



NATO E-3A Component celebrates 35 years



Story by Staff Sgt. Alexandra M. Longfellow
Photos by André Joosten

It's been 35 years since the NATO AWACS first landed at Geilenkirchen Air Base in Germany, marking the start of a new era in airspace surveillance.



One July 1 and 2, the gates of the airbase were opened to approximately 37,000 guests to mark this special occasion. This was

a unique opportunity for the public to have an idea of what goes on behind the gates and provided some insight into the E-3A Component's history, aircraft and daily operations.

The 35th Anniversary aircraft was of course in the spotlight during the celebrations with long lines of eager people waiting to see what is inside and why the AWACS is so special to NATO. Each NATO nation that is represented at Geilenkirchen also provided food, drinks and even music as their speciality of their nation. More than 60 aircraft were on display for guests to walk through, sit in and talk to the aircrew of those aircraft. Guests of the airbase also enjoyed a varied entertainment program.

On the evening of June 29, guests were able to witness the Großer Zapfenstreich (Grand Tattoo). This is performed by pipes and drums and a military band, accompanied by two platoons under arms and torchbearers.

The Zapfenstreich is performed only during national celebrations to honor distinguished persons present at such special events.

Members of the public were also invited to a Fliegerparty on July 1. For this purpose, the Hangar 2, in which an AWACS is normally serviced, has been converted into a party

location. More than 5,000 people who were interested in dance and celebration could experience a very special flair. Over 150 individually controlled and color-changeable headlights created an impressive atmosphere, in which the musicians and audiences alike put into the scenes.





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COMMANDER'S CORNER

With the Commander's Corner, our NAEW&CF Commander and E-3A Commander give the opportunity to wing and squadron commanders, and branch and division heads to share their thoughts about current topics taking place at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen. Every month a different writer will highlight a specific topic concerning their discipline.

NAEW&C United – A team of Champions

Shortly after my arrival at Geilenkirchen, after 18 months at Mons, I was interviewed by Staff Sgt Longfellow for an article for Skywatch (26 Feb 2017). The title of that article was "NAEW&C United" and I make no apologies for reprising it here. In that article I extolled the virtues of a strong organisational identity and the importance of teamwork.

The NAEW&C Force Review had brought the Headquarters, the Component and MSEC altogether for the first time here at Geilenkirchen. The first few months were a learning experience for us all as we got to know each other in much the same way as the new summer signings at a football club take some time to find their feet. But this was not just a case of allowing everyone to settle into the old routine, no, this was the case of everyone having to adapt to a new style of play. Such things take time to bed-in and by the end of the season (mid-summer) we were languishing somewhere around the middle of the league – a steady if unspectacular start, with the promise of greater things to come.

By the time the new season came around in the fall, things had definitely taken a turn for the better.

Everywhere you looked you could see increased evidence of teamwork between the Headquarters, the Component and MSEC – everyone was pulling in the same direction and the results started coming. By Christmas we were a top 3 side and looking pretty strong.

Now as the season reaches its climax once again, we sit at the top of the league as champions. Our success has not been built on the performance of a few individuals – though there are a great many stars amongst us – but on teamwork.

It is important to reflect on our successes but now is not the time to bask in the glory of having come so far in such a short space of time. No, now is the time to seize the momentum we have built and push forward with even greater energy and purpose.

As most of you will know, I will leave Geilenkirchen and the Force this summer and later this year I will retire from active service with the Royal Air Force after 39 years in uniform. Every career has its highlights and to end mine working with such a talented group of people and conducting a mission of such

great importance has certainly been one of the highlights.

When I joined the Force in 2014 we were conducting Operation Afghan Assist and Immediate Assurance Measures following the Russian annexation of Crimea and other events in Eastern Ukraine. As I leave, we are well into our fourth year of Assurance Measures, our second year of Tailored Assurance Measures for Turkey and almost three quarters of the way through our first year supporting the Counter ISIL Coalition. The operational tempo has been relentless, but NATO AWACS has proven to be more than up to the task. As NATO transitions from Assurance to Deterrence there is absolutely no doubt in my mind that NATO AWACS will be in the vanguard of that evolution.

It is certainly an exciting time to be part of this great Force. Our current modernisation programmes will deliver leading edge technologies and the Final Lifetime Extension Programme will in many ways revolutionise how we deliver Airborne Battle Management and Command and Control. Our radical new approach to training, which harnesses new technology, is setting



a high benchmark for European Air Forces to follow – we have broken a paradigm which had stifled our capacity to develop and grow. We have seen similar progress in the area of interoperability with other airborne assets and Command and Control nodes – this is pivotal work to ensure that we can meet the challenges of the future operating environment. Finally our keen focus on process improvement has delivered impressive results across the board.

The above list is far from exhaustive but it shows exactly what can be done when we work as a team – I will miss being part of it. I want to thank you all for your commitment, your dedication and your friendship. This is a very special and unique organisation and I feel immensely proud to have been a part of it. I wish you all every possible success for the future and who knows, maybe our paths will cross again – I sincerely hope so.

**Air Commodore
Paddy Teakle**



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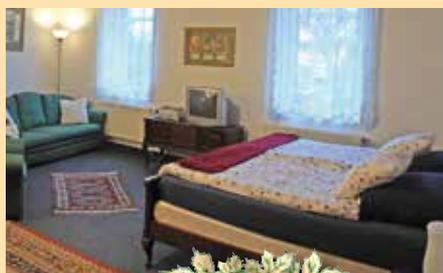


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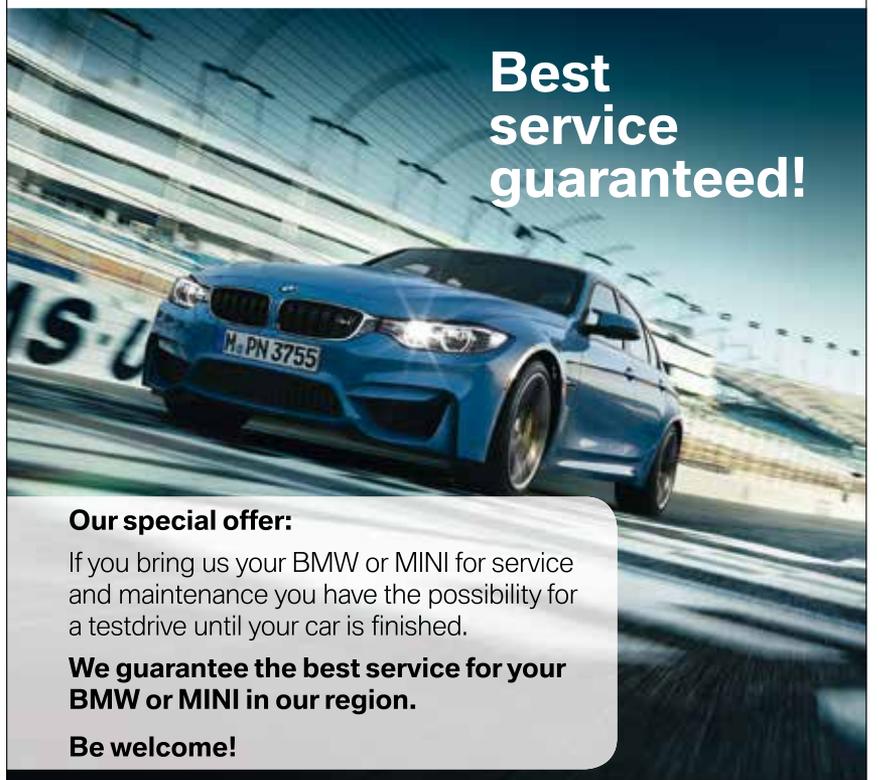
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Opening Ceremony for Open Days GK

Story by Maureen Geraets-Head
Photos by André Joosten

On 30 June, the NAEW&C Force E-3A Component opened its 35th year Anniversary with a ceremony which took place in Hangar 2.

E-3A Component commander, Brig. Gen. Karsten Stoye opened the ceremony and expressed his

appreciation to the audience who had chosen to celebrate this milestone with the NATO AWACS.

During the ceremony, the Mr. Ernest Herold, Deputy Assistant to the Secretary General/Defense Investment addressed the military and civilian men and women of the E-3A Component.

"What a milestone! Today, you mark 35 years not only of service, but

growth, adaption and endurance through some of our Alliance's most challenging periods". He continued, "In reflecting on 35 years of excellence, I see three foundational elements that have driven this organization to be what is today. Let's call them the "three Ps". Firstly, platforms, the AWACS itself, secondly, people the men and women in the air. On the ground, and their families and communities

behind them. And finally, political unity, the critical mass of commitment that is at the bedrock of this Alliance."

The weekend of 1 and 2 July, the base opened for the public during the Open Days to give the people of the surrounding areas the opportunity to meet their NATO neighbour and its international people that are proud to serve for their NATO AWACS.



Comments by guests

"It was very nice! The staff was very friendly and helpful."

Ralph Thié

"Spotters Day and sitting in the Apache was my favorite part; it was just great."

Welf Fischer

"Perfect organization; we had a wonderful four-day trip! See you in five years!"

Johan Hackx

"Great display; I was extremely happy to see a P-8 in the flesh. Pity the weather was so bad. I'll be back in five years."

Ben Schumacher

"We will be back. Where can I make my reservation?"

Jorg van der Schans

"It was very nice. Thank you for opening the gates. See y'all in 2022."

Petra Vess

"The military personnel were very friendly and patient with the kids. A special thanks to the crew from Saturday from the AH64 Apache. Despite the rain, it was a great day. Thank you, guys."

Nadine Streb

"Great day today; thank you for your efforts. See you in five years."

Kerstin Posada

"Going there early was the most important; excellent variation of aircrafts, sufficient possibilities to eat and drink and very friendly staff. Thank you, everyone for your great work. We really enjoyed ourselves at Spotters Day and today."

Frank Rinas

"Three and a half hours of waiting due to traffic and security: long, but already forgotten, and the rain and more rain; but what counts was the huge number of great planes. The Hungarian team made my day with their absolutely delicious bread, Hungarian sausage and onion snack. Great job, everyone. Take care and see you in five years."

Carsten Kotlenga

"This was a great event."

Jochen Kraus

"We had a great time being there to celebrate the 35th Anniversary with all of you. Our favorite part of this event was all the great people of which the Component consists of. Well done; fantastic display of aircraft and a lot to do for our kids. See you soon, I hope."

Roland Becker

"Many thanks to all the soldiers and employees of NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen who made this event possible. We are already looking forward to the 40th Birthday."

Tom Jo

Großer Zapfenstreich (Grand Tattoo)



Photo by Melanie Becker



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Day trips From Enkhuizen to Amsterdam with a lunch stop over in Marken and the crossing of several locks is a trip much asked for.

With the proven seaworthiness of Kuan Yin Lady Victoria it is also possible to make the crossing to England. Tours like these are negotiable but always depend on the weather conditions.

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NATO civilians celebrate 35 years of service

Story by Maureen Geraets-Head
Photo by André Joosten

On 1 and 2 July, the NATO AEW&C Force E-3A Component at the NATO Air Base (NAB) Geilenkirchen celebrated its 35th Anniversary and hosted Open Days to the public.

Making sure the base operates every day of the year and supporting force capability for NATO operations worldwide, are dedicated multi-national staff who support NATO military personnel. Numbering around 90 of this team have been part of NAB since the beginning in the early 1980's. The civilian members of the supporting staff come from many different countries and provide a significant contribution to base operations. Skills provided range from aircraft mechanics, IT, Administration, Logistics to First Responders.

"I remember the dirt road in front of the barracks close to the flight line which did not have a fence since there were no E-3A aircraft yet," said Mrs. Els Powell.

"Today, this base is the home to a key NATO force capability with excellent facilities and infrastructure – A NATO's flagship, with modern buildings and asphalted streets. After 35 years, I am proud to be part of this NATO team!" she added.

To commemorate the base's and theirs 35th Anniversary, they gathered for a group photo in front of the painted 35th anniversary aircraft, joined by the E-3A Component Commander, German Air Force Brigadier General Karsten Stoye.

"I am very proud of each and every

one of my civilian members at Geilenkirchen. They are vital in supporting my operational output as the Commander," said General Stoye. "The valuable functions where they bring expertise and commitment is incredible and they too should feel very proud as we celebrate our 35th Anniversary. NATO Operational output

would not be the same without their dedication," he added.

The NATO AEW&C Force E-3A Component will now continue to consolidate and train for further operations, supporting the Global Coalition fight against terrorism.



NATO, US AWACS work together in BALTOPS 2017

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Alexandra M. Longfellow

BALTOPS 2017 is the 45th edition of the annual multinational, maritime-heavy exercise offering high-end training. The exercise involves 6,000 military personnel, 50 ships and submarines from Allies Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States as well as NATO partners, Finland and Sweden and more than 50 aircraft.

Originally the largest naval exercise in Northern Europe, BALTOPS this year is designed to enhance coordination and cooperation with air forces for the first time.

Nearly 100 men and women of the 513th Air Control Group (AFRC)

from Tinker Air Force Base, OK, USA, representing the only Reserve US AWACS organization flew into NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, Germany June 2 to participate in BALTOPS with the E-3A Component.

"What's unique about this team is that we are 99% reservists," said Lt. Col. James J. Matthey, 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron, Director of Operations. "Most of our reservists have taken time away from their civilian employers to sharpen their combat skills. Most of our warfighters have between 10-20 years working with the AWACS. That is a heck of a lot of combat-ready resources we bring to bear in support of the Combined Forces Air Component Commander and Joint Force Commander."

The 513th ACG successfully provided Command, Control, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance

(C2ISR) for three major exercises over the past two years. Last year, they looked to United States Air Force in Europe (USAFE) and NATO for the opportunity to add more "arrows in their quiver" and sought out BALTOPS as their exercise of choice for 2017.

"We selected GK because it is an E-3A base," Matthey said. "Our maintenance personnel have integrated seamlessly with NATO maintenance keeping us fully mission capable throughout the duration of the exercise. The deployment for us provides invaluable, international training for our pilots, air battle managers, surveillance technicians, mission system technicians and datalink operators."

"The fact we are here, in Europe, working with NATO sends a message," Matthey said. "We are committed to the collective security of all nations and we are extremely proud and

motivated to participate side-by-side with our partners in NATO—the first peacetime military alliance the United States entered into post World War II. The world's geopolitical landscape has changed dramatically in the years the 513th ACG has been in existence. We must continue to understand, anticipate and get out in front of regional and global threats. A strong working relationship between all NATO allies at the tactical and operational levels is a precursor to a strong and enduring defense."

The joint multinational live training exercise BALTOPS, which concluded June 16, was designed to enhance flexibility and interoperability through a series of combined tactical manoeuvres and scenarios involving NATO's Allies' and Partner assets.



NATO E-3A Component c



celebrates 35 years





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US Civil Engineers remodels ANG dormitory

Story by Staff Sgt. Alexandra M. Longfellow

Throughout the year, Air National Guard units come and go to NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, Germany for their rotations. Members can stay up to three weeks on base in their dormitory. The dorms have not been upgraded since 2008.

Lt. Col. Joseph Bosch, ANG Liaison Officer, wanted these dorms to be upgraded for personnel to have an enjoyable, clean place to stay for the different rotations coming in throughout the year.

"I want Airmen to "want" to come to Geilenkirchen, not "made" to," Bosch said.

Bosch got right to work to figure out the most cost saving to get the job done. This is where the 171st Air Refueling Wing, 171st Civil Engineering Squadron (CE) in Pennsylvania, US, came into play. Eleven members from the unit worked for 19 days to start the process of improve the rooms.

The 171st CE unit was the first Civil Engineering Squadron to work on Geilenkirchen.

"There was some hesitation letting us complete work on the building, but Lt. Col. Bosch was able to set up a small project to showcase what we are capable of accomplishing in a short amount of time," said Senior Master Sgt. Mark Nicolola, 171st CES, Heavy Repair Superintendent.



The members of the CE unit went straight to work. They came in and completely gutted the rooms—ripping up carpet and the underlayment. Walls and ceilings were repainted, to include the yellow ceramic tile in the wash area of the rooms. After that was completed, they applied floor levellers to the rooms in preparation of installing vinyl floor tile and base boards. After the flooring was installed, rooms were put back together and ready for use when the CE unit departed.

"This is a great training opportunity for our Airmen to get hands-on-

training and stay proficient that normally cannot be accomplished in a weekend, once a month," Nicolola said. "Hopefully this will open doors for CE units to come back on more complex projects in the future."

This is a two-phase project, consisting of 22 rooms to be remodelled, three dayrooms to be painted and three hallways to complete. The 186th Air Refueling Wing from Mississippi, US will be coming in the beginning of July to complete the rest of the work.



Offering children a fun, safe and educational experience

Story by Staff Sgt. Alexandra M. Longfellow

Many of you who read the Skywatch Newspaper notice on page 13 the many activities available to you and your families. Several of these are hosted by the International Youth Activities Program.

Ms. Ingrid Neuhalfen-Trepper has been working as the IYA Director for more than 26 years.

The IYA offers programs for children and families in the fields of leisure, care and instructional classes.

In general, the program offers children and their families the opportunity to enjoy their leisure hours, side-by-side with other nationalities.

"This experience gives them a better understanding of different lifestyles, contributes to an atmosphere of tolerance and lessens the gap between cultures," Neuhalfen-Trepper said.

Each program has its benefits. The IYA Summer Break Program is not only great for parents who have to work, but the children can come when they get bored at home.

"Parents should feel sure that there is a program where their kids are secure while also having fun," said Neuhalfen-Trepper.

They IYA offers our youth a spacious well-equipped facility with games for different age groups, a large multi-purpose room, rooms for crafts and movies and a dining area. In addition, there is a large playground with a picnic pavilion, a basketball court and table tennis.

"The possibilities for playing are varied," Neuhalfen-Trepper said.

"There is table soccer, LEGOs, board games, and outdoor toys and equipment."

Regarding the weather, the IYA is very flexible—outdoor activities can be shifted inside. When it is nice

and warm outside, the children will visit the base swimming pool in the afternoons.

"Every Wednesday, the IYA offers a field trip to an attractive destination such as an amusement park or zoo," Neuhalfen-Trepper said.

The IYA offers several classes and events not only for children but for youths and adults. Members of the base can sign up for instructional classes such as swimming for beginners and advanced, mixed martial arts, music lessons, fitness classes such as Yoga, meditation and massage therapy.

Language classes are offered in cooperation with Anton-Heinen-Volkshochschule Heinsburg. Offered are various levels of German and English classes for adults. There are even German language training classes for children.

"This is very helpful for children who need to attend the German school

system and arrive here from their home countries without speaking a word of German," Neuhalfen-Trepper said.

The IYA allows renting the IYA Centre for family celebrations, parties or special events.

For more information on the IYA program, keep an eye out in the Component Bulletin and the back of the Skywatch for future events.

The IYA is also looking for a Dance Instructor so they may begin resuming their Dance classes. If interested please contact Ms. Ingrid Neuhalfen-Trepper at ext. 4954.



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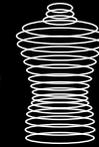
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Illustration shows additional specifications.

Mail In, Mail Out

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Alexandra M. Longfellow

Although the U.S. Geilenkirchen Post Office recently changed their policies servicing only U.S. Air Force members and their families, there are two NATO foreign national (hired by Spangdahlem Air Force Base, Germany) who are a large part of the behind the scenes to accomplish such a load.

The post office has come a long way since it opened and continually tackles challenges such as the influx of mail due to Schinnen Base Exchange store becoming a Troop Store where they have limited items and hours. But this wouldn't happen if not for the help of Mr. Noah De Caüter and Mr. Michael Arhin.

The two have been working hard at the post office for nearly six months. This may not seem like a long time, but it was a long time coming.

"This is a good opportunity for me to receive new experiences," De Caüter said. "So far I have learned so much not only through the job but also

about the U.S. military and their culture."

Arhin said he has great respect for the post office and he chose to apply for the job here when a friend of his told him Post Office companies respect their employees and they create a great environment for rewarding innovations.

"I thought my proactive style would fit in here and so far it has," Arhin said.

The post office does standard and priority mail, insured packages and certified mail.

This small station receives about 28,000 pounds of mail per day. Outgoing amounts can vary depending on several factors, such as deployments, TDYS and local shipping requirements.

Arhin works with De Caüter and the other post office workers each and every day processing the truck, unloading incoming mail, opening the bags full of packages and processing first and second class mail. They load the outgoing mail back on the truck as well.



Both NATO Foreign National employees also dispatch mail through the postal "nesting" system. Nesting is an automated system that tracks the mail. They will also check mail boxes for miss-pitched and old mail. Each member of the post office also works the mail pick up window and assists any customers when needed.

"I enjoy serving the customers at the pick-up window because after receiving their packages I see a big smile on their faces," De Caüter said.

"I like socializing and I love people." Arhin said.

The post office workers process mail within four hours with a 24-hour Department of Defense standard. There are exceptions to daily delivery, especially if the truck comes in later than normal time.

As long as it makes it on the base the mail will be delivered. To make sure, the 5-person postal team works five days a week to keep up with demands. Hours will vary during holiday seasons.

The heat comes up, but they still process the mail. They stay until the

job gets done and they do it all over again the next day. But hard work and all, the US GK Post Office meets the daily challenge head-on and does not mind what others may consider "less than ideal" working conditions.

"I appreciate each and every person who works here," said Master Sgt. Willard Hughes, Postmaster. "They get the job done and get it done well. I am happy for De Caüter and Arhin. They work hard and never complain."



SAR Meet 2017

By Senior Master Sgt. Ingo Senft

The E-3A Component was invited to participate in the "SAR MEET 2017" on May 19-20 at Naval Air Wing 5 in Nordholz. The SAR MEET is an event taking place every second year where Search and Rescue units from all over Europe and NATO AWACS meet at Nordholz to conduct a combined training and to standardize procedures.

A small Component delegation was representing the Component



with the display truck to provide information about the aircraft and the Components tasking to the public and the other air crews. The AWACS

information point was located right in the display area where spectators where asking uncountable questions.

Numerous kids came to the AWACS tent to get a bag with E-3A cut outs, posters and other information material. Also the well-known AWACS merchandizing sale was a small highlight again.

On Saturday an integrated family day took place with sport events such as "Bubble Soccer" and the famous "Highland Games", a combination of funny disciplines where aircrews play against each other. Our AWACS team known as the "Flying Unicorns" even won a price in the challenge.

Some of the units visiting for the meeting were, the Aluette III from Austria, NH-90 Caiman from Belgium, Eurocopter AS365 - Dauphin from Lithuania, W-3RM from Poland, HH-60M Blackhawk from the US and various helicopter from the German Navy, Army and Air Force.

We've spend a great weekend with our friends from the Navy and exchanged a lot of useful information. Some of the units taking part in the SAR MEET will even visit us for our anniversary festival in June / July. We are looking forward to be part of the next SAR meet in 2019.

MWA INFORMATION

UPCOMING EVENTS & IYA ACTIVITIES

(Open to all US and NATO identification card holders)

July / August

Visit the Services Branch WSS Web Page for the latest program information and upcoming events

POC: IYA Events: Mrs Neuhalfen, ext. 4954; Sports Events: Mr Henrichs, ext. 4902; Food Services: Mr Peeters, ext. 4990



Registration starts for Summer Soccer Camp (14 – 18 Aug)

On Monday, 12 June the registration for the Summer Soccer Camp started. For children 6 – 15 years old. Cost: €135 per child. Registration will end on Thursday, 06 July or as soon as the maximum capacity has been reached (i.e. 50 participants). The Summer Soccer Camp starts on Monday 14 August, from 0845 till 1600 hrs and will last till Friday 18 August. T-shirt, Surprise gift, Lunch and lessons are included.

12 July: IYA trip to Bokrijk

open air museum and huge playground, for children aged 5 and older, 0845 – 1730, € 22 without MWA Card, €15 with MWA Card.

12 July: BBQ Lunch at the Rotodome

19 July: IYA TRIP TO WALIBI

big amusement park, for children aged 5 and older, 0800 – 1730, €39 without MWA Card, €26 with MWA Card.

26 July: IYA trip to Bobbejaanland

big amusement park, for children aged 5 and older, 0815 – 1730, € 36 without MWA Card, €24 with MWA Card.

28 July: Bavarian Breakfast at the Rotodome

2 Aug: IYA trip to Zoom

big modern zoo with playgrounds and attractions, for children aged 5 and older, 0815 – 1730, €25 without MWA Card, €17 with MWA Card.

9 Aug: IYA trip to Movie Park Germany

big amusement park, for children aged 5 and older, 0815 – 1730, €34 without MWA Card, €23 with MWA Card.

16 Aug: IYA trip to Gaia Zoo

big modern zoo with indoor and outdoor playgrounds, for children aged 5 and older, 0915 – 1730, €22 without MWA Card, €15 with MWA Card.

Vacancy Announcement

Financial Controller, Advertisement Number 170234, Grade A-5, assigned to the Staff Advisory Group, HQ NAEW&C Force GK. This post is due to be filled as soon as possible.

CLOSING DATE: 25 July 2017

For further details, please visit the HQ NAEW&C FORCE GK (WSS) Portal under HEADQUARTERS NAEW&C FORCE/Personnel and Manpower Division/Civilian Personnel Branch/CPB Recruitment/Recruitment, the official HQ NAEW&C FORCE GK Internet Home Page (www.awacs.nato.int), or review the advertisement posted in Building 8.

NOTE: Only applications of qualified personnel will be considered

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