last May one of our affiliated units, No XIII Squadron RAF at RAF Marham was disbanded. Over the years we developed a very good relationship with XIII Squadron, through the Haberdashers' Company. We will miss the support we received from the Squadron, but wish the very best to all its members now deployed elsewhere in the RAF. However, we still enjoy the privilege of being affiliated to one other front line RAF Squadron; number 28 (based at RAF Benson). We continue to enjoy excellent support from The Royal Society of St George (City of London Branch). Each year the Society presents a trophy to the best cadet and hosts him or her as a special guest at its annual St George's Day banquet. Cadet Corporal George Azzopardi, 15, enjoyed that privilege last April as the Society selected him as Cadet of the Year 2011.

47. My heartfelt thanks go to the heads and teachers of our three affiliated schools, Forest Hill School, St Thomas the Apostle College and Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College for their hard work and the support they have given us. The schools have always valued what we do at 1475 Squadron and have provided us with a steady supply of recruits over the past 36 years. Although, not an affiliation with Mansion House, I wish to record my thanks to The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor for his support and that of his office with particular mention and thanks to Miss Penny Shelley.

#### CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

48. Earlier in the year, the Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Barbara Cooper, secured the assistance of Sir Stuart Rose, the former Chairman and Chief Executive of Marks and Spencer PLC to advise her on the strategic development of the Air Cadet Organisation. M&S set up centres of excellence to train staff, develop and pass on best practice. Modelled on that initiative, Commandant Air Cadets set up centres of excellence in the Air Training. Based on our track record, and what Air Commodore Cooper calls "*The Dulwich Model*" she appointed 1475 Squadron as a centre of excellence in the South East. This is indeed national recognition of the Squadron's standing and its most successful operating strategy which came to light during her Lees inspection of the Squadron last June and our well established reputation for excellence within the RAF family. Of particular note was 1475's support base and affiliations within the City of London and the wider community. Sir Stuart Rose was invited by Air Commodore Cooper to see for himself how "*the Dulwich Model*" could be developed in the ACO.

49. Sir Stuart visited the us on 14 September and was given a tour of the Squadron and witnessed a cross section of activities. He spoke to nearly every one present. He asked about the management structure and was invited to meet the Squadron "*executive team*" which he duly did at the end of the parade. Sir Stuart was surprised, pleasantly, that the executive team consisted only of Cadet Senior NCOs. He was very impressed that adult staff posts such as that of Adjutant and Training Officer were held by Cadet Flight Sergeants and that the Band and Sports instructors were Cadet Sergeants. I am delighted to report that Sir Stuart's visit was most successful. I am grateful to Mr Sam Webber, committee member, for escorting Sir Stuart on his visit to the Squadron and ensuring that he was well looked after. Sir Stuart wrote to me to say how much he had enjoyed his visit and how impressed he was with what he saw, particularly the empowerment of cadets to take such a high profile role in delivering the Corps's objectives to its members.

#### CONCLUSION

50. As is usual in 1475 Squadron, at the conclusion of an activity, event, or camp, we try to seek from the cadets a snap shot account of their "*highs*" and "*lows*" during a debriefing session. Applying that principle here, there is no question that the Civic Honour of Adoption by the London Borough of Lewisham and in military terms the presentation of a new Squadron Colour by the Worshipful Company

of Haberdashers is most certainly the “*high*.” All this in the year after winning the Lees Trophy was a magnificent way of marking the 70th anniversary of the Squadron.

51. The “*low*” was the departure, albeit for just two years, of my deputy, Flt Lt Matthew Impey. Flt Lt Impey produced a tremendous amount of work to keep the Squadron moving, and his absence has been felt in certain areas of training, eg adventure training and shooting. I look forward to his return.

52. I am extremely proud to command this remarkable Squadron. It is still a great honour for me and an immense privilege. The continued success we have enjoyed has largely been due to the amazing support we receive from many a quarter. That support together with the extraordinary talent the Squadron is able to muster to fulfil our aims is truly amazing. My job would certainly be more difficult if it were not for the hard work of the Squadron NCOs. Their loyalty and commitment is the back bone of the Squadron. No commanding officer can ask for more. We have had a turnaround of staff, but I am grateful to Mr Ray Yamin for his contribution and Flt Lt Tom Hawkins for making our Adv Trg Camps possible. Most of what we do cannot be possible without the firm and solid support from the Squadron Civilian Welfare (Executive) Committee and again I am most grateful for the advice, counsel, support and encouragement that I received during the last 12 months from its members under the leadership and most effective Chairmanship of Mr Jonathan Nicholson.

53. I am encouraged to receive reassurances, especially very recently from a founder member of the squadron now in his 80s that we are on the right course in maintaining the Squadron’s fine traditions. The same also come from former COs that 1475 is the same in spirit and character that is has always been. That is most comforting. Whilst we at 1475 are always forward looking, it is good to base new initiatives on a solid platform of continuity and consistency. So, here’s to the next 70 years!

54. It can be seen from the above paragraphs that 1475 Squadron is in good shape and doing what it does best - “*Striving to Win*.” I believe that 2011 has been another example of the Squadron striving for excellence. We have followed on from the winning of the Lees Trophy with a truly outstanding year with the bestowal of three huge honours; two Colours and the “*freedom*” of a borough. We may have handed over our Lees “*crown*,” but – and I think it is apt here again to quote Dr William Beaver, former speech writer to the Lord Mayor that 1475 is still – “*the Best Squadron in the World!*” Of course, I would say that, wouldn’t I, and why not?

55. Those three honours alone have certainly enhanced the standing of the Air Training Corps in the community, and in particular, in the City of London. This was clearly illustrated when the Chairmen of Governors for the City of London Academy, Islington approached 1475 Squadron to advise the school on setting up a in-school unit. The Chairman remarked that when he wanted advice, we would always seek the best. Enough said!

56. In true British tradition of saving the best till the last, this report must close with praise of my cadets. What makes a Squadron is its cadet body. Here at 1475, we have a fine body of cadets who make the Squadron what it is. They have embraced the traditions of the Squadron handed down to them and in turn they take seriously the responsibility of handing down those traditions to the next generation. The current membership has made history in an accident of time to have seen through our 70th anniversary and I know each and every one of them feels extremely proud to have done so. This report reflects the sum of the outstanding work of the cadet body of the Squadron. I congratulate them and praise them for their dedication, commitment, enthusiasm and loyalty. I am constantly amazed how my cadets rise to any challenge put



before them. This was illustrated when they worked tirelessly for six weeks to put on those two parades so brilliantly and at the same time carry out their normal routines; ie band sport and classification training and all. It is my immense privilege to serve as their commanding officer. It has been a fantastic year; only because 1475 Squadron Cadets (*The Highwoodians*) made it so! Well done the cadets. Well done 1475!

**CERTAMUS VINCERE!**

*Kevin Mehmet*

KEVIN MEHMET MBE RAFVR(T)  
Squadron Leader  
Officer Commanding  
31 December 2011  
[www.1475.org](http://www.1475.org)

Air Commodore Barbara Cooper, Commandant Air Cadets wrote in a letter to Air Marshal Sir Christopher Harper KBE RAF, the Squadron President,:-

*".....I was so impressed by what I saw, I simply wanted to pass on to you what an amazing job Kevin Mehmet and his staff are doing. The Squadron is really a cohesive unit speaking with one voice and mutual support and genuine comradeship is evident everywhere. Young NCOs engaged enthusiastically and candidly about the preparation they had received for their new supervisory status, with talk of 'emotional intelligence', left me feeling I had been in a discussion with Regular junior officers, rather than ATC cadets. ...To see such an amazing squadron so early in my tenure has been quite inspirational..... I am delighted to award the Lees Trophy to 1475 (Dulwich) Squadron..... Well done to you all."*



*Mrs Deborah Knight, First Warden of the Haberdashers' Company presenting the new Colour to 1475 Squadron ATC  
Holly Hedge House, Blackheath  
2 November 2011*



*1475 (Dulwich) Squadron ATC No 1 Flight forming the Escort to the new Squadron Colour  
Holly Hedge House, Blackheath  
2 November 2011*

***“Serve your Squadron and Lead your Cadets and together Strive to Win.  
Service and Loyalty always.”***

Taken from the opening presentation slide of the Squadron NCO Course.





### **Haberdashers' Hall**

#### **Squadron Leader Kevin Mehmet MBE RAFVR(T) Commanding Officer, Officers, NCOs and Cadets of 1475 (Dulwich) Squadron of the Air Training Corps.**

It gave one of my predecessors, the late Colonel David A H Sime OBE MC TD, Past Master Emeritus, great pleasure to present you with a Colour on behalf of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers in 1991 to mark your golden Jubilee. It is now your 70th anniversary and the pleasure is mine to do the same in presenting this new Colour to 1475 Squadron ATC to mark this momentous point your history.

Since the Squadron's association and affiliation with the Haberdashers' Company in 1990, your achievements have been remarkable. The Squadron was awarded two Certificates of Merit for services to the City of London and for charity work, the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund's Poignard for services to the RAF's leading charity, the Sir Alan Lees Trophy for winning the national best squadron competition 2010/11 and you have been made a Centre of Excellence to develop and pass on best practice within the Corps. It is evident that the Squadron has not rested on its laurels but has continued to innovate and develop new initiatives to best serve its cadets and in turn to encourage them to serve their community, especially in the City of London. The last 20 years illustrates clearly that 1475 Squadron is a beacon of success. In particular the Squadron's service to its community stands it out as a singular shining example of giving time and energy to the positive development of the young people who make up the Squadron's cadet body. As a Livery Company committed to education, we especially recognise this aspect of 1475 Squadron's commitment to extra-curricular education. The London Borough of Lewisham has also recognised that and has formally adopted the Squadron. I am delighted that we can share the presentation of this new Colour with the Civic Adoption ceremony today. It is a proud day for 1475 Squadron, Haberdashers and the Citizens of Lewisham that you are honoured in such a way.

1475 Squadron has established itself to be of a very high standard in all areas of training activity, particularly your standing in the field of sport. Your sustained success here is testimony that the Squadron is true to its motto of striving to win. The Company is also pleased that links with Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College are maintained and I hope that the association continues.

Although your primary role is no longer to provide manpower to serve in Her Majesty's Forces, 1475 Squadron does make an invaluable contribution to shaping the lives of the individuals who pass through its ranks. Whether or not cadets choose to serve in the Forces, the training they receive will stand them in good stead to be effective and efficient service personnel or upstanding members of our society where training in areas such as discipline, leadership and a sense of service are equally important.

The Haberdashers' Company congratulates and commends 1475 Squadron on its contribution to helping today's young people. It is evident that 1475 Squadron has maintained the highest standards of operational efficiency as cited by Sir John Welch Bt, Past Master Emeritus, 20 years ago and I feel confident that you will maintain this for the future. This new Colour which the First Warden, Mrs Deborah Knight, will present to the Squadron today on my behalf is symbolic of the dedicated service you have given to your community. It represents the very foundations of service and loyalty that 1475 Squadron has been built on and the confidence the Haberdashers' Company has in you. It is also a tribute to the cadets whose devotion and loyalty have given the Squadron such a splendid reputation.

**Bruce Powell**

*Master*

*2nd November 2011*

# Agenda Item 3

<b>COUNCIL</b>		
<b>Report Title</b>	The Civic Adoption of 1475 Squadron ATC	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	Item No. 3
<b>Ward</b>	All	
<b>Contributors</b>	Chief Executive	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 29 June 2011

The Unit was formed in 1941. It is one of several ATC units across the UK. For many years the squadron and its impressive marching band, has led the various contingents to and from the war memorial in Lewisham on Remembrance Sunday.

The Unit currently boasts over 100 cadets mostly taken from local schools including Forest Hill School.

This figure represents one of the highest numbers of cadets in any squadron across the country. This squadron has an excellent track record of shaping the lives of young people through the teaching of team working, self-confidence, fitness and adventure training.

Last year the squadron was awarded the Sir Alan Lees trophy which is awarded for the best Air Cadets squadron in the whole of the UK. It beat all the other squadrons across the UK of which there are nearly 1,000. It also delivered the best ATC national training and development culminating in several awards for many of its cadets. A wonderful achievement in the year of the 150th anniversary of the cadet movement and the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of this particular squadron.

The squadron are proposing to cement its relationship with the Council by incorporating the Council's coat of arms on its own standard flag. The squadron's own motto "Certamus Vincere" translates to "Strive to Win". It is therefore recommended to confer upon the 1475 Squadron ATC the civic honour of the adoption by the London Borough of Lewisham. It reflects the achievements and high esteem in which the squadron is held and to recognise its close co-operation and joint working with the local community and Council since its formation. The squadron will have the right, privilege and distinction of marching through the streets of Lewisham on all ceremonial occasions with its new standard colours flying and band playing.

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Council agrees the recommendation to be proposed by the Mayor and seconded by Lewisham's RFCA representative, Councillor Pauline Morrison that 1475 Squadron ATC be awarded the civic honour of adoption by the London Borough of Lewisham

**Scroll Document**

**Crest**

At its meeting of the full Council held on Wednesday, 29 June 2011, the London Borough of Lewisham unanimously agreed to the formal adoption of the 1475 Squadron ATC.

The wording of the recommendation said:

“It is therefore recommended to confer upon the 1475 Squadron ATC the civic honour of the adoption by the London Borough of Lewisham. It reflects the achievements and high esteem in which the squadron is held and to recognise its close co-operation and joint working with the local community and Council since its formation. The squadron will have the right, privilege and distinction of marching through the streets of Lewisham on all ceremonial occasions with its new standard colours flying and band playing.

This recommendation to be proposed by the Mayor and seconded by Lewisham’s RFCA representative, Councillor Pauline Morrison”.

**ATC 1475 crest**

Signed:

.....  
Sir Steve Bullock  
The Mayor of Lewisham

.....  
Barry Quirk  
Chief Executive

# Agenda item

## Civic Adoption 1475 Squadron ATC

- [Meeting of Council, Wednesday, 29th June, 2011 7.30 pm \(Item 23.\)](#)

### Minutes:

The formal civic adoption of ATC 1475 Squadron was proposed by the Mayor and seconded by the Council's Reserve Forces and Cadets Association representative, Councillor Pauline Morrison.

In response Squadron Leader Kevin Mehmet MBE RAFVR(T) delivered the following address:

“Your Worshipful the Mayor, Chairman of Council, Councillors and Members of the London Borough of Lewisham.

Thank you for inviting me here this evening to address you all. I know this is a privilege rarely granted and I am deeply honoured to be here representing my unit.

Mr Mayor, one of your predecessors, Alderman Henry Edwin Brown JP, with the full support of this chamber on Thursday 12 June 1941 constituted an air cadet unit to be known as No 1475 (3rd Lewisham) Squadron of the Air Training Corps. Since then over 6100 cadets have passed through the unit and today, exactly 70 years and 17 days later, I stand before you as the commanding officer of that very unit which is currently, out of 930 Squadron's, the best in the United Kingdom having won the ATC's coveted Sir Alan Lees Trophy. From then to now, 1475 Squadron has proved itself to be a successful and effective unit and I assure this chamber that we have not forgotten where we came from. The Squadron Band leading the Lewisham's Remembrance Day parade is testimony to that.

Regrettably, we moved out of Lewisham in 1956 – albeit just 10 yards outside the boundary on Lordship Lane, but we have maintained our links with our founding Borough all these years. My first personal experience of that association, as the newly appointed CO, was when Cllr Peggy Fitzsimmons, then as Mayor paid us a visit to review our annual parade in 1986. [Cllr Fitzsimmons do you recall that visit?]

It is our priority to give our cadets opportunities to supplement their education in the hope that they will grow to be good citizens and make a valid contribution to their community. About two thirds of our cadets come from Lewisham. 1475 Squadron is proud to be able to serve this Borough through the young Lewisham citizens in its cadet ranks and in turn to encourage them to serve their community. All with the support of our parent service the Royal Air Force.

Lewisham has never let us go. You have nurtured a sense of belonging to the heart of the Borough. I am delighted to say that the association is firm and strong. In April 2010 when Cllrs Barrie Anderson, then Chairman, and Sylvia Scott came to our HQ to present me with a life time achievement award for service to young people, I asked Cllr Scott why does the Borough maintain such a support for us even though we are outside the borough - albeit just 10 yards. Cllr Scott replied “...because you're OURS, that's why.” Well, we are happy with that and honoured to be yours and this adoption will cement that relationship. I am grateful to you Mr Mayor for proposing this adoption Cllr Pauline Morrison for seconding it. I also thank Cllr Morrison for maintaining the liaison with the Squadron and providing us support on Council's behalf. I also thank Mr Derek Johnson for administering that



support. Lastly, a very special thank you to the members of this chamber and the citizens of Lewisham for bestowing this tremendous honour of adoption on 1475 Squadron.

On behalf of the Trustees, Committee, Officers, Staff and Cadets, past and present of 1475 Squadron ATC, know that I am deeply honoured, touched and flattered by this adoption and the gesture behind it; especially coming in this our 70th anniversary. I record my heart felt gratitude to you all. Thank you."

SQUADRON LEADER KEVIN MEHMET MBE RAFVR(T)

