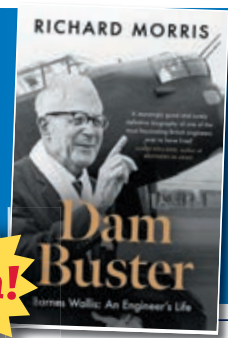


The Forces' favourite paper

Barnes Wallis: the story of the real man behind bouncing bomb
● See page 21



Win!

Coroner morgue horror thriller
● See R'n'R p8

Win!



ROYAL AIR FORCE

Friday, May 5, 2023
No. 1559 £1.20

RAF News

Reaper marks deadly decade at Waddington



See pages 16-17

Boxing
Going pro



● See page 27

Alpine
Medal triple



● See page 29

Luge
RAF Champ



● See page 31



For King & Country



THOUSANDS OF military personnel gathered at Odiham for a full dress rehearsal for the coronation of The King and Queen Consort.

The Hampshire air base that is normally home to the RAF's Chinook Force doubled as a parade route to allow those taking part in the largest ceremonial operation

for 70 years to put their best feet forward.

More than 7,000 servicemen and women from Britain and the Commonwealth came together for the first time to practise their parts in two processions escorting Their Majesties to and from Westminster Abbey, in a spectacular display of pageantry.

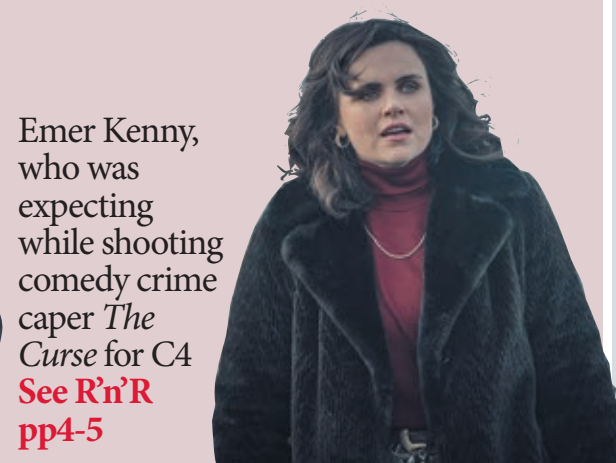
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“The RAF has graduated P-8 Poseidon ahead of time”



Air Cdre Simon Strasdin as Lossie's sub-hunters officially designated 'in-service' See p15

“You rarely get a woman filming while being pregnant”



Emer Kenny, who was expecting while shooting comedy crime caper *The Curse* for C4 See R'n'R pp4-5

“The riders performed some insane tricks”



Snowboarder Cpl Jasmine Furber wins three medals at British Champs See page 29

Polish air defence deal

THE UK and Poland have signed a record £1.9 billion export agreement to roll out a British air defence system across the Central European nation.

In one of the largest bilateral air defence deals by Nato allies, UK firm MBDA will supply ground-based air-defence missiles expected to protect the country for generations to come.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said: “We have played a crucial role in boosting Euro-Atlantic defences since Putin's barbaric invasion of Ukraine, and this landmark agreement is another example of how, alongside our allies, we are committed to protecting our security for generations to come.”

Under the contract Britain will equip 22 Polish air defence batteries with UK Common Anti-Air Modular Missiles (CAMMs) and launchers, under a programme called PILICA+.

The system can engage advanced air and missile targets up to 25km away and can hit a tennis ball-sized object travelling beyond the speed of sound.

It was introduced to Poland by the British Army following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and can be deployed to protect military forces



EUROPEAN SECURITY: Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has agreed £1.9 billion deal to supply CAMMs to bolster Polish air defences

or critical national infrastructure.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: “I am delighted that the UK and Poland's deep and historic defence

ties take another step forward with the signing of the largest ever UK defence export deal with Poland.”

Hundreds of British troops are

in Poland at any one time, including recent deployments of Challenger II tanks and Sky Sabre air defence systems.

This Week In History



1943
Dambusters strike

617 SQN, led by Wg Cdr Guy Gibson, launch Operation Chastise – the mission to destroy German dams in the Ruhr Valley using Barnes Wallis's 'bouncing bomb'.

1965
Reds debut

THE RED Arrows display team make their first public display, flying Gnats at the Biggin Hill Air Show.



1990
Provost pioneers

FLT LTs Sally Cox and Julie Gibson become the first women to fly solo in RAF jet aircraft when they complete their training on Jet Provosts at Linton-on-Ouse.

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



RAF News

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2,200 rescued



SAFE AT LAST: Relieved British nationals file on to RAF transporter at Wadi Seidna air field, near Khartoum



SUDAN: Airlift completed, now UK will up humanitarian aid

Simon Mander

BRITAIN IS to focus on humanitarian efforts in Sudan following the end of RAF evacuation flights from Khartoum as fierce fighting continues.

As *RAF News* went to press, Sudanese doctors working in the NHS were expected to be airlifted from Port Sudan following the hand-over of the Wadi Seidna airfield near the capital.

The airstrip was the centre of the UK effort to save 2,197 people, described as the largest airlift by any Western country during the crisis.

That total included 1,087 people from the US, Ireland, Netherlands, Canada, Germany, and Australia.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "In one week, the RAF have flown more than 20 flights, deployed over 1,000 personnel, evacuated over 2,000 civilians and helped citizens from more than 20 countries to get home.

"The dedicated work of all those deployed on this operation at short notice has seen the biggest and longest evacuation effort from Sudan of any Western nation.

"First in, last out. Defence gets things done."

Brize-based RAF transporters played a key role with Hercules C-130J and A400M Atlas aircraft shuttling between Akrotiri and Sudan to extract civilians and deliver them to Larnaca Airport in Cyprus, from where they returned to the UK on Foreign Office chartered aircraft.

Meanwhile, C-17 Globemasters flew in vital kit and Voyagers transported the 1,500 personnel needed for the operation, including 1 Sqn RAF Regiment Gunners and RAF Police to provide security at landing sites and assist evacuees.

Air Deputy Commander Operations, AM Harv Smyth, said: "The ability of the Air Mobility Force to conduct this operation with such pace and precision demonstrates our flexibility and agility to utilise air power at range, at a moment's notice, to protect UK citizens anywhere across the world."

Runways at the Wadi Seidna airfield were repaired by British forces to make them suitable for the airlift – the first such repairs carried out on ops since



SUDAN BOUND: C-130J Hercules leaves RAF Akrotiri on mercy mission

the Falklands conflict in 1982.

The final flight from the airfield departed on April 29 after what was described as a significant decline in Britons coming forward.

Extra flights were arranged from Port Sudan on May 1 as attention turned to diplomatic efforts.

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said: "Evacuation flights have ended from Wadi Seidna, but our rescue efforts continue from Port Sudan. We continue to do everything in our power to secure a long-term ceasefire, a

stable transition to civilian rule and an end the violence in Sudan."

Fierce fighting broke out in Khartoum on April 14 and quickly spread to Omdurman, Darfur and other cities as a violent power struggle erupted between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

Following the breakdown of a 72-hour ceasefire called to mark the holy festival of Eid the government decided to evacuate all British embassy staff and their dependents.

The UK is now exploring providing further humanitarian assistance having spent more than £250 million in aid to Sudan over the last five years.



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Ceremony is crowning glory for Forces

Staff Reporter

KING CHARLES has presented the RAF with a new Colour at Buckingham Palace in the first Tri-Service ceremony of its kind.

The Colour was one of four military emblems produced for the coronation, owing to their special relevance to the Sovereign.

The RAF King's Colour Squadron paraded into Buckingham Palace where the Colours were consecrated by an Armed Forces chaplain and presented by The King.

Emblems for the Royal Navy, the Life Guards of the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment and the King's Company of the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards were also consecrated.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace and Service chiefs attended, with Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, escorting The King to the front of the parade before a Royal Salute was given, the National Anthem was played, and personnel marched back to Wellington Barracks.



HISTORIC: HM King Charles presents the new RAF standard during Tri-Service ceremony ahead of the coronation

In Brief



Green light for Leeming

MILITARY LEADERS, academics and industry joined personnel and pupils from Leeming to see how the base is delivering a greener future.

Visitors explored solar, wind and kinetic energy and played with model-sized hydrogen cars at a hub based at the North Yorkshire station.

Lt Gen (Ret'd) Richard Nugee and AVM Paul Lloyd were among 150 guests at the Air Force ViTAL Living Lab – a collaboration with Newcastle University that conducts real-life experiments in sustainability, building resilience, and reducing carbon emissions.



FUELLING THE FIGHT: WO Cliff Christie takes a bow at Air Command, High Wycombe

Cliff signs off

Laurence Parker

FUELS ACE WO Cliff Christie has bowed out after 35 years keeping Air Force jets flying on operations in Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq and Sierra Leone.

During his frontline tours he was awarded two commendations for his role solving refuelling issues on combat sorties and reducing environmental damage.

High Wycombe-based Cliff said: "I think my best deployment was in Sierra Leone. There was a great mix of people and I felt as a team we made a big difference and had a greater impact."

"It was a dangerous place, especially around checkpoints, but the people were really nice to us."

"Thirty-five years has gone amazingly quickly. You have to switch off sometimes, especially in war zones, but you just get on with the job at hand."

"I will miss the camaraderie of the Service. I joined my first unit in Stafford and five or six of us still meet up regularly 35 years on."

Conveyor strike hero joins 'living legends'

Simon Mander

A CHINOOK veteran who survived the sinking of the Atlantic Conveyor during the Falklands War joined the ranks of the RAF's living legends as he signed on at Cranwell's Wall of Honour.

Former Master Aircrew Don Maxwell was an 18-year-old crew member when two Exocet missiles slammed into the ship during the night of May 25, 1982 killing 12 sailors.

He survived the raging fires on the deck, jumping from 50ft into the icy South Atlantic waters as the searing heat melted the rubber soles of his boots.

Battling freezing temperatures he was able to help struggling crewmates to life rafts before finally pulling himself to safety.

MAcr Maxwell went on to amass 4,500 hours on Chinooks operating in Northern Ireland, Beirut, the Falklands, Yugoslavia and Albania, later transferring to the C-17 as a loadmaster leader.

In Lebanon he took part in the air lift of Britons during terrorist attacks in Beirut as an impromptu forward air controller and beach master.

SURVIVOR: Veteran Chinook crewman Don Maxwell served on the ill-fated Atlantic Conveyor, destroyed by an Argentinian Exocet missile strike in 1982



Aircrew Survival, Evasion and Resistance (SERE) Training Centre instructor Mark Fairhead said: "Don shared his experiences with future pilots, crew members and observers from the RAF and Royal Navy, offering them sage advice, born from the

wisdom of lived experience.

"He stressed the importance of having a 'readiness' mindset; to be mentally and physically ready to have to operate outside of their comfort zone and to be able to cope with something they hadn't or couldn't have prepared for."

As a fellow Chinook veteran Mr Fairhead added: "It was a personal privilege to see someone I have always looked up to, respected and admired come and share some of his wisdom with the next generation of those who are going to go and do it all next."

John and Jordan
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In brief



BIG PROJECT: Large-scale example

Model day out at Cosford for fans of aviation

AIRFIX ADDICTS put finishing touches to their creations ahead of Model Mania at RAF Cosford's museum.

More than 100 large aircraft types were on display – some alongside their full-size counterparts – including a replica Vulcan with a 20ft wingspan and large-scale versions of Spitfires, a Wellington and Lancaster bomber.

Advanced modellers wanting to fine tune their skills picked up tips from experts while children got the chance to build and paint their own kit to take home.

And for those seeking inspiration Museum staff opened the Hunter and Phantom cockpits, giving visitors the opportunity to sit in the pilot's seat.



DAB HAND: Young modeller

A trip down memory lane for vet Terry



DONE THAT: Former Sqd Ldr Terrance Devey Smith, who flew in the Coronation Flypast for Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, with Wg Cdr Richard Podmore watching a rehearsal for King Charles's Coronation Flypast



A VETERAN who flew in Elizabeth II's Coronation 70 years ago watched rehearsals for a flypast to pay tribute to King Charles and Queen Camilla.

Former Sqd Ldr Terrance Devey Smith, 93, was at Cranwell to watch half the 60 military aircraft expected to take part in the event practise their formations, and the experience took him back to 1953 when he took part in a similar ceremony.

Then a 23-year-old Flying Officer

with 56 Sqn, he was asked to fly a magazine photographer and had to switch from his Meteor 8 to a dual-seater Meteor 7 to capture imagery of the jets in formation, with Buckingham Palace in the background.

He said: "It was never just about the aeroplanes, ground crews or the pilots, it was and still is about the spirit of service and dedication that drives us to do what we do. To serve our country. To honour our King."

The first aircraft in the flypast on May 6, a Shawbury-based Juno HT1 helicopter, will be flown by Flt Lt Tom Knapp.

He said: "The flypast rehearsal went really well. We made our time on target over the top of College Hall, which was standing in as Buckingham Palace. It is great to see months of planning and detailed coordination between all the different aircraft which fly at different speeds starting to come together."

It's a Voyager of discovery for Geoffrey the Giraffe and his pals



FLIGHT OF THE GIRAFFES: 'Watching' a refuel and all strapped in (inset)

CUDDLY TOYS took over an RAF Voyager to raise cash for children with cancer.

A total of 291 furry fliers filled every passenger seat on a Brize Norton-based tanker as part of Great Ormond Street Hospital's Giraffes on Tour fundraising effort.

The sortie came after *RAF News* revealed that globetrotting Geoffrey the Giraffe, who has flown in nearly every aircraft type, including a Red Arrows Hawk, recently stowed away with the Atlantic Flyers pilots on their ocean-going rowing boat.

Voyager pilot Flt Lt Mark Scott said: "The idea came to me when I saw Giraffes on Tour in the news.

"My daughter also has a toy giraffe who has come with me on a few trips around the world, so I got in touch with the charity and pitched the idea of filling an RAF Voyager with sponsored giraffes to raise money."

During the air-to-air refuelling sortie, the soft toys saw Typhoons and F-35s join in formation and the aircraft draw a heart in the sky.

The charity was set up by aviation buff Ian Conway, whose daughter Louise died of leukaemia in 2013.

He said: "My daughter had a toy giraffe called Geoffrey while she was in hospital at Great Ormond Street and that is how the idea started.

"Louise was about fun, and



TOY STORY: Flt Lt Mark Scott (right) with Ian Conway

seeing all these giraffes flying across the world would have brought her huge joy."

The flight raised

more than £4,000 for Great Ormond Street Hospital, with the total still rising as donations from sponsors come in.

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Falcons' cast iron pledge:

Chute stars say they're pumping up the volume & ready to rock air show crowds this summer



Staff Reporter

THE RAF Falcons will be following in the jet stream of Marvel superhero Iron Man when they launch their new show-stopping routine – accompanied by the rock anthem *Thunderstruck*.

The freefall stars are pulling out all the stops to win over the air show crowds this year and turning up the volume at some of the biggest summer events in the UK calendar.

The team has also brought in *X-Factor* and *Britain's Got Talent* voice-over artist Peter Dickson to record an introduction and mentor official team commentator MACr Gaz Attridge.

Gaz said: "We are really ramping it up

this season. When you're putting on a show what happens on the ground is as important as what the team are doing in the air.

"*Thunderstruck* is the team anthem and a definite favourite and we've got some classic tunes on the playlist to add to the experience, including an upbeat version of the James Bond theme and a tribute to the World War II parachutists with the music from *A Bridge Too Far*."

The Falcons showcased their latest routine at their home station Brize Norton in front of a crowd of more than 100 local school pupils.

They exited their usual ride, a Dornier 228, at 7,000ft

performing their trademark snake formation before demonstrating a criss-cross, heart formation and finally the stunning carousel move before landing on target.

Turning a vital military skill into performance art takes intensive training and the team spend months honing their moves in California twice a year.

Drop zone coordinator Flt Lt Jen Littler supervises the display from the ground, carrying out weather and safety checks two hours before the team jump.

She said: "It's technically really demanding.

"We do two intensive training sessions every season, working up

from freefalling with two and three to the full nine.

"Flying in that kind of proximity is challenging. We have to time the exits from the aircraft and the formations to the second.

"Getting out and meeting the public and the children is easily the best part of the job. It's why we do it."

The Falcons' first official engagement of the season will be at Cosford for the Chief of the Air Staff Commendations ceremony and they will make their European debut at Akrotiri for the Cyprus station's families day event later this month.

Along with the major UK-based air shows, the team will also be performing across eastern and central Europe.



MC: Gaz Attridge

News

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Eco mission for Voyager



BIO BREAKTHROUGH: Typhoon tops up from a Voyager tanker flying on a mix of sustainable and traditional fuel

Simon Mander

A VOYAGER powered partially by cooking oil completed an air-to-air refuelling flight over the North Sea.

The Brize Norton-based tanker flying on a 43 per cent blend of sustainable aviation and traditional fossil fuel topped up two Typhoons as part of planned training.

The mission follows the world's first Voyager flight on 100 per cent green gas and is the latest milestone in the Air Force's bid to reduce its reliance on global supply chains and improve operational resilience.

RAF Chief Engineer AVM Paul Lloyd said: "The continued success of sustainable aviation fuel is reassuring to see.

"If we are to achieve our net zero goal by 2040 then exploiting these technologies is going to be an enormous but worthwhile endeavour.

"Despite the challenge, the benefits of reducing our reliance on traditional supply chains and fossil fuels outweigh it.

"The RAF is proud to be leading in this area and I welcome the announcement of the



introduction of commercial uses of SAF."

The flight was part of a two-day industry led conference at Farnborough, where the UK aviation industry published its updated Net Zero Carbon roadmap outlining how it will become more sustainable and commercially viable and meet its net zero commitment.

The fuel for the flight was sourced by International Airlines Group and supplied by UK petro-giant BP.

Falklands runway success

Staff Reporter

Falkland Islands

A £7 MILLION project to refurbish runways at the Mount Pleasant Complex airfield in the Falkland Islands has been completed.

Sub-contractor Gatwick Construction had to transport their kit more than 8,000 miles from the UK to the South Atlantic before starting work in January.

DIO project manager Robert Handford said: "We had to transport the necessary equipment by air or container ship, which makes the project more complicated than it would be in the UK."

The project included repainting runway and taxiway markings in reflective paint, replacing airfield signage with new back-lit units, and coating the runway asphalt with a layer of bitumen.

This protective layer will extend the life of the treated surfaces until they can be fully relaid in the coming years.

Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands, Commodore Jonathan Lett, said: "The Falklands are a long way from Crawley in West

Sussex where the team are usually based, and it was great to see how well integrated they became with BFSAI personnel, mixing with everyone from Typhoon Pilots from 1435 Flight to other defence contractors."



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Putin tests NATO defences in Baltic



RAF TYPHOON

Estonia scramble for

UK and German jets



GERMAN EUROFIGHTER



INTERCEPTORS: RAF and Luftwaffe jets tracked Russian Coot-A surveillance aircraft and two SU-27 Flanker jets closing in on NATO airspace in the Baltic

Simon Mander

BRITISH AND German Typhoons teamed up to intercept three Russian aircraft flying over the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea close to Nato airspace.

Jets from the RAF's IX (B) Sqn and the Luftwaffe's 71 'Richthofen' Wing were scrambled following reports of several unidentified aircraft.

One of them was an Ilyushin-2M Coot-A reconnaissance aircraft transiting from mainland Russia to its Kaliningrad enclave that was later escorted by a pair of SU-27 Flanker-B fighter jets.

The incident happened after the RAF took command of Operation Azotize, the long-established Nato Baltic Air Policing mission run from Amari Air Base in Estonia.

One IX (B) Sqn pilot said: "The

importance of intercepting these aircraft and our commitment to the collective defence of Nato airspace remains steadfast and resolute."

The Eurofighters escorted the Russian aircraft through the region before handing over to Swedish Air Force Saab Gripen fighters.

It was the fifth joint intercept that the UK and German Air Forces have conducted since they started operating as a combined force at the beginning of March.

Eco-Poppy goes green

PLASTIC-FREE POPPIES will be available for the first time from October.

The Royal British Legion has launched a new easily-recycled paper symbol of remembrance.

The new poppy, revamped for the first time in 28 years, will no longer have a plastic stem or centre, but feature a leaf with a crease that can be fastened with a pin, worn in a buttonhole, or stuck on.

It is made from red and green paper, half of which is recovered from waste coffee cups.

Poppy Appeal director Andy Taylor-Whyte said: "We have been able to eliminate single-use plastic and create a poppy that is an enduring symbol of remembrance as well as being more planet-friendly."

Poppies already in circulation can be recycled at Sainsbury's stores.

In Brief



LOCAL HERO: WO Rees-Martin heads the Waddington parade through Lincoln

Freedom first

A WADDINGTON Warrant Officer became the first female to head the Freedom of Lincoln parade, last month.

Station WO Michelle Rees-Martin was at the head of more than 140 personnel who marched from the city's St Martin's Square to the war memorial with bayonets fixed, colours flying, to be met by Station Commander Gp Capt Mark Lorriman-Hughes and Mayor Rosanne Kirk.

WO Rees-Martin said: "It was my absolute honour to be the Parade Warrant Officer, especially as I am the first female to do so."

Typhoon's jamming with radar upgrade

Simon Mander

A NEW prototype combat air radar has been delivered to BAE Systems to be fitted on RAF Typhoons.

The arrival of the first ECRS Mk2 is the latest upgrade to the fighter's advanced electronics and is expected to be in service by the end of the decade.

The multi-functional array system can search, target and jam enemy radar at the same time whilst staying beyond the reach of threats.

Leonardo's Radar and Advanced Targeting senior vice president Mark Stead said: "This delivery marks the next major step towards securing Typhoon's place in the future battlespace."

"The ECRS Mk2 will equip RAF pilots with the ability to locate, identify and suppress enemy air defences; that will increase the Eurofighter's lethality and survivability."

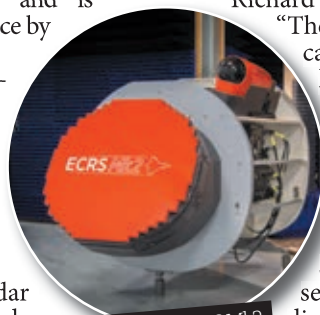
Leonardo is developing the system in Edinburgh and Luton, which is now ready for its first flight tests next year at BAE Systems' facility in Lancashire.

BAE Systems Air Typhoon Programme Director Europe Richard Hamilton said:

"The radar is one of the capabilities that will keep Typhoon as the backbone of air defence across the globe for decades to come."

"Together with enhanced mission systems, advanced sensors, weapons and displays, we are delivering a sovereign capability which will keep RAF pilots safe and ensure that the UK has the skills and key technologies that support its future combat air ambitions."

Leonardo engineers at its Nerviano radar site in Milan are now preparing for Italy's full participation in the ECRS Mk2 programme.



MULTI ARRAY: ECRS Mk2



COMBAT EDGE: Typhoon undergoes testing at BAE's Electronic Warfare facility. The new kit allows pilots to jam enemy signals while tracking multiple targets

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In Brief



CRISIS: Extra funding for veterans' housing

Funds target homeless vets

GROUPS HELPING homeless veterans can now apply for £8 million in grants.

The money from the Office for Veterans' Affairs is expected to provide services for more than 900 supported housing places across the UK.

Under the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust scheme organisations can bid for grants of up to £1.5 million over two years to pay for help with mental health and employment issues faced by former military personnel.

Veterans' Minister Johnny Mercer said: "No one, not least those who have served this country, should be homeless. That is why we are providing up to £8m to fund tailored support in hundreds of housing places across the country."

"Only by helping to address the complex issues they face can we end veterans' homelessness."

Charities, housing associations and registered social housing providers are being urged to apply for the cash by May 22.

Wellington re-boot



Ajay Srivastava

A RARE WWII bomber has been restored to its former glory after a decade of conservation at the RAF Museum, Midlands.

The Wellington, one of only two remaining, has been moved into the public display hangar for the first time to become the centre piece of a new Bomber Command exhibition.

Visitors can view the fuselage and inner wings while the

remaining work of attaching the huge 31ft outer wings, engines, propellers and front turret to the aircraft are completed.

Primarily used as a night bomber, the aircraft is famous for its fuselage structure designed by bouncing bomb inventor Barnes Wallis.

By 1942 Wellingtons were the most numerous aircraft in Bomber Command before being replaced by more capable four-engined Halifaxes and Lancasters.

They continued to operate as training aircraft serving in North Africa, Italy, the Far East and Coastal Command.

The Museum's example was constructed in 1944 and served with No. 1 Air Navigation Training School between 1949 and 1953.

Although not operational in the war, it represents the role played by the type in the bombing campaign against Nazi Germany.

After almost 40 years on

display at the Museum's London site, the aircraft was transported by road to the Midlands in July 2010, for work treating corrosion to its structure and a complete replacement of its fragile Irish linen outer skin.

Technicians, apprentices, and volunteers have conducted the conservation work, including one RAF veteran who worked on Wellingtons more than half a century ago. ● Go to: rafmuseum.org/midlands

Lossie Poseidon fleet complete

THE POSEIDON sub-hunting fleet has been handed over to the RAF's front line ahead of schedule.

The procurement of Lossiemouth's nine maritime patrol aircraft is now complete and they are considered 'in-service,' although full operating capability is expected to be reached over the next two years.

ISTAR Force Commander Air Cdre Simon Strasdin said: "The RAF has graduated P-8 Poseidon ahead of time, in recognition of the outstanding work done across the Service, Defence and the US Navy and Boeing."

The fleet has been operated by CXX and 201 Sqs for more than three years and the last aircraft, ZP809, arrived in January 2022.



TYPHOONS FROM Coningsby checked out the runway at a sister station for use on exercise or in the event of an emergency. The 11 Sqn jets flew into the Oxfordshire home of the RAF's front line Puma HC2 fleet at Benson as part of the Air Capability Environment programme.

Feature

RPAS landmark



XIII SQN: Reaper pilot at RAF Waddington Control Centre PHOTO: SGT MIKE JONES

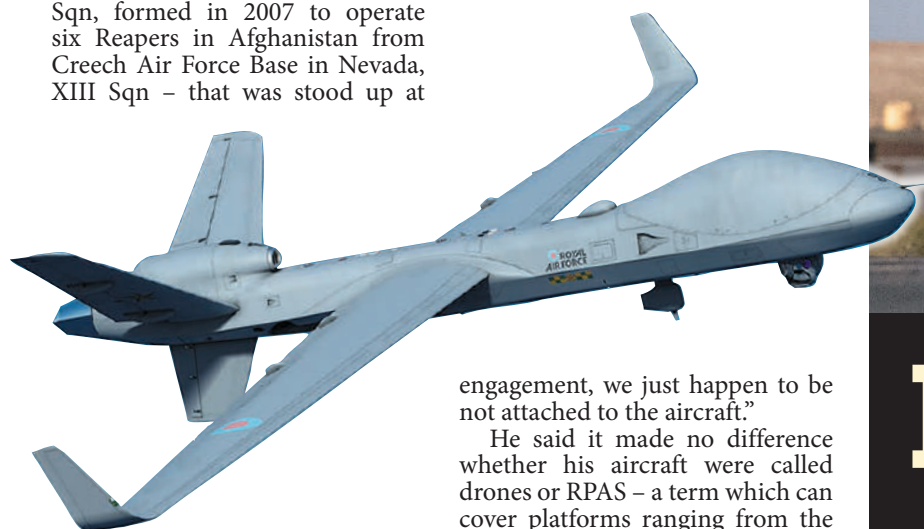
REAPERFORCE personnel currently battling Daesh Islamist terrorists in the Middle East have marked 15 years of operations, including 10 years of continuous operations from RAF Waddington.

During the past decade the Remotely Piloted Air Systems, based overseas but flown by XIII Sqn from RAF Waddington, have fired 1,538 weapons at Coalition targets in Syria and Iraq amassing more than 155,000 flying hours during round-the-clock operations.

And as the last MQ-9 operators to be trained in America return this summer to be replaced by the first UK Protector crews, air chiefs are optimistic about expanding RPAS missions from the Lincolnshire station in years to come.

“Waddington is where the home of the RPAS Force will remain, we have ordered Protector and that will start flying from here by the end of this year before it comes into service in 2024,” said OC XIII Sqn, Wg Cdr Stuart McAdam.

With the disbandment of 39 Sqn, formed in 2007 to operate six Reapers in Afghanistan from Creech Air Force Base in Nevada, XIII Sqn – that was stood up at



Waddington five years later – is the sole frontline RAF RPAS unit.

And as it transitions to Protector (pictured above) it draws on the legacy of Reaper missions.

“It’s no small achievement that we started flying operations in Afghanistan then quickly moved over to Operation Shader in Iraq and Syria and the significant milestone is that we’ve been doing it from the UK for 10 years now,” said Wg Cdr McAdam.

As a former Tornado Weapons Systems Operator and XIII Sqn Executive Officer, Wg Cdr

McAdam has led combat missions as Air Advisor and Forward Air Controller Manager for Task Force Helmand on Op Herrick and on 903 Expeditionary Air Wing at Akrotiri across the Middle East.

He is keen to confront some of the myths that have built up, especially online, about who the 230 XIII Sqn personnel under his command are and what they do.

“Some Reaper people really struggle to get across who we are, we operate an intelligence-gathering platform and so we like to keep secrets, and we aren’t necessarily capable of sharing what we do,” said Wg Cdr McAdam.

“Something I am keen on is to dispel the rumours and misconceptions about what it is to be a Reaper operator.

“Essentially, all we have done is wi-fi the cockpit, it is no different to any other platform. All our personnel are fully qualified aircrew who operate within the rules of

engagement, we just happen to be not attached to the aircraft.”

He said it made no difference whether his aircraft were called drones or RPAS – a term which can cover platforms ranging from the small quadcopters being used by RAF Police and Regiment for Force Protection.

“What we do NOT do is autonomous ops, we have a pilot and a mission co-ordinator that controls the system throughout,” he explained.

“The training is no different than that for any other platform in the Air Force, you have to pass selection and elementary flying and MQ-9 conversion training before you get a patch on your arm saying you are combat-ready on Reaper.”

He said the similarity was reflected in the make-up of XIII

DEADLY



Reaper marks 15 years of ops fighting terror

Sqn’s personnel, that still included former RAF fast jet pilots and ex-Army Apache helicopter aircrew.

But it was the length of time RPAS

crews spend on missions compared to their fast jet brethren that impacted most on their lives.

“Persistence is what makes Reaper

different, whereas other platforms like Tornados have a couple of hours on task at most, this aircraft can get 16 hours plus and we routinely fly up

By Simon Mander

DECADE



THE NEXT GENERATION: RAF Protector trainees are ready to step up

FULLY LOADED: Reaper RPAS with Hellfire missiles ready for a mission

used to watch and destroy Islamist bunkers and ammo dumps, target snipers preparing to ambush Iraqi forces, and to prevent terrorists launching vehicle-borne IED attacks in civilian populated areas.

And from next year its successor Protector, which can fly for up to 40 hours anywhere in the world, will operate from Waddington carrying Brimstone and Paveway IV weapons.

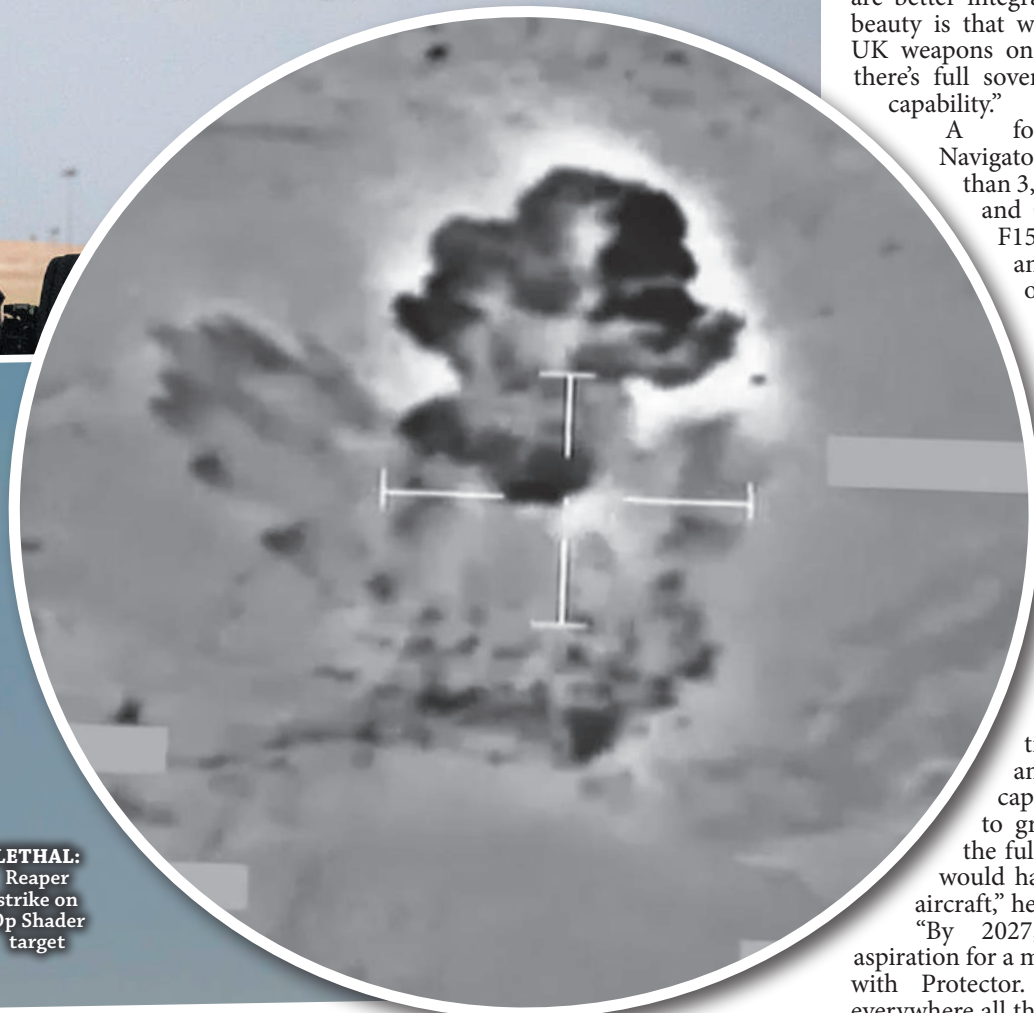
“The biggest benefit of Protector is that it will be a fully certified platform. The reason we do not fly Reaper in the UK is that it is not, but Protector will be, and so it gives us the ability to integrate within any airspace because it will meet those higher Civil Aviation Authority regulatory standards,” said ISTAR Force Commander Air Cdre Simon Straddin.

“It is a bigger platform, it carries a lot more fuel, its systems are better integrated, and the real beauty is that we have integrated UK weapons on to it as well, so there’s full sovereignty about the capability.”

A former Tornado Navigator, he flew more than 3,700 hours on GR1 and GR4 jets and the F15-E Strike Eagle and completed 13 operational tours as a Qualified Weapons Instructor in the Middle East and Afghanistan before getting the top ISTAR job in June 2022.

“We will start off by operating it in temporarily segregated airspace but in time, as confidence and the level of capability continues to grow, we will have the full freedom that we would have with a crewed aircraft,” he said.

“By 2027, we have an aspiration for a maritime capability with Protector. We cannot be everywhere all the time but we will be able to cover a lot more of the ocean so we can use it to support the civil authorities in counter-piracy operations, controlling illegal migration and other things.”



LETHAL: Reaper strike on Op Shader target



to that,” said Wg Cdr McAdam. “It’s a challenge, not only of flying, but also of balancing operations with home and family life – we’ve learned a lot over

10 years on how to support the well-being of our people given the shift patterns they work.” Among the more notable Reaper

missions to reach the public domain was one he flew on May 9, 2017 in which a Daesh sentry on a rooftop was killed by a Hellfire missile to

disrupt a public execution being staged by Islamic State terrorists in Syria. The platform has also been

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Enduring tribute



Battle of Britain National Memorial is 30 years old

Malcolm Triggs

IN THE kind of atrocious weather that only this country seems able to conjure up in midsummer, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother was flown by helicopter to a cliff top location between Folkestone and Dover.

It was July 9, 1993 and Her Majesty was en route to Capel-le-Ferne, where the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust was unveiling the National Memorial to The Few, a statue of a lone airman gazing thoughtfully out across the Channel towards the French coast.

According to Trust legend, the pilot of the helicopter pointed out that the weather was getting worse rather than better and asked his Royal charge if she wanted to turn back. "My boys never turned back in 1940; we press on," is what the story has her replying.

Apocryphal or not, the story sums up both The Queen Mother's indomitable spirit and that of the men to whom she was referring, the fewer than 3,000 men of the Royal Air Force who defeated the Luftwaffe in the summer and early autumn of that year to see off the threat of a Nazi invasion.

Thirty years on, that simple, central Memorial remains the focus of commemorations and remembrance at the peaceful cliff-top site, something which is itself a reflection of The Queen Mother's influence. After unveiling the Memorial on that wet and windy day, she made it clear to the Trust that the central statue and the three-bladed propeller that radiates from it should never be overshadowed by other features.

The Memorial has been expanded significantly since that auspicious occasion, but in response to her wishes each new feature has been placed well outside the central area.

The Wing

The most recent addition was The Wing, an impressive visitor centre built in the shape of a Spitfire Wing which was opened in March 2015 by The Queen Mother's daughter, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh.

Again, the weather was appalling, but again the Royal visitor braved the murk to walk out on to the first floor balcony and wave to the crowds who had waited patiently in the wind and rain to see her. Visibility was so poor that the Memorial itself could not be seen.

Other features that have been added to the Memorial over the past 30 years include the Christopher Foxley-Norris Memorial Wall, which lists the names of the Few in alphabetical order, without rank or medals to emphasise the part that they all played in a shared victory, busts of Air Chief Marshal Sir Keith Park and Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding and a set of gates and a yardarm that once stood at RAF Biggin Hill.

Popular early additions to the site were a replica Hurricane and Spitfire, both life-sized. The Spitfire is painted to represent the



SCRAMBLE: Action stations for fighter crews of 610 Sqn

aircraft flown by Jeffery Quill, who managed to get himself attached to 65 Squadron at Hornchurch during the Battle so that he could see how the fighter performed. Not only did he learn much about the Spitfire, but he also enjoyed considerable combat success.

The Hurricane is painted in the colours of the aircraft in which Pilot Officer Geoffrey Page was shot down on August 12, 1940 while serving with No 56 Squadron. He baled out into the sea, badly burned, but later returned to

operational flying and enjoyed a distinguished career, reaching the rank of Wing Commander. It was Wg Cdr Page DSO, OBE, DFC* who first proposed a tribute to the men with whom he had served and became the driving force behind the Memorial.

Behind those two historic replicas is a third aircraft, a sculpture in stainless steel of a German Stuka dive-bomber made by artist Hex and on loan to the Trust. Somewhat controversial when unveiled, it has become a welcome addition to the site.



DIGGING IN: The late Wg Cdr Bob Foster DFC

The Memorial recognises the bravery and sacrifice of those who were given the 'immediate' award of the Battle of Britain Clasp on the 1939-45 Star, fewer than 3,000 men who flew at least one operational sortie with a recognised squadron or unit of Fighter Command between July 10 and October 31, 1940.

While the National Memorial to the Few is, as its name suggests, a 'national' tribute, the Trust receives no public funding of any kind. It relies instead on donations, a shop



THE WING: Visitor centre is recent addition

and café, and admission charges to The Scramble Experience, a multi-media attraction in The Wing which brings the story of the Battle to life. The outside features are all free to visit and, thanks to a generous benefactor, now floodlit at dusk.

The Experience was designed to allow the Trust to continue telling the story of the Battle as The Few themselves – formerly the best storytellers of all – left us. The Trust enjoyed the support of many of the Few in fundraising for the building, not least Hurricane pilot Wg Cdr Bob Foster DFC, who took to the controls of an excavator to make a ceremonial start on building work.

As he bounced around in the 'cockpit' of the digger he told the assembled crowd: "Flying the Hurricane was much easier."



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Barnes Wallis: the *real* man behind the legend

BARNES WALLIS, one of Britain's greatest engineers and the man behind the bouncing bomb, became a household name after the epic 1955 film *The Dam Busters*, about the legendary 617 Sqn's execution of Operation Chastise.

He was portrayed on the big screen by Michael Redgrave as a shy genius at odds with bureaucracy – but in a new biography, *Dam Buster Barnes Wallis: An Engineer's Life* (published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson), author Richard Morris says that simplified a complicated man.

Wallis, who was knighted in 1968, is remembered for contributions to aviation that spanned most of the 20th century – from airships to reusable spacecraft. Despite his fame, little was known about the man and Morris, author of a biography of Guy Gibson, tells the fascinating untold story of Barnes Wallis – a confirmed bachelor who fell hopelessly in love with his teenage cousin-in-law, Molly Bloxham, in his mid-30s – in his latest book. Until now, the only full-length account of Wallis's life was an authorised biography by Jack Morpurgo.

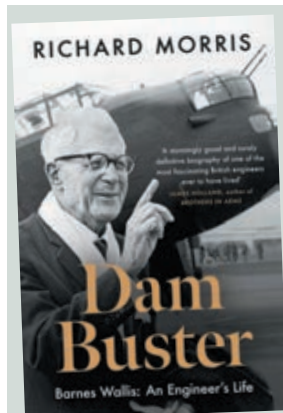
Morris said: "Wallis is but one of three civilians – Alan Turing and Winston Churchill are the others – who have found a place in Britain's pantheon of the Second World War.

"What formed him? Why did none of his later projects [including an aircraft that could change shape in flight] come to fruition? And if he was Britain's greatest engineer of the 20th century, where is his legacy?"

"As time passed Wallis came to inhabit his own legend, gradually rearranging facts and events to suit a particular narrative."

He added: "In spring 1943 Wallis had spent anxious days overlooking the beach at Reculver on the north Kent coast watching trial drops of a weapon remembered today as 'the bouncing bomb'. It was being tested in variant forms, one (Upkeep)

More to determined engineering genius than 617 Squadron and bouncing bomb



WE HAVE copies of *Dam Buster* by Richard Morris (rrp £28) to win. For your chance to own one, answer this question correctly:

Who played Barnes Wallis in the 1955 film *The Dam Busters*?

Email your answer, marked Barnes Wallis 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 May 19.



for use against dams, another (Highball) for warships.

"In 1955 the public marvelled at glimpses of Upkeep and Highball in Michael Anderson's film *The Dam Busters*. They took to the softly spoken, slightly abstracted genius portrayed by Michael Redgrave who spoke lines written by RC Sherriff [author of World War I classic *Journey's End*].

"Sherriff's screenplay depicted Wallis as meek yet determined, neither downcast by snags and disappointments nor resentful of others' scepticism, socially awkward yet warm.

"The souvenir programme for the film's premiere said that experts had 'scoffed' at his ideas, but his faith had 'never wavered' as he tramped from one ministry to another seeking support for his 'impossible' brainchild. This is, indeed, how Wallis himself described it.

"Yet while Wallis's projects often met opposition, and Upkeep was no



BACHELOR: Barnes on his motorbike in 1917

exception, it has long been realised that neither the weapon nor the squadron formed to use it could have emerged without sustained support."

He describes Wallis as 'a gifted maverick struggling to pitch original ideas to an overcautious establishment' and 'Britain's most famous yet most neglected 20th-century engineer'.

Born in 1887, Barnes Wallis was educated at Christ's Hospital, Horsham and Haberdashers' Aske Hatcham College in New Cross, south-east London. He trained as a marine engineer with Isle of Wight-based shipbuilders J. Samuel White, leaving in 1913 to work as an aircraft designer on airships,



GREAT LOVE: Wallis with wife Molly at White Hill House in Effingham, Surrey, 1933

then aircraft. While working for engineering company Vickers he designed the R100 airship. After a successful return flight to Canada in 1930, the R100 was broken up following the crash of its sister ship the R101 the same year – in which 48 people were killed, effectively ending British airship development.

After Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald ruled that the airship programme be axed, Morris revealed that Molly said: "We are feeling a bit sad about R100. It does seem a fearful waste. We keep remembering this and that about her – times when she was worrying and difficult, times when she was beautiful and proud, anxious times and jolly times. Oh well, it's all over."

Wallis developed the revolutionary geodetic system, a type of construction for the airframes of aircraft, for the Wellington bomber.

When World War II started he saw the need for strategic bombing and began the development of the bouncing bomb. He went on to produce the enormous Tallboy and Grand Slam bombs.

He met his future wife Molly at a family tea party in 1922 when he was 34 and she was 17. They were married for 54 years and had four children. From 1930 until his death in 1979 the family lived in Effingham, Surrey.

By Tracey Allen



OPERATION CHASTISE: Dams raids were carried out by Lancasters of 617 Sqn



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Equipping Russians with Hurricanes in Murmansk

But RAF electrician Vic felt colder in Northern Ireland than in USSR

LIVE WIRE: RAF spark Vic Bashford had many adventures and successes during his Service days (*inset, left*) and then went on to top roles in civvie street

VIC BASHFORD, the last veteran of 151 Wing that went to Murmansk, Russia, in 1941, has died aged 102.

Born in Portsmouth on December 28, 1920 to a naval family, he was educated in Surrey and at 14 began a four-year apprenticeship to become an electrician. He joined the RAF in December, 1938 at West Drayton and was sent to RAF Cardington for 10 weeks' basic training, followed by a brief spell at RAF Upwood in Cambridgeshire, before being posted to RAF Henlow in April 1939 to start electrical training.

Vic qualified in November that year and was posted to 615 Sqn at RAF Kenley, equipped with Gloster 'Gladiator' fighters, and deployed to France in December. On May 10, 1940 the Luftwaffe attacked his airfield at Abbeville. Evacuated over the Dunkirk beaches, he was brought back to England in a paddle steamer and was at Kenley for the Battle of Britain.

He was subsequently posted to Northolt, then Credenhill, Herefordshire for more electrical training. After being promoted to Cpl he was posted to Abingdon to work on Whitley bombers.

In July 1941, Vic was sent to Leconfield, Yorkshire, where two squadrons were being formed, 134 and 81, as 151 Wing. On August 12 he sailed on the Llanstephan Castle from Liverpool, arriving in Archangel, North Russia, three weeks later. This was Operation Dervish, the very first convoy to Russia taking Hurricanes, pilots and ground crew to assist the Russians with the defence of Murmansk against Luftwaffe attacks.

Remembering the event, he said: "After we had arrived in Archangel on August 31, I was ferried across the White Sea to our operating base at Vaenga, by Murmansk. I was with our squadron's advance party of fitters and riggers, sent to be ready for the arrival of some of the Wing's Hurricanes, flown off the fleet carrier Argus.

"Our activity at Vaenga was successful in every respect – so we could feel that we had done what we'd been tasked to do when we left, leaving the Russians with a nucleus of a Hurricane force, ready to receive the near on 3,000 later sent to them by many of the convoys of the following years.

"We left at the end of November 1941, and my trip home was aboard HMS Kenya, with a captain who enjoyed giving the Germans a



bloody nose. Instead of a straight passage as escort to the returning convoy, we spent some exhilarating moments bombarding the German coastal installations at Vardo."

134 Sqn reformed at Eglington, Northern Ireland, tasked with providing patrols over the eastern Atlantic to protect the convoys following America's entry into the war. Vic said he felt colder in Northern Ireland than he ever did in Russia.

On April 12, 1942 he embarked on the Rangitata from Liverpool to sail to Durban, South Africa and then on board the Mauretania to Egypt. Vic was loaned to the US Air Force at Lydda to maintain and service their B17 and B24 aircraft, as they didn't have any ground crews and the expected RAF Hurricanes had been sent elsewhere.

In December 1942 he was promoted to Sgt and posted to 107 MU at Kasfareet on the side of the Suez Canal to take over a magneto repair department and to overhaul electrical components. Following that, he established a Link Training and Bombing Teacher Section for the whole of the RAF Middle East Command, crossing the Sinai Desert 52 times.

In December 1945 he returned to the UK to be demobbed at RAF Hednesford on Cannock Chase, Staffordshire.

After the war he found work at The London Brick Company as a maintenance engineer at Capel in Surrey, and was promoted to Divisional Engineer for three



works. In 1951 he went to Warboys in Cambridgeshire to troubleshoot problems there. He was persuaded to stay at Warboys as manager, a position he held for 22 years before being promoted to Chief Executive of LBC's clay blocks division, a role he held for 12 years before taking early retirement when London

Brick was taken over by Hanson in 1984.

Vic and his wife Margaret bought a bungalow in Ramsey, four miles from Warboys and just a few miles from Upwood where he had been stationed all those years ago.

Air Cdre Phil Wilkinson, who was Defence and Air Attaché in

Moscow from 1993 to 1996, greeted Vic and some of his 151 Wing colleagues when they were able to return to Russia in 1993 – their first opportunity since 1941.

Margaret sadly died in 2010. Vic is survived by their three children, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Feature

It's all systems Cro for team's three new Reds



DEBUTS: (l-r) Flt Lts Walker, Hansford and Suckling. Inset right, Red Arrows OC Wg Cdr Adam Collins

THE RED Arrows have been taking part in pre-season training in Croatia on Exercise Spring Hawk 23.

The good weather in Croatia at this time of year allows the RAF's famous aerobatic display team to fly multiple sorties a day, honing their skills and manoeuvres in preparation for the 2023 display season which starts soon.

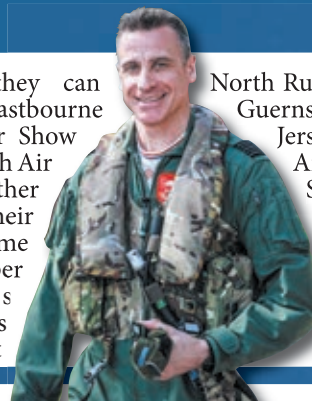
The team will be performing displays on more than 40 occasions this year, starting on June 2 at the Midlands Air Festival. They will also be appearing at RAF Cosford's Airshow on June 11, the Armed Forces Day National Event in Falmouth on June 24, IWM Duxford's Summer Show on June 25, Goodwood Festival of Speed on July 13 and 14 and the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford from July 14-16.

In August they can be seen at Eastbourne International Air Show and Bournemouth Air Festival among other air shows and their display programme in September includes performances at the Great

North Run on September 10, Guernsey Air Display and Jersey International Airshow on September 14 then at the IWM Duxford Battle of Britain Airshow on September 16 and 17. Three new

pilots have joined the Red Arrows this year – Flt Lt Richard Walker, who will fly in the Red 2 position; Flt Lt Tom Hansford, flying in the Red 3 position; and Flt Lt Ollie Suckling who will be Red 4.

● **Go to:** raf.mod.uk/display-teams/red-arrows/displays for the Reds' 2023 full display schedule.



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McLaren's V6 winged wonder



Downsized engine still packs a mighty punch

WHEN IT comes to supercars, bigger is usually better, yet McLaren's new Artura has bucked that trend and downsized its engine.

Not the V8? Yes, the classic 8 cylinder is now a 3.0 twin-turbo V6, but relax, in this case, less is more. The new V6 has been completely reimagined here, with an electric motor added to deliver some staggering numbers: 671bhp, 0-62mph in 3.0 seconds, 0-186mph in 21.5 seconds and a limited top end of 205mph. There's also 61.5mpg on a combined cycle and a 19-mile electric-only range.

The reduction of engine weight

and size has allowed McLaren to do something different. The Artura has a class-leading power-to-weight ratio of 488PS per tonne and, with a kerb weight of 1,498kg, it's also the lightest car in its class.

Outside

Everything has been scaled down on the Artura to create a perfectly proportioned compact supercar. The familiar front end remains, the

butterfly doors instantly identify it as something exceptional and it has one of the most beautifully crafted rear ends ever produced.

It's not red, you'll note. No, another famous manufacturer makes red supercars and McLaren is very quick to point out that the Artura is not, in any way, intended to compete with Ferrari's 296 GTB – which costs £50k more.

Inside

The cabin is well-thought-out and simple in design. The controls are easy to operate and the portrait infotainment touchscreen is responsive, with sharp graphics.

The seats are a brand new design and grip you perfectly in place through the bends. The driving position is good and leg room is generous. A parcel shelf sits behind the seats to give you practical storage space in the cabin. It takes a bit of practice to learn how to get in and out of serious supercars with grace and the Artura's Butterfly doors certainly add an extra consideration to the manoeuvre. Once you've mastered it however, it looks cool as hell.

On The Road

Burning around the country roads of Stratford-Upon-Avon, I was never going to get to push the envelope too far. Yet I managed

to get close a few times, carefully edging the back out on tight, wet bends and deploying enough power on take-off to send the back end twitching ferociously until it settled into a graceful, diagonal launch.

The nose grips tenaciously and you can feel the specially designed Pirelli P Zero Corsa tyres biting into the tarmac. The result is a pure, delicate, accurate driving experience that is perfectly flat through undulating bends. Understeer is rarely a problem.

The electric-petrol combo eliminates any sign of turbo lag and

McLaren Artura

Pros

- Fantastic handling
- Stupendously fast
- A practical supercar
- Well-priced

Cons

- Road noise
- No fast charging on battery
- No new look

Verdict

The Artura looks and feels like a McLaren should. It handles beautifully, has enough power to make you extremely wary of it and is, quite frankly, stunning.

the engine sounds simply awesome, especially in the mid-range.

There are a couple of minor downsides, if we're being really picky. The brakes are a little spongy until you give them a good hard jab and the back wheels do kick up a lot of road noise on the motorway at speed.



BOXING



SIGNING OUT IN STYLE: RAF's Brad Axe dominates against Yuri Cabral as the military man has his last bout before turning pro

Knockout finish for Axe as he leaves amateur ranks behind

Daniel Abrahams

A SMALL piece of RAF boxing history ended in Yeovil, as Cpl Brad Axe had his final bout as an amateur.

Fighting for this home club, the Service boxing team vice-captain said: "I was proud to finish my final amateur fight with my coach and lifelong friend Dean Trott in my corner.

"We started this journey together and it meant a lot to finish it together.

"It's been an incredible ride, from badly losing my first bout to winning the UKAF elite title for the RAF; boxing in working men's clubs, to different countries all over the world.

"I've enjoyed every minute of it."

Axe fought his 52nd amateur bout at 75kg at the Westlands Centre, Yeovil, beginning well and overpowering his opponent, Yuri Cabral.

As the bout unfolded Axe was able to pick his shots easily and show off the full range of his skills to an appreciative and supportive crowd. He upped the pace of his attack in the third round producing the perfect ending with a technical knockout.

Axe added: "Now I have some time to enjoy my last few months in Cyprus before I return to the UK and move over to the professional ranks."

● Follow RAF Boxing on Instagram [@RAFBoxing](#).



CHAMP: Axe wins by TKO

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ANGLING



**FLT SGT
DAVE
THORPE**



**FLT SGT
JIM
THOMAS**



**SGT
TONY
JONES**



**SGT
MARTIN
EMERY**



**WO JASON
VERNEY AND
SGT GLENN
BEARDSALL**

Hooked on fishing

Anglers set out their stall for the season



**SGT ANDY
GODDARD
GETS A BITE**

Daniel Abrahams

THE HOOKS and lines have been cast as the Service's carp anglers settle into what promises to be an exciting season of action.

The association is now well into the opening rounds of the Pairs, of which there will be five events, and British Carp Championship – both of which play out into September.

Earlier in the year there was a Development Day. Sgt Stu Thomson said: "Development of our anglers plays a key role in everything the team does and for some the season began at Linford Lakes back in February for casting tuition with world record holder Terry Edmonds, which saw 15 anglers present.

"We will soon be holding a dedicated development two-day event that will allow members to work on areas of their angling they feel may need improving. With Q&A sessions and one-to-one

tuition available, teaching is tailored to individual needs."

The pairs events, which are held over 48-hour matches, will see the next round, the third, at Thorney Weir, West Drayton in July.



Three pairs of WO Richard Cooke and Flt Lt Carl Booth, FS Matt Hunt and Sgt Tony Jones, and Sgt Martin Emery and FS Ian Coleman will be flying the flag for the Service this year in the British Carp Championships, which will see the final lines drawn at Broadlands Lakes, Romsey, Hampshire on September 8.

The Inter-Services will provide the penultimate match of the year at Berners Hall Fishery in September, as the RAF attempt to wrestle the title back from the Army's grasp.

Thomson said: "Bragging rights are up for grabs here, with each team choosing its best-performing anglers to pit their wits against each other."

The RAF Championships, held in October last year, will close out the season, with approximately 50 anglers expected to take part.

Thomson said: "The event begins with the final development day of the year before a friendly yet competitive individual 72-hour match to determine who will be crowned RAF champion. This year sees the event being run on two of the most prolific carp angling waters the UK has to offer, Brasenose 1 and 2 on the Linear Complex in Oxfordshire."

● **Find out more about the association at: rafsportsfederation.uk/sports or visit the Facebook page: 'Royal Air Force Carp Angling' or Instagram: @RAF_Carp.**

ALPINE

On top of the world



SNOWBOARD HEAVEN: Cpl Sam Brown (*above*) and Cpl Jasmine Furber (*below*)

Cpl's triple medal joy at Brit Champs

Daniel Abrahams

THERE WERE three podium finishes for snowboarding's Cpl Jasmine Furber at the British Championships in Aviemore.

Furber who had secured PSL (parallel slalom) and slopestyle silver at the Inter-Services in Meribel, was joined by Fg Off Chris Harrington (silver in the Snowboard Cross in Meribel) and Cpl Sam Brown, who narrowly missed out on bronze in France.

All competing well, it was Furber who took the titles in Scotland, saying: "It was an amazing experience being able to represent the UKAF Snowboarding team, competing against some of the greats in British snowboarding."

"There was a very impressive display of talent from the young riders and it was a great weekend to be a part of, with a strong community feel and all competitors being welcoming and cheering each other on."

"I competed in all three events; placing second in the banked slalom and slopestyle, and first in the rail jam. All three events were enjoyable, the atmosphere was exhilarating: live DJ, an excited crowd and riders performing insane tricks all rooting for one another."

A mix of bad weather and crashes were the undoing of the RAF skiing representatives in Tignes, France. RAF women's Inter-Services



SITTING PRETTY: RAF skiers with Brit Champs team

stand-in captain Fg Off Kirsty Guest and AS1(T) Ricky Santamaria were selected for the British Championships team following excellent displays in Meribel.

Guest won all five of her IS races, along with the Individual crown, and was selected as Best Newcomer in France, while Santamaria spearheaded the men's ski team charge to within a whisker of eventual winners the Army.

Guest said: "We went straight from the Inter-Services to a training week with the

team and then into the British Championship race week.

"We had a great training week on the same course as many international athletes and Britain's number one male skier, Dave Ryding."

"Unfortunately for the race week, out of the six races we were due to do we only managed one because of very poor weather conditions. In the one race we did get to compete Ricky and I both crashed out."



Sport

Email: sports@rafnews.co.uk

CRICKET



WOMEN CENTRE STAGE: The UK Armed Forces team take on the MCC ladies at Lord's last year



RAF MEN'S TEAM CAPTAIN: Cpl Tom Shorthouse will lead his men against the Army

Lord's & ladies

Daniel Abrahams

THE CHANGING face of Service cricket continues to be represented front and centre at Lord's on May 10 as the IST20 fixture features both men's and UKAF women's teams.

In previous years the day has seen the three men's Service sides all play each other, but this year the RAF and Navy will take on holders the Army as a competition finale at the famous St John's Wood ground in London.

In between the two men's fixtures, the women's games will be held for a second year.

Men's team captain Cpl Tom Shorthouse said: "The format of the day has changed, but it is a small price to pay for the development of the game and to introduce the women's game again on this prestigious stage."

"This is another positive step

Women join men at famous ground as IST20 takes on a different format

forward for the Service game. It will be a great day, I am certain of that."

Shorthouse guided his team to a 3-run victory over the Royal Navy at Aldershot in last year's competition, making 36 runs in the process, before bowling out the Navy for 165-6. The game was staged a few days before the Lord's

event for the first time due to the UKAF women's team playing an MCC side, winning by six wickets, MCC 115-4, UKAF CC 116-4.

In their second game versus the Army to close out the day, the RAF lost by 62 runs, having been bowled out for 106.

Shorthouse's charges managed to

hold a training session at Eversley Cricket Club near Aldershot, with designs on their opening IST20 match against the Royal Navy at the United Services Recreation Ground in Portsmouth a few days before the Lord's event, to decide who plays the title holding Army in the second clash on May 10.

Shorthouse said: "The day itself is earlier in the year than usual, and we have struggled to sort fixtures, having lost those we had due to the weather. Our selection will be down to availability, so we want to get the lads together as much as possible in the run-up."

"They are aware of what is needed, if we win against the Navy and beat the Army we get both games at Lord's next year, so that's what we are hoping to do."

The women's team are currently in the selection process for their new captain.

Tickets are £20 for adults, £10 for over-65s, £10 for Service personnel and veterans with proof of entitlement, and free for under-16s and are available from: tickets.lords.org.

● Visit: interservicest20.co.uk or @UKAFCricket on Twitter for more details.

SEA ANGLING

Chf Tech Treharne lands title

THE SERVICE'S sea anglers celebrated an individual win at the recent Combined Armed Forces shore challenge at Norfolk.

Chf Tech Mal Hore, Chf Tech Mike Treharne, Sgt Steve Rathbone, Sgt James Anastasi and Cpl Ant Beckham made their presence known with several catches, but sadly the team prize eluded them.

Treharne did hold on to take the individual title after two days of fishing.

The first day at Bacton Beach was lost to high shore winds, with anglers changing their focus to the second day at Kelling Beach. The action started quickly with several catches being made, but changes in the tides saw things slow.

CAF anglers were still landing fish right up to the final whistle but it was not enough.

Treharne's success however means the RAF have a second individual champion in as many years.



TOUGH MATCH: Playing the Army in 2022
PHOTO: ALLIGIN

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

VOLLEYBALL

RAF hit Navy for six in Inter-Services

THE RAF volleyball teams kicked off their IS campaign with an excellent display of dominance, with two out of three squads winning their opening games against the Royal Navy.

A camp at Cranwell started proceedings for the Harriers (men), Hawks (women) and Typhoons (mixed development) – training alongside the England Under 19s Men's National Team and a triangular competition also involving Lincoln Cannons Men's 1st team.

On game day, it was the Typhoons that had the first opportunity to battle against the Navy, just losing out 2-3 (25-16, 15-26, 25-16, 23-25, 15-17), with Cpl Paul Eaton Most Valuable Player (MVP).

Next up were the Harriers, with Flt Lt Bryn Mullard dominating the pass, giving perfect balls to setter Cpl Kevin Colton,

who could distribute to any of the hitters. There were excellent displays of hitting power from Flt Lt Josh Main and Cpl David Lucas through the middle position, with Cpl Luke Bushnell hitting though the opposite position, smashing though the block of his old team, after recently transferring over as a PTI. Final set scores were 25-13, 25-23 and 25-16. MVP was awarded to Flt Lt Bryn Mullard.

Harriers captain Fg Off Alex Clare said: "This was a new squad set up, with some key players leaving the sport last year and new players stepping up into the team. However, I was proud of the display that was shown today, and we should look forward to the Army next, get the win and lift the IS trophy.

"Huge thanks to the England team for helping us out with training."

The final fixture of the day was the Hawks team, hindered by unavailable players and injuries and proving the ideal opportunity for newer development players to step up.

Strong serving from captain Flt Sgt Helen Crawford paid off and reflected in the set scores, with the RAF women sinking the Navy 3-0 (25-8, 25-12, 25-9).

MVP Crawford said: "I'm excited for our next fixture against the Army. It will no doubt be a very different game as we know they usually field strong opposition. I'm also very excited for the future of the RAF Hawks, with the quality of the players coming through the Typhoons squad."

● Email Flt Lt Bryn Mullard: Bryn.Mullard100@mod.gov.uk for more about the RAFVA.



BIG HITTER: Harriers Captain Fg Off Alex Clare

ALPINE

Unwin's a natural

CHAMP: Cpl Dex Unwin



SLIDER: Cpl Chelsea Medlock

Daniel Abrahams

THE TITLE of RAF champion was the prize to close out the season for the natural luge team and its members in Jaufental, Italy.

After two action-packed races the overall RAF Champion was Cpl Dex Unwin, taking first place with a personal best run, while RAF veterans David Scott and Eddy Dunlop were second and third respectively.

The championships also saw the association hold its full training camp, with the first day for the novices beginning with a track walk on the ice. The rookies were then taken through the fundamentals of track safety, sitting in the sled, turning and stopping.

Team member Cpl Chelsea Medlocksaid: "We progressed quickly, gaining enough confidence to move slightly higher up the track with each run.

"The intermediate sliders then did their first runs of the week, which was invaluable for the novices to watch and learn from their techniques."

The day ended with sessions on sled work which included sharpening steels, checking tightness of bolts and drying the sleds to prevent any problems with rust.

The second day featured further sliding basic drills and turning on boards and cornering.

Medlock added: "Everything was stepping up, which then led to a rise in the anticipation, excitement, and nervousness across all the sliders. The weather had consistently been perfect for sliding and race day was no different, there was no doubt people would be setting their Personal Bests."

The Novice category went off first in South Tyrol, with AS1 Andy Beer winning, Cpl Stefan Smith taking second and Sqn Ldr Karen Swanston third.

5 pages of the best of RAF Sport action



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Announcements

- p6-7
- Puzzles**
- p8

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Diamond wedding anniversary

Ride for vets in custody

THE CHARITY Care After Combat, that provides support within the Criminal Justice System for Armed Forces veterans and their families, is taking on a tougher challenge for its annual cycling event this month – adding an extra day and visiting more prisons than last year's fundraising ride.

Care After Combat staff and volunteers will cycle 210 miles over three days from May 9-11 visiting 11 of the prisons the charity works in – HMPs Hull, Humber, Hatfield, Lindholm, Moorlands, Ranby, Nottingham, Lowdham Grange, Whatton, North Sea Camp and Lincoln.

A spokesman for the charity said: "Veterans in custody will be invited to take part in the ride within the prison gyms, working to achieve the equivalent distance on exercise bikes in teams or as an individual challenge."

"All the money raised will go towards supporting the



ON THEIR BIKES: Last year's riders

veterans we work with."

He added: "Care After Combat has grown, with it now supporting veterans in more than 90 prisons across England and Wales. With the charity's 10th anniversary next year, the plan is to further expand the cycling event in the years to come."

"Veterans find themselves in the CJS for a whole variety of reasons. Care After Combat do not look at what they have done, more at why they are there and to try to ensure the individual

does not re-offend. This is achieved through bespoke support, from specific mental health provision through to emotional and physical support to the individual and their families.

"Veterans are supported during their custodial period and, if requested, on release, with a volunteer mentor assigned to help them with their reintegration back into the community."

■ Go to: careaftercombat for more information and to donate.

Couple celebrate six decades

BRIAN AND BERYL (née Guille) Brown, celebrated their Diamond wedding anniversary on April 13.

Married in St Matthew's Church, Cobo, Guernsey in 1963 they moved to RAF Gutersloh with No 4 Sqn. At Gutersloh they were presented to The Queen and Prince Philip during their state visit to Germany in 1965.

Brian enjoyed 22 years' service – with 4 Squadron at Gutersloh and 19 Sqn at Wildenrath and Brize Norton.

On retirement in 1982 the Browns settled in Milton-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire, where they still live.

Brian said: "Thanks to my RAF training, experience



HAPPY MARRIAGE: Brian and Beryl Brown, and on their wedding day on April 13, 1963



and further education, I joined the EU-funded Nuclear Fusion Project (JET) near Abingdon.

"After 14 years I then moved to Brussels to manage science and technology projects for the EU-funded programmes."

He added: "We have enjoyed a happy 60 years of marriage and are grateful for the experience and world travel opportunities the RAF gave us."

Email: bwbwychwood@hotmail.com to contact Brian and Beryl.



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