

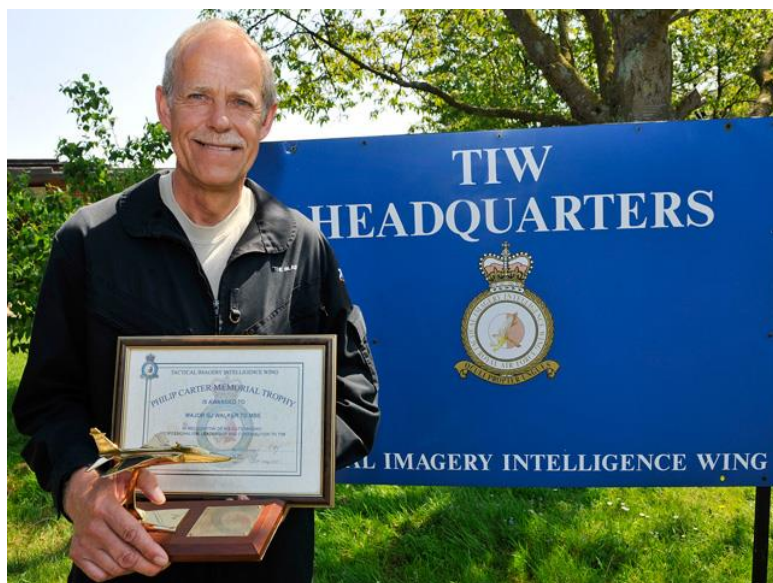
## BRANCH SECRETARY, GARY WALKER

Maj (Ret'd) Gary Walker MBE TD VR RA

Gary is a local man who was born and bred in King's Lynn and worked for Eastern Electricity at their Gaywood Bridge depot before moving on to become a Project Manager in the Metering and Data Collection departments, based out of the Board's HQ in Ipswich.

In January 2001, that all came to an end when he decided to switch to full time service with the Army.

He had been a Territorial Gunner by background, having finished his Regimental Duty as the Battery Commander of the Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry, equipped with the 155mm FH70 Gun. He went on from there to take on the appointment as the TA GLO (Ground Liaison Officer) to No. 41 (F) Sqn based at RAF Coltishall. The opportunity came in 2001 to take on the appointment as GLO to No II (Army Cooperation) Squadron based at RAF Marham, which he readily accepted and where he stayed until December 2004.



From there Gary moved south and back to the 'Gunner' fold as second in command of the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, London, an appointment he held until July 2008. Even then he did not sever his ties with the RAF, managing to see a few of his ex-colleagues who were posted to the MOD, while helping to facilitate the Director of Air Staff annual dinner, when it moved to the Woolwich Officers' Mess. He thoroughly enjoyed his busy tour at Woolwich - then the home of the Royal Artillery - although he was also present to witness the symbolic move of the Gunners from Woolwich to Larkhill.

However, being local to the Marham area, when the opportunity arose for Gary to return to RAF Marham, again with No II (AC) Sqn, he jumped at the chance and was once more back with the 'boys in blue'. Much had changed during his period away from the Sqn, with almost all of the Aircrew and Engineers that he knew so well having been rotated out, and with the site now also being occupied by 31 Sqn. Having been desk bound at Woolwich for a number of years he welcomed the opportunity to get back into an operational appointment - and who better to do it with than the RAF's première Fast Jet squadron.

His time as a Ground Liaison Officer with the RAF saw him complete seven operational tours of both Iraq and Afghanistan together with numerous exercises throughout the world. He continued to serve at RAF Marham, having moved across to the Tactical Imagery-Intelligence Wing to help them to establish a new mission support capability, heavily involved in supporting operations in both Afghanistan and Libya.

On his eventual retirement from the Army, Gary was taken on in a contract rôle doing the same work but this time for a company, 2Excel Aviation, which had been set up by ex RAF personnel to provide Close Air Support training to Army units about to deploy to Afghanistan.

However, the lure of RAF Marham was still not far away, and he was asked whether he would like to apply for a new post that had been created as the Officer Commanding Community Support Flight, primarily responsible for the welfare of the service families, which he readily accepted although it did mean re-enlisting into the RAF in the rank of Flight Lieutenant: this gave Gary the dubious honour of being the oldest recruit into the RAF! He continued in this quite different and demanding role for five years, until he finally decided to call it a day and retire officially.

In what little spare time he has, Gary is a runner, with numerous marathons under his belt - and he is apparently now undergoing conversion to long distance cycling!