



**Take the
Cold War
Tonka tour**

● See page 19



Win!

**Cooper
Tackles
Football**

● See R'n'R page 4

Win!



**ROYAL
AIR FORCE**

Friday, November 17, 2023
No. 1572 £1.20

RAF News



Hotshot Abby's Reds-letter day



See
pp5 &
16-17

Gridiron

**First blood
to the RAF**



● See page 28

**Kite sailing
We're flying**



● See page 31

**Motorsport
Sidecar F2
Brit champs**



● See page 32

Lest we forget



HM KING Charles III led the wreath-laying at London's Cenotaph as more than 800 serving members of the British military and an estimated 10,000 veterans gathered in Whitehall to mark Remembrance Sunday.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Britain's Service chiefs followed tributes by Prince William and other members of the Royal household.

The Queen, with the Princess of Wales by her side, watched the ceremony from the central balcony of the Foreign Office. Her wreath was laid on her behalf by her equerry.

A single shot fired from a canon at nearby Horse Guards Parade signalled the start of a two-minute silence observed across the country and at military units overseas.

Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, said: "At the Cenotaph, around the country and on operations overseas, members of the Armed Forces will pause to remember all those who have died in service of their country.

"The legacy of the fallen lives on in the dedication and duty of today's Armed Forces."

Thousands of veterans marched past the Cenotaph, joined by those who took part in the UK's nuclear test programme for the first time.

BiteSize

“School careers officer laughed when I told him I wanted to be a fighter pilot in the RAF,”

Breakfast TV favourite Lorraine Kelly
See page 13



“This move highlights the resurgent interest in electronic warfare,”

Wg Cdr Matt Lawrence takes command of Spadeadam for a record third time
See p15



“After 16 years, my wish has finally come true,”

Home town queen Suzanne Shaw stars in panto
See R'n'R page 5



Atlas Gulf delivery

Pete Singlehurst
The Gulf

RAF ATLAS A400M tactical transport aircraft continue to sustain Allied military activities in the Middle East providing logistical links between the UK and Forces units across the Middle East.

Atlas crews are also supporting the Qatari-led Ferocious Falcon V exercise, allowing the host nation to operate with key partner nations.

Brize Norton's 1 Air Mobility Wing is working with a British Army contingent from 1st Battalion the Scots Guards, HMS Lancaster and USAF personnel from the 8th Expeditionary Air Mobility Squadron based at Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

Sqn Ldr Oz Clarke, the lead logistics planning officer with 83 Expeditionary Air Group in the Middle East, said: “These sorties are both routine and vital.

“It is one of the core functions of the Air Mobility Force to deliver the supplies needed to sustain UK military activities here and it is a task that the A400M has been fulfilling in the Middle East now for some years.”



This Week In History



1973
Lanc joins BMMF

THE BATTLE of Britain Flight is renamed the BMMF as Lancaster B1PA474 flies into RAF Coltishall to join the fleet of vintage aircraft. The unit relocates to Coningsby in 1976.

1980
Chinook lands

THE FIRST of the initial batch of 33 Boeing-built Chinook heavy-lift helicopters enter service at RAF Odiham.



1991
Women join jet set

THE RAF lifts its restrictions on the employment of female fast jet pilots. Flt Lt Jo Salter receives her wings in April 1992.

Extracts from
The Royal Air Force Day By Day by Air Cdre Graham Pitchfork (The History Press)



ROYAL AIR FORCE

RAF News

RAF News

Room 68
Lancaster Building
HQ Air Command
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP14 4UE

Editor: Simon Williams
Email: editor@rafnews.co.uk

Features Editor: Tracey Allen
Email: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk

News Editor: Simon Mander

Sport: sports@rafnews.co.uk

All advertising:
Edwin Rodrigues
Tel: 07482 571535
Email: edwin.rodrigues@rafnews.co.uk

Subscriptions and distribution:
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Kelvin Lane, Crawley
RH10 9PE
Tel: 01293 312191
Email: rafnewssubs@subscriptionhelpline.co.uk

Cleared for Bake Off

Hit TV show wants RAF personnel to show off Top Buns

Tracey Allen

HIT TV show *The Great British Bake Off* has set its sights on the RAF – to recruit talented Service

bakers willing to test their skills on the top Channel 4 reality show.

It's looking for RAF personnel who want to take part in the ultimate baking battle, showcase their top buns on national television and get feedback from judges Prue Leith and Paul Hollywood – and even earn the rare reward of a coveted Hollywood handshake.

The show, from the famous white tent, is now presented by comedian Noel Fielding and *This Morning's* Alison Hammond.

A *Bake Off* spokesperson said: "Contestants need to have a broader repertoire than just baking cakes as the show also features bread, biscuit and pastry week."

"Include as much information as possible about you and your baking in your application. We want to get a sense of who you are and what type of baker you are, as well as what you have made before. And include as many photos as you can, they are a great way to show off the bakes you have made before."

Since it launched on BBC Two, the programme, where passionate amateur baking fans compete to be crowned the UK's best amateur baker, has been a runaway success and some of its past winners, including Nadiya Hussain, John Whaite, Candice Brown and Giuseppe Dell'Anno, have become household names.

Nadiya – the show's stand-out star – rose to fame after winning the sixth series of *Bake Off* in 2015 when it was still broadcast by BBC Two.



YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS PRUE: *Great British Bake Off* judges Prue Leith and Paul Hollywood, and presenter Alison Hammond, far left

“We want to get a sense of who you are and what type of baker you are”

Times Saturday Magazine. And you don't have to be a series winner to make the big time – Liam Charles, who was a contestant on Series 8, went on to be a successful TV presenter as well as having penned two cookbooks and a column for *The Guardian*.

Liam has co-presented one of the GBBO's four spin-off shows – *Bake Off: The Professionals*, with comedian Tom Allen, and joined Prue Leith as a judge on *Junior Bake Off*, presented by Harry Hill.

The GBBO's two other spin-offs have proved just as popular as the original show.

A host of famous names such as *Friends* actor David Schwimmer, Little Mix star Jesy Nelson,

Olympian Tom Daley and journalist Krishan Guru-Murthy have shown off their culinary ability, or, in some cases, lack of it, on *Celebrity Bake Off*, to raise money for the charity Stand Up To Cancer.

And on *Bake Off: An Extra Slice*, presenter Jo Brand and celebrity panellists discuss the after-events of the latest GBBO episode.

● If you think you've got what it takes to join the next batch of bakers for series 15 of *Bake Off*, applications are open now at: applyforbakeoff.co.uk or you can email: applyforbakeoff@loveproductions.co.uk or call: 0117 456 8530 for an application form. The closing date for applications is 1pm on January 2, 2024.

Half of veterans experience loneliness

MORE THAN half of UK veterans say they suffer from feelings of loneliness and most say they would like to spend more time with their former Forces comrades, according to a survey.

Research by railcard.co.uk, which operates the Veterans railcard scheme, reveals that one in four of Britain's former military personnel report feelings of isolation.

Among the under-25s who quit the Services, there is a shortage of social opportunities to stay in touch with their military pals, according to the survey of more than 5,000 veterans.

A spokesman said: "The extraordinary experiences we undergo during our time in the Armed Forces profoundly shapes our characters and influences various facets of our lives."

"Maintaining connections with fellow veterans has proven to be fundamental in navigating life beyond the military."



'LONELY': Veterans

WWII Gunner reaches 101st

ONE OF the original members of the RAF Regiment, formed during WWII, has celebrated his 101st birthday.

Gunner Cpl Allan Perry (pictured) joined friends at the Dorset, Bristol and Bath branch of the RAF Regiment Association to mark the event.





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rafbf.relate.org.uk

The RAF Benevolent Fund is a registered charity in England and Wales (1081009) and Scotland (SC038109).



SCAN
ME WITH
YOUR
CAMERA



Abby sees Red to take photo crown

Tracey Allen

AIR FORCE hotshot AS1 Abby Drewitt scooped the prestigious Photographer of the Year accolade for her stunning portfolio of work with the Red Arrows during their recent Gulf tour.

For the 27-year-old, the chance to fly with the world's most famous aerobatic team is one of the highlights of her career.

Among the photos that caught the judges' eye were her breathtaking image of the Reds soaring over the pyramids at Giza and an artistic shot of the distinctive Hawk T1 aircraft dwarfed beside a Kuwaiti airliner flying over the ocean.

She said: "The tour was incredible. I was lucky enough to fly in the backseat capturing all the stunning air-to-air imagery and transit out to the Middle East with the Red Arrows.

"I was working with a great team of engineers in my Circus year, as well as a great pilot, so it made my time flying in the back seat that much more enjoyable.

"Communication with your pilot is key. You need to explain where you need to be to get the image you want, and most of the time you may only have a couple of seconds to get

the shot. There are no retakes so the pressure is on.

"For the Kuwaiti airline shot we were photo chasing the formation across the sea.

"They left the smoke on for quite a while so we had a lot of time to try different angles, the sun was in my favour that day and it cast the most beautiful shadow on the sea below.

"It was an incredible day that I'm so grateful to have experienced."

Abby took media studies at school and opted for a career in the RAF because of the opportunity to pursue photography.

She added: "It's been the best decision I've made so far and I'm so grateful for all the amazing experiences and opportunities I've been a part of."

She says capturing the moment is what inspires her and the chance to do just that during The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was her proudest moment.

She added: "There have been quite a few memorable moments but if I had to choose just one it has got to be flying over London for The Queen's Jubilee in 2022.

"It was a very proud moment and a day that will stay with me for a lifetime."

● See pp16-17 for RAF Photography Competition 2023 winners.



FOCUSED: AS1 Abby Drewitt captures the Red Arrows flying alongside a Kuwaiti airliner over the sea during the team's recent tour of the Middle East; left, in the cockpit

Bomber bird of Broughty Ferry honoured in bronze

Tracey Allen

A NEW sculpture honouring a pigeon that became a World War II heroine has been unveiled in Dundee.

Winkie the pigeon was among the first recipients of the Dickin Medal for her role in the rescue of four aircrew following a crash into the North Sea in 1942.

The medal, for animals that display conspicuous gallantry or devotion to duty while serving the Armed Forces, was awarded to Winkie by the PDSA charity and is still given to animals in combat today.

The carrier pigeon flew 120 miles home to Broughty Ferry to raise the alarm about the crewmen of a Beaufort bomber, returning

from a mission over Norway.

The men released her hoping she would fly home, to alert colleagues at their air base.

When Winkie made it back she was found exhausted and covered in oil. Her owner, George Ross, then informed RAF Leuchars.

Relatives of Mr Ross attended a special ceremony recently alongside local Cubs who were inspired by the bird's bravery and had campaigned for a commemoration.

The city council installed the new bronze sculpture, by renowned

Scottish sculptor David Annand. It now sits at the flood gates in Beach Crescent, Broughty Ferry, and is part of the development of flood defences beside the River Tay.

Cllr Steven Rome said: "It is fitting that Dundee's latest piece of public art commemorates a special Broughty Ferry heroine – Winkie the pigeon.

"Her exploits have inspired new generations over the years. The statue will help to ensure that the story of Winkie will never be forgotten."

When Winkie died, Mr Ross donated the pigeon and Dickin Medal to The McManus Museum, Dundee, where they are on public display.



WAR BIRD: Winkle the pigeon with her Dickin medal. PHOTOS: © Dundee Art Galleries & Museums



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Fernwood Village, Phoenix Way, Newark NG24 3UA

Gateford Park, Gatekeeper Way, Worksop S81 7SS

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Stonebridge Fields, Stonebridge Lane, Market Warsop NG20 0DS

The Hawthorns, Beck Lane, Sutton-in-Ashfield NG17 9PS

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Elm Tree Park, Blidworth Lane, Rainworth NG21 0HF



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In Brief



PIONEERING: Attagirl Molly Rose

Girls allowed

A NEW private membership club has launched for female aviators.

The Attagirls Club aims to bring together like-minded women across the aviation world.

The first event is in London with more planned in the Cotswolds, Oxford, Cornwall, Jersey and in other countries, said the club's creator Paul Olavesen-Stabb.

The Attagirls Ball is being planned for autumn 2024 in the Cotswolds, where an award will be presented to a woman who has been a significant influence in the aviation industry during the previous year, he added.

The name 'Attagirls' refers to the nickname of the young female aviators of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) during WWII.

Al pushes on



ACCOUNTS ACE Alan Cook has launched a cancer crusade – doing 100 push-ups a day in November to raise funds for charity.

The RAF High Wycombe-based civvie said: "We all know someone who has suffered with cancer. I'm no spring chicken but this is something I thought I could actually do."

Speed king takes backseat role for Bloodhound bid

RAF vet Andy hands over world record driving duties



WORLD BEATER: Wg Cdr Green is standing down after leading the 15-year Bloodhound mission to smash his own 1997 World Record. Inset left Green with Thrust II

Staff Reporter

THE TEAM behind the Bloodhound land speed record project have launched a hunt for a new driver after longstanding wheelman RAF combat pilot Andy Green stood down.

The 61-year-old veteran was bidding to smash his own record of 763mph, set in 1997 in the jet powered Thrust II.

This week the former Phantom and Tornado F3 pilot announced he would be switching to a consultancy role after more than 15 years behind the wheel.

The move marks the end of Wg

Cdr Green's personal mission to break his own speed record which has stood for more than 25 years, making it one of the longest-standing records in history.

Launched in 2008 by British engineering maverick Richard Noble, who designed Green's world-beating Thrust supersonic car, the Bloodhound was designed to break 1,000mph, using a Typhoon jet engine and hybrid rocket.

The project stalled amid funding problems after high-speed testing in South Africa in 2019, where Wg Cdr Green hit more than 600mph across the Hakskeen Pan, a dry lake bed in

the Kalahari desert, pictured above.

Now under new management, the team is hoping to exceed 800mph using green fuels to become the first Net Zero world record holders.

Bloodhound chief executive Stuart Edmondson said: "As we enter a new chapter of the Bloodhound LSR Project, I am excited about the opportunity and challenges that lie ahead and confident that this will enable us to return to South Africa and set a new record."

"With a new driver, along with my aim of not using fossil fuels to set a new FIA Outright World

Land Speed Record, the project promises to be exciting, engaging, and relevant at so many levels."

Bloodhound bosses will be taking their search for a new driver to the British Motor Museum, the South East and London this month, rolling out a replica of the vehicle.

Along with a high speed pedigree, candidates for the job will need to deliver significant sponsorship funding.

Mr Edmondson added: "We are asking anyone who thinks they have the appropriate financial backing, experience and skills to get in touch through our website."

Friends reunited after 50 years

Jo Lamb

A 102-YEAR-OLD pilot has been reunited with his wartime aircraft for the first time in more than 50 years, to mark Remembrance.

Former Sqn Ldr Jack Hemmings finally got up close to the Lockheed Hudson again at the RAF Museum in London.

He said seeing the Hudson – the first RAF aircraft to successfully shoot down an enemy Dornier Do18 in the North Sea in October, 1939 at the start of World War II – was 'just like old times'.

The Pacific Theatre pilot added: "Flying the Hudson was very

comfortable indeed – a nicely balanced aircraft. If you're going to spend eight hours looking at deadly water, you want to be comfortable."

Jack flew the Lockheed Hudson with 353 Sqn during WWII and received the Air Force Cross while flying. He enjoyed over-the-ropes access to his wartime aircraft at a special event at the museum for Remembrance week.

He has continued flying into his centenary, performing aerobatics on his 100th birthday – the oldest British pilot to perform the manoeuvre.

He was an early pioneer of Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF), the world's

largest humanitarian air service.

In 2022, Jack returned to the controls of a wooden Miles Gemini aircraft – the same model he flew in 1948 to launch MAF, alongside D-Day landings RAF Engineer Stuart King.

Jack's special fundraising flight raised more than £40,000 in Stuart's memory for MAF – the charity he describes as 'the Good Samaritan of the air'.

He added: "Getting into an aeroplane gives a sense of pleasant expectation – I've never got into one and regretted it. I love flying because it gives a feeling of detachment from all the problems in the world – and there are a lot of problems."



OLD FRIENDS: 102-year-old veteran Jack Hemmings with his Hudson at the RAF Museum

Who's your hero?

Did your great grandfather, grandmother, great uncle or other relative support 'the Few' during the Battle of Britain? Then this is your chance to commemorate their bravery, sacrifice or service as the RAF took on and defeated the Luftwaffe.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Trust's Blade of Honour project is laying commemorative tiles at the Memorial in honour of those who supported 'the Few' in the Battle (10 July - 31 October 1940) or one month either side of it.

Do you know someone who served?

Perhaps as -

- ☐ Air Raid Warden?
- ☐ Ground crew?
- ☐ Coastguard?
- ☐ Fireman?
- ☐ GPO?
- ☐ Royal Observer Corps?
- Or in some other way?



The grey granite tiles will be laid along the edge of one of the white propeller blades around the National Memorial to the Few and are expected to cost £495 each (inc VAT). This includes a deposit of £5 (inc VAT) which is required to register an interest via the website below and will be refunded if the nomination is ineligible.

For details see <https://www.battleofbritainmemorial.org/blade>

Surplus funds will be used to support the charity and work will only begin when the Trust has enough names to complete one whole blade.

Please help us remember 'the many' by nominating your own family hero.



The Trust is a charity with no public funding. Please give generously to help us bring the Battle of Britain to life across the generations.

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In Brief



ARROWS ART: Peter Bink, right, presents Wg Cdr Collins with one of his paintings to mark team's 60th anniversary

Paint it Red

VETERAN RESERVIST and artist Peter Bink paid personal tribute to the Red Arrows by producing a series of 21 portraits of former team members.

The original artwork, signed by the Reds, will be auctioned next year to raise funds for the RAFBF, to mark the team's 60th anniversary.

Aviation fan Peter, who served for 20 years before becoming an art teacher at his local grammar school, presented a portrait of 60s Arrows member Sqn Ldr Ray Hannah to current team boss Wg Cdr Adam Collins.



38 Special

'Danger zone' drill

tests Brize EAW



AID MISSION: ATLAS joined the exercise to hone RAF rescue skills with Army's 16 Air Assault Brigade

Alex Gill

Brize Norton

A SPECIALIST Air Force unit set up to fly into disaster zones is honing its life-saving skills alongside the British Army's elite 16 Air Assault Brigade.

Crews with 38 Expeditionary Air Wing at Brize Norton launched simulated operations at remote airfields, flying in supplies on board an Atlas transporter and working alongside land forces during Exercise Venture Spirit.

The air mobility unit is held at a high state of readiness to deploy anywhere in the world

to deliver humanitarian aid and evacuate victims of natural disasters and conflict.

The latest drills are part of the RAF's Agile Combat Employment concept of operating aircraft from remote locations to avoid detection from enemy forces.

XXIV Sqn's Wg Cdr Gav Anderson said: "We're confident that should we be tasked to deploy, we are ready, capable and up for the challenge."

"We are delighted that 16 Air Assault Brigade



have been able to support us by representing the deployed Land Component.

"The end of our Air mission, such as the insertion of troops and equipment by airdrop or airland, is often only the start of the land mission.

"By exercising together, our crews and support personnel are exposed to the challenges and rewards of air land integration. Venture Spirit has been a more complete ACE exercise through our collective participation."

Green machine



RAF MOTORSPORT aces blasted to victory in the gruelling Inter-Services showdown at Silverstone – powered by green fuel.

Drivers Sqn Ldr Si Frowen, Chf Tech David Russell, AS1(T) Alexander Smith, AS1(T) James Flint and AS1(T) Alex Waldeck took the chequered flag two laps ahead of their nearest Forces rivals, the Army team.

It's the first time a car powered by sustainable fuel has completed the event. ● See Sport p28 for full report.

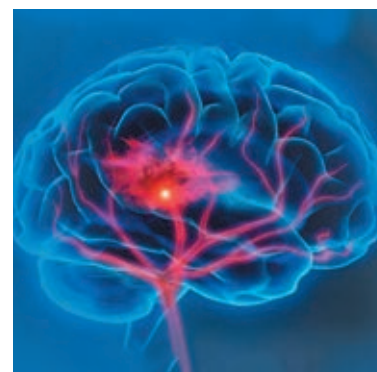
Female veterans face increased 'brain-health' risk, medics say

Tracey Allen

FEMALE VETERANS suffer worse 'brain health' than men of the same age, according to researchers who have launched a probe into the neurological effects of military life.

A team led by Northumbria University and Imperial College London will look at the difference between Forces men and women in a bid to improve treatment for the UK's female veterans who have gone on to develop neurological problems.

Dr Tamlyn Watermeyer, Assistant Professor of Neuropsychology at the university, said: "Recent studies have highlighted poorer brain health in



female veterans compared to male veterans and female civilians.

"This indicates the need for increased and early screening of the female veteran population;

however, currently health services for veterans have mostly been developed for males."

The survey is being funded by the MOD's Health Innovation Fund and will examine the psychological, social and biological factors that lead to poorer brain health in female veterans, a spokesman said.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Johnny Mercer added: "We know that many veterans' treatments are often male-focused, so this important work will explore brain health in female veterans."

"We will also be publishing the government's first Women Veterans' Strategy in 2024, to ensure that the services we provide are best suited to the needs of female veterans."

News



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Gun slingers



Staff Reporter

AIR FORCE Gunners led a charity charge as part of a Tri-Service team who hauled a 1.3 tonne field gun over the rugged Cyprus terrain.

Members of 15 Sqn based at Akrotiri joined Army and Navy volunteers to take on the six-mile challenge and raise funds for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and prepare the British Forces Cyprus team for the forthcoming Mediterranean Field Gun Competition.

ASI Jake Green, who helped organise the event, said: "Pulling a field gun over miles of sandy and rocky inclines in the relentless Cyprus sun is a tough task.

"Despite high operational requirements from the majority of personnel at Akrotiri



we had a fantastic turnout to join the BFC team and support a very worthy cause."

Nuke gong

AIR FORCE veteran John Noble was presented with the UK's new Nuclear Test medal by Chief of the Air Staff, ACM Sir Richard Knighton, during a recent trip to RAF Coningsby.

The award was issued earlier this year to recognise the role of the pioneering personnel who took part in the UK's H-bomb test programme in the South Pacific, 70 years ago.

The chief also met RAF veterans who took part in the Normandy landings during World War II in 1944.



PRESENTATION: Nuclear test veteran John Noble received the recently-issued medal from CAS, ACM Sir Richard Knighton



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TV Queen Lorraine's Royal Air Force dream

DAYTIME TV'S Lorraine Kelly has revealed she had her sights set on joining the RAF before forging a career as one of the UK's top broadcasters.

The long-standing Forces supporter says her dream of being a high-flying fast jet pilot was shot down by her school's careers officer.

Speaking on the Rosebud podcast she said: "My real ambition was to be a fighter pilot for the RAF – that's what I really wanted to do.

"But obviously I was a girl and back then

when I told the careers officer, he chortled."

Instead she applied for a job as a reporter on the local *East Kilbride News* before landing a role in broadcasting and becoming one of the nation's best-loved presenters.

The 63-year-old kept up her interest in the UK military and became the face of Armed Forces Day when it was launched and a regular at RAF air shows.



HIGH FLYER:RAF fan Lorraine Kelly helped launch Armed Forces Day and supports military charities

Ciarán SOS

RAF scramble as yacht battered by 30ft waves in record storm

Staff Reporter

RAF CREWS launched a long-distance rescue mission to save a stricken yachtsman struggling to stay afloat 700 miles from the UK southern coast as Storm Ciarán swept across the Atlantic.

An Atlas from Brize Norton and a Poseidon from Lossiemouth joined merchant vessels and a French Navy Falcon over the Bay of Biscay when the solo sailor issued an SOS after giant waves smashed the main mast, leaving him stranded.

At least seven people died and dozens were injured as Storm Ciarán battered north west Europe with torrential rain and 120mph winds, bringing transport services to a standstill.

The international rescue mission was coordinated by British and French coastguards who called in air support to locate the 40ft Norwegian-registered vessel.

The French Navy scrambled a Falcon FA50 to survey the area before being joined by a RAF Atlas carrying survival equipment including life rafts which can be jettisoned into the sea.

The search was taken over by the 201 Sqn Poseidon, which was able to pinpoint the stricken sailor and guide merchant vessel Green Azure to the exact location to bring him aboard.

201 Sqn's Wg Cdr Adam Smolak said: "Poseidon aircraft and crews are on constant standby to respond to incidents such as this. The duty crew reacted quickly and professionally to help support the successful rescue of the sailor. The success of the mission is a testament to their professionalism and excellent training."



HIGH SEAS DRAMA: Image taken by surveillance cameras on board RAF Poseidon show merchant ship Green Azure closing in on stricken yacht. Inset left, sailor on the deck of damaged Norwegian vessel



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Qatar call-up for Hannah

Staff Reporter

GP CAPT Hannah Bishop has taken over command of UK air operations in the Middle East with 83 Air Expeditionary Air Group, based in Qatar.

She replaces Gp Capt Ian Diggle as Deputy Air Component Commander and will oversee UK operations by four RAF Expeditionary Air Wings as part of the US-led coalition targeting the Daesh terror group in Iraq and Syria.

Gp Capt Bishop is an experienced helicopter pilot with operational experience in the region.



HANDOVER: Gp Capt Diggle welcomes Gp Capt Bishop to 83 EAG in Qatar

Matt's hat-trick

Heidi Garstang

WG CDR Matt Lawrence has scored a RAF first with a hat-trick of commands at Spadeadam – Europe's only electronic warfare tactics facility.

He took over as Station Commander at the Cumbrian base for the third time following a two-year stint at the Air and Space Warfare Centre at Waddington.

Wg Cdr Lawrence assumes the role following the formation of an aggressor squadron at the station to train alongside Nato forces.

He said: "It is a first for the RAF but this move highlights the resurgent interest in electronic warfare trials and training, brought out in the ongoing war in Ukraine."



In Brief



Vets' care campaign

A NEW project has been launched which will benefit the tens of thousands of Armed Forces veterans and their partners living in care homes across England.

The Veteran Friendly Framework will tackle loneliness and isolation, and deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for over 25,000 veterans, charity chiefs say.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Johnny Mercer said: "The Veteran Friendly Framework will make sure that veterans living in care homes understand and are fully aware of the services that are available to them."

"It's all about making this the best country in the world to be a veteran. I pay tribute to Royal Star & Garter, Royal British Legion, VCHA and everyone who has helped with this."

Record run

A GROUP set up to help vets succeed in the Civvy Street job market has reported record numbers of former Forces fighters using its services.

Advisors at the Forces Employment Charity dealt with more than 22,000 ex-military applicants in the last year – the most since the group was founded in 2011.

WWII's Atlantic warriors return

42 Sqn reformed to train P-8 sub-hunters



REBORN: 42 Sqn OCU takes to the skies onboard Poseidon



THE UNIT which faced down the might of the German Navy in World War II has been officially reformed to prepare the UK's latest generation of sub-hunters for the frontline.

42 Torpedo Bomber Sqn paraded its standard at Lossiemouth ahead of taking on the training of crews operating the nine-strong fleet of Boeing P-8 Poseidon maritime surveillance aircraft.

The squadron has reformed as a combined Operational Conversion Unit to train aircrew and engineers on the P-8 and the new Wedgetail early warning and surveillance aircraft due to enter service next year at the Moray station.

Formed in 1916, 42 Sqn saw service on the Western Front and Italy.

It returned in 1936 as a torpedo-bomber unit conducting anti-shipping operations including attacks on the German warships Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Lützow.

In 1942 the squadron transferred to the Pacific theatre, where it operated Blenheims, Hurricanes and Thunderbolts.

The unit operated Shackletons until 1971, when it re-equipped with Nimrods.

A number of those who served on 42 Sqn during its time as the Nimrod Operational Conversion Unit at RAF St

Mawgan operate the Poseidon today.

Former Nimrod campaigner Sqn Ldr Roxburgh, who commanded the final Nimrod MR2 flight in 2011, took part in the first P-8 training sortie flown by 42 Sqn.

He said: "As the aircraft commander of the final Nimrod MR2 sortie, it was an honour and a privilege to be the aircraft commander of the first Poseidon sortie for a newly-resurrected 42 Sqn. The crew performed a mixed bag of training over the North Sea, including Surface Surveillance, Acoustic training – tracking a simulated submarine – and Search and Rescue procedures."

RAF Equipment



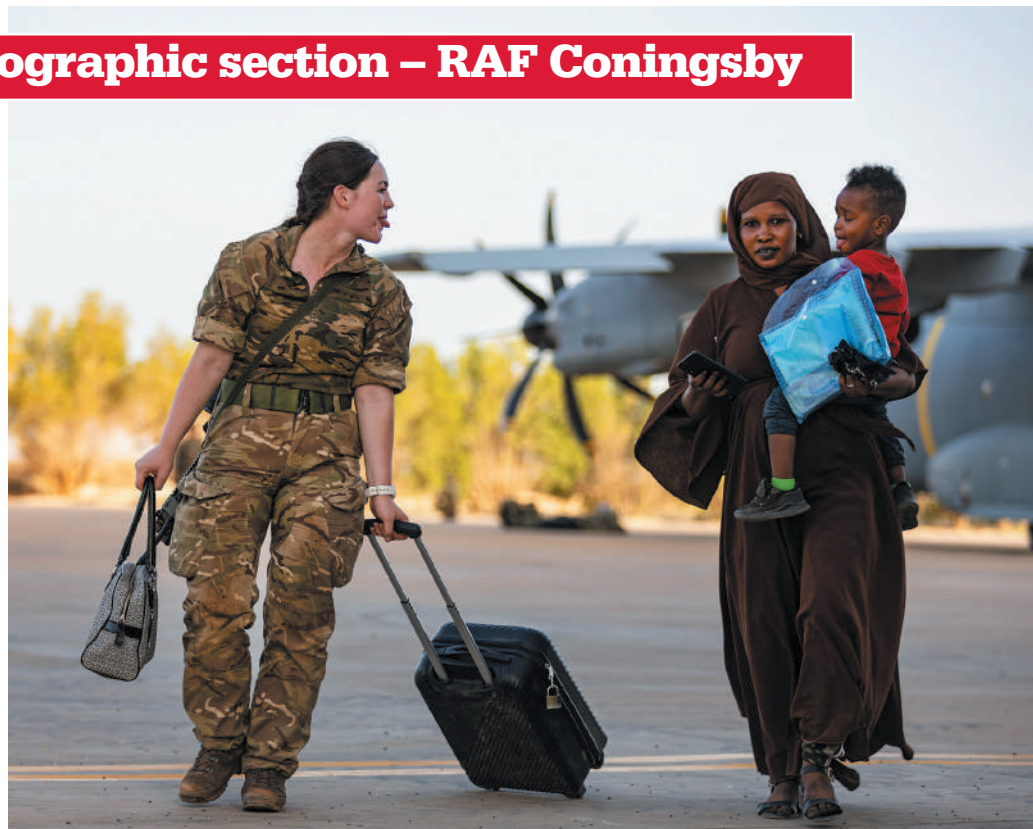
1st LET'S GO: AS1 Amber Mayall

Ops & Exercises



1st GOLDEN ORB: Ian Forshaw

Photographic section – RAF Coningsby



1st HEARTS AND MINDS:
Sgt Paul Oldfield

RAF Photographer of the Year 2023



1st THE PYRAMIDS FLYPAST: AS1 Abby Drewitt

PICTURE PERFECT

RAF Photo Competition

STUNNING IMAGES of frontline operations, global deployments and life on the homefront showcase RAF life in this year's photographic competition.

Hot shot Service snappers fought it out in different categories, capturing the action on international military exercises, overseas missions and routine duties in the UK.

Judges for this year's contest sifted through more than 1,700 images and 50 videos to produce a shortlist of the best.

Pictures from key events including Armed Forces Day, the Royal International Air Tattoo and the King's Coronation are presented alongside action shots from the frontline on combat and humanitarian missions and Nato duties to show the reality of Forces life.

Sgt Lee 'Matty' Matthews, who scooped the title in the Personnel category with his image of the RAF Falcons landing during training in Switzerland, said: "My entry was planned months in advance and after a few test runs and practice



PEOPLE'S CHOICE ENTRY:

shots we went for it on the second jump. "We had tried in the past, but due to landing patterns and the weather we couldn't truly attempt it, but everything worked out over in Switzerland. "We had nil winds, we had our



RE CT

winners



Action Man, by AS1 Emily Muir

various signals for me to move, or if required to CNX the attempt entirely. "After he floated by, I had to double check if I had actually managed to capture it, face in focus, smile beaming... job done."



Personnel

1st **THE SHOT:** Sgt Lee 'Matty' Matthews



Amateur

1st **UNTITLED:** Isaac Pylee

**See next edition
of RAF News
for the People's
Choice winner**



RAF Feature

1st **LIFT OPERATING:** AS1 Natalie Adams



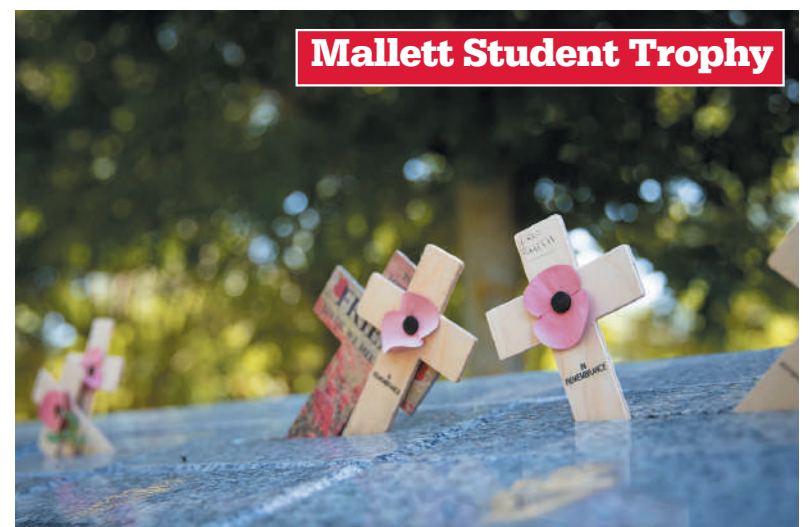
Sport

1st **RUN AND DONE:** Luka Waycott

Technical and Engineering



1st **CHEMICAL OXYGEN GENERATOR:** Richard Beattie



Mallett Student Trophy

1st **REMEMBRANCE MEMORIAL:** AS1 Georgia Callaway



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BAE SYSTEMS

Tornado pilot's view on service countering Soviet threat



NO. 14 SQN: Tornado force officers at the height of the Cold War, in 1986. Paul McDonald is circled



LUQA, MALTA: Paul and wife Jackie at summer ball, 1976



RAF FAMILY: With daughter Hannah at Cranwell, 2002

Tracey Allen

SINCE RETIRING from a long RAF career that included being a fast jet pilot and a flying instructor, Gp Capt Paul McDonald has made a name for himself as an author.

His three-year tour in Malta in the 1970s and subsequent long association with the island inspired him to research and write the fascinating story of the tragic wartime love affair between flying ace Wg Cdr Adrian 'Warby' Warburton DFC and the charismatic dancer Christina Ratcliffe.

She was decorated for gallantry, having served in the underground ops room in Lascaris, in Malta's capital Valletta. Warby disappeared and his body was found in the wreckage of his aircraft in Bavaria in 2002, 12 years after Christina died, a recluse.

Paul also wrote the follow-up to *Malta's Greater Siege & Adrian Warburton - Ladies of Lascaris* (both pen-and-sword.co.uk), with a foreword by *Indiana Jones* star John Rhys-Davies, about Christina and her fellow female civilian plotters who worked in the cramped No 8 Operations Room,



LASCARIS LADY: Kay Xuereb, aged 17

woman with some fascinating memories.

"When I said goodbye after my last visit, she gave me the loveliest of hugs, and said, 'Thank you Paul, you have given me my life back.' I was very touched. Kay will feature in another talk focusing on the girls that I'm planning to give locally in the spring."

Now Paul's autobiography *Winged Warriors, The Cold War From The Cockpit* (Pen & Sword Aviation) has been released in paperback. It's described as an open and honest account of one man's perceptions and fears, his actions and mistakes, from a four decades-long career.

Cadet

After becoming an air cadet, Paul joined the RAF Volunteer Reserve and, from August 1970, aged 21, was in uniform two nights a week as a Pilot Officer on 1409 Squadron. He was then accepted for full-time Regular service and started Officer Cadet training at RAF Henlow in February, 1971.

At the height of the Cold War, he served on Tornado nuclear tactical squadrons just 15 minutes from responding in full measure to an anticipated Soviet onslaught. Previously he flew reconnaissance aircraft on Nato's vulnerable southern flank. He was decorated for gallantry in 1980 and awarded the OBE in 1995. He served as a pilot until 2005.

Paul said: "I started writing the memoir so that our son Matthew and daughter Hannah would have something to add to their many memories of growing up as part of an RAF family."

"Hannah followed in my footsteps and joined the RAF. Very soon she saw active service overseas as an air traffic controller, twice in Iraq and once in Afghanistan engaged in 'hot' conflicts so different from the Cold War that had been my experience.

In from the Cold



RAF LUQA: XIII Squadron aircrew and Canberra PR7. Paul is on the far left



WE HAVE copies of *Winged Warriors* in paperback to win. For your chance to own one, tell us: **In which year did Paul McDonald start Officer Cadet Training at RAF Henlow?**

Email your answer, marked *Winged Warriors* book competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE to arrive by December 1.

Win!

Operation Desert Fox, the air war against Saddam Hussein's Iraq in December 1998.

"During my 34 years regular service I visited and operated from some fascinating and intriguing places: Germany, Italy, Malta, Iran, Canada, the USA, Pakistan, East Berlin before the Wall came down, Israel and Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Cuba."

He also met royalty and heads of state, including Prime Minister of Israel Yitzhak Rabin a few weeks before he was assassinated by an Israeli ultranationalist in 1995.

Paul added: "The now long-forgotten Cold War was not just a hyphen between the Second World War and conflicts in the Gulf and Afghanistan. It dictated the lives of many people throughout the world for 45 years. I hope that *Winged Warriors* goes some way in describing a Service and part of its history, and what that Service was called upon to do during the Cold War and the latter part of the twentieth century.

"It is also about a generation of RAF aircrew, many of whom gave their lives in preserving peace. And it is those aircrew who stand out for me, true warriors in every sense of the word, blessed with an irrepressible sense of humour regardless of circumstance, a humour that was typically British and very typically RAF."

"My route to a fast jet cockpit was untypical: I was a working class 'Geordie' brought up in Consett, County Durham. I didn't go to university but had been an air cadet. Even so, it was to take three visits to the Officers and Aircrew Selection Centre at RAF Biggin Hill before I was accepted for training and that was as a navigator. I became a pilot because of a shortfall of pilot candidates."

He added: "I spent 14 years on operational flying tours abroad ranging from low-level photo reconnaissance [Warby was a photo reconnaissance pilot - and remains the most highly decorated one of all time] on Nato's vulnerable southern

flank to tours on Tornado strike/attack squadrons in Nato's Central Region. All this was at the very height of the Cold War. For four years I was at the heart of the RAF's flying training system, training young men and women for a war we hoped would never occur."

Paul then joined the Directing Staff of the prestigious Royal College of Defence Studies, in London's Belgrave Square. From 1998 to the days just before the second Gulf War, he was a senior adviser in Kuwait.

He said: "I was a 'fly on the wall' in the Kuwait Air Force HQ and the only 'Brit' in the Kuwaiti War Room to witness at first-hand



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New war galleries open

THE IMPERIAL War Museum London has opened the UK's first art, film and photography galleries dedicated to conflict, to coincide with Remembrance Sunday.

And John Singer Sargent's iconic, monumental World War I painting *Gassed* has returned to display there for the first time since 2016, following extensive conservation.

Other works being exhibited at the new Blavatnik Art, Film and Photography Galleries include Queen and Country, Steve McQueen's response to the 2003 war in Iraq.

An IWM spokesperson said: "Thanks to generous support from main funder the Blavatnik Family Foundation, the Blavatnik Art, Film and Photography Galleries will be the UK's first to explore how artists, photographers and filmmakers bear witness to and tell the story of war and conflict.

"Works by artists including Paul Nash, Laura Knight and

Rosalind Nashashibi demonstrate how artistic interpretation can uniquely shape our understanding of war. With diverse displays from filmmakers including Peter Jackson and photographers including Olive Edis, Cecil Beaton and Tim Hetherington, the new permanent galleries will reflect global conflict from 1914 to the present day."

Caro Howell, IWMs' director general, said: "Artists, filmmakers and photographers are eyewitnesses, participants and commentators on conflict. Their work provides critical insight and perspective, while also having the power to deeply move us. We are therefore extremely grateful to our supporters, particularly the Blavatnik Family Foundation, for their generous support in making these beautiful galleries a reality, for enabling us to shine a light on our exceptionally rich visual media collections and for bringing them to a wider audience."



GASSED: John Singer Sargent's harrowing World War I painting *Gassed* is back at IWM London after conservation work

© IWM

The spokesperson added: "The development of the galleries is part of the third phase in the dynamic transformation of IWM London. They enable us to share works from our exceptional art collection, one of the world's most important representations of 20th century British art.

"The galleries will include around 500 works from IWM's collection, showcasing some of the vast and era-defining film and

photography collections, which include more than 23,000 hours of footage and over 12 million photographs."

At the centre of the galleries, Practice and Process will include objects such as a wooden pencil box belonging to artist and WWII prisoner of war Ronald Searle and paintbrushes carried by John Nash on the Western Front. On display for the first time will be documents and a press pass belonging to

Paul Eedle, a war reporter and filmmaker who produced award-winning coverage from Baghdad of the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 for Channel 4 News. Images of filmmakers, artists and photographers at work in conflict zones will reveal their privileged viewpoint and special access on the ground, as well as the challenges and risks – including threat to life – that they face.

● Go to: iwm.org for more details.



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Centenary Concert

Compere: Howard Leader



Watersmeet, Rickmansworth

Royal Air Force Squadronaires

7.30pm Friday 15 March 2024

CAST, Doncaster

Band of the Royal Air Force College

7.30pm Thursday 19 September 2024

Palace Theatre, Newark

Band of the Royal Air Force College

7.30pm Friday 20 September 2024

Playhouse Theatre, Weston super Mare

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

7.30pm Friday 27 September 2024

Assembly Hall, Worthing

Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment

3.00pm Saturday 28 September 2024

West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

7.30pm Friday 4 October 2024

Sqn Ldr Eric Downs MBE

Obituary

Dakota pilot served all over the Far East

- 4,582 hours flown
- 24 aircraft types
- 182 airfields
- Five continents

SQUADRON LEADER Eric Downs, who has died aged 102, had an eventful time as a pilot flying RAF transport aircraft while based in India, Singapore, and Malaya. This included an emergency flight that took him to Shanghai during the Yangtse incident involving the Royal Navy frigate, HMS Amethyst.

On April 20, 1949, Amethyst, the guard ship for the British Embassy in Nanking, came under heavy artillery fire from Communist shore batteries as it sailed up the Yangtse River from Shanghai. There were many casualties amongst the crew including the ship's doctor, who was one of the 20 killed in the action.

Downs, a very experienced Dakota pilot, was tasked at very short notice to fly from his base in Singapore to Hong Kong via Saigon. His aircraft was loaded with relief supplies, which had been prepared to be parachuted to the badly-damaged ship. After a long flight to the RAF base at Kai Tak, he was briefed to be prepared to drop the urgently needed medical supplies. In the event, an RAF Sunderland from Singapore had managed to make a difficult landing on the Yangtse. Despite coming under heavy fire from the Communists, it was able to land supplies and an RAF doctor.

Yangtse

Downs and his crew headed for the scene on the Yangtse but, with the successful operation by the Sunderland, the supplies carried were not required. He flew on to Shanghai, landing with the minimum amount of fuel. He was able to refuel from barrels at the British Overseas Airways Corporation facility and, after embarking the air attaché and other embassy staff, headed back to Hong Kong before returning to Singapore having been airborne for more than 37 hours in a few days.

Eric John Downs, the fourth of 11 children, was born on September 24, 1921, in Bermondsey, London. His father was a member of the new Independent Labour party in Bermondsey, an associate of Dr Alfred Salter, and a radical pacifist and conscientious objector during World War I.

Downs attended the John Roan Grammar School in Greenwich and on leaving education in 1939 he joined a firm of City accountants. After enduring the Blitz of 1940-41, during which he was injured in a bomb blast which badly damaged his house, Downs was called up for pilot training with the RAF in October 1941. He attended British Flying Training Schools in Texas and Arizona, returning to England on the troopship Queen Elizabeth in March 1943.

Okinawa

The newly-commissioned Downs spent the next two years flying trainee aircrew for Bomber Command at No. 9 Advanced Flying Unit in Llandwrog, North Wales. When finally assigned to fly Lancaster bombers with 582 Pathfinder Squadron in June 1945 the war in Europe was over. His squadron then joined Tiger Force, destined for Okinawa, but on Japan's surrender in September 1945 he was posted to 40 Squadron at RAF Abu Sueir, Egypt. Thereafter, from 1947-1949, he flew Dakotas in the Far East.

He was posted to 10 Squadron at RAF Mauripur, near Karachi, in May 1947. His main task was to evacuate troops and convey British personnel and refugees to safety during the partition of India. His flying took him to 27 airfields in India and Pakistan, from Kohat on the North-West Frontier down to Madras in the south. He witnessed many harrowing scenes during this time, and almost became a victim himself when chased through the streets of Calcutta by an angry mob. He recalled being shot at



DASHING: Pilot Eric Downs was also a keen and accomplished sportsman

while landing on small airfields in Bannu and Miramshah on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

From Mauripur he was posted to 48 Squadron at RAF Changi, Singapore, in March 1948 at the

start of the Malayan Emergency. Still flying Dakotas, he spent the next two years carrying out supply drops to the security forces fighting Communist insurgents in the jungles of Malaya.

Returning to England from Singapore in December 1949, Downs qualified as a flying instructor heralding a 20-year career as an instructor, training over 500 pilots. He served at the RAF's No.5 Flying Training School based at Heaney and Thornhill airfields in Rhodesia from 1950-1953 before returning to the UK to work in HQ Bomber Command at High Wycombe. With Wentworth golf club close by, Downs took the opportunity to add golf to his other sporting interests, namely hockey, cricket, soccer, tennis and squash, excelling at most and representing RAF stations and commands.

Ceylon

In 1955 he joined No. 2 Flying Training School Hullavington as a squadron commander, flying the recently introduced Jet Provost trainer. In 1959 he took up the position of OC Flying and Chief Instructor with the Royal Ceylon Air Force, flying Jet Provosts. His officers and cadets included four future Air Chief Marshals of the Sri Lanka Air Force.

After four years as a flight safety officer in HQ Flying Training Command, he spent two years as OC Flying at the Primary Flying School (PFS) at RAF South Cerney. With 24 flying instructors and 24 aircraft, the PFS trained 355 students in its 18 months of existence at South Cerney. During his time there he organised the 1965 world gliding championships, a huge undertaking involving logistics, flying operations and airspace management. For his work he was appointed MBE.

Concorde

Downs completed his career in the Service with several years as senior operations officer at RAF Fairford, supporting two Hercules squadrons and the first Concorde test flights.

On retirement from the RAF in 1970 he had flown 4,582 hours in 24 different aircraft types to 182 airfields on five continents.

He spent the next nine years as credit controller and branch manager for the UBM Group. He finally retired in September 1979 to a life he called the '3Gs' – gardening, golf and grandchildren. Aged 92, he played his last game of golf when his handicap had dropped from 5 to 16. During celebrations for his 100th birthday, a Spitfire flew over his garden in salute.

Eric Downs died on October 18. He married Mavis 'Jimmy' Binnington in Singapore in 1949. She died in 2017 and he is survived by their three children.

Travel

SeaWorld & Aquatica, Orlando

Tim Morris



Dive right in



FAVOURITES:
SeaWorld penguins
are popular with
park visitors



MUST-SEA: SeaWorld

THRILLS:
Kare Kare
Curl ride at
Aquatica



SLIDE SHOW:
Spectacular
Reef Plunge
attraction at
Aquatica



QUEEN SIZE:
Room at Drury
Plaza Hotel

THE SECOND in our series of Florida travel adventures takes us to see the greatest aquatic show on Earth and on to one of the biggest water parks in America.

SeaWorld Orlando opened in 1973, just two years after Disney's Magic Kingdom. It attracts millions of guests every year.

It's a unique concept, a high-adrenaline theme park that's built into a marine zoological exploration centre. Some come for the huge roller coasters, others for rare animal encounters. You can enjoy the serenity of an icy Arctic encounter with beluga whales and huge walrus one minute, then jump onto a neck-snapping coaster, in tropical heat, the next. The pace of the day is up to you.

Live shows are the real centrepiece of the park, with well-choreographed dolphin and orca displays run throughout the day. These are well scripted and truly spectacular. If you really want to set someone up for a good soaking, pre-book seating in the first four rows!

You can pop your hand in the water to 'boop' a stingray, feed the sharks, swim with dolphins (don't mix the last two up), and even get within spitting distance of a walrus. Be careful, they do... spit that is.

The dolphin nursery is adorable, watching mothers playing with their calves, while the sound of roaring sea lions

at Pacific Point Preserve draws you in long before you've seen them. Every marine animal habitat is well designed to get viewers close, without placing the animals in tiny enclosures.

SeaWorld also specialises in animal rescue operations and proudly boasts that it has conducted more than 40,000 to-date. The Manatee Rehabilitation Area is a real eye-opener, well worth a look.

Moving to the theme park, the attractions and the roller coasters are brilliantly themed.

Pipeline is the world's first surf coaster, a ride that launches you 110 feet into the air at 60mph, before banking and curving through a series of moves that simulate riding waves.

My other favourites were Icebreaker, which features a reverse launch into the steepest beyond vertical drop in Florida, a 93-foot tall spike with 100-degree angle, and Manta, where riders plunge head-first, face-down, into an inverted nosedive. Epic!

The park is owned and operated by SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, which incorporates two other attractions in Orlando, Discovery Cove and Aquatica. The latter of these

was my next stop and, in tropical heat, what could be better than a day at a water park?

Aquatica is everything you'd expect from an American water park and more. There's an 80,000 sq ft white sand beach, set next to two large, side-by-side wave pools that simulate the ocean. It's the perfect way to relax in the heat of the city.

Another way to chill is on Loggerhead Lane, where you effectively float down a lazy, meandering river. The flowing water pushes you effortlessly along, past stunning underwater views of fish and Commerson's dolphins.

Once you're cool and fancy some excitement, there are many rides to choose from that will get your heart pounding.

Riptide Race is the world's tallest duelling racer, while Reef Plunge sends you hurtling through 330 feet of translucent rings, past leopard sharks, sardines, and other coldwater fish.

Stay

There are many brilliant hotels to choose from that offer easy access to SeaWorld and the other parks but Drury Plaza Hotel, Disney Springs, takes some beating.

It's a 'Disney Good



SEAWORLD: Sealion

Neighbour' hotel, so shuttles get you to all the main parks easily and it's placed close enough to watch the nightly Disney fireworks from the poolside.

It's the newest hotel in the area and boasts lower rates than any of the official Disney resorts. Its real selling point however is that it's pretty much all-inclusive. I say this because the hotel operates free breakfast and, what it calls, a '5:30 Kickback'. From 17:30-19:30, every day, the food and drink is completely free. You can even order six free cocktails per room, per night. That makes it phenomenal value in this area.

We stayed in a two Queen Bed 'Deluxe room', with a terrace. This would set you back around \$198 per night in December but is certainly big enough for a family and gives you the option to live pretty frugally, if you so wish.

It comes with two super-comfy queen beds, a desk, free Wi-Fi, a TV, a microwave, a refrigerator, a coffeemaker, an iron, an ironing board and a hairdryer. Everything you need for a simple, self-catering holiday. There's even a well-stocked shop in the lobby to buy your supplies.

The pool is big enough for guests to spread out and shallow enough to enjoy with younger children. There's also a good-sized hot tub, plenty of sun loungers and a well-equipped gym.



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Family-friendly Forester

SUBARU'S FORESTER is a cracking bit of kit that's been around for decades. Back in the day, when Scooby ruled the rally stage, there was a super-hot version that was powered by the same engine found in the Impreza WRX. It absolutely flew and gave you such confidence that you'd throw it into wet corners with the same exuberance that you'd give the rally car. A few near misses soon taught you to respect that the Forester was a Sports Utility Vehicle however. Even Subaru couldn't completely defy the laws of gravity.

These days Scooby is all about economy, rather than power, and the e-boxer is a clever system that uses a blend of petrol and electric to drive the wheels. The current Forester is a more practical affair that pretty much 'does what it says on the tin'. It looks like a compact SUV, it drives like a compact SUV and it tackles rough terrain like a capable compact SUV. It's a compact SUV that you can rely on. Simple.

Exterior

The Forester looks the part in the country and has tidy dimensions that won't get you stuck on most green lanes. It's not the type of fat cat 4x4 that will attract the wrath of the greenies on the school run either. It's sleek and chunky, in equal measure, to hit a sweet-spot in SUV styling.

The front bumper incorporates signature LED daytime running lights and the headlamp washers electronically retract to keep the lines smooth. Silver painted roof rails, chrome effect door mirrors and 17-inch alloy wheels help to complete the look.

Interior

Everything in the cabin feels solid and well-bolted together. Some very nice materials are used to finish the dash, including faux-leather and detailed stitching. There are plenty of physical buttons, which I love, and the large ones on the steering wheel cover most of what you'll need.

Getting comfortable is easy,

Pros

- A proper 4x4 with good off-road ability
- Looks good in and out
- Plenty of kit
- Comfortable ride

Cons

- Poor power delivery
- Some wind/road noise
- Economy not outstanding

Verdict

I'd have hoped for better

Subaru Forester

economy as a result of compromising power delivery but the Forester is rugged and performs well off-tarmac. It has a comfortable ride too, with lots of interior space for a family to stretch out on a run. Most importantly, it will never let you down and that makes the Forester a car that's always worth considering.

On The Road

The Forester's 2.0-litre petrol boxer engine sounds as good as ever and revs beautifully at standstill. Unfortunately, the setup is now geared towards economy

thanks to plenty of adjustment from the driver's seat and steering wheel. The driver's seat is electrically adjustable so it requires minimal effort to get into the right position. The only downside in here is that the seats are pretty flat and won't hold you in place well through the bends. They are however comfortable enough for a long run and for chugging along off-road.

You sit high up, with excellent visibility all round. The Forester also comes with a rear-view camera

as standard to help with parking.

The 8in infotainment touchscreen comes as standard with built-in Android Auto and Apple CarPlay smartphone mirroring. The menus are simple and it responds swiftly to inputs.

(a combined fuel consumption figure of 34.7mpg), rather than performance though, so it doesn't quite have the guts to match the gob.

The 148bhp petrol engine, supplemented by a small electric motor, delivers a questionable 0-62mph time of 11.8sec. It doesn't help that the only gearbox option is the CVT automatic either, which sounds like a constantly slipping clutch.

In petrol form, it isn't really geared for towing either as it lacks torque. The diesel may be a safer bet if you need to drag stuff.

Owners of an old XTEn version from the early 00s may be horrified at the lack of power but you soon learn to drive with a heavy right foot to compensate and turn up the stereo to drown out the din. Once you're beyond that, the Forester handles well for an SUV.

Off-road, the excellent four-wheel-drive system gets you to where you want to go with ease and it has impressive, rugged durability. It's a good, honest 4x4.

5 pages of the best of **RAF Sports** action

SURFING

It's *Bay*watch

Sgt Bayfield clinches open surf victory

AFTER A week of wet and wild action in Cornwall, RAF surfing and waveriders crowned Sgt Adam Bayfield (open) and Fg Off Hannah Benfield (ladies) as their new champions.

The week-long event also saw Sgt Rob Maughan take the Bodyboard crown and Cpl Dave Wild triumph in Longboard in conditions deemed tricky, meaning small waves proving challenging for the surfers.

The lack of power from the smaller waves made gaining speed and completing manoeuvres difficult for all, especially as the heats consisted of surfers having 20 minutes to catch a maximum of 10 waves – each scored in terms of size, difficulty and manoeuvres completed.

Association spokesperson Cpl Josh Evans said: “The championships are designed to create a competitive environment where personnel can showcase their training that year and ultimately to crown the champion of each discipline from all RAF personnel and members of the Waveriders Surfing Club, based at RAF St Mawgan.”

The RAF Surfing/Waveriders club is open to all personnel. Events are staged from April to November, with training available for beginners at some sessions.

● See RAF Surfing's Instagram page [@rafsurfing](#).



WINNERS: Sgt Bayfield, Fg Off Benfield, Sgt Maughan and Cpl Wild



IN THE ZONE: Flt Lt Alex Connell catches a wave and open winner Sgt Adam Bayfield with his board, inset left

BASKETBALL

Leeming win Inter-Stations by a single point



ATTACK: Leeming were ruthless in Inter-Stations

Daniel Abrahams

LEEMING BATTLED out a nail-biting final to win the Inter-Stations basketball at Cosford, edging out tournament debutants 'Veterans 1' 77-76.

Event spokesperson WO Samantha Williams said: “It was without doubt the biggest and best RAF Basketball Inter-Stations for more than a decade. Having more than 120 serving and veteran players taking part cannot be underestimated. Neither can the impact it had on the veterans. It has been an absolute privilege to have players past and present at the Inter-Stations and long may it continue.”

The three-day tournament saw more than 90 serving and 35 veteran players in attendance, with some travelling from Abu Dhabi, and the vets fielding two teams for the first time.

Splitting the teams into two pools, RAF Vet team 1, RAF Benson, RAF Marham, RAF Lincoln and RAF Brize made up Pool 1, and RAF Vets team 2, RAF Lossiemouth, RAF



WELL-ATTENDED: 125 players took part in event
PHOTOS: AS2 Josh Gorman

Leeming, RAF Odiham, pool two. It was clear Leeming had only one intent, to beat all comers.

Game four saw Leeming dispatch RAF Vets 2, 58-43, before a master class by AS2 Oliver Putt saw them win game six 65-25 against Odiham, with other matches in the pools

going into overtime.

In game 10, Vets 1 overcame sore muscles to dominate Brize 55-31, with Steve Scaife (15pts) putting them in control.

The second day's action saw Leeming crush Lossiemouth 78-48, with Cpl Gabriel Cousins producing a game-winning 33 points, scoring from all areas of the court.

RAF Vets 1 beat Lincoln 48-42, setting up a veteran only semi-final, which went the way of team one 57-32, while Marham faced Leeming and a battle royale saw Leeming triumph 55-44.

The B-final saw further hard luck for the Vets 2 team, losing 44-48 to Marham, while the match being billed as the game of the tournament saw Vets 1 face Leeming, and Cpl Cousins produced an MVP 42-point display for his side.

Cousins saved the best for last, netting a three-point shot with one second left on the clock, to not only win the game but send a packed Cosford main gymnasium wild.

Would you like to see your sport featured in RAF News? Send a short report (max 300 words) and a couple of photographs (attached jpegs) to: Sports@rafnews.co.uk

Sport

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Daniel Abrahams

“WE WERE ecstatic, it’s a feeling like no other’, said Sgt Rob Carey speaking after the RAF became American Football Inter-Services champions after beating the Army Jackals 41-18.

Two last play interceptions from Sgt Ryan Abbots sealed the deal for the aviators in both clashes, which saw them become the first winners of the William Seeley VC Trophy came after an opening triumph over the Royal Navy 24-6, setting up a winner-takes-all clash at Tisley Park, Abingdon.

Social media manager Carey added: “We knew we were home and hosed being 15 points ahead going into the final quarter.

“The Army would have had to do something very special to alter the score and they tried. They played hard ‘smash mouth’ football but when Ryan produced a second interception as the Army went deep with a pass, it was something truly special.”

The win was the culmination of more than three years’ hard work for the RAF Mustangs, who beat Oxford Saints earlier this year in the team’s first recognised win, before holding two more five-day training camps and designing their own shirts.

Committee chairman and quarterback Sqn Ldr Cameron Stewart said: “This team started in the summer of 2020 during the height of the Covid pandemic. Reflecting on all the planning, meetings and unexpected events, for us to be here three and a half years later is nothing short of incredible.

“The players, coaching staff,



SMART: Coach

First gridiron IS goes to RAF



MVP: AS1 Nathaniel Opoku-Mensah evades an Army defender
PHOTOS: JODY DAVIES

committee and everyone who is part of this organisation shares in this success.

“For now, we will celebrate, but soon the preparation for holding onto this trophy starts.”

Guided by head coach SAC Warren Smart Ret’d (Wembley Stallions), the Mustangs had a faltering start in their opening IS

clash, with the Navy touching down first, but that would be their last score as the Mustangs produced a solid display to win, with AS1 Nathaniel Opoku-Mensah being awarded Most Valuable Player.

AS1 Seb Haley set the RAF’s stall out in the final clash against the Army, scoring one of an amazing four touchdowns with AS1 Dylan Pole converting. The Army were

reduced to kicking for points during the opening quarter and as they played catch-up Haley ran in a further two scores in the second quarter.

Further touchdowns by Sgt Martin Walton and Stewart made the scoring gap too great for the Army to reduce enough, and then Abbots produced his second flying interception and the championship

Wittering the perfect hosts

AS SECRET weapons go the Service’s American footballers are pointing to RAF Wittering as the vital last part in their recent Inter-Service championship win.

Having held two camps at MOD Garats Hay, in Leicestershire, the team made a last-minute move to RAF Wittering for their October training sessions.

Social media manager Sgt Rob Carey said: “I cannot thank RAF Wittering’s Station Commander, Wg Cdr Nicola Duncan, enough. They welcomed us at short notice, marking out a full pitch so we were set up beautifully and I really hope this is the start of something special.

“Our dream scenario would be for the station to become our Home for Sport, but that is some way off, but it was a perfect platform for us, and we all really believe it was a telling factor in our overall IS win.”

The Mustangs held three, five-day camps throughout the year and Carey believes the extended sessions are perfect for the team.

He added: “The longer camps allow everyone to know each other well and by the end of the week we have a solid set-up with a full scrimmage game.”

was the RAF’s.

● Follow RAF Mustangs on Facebook: @RAFAmericanFootball.

MOTORSPORT

Eco car history as service retains its Inters crown



IT WAS back-to-back Inter-Service wins for the RAF’s race driving team as they stormed to glory at the 73rd six-hour Birkett Relay at Silverstone GP Circuit.

The team of Sqn Ldr Si Frowen, Chf Tech David Russell, AS1(T) Alexander Smith, AS1(T) James Flint and AS1(T) Alex Waldeck took to the track among a field of 300 cars, making up 70 teams.

The RAF team was the first-ever to use a vehicle powered by fully synthetic fuel in an endurance race (above).

Having encountered pre-race issues, the team lost Frowen with a blown head gasket in qualifying – meaning he could not take part in the final race.

Waldeck said: “Taking the win and retaining the IS title in a synthetic fuelled car was a special moment.

“It’s a weird race done on handicap; we completed the same



SILVERWARE: (Back row, left to right) Chf Tech Russell, AS1(T) Flint, Sqn Ldr Frowen, AS1(T) Waldeck and AS1(T) Smith. (Front) Cpl Lloyd Huggins (team manager on the day)

number of laps as the team behind us in second but completed them two minutes faster to give us the win. Next closest Service team was the Army, who were two laps behind us.”

Starting 58th on the grid, as per the team’s number, Smith kicked off the race on the 3.667-mile track with 18 turns.

With RAFMSA president AM Paul Lloyd and deputy president AVM Richard Hill looking on, the team battled out the race in fair conditions before the rain started to fall after four hours of hectic racing, with Russell bringing home the win.

● Follow RAF Motorsport on Instagram @raf_motorsports.

THE RAF’S petrol heads have produced a season to remember with podium finishes galore showing a sport in rude health.

They have done battle at Silverstone National, Silverstone International, Croft, Donington Park and Snetterton in the Graduates, Novice and Overall championships to make up the Armed Forces Race Challenge, with this year’s grid being the largest recorded in its 17-year history with entrants from all ranks from AS2 to Group Captain, from RAF stations across the globe.

The airmen and women produced 41 podium finishes, supporting six novice drivers in their first season of competition and a further six seasoned competitors represented the RAF in the Tri-Service championship.

In the Graduate championships, six racers in RAF-owned BMW 116s took the top three slots through Flt Lt Jack Ljewsky in first, Cpl Harry

Podium finishes aplenty

Townsend, second, and AS1(T) Emma Ockendon.

A fistful of finishers saw the Service dominate the Novice event, taking the top five finishing spots: 1st AS1(T) Luke Arpino, 2nd Flt Lt Jack Ljewsky, 3rd AS1(T) James Flint, 4th AS1(T) Alex Waldeck and 5th AS1(T) Emma Ockendon.

In the 39-competitor field Chf Tech David Russell managed to take fifth spot overall, from just six of the 10 races on offer.

The 12-hour Race of Remembrance sees the final chequered flag fall on the season.

NORDIC

Nordic skiers get their skates on

HILLINGDON AND Redbridge cycle tracks doubled for the winter Nordic biathlon and ski courses of Europe at the Service's three-day pre-season training camp.

Sqn Ldr Andrew Goodwin, Performance Coach and RAF Nordic Association (RAFNA) spokesperson, said: "The camp was a huge success and gave us the opportunity to introduce the sport of roller skiing and biathlon to interested personnel and provide a consolidated training period to current development and senior squad members.

"It also provided senior squad members with an opportunity to

TOP 3 RAF IN 24KM:

Male: FS Steve Perry (1.03.11), Cpl William Hodgson (1.15.53) and Sqn Ldr Kieren Jarratt (1.22.43).

Female: Wg Cdr Nichola Rennet (1.36.22).

compete in a 24km Classic Roller Ski race, the final race of the GB Roller Ski Series of the year."

Goodwin, who coached alongside FS Stephen Perry, added: "This event was our fourth training activity and second multi-day training camp. It was also the penultimate multi-day training

camp designed to prepare athletes for the 'on-snow' National and Inter-Services Cross-Country and Biathlon competitions that take place annually in Germany as part of the Army Winter Sports Association's Exercise Rucksack in January and early February."

Next up is the final multi-day training camp from November 3-8 in the Aviemore region of the Cairngorm National Park in Scotland where, Goodwin said, 'final decisions will be made on who will represent the RAF at the Inter-Services competitions.'

● Follow the RAFNA on Instagram @RAFNordic.



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT: Sqn Ldr Amy Hill gets to grips with roller skis

CYCLING

Perfect timing for cyclists

Daniel Abrahams

IT WAS a first for the Service's road cyclists as they produced top-five finishes at the Thruxton Time Trial to close out the season.

Cpl Adam Baker, Sqn Ldr Rob Willcocks, Sqn Ldr Jon Gates and AS1 George Westall raced in the team and individual events at the famous 11.8-mile motor circuit, with Baker second in the Open TT category and Westall third in the Road Bike race.

The team event, also held over five laps, with a field of 29, saw the RAF place seventh overall, and second in the Road Bike category.

Baker said: "The hope is to make Time Trial an Inter-Service event. Typically the end of March/April will be the start of more TT races up and down the country.

"I had a great race achieving a PB by 40 seconds in the individual event, having raced the circuit plenty of times.

"The lack of wind certainly helped as often there is a stiff breeze over the airfield. A relatively short 23-minute effort means cyclists must race hard, but still not start out too fast and blow up, something I think I did well.

"Overall, it was a successful end to the season having also won the IS TT back in July and my winning of the RAF Championships.

On the Thruxton team time trial Baker added: "Having never raced together or practised due to our remote locations we had tempered expectations. However, having discussed a solid race plan, we ended up being very happy with the performance.

"All riders finished together and were suitably exhausted after putting it all out there.

"We certainly want to do more team TTs and make it a regular IS event."

● Follow RAF Road cycling on Instagram @rafcycling.



RAF TEAM: Thruxton thriller

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Army is foiled again

It's 2 Inters champs in a row for RAF

KITE SAILING

HAYLING ISLAND was the venue for the Army-hosted kite sailing Inter-Services, which saw another dominant RAF display to take the crown for the second year running.

The four-day event, which included two days of training, was split into Foil and Freestyle competitions, with competitors judged in timed heats.

Foil entrant Cpl Ian Savage said: "Competitors have a set time to impress the judge – in this case kitesurfing legend and Red Bull King of Air head judge Chris Bull – with a range of tricks, which are marked for difficulty, style and amplitude.

"Winners of heats move through to the next round until the final. The conditions were difficult, making it tough for all involved."

RAF team captain Flt Lt Rick Hughes added: "The Army Sailing Association staged a fantastic event, for which we were all grateful and the training we put in during the RAF kite champs up at Benbecula in Scotland this year really paid off. It was a great result from a brilliant week."

First up, the foil event, which saw the RAF team of Savage, Cpl Rich Turner, Hughes and AS1(T) Ben Bond competing over four separate races, with the winning team being the one with the lowest score.

Despite the Army taking first place in all the races, the strength of the RAF team became apparent with the aviators taking second, third and fourth in some very close races, which led to their overall victory.

The following day the RAF freestyle team of Flt Lt Patrick Morris, Bond, Flt Lt Al

Stephenson and Turner did battle, starting with the intermediate heats.

The outcome of the morning's action saw one RAF rider making the Plate final and the RAF's top three qualifying for the main final.

Bond secured fifth in the plate and there was better to come in the main final, with the RAF having three competitors to the single Army rider.

The team's overall strength in numbers saw them take another win in the freestyle, giving them overall victory and the IS trophy for the second year running.

RAF FOIL TEAM: Strength in numbers at Hayling Island



ICE HOCKEY

Get your skates on and take to the ice this winter



ICE HOCKEY: Give it a go
PHOTO: TRISH THOMPSON

THE ICE Hockey Association hosts its next Learn to Play training days next month.

The two, three-day beginner courses will run from December 3-6 and 6-8 at Telford Ice Rink.

AS1 Allan Fraser said: "I first tried ice hockey at an RAFIHA LTP Camp and I have never looked back. It is an incredible time that you can take a lot from. The RAFIHA and Ice Hockey as a whole has led me to opportunities and friendships that I can't imagine not having in my life now.

"The camp is aimed at people who have never skated or played ice hockey before, to those who haven't played for years

and want to go back to basics or, like me, someone who is a long-time fan of the sport and finally getting the opportunity to see if I have perhaps missed a calling in life.

"The ultimate aim is to get players on the track to develop into a representative ice hockey player for either the RAF Pumas (Women's team) or RAF Aces (Men's team), but the days are also perfect for anyone who wants to play the sport for a bit of fun."

The courses feature five-hours of on-ice coaching with skating basics, stick handling, puck control and shooting.

Email: allan.fraser116@mod.gov.uk or kayla.simmonds101@mod.gov.uk to register an interest.

5 pages of the best of **RAF Sports** action

MOTORSPORT

British champs again

Now F1 beckons for RAF sidecar heroes



JULES BROOK PHOTOS

Daniel Abrahams

SERVICE SIDECAR duo Cpl Robert Atkinson and Sgt Mark Middleton won the British Championship in a storming finale at Brands Hatch.

Their F2-class win at the famous Kent track made it incredible back-to-back titles for the fearless RAF pair, as they produced a stunning late charge to claim the honours in the final race of the season.

They will now move up to the elite F1-class next year.

Cpl Atkinson said: "With big plans for the 2024 season, it must be said the future is looking bright for the RAF Sidecar team."

Work commitments once again spilt the RAF duo up, with passenger Middleton being replaced by stand-in Josh Smith – the young racer once again proving his worth, supporting driver Atkinson superbly.

A great atmosphere on the course for qualifying saw the pair hold 17th on a stacked grid of 24 bikes – including F1 and F2 outfits.

The team were showing good pace and would be in the mix come race day, and so it proved as they produced a good getaway,

moving up a handful of positions as they went into the first corner.

They spent the first half of the race fending off the charging pack before eventually settling into 14th and first in class, a position they held to the end.

They were 17th on the grid for the second outing, hoping for a similar start. They managed to produce the goods again, heading around the outside of a jostling pack at the first turn but then disaster.

They had to take to the gravel to avoid a spinning racer ahead and, having avoided crashing, also narrowly missed a cartwheeling bike, before returning to the track in last place.

They now faced producing a season-saving charge and resolutely set about their seemingly impossible task.

But somehow they cut their way back to 12th place, first in class, and battled to the flag to hold on and seal the class win, the championship and with it promotion to elite F1 racing nest year.

Atkinson said: "Taking the championship means we have achieved two British titles in as many years, so we are obviously delighted."



TEAM EFFORT: (left-right) Josh Smith (stand-in passenger), Cpl Rob Atkinson, Sgt Mark Middleton and Shane Colbrook (stand-in passenger at the beginning of the year)

TUG OF WAR

RAF Tug of war teams are celebrating a year of hard work and victories.

Head Coach Cpl Morley-Jones rallied the troops for competitions across the country and the team have had to work together to meet the weight requirements, with the RAF Odiham anchor needing to meet a 100kg goal.

The end of the season brought them to the Royal Highland Games in Braemar. With the King watching on, both Marham and Odiham had a

Pulling together for victory

lot to prove for the RAF with the rest of the competition being made up of Army teams. A gruelling day saw both stations make it to the final to face off for the coveted trophy and it went to the wire, with Odiham edging it.

Now the teams are in winter training and need new members, no matter what base you are on, ability or gender. Anyone can compete, no matter your size or strength.

● To get involved, contact Sqn Ldr Greg Curtis (Gregory.Curtis103), FS Dave Petrie (David.Petrie504) or Cpl Phil Morley-Jones (Phillip.Morley-Jones577).



Announcements

- p6-7
- Puzzles
- p8

R'n'R



Win top titles on
DVD ● See page 8

**Panto time – oh
yes it is! Win
tickets ● p4-5**



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Film Review

The Killer (15)

In cinemas now

Fincher's assassin film a hit



DAVID FINCHER'S return to cinema is straight to the point: a sharply-crafted film about a hitman on a high-profile job, and the fallout when things don't go to plan.

Michael Fassbender is the eponymous killer, a nameless professional with a plethora of identities, all with the same purpose, to blend in and be unmemorable. For this reason, he doesn't speak much to other people, in narration however he talks incessantly. Whether explaining his code or

attempting to justify it, he has an obsessively methodical approach to his work, with a keen eye for detail that is supposedly the reason for his success, not dissimilar to Fincher himself.

Plonked into the head of this high-functioning psychopath, observing his rigorous routine and discipline, it is very easy to forget about his obvious misdeeds and admire his abilities, actually empathising with the difficulties of taking someone's life whilst remaining incognito. You want him to take the perfect shot, to evade detection and

escape, but it's not always so simple.

We join him on a job in Paris, camped out in a top-floor flat facing the window with sniper rifle at the ready. He assures us that it takes a great deal of patience – this before his routine yoga, carried out in Hawaiian shirt and latex gloves.

The film is able to ratchet up the tension throughout, but remains darkly funny – for example our hired gun has a penchant for The Smiths and so we are treated to a number of songs that serve to illustrate something

happening on screen with a delightfully fanciful melancholy.

After the botched assassination, he must flee Paris and make sure that everything is in order back home. When he finds that it isn't, he'll have to continue to employ his skills as his code becomes more compromised.

Following the momentum of this deranged murderer on a hunt, and sleekly assembled, *The Killer* is thrilling from start to finish.

Review by Sam Cooney

4 out of 5 rounds ○○○○



DVDs

Clangers (U)

On DVD & Blu-ray (Fabulous Films/Fremantle)

Win!

The naughty Major dropped a Clanger in children's show

ORIGINALLY BROADCAST between 1969 and 1972 *Clangers* was made by Smallfilms, set up by Oliver Postgate and Peter Firmin and producing many other childhood classics including *Bagpuss*, *Noggin the Nog* and *Ivor the Engine*.

The adorable little creatures communicated through whistling sounds, an effect created using a swanee whistle. Full scripts still had to be written so that it was clear what needed to be conveyed through the whistling.

Last year Oliver Postgate's son Daniel published *Clangers: The Complete Scripts 1969 to 1974* which proved the urban myth that Clangers had potty mouths. It was confirmed that when Major Clanger was confronted with a door that wouldn't open in an early episode, he whistled the words "sod it, the bloody thing has stuck again."

Clangers was revived in 2015 for CBeebies, narrated by Michael Palin in the UK and William

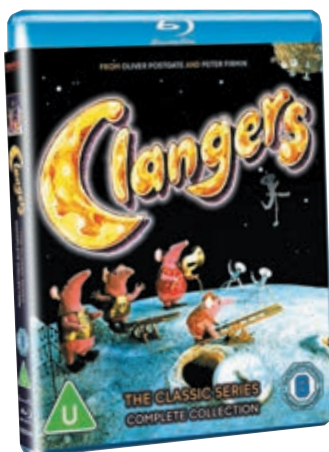
Shatner in America.

Discover a small blue planet populated by pink beings known as Clangers, a green dragon who cultivates soup and orange monopods who emerge from a magician's top hat. Wonderful and exotic creatures often visit, and are always very welcome, especially a chicken made of iron who lives on a nearby nest made of space junk.

Enjoy all 26 episodes from Season 1 and 2, now fully restored, of this charming series narrated by Postgate – we have copies to win on DVD and on Blu-ray. Just tell us:

Who set up Smallfilms?

Email your answer, marked Clangers competition, to tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe HP14 4UE, to arrive by December 1. Remember to include your full postal address and state if you prefer to win the DVD or Blu-ray series.



DVDs

Creation Stories (15)

On DVD & Blu-ray now (Dazzler Media)

Brit Pop king



VISION: McGee (Ewan Bremner)

THIS ENERGETIC, fast-paced film charts the true story of the rise and fall of Creation Records and its infamous founder Alan McGee; the man responsible for supplying the Brit Pop soundtrack to the 90s, a decade of cultural renaissance known as Cool Britannia.

From humble beginnings to Downing Street soirées, from dodging bailiffs to releasing multi-platinum albums, Creation had it all. Breakdowns, bankruptcy, fights and friendships... and not forgetting the music.

Featuring some of the greatest

records you have ever heard, *Creation Stories* follows Alan through a drug-fuelled haze of music and mayhem, as his rock 'n' roll dream brings the world Oasis, Primal Scream and many more generation-defining artists.

From executive producer Danny Boyle and adapted from McGee's acclaimed autobiography, *Creation Stories* stars Ewan Bremner (*Trainspotting*), Suki Waterhouse (*Daisy Jones & The Six*), Jason Flemyng (*Boiling Point*), Thomas Turgoose (*This is England*), Jason Isaacs (*Operation Mincemeat*) and

is directed by Nick Moran (*Telstar: The Joe Meek Story*).

We have copies up for grabs, to be in with a chance of winning one, answer this question correctly:

Who executive-produced *Creation Stories*?

Email your answer, marked Creation Stories DVD competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe HP14 4UE, to arrive by December 1. Please remember to include your full postal address.



Theatre
2:22 A Ghost Story
UK tour

2 good 2 miss?



THE STAGE phenomenon 2:22 A Ghost Story that has taken the West End by storm is now on tour, currently at Belfast's Grand Opera House and visiting various venues across the UK until June 2024.

This edge-of-your-seat, supernatural thriller currently stars Joe Absolom as Ben (*A Confession, Doc Martin*), Charlene Boyd as Lauren (*Mayflies, River City*), Nathaniel Curtis as Sam (*It's A Sin, The Witcher*) and Louisa Lytton as Jenny (*EastEnders, The Bill*).

The play is written by award-winner Danny Robins, creator of the hit BBC podcast *The Battersea Poltergeist*, and directed by Matthew Dunster and Isabel Marr.

Robins said: "I'm thrilled with our first cast for the 2:22 A Ghost Story UK tour and can't wait to see how each actor brings their own distinctive take to the play. It's quite the journey we are on and we look forward to spooking new audiences across the UK. 2:22 is an adrenaline-fuelled experience that gives you the licence to gasp, scream, and yelp."

Jenny believes her new home is haunted, but her husband Sam isn't having any of it. They argue with their first dinner guests, old friend Lauren and new partner Ben.

Can the dead really walk again? Belief and scepticism clash, but something feels strange and

frightening, and that something is getting closer, so they're going to stay up... until 2:22... and then they'll know.

The production premiered at the Noel Coward Theatre, starring Lily Allen, Julia Chan, Hadley Fraser, and Jake Wood, where it won the WhatsOnStage award for Best Play.

The box office record-breaking run at the Lyric starring Cheryl, Jake Wood, Scot Karim and Louise Ford, concluded its run on April 23. The current West End season at the Apollo Theatre stars Sophia Bush, Ricky Champ, Clifford Samuel and Jaime Winstone.

● Go to: 222aghoststory.com for more information.



Theatre
Rick Stein
An Evening With...

Stein to serve up feast for foodies

IT'S BEEN tipped as the hottest ticket of 2024 and a feast for the mind – multi-award-winning chef, restaurateur, writer and presenter Rick Stein heads out on a UK tour in spring 2024.

Kicking off on March 15 at Buxton's Royal Opera House, this 14-date tour will travel to theatres around the country, culminating on March 30 at Torquay's Princess Theatre

An Evening with Rick Stein will see the culinary legend dish-up his favourite memories from nearly 50 years of gastronomic experience. Delving deep into his lifelong love affair with cooking, this new live stage show will explore his unwavering devotion to the brilliance of great British produce. Revelations from the kitchen, musical delights, poetic interludes and stories of global adventures are all on the menu, said a spokesperson.

Stein said: "Touring the country with a show sounds really grown up, like being in a band on tour – 'Oh it's Liverpool, it must be Saturday', sort of thing. I've discovered of late that I love talking about my life to a live audience.

"I've got lots of stories which people seem to really enjoy: like why my nightclub got closed down in the



STEIN: Loves to cook... and to talk

'70s, what Keith Floyd was really like, what the Dalai Lama knew about cooking and why a pint at 5.29pm is so important."

As a self-taught chef, his story is one of perseverance and passion. From humble beginnings to the pinnacle of culinary success – with more than 25 cookery books, 30 TV programmes including 12 cookery series, 10 restaurants and several hotels – Rick Stein is one of the country's most well-known chefs.

The show will explore his career, how he established his thriving restaurant business with no prior experience and his journey to becoming a national institution.

● Go to: RickStein.com for tour and ticket details.



Competition
Tackle!
Jilly Cooper

Queen of raunch Tackles football

SHE'S BACK – seven years after her last bestseller, the marvellous Jilly Cooper's new novel *Tackle!* has hit the bookshops, and we have copies for some lucky readers to win.

Her new title stars her iconic hero Rupert Campbell-Black and the rip-roaring story features scandal, sex and sabotage – this time on the football field.

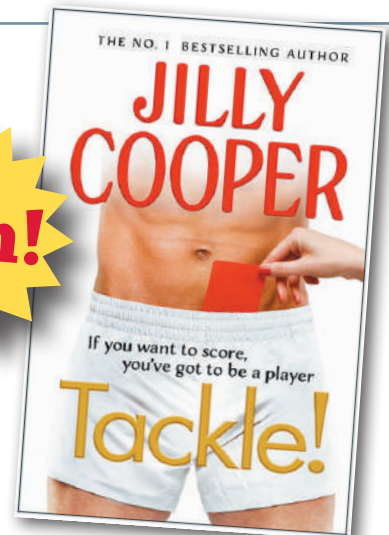
Rupert, undefeated racehorse owner and the most handsome man in the world, is in a very dark place. His adored wife Taggie is about to undergo chemotherapy, his beloved horse Love Rat has died, and now his daughter Bianca

wants him to buy a languishing local football club – a sport Rupert knows nothing about – so that she can return to Rutshire with her football star husband.

Rupert's first impressions of Searston Rovers are unfavourable to say the least. But, swayed by Bianca and Taggie, he signs the deal and, as the Rovers' new owner, he will stand for nothing less than victory in the Premier League, despite the odds being stacked against him. With help from the club's adorable secretary Tember West, Rupert sets out to mastermind Searston's rise to the top, beginning with taking charge of the players – much to the



JILLY COOPER:
Racy writer



fury of Searston's manager.

The rival football club and their corrupt dealings aren't going to make it easy for him either – and they have

a history of foul play...

For your chance to win a copy of this unputdownable book (published by Bantam, www.penguin.co.uk)

rrp £22, tell us the name of Searston Rovers' secretary:

Email your answer, marked *Tackle!* book competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by December 1.

Rivals, Jilly's novel set in the world of television, is scheduled for an eight-part series from Disney+ in 2024. Its stars include Emily Atack, Alex Hassell, Danny Dyer, David Tennant and Aidan Turner.

Hometown queen Suzanne has wish granted in panto role

**SHAW
THING:**
Suzanne is
playing the
Enchantress
at the Swan
in High
Wycombe



AN ALL-STAR cast head the line-up for this year's panto, *Beauty and The Beast*, at the High Wycombe Swan, from December 8-31.

Strictly Come Dancing winner Joe McFadden will be panto baddie the arrogant Eugene, alongside Hear'say and musical theatre star Suzanne Shaw as the Enchantress, and *Britain's Got Talent's* La Voix as Dame Peggy Pulem. Also BGT alumni, Jon Clegg will appear as Percy Pulem.

Joe (pictured right) is best known for playing trauma surgeon Raf DiLucca in BBC's *Casualty* and for winning *Strictly* in 2017.



His TV credits include *Heartbeat*, *Cranford*, *The Crow Road*, *Sex Chips and Rock 'n' Roll* and *Judge John Deed*. He is no stranger to the stage having appeared in *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Priscilla*, *Queen of the Desert*, *Rent*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and many more. He has played in pantomimes across the UK and will be reprising his role after starring in the award-winning Best Pantomime for the UK awards in 2022.

He said: "I'm really excited to be back at the Swan after having had a brilliant time there earlier in the year with the tour of the Agatha Christie play *The Mirror Crack'd*. I'm

also hugely excited to be performing again in *Beauty And The Beast*, which wowed audiences with its amazing digital set in Swansea last year and won best pantomime at The UK Pantomime Awards."

Local lass Suzanne Shaw's big break came in 2001 when she auditioned for the ITV show *Popstars*, and subsequently won a place in the newly-formed pop band, Hear'say, selling over 1.3 million copies of their debut single. She went on to win series three of ITV's hit show *Dancing On Ice*. Her theatre credits include *Chicago* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* in the West End and many UK tours including *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Funny Peculiar* and *Summer Holiday*. In 2020, Suzanne changed her lifestyle and set out to change the perception of mental health. She is now founder and CEO of 'The Happy Health Club' a community for people to enjoy

Win tickets

YOU COULD win a family ticket (for four) to the 5:30pm performance of *Beauty and The Beast* at the Wycombe Swan on Saturday, December 9.

We also have four tickets to see *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* at the Waterside Theatre, Aylesbury on Thursday, December 7 at 6pm. It stars *EastEnders'* James Bye, Andy Collins and Leon Craig.

For your chance to win these great prizes, simply tell us:

Who stars as the baddie Eugene in *Beauty and The Beast* at the Wycombe Swan?

Email your answer, marked: Panto tickets competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE to arrive by December 1.

Please mark on your entry whether you prefer to win tickets for the Wycombe Swan panto or for the Aylesbury Waterside panto. Tickets are non-refundable and non-transferable.



SNOW WHITE: On at the Waterside Theatre in Aylesbury

a total wellbeing approach through health, fitness, sobriety and personal growth.

She added: "I couldn't be more delighted to be in *Beauty and the Beast* in my home town. I've been wanting to do panto in Wycombe for 16 years and finally my wish has come true."

La Voix said: "*Beauty and the Beast* is my absolute favourite and I can't wait to play Peggy, internationally renowned barmaid of the village tavern! Now, it sounds like I've been round the block a bit but this must be coming up to 20 years of panto. And I love it, I adore Christmas and panto makes it even more special."

When an arrogant prince is cursed to live as a beast, his only hope of salvation is to find love before the last petal falls from a magic rose. When pretty village girl

Belle comes into his life is this the chance he has been waiting for?

Joe said: "I've been doing pantomime professionally since I was 17 years old and that wasn't yesterday, so I wouldn't like to hazard a guess at how many I've done! I do love doing it, mostly because it's the first time a lot of people come to the theatre and if we do our jobs properly, they'll hopefully come back. If live theatre is going to survive we need to encourage the audience of tomorrow to come through theatre doors and panto definitely does that."

"As a performer, it's such a privilege to get to entertain families at Christmas time when all the generations get together – grandparents, mums and dads and the wee ones."

● Go to: wycombeswan.co.uk for more details.



Your Announcements

You can email photos for announcements on this page
to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk

Deaths

PARKER Keith ex Mover, passed away at home on October 17, loving husband of Daphne, father to Scott and Duncan, father-in-law to Tanya and Catherine, grandad to Bee, Harry, Josh and Isaac. Donations in memory of Keith can be made to Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis via: justgiving.com/page/scott-parker-1698243410603.

STEVENS Steve, Flt Sgt died aged 84 in hospital, after battling cancer for over a year. He completed 22 years' service in the RAF, and received a Queen's Commendation for his work. He finished his career at RAF Marham, then stayed on as the station warden for 25 years with the Civil Service. His funeral was held at Cromer crematorium on November 10. He dedicated his whole life to working in the Services.



FS Steve Stevens leading a parade

In Memoriam

REMEMBERING Clive Ackroyd Fairgrieve, 115 Squadron. Sadly passed away November 17, 2014. Served in various places as an E/O, last base RAF Benson (1970) and Northolt. Anyone remembering having served with my beloved late father is welcome to get in touch

and to keep in touch with his second daughter, myself Susan Gail Fairgrieve, especially any fellow former Unique Cadets 1964 to 1970. Contact details: email susiegfairgrieve@gmail.com or call: 07592 906828.

Reunion

RAF TG11 Reunion – calling all ex T/phonist/TPO/Teleg/TCO/TCC/WOP Spec/TRC personnel in the former Trade Group 11, also any contemporary comms trades that superseded any of the above. All are welcome at the forthcoming TG11 reunion in March 2024.

Venue is the Marriott Delta Hotels Nottingham Belfry, Mellors Way, off Woodhouse Way, Nottingham NG8 6PY, Friday, March 22 to Sunday, March 24. Please find further details at: tg11association.com where, if not already a member of the association, there is a facility to become one (just press the register motif at the top of the website page).

Associations

THE next quarterly social lunch of the National Service Association (Royal Air Force) Southend Group will be on Wednesday, December 6 at the Castle Hadleigh Essex. All RAF veterans and guests are invited. Details and bookings from Area Organiser Ron Spack: 01268 779697.

The RAF Association Beccles and Southwold Area Branch will be holding their Annual Christmas Lunch on Saturday, December 9, at the Three Horseshoes Inn, Beccles, Suffolk commencing with a Meet and Greet at 12 noon and lunch at 1pm. A welcome from the Branch President will be followed by a short address from the Mayor of Beccles and

will precede the start. All Branch members, Royal Air Force veterans and serving personnel are welcome to attend with a guest.

A copy of the menu is available on the Branch website at: www.rafabecclandsouthwold.wordpress.com/ and the terms of payment are by card or cash on the day.

For reservations and any special dietary needs, please call Shelagh Wells on: 01502 476601.

There is plentiful free parking available.

Further information available from President Brian Vousden on: 01502 711519 or email: lancastr457@btinternet.com.

6 Squadron will celebrate its 110th anniversary on January 31, 2024. To commemorate the event, the Sqn Association, in concert with the squadron, will be holding a dinner at the Queen's Hotel, Farnborough, on Friday, February 2, 2024. Given a numbers limitation of 130 diners, we currently anticipate the event being 'stag' but that might change to a guest night closer to the time if take-up is less than anticipated.

Whilst still at the formative stage, likely details are as follows: three-course meal – approx. £60 including arrival drink, half bottle of wine with dinner and a glass of port; room rates – £99 including VAT and breakfast, based on a maximum of two people sharing.

The Association Committee has kindly agreed that Association Members will get a subsidy of £10 per head. If you are not already an Association Member, you can join by contacting: 6sqnassociation@gmail.com. Expressions of interest should be made to Clive Mitchell at: clive.mitchell163@mod.gov.uk.

Please let Clive know if you would like to attend and bring a guest, should that opportunity arise.

See RAF bands on stage



FANS OF the RAF's top-class musicians have a treat in store – with several concerts taking place soon.

The Friends of St Clement Danes Annual Concert 2023, with the Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment and Choir of St Clement Danes, will be held on Thursday, November 30 at 7pm at St Clement Danes Church, The Strand, London WC2. Tickets, for which a donation is suggested, are available by emailing: concerts@fscd.org.uk (please say how many tickets you would like). Or you can send for tickets by post to: SCD Annual Concert, c/o Scott Williamson, Laerdal, Fetterdale, Tayport, Fife DD6 9PF. Tickets are also available at the door on November 30, donation suggested.

The Royal Air Force Music Services Association presents Esprit De Corps with The Band of the Royal Air Force

Regiment and The Central Band of the Royal Air Force in concert at The Winston Churchill Theatre, Ruislip, near RAF Northolt, on November 24 and December 15 respectively. Go to: hillingdontheatres.uk for show times and booking details.

And on December 5, RAF Shawbury presents a Christmas Carol Concert at St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury, featuring the Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment. Tickets are free but registration is essential through eventbrite.com. Arrival is from 6.30pm to be seated by 7pm. Please bring an electronic copy of your tickets for the evening. All proceeds from the collection will support RAF Shawbury and St Chad's Church charities.

● Go to: raf.mod.uk/display-teams/raf-music-services/live-dates/ for more information.

Association has long history

THE ROYAL Air Force School of Physical Training (SofPT) was formed on the same day as the fledgling RAF, April 1, 1918, at RAF College Cranwell.

"The SofPT is one of only two schools of the same age as the RAF itself (the other is the Central Flying School) and celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2018.

Its 50th anniversary is in 2027," said Les Hammond from the RAF Physical Training Instructors Association (RAFPTIA).

He added: "The Association was formed in 1996 to bring together serving and retired PTIs, it currently has 600 PTI members and its motto is Friendship & Respect.

"The association is committed to supporting and engaging with all PTIs involved in Physical



PHYSICAL TRAINING INSTRUCTORS: The 1920 PTI course at Uxbridge; inset, parading the PTI Standard

Education as well as those who have taken up specialist roles after their original basic PTI course qualification.

"Member welfare is at the heart of the association and on the sad occasions where a member passes away the association standard is on parade at the member's funeral as a mark of respect and support to the member's family."

The RAFPTIA holds an annual Dinner and AGM over a weekend as well as locally organised events held in its representative areas.

● To become a member of the Association you will have had to have successfully passed the RAF Physical Training Instructors Basic Training Course. Contact Hon Sec Denise Street-Brown on: ptisec@outlook.com for membership enquiries.

How to use our service

There is no charge for conventionally-worded **birth, engagement, marriage, anniversary, death, in memoriam seeking and reunion** notices. For commercial small ads contact Edwin Rodrigues on: 07482 571535. We cannot, under any circumstances, take announcements over the telephone. They can be sent by email to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk. Please note that due to the coronavirus pandemic we are currently unable to accept notices submitted by post.

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Your Announcements

You can email photos for announcements on this page
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THE FORCE IS WITH YOU: Elf Force leaders prepare for action at RAF Museum Midlands

Sign up for Royal Elf Force

IF YOU'VE always wondered how Santa delivers gifts around the world in just one night, wonder no more because the secret is out...he has help from the Royal Elf Force.

With a growing number of presents to deliver this Christmas, Santa has teamed up with the RAF Museum Midlands to train more Elf Cadets.

During an hour-long session, new recruits will learn how to load the sleigh, pick the right aircraft for the job, map a route for Santa and deliver the presents via a parachute drop.

"Experience Christmas like never before and get a behind-the-scenes look, as the

Royal Elf Force helps Santa prepare for the biggest mission of the year. Suitable for all the family, Elf Cadet Training combines the best of the RAF and a great big dollop of festive fun, all within the warm and dry of the Museum hangars," said a spokesperson.

The Royal Elf Force are in town for one weekend only, on Saturday, December 2 and Sunday 3. Tickets cost £5 per child, sessions run from 10am until 3pm and the experience lasts around an hour.

● Visit rafmuseum.org/midlands for more information and to sign your little ones up to Elf Cadet training.

Vets meet for Remembrance

RAF VETERANS marked Remembrance Day with a gathering at the RAF Benevolent Fund's Strongest Link Garden at Biggin Hill, home to the Battle of Britain.

Designed by John Everiss, the garden was originally showcased at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2022,

The veterans included WO Albert 'Foo' Howard DFC, who recently turned 101, from Essex. Albert was a 47 Squadron navigator who flew on Beaufighters and Mosquitos in North Africa and Asia during World War II.

Another guest was Aircraftwoman Margaret Garrett, also 101, from Guildford, who was a meteorologist and part of 5 Group Bomber Command based at RAF Waddington and RAF Wigsley in WWII.

She said: "Remembrance Day is a momentous day. My husband was out on D-Day, so I really had a worrying war, one way or the other. You've got to remember how many people lost their lives.

"It's incredible when you look back. I don't think



SHARING MEMORIES: Veterans at the Strongest Link Garden

in everyday life you think about it very much – but you should."

Air Vice-Marshal Chris Elliot, Controller of the RAF Benevolent Fund, said: "This is a very special time of year, where we as a nation have the opportunity to reflect on the selfless acts of the people in our Armed Forces, what they have done and continue to do to keep us and our families

safe and secure.

"It is also an opportunity for us to remember the sacrifices that many make in the course of their duties, many making that ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives for us."

She added: "The Fund remains steadfast in our commitment and it remains here for our RAF Family now and for the future."



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R'n'R



Prize Crossword

No. 351

Solve the crossword, then rearrange the 12 letters in yellow squares to find an aircraft

- Across
- 1. Story about South African gorilla, totally heartless (4)
 - 8. She has a sweet tooth (10)
 - 9. Turned up upsetting ten dated (8)
 - 10. Curry favour with camel? No, a different creature! (4)
 - 12. Spock's plane? (6)
 - 14. Wine and dine Reginald with beer (6)
 - 15. Pilot destroyed marina (6)
 - 17. Bird takes piece, a tasty morsel (6)
 - 18. Quiet ducks go away! (4)
 - 19. A camping trip becomes offensive (8)
 - 21. Cheer pilot operating aircraft (10)
 - 22. Unpleasant condition always causes nasty eczema, at first (4)

- Down
- 2. The samurai became unprofessional (10)
 - 3. In Australia, Chester was a pain (4)
 - 4. And 5 Down. Mosquito flying around renowned wood (6,6)
 - 5. See 4 Down
 - 6. RAF combat boxer before battle (8)
 - 7. I study religious figure (4)
 - 11. Duke's favourite bomber? (10)
 - 13. Country ruined pointlessly bad mosaic (8)
 - 16. Can return first hospital's Mexican fare (6)
 - 17. Fruit piper's son found at ring (6)
 - 18. Without Penny, Pooh's lost in seedy area (4)
 - 20. Atmosphere created by gold god (4)

Name

Address

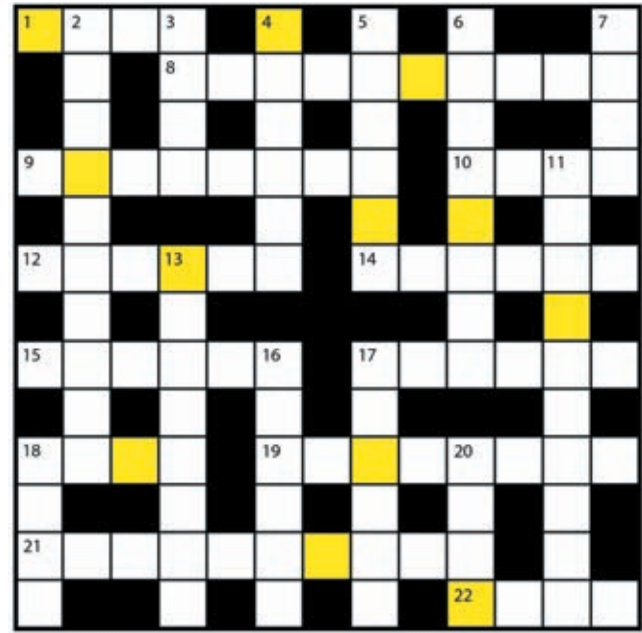
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.....

RAF aircraft:..... Crossword No. 351

The winners of our Prize Crossword and Prize Su Doku puzzles will receive a recent top aviation title – please send your entries to the address printed in the adjacent Su Doku panel, to arrive by December 1.

Prize Crossword No. 349 winner is: Michael Fenelon, Doncaster.



Solution to Crossword No 350:

Across – 6. Helmets 7. Tunic 9. Cobra 10. Warrior 12. Bournemouth 14. Air Festival 18. Ashamed 19. Cable 21. Force 22. Typhoon

Down – 1. Lemon 2. Embryo 3. Sty 4. Quarto 5. Risotto 8. Javelin 11. Crushed 13. Mission 15. Fiance 16. Apathy 17. Elbow 20. Wye

RAF word: Transporter



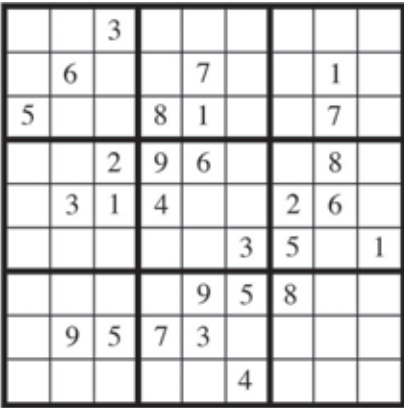
Prize Su Doku

No. 361

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, each column and each 3x3 square contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

Solutions should be sent in a sealed envelope marked 'Su Doku' with the number in the top left-hand corner to RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP14 4UE, to arrive by December 1.

The winner of Su Doku No: 359 is: Mr P G Brewer, Farnham, Surrey.



Solution to Su Doku No: 360

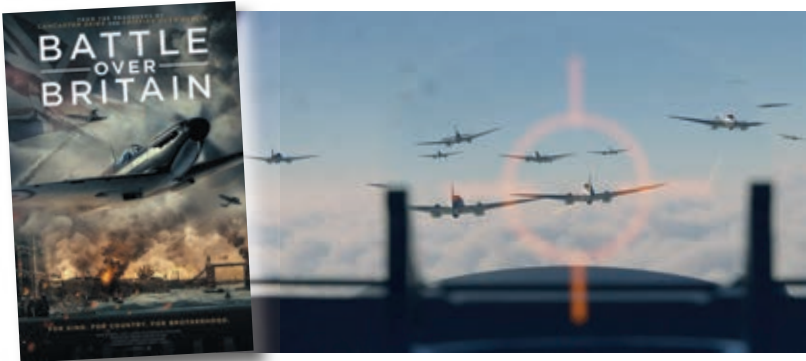
2	8	7	4	6	1	5	9	3
3	1	4	9	5	2	7	6	8
6	9	5	8	3	7	1	4	2
4	7	2	6	1	9	3	8	5
8	6	3	5	7	4	9	2	1
9	5	1	3	2	8	4	7	6
5	2	9	7	8	3	6	1	4
1	4	6	2	9	5	8	3	7
7	3	8	1	4	6	2	5	9



Film

Battle Over Britain

Selected cinemas and on DVD and digital



Bomber County Q&As

A NEW film, *Battle Over Britain*, in selected cinemas from December 1, will host two exclusive Q&A events in Lincolnshire this month, before the wider UK release, with participants including Callum Burn (director and producer), Andrew Burn (producer), Sam Parsons (cinematographer) and actors Chris Clynnes and Vin Hawke.

A throwback to the classic British war films of the 1940s and 50s, *Battle Over Britain* is the third feature from Tin Hat Productions.

Filmed entirely on set in 'Bomber County', two cinemas local to the Tin Hat studios – the Savoy Grantham, and Kinema in the Woods, Woodhall Spa – will host the premieres and Q&As on November 29 at 7:30pm (savoygrantham.co.uk) and November 30, 7:30pm (thekinemainthewoods.co.uk).

At the height of the Battle of Britain, a handful of exhausted Spitfire pilots fight to the last man in defence of their country, in this

World War II drama from the producers of *Lancaster Skies* and *Spitfire Over Berlin*.

A young pilot, fresh out of training, is called to join a Flight while they wait for the call to scramble. Throughout a single day, the skies of southern England are filled with deadly dog fights, and after every exhausting battle the pilots return to the dispersal hut only to find another of their number missing.

Unwilling to surrender, the pilot and his comrades unite to take to the skies once more, determined to defend not only the airfield, but their entire country, ascending into action against fatally overwhelming odds.

Visit the official website: battleofbritain.com for cinema listings and a behind-the-scenes look at the film.

You can buy and rent *Battle Over Britain* (Certificate 15) on digital from January 22, 2024 and it's out on DVD and Blu-ray from January 29.



DVDs

Stanley Tucci: Searching For Italy (E)

Out on DVD and download now (Dazzler Media)

Maigret (15)

Blu-ray/DVD/download (Dazzler Media)

Win travel and crime drama DVDs

THE EMMY award-winning *Stanley Tucci: Searching For Italy* comes home with both of his hit series in one collection on DVD and digital download.



Oscar nominee and much-loved star Tucci (*The Hunger Games* series) travels across Italy tasting the flavours of the land and the sea, discovering the history, secrets and delights of the country's regional cuisines. This is a heart-warming series to own, feel inspired by and enjoy time and again.

GÉRARD DEPARDIEU (*Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Welcome to New York*) brings to life one of the most beloved characters from twentieth century crime fiction in *Maigret*.

It's written and directed by BAFTA-winning filmmaker



Patrice Leconte (*L'homme du train*, *La fille sur le pont*) and is based on Georges Simenon's international bestselling novels. Set in Paris in 1953, the body of a beautiful young woman is discovered at Place Ventimille, dressed in an elegant evening gown. There is nothing



LOOKING FOR CLUES: Depardieu as Maigret in adaptation of Simenon's detective novels

to identify her, and no witnesses. Pensive and world-weary Inspector Jules Maigret (Depardieu) endeavours to piece together her story, and in doing so uncovers details about her past and character.

We have copies of both *Stanley Tucci: Searching For Italy* and *Maigret* on DVD to win. For your chance to own one, tell us:

Who wrote and directed the

new *Maigret* film?

Email your answer, marked Tucci and Maigret DVDs competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe HP14 4UE, to arrive by December 1. Please mark on your entry if you prefer to win the Stanley Tucci or the Maigret title.