

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ROC

### ROYAL OBSERVER CORPS

**1925** was founded following successful trials carried out in 1924, when temporary observation posts covering the Weald of Kent, were linked by a communications system, to an operations room located above the telephone exchange in High Street, Cranbrook, Kent.

The post crews successfully tracked aircraft of 32 Sqn from Biggin Hill.

The first two Groups to be formed, were No. 1 with its Headquarters in Maidstone, and No 2 with its Headquarters in Horsham.

New groups continued to be formed, and by the outbreak of the Second World War most of Great Britain was covered. The Observers on these Posts identified and reported all aircraft flying overland and the sea belt adjoining the coastline, to their respective Observer Corps Centres. As in the early days, radar tracking ceased once inbound aircraft had crossed the coastline.

**1941** In recognition of the sterling service given by the Observer Corps during the Battle of Britain, his Majesty King George V1 conferred the title ROYAL, and during September women were enrolled in the Corps.

**1944** 796 members volunteered to man the Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships during the D-Day Landings.

These volunteers were temporarily seconded to the Royal Navy in the rank of Petty Officer/ Aircraft Identifier and wore 'SEABORNE' flashes on their uniform.

**1945** In May the Royal Observer Corps was stood down.

**1947** On January 1st the Corps was reformed in response to the 'cold war'.

**1953** Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11 assumes the appointment Air Commodore-in-Chief

**1955/60** The Corps was given a Nuclear reporting role, passing the information to Military and Civil Authorities.

**1991** The reduced 'nuclear threat' to the United Kingdom resulted in the stand-down of the majority of volunteer members of the Royal Observer Corps on September 30.

**1995** The decision was finally taken to stand-down the remaining elements of the Corps on December 31, completing 70 years of outstanding voluntary service at the forefront of the defence of the Realm.

To quote Air Vice Marshal 'Johnnie' Johnson when in the presence of a number of ROC members at a parade, and referring to its Battle of Britain service:-

**“What would we have done without you”**



## THE ROYAL OBSERVER CORPS

### ASSOCIATION

The association was formed in 1986 to bring together former members of the Royal Observer Corps to maintain and promote esprit-de-corps and comradeship among Corps members, to keep them in touch with each other and with the activities of the Royal Observer Corps and in furtherance of these objects.

To promote social and other activities for the benefit of all members.

To assist former members of the ROC and their dependants who are in need, to obtain assistance from the Royal Observer Corps Benevolent Fund or any other appropriate source of assistance.

To provide support as may be appropriate to the re-establishment of the ROC as an active volunteer organisation serving the Country in whatever role may be appropriate. To represent the interests of the ROC Association in dealing with other national organisations.

The ROC Association is a non-sectarian and non-political organisation.

### MEMBERSHIP.

Full Membership is open to all who served in the ROC, except persons dishonourably discharged.

Associate Membership is open to the spouse/partner and children of a Corps member. People who have been connected with the ROC whether by employment or otherwise.

## **ROYAL OBSERVER CORPS ASSOCIATION**



For further information about membership of the Royal Observer Corps Association.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail name: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to:

**The ROC Association  
Membership Secretary  
18 College Park  
Peterborough  
PE1 4AW**

Or put the above information in an e-mail and send to :-.

[warep@milnet.uk.net](mailto:warep@milnet.uk.net)

Visit the open pages of the ROCA website

[www.ROCAAssoc.org.uk](http://www.ROCAAssoc.org.uk)