

**The Forces' favourite paper**

**Win aviation and military history books**

● See page 19 and R'n'R page 5



**Win!**

**Win!**

**ROYAL AIR FORCE**

Friday, June 28, 2024  
Edition No. 1587 £1.20

# RAF News

**How to help a colleague who could be suffering a mental health crisis**

See pages 14-15



**Darts**  
**Top-flight Pro-Am**



● See page 26

**Football**  
**Double Dutch**



● See page 27

**Ice Hockey**  
**Pumas make Inters history**



● See page 28

## Typhoon strikes on weapons drill



SERVICE CHARITY crusader SWO Michelle Rees-Martin has been awarded the MBE in the King's Birthday Honours after raising more than £20,000 for the Royal Air Forces Association.  
● See p3 and pp16-17 for more details of RAF recipients

### Crews join NATO live missile Ex

**Simon Mander**

BRITISH AND Finnish fighter jets joined forces in a multi-national live Nato exercise to test early warning and air defence systems.

Air crews and ground troops from 20 Alliance countries took part in integrated air and missile defence drills across nine locations in Bulgaria and Romania, culminating in a live-firing event.

It is Finland's first foreign deployment for Nato since joining the Alliance in April 2023, with them flying sorties with RAF Typhoons from Mihail Kogălniceanu Airbase in Romania.

The exercise also included French, German, Polish and Romanian troops operating various surface-to-air missile launchers, including the Patriot weapons system.

● Continued on p2

BiteSize

“I’m proud to continue my role with SSAFA, even when deployed,”




Long-time charity fundraiser  
Sgt Ken Ivory  
See p13

“She’s action, romance and comedy all rolled into one,”

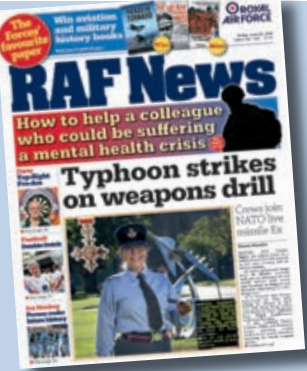


Calamity Jane star  
Carrie Hope Fletcher  
See R’n’R p4

“I would love to create a proper sports association for skaters within the RAF,”



Synchro skater  
Fg Off Afton Perry  
See page 23



ROYAL AIR FORCE  
RAF News

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

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

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

**News Editor:** Simon Mander  
**Sport:** sports@rafnews.co.uk

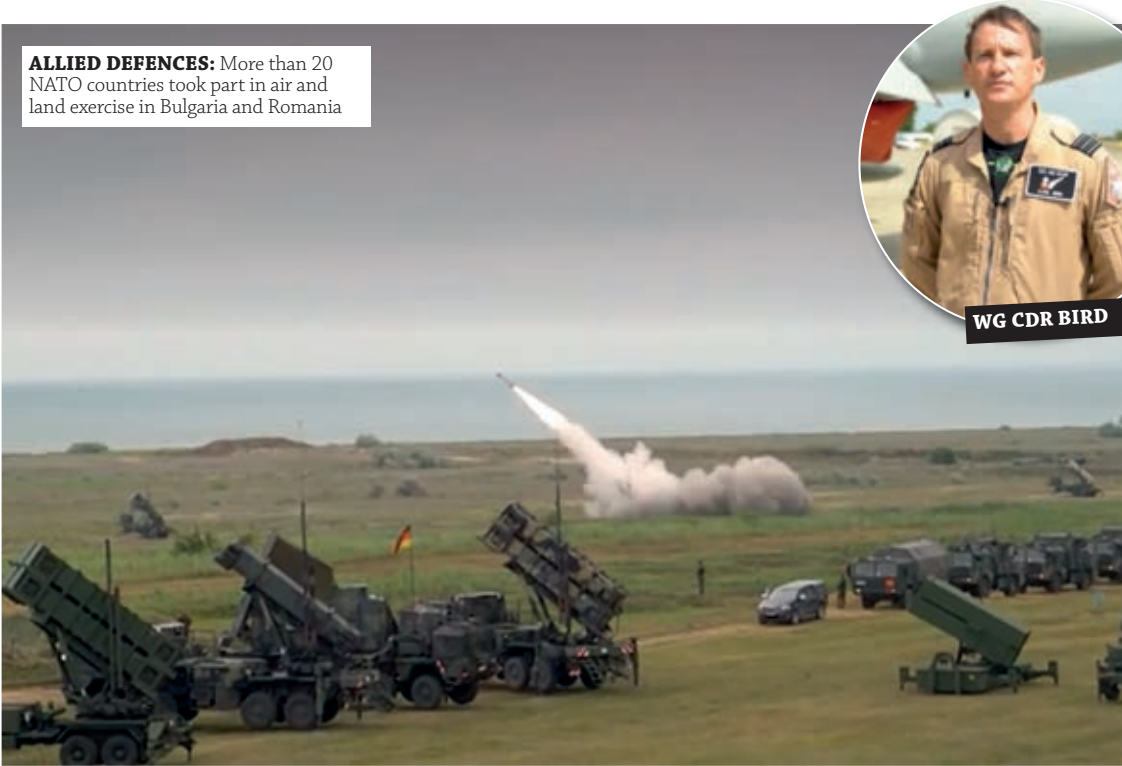
**All advertising:**  
Edwin Rodrigues  
**Tel:** 07482 571535  
**Email:** edwin.rodrigues@rafnews.co.uk

**Subscriptions and distribution:**  
RAF News Subscriptions  
c/o Intermedia,  
Unit 6 The Enterprise Centre,  
Kelvin Lane, Crawley  
RH10 9PE  
**Tel:** 01293 312191  
**Email:** rafnewssubs@subscriptionhelpline.co.uk

NATO missile test

● *continued from front*  
Finnish F/A-18 Detachment Commander Lt Col Rami Lindstrom said: “We are here to contribute to Nato air power and deter aggression.”  
“This is our first time in Romania. It is an important milestone for Finland and the integration into Nato air power. We can enhance Romanian air policing capabilities as a part of the Alliance.”  
He said the FAF had been homeland defenders for decades and were now learning to operate under host nations and support other countries.  
140 EAW’s Wg Cdr Karl Bird added: “The Black Sea is the eastern flank of Nato. We are not very far away from a conflict in Europe, and Romania shares a border with Ukraine.”  
“The UK takes it in turns with our colleagues and partners to make sure that all the air policing detachments required three times a year are filled.”

**ALLIED DEFENCES:** More than 20 NATO countries took part in air and land exercise in Bulgaria and Romania



This Week In History



**1940  
Malta fighters**

THE FIRST Hurricanes arrive in Malta to reinforce the island’s Fighter Flight after transiting through France and Tunisia.

**1969  
V-Force retires**

THE V-FORCE Quick Reaction Alert is terminated as Britain’s strategic nuclear deterrent passes to Royal Navy Polaris submarines.



**1982  
Hercules sets record**

A 70 Sqn Hercules flying from Ascension sets an endurance record of 28 hours and 4 minutes during a supply drop to a Rapier battery near Port Stanley.

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



**DOG'S LIFE:** Bundix has now been rehomed after struggling to cope with life at Marham. *Inset above, during training*

## F-35 sounds out hound

**Simon Mander**

**ITS NOT a dog's life for would-be RAF Police hound Bundix after being honourably discharged from protecting the nation's F-35 fighter fleet.**

The one-year-old Belgian Malinois arrived at Marham in 2023 but the extensive noise from the Lightning's powerful turbo-fan engine disturbed her kennel life and caused extreme stress.

Her short-lived military career seemed at an end after her handlers contacted station Training Capability Unit experts

who assessed her as unsuitable for working life and sent her to Honington to be rehomed.

But at the Suffolk airbase she got a new lease of life and began crate and recall training, and loose lead walking.

Despite being a guard dog she was affectionate with everyone, loved settling down on the sofa, watching football at parks, and taking a friendly interest in cats and livestock whilst out on walks.

And after an RAF Police social media appeal Bundix has now been matched with a family who have offered her a new home.



## CAS on tour

**AIR CHIEF Marshal Sir Rich Knighton launched a whistlestop tour of 12 RAF stations in three days, meeting thousands of serving personnel and hearing their stories.**

CAS took part in question-and-answer sessions with Armed Forces personnel during his visits.

# King honours aviators in his birthday awards

Front-line nurse, Olympian and mental health advocate among recipients

**Simon Mander**

**A LIFESAVING nurse, an Olympic medal winner, a fundraiser and a community organiser are among the RAF recipients of awards in the first King's Birthday Honours List.**

Royal Centre for Defence Medicine Nursing Officer Sqn Ldr Harmony Slade is made an Ordinary Associate of the Royal Red Cross for her dedication to patients, often on the worst days of their lives.

Her citation says: "She has saved many lives of UK personnel, as well as coalition forces and indigenous populations, in some of the most challenging theatres of operation."

"She has been repeatedly called upon to deliver for the nation and does so to exemplary standards for the good of critically-injured people."

Sqn Ldr Slade said: "It was a huge surprise and great honour to be awarded in recognition of the nursing duties I have undertaken throughout my service."

"I am truly humbled and remain eternally grateful to all of the teams, individuals and patients that I have had the great privilege to work alongside."

Olympic Bobsleigh bronze medal winner Chf Tech Stuart Benson (*below*) gets an MBE for increasing trainee instructor first-time pass rates in his trade by 30 per cent, to 98 per cent, at Cosford.

He is said to have produced, 'the highest standard of trained RAF aircraft technicians to their front-line roles in a generation.'

He has also inspired young people to achieve through his athletics coaching and as manager for RAF men's athletics.

Taking to the podium in Sochi 2014, Chf Tech Benson has worked with the Jon



Egging Trust to secure £40,000 so that athletes could compete in the Beijing Winter Olympic Games in 2022.

Now with the Engineering and Logistics Wing in the Falkland Islands, he said: "My journey in elite sport started at the grassroots level, so to give back some of the energy is a huge source of my motivation. I am very proud to continue to serve in the RAF as an Avionics Technician and really enjoy my role."

RAF Association stalwart and Waddington Station Warrant Officer Michelle Rees-Martin is also made an MBE for winning, while at Cranwell, the Lord Tedder Trophy for raising almost £20,000 in a single year for RAFA – the highest collection of any station for the charity. She is also a non-executive Director of RAFAKidz, which runs airbase nurseries.

Fylingdales Community Support Officer FS Keith Burt is nominated an MBE for 'delivering one of the most impactful support programmes in Defence.'

According to his citation: "He has developed the Community Centre in Whitby into a thriving hub that is used by the whole town."

He has also delivered workshops and clinics in mental health, dementia, suicide awareness, bereavement and menopause.

The father-of-five thought he was in trouble when he was summoned to the Station Commander's office to receive the news but is now looking forward to a big family day out to Buckingham Palace.

He said: "I am still coming to terms with such an honour. I am doing something I really enjoy and it is my job. My wife does see it as recognition of the hard work that I have done over the years and Ethan, my eldest twin, sees it as 'raising the bar' for them!"

● See pp16-17 for the full King's Birthday and Operational Honours List.



**LIFESAVER:** Sqn Ldr Harmony Slade



**MBE:** RAF Fylingdales Community Support Officer FS Keith Burt

[baesystems.com/defence-resilience](https://baesystems.com/defence-resilience)

# Proven capability in an uncertain world



**BAE SYSTEMS**

Copyright © 2024 BAE Systems. All rights reserved. BAE SYSTEMS is a registered trademark.

# Reds letter day

## Anniversary stamps mark 60 years of Arrows action

Tracey Allen

THE ROYAL Mail has issued a collection of 12 stamps to celebrate the 60th anniversary display season of the Red Arrows.

The RAF's aerobatic aces have been thrilling crowds across the world since 1964 and will be performing some of their most famous manoeuvres at shows across the UK, Europe and North America to mark their anniversary.

Eight of the specially issued stamps highlight the skill and precision of the pilots, with stunning formations and cockpit shots.

The remaining four showcase the team's performances on the world stage, flying over iconic landmarks including the Niagara Falls, the Pyramids of Giza and the Eiffel Tower.

Team Leader and Red 1, Sqn Ldr Jon Bond (pictured right), said: "This milestone season underscores the excellence, dedication and pride of all those who have worked for, supported or just simply watched a show by the RAF aerobatic team across the last 60 seasons.

"As well as



SQN LDR BOND



celebrating this heritage, these new stamps, many of which feature brilliant images taken by skilled RAF personnel, will hopefully inspire many more people using the wonder of aviation, just like each of our colourful, dynamic displays."

Royal Mail director David Gold added: "During important national celebrations the Red Arrows have entertained us with spectacular displays of aeronautical excellence. We are proud to mark their 60th season with these striking new stamps."

● For details go to: [royalmail.com/redarrows](http://royalmail.com/redarrows)



### In Brief



**COMMENDATION:** Sarah Duviau has been recognised for her work for Forces charity SSAFA and improving life at Brize

## Brize prize

BRIZE NORTON welfare officer Sarah Duviau has been awarded the Chief of the Air Staff's Commendation for her work improving life on the station.

She set up a music room, art therapy group and bowling club alongside her regular duties and charity work for SSAFA.

Gp Capt Claire O'Grady said: "Sarah's commitment and energy are extraordinary. She is delivering facilities that are improving the quality of life for all and reducing loneliness and isolation."

## Parade has it in the bag

THE WADDINGTON Pipe Band led more than 130 RAF and Army personnel through the centre of Lincoln as the station exercised its Freedom of the City.

Crowds lined the High Street as the parade passed en route to the dais, where Station Commander Gp Capt Dutch Holland was met by Lincoln Mayor Cllr Alan Briggs, Lord Lieutenant Toby Dennis and other civic dignitaries to take the salute.

WO Michelle Rees-Martin said: "It's an honour to be able to parade through Lincoln city centre and see so many people lining the streets showing their support."

"All the hard work during rehearsals have paid off, and I am extremely proud of everyone on parade and would like to thank the Drill Instructors for their expert instruction."



**HIGH-FLYING THEATRE** troupe Highly Sprung will be celebrating pioneering airwomen Amelia Earheart and Bessie Coleman with their Trailblazers show at the RAF Museum.

The production, which features actors suspended by wires as they tell the story of early aviation, starts in July and runs until September.

● Go to: [rafmuseum.org.uk](http://rafmuseum.org.uk)





# DID YOU KNOW WE HAVE INVESTED £40 MILLION TO SUPPORT RAF CHILDREN?

We are proud to share that we have invested over £40 million in supporting children and young people in the RAF Family since 2003.

And we continue in our commitment to children and young people of the RAF today. Our Ben Play and Airplay programme delivers over 7000 hours of youth support every year with a devoted team of Youth Support Workers providing a safe, fun place for youngsters, aged five to 18, to spend time with their peers, develop skills and enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities.

Our Listening and Counselling service has helped to improve the mental wellbeing of over 450 young people since its inception, covering a wide range of mental health support for conditions including anxiety, depression, behavioural problems and family change.

We are here for every member of the RAF Family in need – listening, understanding and providing life-changing practical, emotional and financial support.

As a strategic partner of the Royal Air Force, across 25 stations over the last 21 years, we have provided:

**23** childcare centres and nurseries



**40** play parks and multi-use games areas



**To find out more about our support for children in the RAF Family, visit: [rafbf.org/family](https://rafbf.org/family)**



**Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund**

**@rafbf**



# Bittersweet award for Tim

**Tracey Allen**

AN AIR Force dad who helped raise more than £1.4 million for suicide prevention after his 19-year-old daughter took her own life has been awarded the MBE.

Wg Cdr Tim Owen joined forces with two other fathers who lost their daughters to suicide to raise cash to fund school prevention programmes with a 300-mile charity trek as the 3 Dads Walking.

His daughter, 19-year-old Emily, died in 2020. Tim said: "I

strongly believe that in a moment of darkness my daughter made a wrong decision. Two minutes earlier or later it would have been different.

"Had she just taken time to think or to speak to someone, her decision and my family's lives would be on another path.

"Instead she decided she could no longer go on, leaving behind a devastating ripple effect on her family and friends."

He teamed up with grieving dads Andy Airey and Mike Palmer in 2021, walking 300

miles to raise more than £315,000 for prevention charity Papyrus, including a £10,000 donation from 007 movie star Daniel Craig.

The trio's latest 500-mile challenge took four weeks to complete, averaging 20 miles a day.

Tim added: "All three of us in a heartbeat would swap this honour, to get our girls back.

"For all of us, it's bittersweet because the only reason we're getting this award is because of the work we've done after we lost our daughters to suicide."



**POWER OF THREE:** 3 Dads Walking Andy Airey, Mike Palmer and Tom Owen (far right). Inset, Emily Owen, who died in 2020

# Rivet Joint marks ISTAR decade



**FRONTLINE SURVEILLANCE:** Rivet Joint over Waddington. Below, Cpl Eliot (centre right) receives the Engineer of the Year award

**Simon Mander**

A SURVEILLANCE squadron facing demands for intelligence on conflicts from the Middle East to Ukraine has celebrated a decade of operations with three awards for personnel.

And Waddington-based 51 Sqn, which first flew ZZ664, its first RC-135 of three in May 2014, has received top-level recognition for its national and Nato security role.

To mark the anniversary more than 700 people from the squadron gathered for an awards ceremony to recognise personnel and support teams delivering signals intelligence to give ground-based commanders a battle-winning edge.

Specialist crews, often including from its Lincolnshire home or from



**CHF TECH WEST**

USAF experts under a unique co-crewing arrangement, are scrambled several times a week either

deployed locations around the world – including the Middle East.

Recent conflicts have seen UK Rivet Joints patrolling Eastern Europe, across the Barents Sea, Baltic Region, Finland, Romania and the Black Sea.

Cpl Eliot Beddows was named Engineer of the Year for showing resolve and determination in delivering results over the last 12 months.

The Warfighter of the Year award was presented to Chf Tech Glyn West, who demonstrated the biggest commitment to furthering the operational impact and achievements of 51 Sqn.

The Worshipful Company of Painter-Stainers Master's Certificate (Aviator of the Year Award) was presented to Sgt Phil Howle for his unwavering commitment and drive towards delivering first class results.

Officer Commanding 51 Sqn Wg Cdr Keith Bissett said: "During a period of unprecedented demand 51 Sqn has been at the forefront of operations."



**SGT HOWLE**



Registered as a charity in England and Wales Number 210760 in Scotland Number SC038056 and in Republic of Ireland Number 20202001. Established 1885.



**LEARN MORE  
ABOUT OUR SUPPORT  
SCAN HERE**



from across the RAF and UK Defence every fortnight.



# Birthday salute

## Catherine joins senior Royals as RAF take to the skies for King's celebration



**FAMILY OCCASION:** The Prince and Princess of Wales and their children George, Louis and Charlotte join King Charles and Queen Camilla on the Buckingham Palace balcony for the RAF flypast

### Simon Mander

**A DRAMATIC display of more than 30 RAF aircraft took to the skies above the crowds outside Buckingham Palace to mark the King's official birthday.**

Making her first public appearance since undergoing surgery in January, the Princess of Wales joined her family and senior Royals on the balcony. And she watched entranced as waves of aircraft thundered overhead and accompanied her children in a horse-drawn carriage at the event.

Chinook helicopters from Odiham's 7 Sqn started the air display, which has become a popular feature of the Trooping the Colour celebrations. Helicopters from Joint Aviation Command, training aircraft from 22 Group, joined 1 Group aircraft from the Air Mobility, ISTAR and Combat Air Forces, before the Red Arrows finished the display, trailing their trademark red, white and blue smoke trails.

For 29 Sqn Typhoon pilot and mission commander Wg Cdr Andy Shaw, who led and coordinated the flypast, the day was the culmination of months of planning by a team of experienced fliers. He said: "It



is an honour to be involved in delivering an airborne spectacle worthy of His Majesty The King's Birthday.

"I am grateful to have the chance to work with so many outstanding people."

Overhead in procession were helicopters, training, air transport, air-to-air refuelling, maritime, ISTAR aircraft and fast jets.

Royal Air Force aircraft have a long history of taking part in the occasion.



**ROYAL TRIBUTE:** F-35s (left) and the Red Arrows were among 34 aircraft involved in the flypast to mark the King's birthday. Centre, Princess Catherine waves to crowds as she arrives at the palace in a horse-drawn carriage



The first King's Birthday Flypast took place in 1913 for George V, and more recently at last year's Coronation and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

The display ended with

Trooping the Colour on Horse Guards Parade.

More than 1,400 officers and soldiers formed the parade, together with 200 horses and more than 400 musicians from 10 bands and Corps of Drums.

News

# D-Day angels honoured

Simon Mander

**PIONEERING NURSES** who treated D-Day wounded flown back to Britain have been honoured by the RAF.

An event marking the 80th anniversary of the first women officially flown into a war zone took place at a Wiltshire nature reserve.

In June 1944, three Women's Auxiliary Air Force nursing orderlies flew from what was then RAF Blakehill Farm to Normandy to undertake the first casualty evacuation flights.

Cpl Lydia Alford and LACs Myra Roberts and Edna Birkbeck treated casualties as they were repatriated.

They were dubbed by the waiting press 'The Flying Nightingales'.

Family members, serving RAF Medical Services personnel and dignitaries gathered at the former airfield 80 years later to honour them and the centenary of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

RAF Medical Reservists, most of whom also work within the NHS, demonstrated modern aeromedical evacuation capability techniques while *The Last Post* sounded by a trumpeter of the Band of the Royal

Air Force Regiment to them and their predecessors.

LACW Lydia Alford's niece, Sheila Lane, remembers seeing her aunt on a Pathé newsreel in 1944.

She said: "On the screen was my Aunt Lydia saluting two officers before boarding an aircraft to go to France. That's my earliest recollection of her."

"Today means a great deal to me. Growing up, Aunt Lydia was a bit of a heroine and role model for me."

"I have great respect for those who do the same job today."

Attending the event, Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Trust Chief Nursing Officer Toni Lynch said: "What an amazing occasion. It's a great honour to recognise and celebrate the Flying Nightingales and the bravery that they showed 80 years ago."

"What they did is still so relevant for us today, both in the military and NHS, so it's a huge privilege to be here today."

Nursing Services director Gp Capt Charlotte Thompson added: "It's a privilege to be invited by 4626 Sqn RAuxAF, who have put on this wonderful event to commemorate The Flying Nightingales."



**MEDICAL PIONEERS:** Relatives of the original D-Day Nightingales and serving personnel gathered at former station to mark 80th anniversary

## RAF SPORTS LOTTERY

### THE VITAL LIFELINE FOR RAF SPORT

DID YOU KNOW? Your membership helps to provide the majority of the much needed funding for sport in the RAF.

Support your RAF charity by playing today at:

[www.rafcf.org.uk](http://www.rafcf.org.uk)

**1ST PRIZE**

£10,000

**2ND PRIZE**

£3,000

**3RD PRIZE**

£2,000

RAFCentralFund

BeGambleAware.org

The RAF Sports Lottery operates as a society lottery within the Royal Air Force Central Fund and is licensed and regulated by the Gambling Commission ([www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk](http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk)). The Royal Air Force Central Fund is a company registered in England and Wales 8555984, Charity registered in England and Wales 1152560, Charity registered in Scotland SC044299.

**You need to know what  
you're worth before you  
decide to leave.  
Join us. Job done.**

Many of those serving decide to leave before taking all considerations about their pension into account. Worse, many do not appreciate their worth, often underestimating their pension value. At today's values, a pension income of £20,000pa would require a pension pot of at least £400,000.

Seeking individual guidance from the Forces Pensions Consultants at the Forces Pension Society, will help you secure a firm financial base before advancing into the outside world. Even timing your departure to best advantage can make a significant difference to what you receive.

Here's what one Society Member wrote to us recently:

**"As I approach my final weeks in service, the Forces Pension Society has been amazing. Incredibly patient with my questions. A brilliant organisation, providing such important support to Service leavers. Thank you!"**

Join us and arm yourself with the information you need about your real worth before you decide to leave.

#### **Independent, not-for-profit**

Pension guidance is just one of the many benefits of membership. As an independent, not-for-profit organisation, our membership subscriptions help to fund our support for the Veterans' Community, our Roadshows and Webinars, our attendance at CTP Employment Fairs, plus our vigilance in taking governments to task whenever we spot unfairness or injustice in the system.

Visit: [forcespensionsociety.org/join-now/](https://forcespensionsociety.org/join-now/)

Annual membership for you and your spouse/partner is just **£45**. You will have exclusive access to our Forces Pensions Consultants, our informative Members' Webinars and you'll receive our bi-annual e-newsletters and our magazine, Pennant.

You'll also have access to our wide range of membership benefits from discounts on new cars to insurances, including our latest range of travel policies.

**IT PAYS TO UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF YOUR PENSION**

#### **Forces Pension Society**

68 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London SW8 1RL.  
T: 020 7820 9988 E: [memsec@forpen.co.uk](mailto:memsec@forpen.co.uk) [www.forcespensionsociety.org](http://www.forcespensionsociety.org)



# Stunning new family homes near Stamford

**Come and view our exclusive collection of  
4 and 5-bedroom family homes in Colsterworth.**



#### **FEATURED PROPERTY 'The Whitton'**

**4-bedroom detached home with garage**

Priced at just **£399,950**, including flooring throughout, fully fitted kitchen and wardrobes to bedroom 1.

**PLUS £20,000 to spend your way!\***

Designed for modern living, these exceptional new homes enjoy a fantastic village location, close to the A1 with easy access to Stamford, Grantham and Oakham.

Prices start from **£349,950**.

**Show Home and Marketing Suite open  
Thursday – Monday, 10am – 5pm**

Bourne Road, Colsterworth,  
Grantham, NG33 5JF

Tel: 07763 212627

Email: [newtonmeadows@balfourbeattyhomes.com](mailto:newtonmeadows@balfourbeattyhomes.com)



**Balfour Beatty  
HOMES**

Disclaimer: Computer generated images show a typical street scene and Whitton house type at Newton Meadows. Elevational treatments and handing may vary. \*Incentive available on selected plots only. Terms and conditions apply, available on request.

[balfourbeattyhomes.com](http://balfourbeattyhomes.com)

# 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

 **ROYAL AIR FORCE** **Music**  
Charitable Trust

**rafmct.uk**





SGT KEN IVORY

## Medal citizen

SGT KEN Ivory has been awarded the British Empire Medal – after more than 30 years with Forces welfare group SSAFA.

The Wycombe-based aviator joined the charity after leaving school in 1990 and carried on volunteering after signing up with the RAF five years later. Since then he has turned his talent as an endurance runner into a money spinner, raising cash by competing in marathons and ultra marathons.

He said: “I’ve been proud to continue my role with SSAFA even when I have deployed and am honoured and surprised to receive recognition.”



## RAFA delivers

IRISH RAFA members Pete McWilliams and John Connelly dropped in on 104-year-old Battle of Britain hero John Hemingway at his home in Dublin – to deliver a copy of *RAF News*.

Gp Capt Hemingway, who is believed to be the last of The Few, flew Hurricanes with 85 Sqn and recently gave his backing to a campaign for the Blade of Honour project to honour The Many who supported the fighter crews who halted the Luftwaffe in 1940.

## In Brief



**BREAKTHROUGH:** Latest RFDEW developed by Defence scientists uses radio waves to cripple enemy drone swarms

# Drone ranger

Simon Mander

A NEW weapon that uses radio waves to disable enemy electronics and take down multiple drones at once is under development for the UK’s Armed Forces.

The latest Radio Frequency Directed Energy Weapon designed by Defence scientists can track and engage targets across land, air and sea up to a kilometre away.

The system beams radio waves to disrupt or damage the critical electronic components of enemy vehicles, causing them to stop in their tracks or fall out of the sky, a spokesman for the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory said.

It can be operated by just one person and can be mounted on a variety of military vehicles, using a mobile power source to produce pulses of radio frequency energy capable of instantly downing drone swarms.

DTSL will begin live tests with the British Army later this summer.

# Fins fly in on NATO debut



**SKY POLICE:** Finnish and Romanian air chiefs at Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base. Inset left, the RAF’s 140 Expeditionary Air Wing arrive to take on NATO duties last month

Simon Mander

**FINNISH FIGHTERS have joined RAF Typhoons protecting Nato’s eastern flank for the first time, ready to scramble to intercept Russian aircraft skirting Alliance airspace.**

A seven-strong detachment of F/A-18 Hornets will fly missions alongside Lossiemouth-based jets across the Black Sea region from Romania.

Nato Southern Combined Air Operations’ Brig Gen Avraam

Kazantzoglou said: “Having the Finnish detachment deploy to Romania a bit over a year after Finland became a Nato member, together with the RAF, is a crystal-clear message that we stand together as Allies.”

He said the Alliance did not seek to confront the Russians but was determined to defend its members’ interests, which were challenged by the war in Ukraine.

Certificates allowing the Hornets to launch from Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base and lead the mission until

the end of July were accepted by the F/A-18 Detachment Commander, Lt Col Rami Lindström.

The Finnish and UK jets have also taken part in Nato military exercises in Eastern Europe.

Lt Col Lindström said: “This two-month deployment to Romania will be the Finnish Air Force’s first-ever major contribution to Nato’s collective peacetime missions.

“Our presence and readiness, in close cooperation with the Royal Air Force and the

Romanian Air Force, will contribute to Nato’s collective defence and deterrence here in the Black Sea region.”

Six RAF Typhoon fighters arrived in Romania in April to conduct Quick Reaction Alert duties as part of the UK’s long-standing UK commitment to security in Eastern Europe.

The IX (Bomber) Sqn aircraft are on a four-month mission with more than 200 RAF personnel from 140 Expeditionary Air Wing (140 EAW) until August this year.

**Feature**

Help with mental health

# 'The night a strain me from taking n

**RAF Sergeant Laura,  
who now volunteers  
for Samaritans charity**

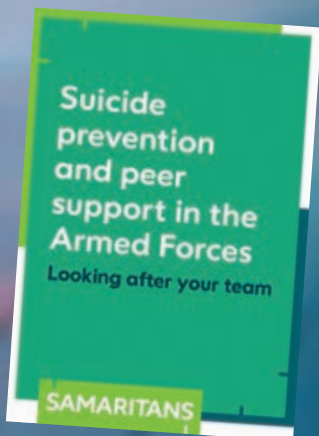


**VITAL WORK:** And Samaritans always needs more volunteers to man its helpline, *also below*



**There is help:** [combatstress.org.uk](https://combatstress.org.uk) 0800 323

# anger stopped my own life..'



HANDY: Pocket guide for Forces

**OVERWHELMED BY** problems Laura, a RAF Sergeant, decided to end her life. If it hadn't been for a chance meeting with a stranger on that night in 2019, she said she would probably have gone ahead with her plan.

She told *RAF News*: "I was on a night out with friends and this woman, a complete stranger, spotted that something wasn't quite right. I told her I was going to end my life. She saved me, talked to me, came back to my hotel and stayed with me. I am incredibly grateful to her, I would genuinely not be here now without her."

"My marriage was breaking down, I was working away from my child and I was in a toxic environment at work. I was petrified I would lose my security clearance if I said there was something wrong with me. I was worried I would lose my job – that stopped me from reaching out."

"I thought I was a strong individual who would not be broken, so I put a lot of pressure on myself. I didn't want to let people down."

## Father

Laura, whose father made attempts to end his life, sought help from her padre and from Defence Community Mental Health Services. She transferred from her job in the north of England to one in the South West and is now much happier, she said.

Now her experiences have prompted her to become a volunteer for the charity Samaritans and as a mental health first aid instructor at her workplace.

"I realised just how important being able to talk is," she added. "A lot of people are suffering from poor mental health but they are afraid to speak up."

"I volunteered because I wanted to give something back. I'm always happy to share my story, to say 'I'm still here' and I haven't lost my security clearance."

Veteran callers are almost twice as likely to report suicidal ideation compared to callers from the general population and more than 6,000 people take their own life each year in the UK and Ireland.

Figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show 5,579 suicides were registered in England in 2023, equivalent to a provisional rate of 11.1 suicide deaths per 100,000 people.

There were 5,175 deaths caused by



**GOOD LISTENER:** RAF veteran Tony volunteers with Samaritans and ran the London Marathon for the charity in 2022

suicide in 2021 in those aged 16 and over in England and Wales; nearly five per cent (253) were UK Armed Forces veterans. Most were male, 93.7 per cent (237 deaths), compared with female, 6.3 per cent (16 deaths) – equivalent to approximately 15 suicides per 100,000 UK Armed Forces veterans, with 16 suicides per 100,000 male veterans and seven per 100,000 female vets.

Samaritans says 1 in 5 calls they receive are from people feeling suicidal. The majority of these aren't actively planning to end their lives. However the figure rises to around 1 in 3 calls in the military community – the majority from veterans.

In 2021 the charity launched an app to support UK vets. It also set up the Veterans Emotional Support Hub and has a military programme lead, Joe, himself ex-Forces.

He said: "There are around 50,000 Service leavers a year. The vast majority transition fairly well but there are perceptions around the 'mad, bad and sad' vet."

"Military veterans have proudly served their country but may find themselves in need of a helping hand once they have to readjust to civilian life."

Samaritans has produced a Forces pocket guide that gives advice on

identifying a colleague who is struggling to cope, intervening to help, supporting them and when to report something to a medical officer, welfare staff, the chaplain or the chain of command.

Joe said: "Samaritans has a few dedicated programmes for certain groups. As well as the military and veterans there are programmes for the prisons and justice system and the national rail partnership."

"The pocket guide has that peer to peer 'buddy-buddy' support element, helping to identify and recognise when help is needed and how to report respectfully."

He added: "There is still a perception that it can have a negative impact on your career if you raise your head above the parapet. The higher up you go in rank, the more people you are responsible for, and you want to be seen as a professional and competent."

"Samaritans is a fully anonymous service – whatever you say will not go back to your chain of command. We focus on the emotional health of the individual who contacts us, listening and asking open questions."

Volunteers run more than 200 branches and the charity is currently looking for veterans, serving personnel and family members from the military community to join its ranks.

RAF veteran Tony, 55, signed up as a Samaritans listening volunteer two years ago when he saw the opportunity as a result of the charity's partnership with Three UK, where he now works.

## Ex-Corporal

The ex-Corporal, who served for 14 years, got involved after friends and colleagues took their own lives. He said: "I get fulfilment from helping someone; if they are talking to me, I'm listening, and that stops them potentially from doing something detrimental to themselves – that's rewarding."

"Our volunteers need to be empathetic and not judgmental. I think there will always be stigma associated with having mental health problems but it's a hundred times better than it was."

As veteran Lee, featured on the charity's website, says: "The bravest thing you'll ever do is ask for help."

● **Go to: [Samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org) for more information. Also see [bigwhitewall.com](https://www.bigwhitewall.com)**

\*Laura's name has been changed.

News

# The King's Birt 2024 & Operat

APPOINTMENTS TO THE  
MILITARY DIVISION OF  
THE MOST HONOURABLE  
ORDER OF THE BATH

As Companion (CB)  
● AM M.E. Sampson CBE DSO

APPOINTMENTS TO AND  
PROMOTIONS IN THE  
MILITARY DIVISION OF THE  
MOST EXCELLENT ORDER  
OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

As Commanders (CBE)  
● Air Cdre J.W.S. Thompson  
● Gp Capt (now Air Cdre) M.D. Lorriman-Hughes OBE  
● Gp Capt S. Vamplew

As Officers (OBE)  
● Wg Cdr (now Gp Capt) D. Collins  
● Wg Cdr C.D. Ball  
● Wg Cdr F.M. Dyson  
● Wg Cdr A. McGuire  
● Wg Cdr W. Pead  
● Wg Cdr J. Sjoberg

As Members (MBE)  
● Wg Cdr A.J. Butterfield  
● Sqn Ldr R.M. Dodd  
● Sqn Ldr H. Fielder  
● Sqn Ldr C. Gordon  
● Sqn Ldr B. Laws  
● WO M. Rees-Martin  
● WO C.D. Taylor  
● FS (Acting WO) J.N. Owens  
● FS K.P. Burt  
● FS C. Workman  
● Chief Tech S.W. Benson

THE ROYAL RED CROSS

As Ordinary Associate of the  
Royal Red Cross, Second Class (ARRC)  
● Sqn Ldr H.A. Slade

THE KING'S VOLUNTEER  
RESERVE MEDAL (KVRM)  
● Wg Cdr S.M. Fry DL  
● Sqn Ldr S.J. Kirkbride  
● MACr D.W.E. Penlington MBE

PROMOTIONS IN AND  
APPOINTMENTS TO THE  
CIVILIAN DIVISION OF THE  
MOST EXCELLENT ORDER  
OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

As Commander (CBE)  
● Mrs J. Toogood

As Members (MBE)  
● Mrs L.M. Neal

● Mr T. Ciesco  
● Mrs L.R. Robbins

MERITORIOUS SERVICE  
MEDAL  
● Flt Lt S. Blackett  
● WO Class 1 B.H. Armstrong (British Army)  
● WO Class 1 D.J. Cattermole (British Army)  
● WO M. Cranston  
● WO K. Davies  
● WO C.A. Dineen  
● WO M. Evans  
● MACr N. Everingham  
● MACr J. Fowler MBE  
● WO N.A. Harries  
● WO Class 1 G.C. Hughes (British Army)  
● WO Class 1 N.J. Kennedy (British Army)  
● WO Class 1 D.P. Mahoney (British Army)  
● WO M. Martin  
● WO E.M.C. Massey  
● WO Class 1 B.W.A. Owers (British Army)  
● WO N.D. Phipps  
● WO C.L. Rowland  
● WO A.J.P. Thompson  
● WO D.R. Ward  
● WO Class 2 (now Capt) T.S.G. Allatt (British Army)  
● FS (now Acting WO) P.M. Lilliman  
● FS A.J. Booth  
● FS S.G. Buffey  
● FS S.A. Evans  
● FS A.P. Field  
● FS H.J. Hulme  
● FS M.D. John  
● FS P. Sharpe  
● FS G. Steel  
● Chief Tech S.E. Buck  
● Sgt B.J. Maclean

CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF  
COMMENDATIONS  
● Wg Cdr R.E. Tweats  
● Sqn Ldr C.J. Petersen  
● Sgt (now Acting FS) P.G. Zgambo  
● Sgt R.D. Casson  
● Sgt C. Chard (British Army)  
● Acting Sgt J.P. Gelsthorpe  
● Cpl M.D. Elvin  
● Acting Cpl (now Cpl) R.V.J. Parker  
● AS1 (T) S.J. Birch  
● AS1 J.B. Durkin  
● AS1 C.A. Noble  
● Ms S. Duviau

Team Commendations  
● 201 Sqn Engineering

● Intelligence Qualified Weapons Instructor – Training Team  
● Op INTERSTORM Combined Team, RAF Cosford  
● RAF Lossiemouth Documentary Media Support Team  
● Headquarters No.2 RAF Police Counter Intelligence and Security Sqn – Project CASTELLA Briefing Team



DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE  
AIR STAFF & AIR AND  
SPACE COMMANDER  
COMMENDATIONS

DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE AIR  
STAFF COMMENDATIONS  
● Wg Cdr M.D. Adamson  
● Sqn Ldr G.P.D. Canty  
● Sqn Ldr S.J. Lloyd  
● Flt Lt S.L. Carmichael  
● Acting FS (now FS) R.J. Seed  
● Dr M. Hutchinson

Team Commendations  
● Headquarters Air Command Air Personnel Casework – Casework Team  
● RAF Central Fund  
● Support Helicopter Force HQ, RAF Odiham and the Chinook Force

AIR AND SPACE  
COMMANDER  
COMMENDATIONS  
● Cmdr S.R. Brotherton (Royal Navy)  
● Lt Cmdr (now Cmdr) D.T. Kennedy (Royal Navy)  
● Sqn Ldr R.L. Douglas  
● Sqn Ldr L. Durbin

● Sqn Ldr D.B. Hayes  
● Sqn Ldr B.L. Laidlaw  
● Sqn Ldr L.C. Playle  
● Sqn Ldr R.M. Philipson  
● Sqn Ldr D.A. Wicks-Randy  
● Maj P. Wooster (British Army)  
● Flt Lt (now Sqn Ldr) A.E. Shenton  
● Flt Lt (now Sqn Ldr) P.W. Wise  
● Flt Lt P.L. Gubbins  
● Flt Lt C.J. Penneck  
● WO P.D. Hannan  
● WO A.L.G. Ives  
● FS (now Acting WO) J. Hoult  
● FS G. Hamilton  
● Acting FS J.R. Ainsworth  
● Chief Tech M.A. Cross  
● Acting Chief Tech S. Reece  
● Sgt A.D.F. Kearns  
● Acting Cpl S.C. Swinson  
● AS1 M. Latham  
● AS1 H.C. McCann  
● AS1 J.J. Ryder-Morris  
● Mr D. Jackson  
● Mr S. James  
● Mrs S. Woodall

Team Commendations  
● John Collier EXCON Facility Staff  
● Operation AZOTIZE Force Protection Team  
● 30 Sqn Tactics and Training Flight  
● 99 Sqn C-17 Secondary Role Capability Team  
● 54 Sqn, Protector Training Flight  
● Periodic Depot Maintenance Team  
● SATTEU  
● RAF Halton, Recruit Training Sqn, Initial Force Protection Team  
● RAF Weston-on-the-Green (Joint Services Parachute Centre Weston)  
● Mobility Support Flight, RAF Lossiemouth

AIR OFFICER  
COMMANDING NO 1 GROUP  
COMMENDATIONS  
● Sqn Ldr (now Wg Cdr) S. Vickers  
● Sqn Ldr D. Alderman  
● Sqn Ldr T.G. Clarke  
● Lt Cmdr R. Dunbar (Royal Navy)  
● Sqn Ldr S.G. Phillips  
● Lt Cmdr (now Lt) M.C. Huxtable (Royal Navy)  
● Flt Lt M.A. Bowers  
● Flt Lt J.S.R. Elliott  
● Flt Lt T.J. Ilett  
● Flt Lt K. Leonard  
● Flt Lt J.O. Northover  
● Flt Lt E. Smith  
● Flt Lt J.H. Southward

● Flt Lt G.P. White  
● Fg Off J.A. Myers  
● WO D.C.W. Gill  
● Acting FS L.A. Mehta  
● Acting CPO (now CPO) I. Robertson (Royal Navy)  
● Chief Tech S.J. Folgate  
● Chief Tech J.P. Gulliver  
● Sgt M.W. Davies  
● Sgt J.J.K. Edwards  
● Cpl R.J. Avon  
● Cpl L. Cunnick  
● Cpl A. Wall  
● AS1 (now Acting AS1 (T)) L.B. Barker  
● Mrs C. Campbell  
● Miss E.C. Horrocks  
● Miss S. MacAulay

Team Commendations  
● A400M Force – Dubai Show Team  
● Command Support Air Transport Tasking Cell  
● 99 Sqn C-17 Jordan Engineering Recovery Team  
● 2 Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Sqn Training Team  
● Poseidon Operation CHAMBRAY Detachment  
● Joint Air Delivery Test & Evaluation Unit – Helicopter Section  
● RAF Lossiemouth Data Management Team, Typhoon Mission Support Centre  
● RAF Coningsby Whole Force Catering Team  
● Ground Support Systems Engineering Tiger Team  
● Typhoon Training Facility (North) – Operation CHIMERA – Simulator 'War Week'

AIR OFFICER  
COMMANDING NO 2 GROUP  
COMMENDATIONS  
● Flt Lt J.A. Eva  
● Flt Lt A. Flather  
● Flt Lt E.W. Forrester  
● Flt Lt S.G. Howard  
● Flt Lt S.P. Price  
● Flt Lt C.L. Robinson  
● Flt Lt J.G. Turner  
● Fg Off (now Flt Lt) J.A. Skivington  
● Fg Off M.F. Kostecky  
● Fg Off M. Thompson  
● Acting WO C.J. Fleming  
● FS E.L. Dye  
● FS C.A. Newton  
● FS A.K. Syrett  
● FS H. Wallace  
● Sgt M.L. Atkinson  
● Sgt J.P. Firth

# hday Honours ional Honours

- Sgt A.P.D. Rothery
- Acting Sgt K.G. Kingswood
- Acting Sgt (now Cpl) D.B. Main
- Acting Sgt (now Cpl) D.M. Maloney
- Acting Sgt D.H. Shields
- Acting Sgt K.J. Yates
- Cpl J.W. Korik-Carroll
- Acting Cpl S.P. Murdoch
- AS1 (now Acting Cpl) G.A. Dunford-Jones
- AS1 J.L. Swinford-Smith
- AS1 H.E. Tyler
- Mrs C. Barker
- Mrs P.A. Finch
- Mr T. Hood
- Mrs V. Maylor
- Mrs T. Stiles
- Mr J. Wheeler

- Team Commendations**
- 90 Signals Unit, 5(IS) Sqn VOLCANEX Federated Mission Network Team
  - 4001 Flight, RAF Regiment Training Wing
  - Aeromedical Evacuation Control Centre, Tactical Medical Wing
  - Distress and Diversion Cell, 78 Sqn Swanwick
  - Tactical Communications Wing, Aerial Engineering Flight
  - RAF High Wycombe Medical Centre Team
  - Intelligence Flight 602 (City of Glasgow) Sqn RAuxAF
  - RAF Brize Norton Force Protection Training Flight Team
  - RAF Brize Norton Physical Education Flight
  - Fire Section, RAF Marham
  - Civil Airhead Detachment Flight, Air Movements Sqn, RAF Northolt
  - Service Discipline and Personal Support Team RAF Odiham (HR Region 1)
  - RAF Waddington Air Traffic Control Sqn
  - RAF Waddington Force Protection Training Flight
  - RAF Waddington Movements Section
  - RAF Wittering STEM

- AIR OFFICER  
COMMANDING NO 11  
GROUP COMMENDATIONS**
- Maj D. Pool (USAF)
  - Sqn Ldr B. Welch
  - Lt (now Lt Cmdr) T.P. Duxbury (Royal Navy)
  - FS D. Simpson
  - Sgt R.P. Cooke

- AIR OFFICER  
COMMANDING NO 22  
GROUP COMMENDATIONS**
- Wg Cdr P. Chegwiddden
  - Lt Col B.B. Creed MBE (British Army)
  - Lt Col M.W. Patey (British Army)
  - Acting Wg Cdr (now Sqn Ldr) C.J. Aston
  - Acting Wg Cdr (now Sqn Ldr) C.A. Melen
  - Sqn Ldr (now Wg Cdr) D. Roe
  - Maj J.A.G. Ede (British Army)
  - Sqn Ldr R.J. Kellett
  - Sqn Ldr P.J. Thompson
  - Acting Sqn Ldr (now Sqn Ldr) I.T. Bratchley
  - Lt R. Fenwick (Royal Navy)
  - Flt Lt D.J. Gibbs
  - Flt Lt W.E.J. Hall
  - WO A.L. Goodall
  - WO G.R. Wosik
  - WO Class 2 S.P.R. Dawson (British Army)
  - Staff Sgt J.W.W. Peters (British Army)
  - FS K.L. Ritson
  - FS J.M. Saxton
  - Acting FS G.D. Hughes
  - Sgt A.L. Nyako (British Army)
  - Sgt J.A. Openshaw
  - Cpl (now Sgt) R.I. Thomas (British Army)
  - AS1 J. Cosby
  - Ms S. Baillie
  - Mrs F. Bolter
  - Mrs J. Grainger
  - Mr D. Hall
  - Mr A. Hickman
  - Ms D. Matthews
  - Ms G. McKellow
  - Mr P. Peacock
  - Mrs G. Perks
  - Ms J. Ray
  - Mrs D. Sellars
  - Miss L. Vinue
  - Mr D.R. Whittingham

- Team Commendations**
- Military Skills Module, RAF Officer Training Academy
  - RAF Wittering Runway Project Team
  - RAF Cosford Post Room
  - RAF Cosford 85th Anniversary Team
  - MOD St Athan Logistics Flight
  - RAF Valley First Responders Management Team

- AIR OFFICER  
COMMANDING NO 22  
GROUP COMMENDATIONS –  
RAF AIR CADET PERSONNEL**
- Sqn Ldr T.R. King
  - Mr J. Clarke

- CHAPLAIN-IN-CHIEF (RAF)  
COMMENDATIONS**
- FS G. Smith
  - Mrs C.T. Opie
- COMMANDER UK  
SPACE COMMAND  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Flt Lt A.J. Staincliffe
  - Capt T. Weatherhead (British Army)
  - AS1 M.F. Helm
  - Mr J. McManus

- Team Commendation**
- Space Liaison Officer Team

- DIRECTOR CAPABILITY  
AND PROGRAMMES  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Flt Lt J.J. Baird

- Team Commendation**
- Typhoon Red Key Sunset Mitigation Team

- DIRECTOR PEOPLE  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Sqn Ldr D.P. Carbutt-McGill MBE

- Team Commendation**
- Recruiting and Selection Analytics Team

- DIRECTOR SUPPORT  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Fg Off (now Flt Lt) W. Mitchell-Gough
  - WO P.F. Mobbs

- DIRECTOR DIGITAL  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Sqn Ldr L.R.W. Wood-Smith
  - Flt Lt T. Barber
  - Acting Sgt M. Healey

- DIRECTOR RESERVES  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Flt Lt C.A. Derbyshire-Laing
  - WO A.P.S. Kidd
  - FS D.J. Holt
  - Sgt M.J. Legge

- Team Commendation**
- Training Team, 3 RAF Police (Reserves) Sqn

- VICE CHIEF OF DEFENCE  
STAFF COMMENDATIONS**
- Gp Capt M.S. Tillyard
  - Sqn Ldr P.M. Bennett
  - Sqn Ldr M.J. Roberts

- COMMANDER UK  
STRATEGIC COMMAND  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Wg Cdr A.R. Mitchell
  - Sqn Ldr (now Wg Cdr) S.J. Coope
  - Sqn Ldr L.J. Small
  - Flt Lt R.A. Morgan
  - WO G.L. Churchward
  - Sgt A. Davies

- JOINT COMMANDER'S  
COMMENDATION**
- Sqn Ldr W.P. Shead

- COMMANDER JOINT  
AVIATION COMMAND  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Sqn Ldr J.W. Babbage

- Sqn Ldr A. Darge
- FS M.I. Baker
- FS C.M. Cole
- FS G.S.J. Woodward
- Sgt D. Green
- Sgt T. Robson
- Acting Sgt (now Cpl) J. Zippo
- Acting Cpl M.J. Monkman
- AS1 (T) L. Morris

- Team Commendations**
- Stock Holding Flight, Logistics Sqn, RAF Benson
  - Supply Control Accounting Flight (SCAF), Logistics Sqn, RAF Odiham
  - 1310 Flight, Op SHADER, RAF Odiham



## RAF OPERATIONAL HONOURS LIST

### APPOINTMENT TO THE MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MOST EXCELLENT ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

- As Member (MBE)**
- Sqn Ldr G.J. Orme

- King's Commendation for  
Valuable Service (KCVS)**
- Sqn Ldr D. Blenkinsop
  - Sgt J. Casey

- JOINT COMMANDER'S  
COMMENDATION**
- Sqn Ldr S. Bowman
  - Flt Lt A.J. Allan
  - Cpl (now Acting Sgt) S.R. Hughes
  - Cpl D.R. Bremner

- Team Commendations**
- 140 Expeditionary Air Wing, Information Effects Team
  - A Flight, 4624 Sqn
  - 1 Sqn RAF Regiment

- AIR AND SPACE  
COMMANDER  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Flt Lt M.J. Hooker
  - Flt Lt R.J. Mainwaring
  - Flt Lt R.T. Minns
  - Acting MAcr M.J. Seward
  - Acting Flt Sgt (now Flt Sgt) I.M. Bateson

- Team Commendations**
- RAF Wittering Whole Force Personnel
  - Cpl L.R. Gilbert (RCDM John Radcliffe Hospital) & Miss A. Rossiter
  - 201 Sqn Crew and Engineering
  - Gp Capt A.J. McIntyre (HQ AIR) & Sqn Leader J.W. Carter (HQ AIR)

- AIR OFFICER  
COMMANDING NO 2 GROUP  
COMMENDATIONS**
- Acting Sgt G.S. MacDonald

## Graduations



**ON PARADE:** Reviewing Officer AVM Cab Townsend meets the new Gunners



### Staff Reporter

THE RAF Regiment's newest recruits are the 15 members of Trainee Gunner Course 4-23, Salalah Flight and 5-23 Meiktila Flight, who recently graduated at RAF Honington.

They were accompanied with music from the RAF Voluntary Band and The King's Colour for the RAF Regiment was also paraded. Chaplain Rev (Sqn Ldr) Young delivered the blessings as loved ones watched with pride from the sidelines of the Parade Square.

Squadron Commanders and Warrant Officers from receiving RAF Regiment Units also met the new arrivals and their families after the event.

Air Officer Commanding No 22 Group, Air Vice-Marshal Cab Townsend, was appointed as the Reviewing Officer and congratulated the new recruits on their future roles within the RAF Regiment.

On graduating the Gunners are posted to either No. 1 Sqn RAF Regt at RAF Honington, No. 2 Sqn RAF Regt (Brize Norton), No. 15 Sqn RAF Regt (Marham), No. 51 Sqn RAF Regt (Lossiemouth) or No. 34 Sqn RAF Regt (Leeming).

Further congratulations go to the Prize Winners:

**Frank Sylvester Trophy, the best all-round Trainee Gunner of each course:**

- TG 4-23: AS2 Hurd
- TG 5-23: AS2 Smith

**The RAF Regt Association Trophy for Drill and Deportment:**

- TG 4-23: AS2 Moulton
- TG 5-23: AS2 Simpson

**WO Ramsey Physical Development Cup:** This prize is awarded to the Trainee Gunner who achieves the greatest improvement during the physical development course.

- TG 4-23: AS2 Hurd
- TG 5-23: AS2 Colclough

**LAC Beard Recruits' Trophy, voted for by the trainees:**

- TG 4-23: AS2 Hurd
- TG 5-23: AS2 Colclough

**SAC Luders Champion Shot Trophy:**

- TG 4-23: AS2 Moulton
- TG 5-23: AS2 Jordan

**Cpl Bradfield Trophy, for outstanding course Corporal Instructor:**

- TG 4-23: Cpl Dalton
- TG 5-23: Cpl Irlam.

# RAF Regiment's newest recruits make the grade



### A DAY TO REMEMBER:

(Clockwise, from left) AS2 Sarah Nehme receives her graduation certificate, AS2 Smith is presented with the Frank Sylvester Trophy, AS2 Simpson is handed the RAF Regt Association Trophy and there's a hug for a new Gunner from a proud loved one

PHOTOS: CPL CONNOR PAYNE



# The Tonka was no toy

Tornado was ground-breaking multi-role strike jet of the RAF

**FIRST FLOWN** in August 1974, the Tornado multi-role strike aircraft entered service with the RAF in the 1980s at the height of the Cold War.

It was designed to meet a 1968 specification for a two-seat Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MRCA) and developed by the international Panavia Aircraft consortium.

The RAF Tornado GRs achieved 38 years of unbroken service and deployed on various conflicts with NATO allies including operations in the Gulf, Afghanistan, the Balkans, Libya and Syria before it was withdrawn from service in 2019.

In *Panavia Tornado* (amberley-books.com) aviation expert David Oliver covers the jet's development, production and service in the RAF and German, Italian and Saudi Arabian air forces.

The book tells the fascinating story of this ground-breaking aircraft – nicknamed 'Tonka' by its aircrew – and contains 200 illustrations.

Oliver explained: "Tornado was jointly developed by the UK, West Germany and Italy under a collaborative agreement and manufactured by a consortium of companies formed under the name of Panavia.

"The MRCA had been the RAF's principal strike weapon system for over four decades. The Tornado GR.1 was the most numerous and important aircraft in the RAF inventory operating in the strike/attack and reconnaissance roles. The first prototype flew in 1974 and the first RAF squadron equipped with the GR.1 became operational in 1982.

"During the 1980s, RAF Tornados participated in the USAF's very sophisticated Red Flag exercises at Nellis AFB in Nevada....The RAF also took part in other exercises mounted in Canada and Alaska.

"First flown in November 1985, and in training use with No.229 Operational Conversion Unit (OCU) at RAF Coningsby

from July 1986, the Tornado F.3 entered squadron service with No. 29 Sqn at Coningsby in April 1987, that squadron being declared NATO operational in November 1987.... The Tornado successively replaced the Lightning and Phantom squadrons in the air defence role."

He added: "Designed to protect UK airspace and able to engage several targets simultaneously, the Tornado F.3 could patrol for over three hours at 300 nautical miles from base. Originally equipping seven squadrons and



YOU COULD win a copy of Panavia Tornado. For your chance to own one, tell us:

**When was the Tornado withdrawn from RAF service?**

Email your answer, marked Panavia Tornado book competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by July 12.

**Win!**

## Jack, 102, in D-Day tribute to pal Stuart

By Jo Lamb

**FORMER SQN Ldr Jack Hemmings, one of the RAF's oldest World War II veterans, made a special trip to attend the D-Day 80th anniversary events in Bayeux, Arromanches-les-Bains, and Gold Beach to remember his best friend Stuart King, who served with 247 Fighter Sqn on June 6, 1944.**

Watching the re-enactment of the landings performed by Royal Marines at Gold Beach, Jack said he felt "immensely proud" of Stuart, one of the Hawker Typhoon pilots who provided close support for ground forces in Normandy.

Jack, 102, said he felt overwhelmed by the gratitude of hundreds of French, Dutch and Belgian visitors who travelled to France to celebrate the anniversary. Many of them were dressed in 1940s

costumes and stopped to shake his hand and pose for photographs.

The AFC winner placed a memorial cross in the sand at Gold Beach, telling reporters how he had thought of Stuart and others from 247 Fighter Sqn who "landed on the beach and waded through deep water towards German machine guns – yet captured an airfield for the British aircraft to fly in. This tireless work continued day after day, and it was a great success."

He added: "I walked along the lines of gravestones in Bayeux War Cemetery and the age at death showed nearly all were in their 20s, some as young as 18. For those who survived, the war was the making of many of us – including myself."

Serving with 353 Sqn as a Lockheed Hudson and Dakota pilot, Jack was stationed in India during WWII, but met Stuart, an engineering officer, in London after demobilisation. The pair became firm friends when piloting the first British humanitarian survey flight to Africa in a Miles Gemini aircraft in 1948 – with the objective of using aircraft for peace in the aftermath of war.

The result has grown to become Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) – an international charity which delivers aid, relief and medical supplies across 25 of the world's poorest countries – flying to more remote destinations than any other air service.

Stuart passed away aged 98 in 2020.

Reflecting on his time in Normandy – which included a service at Bayeux Cathedral attended by Princess Anne – Jack said: "It was a very poignant few days indeed. All in all, I feel it was a privilege to be a part of it, and it's a privilege to be alive."



**EMOTIONAL TRIP:** Jack with photo of pal Stuart at Bayeux War Cemetery



**GRATITUDE:** Costumed locals with Jack on Gold Beach, Normandy



## Worcestershire Medal Service Ltd

Specialists in the manufacture and supply of full and miniature size medals, medal mounting and framing.



124 High Street  
Bromsgrove  
Worcestershire  
B61 8HJ

**01527 835375**

[www.worcmedals.com](http://www.worcmedals.com)      [sales@worcmedals.com](mailto:sales@worcmedals.com)



## ADDICA

**Promotional and Corporate Gifting**

**01527 509380**

**[www.addica.co.uk](http://www.addica.co.uk)**

**[sales@addica.co.uk](mailto:sales@addica.co.uk)**





# No, it's NOT a HR-V

**HONDA HAS** always been at the top of its game when it comes to reliable, practical, family motors and the new e-NY is no exception.

On paper, at first glance, it appears to be an electric evolution of the HR-V but, apparently, it's not. Honda is quick to point out that they are two completely different cars... that just happen to be very alike.

The e-NY is electric, 57mm longer than the HR-V and has new, Sans Serif badging. Not the same, at all.

It's a £45k, small electric SUV, with respectable range. Something that will appeal strongly to existing Honda customers keen to make the EV switch.

## Exterior

It's an eye-catching vehicle, with plenty of detail to grab the eye. Carefully contoured sides help to ease the flat-sided look that can blight many crossovers and the sloped rear gives it a sporty stance. The nose is a little squat for my liking but the slim headlights help to recover it and there's plenty of detail on the front bumper, in the form of air scoops, to keep it interesting. The alloy wheels certainly help to give it a premium look.

## Interior

The cabin is a well-crafted affair, with beautifully-piped leather effect seats and soft-touch surfaces. There's plenty of space too, particularly in the back, where you get impressive legroom. The seats won't hold you in place well through the bends but they're comfortable enough on long runs and there's a reasonable amount of adjustment.

There are a couple of downsides. You have to sit fairly high due to the battery pack beneath you and the steering wheel doesn't have a great amount of reach adjustment. You therefore find yourself having to move your seat further forward, which isn't great for those of us with long legs.

The top spec Advance model comes with a panoramic roof as standard, which makes the cabin feel particularly airy. The hoodless digital instrument panel is a great looking innovation but it can be difficult to read on bright days, as can the huge 15.1in central touchscreen.

That massive central tablet is divided into thirds, with the air con settings at the bottom, menus and settings in the middle, and an info display at the top. This is where you'll find the sat nav or mirrored phone display. It works well, with sharp graphics.

## Honda e-NY

### Pros

- Brisk performance
- Well controlled body-roll
- Stylish interior, with lots of room

### Cons

- Rivals are more fun to drive
- Slower charging than some rivals
- Intrusive regen braking

### Verdict

A well-packaged, small crossover that has all the right characteristics to appeal to traditional Honda buyers. It's the company's first serious EV, with decent range, practicality and performance. An electric SUV that looks good and is easy to live with.

The boot is not huge, due to the sporty slope of the roof, but you get a respectable 361 litres of space, which increases to 1,176 litres with the seats knocked down.

## On The Road

The e-NY handles pretty well for a crossover. It's by no means what you'd call exciting to drive but the ride is firm and it's easy to place through the bends.

The steering has a variable ratio set-up that weights up as speed increases. This works well in most circumstances but can suddenly get heavy as you hurl yourself into a bend. It's an odd feeling, that.

It has a 0-62mph time of 7.6 seconds, which seems a bit lethargic for an EV, until you realise that it's intentional. Honda has looked at the effect that rapid acceleration has on its customers and decided that most of them feel travel sick on take-off.

The e-NY has therefore been tuned to accelerate like a petrol car, with a more progressive pick-up. It's still got a fair whack of poke, when you need it, but accessing it requires a good bit of welly.

It's a comfortable car around town and on a long run. WLTP range is given as 256 miles, which makes the e-NY a practical crossover for day-to-day use. The 61.9kWh battery delivers plenty of power and we recorded an average of 5 miles per kWh on winding country roads. Not bad, all things considered.

The regenerative braking is a bit harsh and the function to dial it back doesn't last long, so I wasn't keen. There was also no B mode on the gear selector, so holding a low gear in bad weather could be a problem. These were notable downsides to an otherwise well-thought-out car.



## **VACANCIES IN THE SULTANATE OF OMAN**

**Vacancies exist in the  
Sultanate of Oman (The Royal Flight of Oman)  
for the following posts:**

### **HELICOPTER MAINTENANCE ENGINEERS**

Royal Flight of Oman is seeking Helicopter Maintenance Engineers who have the following skills and experience.

#### **B1.3 MECHANICAL ENGINEER**

- EASA JAR 66 B1.3 License or equivalent
- Minimum 10 years' experience on helicopters
  - Type Rating H145 D2/D3
- 5 years' minimum experience in the H145 D2/D3.

#### **B2 AVIONICS ENGINEER**

- EASA JAR 66 B2 License or equivalent
- 10 years' minimum experience in helicopters
  - Type rating in H145 D2/D3
- 5 years' minimum experience in the H145 D2/D3

#### **TO APPLY**

Interested applicants should submit their application and CV to  
**recruitment@rca.gov.om or aamrawahi1@rca.gov.om**  
**by no later than 30th June 2024.**

## HOCKEY

# The cap fits for summer Olympian Sanford

RAF AND GB star ASI Liam Sanford got a pre-Olympic heads up after winning the first RAF Cap from Hockey Chair Wg Cdr Sharon Eveleigh-Hall.

Sanford played in the FIH Pro League fixture against Ireland at Lee Valley Hockey Stadium, which GB won 3-0.

GB lost 3-2 to Australia on the Saturday, with Sanford rested as part of the normal

squad rotation to maintain players' fitness levels through the intense FIH Pro League schedule, which sees them play 12 matches in June.

Following this month's fixtures, GB has announced its squad for the Paris Olympics and Sanford has been selected.

The win over Ireland saw the aviator and his teammates rise to third in the FIH World

rankings – considered medal contenders for this summer.

Eveleigh-Hall said: "It is fantastic that through the brilliant additional support we have gained through our sponsors the RAFHA can now recognise our top representative players properly with a physical cap.

"It is only fitting that Liam, as our most capped and

successful international player of recent times, should be the first to receive it.

"It is great to see him performing so strongly in this current Pro League series and we wish him the very best of luck after selection for his second Olympics, this summer."

● Follow RAF hockey on Instagram @rafhockey.



HATTA BOY: Liam with Wg Cdr Eveleigh-Hall

## ICE SKATING

# Going out at the top

## Afton signs off in style

### Daniel Abrahams

FG OFF Afton Perry bowed out at the top after performing for Team GB at the ISU World Synchronised Championships in Zagreb.

The holding officer, who was skating with Team Icicles Senior at the three-day event in Croatia, secured two top-20 finishes in her final days in the sport. Now she hopes to see it, and ice skating in general, become more popular in the RAF.

Currently on Phase 2 training for Logistics Officers, Perry said: "Ice skating is a sport that is very niche and takes a lot of time to practise, so maybe it won't be in the RAF at a high level, but I would love to create an association that would allow people to learn a new skill.

"I would love to see a safe and fun environment for personnel to learn and escape from the day-to-day stresses of work – ice skating for me was, and still is, a massive escapism."

During her 15 years with Icicles, the RAF High Performance Athlete has represented Great Britain at four Junior World Championships, with Zagreb being her second Senior World Championship bow.

The 25-year-old told *RAF News Sport*: "Zagreb went well – we achieved a personal best



GB STAR: Fg Off Afton Perry (left and inset above) and in action with Team Icicles at World Championships

in both programmes and two clean skates. The competition is run over three days, the first day being unofficial practices with the second day the first day of the competition – the short programme. Each team performs a short programme, and then on day two, everyone competes a free programme."

Icicles skated in red and green dresses for their short programme, based on TV hit *Stranger Things* and for the blue programme blue dresses based on *The Tragedy*.

Synchronised skating sees a team of 16 skaters create routines on ice, with the focus on shapes and formations. Each team performs two routines over two days of competition, with their result being the combined score.

Perry (left) added: "Team Icicles, Great Britain's Senior Synchronised Skating Team, are the current and five times British Champions and compete internationally and nationally each season. Other competitions throughout the

year include Steel City Trophy, Sheffield, Trophy D'Ecosse in Dumfries and Santa Claus Cup in Brno [Czech Republic].

"The high point of the season is the world champs, along with other internationals and nationals. Zagreb was the perfect time to step away. I won't be competing now, but I will be training as a judge to continue my involvement, and I will be helping with SPICE, the UK's only inclusive synchronised skating team, based in Slough."

Along with her aims to push the sport in the RAF and help make it more inclusive through her work with SPICE, the Flying Officer has one other burning desire, to see the sport become an Olympic one.

She said: "Despite endless campaigning, the sport has not yet been included in the Games, however campaigns continue and we are seeing more inclusion of the sport within the figure skating world."

**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)**



# RAF News

The Forces Favourite Read

Hit your target market with **RAF News** - the official newspaper of the Royal Air Force since 1961.

Reaching an audience of more than 50,000 readers every fortnight, **RAF News** is the Forces' favourite newspaper delivering exclusive news, features and sports action from across UK Defence.

To discuss your advertising in  
**RAF News** please call or email:  
T: +44 (0)7482 571535  
E: [edwin.rodriques@rafnews.co.uk](mailto:edwin.rodriques@rafnews.co.uk)

**RAF News**

The official voice of the Royal Air Force



FLETCHER:  
A cut above



FENCING

# Campion's champion

## And Fletcher foils opposition

FOUR DAYS of coaching and action saw RAF Fencing prepare for the upcoming Inter-Services with a bumper championship.

The flagship event at Cosford also gives captains the opportunity to select the IS team. The sabre, foil and epee are fenced, giving athletes the chance to hone their skills and distinguish themselves in all disciplines.

Over the competition days a dominant victory for Flt Lt Alex Fletcher, who won the sabre, foil and epee, earned her the title of Women's Champion at Arms.

It was a close fight for the Men's Champion at Arms, with no fencer winning from complete beginner to experienced international; with a

separated first and second place, with outgoing Captain AS1(T) Ed Campion securing the title for a third time.

Sqn Ldr Chris Greensides, RAF Fencing Union Chair, said: "Although a small sport in relative terms, fencing has a long and distinguished history with the RAF, with many personnel gaining not only Service level representation, but also international and even Olympic.

"Although the RAF regularly punch 'above their weight' against rivals in the RN and Army, we make sure that every competition has something available from complete beginner to experienced international; with a



CAMPION



FLETCHER



CAMPION:  
Outgoing  
captain signs  
off in style

number of fencers having started at one and become the latter over their time with us. "Particular congratulations must go this year to Alex and Ed in gaining their respective titles." Association spokesperson AS1 Sian Kelly added: "Despite the competitive nature of the event,

new fencers were welcomed and given the coaching needed to hold their own on the piste against experienced fencers. They were supported throughout the event; with piste-side advice given and tactics against opponents talked through. "All RAFFU events are

suitable for any level of fencer; all kit and equipment is provided. Coaching is also available and it is always a friendly and fun atmosphere." **Email: [air-raffencingunion@mod.gov.uk](mailto:air-raffencingunion@mod.gov.uk) for more information about RAF Fencing.**

CYCLING

# IS criterium win for Sheppard

A FIELD of 10 female racers proved enough for a tight, competitive Helyx UK Armed Forces Inter-Service Criterium Championship, in which the RAF took first and third places.

AS1 Laura Sheppard took the day's first race with Flt Lt Emily Heaton taking third, sandwiching Army rider Katy Vincent to complete the podium finishes.

The open 234 race saw AS1 Danny Hedley come second, with AS1 Liam Richardson winning the fourth category open race.

Speaking after the IS race, Sheppard said: "The race is being called one of the most competitive Inter-Services female races for many years, so it is a massive congrats to all the riders for their strong effort on the day and making the race a well-contested effort." In the Open race a full field of 10 riders from each Service took to the course, with the action exploding on the second lap as a group of nine riders went clear of the main bunch. Four Army, three Royal Navy and two RAF riders worked well

to create a big gap, with the main bunch attacking each other. In the final lap, Army favourite James Bevan made an attack to outsprint the group winning the race, followed by RAF rider Cpl Evan Campbell taking second. The female Open race, which was made up of five Army, four RAF, Navy and civilian riders, followed and didn't take long to heat up. The Army riders started attacking the group with Sgt Laura Furness and Cpl Eve Newton going clear of the bunch.



HOTLY-CONTESTED: Women's IS race PHOTO: @PELTONPIX

The remainder of the group tried to close the gap but were unable to do so.

Third place went to Army rider Capt Pippa Inderwick, with Sheppard coming in fourth.

## Sport

### DARTS

# The arrows take flight in Blackpool

Pro-Am event's on target for huge success

#### Daniel Abrahams

**SERVICE DARTS** is about to make a front and centre arrival when it holds Operation Bullseye mixed professional and personnel pairs tournament in Blackpool next month.

The 16 qualifiers from a field of almost 400 will play against legends of the sport including Colin Lloyd (ex-PDC world Champion), Jose de Sousa (Australia), Damon Heta (11th in the world), Chris Dobey (13th in the world) and Army veteran Dimitri Van Den Bergh (Belgium).

The military personnel include aviators AS1 Aaron Tibbs, Sgt Sean Whisker and FS Glenn West, as well as RAF veterans Ade Larner (Cpl Ret'd), Brian Williamson (Flt Lt Ret'd) and Iain Campbell (Chf Tech Ret'd).

Brize-based Operation Bullseye organiser Cpl Zara Warhurst is steeped in darts history, her uncle Glen Durrant is a three times British Darts Organisation and Professional Darts Corporation premier league champion (who will be playing on the night). Warhurst has used her contacts within the game to create the event – the first of its kind – and has helped set up 15 dart boards and oches at RAF stations across the UK.

She said: "I've grown up around darts so to be able to merge the two worlds that I love – the military and darts – is great.



**TOP-FLIGHT:** FS Glenn West (above), veteran Cpl Ade Larner (below left) and AS1 Aaron Tibbs



"The event at The Grand Hotel, Blackpool on July 11 is supported by *Bullseye* – the 1990s TV show – and will feature MC John McDonald." Tickets are £25.

She added: "The professional players, many of whom are travelling from across the globe, are giving their time for free and paying their own way."

Warhurst is hoping to get darts officially recognised by the Sports Board.



## Bobsleigh's Stanbridge an 'Outstanding Sport'

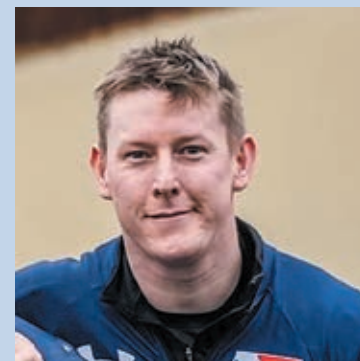
RAF BOBSLEIGH star Cpl John Stanbridge has been nominated in the Most Outstanding Sport category of next month's NAFSE Service Awards.

The National Armed Forces and Emergency Services Event at Sunderland FC's Stadium of Light features eight categories covering Service, Police, Civil Service, NHS, volunteer and sport.

Stanbridge said: "It is nice to be recognised, I really appreciate the nomination. I have done a lot of work over the last few years to raise the profile of the Air Force and I've overcome an injury to have my best season ever. This is the icing on the cake."

Stanbridge spent 10 months in rehab following a European Cup race crash in December 2022 in Germany, in which he fractured his neck and ruptured to spinal discs.

Supported by the Defence



**NOMINATION:** Cpl John Stanbridge

Rehab centres at Waddington and Cosford, he returned to the IBSF European and World bobsleigh competitions in 2023 and 2024, where he and his team kept their winter Olympic dream alive with impressive performances in St Moritz, Sgüida in Latvia, and Lillehammer, Norway.

● **Visit:** [gbbobsleigh.co.uk](http://gbbobsleigh.co.uk) for further details on the team.

## 600 Sqn's got plenty in Reserve

**SIX WAS** the lucky number as 600 RAuxAF Sqn won the RAF Akrotiri netball tournament's plate prize after just one week together.

The RAF Northolt, Odiham and Army Air Corps side lifted the silverware in the annual tournament in Cyprus after a gripping final. It was a group greatly improved from the first day they had played together that week.

Team Manager AS1 Lucy Hemmings said: "It was a great opportunity to highlight the support Reservists can provide as well as showcasing the Sports Fund, which helped with some of the costs."

"Many of the team are



**PLATE WINNERS:** (l-r) AS1 Ashleigh Ibrahim, AS1 Lucy Hemmings, Cpl Amy Spicer, Sgt Tarum Blee, Cpl Gemma Curtis, L/Cpl Chelsea Ribbon, Sgt Charlotte Mortimer, Cpl Bronwyn Harding, Cpl Tasmin Paige, AS1 Gracie McHugh and AS1 Charlotte Barmby with Commander British Forces Cyprus AVM Peter Squires

looking to integrate netball into their fitness regime and would love to return to retain their title next year."

## Rugby League's tribute

THE RAF were represented front and centre at the Cenotaph as Rugby League paid respects to the fallen ahead of the Challenge Cup final at Wembley.

Flt Lt Karl Cassar (32 Sqn, RAF Northolt) and AS1(T) Grace Burnett (RAF Leeming) were present alongside two other wreath bearers from the Army for the annual ceremony which leads up to the summer showcase event for the sport, this year played out between Warrington Wolves and Wigan Warriors, which Warrington won 8-18.

Lt Col Dave Groce laid the wreath on behalf of UKAFRL.

Wreaths were also laid by the teams who played at Wembley: Wigan Warriors and Warrington



**CENOTAPH:** Rugby League ceremony

Wolves, Leeds Rhinos and St Helens (women's final) and Wakefield Trinity and Sheffield Eagles (1895 cup final).

Wreaths were also laid by RBL, RFL governing body Sir Lindsey Hoyle and the head of the officials Phil Bentham and greats of the sport including Ellery Hanley, pictured inset.

FOOTBALL

# DOUBLE DUTCH



TANGERINE DREAM: UKAF women lift trophy after taming the orange peril

UKAF Women	3
Dutch Armed Forces	0

UKAF WOMEN'S football is in rude health according to first team manager FS Karl Milgate following a 3-0 President's Cup win over the Dutch Armed Forces.

The win – kickstarted by a 30-yard net-buster from Cpl Phillipa Wilson at Aspray Arena, Willenhall, and ended with two goals in the last 10-minutes from S/Lt Jay Berrow and Cpl Libbie Dixon – was followed by a tough 1-0 loss to Bundeswehr women's team in Augustdorf, Germany. The matches round off a rich vein of form for the team and its RAF contingent.

Following the final whistle AS1 Seana Jenkins was named player of the match and there was news that assistant coach Cpl Dan McNamara had achieved elite sports status from the RAF Sports Board.

Milgate said: "To take on two international fixtures in two weeks and win one the way we did and lose one narrowly is a great return, especially against the calibre of

## Cup delight for UKAF women and RAF men



PHYSICAL: Dutch sliding tackle

opponent that we faced. "Then to see us win a player of the match award and for our assistant coach to achieve such recognition to my mind shows exactly where we are."

He added: "It was a deserved win. This group has stayed together for the last three President's Cups and having lost the last two on penalties, they were hungry to get what they deserved.

"We spoke about winning and not wasting chances, which we had done in the previous encounters, but in the first half we were culpable of not taking our opportunities, until, just before half-time, Cpl Pip Wilson smashed one in from 30 yards. It set us up to be in control for the second half.

"It was important to get that first goal and then we closed out well with two goals in the last 10 minutes."

Then it was out to Augustdorf, Germany where the team trained for two days before the double header clash, which saw the men lose 3-1 while the women's team went down 1-0.

Milgate said: "We dominated possession, then in the 59<sup>th</sup> minute they scored and we were chasing things a little."

● Follow UKAF women's football on X @UKAFWomen

## Goalie Bartlett keeps the faith for comeback

RAF REGIMENT FC keeper AS1 Jamie Bartlett etched his name in Astra League history with a dramatic 94<sup>th</sup>-minute headed equaliser and match-winning penalty save.

The Regt's super stopper got his hands to a TG5 spotkick for a 7-6 win on penalties to cap an epic comeback for his side, who retained the trophy at Oxford City FC's ground.

RAF Regt captain Cpl Hayden Pain said: "To win the Astra League cup two years in a row is a remarkable achievement and one that all involved can be proud of. It was extra special for me as it was also my last serving day in the RAF Regiment. A day I will always remember."

The game kicked off exactly as it ended, with a goal in the first and last minute of play, but it was RAF TG5 FC First who opened the action and scoring as AS1 Josh Randall rounded the keeper after a poor clearance fell to him.

Regt didn't have to wait long to level the scores thanks to the diving of Fg Off Harry Richardson. TG5 did not waste any time getting back in front however as the next 10 minutes saw a complete collapse in concentration from the Regt team, who failed to clear a cross that was scrambled home by Randall. They also failed to deal with a corner, that was again netted by Randall to complete his hat-trick in 20 minutes.

The second half proved to be as manic as the first, with the Regt producing a very late charge after a half which featured good chances for both teams.

An 80<sup>th</sup>-minute penalty saw Regt bring things closer as AS1 Krissy Dixon netted for 3-2, before Bartlett headed Dixon's



REGIMENT FC: Retain Astra Cup

94<sup>th</sup>-minute corner kick into the top corner for 3-3 with seconds to play. Extra time saw Regt's FS Tom Morton introduce all his substitutes and pile on the pressure, with TG5 keeper Cpl Scott Evans again and again coming to the rescue to keep the scores level.

With the score still 3-3 after 120 minutes the game went to penalties, ending in a nail-biting win for Regt.

Manager Morton said: "We don't give up. To grab the equaliser in the last minute, and by the keeper, sums up the belief in the squad. You can't buy that. I thought once we got that goal there would only be one winner."

TG5 manager WO Richie Killick said: "I am really disappointed with the result but we have to be proud of what we've achieved in our first season."

RAF XI	4
Dutch Air Force	0

A FOUR-goal blast was sweet for the RAF XI team as they wrestled back the President's Cup from the Dutch Air Force at Sporting Khalsa FC.

Having seen his charges lose out on penalties last year, head coach Sgt Danny Bartlett was delighted with the win, saying: "We wanted to ensure the trophy came back to the UK. We had an extremely young squad comprising of all RAF U23s, bolstered by three SRT players and AS1 Danny Dixon, who was playing in his penultimate President's Cup. He was made captain and led and inspired the youngsters.



PROUD: Coach Bartlett holds trophy

"After a close first half we stuck to our game plan and the players executed it superbly. The first goal from Cpl Brodie Gray set us up nicely and from there on we dominated and controlled the game.

"It was great to get the 4-0 win and lift the trophy, but it

was also great to see our Dutch counterparts, who we enjoy an excellent relationship with, and look forward to being hosted in Amsterdam next year."

Brodie's curling freekick from the angle of the area sparked the fire for the Airmen in the second half after both sides had gone close in the first.

A quick counterattack created the second goal, which was slotted away by AS1 Jake Staunton, before AS1 Tom O'Hanlon punished a defence error to score.

A clinical finish from a tight angle saw AS1 Josh Randall end the scoring with the fourth.

● Follow RAF football on Instagram @raffootballassociation.

### GOLF

## 72-hole D-Day challenge for golf team

ON THE anniversary of D-Day, RAF Honington Golf Team undertook a formidable 'longest day' 72-hole golf challenge to raise money for the RAF Benevolent Fund.

Teeing off at 6:30am at Diss Golf Course, the team started their marathon round at the same time Allied troops began



their historic assault on the Normandy beaches 80 years ago.

After completing 18 holes at Diss, they moved on to Thetford Golf Course for another round, before finishing with 36 holes at Flempton Golf Course.

As daylight waned and tiredness set in, the squad

added a final twist to their challenge. On the last hole, a par 3, each member took a shot at the green. Those who missed were fined a £10 donation to the fundraising pot, adding an extra £60 to the £700 raised.

The money will support the RAF Benevolent Fund's mission to provide financial, practical and emotional support to serving and former members of the RAF and their families.

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



**UKAF ladies' Dutch delight**

See page 27

ICE HOCKEY

## Double joy for Service as men & women take IS crowns



# Twice as nice



**UNDEFEATED:** RAF Aces celebrate taking title after wins against Navy and Army

ALL PHOTOS: TRISH THOMPSON

**Daniel Abrahams**

**GOALS AND drama** were aplenty as the RAF Aces took the IS crown after two action-packed wins over the Royal Navy Destroyers and Army Fury at Sheffield Ice Arena.

Speaking after the 9-7 title win, Aces captain Sgt Jamie McIlroy said: "This was one rewarding way to end my Service career. We started slowly in both games, but we showed what we are about to claw back the games and win."

"There really is no better way for me to bow out and the team to have won."

Team fixture secretary Fg Off Adam Rosbottom added: "What a week, what a team. The players are delighted to have earned the right for the RAF Aces to be named Inter-Service champions."

"The continued buy-in and effort, on and off the ice, from the whole squad throughout the season is what has contributed to making the Aces a winning team."

"The atmosphere in the

arena was fantastic during the IS fixtures and the team are now looking at how we can progress to ensure the RAF Aces continue to fly as champions; we've got a title to defend. Congratulations also to the RAF Pumas who won the inaugural Ladies IS final against the Army Fury. It has been an extremely successful week for the RAF Ice Hockey Association. Here's to continued success."

The opening clash versus the RN, although a closer game, proved to be a thrill ride and the

perfect set-up for the IS decider. Having gone behind at the start of the clash, the RAF went in 1-0 down after the first period, despite going close on several occasions. Raising its game in the second period the RAF went ahead 2-1, with Rosbottom then making it 3-1, and despite the Navy pulling the score back to 4-3, they succumbed 5-3 before losing to the Army on penalties, 3-2.

In a clash for the ages the tournament's two best teams

produced a 16-goal thriller to decide the tournament.

The hosts were 2-0 down and 3-1 down before a brace from Rosbottom saw them level 3-3 and from there they never looked back.

The Aces had a clear gap when they made it 7-4 but the Army again scored. An agonising score as the puck rolled across the line after it appeared saved made it 8-6. Again, the Aviators found the net to keep their nose in front and despite a late Army strike, the Aces triumphed.

## Pumas make history in the Steel City

**TWO YEARS** of hard work and a nerve-shredding 7-5 win over the Army saw the RAF Pumas women's ice hockey team crowned the first Inter-Services champions.

An end-to-end game saw the light blues open the scoring and having taken the lead for the second time at 3-2 they led throughout the remainder of the game to claim prestigious bragging rights at the Sheffield Ice Arena after not going behind again.

Scorer of the opener, captain Cpl Tee Lewis, said: "We worked hard and pushed with everything we had. Shots and rebounds were the key. Losing was not an option. Overall, the drills and training we put in could be clearly seen on the ice. We gave it our all for the team,

the fans and, obviously, bragging rights."

Sgt Andy Rourke, Puma's head coach, said: "It's been a very tough couple of years preparing for this game. People dream about being a part of history and I am massively proud to be a part of this moment. The team has gone through some major changes in the last 12 months and everyone has bought in to the new ways of thinking. A new ethos, harder training and the positive acceptance of competitive selection meant every player who was selected earned their right to wear the blue jersey."

"We now have even harder work to do with the defence of the Women's Inter-Service Trophy. The pressure is firmly on us, and we can't wait to get started."

Having opened the scoring the RAF saw the Army level only to retake the lead, then see the Army level again and end the opening period at 2-2.

With the RAF taking the lead eight minutes into the second period, the Army then netted an own goal to make it 4-2 to the light blues, with the goal action unabated the period ended 5-4 to the Pumas.

Taking advantage of an Army penalty the Pumas extended the lead, before an incredible solo effort from Cpl Jaz Lawton made it 7-6.

The Army then had a goal ruled out before finding the net once more to set up a nerve-jangling last passage of play which the Pumas dealt with superbly to take the crown.



ISSN 0035-8614



9 770035 861051

26 >

**Announcements**

● p6-7

**Puzzles**

● p8

# R'n'R



**Win cop classic  
complete  
collection on  
Blu-ray ● p8**



**Dr's in the  
house –  
Jason plays  
Frank'n'Furter**

● See  
page 4



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

We all know it's good to talk. Host a Brew and Bake coffee morning or bake sale on station, at home, or in your community and make a life-changing difference to a veteran whilst having a brew, some banter and a slice of cake.



Simply sign up online for your free fundraising pack.  
Raise funds by asking for donations in return for a  
delicious brew and some baked goodies.

**COMBAT  
STRESS**  
FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH



## Film Review

**Before Dawn (15)**

In cinemas now, on Blu-ray, DVD & digital from Sept 2 (Kaleidoscope Ents)

# The Somme trenches through Anzac eyes

**A** YOUNG boy from Western Australia leaves his dad's sheep farm to join his friends in fighting with the 44th battalion on the Western Front.

*Before Dawn* begins by transitioning from Jim Collins (Levi Miller) back home on the ranch in 1916, with the warm orange hues of sand and sun beneath a clear blue sky, to the murky and muddy trenches of the Somme.

Like many others, he fights beside his friends, making any casualty more painful. Jim appears conflicted on the battlefield, for reasons that are left for us to ponder, but he makes a point of helping anyone he can, and is known by the foreshadowing moniker of 'Crackshot'.

Much of the film's runtime is spent in the trenches, and perhaps for good reason as it was shot in WA, reportedly

spending \$900,000 on digging these ditches correctly and credibly recreating war-torn Europe. This colossal effort, with its hundreds of supporting actors and pyrotechnics, is a bold and impressive feat for a production of this scale, captured in some magnificent shots towards the climax.

While it would have been great to see more time spent exploring the characters, whose actions are based on real people



from genuine diary entries, the film appears to be concerned with creating a spectacle, which it certainly achieves. Though under explored, there is a relatability to the Anzac identity glimpsed through the lads' sense of humour.

It would have been nice to spend more time with these characters outside of the more familiar rhythm it drops into, with moments of levity interrupted by sudden attacks or

bullets flying overhead. Although there are missed opportunities to delve deeper into the characters, the film's portrayal of these boys ploughing through no man's land is convincing, at least from certain angles.

*Before Dawn* is a commendable effort that manages to deliver a visually impressive portrayal of war, even if it sometimes sacrifices depth for spectacle.

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



## There goes the Neighbours-hood!

**N**EIGHBOURS ICON Jason Donovan is set to thrill theatre audiences later this summer when he joins the cast of Richard O'Brien's legendary rock'n'roll musical the *Rocky Horror Show*, to star as Frank'n Furter in the 2024-25 UK tour.

Jason will be returning to the role for the first time in the UK for more than 25 years – he show is due to hit the road from August 19 to February 1, 2025.

The upcoming tour is the new West End production of the *Rocky Horror Show* and includes a two-week run at London's Dominion Theatre from September 6-20, plus a Christmas season at the Liverpool Playhouse from

December 3 to January 4, 2025.

Jason said: "I am thrilled to dive into the exhilarating role of Frank'n Furter with a fantastic new cast and time warp with audiences throughout the UK. We promise to deliver the freshest Rocky ever, that audiences will not forget. So, buckle up, as the show promises to be a wild and wicked ride!"

The *Rocky Horror Show* tells the story of Brad and his fiancée Janet, two squeaky clean college kids who meet Dr Frank'n Furter by chance when their car breaks down outside his house whilst on their way to visit their favourite college professor. It's an adventure they'll never forget and the show

features all the famous musical numbers which have made it such a huge hit, including the timeless floor-filler, *The Time Warp*.

Jason will be donning his fishnets for UK audiences after a sell-out season at the Theatre Royal, Sydney for which he received rave reviews as Frank'n Furter. He made his West End debut in 1991 playing Joseph in the London revival of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and has gone on to have a hugely successful stage career with credits including *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* and *Grease The Musical*.

● Go to: [RockyHorror.co.uk](http://RockyHorror.co.uk) for more details.



## DVD Competition

**Creation of the Gods I (15)**

Blu-ray and DVD now, digital from July 22 (Trinity Cine Asia)

Win!

## Outfoxing the evil demon



**F**ROM THE acclaimed producer of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Hero* – Yang Du – comes this epic, visually-stunning blockbuster, and the first instalment in a new cinematic trilogy, adapted from a classic 16th-century Chinese novel.

*Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms* resurrects a mythic, legendary battle between humans, immortals and monsters that is said to have occurred more than 3,000 years ago. After conspiring with a conniving fox demon to kill the emperor and seize power, King Zhou reigns as a tyrant so brutal that he incurs the wrath of Heaven.

In a final attempt to save the mortal world from desperate peril, the gods decide to intervene and invest in an unlikely champion brave enough to challenge the evil king, even if it costs him everything.

The film is helmed by visionary director Wuershan (*Painted Skin: The Resurrection*, *Mojin: The Lost Legend*) and boasts an impressive production team, including the Oscar-winning art director of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Timothy Yip Kam-tim.

Blending epic mythology, stunning fantasy and heart-racing action and adventure, the movie was a smash hit at the box office when it was released last year and we have copies on DVD up for grabs.

To be in with a chance of winning one, simply answer this question correctly:

**Who directed *Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms*?**

Email your answer, marked *Creation of the Gods* DVD 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 July 12.



# R'n'R



## Theatre Calamity Jane

UK tour

WEST END  
GIRL: Carrie  
Hope Fletcher as  
Calamity Jane



## Carrie has her Day as feisty Calamity Jane

**H**OLLYWOOD LEGEND Doris Day will forever be associated with the role of Calamity Jane, having played the feisty heroine in the whip-crackin' 1953 movie – said to be based on a true story.

Now West End star Carrie Hope Fletcher (sister of McFly's Tom), is to play Calamity Jane in a touring production of the musical comedy classic, kicking off at Aylesbury's Waterside Theatre on January 14, 2025.

Carrie said: "Calamity Jane is one of those roles that doesn't come around all too often. She's action, romance and comedy all packed into one character, and I can't wait to take on the challenge of filling her shoes!"

The new production, that tours the country until next September, features the famous songs *The Deadwood Stage* (Whip-Crack-Away), *The Black Hills of Dakota*, *Just Blew in from the Windy City*, and the Oscar-winning *Secret Love*.

The tour marks 10 years since the show last hit the road. Producer Jamie Wilson said: "With this new version of *Calamity Jane* first opening at The Watermill Theatre in 2014, I am delighted to be collaborating with them again to finally bring this wonderful production back to theatres all over the country.

"We have been waiting for the right moment and artist to step

into Calamity's boots and bring this hilarious and joyful musical back to the nation, and we are thrilled that Carrie Hope Fletcher will be leading the company as the iconic Calamity Jane.

"Carrie is one of the UK's most talented artists, whose broad fan base will introduce this much-loved musical to audiences across the country."

Carrie is a three-time WhatsOnStage Best Actress in a Musical winner. She most recently played the title role in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cinderella* in the West End and her previous credits include Veronica in *Heathers*, Wednesday in *The Addams Family* and Éponine in *Les Misérables*.

Based on the Day film that also starred Howard Keel, the musical is set in the 1870s and follows the fearless, gun slingin' heroine, the biggest mouth in Dakota territory and always up for a fight, who tries to win the heart of dashing Lieutenant Gilmartin and shoots insults at the notorious Wild Bill Hickok.

But when the men of *Deadwood* fall hard for Chicago star Adelaide Adams, Calamity struggles to keep her jealousy holstered. Her heart's a thumpin'... but who for?

Full casting will be announced in due course.

● Go to: [atgtickets.com](https://atgtickets.com) for more details.



## Theatre Wizard of Oz

UK tour

**S**EE *STRICTLY Come Dancing's* Craig Revel Horwood like you've never seen him before – the longest-serving judge of the hit TV series is starring in *The Wizard of Oz* as the Wicked Witch of the West.

He plays the role on a UK tour, direct from the London Palladium, that goes to the King's Theatre, Glasgow (July 2-7), His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen (July 9-13), Milton Keynes Theatre (July 16-21) and then Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff (July 23-28) when The Vivienne takes over for the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre and Sunderland Empire dates.

### Scarecrow

Aviva Tulley is Dorothy in the show that features the original score from the Oscar-winning MGM movie – including *Over The Rainbow*, *Follow The Yellow Brick Road* and *We're Off To See the Wizard* – with additional songs from Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. Benjamin Yates also joins the cast as the scarecrow.

The show is based on L. Frank Baum's classic fantasy, published in 1900, in which young Dorothy is swept up by a tornado into the curious Land of Oz and magical adventures follow.

Tulley (*Book of Mormon*, UK tour), said: "Who wouldn't want to play Dorothy? She is such a well-known and iconic character. Loads of people know Dorothy. I watched the *Over The Rainbow* TV series, the competition to find a Dorothy for the 2011 West End production, and I remember just loving it. Getting to play Dorothy myself now is a dream come true.

"She's a strong, confident character. I guess you could also say that she's strange but that's because she's different from her friends and family in Kansas. She stands out."

### Independent

Tulley identifies with Dorothy, immortalised in the 1939 film by Judy Garland.

"I've always considered myself to be independent ever since I was young. I have always done things myself, my way, and I've always made a plan for myself, known what I wanted to do and then just implemented it. I've always been driven. Dorothy's very driven and so am I," Tulley revealed.

She added: "I've never been in a show before where I've hardly left the stage. Usually, you get a little break but with Dorothy there's no break. You have to be in it and on it the whole time.



MAGICAL:  
Dorothy  
and the  
Munchkins

## 'Dorothy' is h youngsters fo

## Brit School's Aviva stars in *The Wizard of Oz* with TV *Strictly's* Craig Revel Horwood



DOUBLE ACT: Dorothy (Tulley) and Toto (Abigail Matthews)

Also, it's such a well-known and much-loved show and she's a well-known and much-loved character. I have to do it, and her, justice by being the best I can be.

"I didn't get to see the show at the Palladium recently and I never saw Danielle Hope when she did it back in 2011, so it's very much my own take on the character. It's about showing her strength but making it seem natural, not forced."

Not surprisingly, Tulley cited the classic *Over The Rainbow* as one particular song from the musical that she loves singing: "Of course, it has to be *Over The Rainbow*. I've been singing that song my whole life so to actually do it on a stage in front of everyone is amazing.

Edited by Tracey Allen



# hoping other follow her path



WICKED  
WITCH:  
Craig Revel  
Horwood

I also love the first time we sing *Ding-Dong! The Witch Is Dead* in Act One because that's when you first discover the Munchkins."

And she agreed with the show's famous line that "there's no place like home".

"I think home humbles you. Some people can leave home, discover new things and then they forget their base. Being an actress, travelling or touring is a very magical experience but then when I go home my family keep it very real. It's like they take me back to who I really am. Home is where you are your true, authentic self," she said.

After training at The BRIT School and the Arts Educational

School, Tulley was in *The Book of Mormon* tour at just 21.

"It definitely took me out of my comfort zone, but it was a fantastic experience," she said.

She added: "It's nice to introduce kids to live theatre. I remember seeing my first-ever theatre show, which was *Matilda*, and I was like 'that's what I want to do'. The fact that there's kids who will come and watch the show and go 'This is the path I want to go down' is magical. I really hope that's what happens. I hope they come and are inspired to follow their dreams."

● Go to: [uktour.wizardofozmusical.com](http://uktour.wizardofozmusical.com) for full tour information.



## Books

The Air War Through German Eyes/The Heavy Water War  
[amberley-books.com](http://amberley-books.com)



# How Nazis lost World War II

STARTING WITH leaflet drops in 1940, the aerial offensive against the Nazis' homeland grew into a huge armada that pulverised much of Germany, seriously damaging her ability to make war and killing hundreds of thousands.

By day the Flying Fortresses of the mighty Eighth US Air Force battled the Focke-Wulfs of Luftflotte Reich, and by night it was the turn of Bomber Command's Lancasters to see off night-fighting Messerschmitts and Heinkels. For the Allied airmen who fought this war the price was frighteningly high, for those who opposed them – in the air and on the ground – it was even higher.

As the bombing increased, Nazi high command were forced to devote more and more resources to try to defeat the Allied campaign just as those same resources were desperately needed elsewhere, on the Russian Front and, after D-Day June 6, 1944, on the new Western Front.

Written from the 'other side' and told as much as possible through the words of the veterans, *The Air War Through German Eyes* and *How the Luftwaffe Lost the Skies Over the Reich* by Jonathan Trigg ([amberley-books.com](http://amberley-books.com)) has been described as an important book on one of the most controversial campaigns of World War II.

During the course of WWII, the Allies mounted a series of attempts to stop Germany from manufacturing heavy water by utilising hydroelectric plants in occupied Norway. These efforts comprised a mix of bomber and commando raids. The overall aim was stop Nazi Germany building a nuclear bomb.

In fact, Hitler was never as

close as the Allies thought, but the idea that his regime could construct and deploy a device was the ultimate Domesday scenario, one that would have tilted the balance in favour of the Nazis. Just the threat might have been enough to force a negotiated peace with the perceived reality of a Nazi bomb hanging over the world like a nuclear-powered sword of Damocles.

Production, and therefore Allied aims, centred on the Vemork Power Station by the Rjukan Waterfall at Telemark. A series of daring raids – Operations Grouse, Freshman and Gunnerside – neutralised the plant's capacity. In Operation Freshman, every single glider-borne paratrooper was either captured or killed. In February 1943, a force of SOE-trained Norwegian commandos succeeded in sabotaging the plant's production capacity. Further manufacturing effort was abandoned, and the Nazis attempted to transport the heavy water they had aboard the ferry SF 'Hydro'. The Norwegians managed to sink the vessel in the deep waters of Lake Tinn. The stakes in any special forces raids in history have never been higher, according to John Sadler, author of *The Heavy Water War, Beating Hitler to the Bomb* ([amberleybooks.com](http://amberleybooks.com)).

We have copies of each of these absorbing books to win. For your chance to own one, tell us:

**What was the name of the power station by the Rjukan Waterfall at Telemark?**

Email your answer, marked Amberley books 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, by July 12.

Please state if you prefer to win *The Air War Through German Eyes* or *The Heavy Water War*.



## Theatre

Am Audience with Guenther Steiner

Wycombe Swan, July 4

# The inside track to F1

JUST DAYS ahead of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone on July 7, a motorsport supremo will be appearing at the Wycombe Swan Theatre, for *An Audience with Guenther Steiner* on July 4.

The charismatic Haas F1 Team principal and breakout star from Netflix's *Drive to Survive*, will share his unique insights, anecdotes and behind-the-scenes stories from the world of Formula 1 and his illustrious career.

His 2023 book *Survive to Drive* became an instant hit and topped The Sunday Times bestseller list. Fluent in English, German and



GUENTHER STEINER: The Italian-American is a world authority on motorsport

Italian, Steiner is one of the most recognised and sought-after figures in Formula 1.

He will be back in the UK this autumn for a tour that includes dates in Oxford, Bath,

Cardiff, London, Sheffield and Edinburgh, running from October 1 to November 19.

● Go to: [fane.co.uk/guenther-steiner](http://fane.co.uk/guenther-steiner) and [wycombeswan.co.uk](http://wycombeswan.co.uk) for more details.



## Your Announcements

You can email photos for announcements on this page to:  
[tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk](mailto:tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk)

### In Memoriam

**WATT** Catherine Grace (née Leech)  
Former WAAF Corporal  
Passed away June 12, 2002  
"Twenty two years gone  
The pain and sorrow lives on."

**WATT** Alfred  
Warrant Officer retired  
Passed away May 25, 2009  
Both remembered with love and sadly missed.

### Seeking

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

**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: [ffrise713@gmail.com](mailto:ffrise713@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.

### Associations

**WHAT** do you know about the 2 Halifax RAF Sqns – 346 and 347 – that 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: 003546953889.

**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.

**RAF** Catering Warrant Officers' and Seniors' Association: all serving or retired TG19 WO or FS and all former Catering Branch Officers are invited to join the RAF CWO&SA. We meet twice yearly with a vibrant gathering of retired and serving members. So why not come along and join us? For more information send an email to: [janedjones6@btinternet.com](mailto:janedjones6@btinternet.com). The first year of membership is free.

**IF** you trained as an RAF Administrative Apprentice (or are related to one) we would be delighted to welcome you to the RAFAA Association. Please see: [rafadappasn.org](http://rafadappasn.org); or contact the Membership Secretary on: 07866 085834 or the Chairman on: 01933 443673.

### Volunteers wanted

**HUCKNALL** Flight Test Museum is looking for volunteers to help out at its site in Nottinghamshire. Dave Wheeler from the museum said there are plenty of opportunities including working with restoration team members, fundraising, archiving, shop and café management, museum maintenance and other areas. The museum is a registered charity and has been awarded Grade II listed status and as 'Home of the Merlin' is said to be one of the best-kept secrets in the country. Contact Dave on: 07834 278460 or email: [davidwheeler.flt.lt@gmail.com](mailto:davidwheeler.flt.lt@gmail.com) for more details.



**HISTORIC:** The 1899 car at last year's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run

## Help fix OWL's wings

THE BRITISH Motor Museum has launched a campaign to fix the leather-covered wings of their 1899 Wolseley 3.5hp Voiturette to allow it to participate in the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run in November.

The legendary 125-year-old vehicle needs to be restored and the museum is asking for donations to raise £5,200 to complete the work this summer.

Affectionately known as 'OWL' because of its registration plate, it has taken part in the famous London to Brighton Run 38 times with the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust.

Catherine Stuart-Yapp from the museum said: "This vehicle is a fantastic example of motoring history. We are asking for support to restore OWL to its former glory and get it ready for the start line once again this year."

● Go to: [britishmotormuseum.co.uk/owl](http://britishmotormuseum.co.uk/owl) for more information.

## Still going strong



**FIT:** The RAF Gymnastic Display Team in 1960

SINCE ITS inception on April 1, 1918, the same date the RAF was formed, the Service's Physical Training Instructor trade has seen more than 10,000 PTIs qualify and has operated five different Schools of Physical Training (SofPT) across the UK, based at RAF Cranwell, Uxbridge, Loughborough College, St Athan and Cosford – where the SofPT is today.

"In the early days a PTI was not only trained in just applying physical training but was required to instruct in drill, combat and weapons training including fencing and airfield defence," said Les Hammond, the RAF PTI Association's communications officer.

He added: "The RAF School of PT motto 'Viribus Audax' means 'Bold in Strength' and is

symbolised by a roebuck on the school crest.

"A PTI's core role is to support station personnel in the organisation of sport, remedial programmes, military fitness testing, outdoor activities and aircrew support for survival and parachute training drills."

The association holds an annual dinner and AGM over a weekend plus locally organised events. Contact RAFPTIA Honorary Secretary Denise Street-Brown on: [ptisec@outlook.com](mailto:ptisec@outlook.com) for membership enquiries.

To become a member of the association you will have had to have successfully passed the RAF Physical Training Instructors Basic Training Course. The association was formed in 1996 to bring together serving and retired PTIs.

### 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.

### Important Notice

The publishers of *RAF News* cannot accept responsibility for the quality, safe delivery or operation of any products advertised or mentioned in this publication. Reasonable precautions are taken before advertisements are accepted but such acceptance does not imply any form of approval or recommendation. Advertisements (or other inserted material) are accepted subject to the approval of the publishers and their current terms and conditions. The publishers will accept an advertisement or other inserted material only on the condition that the advertiser warrants that such advertisement does not in any way contravene the provisions of the Trade Descriptions Act. All copy is subject to the approval of the publishers, who reserve the right to refuse, amend, withdraw or otherwise deal with advertisements submitted to them at their absolute discretion and without explanation. All advertisements must comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice. Mail order advertisers are required to state in advertisements their true surname or full company name, together with an address from which the business is managed.



Your Announcements

You can email photos for announcements on this page to:  
[tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk](mailto:tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk)

Neil's close connection

AVIATOR NEIL Robinson has made a special trip to visit the grave of his great-uncle, killed during the Normandy Campaign in 1944, aged 21.

AS1 Robinson, based at Brize Norton with 30 Sqn, paid tribute to his relative, Private Douglas Robinson, who died during Operation Totalize – an offensive launched by Allied troops in the First Canadian Army during the later stages of Operation Overlord, from August 8–9, 1944.

In August Neil will attend a memorial service for his great-uncle in Le Castelet to commemorate 80 years since his passing in the village where he was killed, and to mark 80 years since the Normandy Campaign.

Neil said: "I think because he was a Robinson, because he looked like me and because of his service in the military, I've had this sort of connection with him, even though I didn't know him. And because I'm in the military myself, I feel like I'm carrying his legacy forward."



SPECIAL VISIT:  
Neil at his great-uncle's grave, inset, Pte Douglas Robinson

Neil has a close connection with the RAF Benevolent Fund, having reached out for support when he was feeling apprehensive about his deployment to Cyprus and how his family would cope.

He said: "I was deployed for four months – the first time I'd been away as a dad; I found that difficult. I had some listening and counselling sessions before I went away and that helped me loads."

At the Fund's recent 2024 Awards he won the Outstanding Support from an Individual award for organising the C-130 challenge to commemorate the iconic aircraft's retirement in 2023, raising more than £5,000 for the RAFBF.



END OF AN ERA:  
The Signals Museum team

Signals Museum shuts

AFTER ALMOST 25 years the Signals Museum based at RAF Henlow has shut its doors, following the announcement that the station will close by 2026.

Dave Thompson from the museum said: "Our last day was a sad one for the team. Most of us are retired and some are former RAF technicians."

"Donations were regular from visitors but there was no entry charge and money we did spend went on books and spare parts, but much of the surplus went to RAF and local charities."

"Our last three or four open days were amazing with the number of visitors very high, and still enthusiastic despite our closure, even bringing in equipment and asking for help."

Dave added: "A big thank-you to Shefford Amateur Radio Club who came and put our Amateur Station, GB4SMH, on the air to communicate with other groups all over Europe."

**ROYAL AIR FORCE**

**RAF News**  
The Forces Favourite Read

Hit your target market with **RAF News** - the official newspaper of the Royal Air Force since 1961.

Reaching an audience of more than 50,000 readers every fortnight, **RAF News** is the Forces' favourite newspaper delivering exclusive news, features and sports action from across UK Defence.

To discuss your advertising in **RAF News** please call or email:  
T: +44 (0)7482 571535  
E: [edwin.rodriques@rafnews.co.uk](mailto:edwin.rodriques@rafnews.co.uk)

**RAF News**  
The official voice of the Royal Air Force

R'n'R



Prize Crossword  
No. 364

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

- Across
- 6. Type that is sure to start flights (7)
  - 7. And 19 Across. Twice Dundee United sprinted towards group (5,5)
  - 9. Tool for house in south-east (5)
  - 10. See 20 Down
  - 12. And 1 Down. William on plane takes body out east with early pilots (5,6,5)
  - 14. Cheer pilots flying these around (11)
  - 18. After support, extra RAF quality emerges (7)
  - 19. See 7 Across
  - 21. For example, half linger at US Air Base (5)
  - 22. Sense cost of fish (7)

- Down
- 1. See 12 Across
  - 2. Duo sit around artist's space (6)
  - 3. By the sound of it, devoured claret (3)
  - 4. Spirited wine? (6)
  - 5. Bornean upsets everyone's welcome (3,4)
  - 8. Supplies uniforms (7)
  - 11. Works for Sir Keir Starmer? (7)
  - 13. Lords look for a long time (7)
  - 15. I appear in frontline to no effect (2,4)
  - 16. Or, conversely, trade blue money (6)
  - 17. Great relative is haggard (5)
  - 20. And 10 Across. RAF component produced in bitter June (3,7)

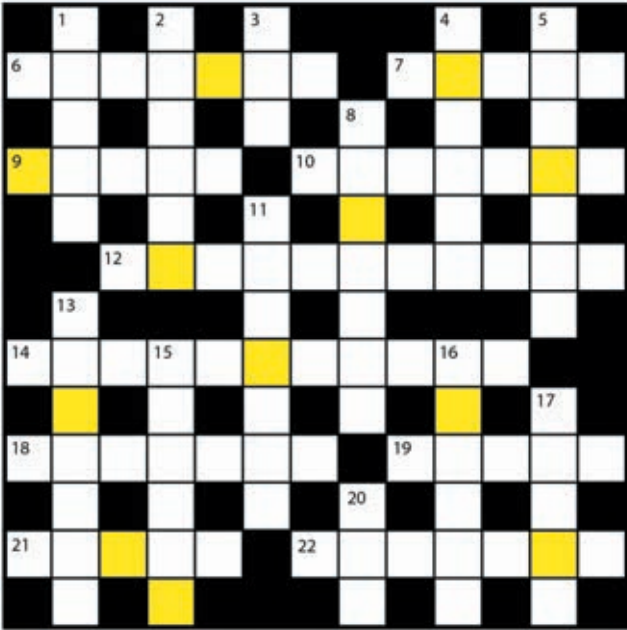
Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

RAF station: .....Crossword No. 364

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 July 12.  
Prize Crossword No. 362 winner is: Jean Noble, Wellingborough.



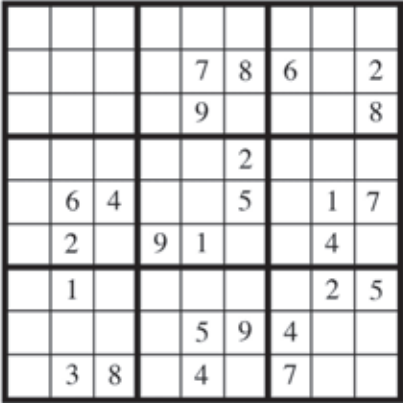
**Solution to Crossword No. 363**  
**Across** – 1. Edge 8. Scientific 9. Baby Food 10. Bibs 12. Meteor 14. Easter 15. Arabia 17. Reside 18. Know 19. Ditching 21. Lawrence Of 22. Ibox  
**Down** – 2. Decahedron 3. Espy 4. Vigour 5. On Edge 6. Air Bases 7. Aces 11. Bread Knife 13. Embowers 16. Ardent 17. Rotten 18. Kill 20. Hi-Fi  
**RAF word** – Missions



Prize Su Doku  
No. 374

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 July 12.  
The winner of Su Doku No: 372 is: Emily Russell, Stratford-Upon-Avon.



Solution to Su Doku No. 373



Theatre  
Only Fools and Horses  
UK tour

Paul in  
Grand  
return



TALENTED: Whitehouse, here as Grandad, also co-wrote the show's script

COMEDY GIANT Paul Whitehouse will be reprising the role of Grandad from the hit musical *Only Fools and Horses* when the West End show takes to the road for a UK tour this autumn, direct from its four-year run in London.  
The 10-month tour kicks off at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley on September 23 then travels to more than 30 towns and cities across the country, before culminating in Dublin at the end of June 2025. Philip Childs will play the role of Grandad when Whitehouse is not available, as he did in the West End.  
The multi-talented Whitehouse not only stars as Grandad – with Jim Sullivan (the son of the much-loved, long-running TV series' creator John Sullivan), he has written the stage show's script and original score, featuring 20 songs. The touring production is directed by originating West End director Caroline Jay Ranger (*Fawlty Towers* – *The Play*).

Joining Whitehouse in the cast will be Sam Lupton (*Wicked*, *Little Shop of Horrors*) as Del Boy and Tom Major, making his professional theatre debut, as Rodney.  
The show takes a trip back in time, where it's all kicking off in Peckham. While the yuppie invasion of London is in full swing, love is in the air as Del Boy sets out on the rocky road to find his soulmate, Rodney and Cassandra prepare to say 'I do', and even Trigger is gearing up for a date (with a person!). Meanwhile, Boycie and Marlene give parenthood one final shot and Grandad takes stock of his life and decides the time has finally arrived to get his piles sorted.  
The musical, that was praised by fans and critics alike, is described as 'a feel-good family celebration of traditional working-class London life in 1989 and the aspirations we all share', that promises, of course, a 'cushty' night out.  
● Go to: [onlyfoolsonstage.com](http://onlyfoolsonstage.com) for full tour details.



Blu-ray competition  
Columbo: The 1970s Complete  
Collection, Seasons 1-7, (15)  
Blu-ray, out now (Fabulous Films Ltd/Spirit Entertainment)

Win!

Ground-breaking cop show

PETER FALK stars as the cigar-chomping, trench-coat wearing, police lieutenant Columbo in the classic television series that set the standard for the murder mystery genre. The recently-released 20-disc Blu-ray set contains the first seven seasons of this ground-breaking series, including the two original pilot TV movies, now restored and remastered by NBC Universal in 4K.

The impressive list of guest stars includes Vincent Price, Martin Sheen, Vera Miles, Johnny Cash, Dick Van Dyke, Robert Vaughn, Janet Leigh, George Hamilton, Leonard Nimoy, Leslie Nielsen, Patrick McGeehan and William Shatner.  
A 24-year-old Steven Spielberg was director of the first episode of the series (four years before he became a household name directing *Jaws*).  
Titled *Murder by the Book*, the

episode was filmed second (after *Death Lends a Hand*) but was bumped up to the premier slot at the last minute as it was so good.  
Falk won four Emmy Awards for his portrayal of Lieutenant Columbo in 1972, 1975, 1976 and 1990. per episode.  
One lucky reader could win a copy of the 1970s Complete Collection (rrp £149.99).  
For your chance to own it, tell us:

What is the name of the actor who stars as Lieutenant Columbo?  
Email your answer, marked Columbo Complete Collection 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 July 12.

