

# OBITUARY FOR GEOFF PAINE

Truro ROCA member, Geoff Paine, died on 29 August 2019 in hospital at Rickmansworth, Herts. The funeral took place at West Herts Crematorium Chapel, Garston, Watford on Monday 16 September. The chapel was full with family and friends, the coffin was draped with the RAFA flag and his ROC Officer's cap was on top. Five standards were paraded including those from 2, 7 and 10 Groups ROCA, RAFA and Royal British Legion. The 10 Group ROCA standard was carried by Sue Fenton of the Croxley Green, RBL. Representatives from RAFA, RBL and the ROCA were present. 10 Group was represented by Lawrence and Chris Holmes. Other ROCA people included 2 Group Chairman Pam Saunders with standard bearer Geoff Saunders, Jenny Major, Edwina Holden, national Heritage Officer and Mike Quincey, 7 Group standard bearer.



The service was conducted by Rev Robert Riley-Braley. After the introduction, opening prayer and hymn, a tribute was read by David Jenkinson, nephew to Geoff Paine, who told of Geoff's life and his many activities. Barbara Lewis then gave another tribute explaining Geoff's love of cycles. The Commendation and Committal included the playing of the Last Post by a member of the RAF Regiment standing in the balcony. Afterwards many people attended a very good buffet at the Abbots Langley Cricket Club when there was much chat and memories swapped about Geoff, his many friends and his very full life.

Geoffrey Hugh Paine was born on 26 May 1925 at Gerrards Cross in south Buckinghamshire north west of London. He was the youngest of four children. Geoff's father was a scout master and both parents had Cornish ancestors. All his father's family were from Falmouth and one family member named Peter Barratt was a tin miner from Gwennap. In the 1930s all family holidays were scout camping at Durgan on the Helford River. In 1938 the family bought land at Helford Passage and built a bungalow called 'Trelow'. At the age of 14 years Geoff was sent to Cornwall to live and spent most of WW2 at Helford Passage. (see article 'A Boy's War on the Helford River 1939-1944' by Geoff Paine). He attended Falmouth Grammar School and in his spare time developed a love of boats and fishing. Geoff became a messenger boy for the Home Guard and learned how to use a Vickers Machine Gun. He also joined 1157 Squadron ATC which met in nearby Mawnan Smith and attained the rank of Corporal.

At the age of 18 years, on 29 August 1943, Geoff joined the RAF and started his pilot training. After medicals and tests Geoff joined No 6 Training Wing at Aberystwyth. After only six hours flying he went solo and a variety of postings followed. In February 1945 he sailed for South Africa and in May of that year WW2 ended. He arrived back in UK on 29 October 1945 and ultimately in 1947 became 2nd pilot flying the Avro York. In March 1948 he attended a Staff Pilot's Course flying Oxfords, Ansons and Wellingtons. He married Evelyn on 26 August 1948 and left the RAF on 7 August 1949. Geoff returned to Cornwall and farming, living at Pelynt near Looe.

On 1 October 1961 he became a spare time observer on E3 Post Polperro (Pelynt) in No 11 Group ROC Truro. After 5 years as a volunteer observer Geoff decided to apply for a full time Officer's job and was appointed Mobile Training Officer at HQ Southern Area at RAF Rudloe Manor on 14 February 1966.

On the 1 March 1967 he was posted to No 11 Group HQ at Truro as Group Training Officer under Obs/Lt Martin Burgess who was the DGC. In 1968 the Truro Group became a sub Group and Geoff was appointed the Deputy Group Commandant.

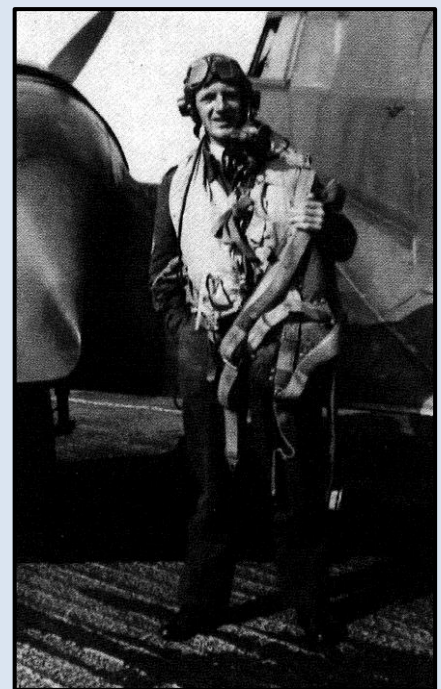
On 24 January 1971 Geoff was promoted to Observer Lieutenant and posted to HQ Metropolitan Area at RAF Uxbridge as Area Training Officer in that Area. Then on 1 February 1974 he was appointed Deputy Group Commandant No 2 Group Horsham and on 3 September 1974 was promoted to Obs Lt Cdr. On 21 March 1975 he moved to HQ Royal Observer Corps at RAF Bentley Priory as Ops 2 then to Ops 1. In 1975 he was Camp Commandant at RAF Colerne and on 25 July 1978 attended a Royal Garden Party.

On 1st October 1980 Geoff was posted to HQ Western Area as Deputy Area Commandant. Then on 4 March 1985 Geoff was posted back again to HQROC at Bentley Priory as Project Officer for the 60th Anniversary of the Corps. Here he was responsible for all the administration in connection with the Royal Garden Party at Bentley Priory, the ROC Train naming ceremony at Waterloo and First Day covers etc. He received his ROC Long Service medal in September 1981 and on top of all that he was Camp Commandant at RAF Leeming in the summer of 1985. But that was Geoff's swan song for he retired from the Corps on 13 December 1985. Geoff was appointed as Honorary member of the ROC on 14 December 1985 and later became the first National Secretary of ROCA and became a long serving member of the Truro Branch ROCA.

Geoff and Evelyn moved to live in Croxley Green, Rickmansworth in 1971. Geoff became interested in old engines then bikes and even rode a Penny Farthing. He joined the Southern Veteran Cycling Club and then formed the Chiltern Section. He became Sales Officer, President then Honorary Life member. From 1985 Geoff and Evelyn became volunteers in the Three Rivers Museum in Rickmansworth and remained so until the present day. Both Geoff and Evelyn were very interested in the war years, Geoff re-enacting his RAF and ROC life and Evelyn wearing her Land Army Girls outfits.

This obituary can only cover a fraction of what Geoff Paine achieved in his prolific and varied life. It cannot portray adequately Geoff's bubbling enthusiasm, ability to encourage others and be a role model for the many people whose lives he touched.

*(Obituary by Lawrence Holmes 10 Group ROCA Chairman)*



Above left is at Twinwood Glenn Miller Festival in 2005. Evelyn Paine is far left dressed as a Land Army Girl Geoff Paine is on right wearing his ROC uniform. Photo on far right shows Geoff in flying gear when in the RAF.