



33 Squadron Association thank NZ Defence Attaché for 'Mixed Pickles' Cenotaph assistance

LONDON, Friday 24 November 2017

Enroute to the Annual Puma Reunion in London on Friday, Association Chairman Dave Stewart took the opportunity to visit the New Zealand Defence Attaché, Wing Commander Lisa D'Oliveira RNZAF to say 'thank you' for the assistance she had given to the Association members who had marched at the Remembrance Day Parade. Having had a successful year researching and discovering 33 Squadron's 'Mixed Pickles' nickname in 1944, given as an indication of the multinational makeup of the Squadron in Europe at that time but indicative of its make up throughout its long history, it was agreed that marching members would either wear berets or a forage cap to represent as many of those nations as possible. Lisa investigated several possibilities for us, which included asking her fellow DAs in London for loans or donations, and then deposited the caps at the RAF Club for collection. Consequently, the 33 Squadron Association contingent marched past the Cenotaph with headwear representing New Zealand, Australia, America, Canada and the Netherlands; only headwear from South Africa alluded us.

Following the presentation of a 33 Squadron Centenary bottle of claret, a George Roney 'In Memorium' booklet and the special '1916-2016' edition of 'Loyalty', Dave spent an hour explaining 33 Squadron's historical links with New Zealand that stretch back to Crete in 1941, and the background to 'The Mixed Pickles' that only came to light in Jan Linzel's, 33 Squadron's oldest living veteran, book last year. Lisa is now keen to spread the story around the DA's in London who represent those countries and establish a 'Mixed Pickles DAs' liaison group with 33 Squadron and the Association. In the meantime, Lisa is asking for some permanent donations from the DAs to present to the 33 Squadron History Room as a memorial to the 'Mixed Pickles' of 1944-1945.

Reader's of previous copies of 'Loyalty' will already be aware that the 'Mixed Pickles' nickname could be applied equally to 33 (Home Defence) Squadron RFC between 1916-1918. The list of recorded fatalities in those early years lists pilots from Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and Argentina, the first being Lieutenant John Brophy, a Canadian who joined 33 Squadron from the Western Front on 26 November 1916; he died in a B.E.12 crash at Kirton-in-Lindsey on Christmas Eve 1916. Lieutenant Brophy lies with seven other 33 Squadron aircrew officers who died between December 1916 and 5 August 1918. We know of eight other 33 Squadron officers and airmen who died during World War One and are buried in cemeteries across England and Scotland.

