

208 Squadron 'Valley Wings' Article - January 2016

Happy New Year from the premier squadron at RAF Valley; we hope you all had a good Christmas.

On the course side of things TW83 graduated from 4 FTS on the 30 October and have all taken up postings at either Coningsby or Lossiemouth. TW84(Rotary) Course is cracking ahead with the flying and have completed the AD, Range, and SAP Phases of the course. 208(R) Sqn has also welcomed back Major Al-Hasan and Major Al-Kandari from the Kuwaiti Air Force after their CFS groundschool at Cranwell. Both of them are completing the AFT QFI course before returning to Kuwait to ready to impart their hard won knowledge on unsuspecting students. Refresher courses continue to arrive and Sqn Ldr Phil Stewart has completed a Hawk refresher course prior to taking up a post on 100 Sqn. The 208(R) Sqn Naval link continues with the arrival of Lt Abi Mark from RAF Linton On Ouse. Abi will be completing her Hawk refresher before moving to 736 Sqn, RNAS Culdrose.

In November the squadron deployed to FAF Solenzara, Corsica for another Air Combat Detachment. Solenzara provided the perfect opportunity for TW84 to complete their 1v1 AD phase as well as finishing off the Creamies 2v1 AD refresher. Flying wasn't the only thing on offer in Corsica and the RAF side of the squadron was treated to a Taranto Dinner organised by the RN contingent and led by Lt Cdr Bins Brayson. This involved the usual display of fireworks and cardboard ships as a re-enactment of the Battle of Taranto. The Ents plot was further enhanced by the hosting skills of our resident Glaswegian, Flt Lt Glen Beresford and his 'Deep Fried Mars Bar' drinking establishment. As well as a busy Ents and flying plot the squadron also took part in the local commemorations for Remembrance Day alongside other base personnel.

The end of the year brought about some goodbyes for those leaving 208(R) Sqn. Flt Lt Gerry Kingman and Flt Lt Piers Dudley have finally escaped the clutches of Anglesey and have departed to RAF Coningsby for the Typhoon OCU. You can rest assured that Kingers will be putting the same amount of effort into 1 Gp Air Standing Orders that he did with 22 Gp Orders, whilst Duds is in the process of booking his next Justin Beiber gig. Neil and Emily Staite have left Valley to join the Mighty Fin on XV(R) Squadron at Lossiemouth. Staitey's posting to XV was direct response from the TGRF for a new heavy weapon to combat any new emerging threats and we were very happy to provide! Gents, it has been a pleasure and we thank you for your service to the squadron and we wish you all the best for the future.

On the social side of things at Valley we've had the Aircrew Lunch of the Year, the Squadron Christmas Party in Dylans and the Christmas Draw. Everyone enjoyed the draw so much that we are all really looking forward to attending the 2016 Draw en masse, providing the tickets are refundable! But the fun doesn't stop there and 2016 will be a big year for 208 Squadron as it is the centenary of the formation of the Squadron. A plethora of events is being organised by Sqn Ldr Paul "Been on 208 since 1991" Harrison including, but not limited to, an exped to France and a celebration/closing down* (*delete as applicable) dinner in the Officers' Mess. The evening promises to be a great one so those interested should sign up now to avoid disappointment.