

No. 297 (Musselburgh) Squadron

Air Training Corps

Annual Report for Year to 31st March 2007

Web site: <http://www.297sqnadc.org.uk/>



The Civilian Committee

James Scott	-	Chairperson
Sheila McLuckie	-	Honorary Treasurer
John W Darroch	-	Honorary Secretary
William Nelson	-	Community Council Representative
Kathrona Ireland	-	County Education Representating
Gavin Strang	-	Member of Parliament
Tommy Gallagher	-	Committee Member
Flight Lieutenant Lyall Downie	-	Squadron Commander (Ex-Officio Member)

The Squadron Staff

Flight Lieutenant Lyall Downie	-	Commanding Officer
Pilot Officer Alison McLeod	-	Adjutant
CI Morag Martin	-	Training Officer
CI Brett Jeffery	-	Aviation Instructor
CI Ronnie McCulloch	-	Admin
CI Gary McIver	-	Weapon / Range Instructor
CI Claire Graham	-	First Aid Instructor
CI Samantha Scott	-	Equipment Officer

“The Aims of the Air Training Corps”

- To promote and encourage among young people a practical interest in aviation and the Royal Air Force.
- To provide training which will be useful in the services and civilian life.
- To foster the spirit of adventure and develop qualities of leadership and good citizenship.

The ATC Motto is - “Venture Adventure”

The Squadron Motto is - “Honesty”

Report by the Squadron Commander

The squadron offers young people aged 13 – 20 years of age the opportunity, through the team of Staff and adult volunteers, to learn about and to take part in flying, learn and develop the necessary skills to lead others on such things as expeditions, to participate in target shooting, to take part in sports up to national level, to attend camps on RAF Stations, home and overseas, and to take part in adventure training including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

No 297 Squadron is the only Air Training Corps Squadron of the Edinburgh and South Scotland Wing located in East Lothian. The Cadets parade on a Wednesday and Friday evenings, at the Squadron's Headquarters in Goose Green Place, Musselburgh. Cadets attend the Squadron from across the County, as far a field as North Berwick and East Linton.

Throughout the year the Squadron has maintained a strength of between 18 and 32 cadets.

Mandatory Training

The Squadron has a laid down training programme covering such subjects as Map Reading, Principles of Flight, Aircraft Operations, Airmanship, Propulsion not learning about the history of the Air Cadet Organisation and its past and present links with the Royal Air Force.

The training syllabus is prescribed and monitored through an examination process administered through Headquarters Air Cadets.

The Squadron through its team of instructors carries out the training and then presents cadets for the examinations at the appropriate levels.

During the year the squadron has presented a steady stream through their examinations

Projects

The Training Syllabus also requires Cadets to achieve a prescribed number of hours of project work in relation to the level of the classification exam for which they are studying. The current projects consist of: making plastic and engineering models, using Air Traffic Control and Flight Simulators, media project to produce a newsletter, help in the maintenance of the Squadron's web site and the construction of a new plinth for the Squadron's Banner. Another major project is the digitising of the Squadron's vast number of photographs and Press cuttings into a Digital Squadron History Album

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

The Squadron operates the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme with cadets achieving Bronze and Silver Awards in the last year. There are presently cadets taking part at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels including a member of staff who is working towards the Gold Award. All Cadets are actively encouraged to participate in the Scheme.

Nijmegen Marches 2006

6 Cadets from the Squadron participated in the 4-Day Marches in Nijmegen, Holland. They took part as a "civilian team" as there was no Wing Team. Some were also under age to participate as Air Cadets in the first place as they are required to be 16 or over as a cadet. Their participation was organised by Jim Scott, Civilian Committee Chairperson, and supported by Tommy Gallagher, Committee Member, George West an ex RAFVR (T) officer from the Squadron, Captain Pryde from Loretto School and Mr Len Goldsmith a former Warrant Officer in the Corps and himself a Marches veteran. Due to the extremely high temperatures in Holland and the overwhelming loading on the emergency services the Marches organisers cancelled the event

on completion of the first of the four days. The Cadets however also enjoyed a week's sight seeing holiday after the outwith the Marches.

First Aid

CI Claire Graham has recently qualified to instruct Cadets in First Aid and is currently setting up weekend courses for the Cadets to achieve their St John's Young Lifesaver Plus Awards. We look forward to a large number of cadets gaining their award.

Marksmanship

The Squadron has its own indoor small-bore rifle range on which Cadets learn the skill of marksmanship and competitive target shooting. The cadets are trained to use the weapons in a safe and competent manner prior to shooting "live" ammunition. They are then taught the skill of marksmanship. At present the Squadron has gained Marksmen Awards at Squadron, Wing and Corps levels. The range has been "adopted" by RFCA (a Government Agency) who are now responsible for its maintenance - the Squadron is still responsible for the use and the safety of the range.

Flying and Gliding

These are the activities which reinforces one of the aims of the Air Training Corps

- To promote and encourage among young people a practical interest in aviation and the Royal Air Force.



In the past year Cadets from the Squadron have completed GIC 1 & 2 (Gliding Induction Courses).

Cadets have also flown in the Tudor at RAF Leuchars as part of the RAF Air Experience Flight Scheme. A further 18 flights have been made with Cadets flying at Dirleton in a Bulldog owned by the Duke of Hamilton and a Piper Cub. Others have flown in the Rans 5, a kit aircraft part of which was built by former members of the Squadron along with 2 other ATC Squadrons and a group of Air Scouts as part of a "Millennium Build a Plane Project". During the year 19 cadets flew a total of 15.5 hours in powered aircraft and gliders

Community Involvement

The Squadron assists in various Community projects, e.g. Car Boot Sale at Dirleton Estate where cadets help in setting up the stalls, car parking, and tidying up at the end of the day. The Squadron also participates in the Musselburgh Children's Gala, and the annual Torchlight Parade. It also participated in the Battle of Britain Wings and British Legion Poppy Appeals

The Squadron also creates competition within the Cadets services (Army Cadet Force, Sea Cadet Corps and the Combined Cadet Force at Loretto School) in Musselburgh with an Annual Drill Competition and Shooting Competition.

Cadets and Staff from the Squadron refurbished a large concrete WW11 "Arrow" located next to it's Headquarters. The arrow was used during the training of bomber crews, based at Drem, Macmerry and East fortune airfields during WW11 to direct them to the target area North of the Squadron's HQ in the Forth Estuary. A cairn was erected by cadets to commemorate the event.



Adventure Training



During the year the Squadron has run an Adventure Training weekend. Cadets from the Squadron and Cadets from 1143 (Portobello) Squadron took part in this event. The weekend was run as a Leadership Training Exercises during which the NCOs and Staff

abilities were constantly assessed. The Cadets learnt new skills and improved on their existing skills regarding Teamwork, Leadership and Communication.

NCO Training



NCO Training Weekends is an annual event involving cadets and NCOs from other Units in the Wing Area. A NCO Cadre has been formed and Cadets are promoted Acting Corporals and are given different areas of responsibility and duties within their respective flights. This training is ongoing and at the end of the training period some then have their promotions substantiated.

Camps

This year cadets have attended RAF Regiment Camps at RAF Honnington and Easter camp at RAF Lossiemouth and Macrihanish.

Looking into the future

A new Chaplain will be appointed soon - Rev Yvonne Atkins from St Andrews Church, Musselburgh. Yvonne will take over the reins from our former Chaplain who retired in 2005.

The Squadron is also looking to recruit a suitably qualified mature person to fill the post of Adult NCO. This post has the responsibility of the general discipline, drill and uniform standard of the cadets.

We will continue to foster our strong links with the community, particularly with the Musselburgh and Inveresk Community Council and the various representatives of local Government both MP & MSP.

A New Airfield is under planning application near Dirleton and the Squadron has been advised there will be some opportunities for cadets to assist in some ways that will be of benefit to them and the Airfield Management.

Learning and Personal Development

We encourage the Cadets to take advantage of all flying and Gliding opportunities which in turn should help to consolidate their theory lectures regarding flying and gliding. They are also encouraged to participate in Adventure Training exercises to enhance their skills in Navigation, Leadership, Team working and Communication.

Active encouragement to achieve a Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award and earn a BTEC Diplomas in Public Services, ensuring that the Aims of the Air Training Corps regarding a practical interest in aviation, training which will be useful in the services and civilian life, the spirit of adventure and to develop qualities of leadership and good citizenship.

Cadets are also made aware of the many official Training Courses are available through the regular Routine Orders issued by our Headquarters Air Cadets at the Royal Air Force College Cranwell. The courses are available to both Cadets and members of Staff.

Lyall Downie
Flight Lieutenant
Officer Commanding

Report by the Civilian Committee

The Squadron's Civilian Committee operates within the Guidelines for Squadron Civilian Committees as issued by Headquarters Air Cadets and meets approximately every six weeks or as necessary

The Committee's function is to assist the Squadron Commander and his Staff with :

- Relations and liaison with the local community and the various Official Bodies
- The raising of, and accounting for, all Non-Public Funds
- The General Welfare of the Squadron

Funding

During the year under review the Squadron's operations resulted in a deficit of £338 with a balance of just over £7,000 of which £6,000 is readily available. The deficit is entirely attributable to Headquarters not submitting complete demands in the previous year, which resulted in that year having a greater surplus than should have been the case.

The current Funds when taking into account the budgets for 2007/2008, are currently considered to be in a healthy state, however, it is recognised that a constant monitoring is maintained and, if found to be necessary, a concentrated effort may be required to boost the funds in order that we can continue to pay for, or subsidise, the activities which do not attract funding from RAF and other sources..

During the year the Squadron were fortunate to receive a grant of £350.39 from Virgin Rail towards the cost of sports tips for those cadets taking part in the Nijmegen Marches in Holland.

Our current method of attracting funds is as follows:

Collection of subscriptions from cadets
The Squadron's Great Weather Lottery
Canteen Sales
Our online "shop" <http://www.buy.at/297sqnate>
Small fundraising events at Galas, Fetes etc
Donations and Sponsorship

The Squadron will be submitting a claim under Gift Aid during 2007/2008

The Committee operates an agreement whereby activities are funded on a fifty per cent share basis between those attending and the Squadron Welfare Fund.

The Squadron also meets the cost where hardship would prevent a cadet from being able to take part in a major activity like overseas camp or an International Air Cadet Exchange visit.

The Committee liaise closely with the Squadron which contributes to the overall team co-operation

J D Scott
Flight Lieutenant Retired
Chairman

