



NO. 50 (FOUNDER) SQUADRON.

AIR TRAINING CORPS

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JANUARY 1939 - 1964

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A. D. C. C.



THE PAST

The formation of the ADCC was the result of a luncheon gathering of 6 men at the London home of the Duke of Sutherland on January, 1938, from this meeting the idea of an Air Cadet Corps similar to the Sea and Army Cadets, grew into plans, and these plans with generous financial assistance from members of the Air League grew into the formation of the ADCC on an area basis.

July 1938 saw the formation of the first 2 Squadrons.

On 27th January, 1939, No.50 (Founder) Squadron ADCC was formed with a Hut in Sussex Road - Brixton as it's Headquarters, later expanding into the school.

The creation of Lambeth's Unit was the result of the hard and painstaking work of a small body of men in Lambeth who had encouraged interest, encouraged financial assistance and moulded the efforts together.

At the formation, the Hon. Secty. Mr. C. Wood of the Lambeth Town Hall staff.

It is a point to make here, that Mr. C. Wood is still actively connected with the Air Cadets of Lambeth, in the Office of the Deputy Lieutenant of Lambeth.

The formation staff of the Unit included many men in Public Service and it is to be noted that Mr. A. French who was an Officer at that time, is today Lambeth Civil Defence Officer, still giving valuable assistance to Lambeth Air Cadet Units.

Units were very self supporting - Uniforms were purchased by the Cadets, 1940 prices were £1.5s. including Forage Caps.

A Nostalgic note is Order No.123 on 30th November, 1939 which ruled that the New Drill 'IN THREE'S' would be carried out forthwith!! May 24th, 1940 saw the Squadron presented with it's Standard by the late Ald. Lockyer J.F, then Mayor of Lambeth, the Standard was handed over to the Squadron by the Commandant A.F.O - Air Commodore Chamier. Also during 1940 the Squadron formed a Guard of Honour for the Royal Family, departure for a visit to Canada.

The uniform worn was of the DOG COLLAR STYLE with special badges and buttons marked ADCC. This style remained when the ADCC was taken over and conversion to the new A.T.C came about in February, 1941, by that time nearly 200 Squadrons had been formed throughout the country.

The change over to a Royal Air Force style of organisation was recognition of the value of this type of training for youth. By the end of 1941, Lambeth had split No.50(F) Squadron into the formation of 3 other Squadrons - Herne Hill No.1481 at Norwood and No.2095 at Kennington.

Boys were posted to the Unit nearest their homes. Officers were posted and appointed to form these Units.

The war kept the 4 Squadrons busy - and strength of over 100 were common. Competition was keen, and with the support of local tradesmen many trophies were presented and honours won by each of the Units, some of these trophies are held by No.50(F) Squadron today, and are displayed on special occasions.

Many large scale parades were held in London, Leicester Square - Odeon Cinema, - Hyde Park Review - 10,000 Cadets from all over the British Isles inspected by Air Minister Sir Archibald Sinclair, with many local Borough Parades and Functions supported by each of the Units - Lambeth SPITFIRE - National Savings etc.

Cadets from all Lambeth Squadrons entered the Services, even served in the Mines, as Bevin Boys - No.1481 Squadron records it's members with a Scroll, on view in No.50(F) Squadron Headquarters.

Many awards were made to Cadets of Lambeth, such was the material supplied to the Services.

The war ended with the Units gradually loosing strength, and the post war period was a testing time for most Units.

Very soon No.1328 at Herne Hill closed down and Cadets were transferred to other Units.

Accommodation was also a problem, Units moved from one Headquarters to another, Headquarters were bombed/requisitioned or just taken back by their owners.

During this period - strengths were down to approx. 50 Cadets, Officers were returning to their civilian occupations, and the type of Cadet was now the lad who was keen on Air Subjects.

The introduction of National Service, encouraged recruiting, No.1481 Squadron still maintained a steady quota - a Band was formed, Drill competitions were won - Romson competition was won 2 years running by 1481 - No.50(F) were also runners up - Local Parades were still supported by all the Units.

Many lads entered the Royal Air Force, better for their service with the A.T.C.

The end of National Service saw a further decline of strength and soon No.1481 Squadron was disbanded, Cadets and Officers were amalgamated with No.50(F) Sqdn., at their present Headquarters at Tulse Hill.

There were many changes in the staff of Units, too many to record here, a record is maintained at No.50(F) Sqdn., Headquarters, but gratitude is expressed to all who served so well.

The peace time activities of the remaining two Squadrons was progressing sedately when Tulse Hill School opened it's own Air Training Corps Squadron - The A.T.C in Lambeth was strengthened by this new Unit which grew to be a great name in Rifle Shooting in the County of London Wing, and in the A.F.C.

So from the fleeting glance at the past, recorded here we move onto the present phase of the A.T.C, with nostalgic memories of large Squadrons - numerous Officers and Instructors - to spur us on to keep Lambeth Air Cadets out in the Public's eye, even if only to remind them of the efforts, time, trouble and money that men and boys from Lambeth have put into the Air Cadets, with the results we all know so well.

To the honourable ladies and gentlemen of the past, upon whose efforts we stand today, Lambeth Air Training Corps send a grateful 'THANK YOU'

THE PRESENT

Today 50(F) Squadron maintains a steady strength of 25, after a session of low numbers, with a good proportion of efficient Cadets and probationers slowly climbing the ladder.

The present Officer Commanding has more than the usual interest in maintaining No.50(F) Squadron Standards, being an ex Cadet of the 1940 period, he is today supported by two Civilian Instructors both ex Cadets of the A.T.C., now giving their services to young lads keen on Air Subjects.

The Unit has many and varied activities to hold the interests of the modern youth, Sports are catered for in most of it's forms, 50(F) having won the Lambeth Cadet Forces - Five a Side football competition for two years running.

A Radio Station is active on parade nights, operated by one of the Instructors, with a Senior Cadet training for his license exam early this year. This makes contacts over a wide area of Southern England, and never fails to cause comment concerning Lambeth Air Cadets.

Adventure Training in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is progressing, with weekend tent camping for all Cadets, weather permitting. Cross country exercises are held each year in co-operation with the other Squadrons in Lambeth.

This co-operation is also evident in the Deputy Lieutenant of Lambeth's Cadet Sunday competition, which the A.T.C have been placed second to the Army Cadets, for two years running, such is the result of the co-operation.

Liason with the Royal Air Force is made by regular visits to R.A.F Stations for Flying and Gliding, with Summer Camp held each year, all available to Cadets, for the cost of their meals.

The serious difficulty of today, is the lack of Officers and Instructors, assistance given by Officers from other Units to 50(F) is invaluable, but a plea is extended to anyone willing to give some spare time as an Instructor.

The Air Training Corps of Lambeth has publicly celebrated it's 21st Anniversary, with a parade through Brixton to a Drum-head Service at Tulse Hill Barracks, in an effort to remind Lambethians of their existance. Now the 25th Anniversary is

celebrated by the Dance on the 22nd February, 1964, to which we hope anyone with an A.T.C attachment in the past, will attend, to talk over old times, and who knows, maybe revive their interest in the Air Cadets of Lambeth.

THE FUTURE

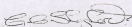
The future holds the unknown, but it is certain that the Air Training Corps will be required to serve the needs of Air minded Youth of Lambeth for many years to come, and 50(8) will be there to provide these facilities, but only with the support and co-operation of the other Squadrons in Lambeth, this has been the result of the policy of co-existence of the three Squadrons, although closely situated, each maintains it's individuality but co-operating on major events in the Borough.

To adults of Lambeth we send a common suggestion, if you can spare an evening or so, why not contact your local Squadron, your assistance is needed, in numerous ways, to provide an interest for young lads who are keen on Air Subjects.

If you served in the Royal Air Force, you can help a lad to learn the traditions and gain interest in Air matters.

This brief account of the passage of time was compiled with the assistance of the back numbers of the ADCC Gazette - The Air Training Corps Gazette and Air Reserve Gazette, loaned for research by the Imperial War Museum, to whom we express our grateful 'THANKS'.

To the reader we say 'THANK YOU' for reading this, it is not a history, many events - names etc., have not been mentioned, due to space limitations, but if you have read this far, you will have been reminded of the Air Cadets in Lambeth.



G.C. Shepherd, D.F.M.,
(Flight Lieutenant),
Officer Commanding,
No.50(F) Squadron, A.T.C.