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# The Panther

The official newsletter of 146 Northwich Squadron



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## Huge Success For Sqn Band

Proud Cadets from 146 Squadron, Air Training Corps Northwich, recently came 5th overall at the National Air Cadet Band competition, held at RAF Halton, Buckinghamshire. The finalists, had been selected through Regional heats, held across the country.

The Competition is a highly prestigious event, attended by Air Commodore Dawn McCafferty, Officer Commanding the Air Cadet Organisation. The Air Cadet Organisation has 960 squadrons, Nationwide, so competition was very tough. "To make the finals was success in itself" said Civilian Instructor and Band Master Sarah Ross, "I am extremely proud that we performed so well at National level, especially as many of the cadets are junior band members, playing their instruments for less than a year!"

The Band was led by Cadet Charlie Hensby, 16, of Little Leigh, Cheshire. This was the first time the band has made the finals in the history of 146 Squadron, founded in 1939.



## Staff Member Awarded For Service

October 2013 saw Flight Lieutenant VR(T) Timothy Lloyd of 146 Squadron Air Training Corps, Northwich become the proud recipient of a distinguished long service award.

The Cadet Forces medal, is only presented to volunteers who have given over 12 years of service. Flt Lt Lloyd received the 18 year service medal! A bar which is added to the medal and represents the added 6 years of service.

The distinguished award was presented by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, David Briggs, MBE, K.St.J.

Flt Lt Lloyd joined the Air Training Corps in 1990 aged 13 years old. He later became a volunteer staff member in 1995 and has been involved ever since.

"I was thrilled to be presented with this award, especially by the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire!" said Flt Lt Lloyd of Crewe.

"Having joined as a teenager, I can really say that it has offered me some great opportunities, this award, is a real honour."



## Other News

### Promotions:

Cdt Harvey-Kelly to Cpl  
Cdt Nasralla to Cpl  
Cdt Cawley-Cooke to Cpl  
Cdt Tomlinson to Cpl  
Cdt Neild to Cpl  
Cdt Yale to Cpl  
Cdt Edment to Cpl  
Cdt England to Cpl  
Cdt Bennett to Cpl  
Cpl Farrow to Sgt  
Cpl Pickup to Sgt  
Cpl Keegan to Sgt  
Cpl Martin to Sgt  
Cpl Wallace to Sgt  
Cpl Houghton to Sgt  
Sgt McGough to Flt Sgt  
Flt Sgt Quayle to CWO

### Sports Representations:

Wing Swimming  
Cpl Harvey-Kelly  
Cdt Baker Wing Swimming  
Wing Hockey  
Cpl Harvey-Kelly, Cdt Prime,  
Sgt Jessop  
Wing Senior Netball  
Cpl Harvey-Kelly  
Wing Cross-Country  
Cdt Halpin, Cdt Mackintosh,  
Cdt Henderson, Cdt Harvey-Kelly  
Region Hockey  
Sgt Jessop  
Cpl Harvey-Kelly  
Corps Hockey  
Cpl Harvey-Kelly

### Gliding Scholarships:

Cpl Cawley-Cooke - Silver Wings  
Sgt Martin - Silver Wings

### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/atc146](http://www.facebook.com/atc146)

### YouTube

[www.youtube.com/atc146](http://www.youtube.com/atc146)

### Editor

CI M Moores

### Writers

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CI M Dutton

*The following article was written by Cadet Sgt Webb, before he left to join the Royal Air Force, earlier this year. It describes the application process, from start to finish, for joining the RAF as an airman.*

As I know some cadets will hope to apply to the armed forces when they come to leave school, so I have documented my experiences from the past few months in this article to give you an idea of what is involved in the application process, and to offer some advice for those who wish to follow in my footsteps. Please note that I am applying as an airman, so the selection process for non commissioned aircrew and officers will be different.

The stages of application:

- register your interest
- aptitude tests
- selection interview
- medical assessment
- fitness test
- PRTC (Pre-recruit Training Course)
- final interview
- basic training

The first step of the ladder is to decide what trade (job) you want to do. Once you've decided this you should contact the local Armed Forces Careers Office (AFCO) to register your interest. Don't rush this stage as it will be very difficult to change what you are going to be in the future, so take your time and make sure that it is what you really want to do before you proceed.

Once the trade you've applied for starts recruiting, the AFCO will contact you, and you will be asked to complete an online form. Once this is complete you will be invited to the AFCO for the day to complete a series of aptitude tests.

These include:

- Verbal reasoning - How do you use and interpret written information
- Numerical reasoning - Can you use basic fractions, decimals and formulae; can you understand and interpret graphs and tables
- Work rate - How quickly and accurately do you complete tasks
- Spatial reasoning - Can you understand how shapes and objects work
- Electrical comprehension - Can you work with electrical concepts
- Mechanical comprehension - Can you work with mechanical concepts
- Memory - How accurately can you remember information

The next stage of the application process is the selection interview. Again, this will take place at the AFCO. You will be asked about yourself, including your family, school, work, interests and hobbies, you will also be asked about the RAF and your chosen trade. Advice for this stage is to know everything!! Know as much as you can about the RAF, your chosen trade, current affairs, everything! Try not to give short answers, try to expand on them, giving more information than a simple yes or no.

Once you have passed the interview you will be booked in for a medical assessment to check that you are healthy enough for active service. This stage is not that bad! If you have any worries about any medical issues, simply contact the AFCO or go on the RAF careers website.

Shortly after your medical, usually within three days, you will need to complete a basic fitness test. This will probably take place in LA fitness in Manchester. You will need to complete a 1.5 mile run, press ups and sit-ups. The minimum standard for these can be found on the RAF careers website.

Now coming to the end of the application process, you will be given a potential date, and you will have to attend a four day course at RAF Halton, where your basic training will take place. This course is called the Pre-Recruit Training Course, or PRTC for short. You will do this at least six weeks before your potential start date.

Hopefully, once you pass these tests with the required score for your trade, you can move onto the next stage.

You will arrive on the Tuesday evening, issued coveralls, and have a quick tour of the base. On the Wednesday is when the fun begins, you will have to pass the RAF Fitness test (RAFFT) which involves a bleep test, press ups and sit-ups. Again the basic requirements are found on the RAF careers website. If you happen to fail the RAFFT, you will be kindly asked to leave that afternoon. Hopefully you will pass this, and the next thing you will do is the basic numeracy and literacy functional skills tests. This will ascertain your level in these areas, level one or level two. You will then have to do basic maths, English reading, writing, speaking and listening exams. Don't worry if you don't pass these, as if you fail you will only be asked to arrive at RAF Halton a few days before your training is due to start and you will re-rake these. You will also have briefs about foot care, boot care, dental care, and you will visit the force protection facilities. You will also be issued your boots to give you a chance to break them in before you arrive for basic training. The course will give you an idea what it is like to be a recruit in the RAF, so if it's not for you, you still have time to stop your application. But having been in the cadets you should all love it.

Now comes the final stage of the application. This is your final interview. This will take place at the AFCO, and you will be interviewed by a sergeant or above. This is basically a more formal version of the initial interview, so know everyone, and more, that you did for the first one. This is also where you will be filling in paperwork in preparation for you joining the armed forces.

On successful completion of the final interview, you will then be offered a offer of service with the RAF, and your start date will be confirmed.

One piece of advice that is probably the most important for preparing for the application process and that is to get fit. You don't need to do to the gym to get fit, just go out for runs, and practise press-ups and sit-ups. Most people fail on the fitness aspect, so don't let yourself down on something that you can easily improve!!

If you have any questions about the application process, or want any advice, simply visit the RAF careers office, or contact the armed forces careers office.

Good luck!!

Sgt Webb

