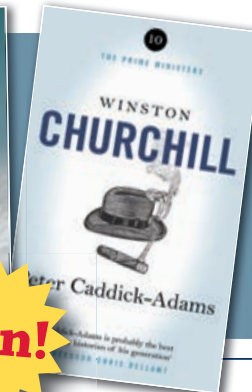


**The Forces' favourite paper**

## New books on Cold War Boys and Churchill

● See pages 14-5 and 19 for competitions



**Win!**

**ROYAL AIR FORCE**

Friday, July 26, 2024  
Edition No. 1589 £1.20

# RAF News

## Royal return – Wills is back at RAF Valley

See page 13



### Rugby It's Cardiff for McNally



● See page 23

### Golf Flt Lt Pucill's masterstroke

● See page 25



### Karting Brize rise to the occasion



● See page 27

# Forces enter the hard power age



THE LAST of The Few, WWII pilot Gp Capt Paddy Hemingway, celebrated his 105th birthday with a surprise from British Embassy staff in Dublin.

● See page 5

### Staff Reporter

ALLIED FORCES must adapt to the threat from Russia and China to avoid all out war, according to Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Knighton.

Speaking at the annual Global Air and Space Chiefs' Conference, he said projecting hard power was crucial to counter the growing threat of conflict and deter enemy regimes.

He said: "We live in a new and dangerous era defined by volatility and insecurity. Russia has continued with its illegal invasion in Ukraine and we have been involved in operations across the Middle East.

"The world is a more dangerous place now than at any time in the 30 years I have been in Service.

"Ukraine is an example of failed deterrence and the cost on both sides has been enormous.

"War is not inevitable but it requires sophisticated thinking and Armed Forces that our foes fear and that our allies value."

● Continued on p3

**WARNING:**  
ACM Sir Richard Knighton





# BiteSize

“I look forward to the challenges and successes ahead,”

First female Provost Marshal WO Adele Good See p13



“There’s no need to worry about time differences with this Olympics,”

New BBC Sports host Olympian Laura Kenny See R’n’R pp4-5



“Cardiff has a great history and a city that is really behind the club,”

Sgt Josh McNally signs for Welsh pro side See p23



# 100-day aid pledge

## Brimstone and AS-90s are heading to Ukraine

**Simon Mander**

**BRIMSTONE MISSILES** used by the RAF are part of a package of support to Ukraine pledged by new Defence Secretary John Healey.

Following talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his counterpart Rustem Umerov, he promised support committed in April would arrive within the next 100 days. He said: “As the new Defence Secretary, I will ensure we reinvigorate Britain’s support by stepping up supplies of vital military aid.”

The new package includes 90 anti-armour Brimstone missiles, a quarter of a million 50 calibre rounds, 10 AS-90 artillery guns and 61 bulldozers.

In April, the UK announced the largest ever military aid package including 1,600 strike and air

defence missiles, as well as Storm Shadows, four million rounds of ammunition and 60 boats.

Having provided more than £7.6 billion of military support since the invasion, more than 42,000 Ukrainian soldiers have also returned to fight after completing basic training in the UK since June 2022, under Operation Interflex.

Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, said: “The recent milestone of 500,000 Russians killed or wounded is a reminder of how badly this war has gone for Russia.”

“Over the past year, with British help, Ukraine has driven the Russian fleet from Crimea and reopened the Black Sea for exports.”

The UK-led international capability coalition has also deployed thousands of drones to Ukraine whilst also boosting the British defence industry.



**AGREEMENT:** Defence Secretary John Healey with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy



**ROYAL AIR FORCE**  
**RAF News**

**RAF News**

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## This Week In History



**1940**

### Stirling debut

THE RAF’S first four-engine bomber, the Stirling, enters service with 7 Sqn at RAF Leeming.

**1955**

### Supersonic ejector

FG OFF Holland becomes the first RAF pilot to eject at supersonic speed when he abandons his Hunter F5 over the North Sea at Mach 1.1.



**1991**

### 18 Sqn welcomes Chinook

18 SQN is reformed at RAF Odiham as the Service’s first heavy transport helicopter unit operating the Chinook HC1.

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



In Brief



NEW ROLE: Air Cdre John Lyle

## Nav lands college post

Simon Mander

AN EX-TORNADO navigator has found his way to Cranwell's top job.

Former F3, E-3D and Shadow aircrew Air Cdre John Lyle has become the 44th Commandant of the Royal Air Force College.

His recent roles include jobs at the newly-formed UK Space Command and chief of the RAF Air Mobility Force.

Now he hopes to inspire, attract, train and develop the next generation of Royal Air Force personnel.

He said: "I could not have imagined that 29 years ago, as I was commissioning from this very college, that I would return in this incredibly rewarding role."

"We are witnessing a shifting of the geopolitical tectonic plates, and more than at any time in the last 30 years we need to be prepared to demonstrate our willingness and preparedness to defend UK interests at home and abroad."

# Flypast honour for last VC hero



LANDMARK FLIGHT: Catalina flies over the Scottish mainland and islands as a tribute to Mr Cruickshank, pictured right. Below, Wartime Catalina



Simon Mander

THE HEROIC exploits of Britain's last surviving World War II VC holder have been marked with a special flypast.

In July 1944, Flt Lt John Cruickshank won the honour piloting a flying boat of 210 Sqn out of RAF Sullom Voe in Shetland – one of only two of the medals given to Catalina pilots.

Three weeks earlier, Canadian Flt Lt David Hornell was awarded his posthumously for flying a 162 Sqn Catalina out of RAF Wick.

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the awards a flight from the Imperial War Museum Duxford flew over RAF Coastal Command bases and land in Aberdeen, where 104-year-old John Cruickshank lives, before continuing to Sumburgh, Shetland.

Another flight was launched over Lerwick New Cemetery and Sullom Voe before returning to Duxford, overflying former bases at Wick, Invergordon, Alness, Inverness and Oban.

Cruickshank's first attack on German submarine U-361 failed as depth charges



did not release. And despite being hit 72 times, including twice in the lungs, Cruickshank refused morphine so as not to affect his judgement.

His second pilot flew the aircraft for five-and-a-half hours homewards while his captain lapsed in and out of consciousness.

But Cruickshank landed the aircraft and ran it ashore to stop it from sinking and needed a blood transfusion before he could be taken to hospital.

Cruickshank's crew were FS JS Garnett, FS John Appleton, Navigator F/O JC 'Dickie'

Dickson, Flt Eng 'Paddy' Harbison, Sgt I Fidler, W/O WC Jenkins, FS Gershenson, FS AI Cretan and Sgt RSC Procter.

Dickson was killed on board from gunfire and is buried in Lerwick New Cemetery.

Earlier, Flt Lt David Hornell won a posthumous VC for attacking U-1225.

Flying a 162 Sqn Catalina out of RAF Wick despite the aircraft being on fire and losing the starboard engine, Hornell managed to land it on a heavy swell.

The crew took the only serviceable dinghy and were rescued 21 hours later.

Two flight engineers, Scott & Laurent, and Hornell died. He is buried in Lerwick New Cemetery.

Hornell's crew were F/O BC Denomy, F/O SE Matheson, F/O G Campbell, FS IJ Bodnoff, FS SR Cole, Sgt DS Scott and Sgt F St Laurent.

The commemorative Catalina flying boat is based at Duxford and is the last one still flying outside of the Americas.

● To support the commemorative flight go to: [gofund.me/9c48a414](https://gofund.me/9c48a414)

## 'Our enemies must fear us' - CAS

● Continued from front

"Deterrence has to be active. Hard power really does matter. What we say matters, but what we do matters more."

To meet the growing threat in Europe and the Indo Pacific, Allied forces must embrace the Agile Combat Deployment tactics, he added.

The Air Force chief also highlighted the growing role of UAV platforms and drones in any future conflict.

He said: "Autonomous systems are going to form a fundamental part of future force structure –

"The future is going to be a high and low mix of equipment.

"Our Autonomous Collaborative Platform strategy describes how we will develop that capability and how it will help lethality and survivability.

"We are committed to delivering a useable operationally useful capability by the end of this financial year.

"But it doesn't mean we are going to throw away all of our modern equipment.

"Today we have the most modern kit we have ever had throughout our history.

"But we are in danger of capability stagnation if we view it as sufficient for the challenges we face today."

The annual event in London brings together air chiefs from across Nato and allied nations.

Speaking at the event, new Minister for the Armed Forces Luke Pollard added: "If we are to get Britain's fighting forces fit to deter our adversaries and defeat them if necessary, we must be ready for the profound step changes in warfare we are seeing in our increasingly volatile and contested world."



SHOW OF FORCE: CAS, Sir Rich Knighton, during a recent visit to Akrotiri





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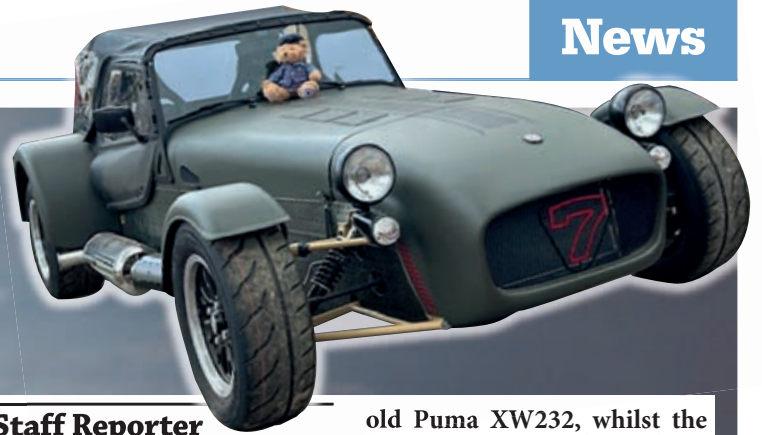




# Caterham corps cooks up £100k Puma tribute



**FRONTLINE AIR POWER:** Puma has served on combat and humanitarian missions worldwide; inset right, RAF personnel test out the Caterham



## Staff Reporter

UK CAR legend Caterham has teamed up with RAF motorsport aces to produce a special edition of their classic Seven 360R hot-rod using panels and components from a retired Puma helicopter.

The roadster, which can hit 60mph in under 5 seconds and top 130mph, will be auctioned off to raise cash for the RAF Benevolent Fund and Forces charity Mission Motorsport.

Body panels on the car have been kept as they were on the recently retired 50-year-

old Puma XW232, whilst the remaining parts have been painted matching Nato green. The chassis has been finished in desert sand.

The unique racer is a collaboration between Mission Motorsport, RAF Benson and Caterham and is expected to raise £100,000 for the charities.

RAFBF regional director Neil Tomlin said: "The completed car showcases the engineering excellence of those who have taken part in building this truly unique Caterham while simultaneously raising awareness of both charities supporting serving and retired military personnel and their families."



# Paddy's in the picture

## Simon Mander

STAFF AT the British Embassy in Dublin hosted a unique exhibition to honour the last of The Few, Gp Capt John 'Paddy' Hemingway, as he celebrated his 105th birthday.

Deputy UK Ambassador Elin Burns unveiled the pictures by British artist Dan Llywelyn Hall at a party to mark the event, attended by serving members of the RAF and generations of his family.

Paddy said: "I am here because I had the staggering luck to fight alongside great pilots, flying magnificent aircraft, with the best ground crew, in the best air force in the world."

"It has been a pleasure to ask Dan to capture some moments of my life in his portraits."

"I hope to see you all again. Next year."

**"I had the staggering luck to fight alongside great pilots, in magnificent aircraft"**

Pilot Officer Hemingway joined 85 Sqn and took part in the Battle of France.

In May 1940, Paddy destroyed a He-111, the following day he downed a Do-17 but his Hurricane was hit by anti-aircraft



fire, forcing him down.

Returning to the UK, 85 Sqn became a front-line Fighter Command unit in the Battle of Britain.

His logbook records flying five

sorties a day and bailing out twice.

In July 1941, Paddy was awarded the DFC and served as an Air Fighter Controller during the Allied invasion of Normandy.

In 1945, he commanded 43

Sqn in Italy, bailed out a fourth time when his Spitfire was hit and returned with the help of Italian partisans.

Artist Llywelyn Hall said: "I have emphasised different facets of

John's rich personality as a proud Irishman who occupies an utterly unique moment in our history."

The portraits will be auctioned for Trinity Nursing Home in Dublin, where Paddy lives.



# Royal Air Force In Concert

## **CAST, Doncaster**

Band of the Royal Air Force College

Thursday 19 September

## **Palace Theatre, Newark**

Band of the Royal Air Force College

Friday 20 September

## **Playhouse, Weston Super Mare**

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

Friday 27 September

## **West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge**

Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment

Friday 4 October

## **Terry O'Toole Theatre, Lincoln**

Royal Air Force Swing Wing

Friday 25 October

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### Tracey Allen

THOUSANDS OF Forces fundraisers across the world saddled up for this year's Royal Air Forces Association Ride.

In the UK 1,900 cyclists hit the road at Marham, Brize Norton and Leeming, while veterans and personnel across the globe staged their own events to support the welfare group.

Among them was 77-year-old RAF veteran Stephen Poulton, who put his pedal power to the test at Brize.

He said: "I was stationed at RAF Brize Norton for two years, so taking part felt natural to me. It was a chance to challenge my fitness and support an organisation I'm familiar with. It was a very enjoyable event."



### In Brief



### Simply the Fest

MORE THAN 4,000 Service personnel, families, veterans and guests attended this year's Lossie-Fest.

The Moray station's annual families day included displays by Typhoons, F-35s and US Air Force Fighting Falcons, along with traditional Scottish entertainment from the Lossiemouth Pipes.



US ROLE: AM Paul Godfrey

## New face in space

AIR MARSHAL Paul Godfrey is crossing the Atlantic to start a new role with the US Space Force.

The former inaugural boss of UK Space Command assumed the role of US Assistant Chief of Space Operations last month.

He will advise US space chief Gen Chance Saltzman on space superiority, resilience and international partnerships.

AM Godfrey said: "Space is a team sport and we cannot hope to maintain competitive without a coalition of like-minded nations committed to responsible behaviours."

Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Rich Knighton, said: "The US is one of our closest partners in space and AM Godfrey's appointment will strengthen the special relationship we have with our allies."

The new UK Space Command head is Army Air Corps pilot Maj Gen Paul Tedman (pictured left), who takes over after command positions in the UK and the US, and operations in the Balkans, Africa, Afghanistan, and Iraq.



# Aloha!



JOINING THE RIMPAC: CXX Sqn Poseidon crews receive a warm welcome in Hawaii

## Lossie sub-hunters land in Honolulu

Staff Reporter  
Honolulu

UK SUB-HUNTER aircraft deployed to Hawaii for the first time from their Scottish home.

P-8 Maritime Patrol jets covered 7,000 nautical miles to Honolulu via a refuelling stop at Goose Bay, Canada and overnight stay near Seattle.

The UK crews were greeted

by Indian Navy Captain A K Singh, Deputy Commander of Combined Task Force 172 for the exercise.

It is the furthest and longest duration Poseidons have gone for training to date and crews will operate in a wide variety of operational scenarios, including disaster relief.

CXX and 201 Sqn will train alongside other maritime patrol

squadrons, fighter aircraft, 40 surface ships and three submarines.

Engineering and operations support personnel will also work alongside multinational colleagues.

Gp Capt Pete Thorbjornsen said: "We work closely with allied and partner nations in the Indo-Asia Pacific to improve interoperability, enhance security and provide disaster relief in

humanitarian crises.

"RIMPAC [Rim of the Pacific] will help strengthen and reinforce these relationships and demonstrates our commitment to a free and open region."

Air Cdre Mark Farrell added: "The exercise is a clear illustration of the RAF's ability to project airpower to the other side of the world in support of allies and partners if required."



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# Proven capability in an uncertain world



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## Isle of Man T2



A TRIO of 4 Sqn Hawk T2s performed a flypast over St John's on the Isle of Man to mark Tynwald Day, the islanders' national celebration. PHOTO: AS1 ALEX NAUGHALTY

### In Brief



**SOLO EFFORT:** Microlight instructor Eddie McDowell raised money for Battle of Britain Memorial Trust in Kent

## Eddie's got the readies

### Malcolm Triggs

AN INTREPID microlight instructor has raised more than £1,100 for a memorial to the Battle of Britain based at the other end of the country from him.

Eddie McDowell took his Quik GT450 flexwing on an epic 'longest day' adventure which saw him spend 12 hours flying around the Scottish mainland, the Orkney Isles and a smattering of the Inner and Outer Hebrides.

His remarkable sponsored solo flight, which covered 750 miles at an airspeed of just over 70mph, started and finished at the historic Balado Airfield and raised £1,120 for the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust based at Capel-le-Ferne in Kent.

During his trip he flew over, approached or landed at 30 airfields on what was one of the longest solo one-day trips ever attempted.

He said: "It was a fantastic adventure and I am proud of what I achieved and glad that I was able to raise money for such a fantastic cause as the Battle of Britain Memorial."

Eddie, who lives in Edinburgh, has a full private pilot's licence and trains people to fly both fixed wing and flexwing microlights.

## Navy goes it alone with F-35 flight

**THE FIRST** Royal Navy squadron to operate the F-35B fighter jet has completed its first independent operational sortie in the aircraft.

Operated by 809 Naval Air Sqn, the aircraft was flown by an 809 pilot, as well as being maintained, dispatched and recovered solely by 809 personnel.

# Pacific heights

## UK and French fighters joining forces Down Under on Exercise Pitch Black

### Simon Mander

UK TYPHOONS have joined units from 19 other nations Down Under for training this summer.

Six jets from Coningsby-based XI (F) Sqn are to work with the French Air Force for the three-week exercise in Australia.

And both countries have set up a Combined Joint Expeditionary Force to get the 10,000 miles to their destination.

As part of Exercise Griffin Strike, airborne Voyager tanker and transport aircraft from both nations will support fighters on the mammoth journey.

"As both nations are taking part, we have grasped the opportunity to combine projection of air power to the other side of the world," said 11 Group Assistant Chief of Staff Plans, Air Cdre Mark Farrell.

"This is an ideal activity to assess a combined headquarters in real time, rather than as an exercise," he added.

The Typhoons and Brize Norton-based Voyager and A400M tankers joined up with French Rafale and Phoenix aircraft at Intres Airbase in southern France and after stops in the Middle East and Singapore, arrived in Darwin, Australia.



**FRENCH CONNECTION:** Air Cdre Farrell leads parade at Istres Le Tube PHOTO: AS1 EOIN KIRWAN-TAYLOR

It's not the first time 11(F) Sqn have exercised in the Indo-Pacific region as last year they were in Malaysia on Ex Bersama Lima.

Both countries joined the

Royal Australian Air Force-led biennial air war fighting Exercise Pitch Black, the largest in its 43-year history bringing together 20 nations and more than 140 aircraft, with 4,500 personnel participating.

The manoeuvres are conducted primarily from RAAF bases at Darwin and Tindal in the Northern Territory, with additional aircraft operating from RAAF Base Amberley, located near Ipswich in Queensland.



## News



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# Clean sweep honours Mat



**BEACH BLITZ:** Members of 83 EAG get to work as part of project inspired by Guardsman Mathew Talbot

## Simon Mander

AIR FORCE personnel turned beachcombers in memory of a soldier killed by an elephant he was trying to protect.

A team from 83 Expeditionary Air Group took time off from organising humanitarian aid drops into Gaza and striking of Houthi targets to take part in the Global Charge initiative.

The scheme was set up after the death of Coldstream Guardsman Mathew Talbot, pictured right, in 2019 who died on a counter-poaching mission to Malawi.

Personnel took to the

beach to collect rubbish from glass shards and water bottles, known for starting bush fires, to larger items such as old parasols and tyres.

Members of 901, 902, 903 and 906 Expeditionary Air Wings undertook the work to ensure the area was habitable for marine turtles wishing to lay eggs.

So far more than 10,000 military personnel have taken part in various environmental efforts all over the world. In the last year they hosted more than 100 different events, from cleaning riverbeds to tree planting and bridge building.



# Saddle score

## Staff Reporter

CONINGSBY FUNDRAISER Darryl Pettit put in a non-stop 24-hour shift in the saddle to net £2,000 for mental health charity Combat Stress.

The Air Traffic Controller led a team of 30 volunteers, who clocked up more than 1,400km during the exercise bike marathon.

He was also joined by Station Commander Gp Capt Pablo O'Grady, who put in a shift, as Station WO Nikki Nolan boosted the fundraising total by collecting donations from personnel and visitors at the station gate.

Darryl said: "We wanted to do something notable to raise money for Combat Stress for the incredible work they do for veterans."

"Military trauma shouldn't destroy the lives of veterans and their families."



**PEDAL POWER:** Darryl during his incredible 24-hour stint on the exercise bike; left, Station WO Nikki Nolan on collection duty





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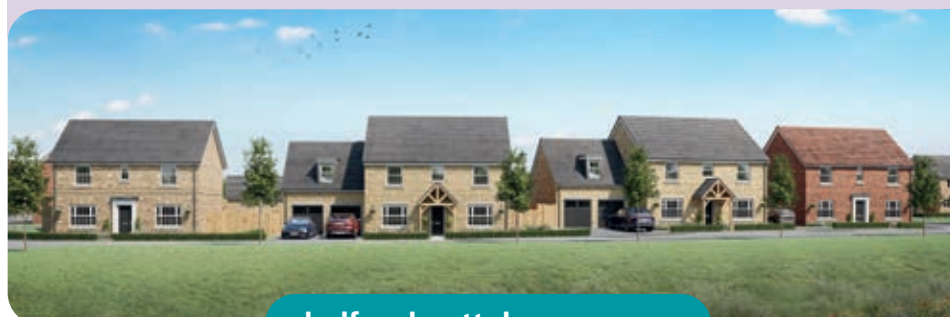
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In Brief



**FAMILIES' FAVOURITE:** Museum delivers top day out, says international travel site Tripadvisor

## Museum hits global top ten

THE RAF Museum Midlands has been voted one the world's top 10 family days out – according to a visitor satisfaction poll.

The Cosford venue netted the coveted rating in the annual Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice survey, which rates attractions worldwide.

Museum operations chief Alan Edwards said: "We are honoured to be included among travellers' favourites this year and extend our heartfelt thanks to every visitor who left us a review."

"This accolade is a testament to the exceptional work of our staff and volunteers, who ensure our visitors have an outstanding experience."



## Mountain scramble

VALLEY'S MOUNTAIN Rescue experts were called in to assist local emergency services when a walker fell and suffered a serious leg injury on Mount Snowdon.

The team worked with local rescue services to evacuate the climber from the peak to a nearby road, where they were transferred to an ambulance.

# Wills fired up by return to Valley



**ROYAL REUNION:** HRH Prince William is escorted by Valley Station Commander Gp Capt Gerard Currie. Inset right, with the station's fire fighters. Below, Wills chats to Service families PHOTOS: CPL GARETH MCGARVIE



### Tracey Allen

HRH PRINCE William climbed into the hot seat to take part in a firefighting drill as he returned to RAF Valley where he spent three years as a Search and Rescue helicopter pilot.

Heavy rain failed to dampen the Royal pilot's sense of nostalgia as he quipped: "It wouldn't feel like home if I wasn't back here on a day like this."

After dousing flames alongside Valley's firefighters during the simulated emergency call-out, the Prince of Wales met with personnel and families stationed at the base, home to IV Sqn which trains the UK's next



generation of fighter pilots.

As part of the tour Prince William also visited the Air Traffic Control Tower to learn

more about a £44 million project to refurbish RAF Valley's second runway, before joining squadron

engineers and flying instructors.

The visit to the Anglesey Station is the Prince's first since he took on the position of Honorary Air Commodore at Valley following the coronation of King Charles.

As part of his official duties His Royal Highness also presented the Prince of Wales Award, which recognises the best Qualified Flying Instructor, to Flt Lt Jake Fleming.

Before leaving the station the Prince joined the RAF Valley Mountain Rescue team – the only specialist military unit of its kind in the UK, which remains on 24-hour standby to deploy to some of the nation's most remote locations.



## Top cop appointed Provost Marshal's WO

TOP COP Adele Good is to become the first female Provost Marshal's Warrant Officer next month.

WO Good, who was awarded the MBE in 2022 for her work with the RAF Special Investigations Branch on sexual offences, has

completed tours on Operation Telic, Kipion, Herrick and Shader.

She has also deployed with Nato and the British Army, and most recently was Royal Navy Force Protection and Security advisor in Bahrain.

In her new post WO Good will be involved in all areas of RAF Police business including

mentoring, welfare and maintaining high professional and personal standards.

She said: "I look forward to the challenges and successes ahead representing and serving the professional, talented and committed personnel who will be at the heart of everything that I do."



## Feature

## Cold War Boys



HARRIER GR3: Dispersed-site landing

# Cold War person globe had wor

**U**NTIL THE end of the Cold War, the RAF had a global presence with large bases in Germany, the Middle East and in the Far East. There was a period post war when almost half the RAF served overseas. Many were on bases established between the two World Wars, with excellent facilities for those who worked and lived there. Not only was the flying very varied and exciting, but serving overseas was a different way of life, a lifestyle for RAF personnel and their families that no longer exists in today's Service.

The contributors to *Cold War Boys Overseas* recall their time on bases spread across the world. The early chapters highlight the response to the Soviet threat in the Central Region of NATO by those who served on the large bases in Germany. The opening chapter is written by a pilot who flew the Swift and the Hunter in the fighter reconnaissance role, and it is followed by two chapters on the Canberra, one in the photo reconnaissance role and the other tasked in the strike role.

### Commanders

These are followed by squadron and flight commanders, relating how the newer generation of 'fast jets' assumed those roles. Chapters on the Phantom and the Lightning are reminders of the potency of those iconic aircraft. Other chapters take the reader into 'the field' as operations with the Harrier, Wessex and Chinook are vividly described. The German section concludes with a pilot describing how the Tornado was the last type to operate in Germany in the strike role.

All these chapters remind the reader of low-level flying, sometimes in less-than-ideal weather, exercises and detachments with NATO allies and the need to maintain quick reaction alerts (QRA) on the air defence and strike squadrons – deterrent requirements that were cheerfully accepted despite the personal inconvenience.

Many squadrons served in the Near

East with Shackletons operating from Malta and patrolling the Mediterranean. Canberra PR9s, also based in Malta, carried out surveys and photo reconnaissance sorties over Africa and as far away as the Pacific – all with some crews on a first tour when many were under 25 and still ineligible for a marriage allowance and a Service married quarter. At one stage there were five Canberra squadrons based in Cyprus and they were joined by Vulcans who were assigned to CENTO and continued to have a nuclear role. Chapters on each graphically highlight how both types operated over a huge area of the Middle East and Asia, landing at airfields

that no longer feature in RAF activities.

The scene shifts to Aden where Hunters were in action against Yemeni-supported dissident tribes in Radfan. As independence drew closer, the risk to families increased but life continued. A Beverley navigator relates the role of the huge transport as it supported special forces, local Levies and 'up-country' RAF detachments. The groundcrew perspective of life on a Hunter squadron is covered in an excellent chapter. Hunters operated in the Gulf and Wessex helicopters flew from the spartan base at Sharjah, where personnel served unaccompanied. Here they supported the Trucial Oman Scouts in the rugged inland

jebel country. Both justify a chapter each.

RAF bases had been established in the Far East in the 1920s and those who served later enjoyed new experiences in that fascinating part of the world. Not surprisingly, the Hunter and Canberra feature again, but in a very different environment. Flying from Hong Kong presented some unique problems, and a pilot describes his experiences flying the Venom before converting to the Hunter.

The challenges that arose from the Indonesian Confrontation are well covered, with Canberras at the bare base at Kuantan in northern Malaysia and helicopters operating deep into the jungle in Borneo.



ON TOP OF THE WORLD: Wessex makes a precarious landing in the hinterland at Sharjah, UAE 1971



# nnel across the ld at their feet

**New book highlights the  
rewards *and* challenges  
of RAF overseas service**



The many remote Army outposts were resupplied by Hastings operating from Changi and a junior supply officer describes his experiences supporting operations at Kuantan and in Borneo – he was just 21.

Finally, just before withdrawal from so many of these ‘overseas’ bases in the late 1960s, a Hercules pilot takes the reader from Singapore across the Indian Ocean and to outposts in Southeast Asia, bringing the book to a fitting conclusion.

Throughout, there is a powerful sense of the excitement of serving overseas, the different, often demanding, flying experiences, the unique opportunities to discover different cultures, and the

majority shared by one’s family.

This book will bring back many memories for those who served overseas and highlight for later generations a very different way of RAF life.

In his foreword to the book, former Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns, writes: “This is a treasure trove of memories of overseas tours, when they were part of a routine career pattern. How heartening it is to read recollections that evince personal pride in achievement and a can-do attitude that was the equal of operational challenges with service in the Far East, Middle East and Germany. I very much hope that it gains the service and public acclaim it so richly deserves.”



**DUSTY:** A Beverley on desert airstrip in Aden



**SHIRTS OFF:** Arming a Hunter in Khormaksar



**TERRAIN-MASKING:** Swift FR.5 flying low over Germany



**SARAWAK:** Two 110 Sqn Whirlwinds at Nanga Gaat

## Competition

**Win!**

WE HAVE copies of *Cold War Boys Overseas* to win.

For your chance to own one, answer this question: *Who wrote the foreword to the book?*

Email your answer, marked Cold War Boys Overseas competition, to: [tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk](mailto: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 August 9.





## Squadron Leader John Peters Gulf War PoW

**Tuesday 17th September 2024 at 7pm**  
**RAF Coltishall Heritage Centre, Norwich NR10 5FB**

John Peters came to the world's attention in January 1991 during the first Gulf War, when his bruised and battered face flashed onto television screens around the world. It was his disfigured image that became a potent symbol of Saddam Hussein's ruthless aggression. His dramatic and sometimes harrowing experiences reach deep into our innermost minds, showing us how we can overcome even our worst fears and nightmares. His war was not all as he expected – it became a seven-week ordeal of torture and interrogation testing John Peters to the absolute limit and bringing him close to death. By no means a doom and gloom story, his insights are powerful, passionate, emotive & challenging with an innate sense of humour.

John started his career as an RAF fast-jet pilot flying Tornado GR1. Many will remember him from the first Gulf War in 1991 as the bruised and battered POW who was paraded on Iraqi State television. Subsequently, he has written two best-selling books on his experiences; 'Tornado Down' and 'Team Tornado', and the

documentary; 'Tornado Down' was Independent Documentary of the Year and a BAFTA Award Nominee.

This experience sparked an international business speaker reputation that has spanned the last 30 years. Of note, he was the sole reader representing the British Armed Forces at the National Gulf Memorial Service, in front of Her Majesty, The Queen, presented the Sir James Martin Lecture at the Royal Aeronautical Society in the presence of Prince Philip, and has followed Mr Nelson Mandela on stage in South Africa.

In 2000, John retired from the RAF to start his own management consultancy firm. Working internationally with corporates, business schools, government and the Third Sector, Monkey Business provides business critical development, consulting and coaching through a leadership lens. John lives in the Worcestershire countryside with his wife, Helen, and dog Spartacus. His son is a City banker and daughter an Event Manager.



Come and listen to Squadron Leader John Peters share his incredible story as a Prisoner of War. An inspirational talk that you won't want to miss. Tickets are priced at £30 each and include refreshments.

To book please scan the QR code or email:  
Carl Lamb - [carl.lamb1988@gmail.com](mailto:carl.lamb1988@gmail.com)





**DOMINIE:** The RAF version of the Dragon Rapide, used to train navigators and wireless operators

# Art of war

Some military aircraft are plain works of art, as aviation enthusiast *Ronan Thomas* found on a recent flight in an ex-RAF Rapide which this year marks its 90th anniversary



**JUST CAPITAL:** View of London from the air captured on mobile phone camera



**“T**ODAY WE take jet flight for granted. But airlines used to be different. In the 1930s, the British aviation industry was in its infancy, operating piston-engine biplanes built of wood, metal, and fabric. Then, as now, it was rare to fly in a biplane.

In 1934, a new airliner took off – the De Havilland DH 89 Dragon Rapide. Those who flew in it knew it was something special, and it still is.

The Rapide was made of plywood and fabric and had swept-back wings resembling the shape of a moth – it was an airliner for the Art Deco age.

At 34 feet long with a 48-foot wingspan, it was powered by two De Havilland Gipsy Six engines – each producing 200 horsepower. It had a range of up to 556 miles (or four hours flying time) a ceiling of 16,000 feet, at an airspeed of between 135-157mph. Along with the pilot, the Rapide carried between six and eight passengers and their luggage.

Built at De Havilland's factory at Hatfield, Hertfordshire, the Rapide also found Royal favour. By 1935, it was the preferred aircraft for the new King's Flight and Edward, Prince of Wales (briefly King Edward VIII) and Prince George, Duke of Kent, were ex-RAF pilots who used two red and blue liveried DH 89s for official duties. In 1936, King Edward flew one to London in a first for a British monarch.

Biplanes began to be replaced by monoplanes as World War II approached but a military variant – the Dominie – was also produced. A total of 728 were built and by the end of the war more than 100 were sold as light airliners.

Rapides were operated on short haul routes to and from the Channel Islands, the Isles of Scilly and in Scotland. Today, 43 aircraft survive in museums, 17 of them airworthy. The silver Rapide I flew in was built in 1946 and was formerly an RAF parachuting aircraft.

Eight passengers climbed



**DREAM FLIGHT:** Ronan at Duxford before his hour-long Rapide adventure

in from the rear using a dangling rope but inside it was comfortable, and everyone had a window seat. A small escape hatch in the cabin roof above was secured by two metal pins and with daylight showing through a small gap between the seal in the door, my first thought was that I was in an Agatha Christie film.

Belted into bucket seats, the

pilot warmed the Rapide's twin engines up and we took off. Heading south from Duxford, we reached an altitude of around 1,500ft under the cloud at around 100mph.

Light aircraft passed us and although the cabin was enclosed an opening in the cockpit let airflow circulate and the view of the airliner's silver wing struts and bracing wires

soon began to feel natural.

The twin piston engines resonated and there was little turbulence on the hour-long trip and the Rapide gently bucked as countryside gave way to congested London.

It is extraordinary to bank gracefully in a vintage aircraft over the capital and the Thames passed below, along with Parliament, Buckingham Palace, Tower Bridge and Battersea Power Station (another Art Deco icon built between 1929-1941). At 1,016ft high the Shard seemed to reach up at us as we passed above.

On our return, the pilot throttled the twin engines back and we landed smoother than in a modern airliner. It was an RAF Art Deco marvel from start to finish.

Duxford Airfield in Cambridgeshire is Britain's home of vintage flying and last month celebrated the 80th anniversary of D-Day, with a Battle of Britain display set for the coming weeks. It's a marvellous experience of history, sight, and sound.”



# Under The Disc

A newly formed group led by RAF Odiham to unite serving and ex-serving personnel who have worked closely with the Chinook Force.

***Under The Disc** aims to **bring together current and ex-serving members** of the Armed Forces who are working or have previously worked closely with the Chinook Force. The aim is to **reconnect, socialise, and most importantly remain part of the Chinook family!***

For its inaugural event, members will be invited to RAF Odiham for a coffee morning hosted by the Chinook Force Commander, Group Captain Matt Roberts alongside attendance from SSAFA, RAFA and RAF Benevolent Fund. The event will take place on **Tuesday 10 September 2024** in 18(B) Squadron's hangar where food and drink will be provided. Further details will be communicated to members in due course.



To become a member, please send your name, email address and details of your affiliation with the Chinook Force to Squadron Leader Adam Calvesbert.

Contact email: [adam.calvesbert362@mod.gov.uk](mailto:adam.calvesbert362@mod.gov.uk)



SUPPORTED BY



**Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund**

Under The Disc is based at RAF Odiham, Hampshire. RAF Odiham is the home of the UK Chinook Force, operating three Chinook squadrons, 18(B) Sqn, 27 Sqn and 7 Sqn.  
28 Sqn is a training squadron based at RAF Benson.



By Tracey Allen

Feature

# The psychology of war

**A** MAJOR new temporary exhibition exploring the psychological dimensions of war opens this autumn at London's Imperial War Museum.

*War and the Mind*, running from September 27 to April 27, 2025, presents a unique perspective on how humans start, experience and make sense of the conflicts that have shaped and shattered our world – through IWM collections and ground-breaking research projects funded by the UK Research and Innovation Arts and Humanities Research Council, said an IWM spokesperson.

The exhibition features more than 150 objects from IWM's collections, offering insights into conflicts spanning more than a hundred years, from World War I to the War in Afghanistan (2001–2021).

Laura Clouting, lead curator of *War and the Mind*, said: "War is often thought of in physical terms – its violence and destruction. But arguably, its most significant impacts are psychological. Group identity

## How conflict affects the mind



**EXHIBITS:** Amphetamine pills issued to Allied soldiers in WWII and, inset below, a baby's mitten carried by his rear gunner father on Lancaster bomber raids

– 'us' versus 'them' – shapes the hatred and hostilities that cause and sustain conflict.

"Each person's emotional experience of conflict is unique, from fears to thrills, from endurance to despair. Human thought, emotion and behaviour are critical to why humans start, fight, endure and end wars. *War and the Mind* asks visitors to rethink conflict through this psychological lens."

The spokesperson explained:

"War is an assault upon the senses. First-person testimony shows how going into battle can feel terrifying, or even thrilling. Camaraderie can buoy the will to 'keep going' in the most extreme environments, but battle causes severe stress. The psychological importance of morale and discipline is recognised by the Armed Forces.

"Objects on display include amphetamine tablets issued to Allied soldiers to help them overcome the debilitating psychological effects of fatigue and a newly-acquired mitten

belonging to the baby son of an Avro Lancaster bomber rear gunner who carried it for comfort while on dangerous operations during the Second World War."

A Protect and Survive booklet (below) issued in Britain in 1980 indicates how the government responded to the widespread terror caused by much-feared nuclear weapons and geopolitical tensions during the Cold War.

Professor Christopher Smith, executive chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, said: "From drone warfare to psychological warfare, from the medical discoveries arising from war to the lessons from the past for our contemporary world, this exhibition showcases not just the impact of war on the mind, but also the power of multidisciplinary research that melds arts and humanities with science."

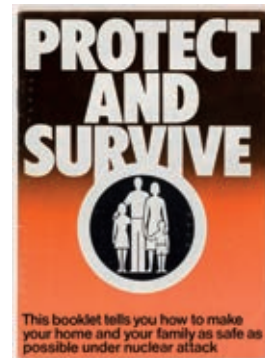
*War and the Mind* will be accompanied by a programme



**SHOW OF SUPPORT:** Falklands T-shirt

of activity at IWM London. A choir performance developed by veterans from Soldier Arts Academy and soprano Laura Wright in response to the exhibition's themes will be performed on September 28 to coincide with the exhibition's opening weekend. This will be alongside a 'Conflict Café', where museum visitors can spend time talking to veterans, civilian survivors of conflict and mental health practitioners who work with veterans. And throughout its run, *War and the Mind* will also be accompanied by expert talks, including a lecture day.

● Go to: [iwm.org.uk](http://iwm.org.uk) for more information.



This booklet tells you how to make your home and your family as safe as possible under nuclear attack

## Competition

# How WWI prepared Churchill for greatness

**I**N HIS new biography of Winston Churchill, acclaimed historian Peter Caddick-Adams shows that the recipe for the politician's success during his wartime premiership of 1940-45 can be found in World War I.

In *Winston Churchill*, the first in a new concise biography series published by Swift Press, he argues that Britain's survival under Churchill was precisely because the nation, and its leaders, had undergone a 'dress rehearsal' in 1914-18; conscription, rationing, convoys, air raids, mass production, women's uniformed services, coalitions and war cabinet. It had all happened before.

Caddick-Adams said: "The only British premier to take part in a cavalry charge under fire, he [Churchill] was also the first to possess an atomic weapon. Besides being known as an animal breeder, aristocrat, aviator, beekeeper, big game hunter, bon vivant, bricklayer, broadcaster, connoisseur of fine wines and tobacco, essayist, gambler, global traveller, horseman, journalist, landscape gardener, lepidopterist, monarchist, newspaper editor, Nobel Prize winner, novelist, orchid-collector, parliamentarian, polo player, prison escapee, rose-grower, sailor, soldier, speechmaker, statesman, war correspondent, war hero, warlord and wit, one of his many lives was that of writer-historian."

He added that Churchill was the author of one novel and 30 non-fiction books and published 27 volumes of speeches in his lifetime, as well as thousands of newspaper dispatches, book chapters and magazine articles.

In 2002 he came first in a BBC poll of the 100 Greatest Britons.

Caddick-Adams noted: "As much a global figure as a British politician, Churchill was one of the first international media celebrities. Something of a lifelong dandy, with his many uniforms (he was both an honorary colonel and an honorary air commodore) and hats, watch chains and



**PM:** Churchill inspects damage inflicted on a hotel in Ramsgate, Kent by Luftwaffe raid the night before, August 28, 1940. © IWM

walking canes, silk dressing gowns and siren suits, spotted bow ties and ever-present cigars, he was a man of props, which boosted his familiarity to people in the pre-television age."

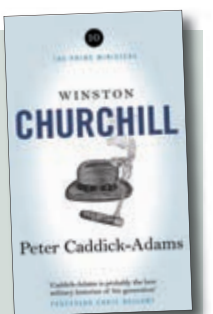
*Icons of British Fashion*, a recent exhibition at his birthplace, Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, included a special smoking cap designed by milliner Stephen Jones, paying homage to Churchill as 2024 marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth. Inspiration for the traditional velvet cap featuring his embroidered initials, button and tassels, came from Churchill's iconic siren suit and slippers. The

Win!

YOU COULD win a copy of *Winston Churchill* by Peter Caddick-Adams. For your chance to own one, tell us:

What was the first name of Churchill's wife?

Email your answer, marked Churchill book competition, to: [tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk](mailto: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 August 9.



cap's lining has a hand-embroidered clementine, in honour of his wife, Clementine.

Winston and 'Clemmie' were married for 57 years and had four children, including Sarah (1914-82) who worked in photo intelligence for the WAAF and went with her father to the Tehran and Yalta conferences.

Caddick-Adams explained: "In this volume on his premiership...I have dwelled at length on Winston's earlier life, for the hinterland to 1940 explains how he acquired the personal tools to deliver a wartime Prime Ministership so effectively during 1940-45.

"He himself felt drawn not just to politics, but to the highest tier of governance, and often recorded a sense of destiny guiding his actions. Churchill truly believed he was destined for greatness, to the extent that he saved everything he wrote."





**F**RANCE CAPTIVATES travellers with a rich blend of history, culture and cuisine, set against a background of picture-postcard vistas. Vibrant cities, historic towns and bustling villages all await, each with unique character. If you're looking to experience the unspoilt side of this wonderfully varied country, a great place to start is Hauts-de-France, in the north.

As I write, I'm listening to the musical bells in Arras city hall chiming the hour. A soft sound, carried across the ancient city on a warm summer breeze. My morning had started with a stroll around the oldest part of the city, during which I'd stopped at a pretty café, sitting outside to enjoy tea and cake. At that point, I was in one of Arras' picturesque market squares, 'Place des Héros', surrounded by 17th and 18th-century style Flemish Baroque houses. It was an almost magical experience.

A second, slightly larger, square called Grand' Place, sits almost adjacent and is just as pretty. My view, however, was perfect and I could have stayed there for hours. I was facing the imposing Flemish Gothic city hall, with its ornate clock tower. The warm morning sun, the city buzz around the cobblestoned square and the most delicious cakes in Europe... That's how to start a day, I thought.

Having finished my tea, I wandered a few streets away to where I was staying, Hôtel de l'Univers. Now I found myself sitting in a 16th century bedroom, with the huge windows open and a slightly more distant view of the clock tower. Travel writer hat on, laptop fired up and here we go... Not a bad office for the day really.

### Location

Arras is an outstanding city, vibrant but still small enough to retain its charming character. The flowing gables and decorative detail of the architecture make you feel like you've stepped back to the 16th century in places and, yet, much of what you see was built after World War I. The reason for this is that the originals were almost completely decimated during the conflict. It's an effective reconstruction though and the city feels very much alive, with something new to experience each time you visit.

From the Fete de la Musique, around the summer solstice, where the city comes to life with live bands on every street corner,

to Christmas card-worthy winter scenes, Arras is a city with soul. It's the perfect stop-off if you're on a larger road trip and a great destination if you're looking to soak up genuine French ambiance for a few days.

It's also a strong reminder of the two World Wars that have been fought here and a place to remember the fallen.

### Relax

Head to the Gothic styled city hall, Hôtel de Ville, and meet the four giants who live in the lobby. Then take a lift in the basement and climb 43 stairs to reach a balcony that runs around the outside of the 75m high, UNESCO-listed belfry. From there you're treated to the most amazing panoramic views of the city.

Alternatively, take a drive to nearby Saint-Laurent-Blangy, where you can enjoy a serene day on the water. Riverside Park Watersports Centre offers electric boat rental that puts you out on the river, silently gliding along La Scarpe.

### Adventure

Riverside Park could easily fit into our 'adventure' category too, because it offers great white-water experiences on a man-made course. You don't even have to paddle back to the top, there's a conveyor belt to do the work for you. Great fun for adrenaline lovers.

For more historic adventure, head back to Arras and discover two subterranean World War I sites. The first is located under city hall. You can descend into the caves beneath the square and discover lost passageways that were turned into British command posts during WWI. Today they stand as a poignant memorial to the brave troops who served here. A fast-paced tour shows how the caves became hospitals, mess halls and barracks, right beneath the enemy's feet. Tours last about 40 minutes and tickets can be purchased from the tourist office on the ground floor in city hall.

The city is well placed to visit other battle memorials in the region and Carrière Wellington is a very short walk from the old city centre.

Used as a staging ground for the spring 1917 offensive, Wellington Quarry is a 20m-deep network of old chalk quarries that were expanded during WWI. These days it's a well thought-out visitor centre.

## Hitting the Heights



**CAFE CULTURE:** Arras Old City and, top from left, Carrière Wellington Memorial, City Hall Caves, Riverside Park rafting and Hotel de l'Univers

### Stay

Located in the old city centre of Arras, Hotel de l'Univers is a classical structure that has been transformed into a four-star modern hotel with 37 rooms, including three Junior Suites.

Our room was in one of the oldest parts of the building, featuring classical curtains, old oak beams and vintage furniture. The contemporary en suite bathroom was light and a good size. A buffet-style breakfast was included.

A former Jesuit monastery, the hotel has endless charm and a facade that hasn't changed much since WWII.

Parking is available for a

fee and there are two charging stations for electric vehicles. Staff are friendly and go the extra mile to make your stay memorable, even if they do seem a little short-handed at times.

A standard double room will cost you around £70 per night in August, so it's good value for four star accommodation.

### Eat & Drink

As you can imagine, there's no shortage of excellent restaurants in Arras. Le Comptoir is well placed, with a good view. It's important because the main squares are particularly lovely at night.

Le Silex is in the next square

and another great place to eat. Plates are filled with colour and flavour. Even a humble burger looks impressive, with homemade fries on the side.

Finally, if you're heading to Saint-Laurent-Blangy for the watersports, stop at Les Jardins de Saint-Laurent. This is a busy little restaurant that has a nice view of the gardens. The beef bourguignon was outstanding.

### Visit

- [hautsdefrancetourism.com](https://hautsdefrancetourism.com)
- [arraspaysdartois.com/en/visit-arras](https://arraspaysdartois.com/en/visit-arras)
- [carrierewellington.com/en](https://carrierewellington.com/en)
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Tim Morris

Mazda 3, 2024 (from £23,000 otr)

**Motoring**



# It hazda be Mazda



**MAZDA IS brilliant at making cars. In this mad modern world, where everything is electric or hybrid, with complicated auto transmissions as standard, it is an absolute breath of fresh air to drive the Mazda 3.**

Here is a car, in the 21st century, that comes with a choice of two petrol engines that can be married to a slick manual, six-speed gearbox. You can opt for the 2.0-litre 120bhp naturally-aspirated petrol, or the devilishly clever 2.0-litre e-Skyactiv-X, high-compression engine. Our test car came with the latter and we were staggered by its impressive real-world economy.

It's beautifully designed and you get the feeling that Mazda cares about its work. Details have been thoughtfully updated to make the 3 better than its predecessor, inside and out. The 2024 car is therefore good to look at, pleasing to be in and easy to live with. It's a proper hatchback.

## Exterior

Mazda has given this five-door family hatch a sleek profile, with smooth contours on its surfaces and a gently sloped roofline



that flows from the front pillars to the rear screen. It's instantly recognisable and a million miles from its boxy rivals. It looks smart and quick.

## Interior

The interior quality of the Mazda 3 is up there with the best in this class. Everything feels solid and well bolted together, with surfaces clad in high-quality materials.

The dashboard is nicely laid out, framed with chrome trim highlights. The switchgear operates with a precise, slick movement that makes the cabin feel expensive. Even the

## Pros

- Good-looking
- Handles well
- Plenty of standard kit
- Great build quality

## Cons

- Restricted rear visibility
- Can be tight in the back
- Restrictive boot opening

## Verdict

The Mk. 4 Mazda 3 is a brilliant hatchback. It might not be as fast, or as big, as some rivals but it's a

## Mazda 3

refreshingly simple car to drive and it handles well. Its well-equipped, interior quality is great, it looks good and costs between £23,000-£31,000. The low tax band and the impressive fuel economy, especially from the e-Skyactiv X engine, make it an affordable option that offers an awful lot. It remains one of our favourite hatchbacks.

infotainment system's rotary controller turns with a satisfying click.

There's plenty of adjustment on the steering wheel and the seats, so it's easy for most drivers to get comfortable and the driving position is brilliant for winding roads.

You get a smart instrument binnacle, a head-up display and a touch-screen infotainment system. This is a slightly odd one though because you can only use the 10.25 inch touchscreen while

the car is stationary. To operate the functions on the move, you'll need to use the rotary controller and shortcut buttons. The graphics are sharp though and the system is quick to respond.

There's plenty of space in the front and the back's no disaster. Granted, anyone tall will find their knees close to the front seat and their head brushing the roof but it's not a deal-breaker. The boot is a good size too, slightly bigger than a Golf in fact. The only downside is that the boot

opening is a slightly odd shape that makes it awkward to load larger items.

## On The Road

Let's start with the stats. The Skyactiv X engine produces 186bhp, enough to take you from 0-62mph in 8.1 seconds. It's not massively quick but it feels lively. Through the bends, it's smooth and accurate, with well-weighted steering. A torque vectoring system smooths out the cornering. The result is a well-balanced, quiet and refined hatchback that's pretty hard to fault.

The really impressive thing though is the fuel economy, because the 3 easily returns 53+mpg in most circumstances thanks to some ingenious technology that also lowers CO2 emissions – saving you a packet into the bargain.

The engine is further supported by a 24V mild hybrid system that uses brake regen to run the car's on-board electric systems. The whole set-up is very clever. Just make sure you stick to the slick six-speed manual if you want to get the best out of it.



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## RUGBY UNION

Blue and Blacks move for 6ft 7in RAF Inter-Services stalwart Josh

# McNally presents Arms in Cardiff sign-up

**Daniel Abrahams**

"I'VE ALWAYS been in awe of the passion for the game in Wales," said RAF rugby union star Sgt Josh McNally after signing for Cardiff.

Having shone with his usual battling displays in the recent RAF Inter-Service championships, McNally will debut for the Welsh Premier Division side against old club Bath, who he left earlier this year after five seasons.

McNally, 33, *inset right*, said: "I'm really thankful for the opportunity to join Cardiff and can't wait to get involved. Cardiff has such a great history and a city that is fully behind the club."

"Having spent part of my career at London Welsh, and all my wife's family originate in Wales, I can't wait to immerse

myself in the capital."

Head coach of the Blue and Blacks, Matt Sherratt, said: "We're delighted to bring someone of Josh's quality to the Arms Park [Cardiff's home ground], both in terms of his playing ability and as a leader."

"With so many senior figures moving on or retiring in recent years, it was really important to bring in players with experience and leadership ability from top environments and I believe we have managed to do that."

"Josh has been a key figure on and off the pitch during the past five seasons at Bath and his former coaches and teammates cannot speak highly enough of him."



**RAW POWER:** Sgt Josh McNally makes the hard yards against the Army in the Inter-Services and, *below*, scoring a try for the RAF against the French Air Force PHOTO: SBS

"He brings a physical presence, but he is also a good all-round athlete, is strong technically and a real lineout tactician."

"He will bring undoubted quality to us on the pitch and be an important figure in helping some of our younger players."

The 6ft 7in, 19st 6lb second row star, who has been ever-present for his Service, added: "The brand of rugby Cardiff are starting to play, and the squad being assembled, is something I can't wait to contribute to."

"I would like to thank the RAF for allowing me the opportunity

to come here. They have been fully supportive my entire career, and I wouldn't be here without them."

The pre-season friendly clash against Bath will be at Cardiff Arms Park on September 6, KO 7.15pm.

● Follow RAF rugby on Instagram @RAFRugby.

## NETBALL



**RAF PLAYERS:**  
Six of the best

## Five alive for UKAF ladies

A CRACKING return of five wins out of six games rounded out a hugely successful end of season trip to Guernsey for UKAF Netball.

The three-day tour for Head Coach Jane Lomax's charges saw UKAF, bolstered by six RAF stars, pack in fixtures in the morning and afternoon against the island's women's and men's teams.

Flt Lt Francesca Kennard-Kettle said: "The trip was our last fixture weekend of the 2024 season. To have six RAF Netball players selected for the camp was

great, and to win five of these matches where players were able to solidify connections and build on the progress that they have made all season was incredible."

"Playing the men required creative play from us to combat their speed, height and agility."

"Ending the camp on a high, with a sea of wins throughout the season, it will be great to see all three Services use what they have learnt from the UKAF coaches and take this to Inter-Services 2025."

● Follow UKAF netball on Instagram @rafnetball.

**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](mailto:Sports@rafnews.co.uk)**





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## GOLF

# Flt Lt Pucill's masterstroke

## Day two 72 helps seal it for Liam

### Daniel Abrahams

**FLT LT Liam Pucill battled out a down-to-the-wire win at the RAFGA's flagship event, the Corelight Strokeplay Championships at Luffenham Heath Golf Club.**

Pucill made his charge on the second day of the three-day event, before battling to victory in the final group of Sgt Aaron Ashberry and last year's runner-up Cpl Scott Richardson – scoring an 80 to win having dropped five shots on the way to a nail-biting victory.

In changeable conditions the first day's action saw Cpl Scott Richardson shoot a very impressive 73 to start things off, leading by one from Ashberry and Sgt Luke Pepper – a last-minute inclusion.

The question around the club house before the second day teed off was could Richardson add to his great opening round?

All was going well walking up to the ninth at one over, but he



began dropping shots at the run in and found himself six over at the 12th, before posting a 79.

Ashberry – just one shot behind the overnight leader – battled well with a couple of birdies before the 10th, posting a competitive 76.

While Pepper, the surprise package of the first round, opened with a birdie but an up and down round saw him post a 79 to remain in the hunt.

Outside of the top three saw a best round of the day two over 72 for Pucill, who was three under at the turn and a new hat in the ring for the year's trophy.

With just six shots separating the top five, the trophy was still up for grabs, but with a forecast of rain eyes focused on the early starters. Could anyone post a score that would compete with or steal the leader's thunder?

Flt Lt Paul Dickinson did just that with a best of the day 5 over par 75 and a combined 243.

In the second to last group, Pepper, a dark horse throughout, just



**EARLY LEADER:** Cpl Scott Richardson led with a 73 after day one, but was overhauled by eventual winner Flt Lt Liam Pucill, left

ran out of steam carding an 87 leaving him with a combined 240. While a six over par 76 to leave him with a combined score of 232 saw Cpl Matt Branowsky as the new clubhouse leader.

Back-to-back trebles from

Richardson saw his charge ended, posting an 88 for a combined 240.

Ashberry hit an early bogey followed by another five, seeing him post 41 at the turn before posting 81.

Pucill, backing up his 72 from

day two, seemed clear as he dropped five shots around the turn – another double at 13 and a bogey at 17 made a nervy close, but a par on the last meant he would be the Strokeplay Champion, shooting an 80 for a combined score of 230.

## GRIDIRON

## Mustangs sally forth

THE RAF Mustangs summer training camp at Wittering was a rewarding affair for the ever-growing sport of American football.

A turnout of 50 players and coaches was bolstered by new players at the event, which gave the Inter-Service championship team's coaches another chance to hone basic skills and further progress.

RAF American Football General Manager, Assistant Head Coach Chf Tech Paul Wakeford, said: "There was plenty of tweaking and adjusting where necessary. It was especially nice to be able to introduce some new personnel to the mix and let them see what we are about."

The camp also featured the team's inaugural awards evening, with accolades going to:

- Mustang of the year – FS Rob Carey
- Offensive player of the year – Sgt Martin Unsworth
- Defensive player of the year – Cpl Curtis Colhoun
- Special teams player of the year – AS1 Nathaniel Opoku-Mensah
- MVP – Cpl Sebastian Haley



**NEW PLAYS:** RAF Mustangs

- Players' player – Cpl Sebastian Haley
- Players' coach – Mr Warren Smart.

## ANGLING

## Pair in semi-finals of British Champs

A FABULOUS British Carp Angling Championships semi-final place was secured by Sgt Dave Jones and FS Jim Thomas after a battling display at the Norton Disney complex.

After fish spawning caused the opening BCAC qualifier to be rescheduled, the RAF duo wasted no time in their second chance for glory.

After comprehensively scouting the Embryo Anglings Billy's Lake, the pair were confident for the 48 hours ahead.

Following a very quiet start and change of spot, Jones finally landing the first fish, at 13lb 5oz.

Within five minutes a larger specimen of 15lb 12oz was hooked.

Two 22lb carp landed going into the evening placed the Aviators in a position to

fight for fourth place, which was duly secured with another decent catch going into the next morning. With only 13lb separating fourth and seventh, one fish could change everything.

With the peg next door losing a fish at the net and other fish being caught, one more carp was needed to secure the prized semi-final berth. This came in the shape of the biggest of the weekend for the pair, 27lb 2oz, giving them a 39lb weight advantage.

The hooter finally sounded and it was confirmed that Thomas and Jones had indeed managed to secure the final position to qualify for their first semi-final in the BCAC, at Linear fisheries, Oxford on the famous Brasenose 1 Lake.



**4TH OVERALL:** Sgt Dave Jones with catch



## Sport

### CYCLING

# Service riders Man up for Isle enduro round

## Lochhead & Fieldsend lead way on tricky course

A BATTLING second place was the highlight as RAF Cycling shone in the third national enduro series round on the Isle of Man.

The weekend saw further top 10 and top 20 finishes for the team as Sgt Andy Lochhead was ably supported by FS Adam Fieldsend, who finished eighth in the same Veterans category.

AS1 Conrad Clarke recorded an impressive 14th in the Seniors, and Cpl Tom Abel finished 11th in the Masters group.

Riders faced wet and slippery terrain over two days of racing.

Lochhead, who has been riding enduro for over 10 years, said: "It was a tough race, but I enjoyed every minute of it. The conditions were tricky, but



**EIGHTH:** Flt Sgt Adam Fieldsend

I managed to stay focused and consistent throughout the stages. I'm proud of the team, we all did our best and had fun. It's an honour to represent the RAF in this sport."

Consisting of 10 stages over two days, the event provided

racing with varying levels of difficulty and elevation, with downpours before the opening stages making the trails extra greasy and muddy.

With riders having to juggle speed and control to avoid crashes, the team rode 37km and gained 1,300m of elevation, tackling technical and steep sections of the course.

Lochhead finished the first day in third place in the Veterans category, followed by Fieldsend in eighth.

Riding a slightly longer 39k trial on the second day, with 1,320m of elevation, Lochhead came home second, to increase his overall standing to third, while Fieldsend came eighth again.



**LOCHHEAD:**  
Runner-up in  
Vets category

The team now head to Minehead for the fourth national enduro round.

Fieldsend said: "We're always grateful for the opportunity to compete and showcase our skills. We're also thankful for the sponsors and supporters who make this possible. We hope to see more people join us and try enduro at the Inter-Station Race Series, it's a great sport and an exciting way to stay fit and have fun."



**SILVER LINING:** Sgt Lochhead, left

## Rich vein of form for racers Summerbell and Sheppard



AS1(T) LAURA Sheppard and Sgt Rich Summerbell set light to the roads around RAF Shawbury to take top spot in the RAF Road Race Championships.

The Ellerdine circuit kicked off the day's action with the women's race in wet conditions at the start, which produced a cagey opening.

There were a few attacks on the bunch

group, but each attempt was closed down, ensuring no one got away too early.

The first two laps saw Emily Heaton and Flt Lt Harriet Haywood doing most of the work on the front. On the final lap Sheppard attacked the bunch, opening a gap of 10 seconds, which then grew to over a minute on the finish line.

The remaining podium spots came

down to a sprint finish in the bunch with Cpl Kat Robinson getting second place and Flt Lt Georgina Snowden-Brett third.

The Open race then got under way with attacks from the off with Sgt Dan Watts initiating the first, stringing the bunch out.

Surges came thick and fast throughout the race, but a breakaway formed with Cpl Will Lewis, Rich Summerbell and AS1

Danny Hedley, who managed to stay away from the chasing group to make up the podium.

The chase group rode hard, attacking each other to try to break away, but were hunted down.

After all the effort the race was decided on a sprint finish, with Summerbell taking the crown.

**CHAMPS:** Summerbell and Sheppard, inset  
PHOTOS: JACK WELSON AND LUCY MORLEY



KARTING

# Brize mobility is a force to be reckoned with

## Station's putting the Kart into Carterton

### Daniel Abrahams

RAF BRIZE Norton pipped Benson in the closing stages of a nail-biting RAF Inter-Station Cup at Fulbeck Kart Club after four days of high-speed action.

The Lincolnshire track hosted the fourth round of the Armed Forces Karting Championship (AFKC), which produced an anxious last 20 minutes.

After a three-hour endurance race on the final day, Benson pulled a move in the pits to leapfrog Carterton-based Brize, but, having taken pole to start, Brize rescued the race to take the Inter-Station title.

There was a field of 70 karts from various teams and stations from all three Services, with the RAF fielding 29 karts.

The event started with an



**WINNERS:** AS1(T) Rhys Jones, Flt Lt Jasper Chamberlain and AS1(T) Adam Hoyle from RAF Brize Norton

engagement day to encourage new members into the sport, followed by two days of Tri-Service and civilian team racing with the AFKC taking place before the final

day focused on the Inter-Stations race.

A spokesperson for the Waddington team, who suffered mechanical issues throughout the weekend, said: "It can be summed up in three words for us; long, hot and challenging. Overall, it was just brilliant though."

"All our karts unfortunately picked up some sort of mechanical issue, but I suppose that should be expected after the abuse they get at this track."

The Prokart Racing was a close fight between the Royal Navy, Brize Norton (consisting of Flt Lt Jasper Chamberlain, AS1(T) Rhys Jones and AS1(T) Adam Hoyle) and RAF Benson competing for the top spot.

In the end the Navy took the honours, with all the teams really pushing their two Honda gx160



**LARGE FIELD:** Inter-Station Cup

engines to the fullest.

On the Sunday the same RAF teams were again fighting for the top spot.

For the three-hour endurance RAF Benson qualified on pole and Brize second.

For most of the race Benson (Cpl Jack Wood and AS1 Bailie Kirkwood in their 7Kart), held

onto first position. Kirkwood drove the last stint in the Benson kart whilst Jones drove it for Brize.

In the final stages Jones managed to get ahead but the move wasn't enough as Brize – home of the Air Mobility Force – pulled things back to take the chequered flag.

MOTORSPORT

# Snetterton keeps hopes alive

"A FANTASTIC set of results for the team which sees us sit fourth in class," said Cpl Rob Atkinson after round four of the British Sidecar Championship.

The Serviceman, who had loan rider Josh Smith in attendance due to ongoing work commitments for usual passenger Cpl Mike Middleton, produced a brace of third-place finishes at Norfolk track Snetterton to keep in contact with the top three of the championship, which heads to Castle Combe for its next round.

Driver Atkinson added: "The finishes mean we are just a handful of points behind second and third and we have Mark back for the next round so the team will be back at full strength."

"A huge shout-out to Josh for filling some very big shoes in Mark's absence. Josh hasn't put a foot wrong all season and it has been a pleasure to call him part of our team. We wish him all the best in the rest of his season."

The RAF team had never laid eyes on the Norfolk circuit until arriving at the track, with Atkinson promptly identifying it

## Team look forward to return of Cpl Mark Middleton



**HANGING ON IN THERE:** Cpl Atkinson and Smith  
PHOTO: SIMON HEATH

as: "A high-speed, flowing circuit, requiring plenty of bravery."

Practice was cut short because of a gear problem with the bike, leaving the team stranded at the side of the circuit.

The opening action on the Saturday was cut short when the race was cancelled after a bike

overturned and the rerun was moved onto Sunday's schedule.

This time the RAF team got a good start and brought the bike home in third place in class and 9th overall, their best result to date.

Race two started under the threat of rain and, having lost a position at the first corner,

Atkinson and Smith had a fight on their hands.

Three laps in and a late braking manoeuvre into the Agostini bend saw them reclaim third in class, which they would hold until the chequered flag.

● Follow the duo on Facebook @RAF Sidecar Team.

HOCKEY

## Tri-Service Cup victors

"WE DID what we needed to do," said Brize Norton hockey captain WO Steve Keating after the station won the Tri-Service Cup at RAF Halton.

Having beaten HMS Heron 8-4 in the first of the round robin matches, Brize then watched 8 Training Battalion REME win 8-0 over Heron, setting up the final clash.

Facing the defending champions, Brize wasted no time and stormed to glory 7-4 to take the cup.

Keating added: "We had limited numbers for the team going into the tournament, due the change of dates for the event. Fortunately, we had some subs, we stuck together, played well as a team and kept possession well."



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



**Sgt Josh McNally signs for Cardiff**

See page 23

SHOOTING

# Hotshot Nate's date with King

## Medal 'first' for Cpl... then he bags a fiancée

### Daniel Abrahams

IT WAS a perfect day for RAF sharpshooter Cpl Nathaniel Webb after he was awarded the King's Medal by His Majesty and proposed to his partner.

Webb – based at the General Engineering Flight, RAF Lossiemouth – ended five days of tough competition to win the RAF Operational Shooting Competition (RAFOSC), and with it the prestigious gong.

But it wasn't the first time the hotshot had claimed such an honour, he previously won The Queen's Medal, in 2022.

It makes him the first member of the Armed Forces to win both gongs.

Webb clinched top spot in the rifle shot competition by a staggering 57-point margin, with a combined score of 1,848 at the National Rifle Association's Bisley HQ in Surrey.

The event is shot over eight stages with each consisting of four or five shoots of 10 rounds and includes shoots from 500 to 25 yards with Service rifle and pistol. Competitors must wear full body armour and helmet.

Speaking after being awarded



**FAMILY AFFAIR:** Cpl Nathaniel Webb, fiancée Taela and son Oakley, two, at Windsor Castle  
PHOTO: ANDREW MATTHEWS

his medal, Webb said: "It was a great honour to win, and a wonderful day at Windsor Castle. "When the King got to me and shook my hand he said 'So, you've won this before? You must be a bit of a crack shot."

"After the presentation was over, we made our way out into the grounds of Windsor Castle where we had a chance to take pictures and where I proposed to my partner, Taela."

The original Queen's Medal was instituted in June 1953 by Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for Champion shots of the RAF. The reverse of the medal shows Greek god



**ROYAL HONOUR:** Cpl Webb looks on as proud partner Taela shakes hands with His Majesty King Charles at the medal presentation PHOTO: BRITISH CEREMONIAL ARTS LTD



Hermes throwing a javelin and mounted on a hawk in flight.  
● Follow RAF Weapon's shooting on X @ RAFSWShooting.



**FIELD OF DREAMS:** Winner Webb at Bisley awards ceremony and, left, with King's Medal







Win hit TV  
series on  
DVD ● p8

# R'n'R

Ocean's 11th –  
win tickets to  
film festival

Announcements:  
p6-7 Puzzles: p8







# IT'S TIME TO BREW AND BAKE FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH.

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**COMBAT  
STRESS**  
FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH





**PLASTIC FANTASTIC:** California-based artist Tess Felix, above, uses rubbish retrieved from the sea to create works of art. Right, *The Whale Song* studies how humpbacks communicate in the ocean



**Win festival tickets**

**ICE MAIDEN:** Lisa Blair embarks on her bid to be the first woman to sail solo and unassisted around Antarctica

**T**HE OCEAN Film Festival World Tour is at venues around the UK this autumn. Running from September 12 to November 21, it's a celebration of the planet's seas, with wild voyages and fascinating marine-life – up on the big screen.

"The Ocean Film Festival Tour is a platform for storytelling that brings the beauty, challenges and importance of our oceans to audiences around the world," said festival founder and CEO Jemima Robinson.

"This year's line-up is a testament to the incredible adventures, talents and environmental messages that resonate with us all. We are thrilled to share these inspiring films and celebrate the magic of the ocean."

The festival was created in

Australia to inspire people to enjoy, explore and protect our oceans, and this is the 11th year it has toured in the UK.

The inspirational short films are introduced by a compère, and each screening will see a free prize giveaway to win ocean-related goodies.

Dates include Brighton's Dome on September 18, Exeter Corn Exchange on September 24, Amey Theatre, Abingdon on September 27, Festival Theatre,

Edinburgh on October 16, UEA Norwich on November 13 and Komedia, Bath on November 20.

Film highlights include *Ice Maiden* which focuses on adventurer Lisa Blair who is embarking on a voyage to become the first woman to sail solo, nonstop and unassisted around Antarctica.

*The Whale Song* delves into the enigmatic communication of humpback whales. Beyond their renowned songs lies a thrilling

revelation – these majestic creatures ingeniously remix each other's tunes, passing melodies around the world's oceans. *The Whale Song* draws a parallel between the musical genius of DJ Sam Feldt and the whales' haunting harmonies. As Sam transforms whale songs into chart-topping human beats, an extraordinary synergy between nature and art unfolds.

Another highlight is *Tess Felix: Portrait of an Artist* – California-

based Felix uses plastic debris to create mosaic portraits as a vibrant response to the perilous state of our oceans.

We have a pair of tickets up for grabs for the Abingdon date on September 27. For your chance to win them, send us the correct answer to this question:

**What is the name of the Ocean Film Festival's founder and CEO?**

Email your answer, marked Ocean Film Festival competition, to: [tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk](mailto:tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk) or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by August 23.

● Go to: [oceanfilmfestival.co.uk](http://oceanfilmfestival.co.uk) for full list of tour dates and ticket details.



## Film

### Firebrand (12A)

In cinemas from September 6

## Parr: The Tudor survivor

**A**LICIA VIKANDER (Ex *Machina*, *The Danish Girl*) stars with Jude Law (*Sherlock Holmes*, *The Talented Mr Ripley*) in historical drama *Firebrand*, released in UK and Ireland cinemas on September 6.

Vikander plays Katherine Parr and Law Henry VIII in the movie based on Elizabeth Fremantle's 2013 novel *Queen's Gambit*.

In blood-soaked Tudor England, Katherine Parr, the sixth and last wife of King Henry VIII, is named Regent while tyrant Henry is fighting overseas.

Katherine has done everything she can to push for a new future based on her radical Protestant beliefs.

When an increasingly ailing and paranoid King returns, he turns his fury on the radicals, charging Katherine's childhood friend with treason and burning her at the stake. Horrified and grieving, but forced to deny it, Katherine finds herself fighting for her own survival.

*Firebrand* is award-winning filmmaker and visual artist Karim Aïnouz's English language feature debut.

The supporting cast features Simon Russell Beale (*The Death of Stalin*), Eddie Marsan (*Back to Black*), Ruby Bentall (*The Serpent Queen*), Bryony Hannah (*Call The Midwife*) and Sam Riley (*Control*).

**LAST WIFE:** Katherine Parr (Alicia Vikander) and Henry VIII (Jude Law)



## Film Review

### Sleep (15)

In cinemas now

## Family night terror

**A** PROFESSIONAL actor and his pregnant wife are safe-proofing the house and changing their lifestyle – not just preparing their home for the baby on the way, but fortifying against something far more sinister that haunts their nights.

*Sleep*, the Korean horror debut of Jason You, opens appropriately with the sound of deep, guttural snoring. The culprit is Hyun-su (the late Lee Sun-kyun, star of *Parasite*), an Oscar winner who now sits bolt upright at end of the bed muttering that "someone is inside", panicking wife Soo-Jin (Jung Yu-mi) to high alert before he cosily returns to sleep.

There is a deft mix of dark humour and creeping dread that eases the tension with perfectly



**BEDROOM TRAUMAS:** Hyun-su and Soo-Jin

timed comic relief, especially as Hyun-su's night-time escapades become more unpredictable and violent: one scratching fit early on leaves gashes in his face. When he starts to sleepwalk and roam about the apartment, they begin to fear for the safety of Pepper, their little Pomeranian, as well as the unborn baby.

An executive by profession, Soo-Jin is a pragmatist and so she waves off her mother's spiritual notions and instead meets every potential hazard with a solution, beginning with a trip to the sleep clinic. Here they will learn that

Hyun-su's nocturnal activities are all symptoms of a stress-induced sleep disorder, but the question is whether they can help before he does anything drastic.

Sleekly made with a style that complements its suspenseful turns and moments of gore, *Sleep* sets its story up neatly and commits to its level of escalation. It's a fun and sometimes wince-inducing horror that does a great job of treading the line between heightened reality and the supernatural.

3 out of 5 roundels ●●●  
Review by Sam Cooney



## R'n'R



### Theatre Steve Backshall UK tour



BACKSHALL:  
Sold-out tours in  
2022 and 2023

## Love letter to the sea

**F**OLLOWING SOLD-OUT tours in 2022 and 2023, naturalist and explorer Steve Backshall will take to the road again this autumn with his critically-acclaimed live show, *Ocean*. Kicking off at Perth Concert Hall on October 19, Backshall is back for 13 more dates across the UK.

"Backshall's *Ocean* is a love letter to the most exciting environment on our planet – and a great way to learn more about what we need to do to protect and save our seas," said

a spokesperson. "Featuring stunts, experiments, props, cutting-edge science and big screen footage from his two decades in TV, Backshall brings the icons of the Big Blue to life, live on stage. From great whites to great whales, seals to sardine shoals, orca to the oddities of the deep; this is a fantastic opportunity for fans of all ages to dive deep and explore the enchanting world beneath the waves."

● Go to: [SteveBackshall.com](http://SteveBackshall.com) for tour details.



### TV Apollo 13: Survival Netflix

## The Apollo 13 crisis

**J**UST NINE months after Neil Armstrong's historic moon landing, NASA faced the greatest crisis in its history. On the night of April 13, 1970, a catastrophic explosion rocked the Apollo 13 spacecraft, stranding three astronauts halfway to the moon. Within a few hours, the primary oxygen and power supply would be gone, setting the stage for one of the great survival stories in human history.

What unfolded over the next four days was a rescue mission like no other; a knife-edge, life-or-death drama, broadcast in real time to the watching world.

The documentary *Apollo 13: Survival*, directed by Peter Middleton, is an archive-led retelling of the crisis, launching on Netflix on September 5. The



story is brought to life with rare access to the complete audio recordings of the mission, never-before-seen film materials, and archival interviews with the crew, their families and the team at Ground Control.

The approach immerses the audience in the unfolding drama of the emergency – it's described as a uniquely cinematic experience of the most dramatic story in spaceflight history.



### TV The Olympics BBC

# Meet Beeb's t for Paris Olyn

**A**FTER ALL the excitement of the Euros and Wimbledon, the summer of sport continues with the Paris Olympics – and the BBC is promising live coverage of the Games morning, noon and night from July 26 to August 11.

"For the first time since London 2012 we have an Olympic Games taking place in a European time zone, which is really exciting for UK audiences," said Alex Kay-Jelski, director of BBC Sport.

BBC One and Two will broadcast more than 250 hours of live coverage across the entire 16-day event, while Olympics Extra, following the biggest moments across every sport, will be live streamed on BBC iPlayer.

And a special Olympic schedule is running across the duration of the event on BBC Radio 5 Live and BBC Sounds.

Leading BBC Sport's TV coverage are presenters Clare Balding, Gabby Logan, Hazel Irvine, Isa Guha, Jeanette Kwakye, JJ Chalmers and Mark Chapman. Joining the guest line-up for the first time are most decorated female Olympian Laura Kenny (below), TV personality Fred Sirieix, British long jumper Jazmin Sawyers, Olympic gold medallist Moe Sbihi and Olympic bronze medallist Vicky Holland.

Asked about her fondest Olympics memory, Balding said: "London 2012 from the start of the Olympics to the end of the Paralympics was an utterly joyful, uplifting and thrilling event. I loved every second of it but particularly when Katherine Grainger and Anna Watkins won gold on super Saturday.

"My stand-outs from Tokyo were the mixed team events – whether it was the eventing team, the mixed relay swimming team or the mixed triathlon team.



**GAMES ON:** Sports stars like RAF Hockey ace AS1 Liam Sanford, above, will be in action in Paris.

I love the concept of mixed teams and we're good at it!"

Talking about Paris 2024 she said: "The crowds will be back, friends and families will be there to share the experience and support athletes, the venues will be beautiful, and it'll be in a friendly time zone so there is a huge amount to enjoy. I think we'll have our best ever Olympics in swimming and that's what I'll be enjoying."

She added: "We've got huge [medal] chances across the board but I'm particularly looking forward to seeing how Matt Richards, Tom Dean and Duncan Scott can do in the pool, as well as Adam Peaty of course. Emma Finucane is one

to watch in the velodrome and Tom Pidcock, who defends his mountain bike title. Also, I'll keep a close eye on the eventing team – Ros Canter is one to watch as well as Ben Maher, who defends his title in show jumping."

Former Royal Marine and Invictus Games medallist JJ Chalmers tipped skateboarder Sky Brown as a Paris 2024 medal-winner.

He explained: "One of the most exciting sports from Tokyo was skateboarding, a brilliant addition to the Olympics. It's like grungy gymnastics, spectacular to watch, with seemingly impossible feats from the competitors. The atmosphere was electric, especially considering the age of some participants. Sky Brown, who was 13 last time, is now 16 and has all the skill and temperament to bring home the gold."

Logan (right)





Edited by Tracey Allen

# Team mpics



with commentary from presenters including Clare Balding (top right) and JJ Chalmers (inset left)

commented: "As the athletics presenter, I am so excited about Keely Hodgkinson (800m), Josh Kerr (1500m) and Molly Caudery (pole vault) for Great Britain. I fancy them all for medals. But I'm also excited about the breakdancing!"

Kenny said: "From a GB perspective, I think one of the most exciting things is the first Games in a long time where there's no need to worry about time difference on events or needing to have to set alarms in the middle of the night to tune into your favourite events."

Cricket commentator Guha (right) added: "My favourite Olympics memory was Dame Kelly Holmes achieving the double-gold in Athens 2004. I remember I was training for England cricket at the time and she gave me the inspiration to do



the 400m sprints we used to have to do for speed endurance.

"We've got a lot of medal contenders for this Games. I'm looking forward to seeing Tom Daley diving again as well as the rest of the team. We've got some world-class gymnasts and I love watching Jake Jarman do his thing. I'm looking forward to seeing the athletics team excel after some disappointments in Tokyo as well as catching up on the tennis in the Roland Garros, which will be epic."

And don't forget to catch RAF Hockey ace AS1 Liam Sanford playing for GB, while behind the scenes Gp Capt Ray Morley will be hard at work as a Games boxing official.



## Exhibitions

### Barbie

The Design Museum

# Barbie world



IMMORTALISED: Astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti and her Barbie on the ISS

A RARE first edition Barbie from 1959 is among the highlights of a hugely anticipated exhibition that's just opened at The Design Museum in London.

*Barbie: The Exhibition* runs until February 23, 2025 and includes more than 250 objects in the major show that features over 180 dolls.

Another highlight is a Barbie taken into space by astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti and exhibited for the first time at the Design Museum. The doll is a likeness of Cristoforetti and spent six months with her aboard the International Space Station in 2022. Cristoforetti made history as the first female commander of the ISS and the first European woman to complete a spacewalk.

The exhibition marks the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Barbie brand in partnership with leading global toy company Mattel.

A Design Museum spokesperson said: "Visitors will come face-to-face with important and distinctive dolls, from the first Barbie to 'move' to the first Barbie to 'talk', as well as a vast selection of others that have been a part of the Barbie universe and have made an impact on culture throughout the decades.

"The exhibition explores Barbie's changing appearance in relation to evolving cultural shifts around diversity and representation. It presents exclusive, behind-the-scenes insights into Mattel's design processes, and offers a detailed exploration of the Barbie doll as a technically and materially innovative creation."

Other highlights include some of the most recognisable and best-selling dolls such as the 'surfer girl' Sunset Malibu Barbie from 1971, one of the most popular of the decade, and the ground-breaking Day to Night Barbie from 1985, designed to reflect the workplace revolution for women in the 1980s, and which saw Barbie's work-attire pink suit transform into a chic evening gown. There's also two examples of 1992's Totally Hair Barbie, the best-selling Barbie of all time which has sold over 10 million across the globe.

There are examples of the first Black, Hispanic and Asian dolls to bear the Barbie name on display, as well as the first Barbie with Downs Syndrome, the first to use a wheelchair,



FIRSTS:  
Original  
1959  
Barbie  
and Black  
Barbie,  
below

and the first to be designed with a 'curvy' body shape.

Across the exhibition, there are dozens of original Barbie outfits which both highlight Barbie's origins as a fashion doll, and her impact on the wider history of modern dress. This includes 'Poodle Parade' (1965) — a life-size replica was worn by Billie Eilish when she performed at the 2024 Grammy Awards in February.

Tim Marlow the Design Museum's director and CEO, said: "Design has been at the heart of Barbie's story ever since her creation 65 years ago. And as we've seen recently, her impact has also evolved with each new generation. Visitors to our timely exhibition will come face-to-face with some of the most important and recognisable iterations of Barbie from across the past six-and-a-half decades."

● Go to: [designmuseum.org](https://designmuseum.org) for more details.







## Your Announcements

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### Seeking

MY father-in-law, Cecil Goodier, was a flight engineer serving with 61 Squadron Bomber Command in 1944/45. Cecil's pilot was Ray Lushey, who sadly passed away a few years ago. The crew's usual aircraft was Lancaster III-QR-E, serial number RF160. The crew flew over 30 sorties in this aircraft.

I am seeking to make contact with any relatives of this crew, who may have photographs or interesting information. Other crew member names were as follows: Harry Parsons, W/op; Len Brewin, Bomb aimer; John Brewster, Navigator; Robert Humphries, Air gunner; Bill Fox, Rear gunner.

In addition, Cecil was attached to 1654 Heavy Conversion Unit earlier in 1944, flying Stirlings. Any information at all on this unit would be gratefully received, especially photos. I am keen to establish the serial numbers of Stirlings that were in service with this unit during the period January to August 1944 and in which Cecil may have flown. Please email: [mikeyb03@gmail.com](mailto:mikeyb03@gmail.com), or phone: 07593 034028

I have been trying to locate Flt Lt AFW Cartlidge SEORAF Bahrain 1960/61. Any information please contact: [80andrews90@gmail.com](mailto:80andrews90@gmail.com).

I am currently searching for Ivan Spring, a South African Airman who was based at RAF Marham in the 1950s for my mum, maiden name Susan Clarke (now Susan Bennett) who has dementia. She recalls Ivan fondly and has photos of when she went to visit his family in South Africa but doesn't appear to have any photos of him. She lived in Cambridge when she knew Ivan and her mother worked as a housemistress at Queens' College. It would be lovely to find out what happened to him and complete the story. If anyone can

help, please email: [beckygoff542@gmail.com](mailto:beckygoff542@gmail.com) or telephone: 07985 424308.

### Reunions

**THE** RAF Masirah and RAF Salalah Veterans Association Reunion Gala Dinner is to be held on Saturday, October 12 at the Hatton Court Hotel, Upton St Leonards, Gloucester GL4 8DE. All members are welcome to attend. If you are interested in attending the Dinner, please contact Alan Teasdale on: [joalteas@btinternet.com](mailto:joalteas@btinternet.com). If you would like to join the Association as a member, please visit our website: [www.omanrafveterans.org](http://www.omanrafveterans.org) for further information.

**ANNUAL** Reunion: The Association of RAF Women Officers Annual (ARAFWO) Reunion Lunch will take place on Saturday, October 12 at the RAF Club, Piccadilly, from 11am. Our speaker will be Dorit Oliver-Wolff. Dorit survived the holocaust, is an accomplished public speaker and is dedicated to educating others about the consequences of the Holocaust. For tickets to attend this inspiring reunion, please contact Fiona Morgan Frise by email: [friese713@gmail.com](mailto:friese713@gmail.com). For further information about ARAFWO, please visit [arafwo.co.uk](http://arafwo.co.uk).

**124** Entry Apprentices – RAF Cosford, 1974-77. 50th anniversary reunion. Members will be meeting at The Limes Country Lodge Hotel, Earlswood, Solihull on Saturday, October 12 with an informal buffet luncheon to follow on in the evening of Sunday, October 13. For further information please email: [nigelcooper1@live.co.uk](mailto:nigelcooper1@live.co.uk) or call/WhatsApp on: 07986 200137. We have currently managed to locate and contact more than 30 of our 49 original members so a great time is assured.

**CALLING** all former TG11 T/

phonist, TPOs, Tels, Wop Spec, TCO, TCC, TRC, all are welcome to attend the TG11 Association reunion to be held Friday, March 21 to Sunday March 23, 2025, at the Marriot Delta Hotels Nottingham Belfry, Mellors Way, off Woodhouse Way, Nottingham NG8 6PY.

Further details can be found on the TG11 website: [tg11association.com](http://tg11association.com), if not a member please click on the motif to join.

### Associations

**WHAT** do you know about the 2 Halifax RAF Sqns 346 and 347 which flew from RAF Elvington near York in World War II? Why not join the Sud-Ouest France Branch of RAFA to find out more? You will be welcomed with open arms or un Accueil Chaleureux! For further details contact Terry Dennett at [Admin@Rafsudouest.fr](mailto:Admin@Rafsudouest.fr) or call: 0033546953889.

**RAF** Armourers past and present: RAF Association's Armourers Branch aims to provide welfare support and comradeship for all who have served or currently serve as an RAF Armourer. Please see the website: [rafaarmourers.co.uk](http://rafaarmourers.co.uk) or you can contact the committee via email at this address: [plumbersrest@outlook.com](mailto:plumbersrest@outlook.com).

**THE** Association of RAF Women Officers (ARAFWO) is a lively, friendly, world-wide networking group. Visit our website: [arafwo.co.uk](http://arafwo.co.uk) and discover the benefits of membership, plus see what activities and events we offer all over the world.

**SUAS** – have you been a member of Southampton University Air Squadron as a student or staff member? If so, please join our Facebook page, 'Southampton UAS Association' or email: [6FTS-SUASAdmin@mod.gov.uk](mailto:6FTS-SUASAdmin@mod.gov.uk) to join our association community so that we can welcome you back.

# Bawdsey Manor hosts reunion



**FRIENDS REUNITED:** RAF Bawdsey Reunion Association members meet again

**OUTDOOR** ACTIVITIES provider PGL's historic Bawdsey Manor played host last month to RAF Bawdsey's Reunion Association for its annual reunion weekend.

"RAF Bawdsey is an integral part of our lives and for many of us returning to the Manor feels like coming back to a second home," said Doreen Calver, the association's secretary and treasurer.

"We are so grateful to the team at PGL for welcoming us with open arms and making the event possible."

Association members were joined at the event by personnel from 432 (Woodbridge)

Squadron Air Cadets who helped with the smooth running of the occasion and chatted with former Servicemen and women from RAF Bawdsey, which finally closed in 1991.

Evangeline Wells, PGL Bawdsey Manor's general manager, said: "At Bawdsey Manor we understand how rich the history of our centre is and we are always delighted to open our doors to the reunion association as we know how much it means to them."

Contact Doreen Calver on: [doreen.bawdseyreunion@btinternet.com](mailto:doreen.bawdseyreunion@btinternet.com) or: 0751 3301 723 for more information about the Reunion Association.



**ROYAL OCCASION:** Princess Alexandra arrives at the High Wycombe Home for its official opening in 2020

## Princess's special message

**IN** A special message, HRH Princess Alexandra said it has been an honour and a privilege to be President of Royal Star & Garter, after marking 60 years with the veterans' charity.

Royal Star & Garter provides care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, from Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe.

It has also launched new services into the community.

In her message, the Princess said she had enjoyed her many visits to the Homes and always looked forward to spending time with residents and staff.

Royal Star & Garter Chair, Major General Tim Tyler, said: "We are honoured to have the Princess as our President."

### 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](mailto: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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# Cadet conquers challenge

**AIR CADET Sophie Mackenney has smashed her fundraising goal six times over after completing the gruelling 3 Peaks Challenge in under 24 hours.**

The 16-year-old has raised £3,115 to date for her squadron, 1064 (Honiton) in East Devon, after climbing the highest mountains in England, Scotland and Wales – Scafell Pike, Ben Nevis and Snowdon. Her initial target was £500.

She was backed up by a team of former military personnel – climbers James and her dad Mac, who is ex-RAF, and driver 'Aitch'.

And she's had support online from celebrities including Sir Ranulph Fiennes, Bear Grylls and Charley Boorman.

The intrepid cadet finished the challenge in 23 hours and 16 minutes.

Proud Mac said: "Sophie was undaunted by the task, her fitness and sheer strength showed through as she powered her way ever higher. Full of drive and determination she encouraged



and motivated her teammates, never having any self-doubt that she wouldn't make it within the challenge time of 24 hours.

"She endured over 10,000ft of climbing, 462 miles of driving, 18 miles of trekking and summiting the three highest mountains but not for one minute did she give up.

"I finally reached the last summit 10 minutes behind her and standing on top of Ben Nevis, the UK's highest mountain, together was an incredibly emotional experience."

● Go to: [justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sophie-mackenney](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sophie-mackenney) if you want to sponsor Sophie.



**TRIBUTE:** The memorial on Cleeve Common overlooks the town of Cheltenham

## Salute to fallen airmen

A MEMORIAL to seven airmen lost in the crash of a Halifax bomber in August 1944 will be dedicated on Cleeve Common overlooking the Cotswold town of Cheltenham, on August 26 – the 80th anniversary of the crash.

The memorial will be officially dedicated by AVM The Venerable Ron Hesketh (ret'd), a former Chaplain-in-Chief to the RAF. The service will take place at the memorial site, with speeches and refreshments for invited guests later in nearby Cleeve Hill Golf Club.

Mike Bryant, chairman of RAFA's Cheltenham branch, said: "Surviving relatives from Canada and across the UK will be in attendance alongside local dignitaries together with members of the Cleeve Common Trust and the Royal Air Forces Association. Weather permitting, there will be a flypast by a Lancaster bomber in salute to fallen comrades."

Please email: [rafacheltenham@gmail.com](mailto:rafacheltenham@gmail.com) if interested in attending.

**ROYAL AIR FORCE**

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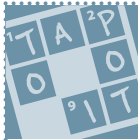
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Prize Crossword  
No. 366

Solve the crossword, then rearrange the 9 letters in yellow squares to find an RAF word.

Across

1. And 9 Across. WWII RAF personnel excellent at crosswords, presumably (4,8)  
8. See 18 Down  
9. See 1 Across  
10. Kick a ball from Idaho offensively (4)  
12. Pick half a train from South-East (6)  
14. Endless television Abbey is responsible (4,2)  
15. After rugby union, jaunty bear appears (6)  
17. Happy-go-lucky hooligan? (6)  
18. Healthy Scottish footballers lose mum (4)  
19. These landings involved conquest in less than a day (8)  
21. Maybe it curtails selfless outcome (10)  
22. Most amusing ditch? (2-2)

Down

2. Sydney, for example, may arouse hope (5,5)  
3. Even Newtonian may erupt (4)  
4. Fail to honour Zellweger embracing good (6)  
5. Bigoted daughter leaves baddies in disarray (6)  
6. Heavens! Birds on Argentinian planes! (8)  
7. I very much doubt returning Fiona to South Africa (2,2)  
11. Danish lout becomes weird (10)  
13. After six balls, peer has memorable operation... (8)  
16. ...while this sport requires new balls (6)  
17. Dog finished off vicar's aide (6)  
18. And 8 Across. How Charles voiced surprise? (4,3,7)  
20. Affected tree left out (4)

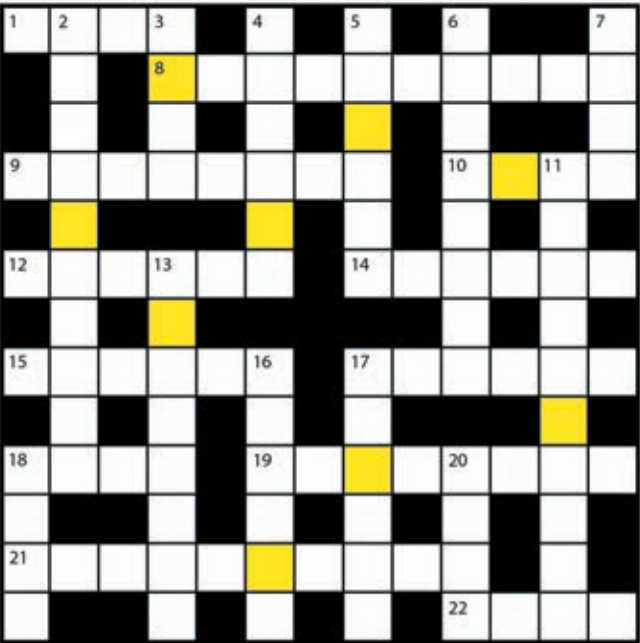
Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

RAF word: .....Crossword No. 366

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 August 9.  
Prize Crossword No. 364 winner is: John Maw, Leeds.



Solution to Crossword No. 365

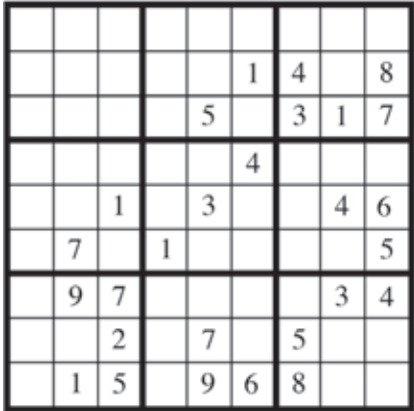
Across – 7. Oscars 8. Famous 10. Parsnip 11. Ankle 12. Deep 13. Drill  
17. Forth 18. Esau 22. Rowan 23. Obelisk 24. Will Do 25. Bomber  
Down – 1. Torpedo 2. Scarlet 3. Grand 4. Taxable 5. Forks 6. Usher  
9. Operation 14. Tornado 15. Astilbe 16. Dunkirk 19. Crews 20. Swell  
21. Heron  
RAF plane: Lancaster



Prize Su Doku  
No. 376

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 August 9.  
The winner of Su Doku No: 374 is: Selim Sensoy, Officers' Mess, Innsworth.



Solution to Su Doku No. 375

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



Competition

Sister Boniface Mysteries Series 3 (12)  
On Blu-ray, DVD and download from July 29  
Dazzler Media

Weddings can be murder

TV'S FAVOURITE Vespa-driving, crime-solving Catholic nun is back for the third series of the hit *Sister Boniface Mysteries*.

But her detective instincts and forensic expertise are put to the ultimate test when she must uncover a killer within Felix's (Jerry Iwu) own wedding party, as the nuptials draw near. Can Sister Boniface crack the case before the wedding bells ring?

Set in the fictional town of Great Slaughter in the Cotswolds, this entertaining detective drama stars Lorna Watson as St Vincent Convent's Sister Boniface – who is also a wine maker and part-time forensic scientist – and is a spin-off from the popular *Father Brown* TV series.

This latest release includes all episodes from series three, plus the 2023 Christmas special, and we have copies on DVD up for grabs.

To be in with a chance of winning

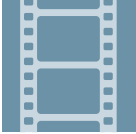


NUN BUSIER: The Sister is also a crime-buster, forensic scientist and vintner

one, simply answer the following question correctly:

Where are the *Sister Boniface Mysteries* set?

Email your answer, marked Sister Boniface Mysteries competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by August 9. Please note, competition entries by email should be sent only to the email address above.



Film Review

The Arctic Convoy (15)  
On digital from July 29 (Signature Entertainment)

Seamen left as sitting ducks on Arctic Ocean

A CIVILIAN cargo convoy travels unprotected from Iceland to Russia in this Norwegian war survival film based on real events leading up to the Battle of Stalingrad.

Set on one of these ships during the perilous 12-day journey, the convoy is protected by Allied planes until information is received onboard that they are being redirected, instructing the convoy to disperse. Perhaps they are needed elsewhere, or maybe there is an incoming attack that has been deemed too powerful.

They are left exposed at sea with potential attacks coming from any direction, above and below: from German planes, U-boats, or even minefields. With a crew that has varied experience, in fact a whole lot of inexperience, and conflicting opinions, the tension of the men will become magnified as they drift further away from home and into enemy territory.

Captain Skar (Anders Baasmo, pictured) is stubborn but commanding, impersonal but professional, where his First Mate Mørk (Tobias Santelmann) is more cautious after a previous mission where his boat was torpedoed – a marker of bad luck that he is ordered to keep to himself lest he spread fear among the ranks. And then among the crew, there are many others including Swedish Gunner (Adam Lundgren) and very green Sigurd (Jon Ranes), acting as Gunner's Mate.

As days pass and other ships are picked off, pressure



builds immensely. Messy moral conundrums are presented that make the drama more compelling, with acts of cowardice or heroism hard to discern in the heat of battle. The film does well to create the feeling of vulnerability in the vastness of the ocean, with a modest production size, which it then converts into paranoid claustrophobia when below deck.

Based on what Churchill called "one of the most melancholy naval episodes in the whole of the war," *The Arctic Convoy* is effective at presenting a disparate group acting under pressure, without the chest-thumping heroism you might expect.

Three out of five roundels   
Review by Sam Cooney