

The Forces' favourite paper

Competition 'Mysteries' of flight revealed

● See page 23

Win!



Raven beauts Packham's animal geniuses

● See RnR pages 4-5



ROYAL AIR FORCE

Friday **March 12** 2021
No. 1510 **70p**

RAF News



Reparation fight of gay RAF veterans

Call for more to be done to help those hounded out



● Pages 16-17

Football
Atkinson's global goal



● See p27

Boxing
Axe man's in run test



● See p29

Brize delivers on UN mission



BRIZE NORTON personnel have completed the biggest British air operation since the start of the war in Afghanistan in 2006.

Over the past four months an air mobility team from the Oxfordshire base has flown more than 24 times to set up a base for British troops fighting Islamist terrorism in Mali.

The airlift saw 640 tons of freight and 300 military personnel transported more than 3,000 miles

each way to the Sahel – one of Africa's poorest and most fragile regions plagued by chronic poverty, instability, climate change and violence.

The RAF team from the United Kingdom Mobile Air Movements Squadron was led by Sgt Dan Ashford.

He said: "It was an honour to wear the UN beret and represent my squadron in Mali, demonstrating our capability."

● Continued p3



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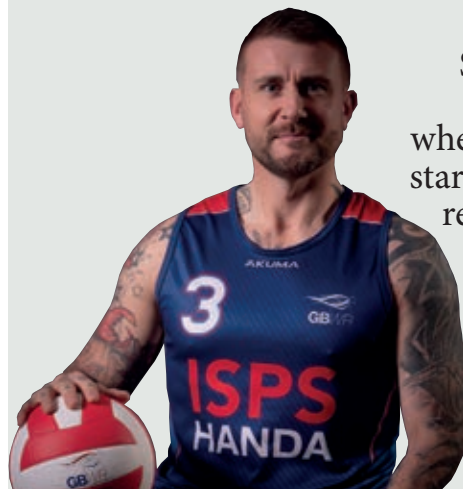
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“We’ve battled on unfunded for four years, the challenges have bonded us as a team”



Stu Robinson,
Team GB
wheelchair rugby
star, on his team’s
recent sporting
trials
See p30-31

“You can’t fail to be impressed by how university air squadrons transform young people,”



New Cambridge
UAS chief
Sqn Ldr Mark
Hammond
See p7

“We have some extraordinary chefs in the UK and we are happy to showcase that talent”



Rachel Khoo,
new judge on
Great British
Menu
RnR p3



RAF News

RAF News

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Atlas UN Mali ops

Continued from front

Ashford said: “The sense of achievement we all had after knowing that we had done it and completed the task was enormous.”

The new airhead supports the Army’s Light Dragoons-led Long-Range Reconnaissance Group now operating as part of the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali.

The task force arrived by A400M transporter at Gao base in December to carry out highly specialised intelligence gathering patrols and engage with local people to counter threats from violent extremism and weak governance

Sgt Ashford added: “Our role is to provide the equipment and expertise to enable forward operating in austere conditions and to allow the UK military to deploy worldwide as required.”

The squadron is part of 1 Air Mobility Wing – a high-readiness Air Combat Unit at Brize, capable of providing early entry air movements support, both in the UK and overseas.

The UN Mission in Mali has 14,000 peacekeepers from 56 different countries and works to



UN FRONTLINE: Sgt Ashford with UN armoured vehicle at Gao, where Army-led taskforce is supporting anti-terror operations

support peace, encourage security sector reform, protect civilians and promote human rights. A total of 237 peacekeepers have been killed

since it was established by Security Council resolution 2100 on April 25, 2013.

Sgt Ashford’s team has now

been replaced by two other movement specialists to sustain ongoing logistical support for the troops.

This Week In History



2003

Telic shots fired

PRECISION ATTACKS begin against several hundred land targets in Iraq by Tornado and Harrier GR7s as the second Gulf War starts.

1944

Stalag Breakout

RAF PRISONERS in Stalag Luft III PoW camp stage a mass breakout which later became known as the Great Escape. Seventy-six prisoners escape through a tunnel codenamed ‘Harry’. Most are recaptured and 50 executed on Hitler’s orders.



1942

Bomber raids begin

Bomber Command mounts its first concentrated raids against a German city as 234 aircraft, mainly Wellingtons, attack Lübeck with a large number of incendiaries. The intensity of the attack leads to the Germans coining the phrase ‘Terrorangriff’ (Terror Raids).



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

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- OFSTED



With the help of SSAFA, Army
medics Lisa and Sophie have been
able to start a family of their own.

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In Brief



FALL GUYS: RAF parachute display team in action during training in the US

Falcons hit the heights Stateside

THE FALCONS are set to be licensed to thrill after completing high altitude training in California.

The Air Force parachute display team are expected to receive their Public Display Authority after each member completed more than 90 jumps during the annual US-based Falcons Stack exercise.

Team spokesman Stu Philpott said: "Training provided the team with an opportunity to conduct the required display training and best prepare for the 2021 display season."

"During these testing times the team made best use of the opportunity to focus on ensuring we are ready to display as soon as the Covid restrictions allow."



TRUNK CALL: RAFBF mascot

Name your charity hero

THE RAF Benevolent Fund is inviting nominations for its prestigious annual awards to celebrate fundraisers and volunteers who have stepped up during the Covid pandemic.

Categories include caseworker of the year, outstanding youth worker, RAF station of the year and volunteer of the year. Entries close on April 9.

● Go to: rafbf.org/get-involved/rafbf-awards for more information and to submit your nominations.

Cpls' Qatar call-up



STRIKE A POSE: Cpl Sutherland learns some moves on the flight line with USAF Stratotanker team in Qatar
PHOTO: SGT BRIGETTE WALTERMIRE

Staff Reporter Qatar

TWO RAF personnel joined the largest expeditionary wing in the world for a flight line view of a Stratotanker aircraft.

The pair got to grips with the giant KC-135 which has served the US Air Force for more than 60 years as part of a Chief for a Day programme.

Computer technician Cpl Joe Carter-Blundell and Cpl Amy Sutherland spent a shift with ground crew of the 379th 'Grand Slam' Wing, which earned its unique nickname for being the best bomber outfit in 1944.

They helped prepare to launch a Stratotanker – the core USAF air-to-air refuelling aircraft, also used for reconnaissance missions and aeromedical evacuations.

They moved portable power generators, learned to signal to the aircraft's pilot, attach fuel lines and carry out pre-flight checks.

Cpl Sutherland said: "Working with the USAF on their aircraft was a fab opportunity to have an insight into what they do on



a day-to-day basis whilst on Ops, it was one of the highlights of my deployment."

The visit programme enables airmen and women from any specialism to integrate with the American part of the US-led 83-member global Coalition against Daesh.

Cpl Carter-Blundell said: "It

was a really good experience, definitely something I'd not done before."

The US Air Mobility Command has 396 KC-135s, each costing \$39 million.

First flown in 1956, the 136ft-long Stratotanker has a maximum speed of 530mph, a ceiling of 50,000 feet, and range of 1,500 miles.



INSPIRING: UK Military's most senior female officer Air Marshal Sue Gray, centre, with previous Women in Defence winners

UK Forces' females step centre stage

Tracey Allen

DEFENCE DISCOUNT Services has launched a four-week campaign to celebrate the achievements of women in the Armed Forces, in honour of International Women's Day.

The UK Defence community is invited to nominate candidates for the Inspirational Woman in Defence 2021 title. The competition is open to those working in all areas of Defence, including serving Armed Forces and Reserve Forces personnel, MoD civil servants and Nato personnel serving in the UK.

Participants should send their nominations, with a few lines about why they believe their chosen person should win, to: marketing@defencediscountservice.co.uk by March 29.

Tom Dalby, the Service's CEO, said: "We know how hard our UK Defence teams work to keep us all safe, and we thought International Women's Day was the perfect opportunity to celebrate those women who have gone the extra mile over the past year."

"We would encourage all members of the Defence community – whether male or female – to nominate their inspirational women and join us in celebrating all their hard work."

The winner of the title will be announced on April 9 and will receive a £250 gift card from Virgin Experience Days, said a spokeswoman for the Service, the official MoD discount service for the British Armed Forces, veterans and Defence community, that offers its members access to exclusive discounts for free online through its website.

A Defence Privilege Card can also be bought to qualify for discounts in stores, restaurants and venues and is valid for five years.

● Go to: www.defencediscountservice.co.uk to register and find out more.

CHOCKS AWAY ...

for the Virgin Money
London Marathon

13

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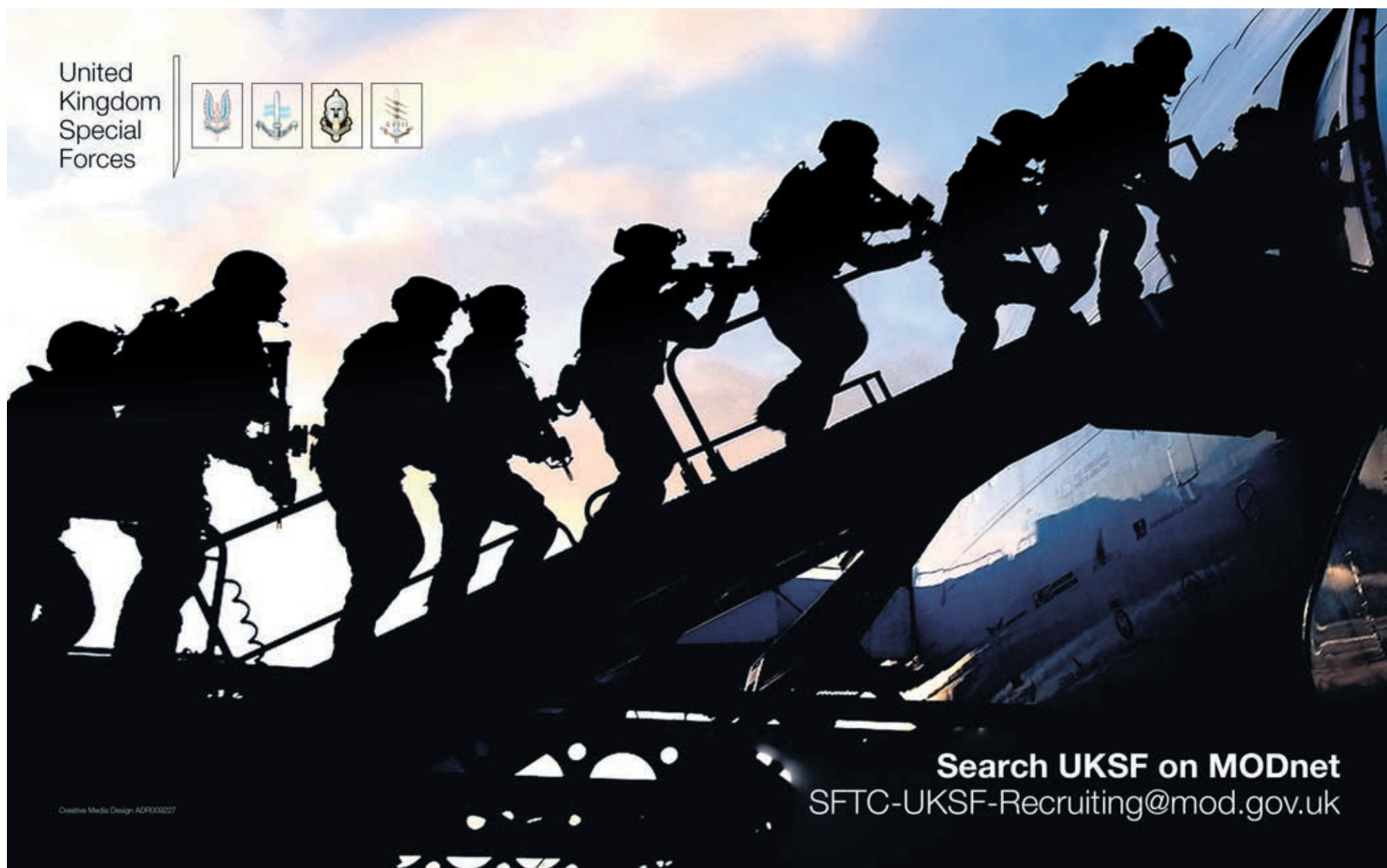
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Rookie students land Afghan rescue hero

Staff Reporter

A FORMER Royal Marine who won the DFC for launching a series of daring rescues in Afghanistan has taken command of Britain's oldest University Air Squadron.

RAF Wittering-based ex-Apache and Chinook pilot Sqn Ldr Mark Hammond will offer Cambridge undergraduates basic flying training.

He was awarded one of the British military's highest accolades for carrying out three rescue missions to save UK paratroopers injured in a fierce gun battle.

During an attempt to land at the Para outpost in Musa Qala two rocket-propelled grenades passed within 10ft of his helicopter and four rounds hit it, forcing him

to abandon the rescue bid. After finally landing the stricken aircraft at Camp Bastion he found another Chinook and made another trip, rescuing a soldier while still under heavy fire.

The 53-year-old amassed 4,000 flying hours on helicopters including Gazelle, Lynx, and Chinook and is one of a select group of British pilots to have flown United States Marine Corps Cobra.

He said: "You can't fail to be impressed by how Cambridge University Air Squadron transforms young people.

"We teach them how to fly, teach them life skills, adventure training, enhance their university education, and they leave with a positive impression of the RAF."



COMBAT PEDIGREE: Right, Sqn Ldr Mark Hammond takes over Cambridge UAS. Left, in the Chinook cockpit during ops in Afghanistan. Main, a Grob Tutor takes off



Voyager Cyprus jab mission



SPECIAL DELIVERY: Voyager

RAF delivers vaccine to protect thousands of frontline personnel

MEDICS RECEIVED the first Covid-19 jab at Episkopi Garrison in Cyprus after thousands of shots were delivered by an RAF Voyager to the Mediterranean island.

The AstraZeneca vaccine was flown into Akrotiri and will be administered in phases following UK guidelines.

Nurse Julie Finch gave a dose of the serum to Cpl Hannah Mortimer (pictured above) of The Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps, who will be one of 11 vaccinators at the base.

Officials have confirmed those with a higher risk of contracting the virus, or individuals at greater risk of becoming seriously ill should they catch it, will receive the vaccine first.

This phase will include frontline healthcare workers, clinically vulnerable people and those over

50, with the second dose expected to be administered between four and 12 weeks later.

Staff and personnel at the British High Commission will also be included in the programme.

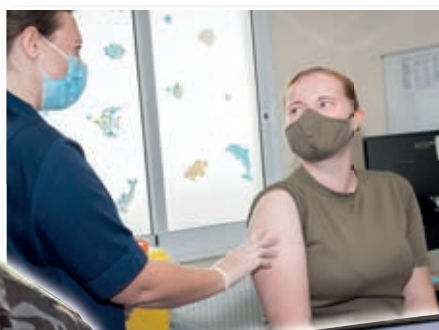
But Commander British Forces Cyprus Major General Rob Thomson stressed this was not the end of the pandemic.

He said: "It is good news that British Forces Cyprus are now able to begin administering the vaccine to the most vulnerable people in our community.

"Vaccination is just one of our tools in fighting a pandemic.

"Social distancing, wearing a face mask where required and all other measures will remain in place as we continue fighting this virus alongside our colleagues and friends in the Republic of Cyprus."

Those within Phase One have now been informed by medical centre staff. Details of Phase Two will follow and will mirror the rollout in the UK.



VAC IN THE BOX: Unloading Astra vaccines from RAF Voyager at Akrotiri

In Brief



Family fundraiser

A RAF couple and their two young children have smashed their charity fundraising target – netting £830 for the RAF Benevolent Fund.

Husband and wife Corporal Matt Phillips and Flight Sergeant Fiona Phillips ran and cycled 1,000 miles throughout February to raise the cash for the Fund, beating their goal of £650.

The couple, both based at RAF Odiham, where Matt is a General Technician (Mechanical) and Fiona is an RAF medic, were joined by their sons Ben, nine, and Henry, six.

Fiona (above with Matt and children) said: "With Matt due to deploy soon and both of us working full-time, we wanted to do something fun as a family. We asked Henry the biggest number he could think of and he said 1,000 – I'm glad it wasn't any higher.

"The children have been keeping us motivated, and even woke us up in their running kit at 6.15am."

She added: "We've seen what great work the Fund does. Our children have benefitted from Airplay parks and activities, so we decided to fundraise."

● Go to: [justgiving.com/familyphillips1](https://www.justgiving.com/familyphillips1) to donate.



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Proud to follow my *Desert Rat* granddad

Canadian pilot Scott flying with RAF in Mali 80 years after WWII airman Rob battled Rommel in Africa

Peter Singlehurst

A CANADIAN exchange pilot is following in his grandfather's footsteps by serving with the RAF in Africa.

Chinook Captain Scott Stewart is flying with RAF Odiham-based 27 Sqn in Mali supporting the French counter insurgency campaign.

His grandfather Robert Brown served with the Desert Air Force during the North African campaign in World War II.

Capt Stewart said: "My grandfather was so excited that I was going on this exchange. He was so proud of his RAF service, and now here I am serving in Africa as well."

Robert, from Carstairs in Lanarkshire, joined the RAF as an 18-year-old airman in 1940.

After the Battle of Britain he took part in the bomber campaign in support of the Desert Rats and became a radar technician in Burma, before joining Devon Police after being demobbed.

Capt Stewart added: "After my grandfather's retirement from the police in England, he and my grandmother moved to Canada to join us in British Columbia.

"He told us his fondest memory was of seeing elephants in Burma during the war. The elephant features on the squadron crest of 27 Sqn – he would have like that."

After Capt Stewart's second tour to Mali he will be posted to 450 Sqn RCAF to fly the Canadian CH-47F Chinook from Petawawa Air Base in Ontario.

Capt Stewart said: "Coming from the CH-146 Griffon, it was challenging to learn a new aircraft, SOPs, accents, places, plus all the RAF rules and regulations in a short time.

"This was compounded by constantly being teased for my



WAR ON TERROR: Capt Scott Stewart at the helm of RAF Chinook in Mali, West Africa. *Inset right,* WWII airman Robert Brown who joined the RAF at 18 and fought with Montgomery's Desert Rats

North American accent, being a Griffon pilot, love of ice hockey, and withdrawals from real Tim Hortons coffee."

He said his tour highlights were taking part in Ex Saif Sareea in Oman, embarking on HMS Queen Elizabeth, and battling the flood emergency at Whaley Bridge dam.

"My wife Viktoria and I will always remember being invited to

The Queen's Buckingham Palace Garden Party and introducing the RAF to moose milk."

Moose milk is a traditional Canadian cocktail made with whiskey, vodka, or dark rum, Kahlúa coffee, milk, cream, condensed milk, eggnog, or vanilla ice cream, maple syrup or sugar, nutmeg and occasionally cinnamon.



In Brief



PLEDGE: Chancellor Rishi Sunak

Budget boost for veterans

CHANCELLOR RISHI Sunak pledged an extra £10m in the Budget to help veterans battling mental health problems.

The funds will help support Forces charities working with ex-military personnel and NHS support and treatment, he said.

A further £475,000 will be given to Armed Forces charities to support the development of a digital and data strategy.

Forces in Mind Trust chief executive Ray Lock said: "We know that veterans' mental health services are facing a critical increase in demand.

"The announcement is an important step in ensuring that all ex-Service personnel and their families are able to access good quality health services when and where they need them."

Forces freeze

MOST BRITISH military personnel will go without an annual pay rise this year.

The Forces pay review body is to delay recommendation on salaries to Defence chiefs, it has been confirmed.

The move follows a public sector pay freeze announcement, in November last year.

Forces pay tribute to Sir Tom with full military honours and flypast

Staff Reporter

A FLYPAST by a lone World War II Dakota paid tribute to Captain Sir Tom Moore whose funeral was accompanied by full military honours.

Yorkshire Regiment soldiers provided a bugler, bearer party, firing party and a ceremonial guard at the private service in Bedford attended by just eight family members but watched on TV by millions.

Earlier, RAF Fylingdales paid

its respects to the 100-year-old veteran, who died after testing positive for Covid-19, by projecting images of him onto the surface of its radar.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "In national emergencies ordinary people do extraordinary things and inspire us all to pull together to overcome adversity.

"Sir Tom's contribution and example now lives on in us all. The Armed Forces are immensely proud to contribute to the celebration of his extraordinary life of service."



NATIONAL HERO: Sir Tom Moore

News

In Brief



HONOUR: UAE memorial to Sgt Donnelly

Gulf tribute

UK MILITARY personnel deployed in the United Arab Emirates paid tribute to the only UK airman to be buried in the Gulf state during World War II.

Sgt William 'Billy' Donnelly was the navigator of a Wellington bomber that crashed during a flight to India in February 1943.

He later died from the injuries and was buried near the crash site by crewmates who survived.

A memorial was unveiled by his niece June Botten in 2010.

Since then British military personnel serving in the UAE have travelled annually to work with the local authority to maintain the memorial and to hold a ceremony of remembrance for Sgt Donnelly.

Photo of the week



BIG LIZZY dwarfs the quayside as she emerges from the Round Tower in Portsmouth.

Fleet flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth sailed for sea trials and training ahead of the Carrier Strike Group deployment with RAF F-35 Lightnings (inset) later this year.

PHOTO: RORY ARNOLD



Farm therapy bid to help vets battling PTSD

Staff Reporter

A FORMER Gunner who took up farming after being struck down with PTSD has won financial backing from Forces charities to help other veterans battling the condition.

Sixty-year-old Jamie Quinn spent years working with livestock in some of the most remote parts of the UK after being medically discharged from the RAF.

Now he is offering Forces veterans the chance to get back to nature and ease their symptoms by working with animals on his farm in Lincolnshire.

He said: "My PTSD started a while after leaving the Regiment. It was the stress we were under after running at full stretch all the time in



Northern Ireland, the Falklands and on operations. Mental health was not a high priority in those days."

After working as a forester in Scotland, Jamie bought a few horses and eventually ended up buying a small 100-acre farm near Messingham, Lincs, breeding pedigree cattle and Lincoln Longwool sheep.

He said: "I got a few horses and found it really calming. If you are caring for them you are caring for yourself at the same time."

"Before you know it you are telling them about your worries. It doesn't matter what you say to them – they never take offence."

Jamie teamed up with charities Help for Homeless Vets and the Vets Foundation and has landed

a £10,000 grant to offer other veterans work experience.

He added: "There are opportunities to get involved with everything we do here including lambing and calving. We have a Sussex ox and enter all the local ploughing competitions."

"The livestock we have are very easy to work with. Lincoln Red cattle and Longwool sheep are very sociable. There is a lot of scientific research about the therapeutic benefits of being around animals."

"It might also open up new job opportunities in the farming sector, which is something most Forces veterans probably never consider when they leave."

Jamie has kept true to his RAF roots, his latest pedigree calf is registered with the number 63 – in honour of 63 Queen's Colour Squadron – while another was named Watchet, after the Somerset RAF Regiment Gunnery School.

● **Email:** ceohelp4homelessveterans@gmail.com for details.



MOO-VING ON: Former Gunner Jamie Quinn with one of his rare breed Lincoln Red calves, tagged with the number 63 in honour of 63 Queen's Colour Squadron; inset left, with a Longwool sheep.



**McCloud Case Pension Ruling.
Find out how it could affect you.**

Join us. Job done.

The McCloud case relates to an age discrimination ruling in 2019 against the Public Sector Pension Schemes introduced in 2015. Since then, the Government has been looking at two options for how to remedy the problem. That decision has now been made and it affects all personnel serving *both* on or before 31st March 2012 *and* on or after 1st April 2015 (including service leavers). So there is a good chance it will affect you, and your family's future income.

In line with the solution for which the Forces Pension Society lobbied hard, "Deferred Choice Underpin" has been chosen. It means you can make an informed decision based on the actual pension benefits earned, calculated toward the end of your service.

So if you have been in, or are approaching Resettlement in this period, you will need to know what action to take when you are contacted by the Ministry of Defence. As always, the Society will be on hand to advise and support our Members.

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Independence is vital to our work, calling Governments to account whenever we spot injustice or unfairness in the system. This year we celebrate our 75th Anniversary of supporting the Armed Forces Community, championing their pensions.

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Annual membership for you and your spouse/partner is just **£41**. As a Member, you will have exclusive access to our Pension Advisory Team who can advise on the implications for you of the McCloud ruling. You'll also have exclusive access to Members' Webinars and our bi-annual e-newsletters and magazine, Pennant.

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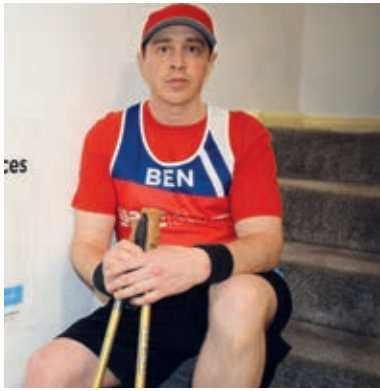


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The RAF Benevolent Fund is a registered charity in England and Wales (1081009) and Scotland (SC038109)

In Brief



PEAK PERFORMANCE: RAF vet Ben Wilson

Stair master

AIR FORCE veteran Ben Wilson is aiming high with his latest charity bid – scaling the world's highest mountains from his home.

The former airman – whose RAF career was cut short after he suffered a spinal injury – is halfway through the challenge of 'scaling the peaks' by climbing his stairs, netting him £2,000 for Forces charities so far.

He said: "I was inspired by Capt Tom Moore and I had a desire to give something back to some amazing charities."

Digging deep



FAIR PLAY: Gp Capt Phil Wadlow and Shawbury development officer Gail Moore

WORK IS underway building a youth centre for Forces families at Shawbury.

The new facilities will replace the previous community centre housed in a former accommodation block built in the 1930s.

Boris backs Jack's book

Simon Mander

AVIATION-MAD JACK Berry has received an award from the Prime Minister after illustrating a book on military aircraft.

The teenager, who has autism, won Boris Johnson's daily Points of Light accolade for his drawings of Lancaster bombers, Spitfires and Tornados in the work entitled *Flying High in the Sunlit Silence*.

And the 14-year-old's family, who do not have a military background, have given part of the proceeds to SSAFA's Forces Additional Needs and Disability Forum support group.

In a personal letter Mr Johnson said: "Every day I write to thank somebody in our country for doing something special. Today that person is you!"

"With your beautifully illustrated book, you have captured the majesty of our nation's aviation history. From the restored NHS Spitfire which lit up our skies with the names of NHS heroes, to the splendour of the Red Arrows, your pictures tell uplifting stories – all while raising important funds for SSAFA."

Jack's mum Sara said: "This is marvellous news for Jack, and he is over the moon. He just wanted to help people and do his part during the pandemic."

"Jack loves drawing, and his drawings have



TALENTED: 14-year-old Jack Berry's paintings of RAF WWII aircraft feature in a book released for charity; below, PM Boris Johnson

pulled communities together on the whole.

"The book is a community project, we have had a number of letters from war veterans and as his mum I think it's amazing that war veterans want to make friends with a child with autism spectrum disorder and selective mutism."

SSAFA chief executive Sir Andrew Gregory said: "Jack has inspired everybody he has come into contact with. I and all in SSAFA, the

Armed Forces charity, salute him." Jack's book can be bought online for just under £10.

Military personnel with a child with additional needs can get help at: ssafa.org.uk/get-help/disability-support/additional-needs-and-disability-support



RESTORATION: BBMF Lancaster

Antiques airshow

RESTORERS HAVE borrowed rare parts from a Canadian museum to repair the RAF's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Lancaster.

The news comes as the MoD was reported to have agreed a £1.4m contract to engineer and build a new tail plane for the 75-year-old bomber.

BBMF deputy chief engineer Wg Cdr Andy March said: "This project represents a huge technical challenge. No Lancaster tail planes have been built since the 1940s and many of the original materials and drawings are no longer available."

The parts are subject to a finite fatigue life and should be replaced at 6,330 flying hours from new, which the BBMF Lancaster is now approaching.

A set of tail planes from a Canadian museum aircraft have been borrowed to be used as patterns where there are no original drawings and at the end of the project they will be returned.

The work is being done in close collaboration with BAE, the successor to the Lancaster's original manufacturer Avro, and airframe experts from defence contractor QinetiQ.

"Some of the construction techniques, such as plug riveting, are unique to Avro designs of this era and will require technicians to employ their considerable experience of aircraft restoration projects," said Wg Cdr March.

The work is likely to take up to 18 months with the new tail planes scheduled to be fitted next winter.

The Lancaster is currently with the Aircraft Restoration Company at Duxford undergoing routine scheduled in-depth maintenance and should be back at Coningsby this summer.



Sun sets on Sentinel after 14 years targeting terror

Simon Mander

THE SENTINEL R1 surveillance aircraft has carried out its last operational flight after 14 years.

A veteran of campaigns in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya the RAF Waddington-based V Sqn fleet has flown 32,300 hours on 4,870 sorties during its Service life.

Five were acquired as an airborne stand-off radar to protect troops from the Taliban during Operation Herrick in 2008.

And on its recent return from counter Daesh missions on Op Shader in Syria and Iraq top brass praised its performance.

UK Joint Operations Commander Vice Admiral Sir Ben Key said: "Right to the end of its commission, V(AC) Sqn has been a constant among my deployed Force Elements. It is a record to be proud of."

Sentinel's longest flight of 12 hours and 30 minutes was

achieved on March 30, 2011 during Operation Ellamy – Britain's bid to topple Colonel Gaddafi's regime.

In addition to operations around the world the aircraft also assisted during the UK's flood emergency in southern England in 2014.

The Sentinel's withdrawal from service was first announced as part of the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Its reconnaissance role will now be carried out by Lossiemouth's Poseidon subhunters and Waddington's Protector UAVs, amongst others.

Wg Cdr Dominic 'Dutch' Holland said: "It has been an absolute privilege to have commanded V (AC) Sqn.

"It is a fantastic squadron, with wonderful people, that has delivered exceptional results on multiple operations across the globe."



I-STARS: V (AC) Sqn crew at Waddington after final flight in the Sentinel R1
PHOTO: SAC BEN STEVENSON



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News bulletin



ANNIVERSARY: Defence Secretary Ben Wallace and veteran WO Glenn Haughton

Tribute to Gulf fallen

DEFENCE SECRETARY Ben Wallace led tributes to the 47 British military personnel killed in the first Gulf War.

The conflict, which ended with a temporary ceasefire agreed on February 28, 1991, saw the largest deployment of UK forces since World War II with more than 53,000 joining the US-led Coalition to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi forces.

The first RAF aircraft arrived in Saudi Arabia on August 10, 1990 to begin Operation Granby and the force grew over the following months to include Tornados, Jaguars and Hercules transport planes based in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

After a six-week air campaign, on February 24, 1991 ground forces were given the green light to advance for a fight that lasted less than 100 hours.

Iraq veteran WO1 Glenn Haughton, who deployed as an 18-year-old Private in the Grenadier Guards, joined Mr Wallace at a wreath-laying ceremony at the Iraq and Afghanistan Memorial in London.



FUNDRAISERS: RAF Brize Norton 4624 Sqn team clocked up more than 600 miles for charity

Running total

BRIZE-BASED Reservists have clocked up more than 600 miles to support frontline medics at their local hospital battling Covid and in aid of Forces charity SSAFA.

The 4624 Sqn team hit the road to cover three miles each every day last month to smash their original fundraising target and net more than £2,000 for good causes.

Rivet takes control on Nato Baltic drill



AIRSPACE CONTROL: Rivet Joint surveillance aircraft comes in to land after Nato training sortie. *Inset left,* Boeing-built aircraft refuelling
PHOTO: SAC JAMES SKERRETT

Simon Mander

AN RAF surveillance aircraft has taken part in a major US-led exercise designed to beef up Nato firepower in the Baltic.

The Waddington-based 51 Sqn RC-135W Rivet Joint teamed up with American and Dutch forces

to conduct two warfighting scenarios.

The manoeuvres are part of the US National Defence Strategy and test and demonstrate Nato's ability to integrate command-and-control procedures in the air, at sea, on land, and in cyber and space activities, to rehearse for possible future operations.

ISTAR Force Deputy Commander

Gp Capt Jim Beldon said: "It is very important to be able to integrate an RC-135W Rivet Joint aircraft into this exercise.

"This system will merge information from a variety of sources, which enables commanders to react rapidly and decisively in dynamic operational situations."

Appeal to save Falklands War air icons as museum chiefs count cost of Covid

Simon Mander

ICONIC AIRCRAFT that played key roles in the Falklands War are to be featured in a new £1.7million centre at the Islands' museum.

They include one of the former 29 Sqn Phantoms which provided air cover for Harrier operations during the conflict and defended the overseas territory, and the last Search and Rescue Sea King used by the RAF in the South Atlantic.

However, plans are under threat from huge rises in shipping costs caused by the pandemic, leaving museum chiefs facing a £450,000 shortfall.

Andrea Barlow, Director of the Falkland Islands Museum and National Trust, said: "We have raised just over £1.2 million but the Covid pandemic has seen shipping costs increase by 68 per cent."

The new complex builds on the historic Dockyard Museum opened in 2014, which famously linked up with its honorary patron – former *Monty Python* star Sir Michael Palin – who researched his book, *Erebus*, there.



HISTORIC: Main, Chinook flies in Sea King; above, 29 Sqn Phantom pilot Ian McFady lands during Falklands conflict; inset right, reunited with the airframe at the museum in 2016

He said: "The Historic Dockyard Museum is a well-designed, well-run, friendly place with an awful lot

of history to learn about and enjoy. "I found the staff exceptionally helpful when I was researching

my book on HMS Erebus and I felt that they were working to an ambitiously high standard."

The current museum is cramped, has no available storage and can show only a selection of the smaller items from its extensive collection, with reserve items kept in cardboard boxes stacked up in a rented building not fit for purpose.

The new building will showcase large vehicles of significant importance including the ex-RAF Sea King, a Sea Harrier and Lynx helicopter recently pledged by the Ministry of Defence.

It will feature exhibitions dedicated to the Task Force and the effects of PTSD.

So far £1.2 million of the £1.7m cost of the project has been raised with £750,000 from the Falklands Islands Government and £200,000 from the Friends of the Falklands Islands Museum.

● To donate to the appeal, visit givingain.com/c/fimnt/about

WE SERVED WITH PRIDE

Recognition for mistreated gay ex-Forces personnel

ALTHOUGH THE government's recent decision to allow Armed Forces veterans dismissed for being gay to apply for their medals back has been warmly welcomed, many feel a great deal more needs to be done for a community of veterans who feel they were treated uniquely harshly.

Many LGBT+ veterans who were stripped of their careers solely because of their sexual orientation and gender identity still feel hurt and humiliated by the way they were treated. They have shunned veterans charities, groups and organisations, according to the charity Fighting With Pride (FWP).

Carl Austin-Behan understands their reservations. He was on the verge of promotion and signing on for 22 years service when he was dismissed because he was gay.

Carl, formerly an SAC fireman, said: "Many veterans may not want the medals back, they feel so disgusted at the way they were treated by the government and were made to feel worthless.

"Last year was the 20th anniversary of lifting the ban. It took 20 years for the government to apologise and 21 years for them to say you can have your medals back. It's not enough, a lot more needs to be done.

"The veterans who were dismissed with nothing deserve compensation and to have their pensions reinstated. There is a duty of care under the Armed Forces Covenant that needs to be addressed. It's about dignity, about respect and about what's right."

Now a successful businessman, Carl joined the Air Force aged 19 and served for six years. He was awarded a CINC's Commendation and a Bronze medal from the Royal Humane Society for rescuing a pilot from a burning aircraft at



FLYING THE FLAG: RAF personnel take part in a London Gay Pride event pre-Covid

RAF Chivenor in 1992.

Before the policy changed on January 12, 2000, LGBT+ Service personnel were banned from serving in the UK Armed Forces. If found to be gay, military personnel could be sent to jail for up to six months.

In April 1997, six months after coming out to his family back home in Manchester, Carl was called to a meeting with senior RAF staff and the RAF Police and asked if he had homosexual tendencies.

He said: "I just froze. They asked me again and I just burst into tears. In that split second, I knew my life had completely changed."

He said: "The Police went

through your stuff, your clothes, photographs, to try to find if anyone else was implicated in any way. People were hunted down and that was wrong. It wrecked lives."

Carl was stripped of his medals and given just an hour to collect his belongings.

He said: "I was marched off the camp. They led me to believe that I could have gone to military prison."

Carl was told he avoided prison because of his exemplary service.

Having initially signed on for 12 years, he was about to extend his service to 22 years and had been recommended for promotion.

He said: "I did a lot in six years.

After basic training at Swinderby, and trade training at Manston, I was posted to Chivenor, then Belize for six months, then Henlow, Ascension Island for nine months, then Honington. I also did a six-week tour at Akrotiri.

"To get promotion in my trade back then with just six years service was unheard of. I loved the life and I wanted to make a career in the Air Force. It was my dream to becoming a commissioned officer and I was on track to achieve my dream."

Carl was also doing a lot of secondary duties, including working with SSAFA. Through SSAFA he had been invited to a Buckingham Palace garden party, but was banned from working with the charity after admitting he was gay and informed by the RAF that he could not wear his medal.

He said: "I had a letter from the RAF to cease involvement with SSAFA and was ordered not to attend the garden party."

After his RAF service Carl first ended up stacking shelves at night in Asda before joined the Greater Manchester Fire Service for 18 months. He then set up a promotions company. In 2008 he joined Greater Manchester Police LGBT Independent Advisory Group and two years later set up a cleaning company with his business partner, which he still runs.

Carl got involved in local politics, initially as a city councillor. He became the first openly gay Lord Mayor of Manchester in 2016. Three years later

he was awarded a Doctorate from the University of Bolton for services to the community, and appointed LGBT Advisor to the Mayor of Greater Manchester.

In December 2019 Carl was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of The County of Greater Manchester and in 2020 awarded an OBE for services to charity, LGBTQ+ equality and to the community.

He said he still has huge respect for the Armed Forces and is proud of his RAF service.

He added: "It was the government that set the legislation. I still have recurring dreams all the time about rejoining the RAF. It is a matter of pride that right now, the British Armed Forces are probably the most inclusive in the world."

Carl is a trustee of FWP, created on the 20th anniversary of the complete lifting of the ban on LGBT+ service. FWP supports LGBT+ veterans, serving personnel and their families, particularly those who were affected by the 'gay ban'.

He said "FWP is here to restoring the military covenant to the LGBT+ veterans community and bring this incredible community of LGBT+ veterans back into the military family."

■ Go to: fightingwithpride.org.uk for more information.



REDS: Pride flypast role

Uni bid to improve support for LGBT+ vets

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY and Fighting With Pride have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a shared mission of transforming support for LGBT+ veterans.

The partnership between the university's Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research and FWP is the first of its kind in the UK.

The agreement marks the university and the charity's intention to work together on research and consultancy projects to influence national policy and service delivery of support for the LGBT+ veterans community.

It is not known exactly how many military personnel had their careers ended as a result of the 'gay ban', but it is thought to be thousands.

Northumbria University and FWP's work will be closely supported by SSAFA.

Dr Matt Kiernan, Associate Professor of Mental Health

and Veteran Studies at Northumbria University and a former Lt Cdr in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service, said: "With hindsight it is quite astonishing to consider that in the last years of the 20th century we were still prosecuting and dishonourably discharging members of the British Armed Forces for no other reason than who they chose to love, or who they chose to be.

"The work we are about to undertake is long overdue, as we must strive to understand the long-term emotional, psychological and financial impact the actions of the ban had on this hard to reach, hidden population of veterans."

Caroline Paige and Craig Jones, joint chief executives of FWP, added: "The treatment of our LGBT+ veterans

has been a national disgrace for which there has been no remedy, or reparations. Many were left unsupported and fell on hard times. Disassociated from the military they became isolated and often discarded by family. For many individuals, the circumstances, methods, and consequences of dismissal precipitated debilitating mental health issues.

"FWP is working with the government, NHS and charitable organisations to bring the LGBT+ veterans community into the protection of the Armed Forces Covenant and welcome them back to the military family."



FWP CO-CHIEF: Caroline Paige



SERVICE: Businessman Carl Austin-Behan; inset left, when he was the Lord Mayor of Manchester

YOUNG SAC: Carl Austin-Behan

Announcements

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- P8

Win!



**Win: ● TV
hit on Blu-ray
and DVD p4**

R'n'R



Animal magic – Chris Packham ● p 4-5



HM Government

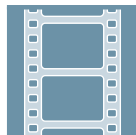
NHS

Every day at home is making a difference

By staying home we're helping stop the spread of Covid-19, because the less we go out, the less likely we'll come into contact with the virus.

Let's keep going

**STAY HOME
PROTECT
THE NHS
SAVE LIVES**



Film Review Gatecrash (15)

On digital download (Birdbox)

Pair crash and burn

A COUPLE arrive home from a party screaming at one another, blaming each other for the hit-and-run that just took place, but judgement will soon find them both in this domestic thriller.

Steve (Ben Cura) was driving, after maybe having a few too many drinks, but what is evident is that they were fighting already at the point of hitting a man in the middle of a country road. Piecing together information from their heated exchange, it seems that this might not even have been an accident.

Seen from the perspective of abused wife Nicole (Olivia Bonamy), we witness through quick cuts Steve's denial, guilt, rage and remorse.

Aside from this early flurry of editing, *Gatecrash* is clearly adapted from a stage production, a Pinteresque morality play that tilts into unnerving horror as soon as other characters come knocking.

Primarily taking place in the couple's home, modern and minimally designed, it allows the cast to pace around and command

the space. This is certainly true for the first visitor, a policeman (Samuel West) who arrives at the property shortly after their return, following a report of strange activity. Suspicious and inquisitive, his predatory performance grows larger and more pronounced as the cracks begin to show.

It is Sid (Anton Lesser), the visitor of the second half, who brings a different tactic altogether. Gentle and downplayed, he draws you in, evoking a much deeper paranoia as you double guess his



DISTANT: The warring couple struggle to keep up their deceit in front of unwelcome visitors

intentions. A gracious house guest, he allows both Steve and Nicole to incriminate themselves, a chess game envisioned through their manoeuvring around the spacious kitchen.

The camera work helps to direct focus, to interrogate Nicole's complicity as she watches her partner lie, to see the barely

contained violence in Steve's accusatory glances.

A simple but twisty story that has some confusing turns at its climax, *Gatecrash* is gripping for the most part, able to pull tension from an event that occurs before the film even begins.

3 out of 5 rounds ●●●

Review by Sam Cooney

Travis flexing the plastic once more

Debut album vinyl reissue

SCOTTISH ROCKERS Travis's 1997 debut album *Good Feeling* will be reissued on vinyl in its original format next month.

The LP was produced by Steve Lillywhite (U2, The Rolling Stones, Morrissey, Peter Gabriel) who teased out the anthemic hooks of the group's debut single, *All I Want to Do is Rock*, and helped them craft their breakthrough hit *More Than Us*, which went Top 20 in the spring of 1998.

Taking Travis into the Top 10 of the UK album charts, *Good Feeling* also included the Top 40 singles *U16 Girls*, *Happy* and *Tied to the 90's*.

“*Good Feeling* was hailed as one of the debuts of the year by legendary music critic Andy Gill”

Frontman Fran Healy (second from left in black and white picture and far right in colour picture) said: “In December 1996, just out of Woodstock in Upstate New York, Travis assembled in the legendary Bearsville Studios with the legendary producer Steve Lillywhite to begin recording their debut album *Good Feeling*. “Hailed at the time as one of the



BOYS TO MEN: Travis in 1997 and today

debut of the year by the legendary music critic Andy Gill, *Good Feeling* is us at our rawest. We're extremely happy to be reissuing it on vinyl.”

As well as 180-gram heavyweight black vinyl, an exclusive limited-edition red vinyl version is available for pre-order via the Travis official store and UK independent record shops.

The band have also announced rescheduled 2022 UK tour dates. Visit travisonline.com for details.



GB Menu's Khoo coup

CHEF Rachel Khoo, who amassed a loyal fan base through the BBC series *Little Paris Kitchen*, has joined *Great British Menu* as the TV competition's new judge.

Her appointment comes as Andi Oliver reprises her role of presenter for a second series. Andi, a judge on the show for four series, left her seat at the judging table to present the festive special in December and will continue to guide audiences through the heat of the kitchen in series 16.

Rachel (below) joins long-standing judges Matthew Fort and Oliver Peyton. The judging panel will be completed by a different guest each week.

Rachel said: “I am delighted to be taking on the role of judge. We have some extraordinary chefs in the UK and the programme does a great job of showcasing that homegrown talent.”

Series 16 of *Great British Menu* is set to be its most inventive yet, said the BBC. With 2021 marking the 30th anniversary of Sir Timothy Berners-Lee's world wide web, as well as Helen Sharman becoming the first British astronaut to go into space, chefs from across the UK will showcase their culinary creativity through dishes celebrating British innovation.

Taking inspiration from early inventors in the world of computing, right through to modern-day medical pioneers, the chefs will have to prove their originality and technical flair to be in with the chance of serving their creations at the GBM banquet.

■ *Great British Menu* returns to BBC Two later this month.





Music

Tour news

Soul II Soul, The Stranglers, Nathan Evans & Queen

Evans above, I made it

FOLLOWING THE huge success of his *Wellerman* sea shanty, TikTok star Nathan Evans has announced a UK and Ireland tour for later this year.

It kicks off on December 1 in Dublin with dates scheduled throughout the UK including Manchester and London, with a final show in Glasgow.

Nathan (pictured) said: "I cannot tell you how excited I am to announce these tour dates to you guys. This

has been my dream since I was six years old."

Nathan, from Airdrie, North Lanarkshire in Scotland, shot to stardom after uploading songs to TikTok after completing his morning duties as a postman.

Now, signed to Universal Music, he has famous fans including Andrew Lloyd Webber, Gary Barlow and Queen's Brian May, who have also uploaded their own renditions of *Wellerman* to TikTok.

■ Go to: livenation.co.uk for tour details.

Stranglehold



THE LEGENDARY Stranglers (above) have also had to reschedule their tour yet again, to 2022.

The band, whose classic hits include *No More Heroes*, *Peaches* and *Golden Brown*, said: "We are, once again, incredibly saddened to confirm that we have had no alternative but to reschedule the planned 2021 spring tour. This decision has not been taken lightly, especially as the tour has already been moved back."

■ Go to: thestranglers.co.uk for more information.



QUEEN: UK tour rescheduled again

Queen set to rule in 2022

QUEEN ARE once again having to postpone the UK and European dates of their *Rhapsody* world tour.

They were originally set to tour here last summer but had to postpone the dates to 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic, now they have had to reschedule to 2022.

Singer Adam Lambert said: "There's no possible way the tour can go ahead as planned for this year. The prospect of again not being able to look forward to performing and getting to experience those wonderful audiences is just heartbreaking."

The band have announced a new and expanded set of 2022 dates which will now kick off in the UK with two shows at the AO Arena Manchester on May 30 and 31. Two extra UK shows are planned at The SSE Hydro, Glasgow on June 2 and 3.

The full list of the now 29 rescheduled shows will, as before, include a marathon 10-night residency at The O2, London.

The band's previously scheduled 13 mainland Europe shows now follow the UK dates throughout late June and July.

■ Go to: queenonline.com for more information.

Soul II Soul Back To Live

ONE OF Britain's top bands has announced rescheduled tour dates as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Soul II Soul will complete a 15-date UK tour in 2022, starting on January 21 in Cardiff and finishing at London's Royal Albert Hall on April 18.

The band's frontman Jazzie B said: "Who would have thought that after 30-odd years we'd still be on the road with this thing? It's been a helluva journey – literally – and I feel truly blessed."

During the course of their stellar career the band have sold more than 10 million albums worldwide and Jazzie B was awarded an OBE for services to music in 2008, as well as an Ivor Novello Award for Inspiration, as "the man who gave British black music a soul of its own".

With huge hits including *Keep On Movin'* and the UK number one single *Back To Life (However Do You Want Me)*, Soul II Soul progressed from



TOUR DATES:
Jazzie B (right)
and Caron
Wheeler

being one of the leaders of the 1980s warehouse scene to pioneering British black music around the world.

■ Go to: soul2soul.co.uk for tour details.



Competition

Talking Heads (18)

Out now on Blu-ray, DVD & digital (Dazzler Media)



Bennett masterpieces

THE CRITICALLY-acclaimed, star-studded series *Talking Heads* is just out on Blu-ray and DVD and we have copies to win.

Alan Bennett's multi-award-winning monologues first aired on BBC TV in 1988 and 1998, breaking new ground for television.

Ten of the original pieces have been remade, with the addition of two new monologues written by Bennett in 2019. These remakes feature some of Britain's biggest television and film stars, including Jodie Comer, Martin Freeman, Kristin Scott Thomas, Tamsin Greig,

Maxine Peake, Lesley Manville and Imelda Staunton.

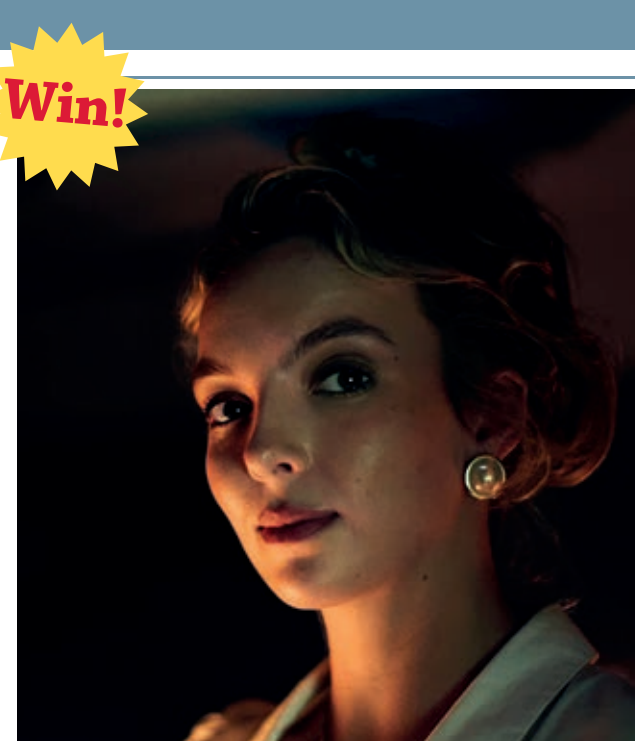
For your chance to own a copy of the series just tell us:

When did *Talking Heads* first air on BBC TV?

Email your answer, marked Talking Heads competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE to arrive by March 26. Entrants must be over 18.

Please mark on your entry whether you prefer to win a copy on Blu-ray or DVD.

KILLING IT: *Killing Eve* star Jodie Comer is one of the talented *Talking Heads*



Competition

The Investigation (15)

Out now on DVD and digital (Dazzler Media)



Fight to nail sub murderer

ACCLAIMED DANISH filmmaker Tobias Lindholm, the director of hit thriller *Mindhunter* and writer of top political drama *Borgen*, is the writer and director of BBC series *The Investigation*, based on a true story.

The brooding drama covers the six-month investigation into how and why Swedish journalist Kim Wall was murdered on a submarine where she was interviewing the eccentric inventor who had built it.

Dogged policing sees the case finally brought to justice, but only after much obfuscation from the killer and seemingly insurmountable obstacles in the gathering of evidence.

In what is to become his final investigation,

determined detective Jens Møller (Søren Malling, *The Killing*, *Borgen*) never gives up, and forms close ties with the victims family, spurring him to seek justice.

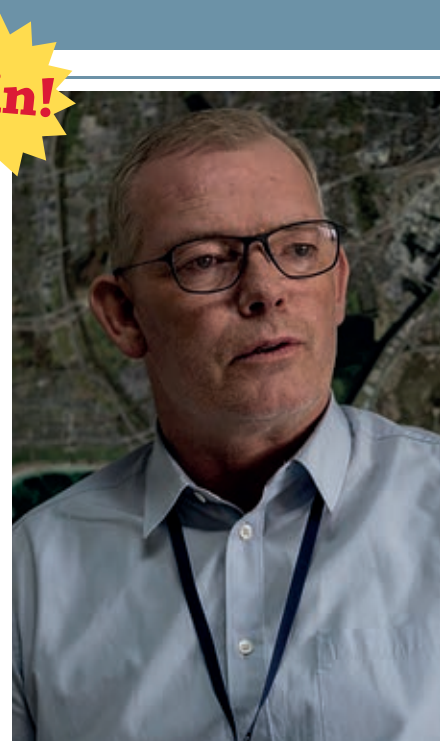
This authentic, harrowing and carefully-crafted story launched to become Denmark's highest-rated new crime drama and has earned rave reviews worldwide.

We have a copy on DVD up for grabs. To be in with a chance of winning it, tell us:

Who wrote and directed *The Investigation*?

Email your answer, marked Investigation DVD competition to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk or post it to our usual address on p3 to arrive by March 26.

FINAL CASE: Søren Malling as detective Jens Møller



The Big Event

Chris Packham's Animal Einsteins

You raven beauty...

Brainy Bran's no flake

LIFE IN the natural world is tough. Animals need to find food, create a safe home, attract a mate, raise a family and the most important of all – avoid being eaten.

In *Chris Packham's Animal Einsteins* viewers meet nature's savviest species who show that brainpower, ingenuity and clever tactics are just as important as brawn in the daily battle for survival.

With the help of experts, experiments and the very latest science, Packham shines a light on some of the smartest creatures and looks at what has led them to develop such talents.

Each 60-minute episode explores a very different skill, and showcases the animals that have honed that skill to perfection.

What's the most unusual skill or technique Packham saw the animals on this series displaying?

"I think I'd go for the Mourning Cuttlefish; they make half of their body look like a female and then they can sneak past another male, it's just unbelievably cheeky," he said. "It's so sneaky and so brilliant that they have the capacity to change their colouration to mimic the opposite sex, for me that was just joyous."

The popular TV presenter and naturalist said: "There are quite a lot of wow moments. There are stories that are going to stop people in their tracks and get them to completely rethink the way they probably consider other animals' intelligence. The reason for that is there's a lot of good new science.

Given the advances in technology we have,

this has led our scientists to have a wide range of access to understand species' behaviour. It's really simple things sometimes, like the type of monitoring equipment we have. While we previously had suspicions, we are now able to prove those using the contemporary technology."

Packham, also a nature photographer and author, added: "I'm very fortunate in that my life is an ongoing learning experiment and I enjoy learning new things about animals, plants, life. Sometimes people imagine it's because you get to travel places – not at the moment obviously – or you get to meet the animals. But really it's not, it's meeting people who know more about them than I do. They effectively just tell me everything they know about that species and that topic. It's like a rolling series of lectures."

He explained: "Part of the challenge of this series was to say to people, and we repeatedly stress this, that you cannot use the same parameters for animals that we use to measure our own intelligence. They are just not applicable. The most significant example of that is perhaps the self-awareness with dogs using smell rather than sight, because a lot of dog owners

will know that they are, relatively speaking, an intelligent animal, but they don't have what we

have. We've previously never thought they had a sense of self, in the sense that they know each other and other dogs as individuals. I've always had suspicions because this is such a long-lived social animal. An experiment done in the series, which involves moving a dog's urine around its range, seemed to show they do have a sense of self."

Chris cited the raven as the most intelligent of all the animals he encountered in the series.

He said: "The first time Bran the raven tackled a challenge it hadn't seen before it took it about a minute and 15 seconds and the second time about 45 seconds. What we didn't show in the episode was that once the raven had figured it out, it just kept doing it again and again and again, because it was getting the reward."

"After about four goes it was doing it in about 15 seconds. So it's not only that it has the capacity to solve the problem initially, it can also hone its problem-solving ability so it could do it more effectively. To see that in real time, every time it did the test it sort of halved the amount of time that it took, was just amazing. I like ravens very much."

He added: "I like animals that are better at doing things than we are. You show the chimpanzees something for a fraction of a second and then in a fraction of a space of time their short-term memory is so strong they're able to relocate all the things you've just shown them."

"Even things like budgies, everyone thinks of them as a little caged bird your



TOOL SKILLS:
Young chimpanzee
uses a stick to
forage for insects
in Gombe National
Park, Tanzania
PHOTO: ANUP
SHAH

MEMORY FEAT:
Western scrub-jays (below) in USA
hide and remember the location of
up to 6,000 acorns each year
PHOTO: ROLF NUSSBAUMER



MOORING GLORY: Half-made-up Chris shows his feminine side, like the cunning male cuttlefish (inset) does. Above, Packham with clever-clogs raven Bran (PHOTO: LUCY BOWDEN)



Your Announcements

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

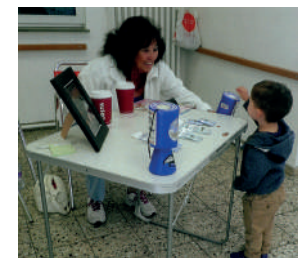
Death

IT is with great sorrow that I inform you of the death of Faith Grace Isted on March 23, 2020. Faith was a much-loved member of the RAF Bruggen/Elmpt station community, 1985-2015. She was a member of both churches, St Andrew's and St Nicholas, and played her part in the congregations to its fullest. She was a Brownie pack leader, and was a Sunday School teacher at St Andrew's, again with the children she loved.



Faith Grace Isted

Faith was a keen sponsor of the successful RAF Bruggen Catering Squadron football team. She worked at the Big House and was a founding member of the Rheindalen branch of the Royal British Legion, also a member of the Royal Air Force Association and over many years collected hundreds of pounds for both charities. She is sorely missed by her three children, 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. She really was Amazing Grace. RIP. Dennis Case.



Cpl John Murphy

I am looking for background

Seeking



Reginald Fuller

I am grateful for any information about Reginald J. Fuller, Service Number: 2221635 with the RAF. He was a British engineer in my father's Canadian crew in 1944 and 1945, at Tholthorpe, Yorkshire with 28 operations completed before war's end. It's clear that he was talented, admired, and a great asset to the crew, but when allied members immediately returned to Canada, they lost touch. I would be so very happy to hear from anyone who might know Mr Fuller's family and ultimately help me to conclude a story that pays tribute equally for his contributions. Please email: denis.thievin@gmail.com

information on my father Cpl John J Murphy, who served in the RAF from 1947 to 1978, with a small break in the 1950s. He did tours in Africa and also in Northern Ireland in the 1960s. He passed away, aged 90, in February, 2020. Unfortunately, I know very little about him and am trying to track down any information about his early life and family. I believe he was born in Ireland, that his father worked for the Belfast Shipping Company and in the 1960s he was married to Shirley, but know almost nothing else. Please email me on: thebrookners@aol.com if you have any information that could help.

BOY Entrants 45th Ground Wireless. Tracing the above for a reunion in York, June 2021. 57 out of 107 traced with, sadly, 12 deaths. Contact suddesr@aol.com

Reunions

DID you serve at RAF Changi or HQFEAF Singapore? The RAF Changi Association (inc. HQFEAF). Founded May 1996 welcomes new Members from all ranks ex RAF/WRAF/WAAF and civilian personnel who served at RAF Changi (inc. HQFEAF) during 1946-72. For more information please contact our Membership Secretary: Malcolm Flack on 01494 728562 or email: MemSecChangi@outlook.com or visit: www.rafchangi.com for more details.

SINGAPORE Armed Forces Reunion. Were you seconded from the RAF to the SAF at RAF Tengah between 1971-75? If so please contact Peter Priscott for a 50th anniversary reunion in August. Email: peterpriscott@aol.com or call: 01842 878554.

RAF Bawdsey Reunion Association. Having

cancelled our 2020 reunion, we were planning the next reunion for June 5 2021, but the continuing Covid-19 restrictions make it impossible to hold a successful reunion for our members, so the June 5 event is cancelled. A consensus showed that members were not in favour of a reunion in September 2021 therefore we have provisionally planned the next reunion for Saturday May 21, 2022, before The Queen's Jubilee celebrations and the extended public holidays in early June, and we look forward to seeing our friends again then. In the meantime we wish you all a safe and healthy time as the roadmap out of lockdown progresses. If you have any queries please email: doreen.bawdseyreunion@btinternet.com or call: 07513 301723.

Apprentices' Assoc

ARE you a Trenchard Brat who did your training at RAF Halton? Maybe you were trained at No. 1 S of TT RAF Cosford or at RAF Cranwell? Some Brats were trained at other RAF training schools, many were Boy Entrants trained at RAF Cosford or St Athan. We were known throughout the RAF as the Trenchard BRATS. Our Association, The RAF Halton Apprentices' Association, (The Old Haltonians) welcomes you all. Check us out via our website 'Old Haltonians' and then contact us at: membership@rafhaa.co.uk for further details.

Admin Association

THE RAF Administrative Apprentice Association welcomes all Administrative apprentices who trained as Suppliers or Clerks at RAF St Athan, RAF Bircham Newton, RAF Halton, RAF Ruislip or RAF Hereford. Go to: rafadappassn.org for further details.

Catering Association

SERVING and Retired Catering WOs and FSs plus former Catering Officers are welcome to full membership. For further information and an application form please email Eddie Jones: janedjones6@btinternet.com; or you can call: 01480 823480; Facebook: RAFCWO&SA.

Window on church project's progress

THE CONSTRUCTION of the RAF Scampton commemorative window is going well, says project co-ordinator Joe Bartrop. "Claire Williamson, our talented window designer, is keeping us up to date with every stage in the construction process," he said. "She recently shared some more photographs with our leadership team at Scampton Church."

Joe added: "A huge thank you to all our sponsors and supporters, and to everyone who responded to our recent appeal, to address the issues relating to our 'RAF Church' building being listed on the English Heritage 'At Risk' register."

Local minister Rev Sue Deacon said: "We would like to purchase an oak lectern, have it cleaned and repolished, and have the RAF 'Per Ardua Ad Astra' badge with the King's crown carved into the bookshelf."

"This would reflect the RAF badge carved into Commonwealth War

Grave headstones in the churchyard.

"The lectern would be placed directly under the RAF Scampton commemorative window and would display the leather-bound commemorative book."

"Our thanks go out to everyone who has sponsored a pane of glass, and written a dedication. There are some wonderful and very touching personal stories."

Rev Deacon added: "Claire is kindly sending photographs of the window's construction as it develops. These photographs show the finalising of the base glass for the tracery sections of the windows."

"The pictures show more base glass cutting. Each shape will reflect the panels to be shown on the sponsorship 'key'."

"When complete, a sponsorship 'key' with numbered panels will form the index of the commemorative book."

■ Go to: scamptonchurch.org for more details.



HIGHLIGHTING HISTORY: The window under construction in artist Claire Williamson's studio

Recipes to make Mum's day

MOTHERING SUNDAY is on March 19 and the War Widows' Cookery Book could make a suitable gift. It costs £5, plus £2 package and postage, and every penny raised will benefit members of the War Widows' Association.

Go to: warwidows.org.uk to order a copy of the book, fill in the form and pay by bank transfer. Or you can send a cheque to: PO Box 29265, Dunfermline, Fife, KY12 2FH. Contact: remembrance@warwidows.co.uk for more information.



Your Announcements

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24-HOUR CHALLENGE: Rugby 7s members are fundraising for the RAF Museum

Rugby 7s make a day of it

SINCE THE RAF Museum launched its Lancaster Challenge in January, more than 4,700 participants worldwide have used the virtual event as motivation to keep them moving during lockdown.

You can choose whether to complete 80K, 150K, or 500K in celebration of the 80th anniversary of the first flight of the Lancaster.

Now members of the RAF Rugby 7s team will be taking the challenge to new heights when they attempt to complete more than 500K in

just 24 hours. While most of the team members are already clocking up the kilometres – by walking, running and cycling their way through the start of 2021 – on May 21 two teams of RAF Rugby 7s players will undertake the mammoth task of competing day and night, by foot or in the saddle, to complete their 500K challenge in 24 hours.

A cycling team will set off from the RAF Museum Cosford in Shropshire, pedalling the 135km route to the Derwent Reservoir,

Derbyshire, where they will join the running team completing relay laps of the reservoir, and will continue together for the rest of the challenge.

The reservoir has significance for the Lancaster as it was selected by the RAF's celebrated 617 Squadron to perform low-level practise sorties in the bomber in preparation for Operation Chastise and the use of 'bouncing bombs'.

■ Visit the Rugby 7s JustGiving page to support them.

Museum's reopening plans



PLANE-LOVER'S PARADISE: Newark Air Museum

NEWARK AIR MUSEUM (NAM) has announced its 'roadmap to reopening' once lockdown restrictions are eased.

The museum, in Nottinghamshire, is hoping to be able to open its outside display areas from April 12.

There are plans to open its external displays three days a week, typically Friday, Saturday and Sunday, starting on April 16. This will be at a reduced admission rate to reflect the reduced number of exhibits that can be seen, said a NAM spokesman.

The museum shop will also reopen under the changes to non-essential retail and a take-out service will be offered from the café.

After an assessment of aircraft conditions, the museum will instigate a cleaning programme for external exhibits – it is anticipated this will take place in early

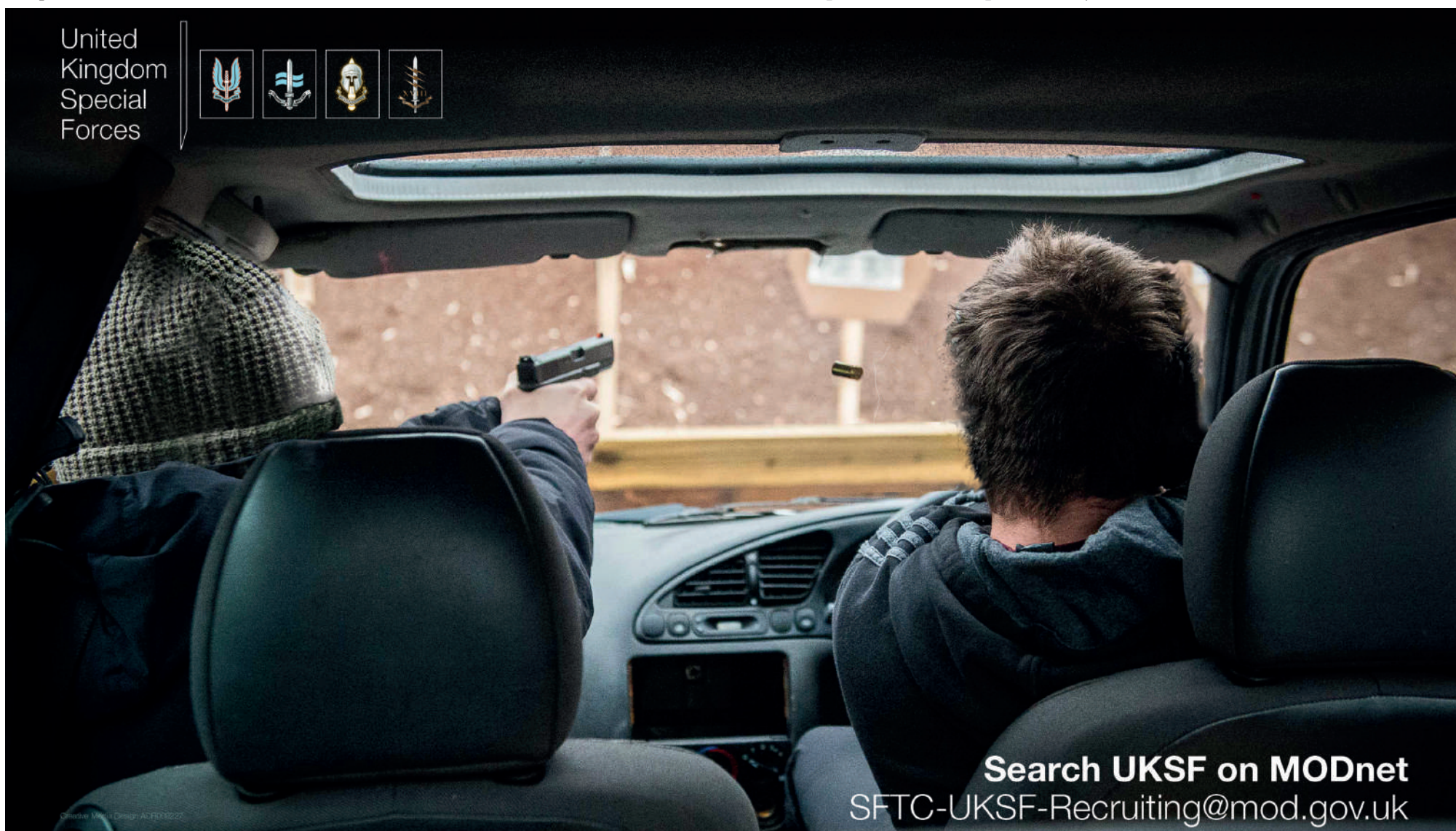
April, while working to the expected 'rule of six' regulations.

The NAM aims to open its internal displays from May 17, in line with the relevant Covid-secure regulations which may be subject to change, the spokesman added. He said: "Sadly, the museum has already cancelled the Cold War Call-Up event that was planned for May."

An Outdoor Aeroboot/Aerobounce will be organised for July 3 and the Cockpit-Fest 21 and Aeroboot event has been rescheduled for the Bank Holiday weekend of August 28-30.

The spokesman said: "Please be aware all of these proposals are subject to change. See our website and Social Media feeds for regular updates."

■ Go to: newarkairmuseum.org for more information.



United Kingdom Special Forces



Search UKSF on MODnet
SFTC-UKSF-Recruiting@mod.gov.uk

How to use our service

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

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Prize Crossword

No. 292

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

Across

7. Power-grab by the French duo (6)
8. Simple character meets last svelte Frenchwoman (6)
10. Du Beke and I duck merchant (7)
11. Darling heroine (5)
12. Initially cautious, Harold oversees precious harvest (4)
13. Frenchman and the Italian take article to city (5)
17. Maybe Long Island Mafia put in cold storage (5)
18. Asian ingredient to infuse heart (4)
22. 100 bolt to timekeeper (5)
23. Is bloke upset by needle? (7)
24. In Donmar, Hamlet finds his station (6)
25. Heartlessly needing improved aeroplane part (6)

Down

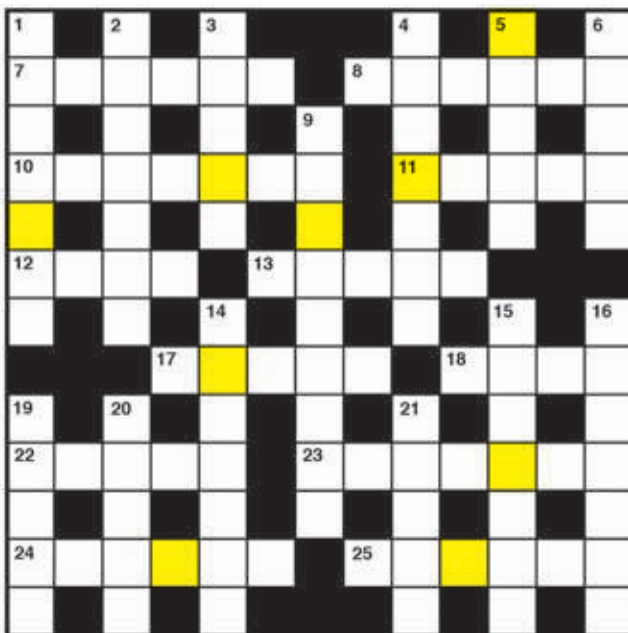
1. Scottish chart disfigured by mark (7)
2. Where lots go under the hammer (7)
3. 21, in short, on street vehicle (5)
4. See 5 Down
5. And 4 Down. Allowing many upset by uncrewed prototype (5,7)
6. A number of points about First Lady (5)
9. Is no combo affected by aerial explosion (5,4)
14. 2000 Operation bearing milk spilled around North America (7)
15. Second 'Twelfth Night' character reached country...(7)
16. ...pastry king gave Bottom somewhere to sleep (4,3)
19. Cheeky monkey operated swindle on Peterhead (5)
20. Shakespeare has nothing against directors (5)
21. Girl is writer from Big Apple (5)

Name

Address

RAF aircraft..... Crossword No. 292

The winners of Prize Crossword 291 and Prize Su Doku 301 will be published in our March 26 edition. Send entries to the address printed in the adjacent Su Doku panel.



■ The winner of Crossword No. 291 is Richard Foster of Rutland

Solution to Crossword No. 291:

Across – 6. Sorties 7. Radar 9. SPEAR 10. Voyager 12. Desert Storm 14. Civvy Street 18. Flypast 19. Acorn 21. Tsars 22. Landing

Down – 1. Corps 2. Strafe 3. Jet 4. Basalt 5. Madeira 8. Pottery 11. Persist 13. Aimless 15. Vipers 16. Escudo 17. Frank 20. Lax

RAF word – Formation



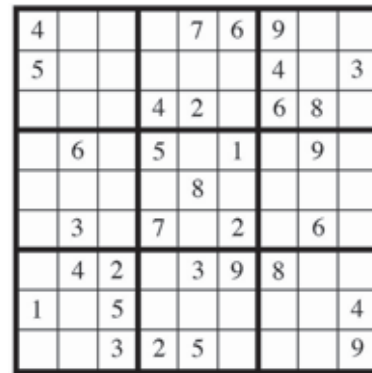
Prize Su Doku

No. 302

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 March 26.

■ The winner of Su Doku No. 301 is Paul Carruthers of Pickering, North Yorkshire



Name

Address

..... Su Doku No. 302

Solution to Su Doku No: 301



Film Review

Dreams on Fire (15+)

On digital as part of Glasgow Film Festival (glasgowfilm.org)

Yume's led a merry dance

YOUNG AND impassioned Yume (Bambi Naka) leaves her home in the country for a literal box room in Tokyo to pursue her dream of becoming a dancer, finding that compromise and persistence are necessary to achieve any kind of success.

Needing money to pay the rent and for dance classes, she falls into a job as a costumed hostess, providing company to leering clientele, who ply her with drinks and make insistent sexual advances. With a boss just as lurid and untrustworthy, her desire to dance becomes ever-urgent as a means of escape.

The first time we see Yume on her own, she is watching an underground dance battle. She holds herself uncomfortably, pulling at her sleeves, until volunteering to take part, when her nervous twitches become robotic, synchronising with the music; but she has a way to go yet.

And the journey will run a lot stranger than anticipated, plunging into Japanese subcultures



DANCING QUEEN: Yume (Bambi Naka) lets rip on the dance floor, and thoughtful, inset

of fetish clubs and go-go dancing. She will befriend strangers, each imparting their own bumper-sticker mantras, but their support is earnest, and the message of female solidarity is heartfelt.

The competitions, auditions and job opportunities become a little repetitious, but the dips into different scenes open up temporary portals that are hypnotising.

An array of dance styles, set to witchy Russian electronica or UK drum and bass, soaked in the green

and red neon of a nightclub or in a latex bar transport to a place much darker than expected but it remains playful.

When it seems like it might be frightening for our fragile protagonist, you realise that she is excited and enthralled – this is the dream.

Dreams on Fire has more edge than it first lets on, and though the story is side-tracked by a string of dance sequences, the style and soundtrack make each more exciting than the last.

4 out of 5 roundels

Review by Sam Cooney



Competition

Cry Freedom (15)

Out now on DVD and Blu-ray (Fabulous Films Ltd/Fremantle Media Enterprises)

Win!

Acclaimed film tells of Biko's apartheid fight

DIRECTOR RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH'S adaptation of Donald Woods' book about black activist Stephen Biko (Denzel Washington), head of the Black Consciousness Movement, is now available on DVD and Blu-ray. The tension and terror of a recent South Africa is powerfully portrayed in this acclaimed film.

Cry Freedom tells the story of the unforgettable friendship of Woods and Biko. After learning of apartheid's true horrors through Biko's eyes, liberal white newspaper editor Donald Woods (Kevin Kline) discovers that his friend has been silenced by the police. Determined not to let Biko's message go unheard, Woods undertakes a perilous quest to escape South Africa and bring Biko's tale of courage to the world.

Washington was Oscar-nominated for his role. The film also features Penelope Wilton as Wendy Woods, John Thaw, Timothy West, Julian Glover, Ian

Richardson and Josette Simon.

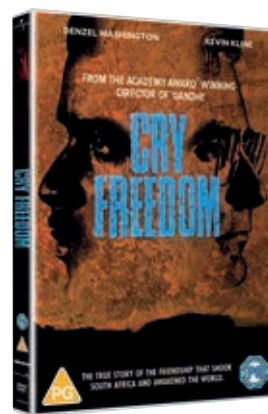
Woods lived in exile for 13 years, giving 462 lectures at universities and colleges in America alone; he briefed 37 western governments about apartheid and was invited to address the UN Security Council.

A statue of Biko was erected in South Africa in 1997 with donations from Denzel Washington, Kevin Kline, Peter Gabriel (who wrote the anti-apartheid song Biko in 1980) and entrepreneur Richard Branson. The money was donated at the behest of Woods.

We have copies of *Cry Freedom* on DVD to win. For your chance to own one, simply tell us:

Who plays Donald Woods in the film?

Email your answer, marked Cry Freedom DVD competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by March 26.



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Vehicle shown may not reflect latest UK specifications.

Figures shown are for comparability purposes only; they only compare fuel consumption and CO2 figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.

Search: Ford Military Sales

ford.co.uk

Crew View

CXX Sqn, RAF Lossiemouth



MAcr Steve Flavell (WSOp)

“I am a WSOp Electronic Warfare specialist still in the process of converting to the Poseidon. I have completed the initial six months of training at Jacksonville NAS in Florida and hope to complete the UK-based phase of training shortly. It has been challenging so far, as you’d expect with a new platform, but I’m looking forward to joining a frontline crew flying maritime operations for real very soon.”

CXX SQUADRON at RAF Lossiemouth have a big job to do, protecting the UK’s waters from ever-increasing enemy threats.

Fortunately, they have the tools to do that job, bolstered further last month with the arrival of another state-of-the-art Poseidon P-8 subhunter at the Moray base.

RAF News spoke to some of the crew on maritime operations off the coast of Britain in the high-tech new aircraft, the fifth of nine planned for the squadron.



POSEIDON: CXX Sqn

Flt Lt Jamie Halls (Pilot)

“CXX Sqn was my first frontline squadron after pilot training in 2010 with the Nimrod MR2. It was clear from the beginning that maritime flying was steeped in history and tradition, it was an enjoyable role to fly because every sortie was different and challenging in its own right. When the opportunity arose to come back to maritime to captain a brand new aircraft, I leapt at the chance. Not only do I get to develop a crew and help bring them to combat readiness but I get to do it in one of the most picturesque regions in the country.”



Flt Lt Si King (WSO)

“When I left the RAF in 2012 and retrained as a teacher, I didn’t expect to be back in uniform at any point in the future. So it has been quite a journey that has seen me rejoin, return to maritime aviation and return to Moray. On returning to the area where I had spent so much of the first part of my career, it immediately felt like home. The fact that I am here to help bring a brand new aircraft into service and to operate from our impressive new building whilst back on my old squadron means that my decision to return to the RAF has been fully justified.”



Flt Lt Mark ‘Marshal’ Mather (STT TACCO)

“I am a WSO(N) Tactical Co-ordinator (TACCO), and Mission Commander (MC) on the Poseidon MRA Mk1. I have been operating on the frontline since April 1, 2020 during which time I have conducted UK-based maritime exercises and operations. It has been hard work and there have been numerous challenges both technical and logistical, as you’d expect with a new platform, but it has been rewarding so far. I have had more sub [submarine tracking] time, from multiple nations, over the last 12 months than at any point in my career. I now look forward to developing the current WSOs on CXX Sqn as well as training the new generation in my second role as WSO instructor.”



FS Craig Thomson (EWO)

“I completed the initial six-month course in 2019 followed by the British designed work-up and have been on a frontline crew for almost six months now. It’s a challenging environment trying to take the information learned and trying to apply it to flying in waters surrounding the UK but one which I’m thoroughly enjoying. Every one of the team is keen to learn how best to employ their sensors so we can all make the aircraft perform more efficiently and effectively.”



Sgt Gaz Morrissey (WSO)

“Having served in the RAF for 18 years, the majority of which was in the Flight Operations Trade, I fulfilled a long-held ambition to become a Weapon Systems Operator in 2019. After two years in the training pipeline, I’m at the transition point from OCU onto a frontline squadron. As an Acoustics Operator my primary role on the Poseidon MRA 1 is concerned with Anti-Submarine Warfare. I feel immensely proud to be one of the first Ab-initio Acoustic Operators on the Poseidon MRA 1 and look forward to completing my Combat Ready training in order to serve at the tip of the spear with 120 Sqn.”



Flt Lt Stu Walker (Pilot)

“I first donned a CXX Sqn name badge in June 2000. In June 2020, I donned a CXX Sqn name badge for the second time. That is quite a surreal feeling, but a warm one as well. I had forgotten how much I had loved flying maritime all those years ago, and it is a pleasure to be back, especially bringing a new fleet on line. Poseidon is a fantastic aircraft to fly and its technical systems capability is extraordinary. For future pilots, WSOs and WSOps, aim to get to this jet. You’ll be at the cutting edge of technology, but also in a position to make real positive changes during your career. The stunning Moray coastline is also an added bonus.”



FS Simon Iveson (WSO)

“I rejoined the RAF in 2016 specifically as a WSOp Acoustics Operator on the P8 MRA 1. My main role is to analyse and detect sub surface contacts. This is the ultimate game of hide and seek where the submarine has the advantage to stay hidden. With the P8’s complex sensor suite the fleet is only just scratching the surface of the full capabilities of this platform. For me the exciting part of the job is bringing a state-of-the-art MPA into service whilst discovering and developing its full potential.”





HM Government

NHS

Every foggy lens is making a difference

By covering our mouth and nose we're helping stop the spread of Covid-19, because anyone can catch it, and anyone can spread it.

Let's keep going

**STAY HOME
PROTECT
THE NHS
SAVE LIVES**

By Tracey Allen

Women's History Month

Feature



WOMEN AT WORK: Elva Blacker's *Communications Room* Watercolour, 1944



NERVE CENTRE: Elva Blacker's *Filter Room* Ink on Paper, 1944

WWII women's art

Exhibition celebrates female pioneers

LAURA KNIGHT created some of the most memorable images of World War II – from her famous 1943 painting *Ruby Loftus Screwing a Breech-ring to The Nuremberg Trials*, depicting 20 senior Nazis in the courtroom.

She is probably the best-known female artist featured in the RAF Museum London's online new exhibition *In Air and Fire: War Artists, The Battle of Britain and the Blitz*, a playlist showcasing various wartime women artists' work in its collection to mark Women's History Month this month.

The exhibition also focuses on Eva Blacker, whose drawings made at Biggin Hill when she was a WAAF are the largest collection of work documenting activities at an RAF station, British-Chilean artist Olga Lehmann and Rachel Reckitt, described by a Museum spokesman as 'a great modernist that time forgot'.

One of the leading artists of the last century, Dame Laura, a member of the Royal Academy, was also an Official War Artist.

Julia Beaumont-Jones, the Museum's curator of fine art, explained: "Women war artists were paid less for their work than their male peers, which dissatisfied Knight when, in 1939, she was appointed an Official War Artist, prompting her to speak up about it."

"Following the establishment of the War Artists' Advisory Committee by Sir Kenneth Clark under the auspices of the Ministry of Information in autumn 1939, women artists comprised 13 per cent of officially commissioned war artists and only Evelyn Dunbar received a full-time salaried commission – the others were given short-term contracts, working from commission to commission, when many male artists benefitted from six-month renewable contracts."

Knigh's other notable wartime work includes her 1940 portrait of Cpl Daphne Pearson (IWM collection), who received the Empire Gallantry Medal (later the George Cross) for her bravery in saving air crew from a crashed British bomber at RAF Detling.

In 1942 Knight was commissioned to

produce a painting of WAAFs operating a barrage balloon, to encourage women to enlist as operators.

Julia said: "From April 1941, WAAFs underwent training to replace male balloon operators so they could be transferred for other RAF duties. Whereas 10 men would usually operate a barrage balloon, now 13 women could take their place."

She added: "A Pathé newsreel of 1941, *WAAFs and Barrage Balloons*, less enticingly referred to desired recruits as 'Sturdy types whom we habitually looked upon as cut out solely for gym mistresses, policewomen or mothers-in-law'."

In 1943 Knight broke free from representing



SPANISH REFUGEES: Rachel Reckitt c1940-41

women exclusively to depicting the operations of Bomber Command when she was commissioned to paint a bomber crew flying Short Stirlings at RAF Mildenhall for *Take Off* (IWM collection).

Eva Blacker joined the WAAF in 1942 as a Motor Transport Driver. After her training, she was posted to Fighter Command at Biggin Hill where she eventually became the personal driver to the station's chief intelligence officer.

She later served at RAF Manston.

"Blacker made the most of the opportunity her RAF service afforded, practising as an artist in between her shifts, drawing RAF personnel in situ – after obtaining a sketching permit to do so," Julia said.

"Her output of some 200 works – mostly ink and pencil drawings, and watercolours – is today considered the most extensive artistic record of life on an RAF station."

She added: "To represent the goings on in London during the war, Olga Lehmann requested a sketching permit from the Ministry of Information – lest she be confused for a spy; this was the expectation from anyone who wished to draw public scenes."

"One of her first wartime commissions was a mural for the Air Raid Precautions headquarters in Camden Town. A number of illustrative drawings in the RAF Museum collection which represent ARP demonstrations and civil defence activities were likely produced in connection with the mural commission."

Rachel Reckitt was from a wealthy family in Somerset and during the London Blitz left the safety of her rural home to do relief work in and around Whitechapel in East London.

Julia said: "Until then, Reckitt had never had to work for a living, relying on the wealth of her family to sustain her practice as an artist – which may explain her experimentation, unfettered by market forces within the artworld, and the fact she had no impulse to undertake Official War Artist commissions during the war, but to produce art independently of the scheme."

The exhibition features a commentary by Reckitt's niece, well-known author Dame Penelope Lively.

■ See: *In Air and Fire: War Artists, the Battle of Britain and the Blitz* – Rachel Reckitt's War Work on YouTube.



HEAVE: Laura Knight's study for *A Balloon Site Coventry*, watercolour on paper 1942



CREW: Laura Knight study for *Take Off*, 1943



WAR EFFORT: Olga Lehmann factory painting

Top honour as collegiate continues to improve offering for boarding students

STAFF and students at Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate (QE) are celebrating following the news that the school has been recognised by the UK Boarding Schools Association Awards as a Finalist for their work to continually improve their offer for boarding students, to better meet their needs.

The Collegiate has also been announced as a Finalist for its approach to supporting international students as they become part of the QE community.

QE welcomes girls and boys from three months and supports them through four schools – Chapter House (three months to Year 5), King's Magna (Years 6 to 9), The College and Faculty (both Year 10 to 13), with those wishing to board being able to do so from Year 3.

Set in 220 acres of picturesque North Yorkshire countryside, the Collegiate provides a safe and happy community environment for its 850 boarders. Weekends



are as busy on campus as during the week, with a wide range of sporting, creative and performing arts, cultural and outdoor activities on offer. Boarding houses also host a varied programme of activities, encouraging students to socialise and follow their individual interests.

Known locally, nationally and internationally as a place that promotes the highest standards in all that it does, the Collegiate's exam results consistently rank it amongst the top ten day and boarding schools in the UK. In 2020, students in the academically focused College achieved 97 per cent A*/B at A level and 100 per cent D*/D in the small number of BTECs taken to enrich the

A level programmes (equivalent in university points to A* and A grades at A level). The Faculty, which offers a wider range of academic, creative and vocational courses, achieved 96 per cent A*/B at A level and 86 per cent D*/D in BTECs.

The Collegiate has risen to the challenge of starting the new school year during the current COVID-19 pandemic, gaining the COVID Safe BSA Charter and providing boarders with the option of a two week pre-term stay for students to become accustomed to the changes put in place to ensure their safety, prepare for the school year ahead and complete any quarantine period that might be necessary.

Principal Jeff Smith explains: "QE has complied with, and gone beyond, the measures required by the Government and we have committed ourselves to the BSA School Safe Charter, putting adaptable plans in place for this coming year and beyond.

"We will continue to find ways to broaden and improve the curriculum and enrichment opportunities we offer and continue to extend students' learning beyond the classroom. We will use our recent online teaching experience to update our IT strategy, taking the opportunity to develop e-learning in an impactful way.

"Through our academic, pastoral and enrichment programmes, we will continue to develop the personal qualities of our students, such as leadership, resilience, critical thinking and responsibility. As always, we will prioritise the safeguarding, health and wellbeing of all our students and staff."

*** To note: At the time of writing, the BSA Awards 2020 ceremony had not yet taken place. To find out more about QE and to arrange a socially distanced private tour of campus, please visit www.qe.org**



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***To find out more information on how to join Bromsgrove School, and about our generous forces bursaries, don't hesitate to contact our admissions team who will be happy to help.**

Competition

Book gives simple explanations of some of the 'mysteries' of aviation Plane talk

HOW DOES an aircraft move through the air? What is turbulence? What do those lines on the runway mean?

All these questions and many more are answered in new children's book *Planes* by Jan van der Veken (publishing by Prestel), a beautifully-illustrated history of aircraft and flight.

Subtitled *From the Wright Brothers to the Supersonic Jet*, it opens with a basic introduction to aircraft anatomy. Readers will learn about aerodynamics, the mechanics of wing shape and lift and how ailerons, propellers and flaps work. There's also a section on communications systems, runway design and GPS.

Profiles of famous historic planes illustrate basic principles throughout the book. Readers will find out about record-breaking flights across continents and oceans: how 'flying wings' evolved into the B-2 bomber; and where the world's most treacherous runways are located. A section on experimental aircraft looks at zeppelins, flying cars and Concorde.

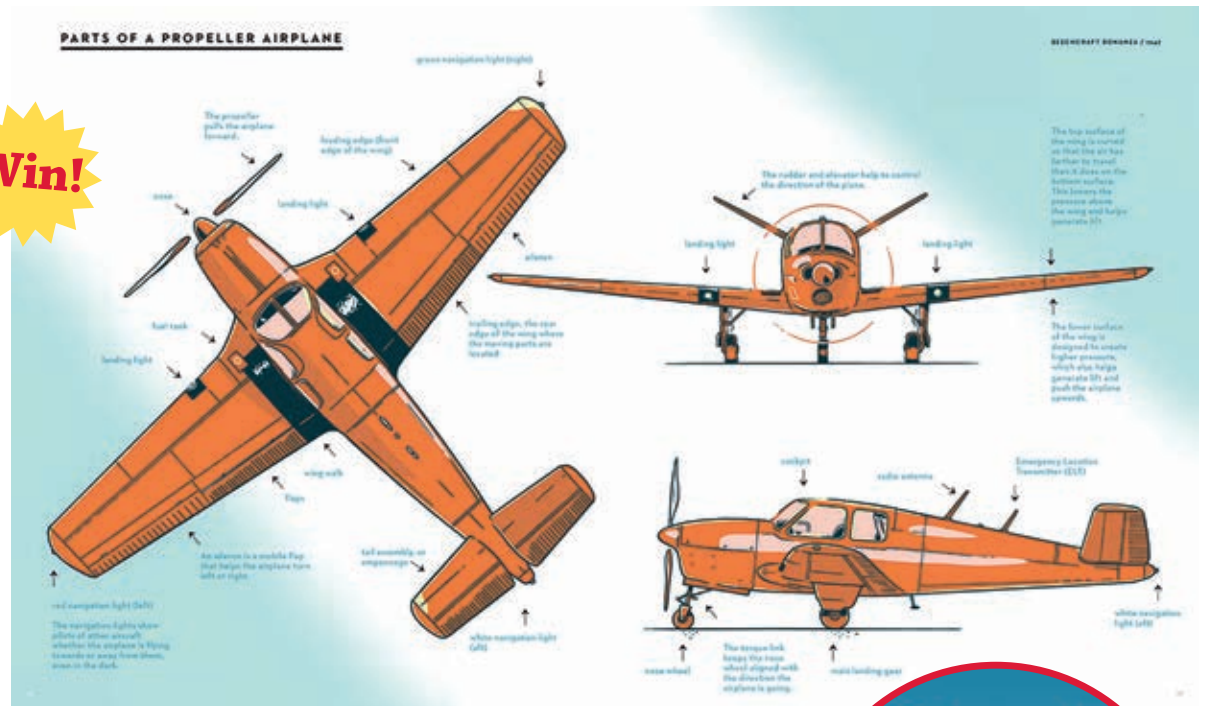
Van der Veken's lushly coloured,



PRIZE: *Planes*; drawings from book (right)

retro drawings detail everything from plane design to the physics of flight. Budding aviators will enjoy this information-packed book that serves both to demystify and celebrate the miracle of flight.

Jan van der Veken designs book covers and posters and creates illustrations for newspapers and magazines including two *New Yorker* covers. When not drawing you can find him high in the sky, piloting a plane. In 2016 he



received the Culture Prize from his hometown of Ghent, Belgium.

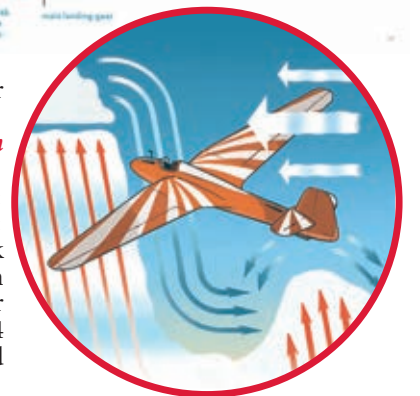
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We have three copies of *Planes*

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In which country is author Jan van der Veken's hometown?

Email your answer, marked: *Planes* book competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by March 26, and include your postal address.



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RAF News

The official voice of the Royal Air Force

Air Cdre 'Mickey' Witherow

Obituary

Mr RAF Regiment



ADEN: Witherow was in a number of skirmishes

AIR COMMODORE 'Mickey' Witherow, who has died aged 84, was one of the most influential post-war RAF Regiment officers, specialising in desert warfare, airfield defence and diplomacy.

He joined the RAF as an airframe mechanic in 1955, and was soon identified as 'officer material'. He chose to follow his brother into the RAF Regiment.

After completing his specialist training in November 1956, he was posted to the Aden Protectorate Levies – an Arab military force raised for the local defence of the Aden Protectorate, and commanded at that time by the RAF Regiment. He was involved in a number of skirmishes, managing to record one with his 8mm cine-camera.

After a six-month detachment to RAF Muharraq in Bahrain on airbase defence duties, he transferred to No 62 (Field) Squadron RAF Regiment at RAF El Adem in Libya.

The squadron became experts in long-range desert operations, including reconnaissance and harassment of enemy lines of communication in the event of an Egyptian invasion. This did not materialise, but Witherow did take on a pioneering north-to-south Land Rover crossing of the Sahara in 1958. Setting off from El Adem, he made it to southern Niger (roughly 1,500 miles) before being stopped by floods, just short of their actual destination of Kano.

When he returned home to Lockerbie on leave, he was amazed to see a local newspaper headline proclaiming 'Dumfries Man Crosses Sahara' and wondered at the coincidence; when he opened the paper he saw a photo of himself.

On his return from Libya he served in England before moving in 1962 to RAF Geilenkirchen, one of four RAF airfields in Germany with Canberra bombers mounting a nuclear quick reaction capability.

In 1966 he was appointed ADC to the C-in-C Transport Command, and, two years later, he assumed command of No 26 (Light Anti-Aircraft) Squadron, equipped with the L40/70 Bofors gun based at RAF Bicester, but operating at various times in the Caribbean, Oman and Bahrain.

After a period training officers for the RAF Regiment, Witherow went to the MoD, where he specialised in airfield defence. In October 1974 he returned to Germany, to a Nato assignment in the Air Headquarters, Allied Air Forces Central Europe (AAFCE) at the USAF's Ramstein Airbase.

His duties included providing airbase protection advice to the commander – a USAF general. He was also a specialist team member on no-notice inspections and evaluations of Nato airbases. From Ramstein, he returned in 1976 to the RAF Regiment Depot at Catterick to command No 3 Wing, with three squadrons, together with an independent Tigercat Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) Flight.

In response to renewed Guatemalan threats in 1977, he deployed Tigercat to Belize, and modified the Belize air engagement zone (which he had designed, previously, for L40/70 guns) creating the UK's first joint gun/SAM operational deployment.

In July 1979, he accompanied the Commandant General of the RAF Regiment on a MoD team sent to Zambia – at the behest of Lord Carrington, the Foreign Secretary – prior to the



SHARP-SHOOTER: With Sterling submachine gun, 1985

Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOG) Conference, which The Queen was secretly scheduled to attend.

Their mission was to determine how to neutralise the surface-to-air missile threat to civil flights, to and from the capital, Lusaka, posed by the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) guerrillas. Within a day of the team's arrival, the problem was brought vividly to the fore when the Rhodesian SAS raided the guerrilla camps in the city. The Zambian Air Force took to the air in response and was engaged by the Zambian Army.

“How fitting to die on Corps' birthday. Such masterful planning on his part. No surprise there!”

The RAF Regiment-proposed solution to safeguard the airspace satisfied the British government, and the conference went ahead as planned without incident, paving the way for the successful Lancaster House Agreement some months later.

In January 1980, Witherow returned to Catterick, this time as Commandant of the RAF Regiment Depot and, in June, he became the first RAF Regiment officer to be appointed as Aide-de-Camp to The Queen. After attending the Royal College of Defence Studies Course – the first RAF Regiment officer to do so – he was posted to Headquarters RAF Germany as the Command Regiment Officer, a post he held until September 1985, when he became the Director of Personnel (Ground) controlling the careers of all ground branch and trades personnel for the RAF.

In July 1987, he moved, for the final time, back to the Commandant General's staff in the MoD as Director RAF Regiment and Fire Services (RAF) until September 1990, when he prepared for his retirement from the Service – and his beloved Regiment. He served on the board of the Officers' (later Forces') Pension Society. He remained an active participant in Corps matters and attended many RAF Regiment events and functions. To all who knew him, he epitomised the ethos and traditions of the Corps.

On hearing that he died on the Corps' birthday (February 1), a colleague commented: "How fitting for Mr RAF Regiment. Such masterful planning on his part. No surprise there!"

As a mark of respect and affection, the Regiment provided The Queen's Colour Squadron as the bearer party at the funeral.

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5 pages of **RAF Sport** start here

● Win classic sport thriller DVDs and Blu-rays: p28

RUGBY UNION

International call to arms for RAF rugby

Four signings bolster IS women's team for 2021

Staff Reporter

HQ Air Command

RAF WOMEN'S rugby union has seen its ranks bolstered with the arrival of four hugely impressive international signings.

The announcement, coming as the sport lies dormant due to the current lockdown restrictions, is a massive coup for the association – which was hoping to defend its Inter-Service crown this year, before the championship was postponed.

Association spokesman Flt Lt Dan Mellor said: "This is some really good news in this difficult year for all, the RAFRUW have been lucky enough to welcome these new arrivals.

"The announcement of Fg Off Carys Williams, Off Cdt Sarah Bonar, SAC Daisy Fahey and Fg Off Sarah Graham to the fold is the culmination of an exceptional effort from the committee and players alike to continue to attract some of the UK's best rugby talent.

"All four have represented their country up to and including Senior

level and all regularly represent their club sides in the Tyrells Premiership.

"The addition of these four experienced and highly-skilled individuals will complement the already extremely strong RAF women's set-up.

"This, and the fact that the team have maintained a strong sense of community and effort throughout the pandemic, will help ensure that once a return to normal rugby life resumes, the team will continue to show the dominance that led them to be Inter-Service champions."

Fg Off Williams, 22 Gp Requirements Analysis Wing (RAW), first represented England at U20 level in 2012.

She moved up to the Senior squad in 2019, appearing at the Six Nations after impressing as part of a competitive Loughborough Lightning set-up in the Tyrrells Premier 15.

Off Cdt Bonar is currently going through Initial Officer Training at RAF College Cranwell and is due to pass out in May.

Loughborough Lightning star Bonar has played second row for Scotland an impressive 22 times, scoring two tries in the process, and was instrumental in their 2017 Six Nations campaign.

Fg Off Graham, a Training Officer at Airman's Command Sqn, plays her club rugby at Bristol and was part of the England under 20s set-up that won the inaugural Nations Cup in Toronto, Canada, in 2008.

SAC Fahey, another capped England under 20 international, is currently based at RAF Brize Norton AMS and has played for Gloucester-Hartpury since 2017.

■ Follow RAF women's rugby union on Twitter @RAFRU_Women.

SMILES BETTER: Left, Fg Off Carys Williams after passing out
PHOTOS: GORDY ELIAS RAF CRANWELL



ON THE CHARGE: SAC Daisy Fahey looks to get a move going for Gloucester
PHOTOS: LNC IMAGES

The Bel rings for Atkinson

RAF AND UKAF footballer Sgt Mike Atkinson has made a welcome return to the international footballing arena after being recalled by Belize for their upcoming World Cup qualifying matches.

The RAF Honington PTI has already starred in the recent CONCACAF Nations League for Belize, playing against Costa Rica, and is now set for matches against Nicaragua, Haiti, Turkey, Caicos and St Lucia.

Atkinson, who qualifies for Belizean football through his mother, was approached before by the country's national team when he played for League Two side York City and debuted for the country in 2018.

He said: "I played a couple



ISLAND LIFE: Atkinson in action in Guernsey for UKAFFC during the island FA's 125th anniversary celebrations
PHOTOS: CPL TIM LAURENCE

of games against El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras as well.

"From that point on, it sort of solidified my place in the team for the upcoming qualifiers.

"I think I've won eight caps now. This will be nine and 10, hopefully

– Covid permitting."

On the qualifying matches, Atkinson said: "The group games are definitely winnable.

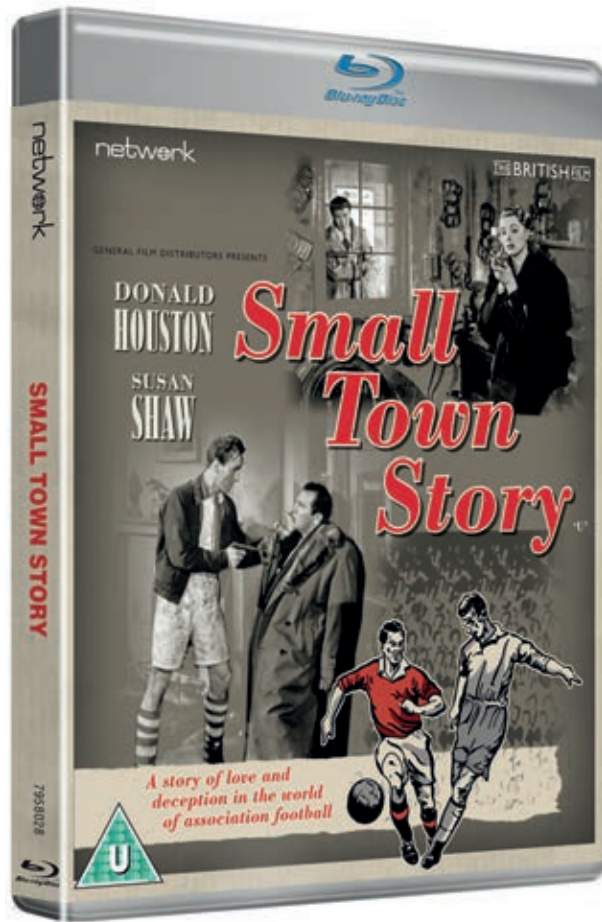
"Even if we didn't qualify, it's still going to put us in good stead for other competitions."

Sport

COMPETITION

Win kicking DVDs

Net soccer classics in our competition



WE'VE GONE football crazy at *RAF News Sport* as we've teamed up with NetworkOnAir.com for a brilliant soccer related DVD/Blu-ray competition.

We have two pairs of discs to win, kicking off with the excellent British thriller *Small Town Story*. Starring Donald Houston, Alan Wheatley and Susan Shaw, this gripping story of love and deception, all set against the backdrop of Association Football. Devotees of the summer game cricket will notice a cameo role from Denis Compton along with players from Millwall, Arsenal and Hayes football clubs.

The copy of this film, which sees Canadian war veteran Bob Regan become embroiled in the misdeeds of a club inheritance of £25,000, is the only one known to exist. Next up *The Arsenal Stadium Mystery*

– featuring Arsenal's 1938/39 team line-up and an arguably career-best performance from Leslie Banks as an eccentric detective. The films remains a high-water mark for pre-war British movies. It sees amateur football team The Trojans face their toughest challenge: a charity match against Arsenal in front of a capacity crowd. During the game their star player collapses and dies of poisoning. Inspector Slade of Scotland Yard is assigned to catch the murderer.

Network On Air is a brilliant one stop shop for classic films and TV – Networkonair.com.

For a chance to win one of two pairs of these discs simply answer this question correctly: *What famous cricketer appears in Small Town Story?*

Email your answer, marked Sports films competition to: sports@



KICK OFF: Main, *The Arsenal Stadium Mystery*, left, *Small Town Story*

rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by

March 28. State DVD or Blu-ray preference. Please mark on your entry Football DVD competition and include your full postal address.

RUGBY UNION

Cokayne hits back at the double

RAF WOMEN'S rugby star Fg Off Amy Cokayne played a superb one-two during Quins' ladies Allianz Premier 15s league 20-19 win over Wasps ladies.

Cokayne ran in a brace of tries as she faced Service teammates Fg Off Lucy Nye and Plt Off Carys Williams, who put in sterling displays in the opposition at Surrey Sports Park Ground, Guildford.

Her second try pulled back the Wasps' lead to seven points during a hard-fought second half.

The match was secured with a 78th minute kick when Quins took the lead for the first time through the boot of Lagi Tuima.

Tuima's kick not only secured the win, but saw the hosts take the lead for the first time in the match.

Cokayne said: "It's fair to say that we've had a tough start to the year at Harlequins with Covid-19 affecting our games, compounded by injuries, suspensions and international call-ups.

"So, coming off the back of

two defeats against Exeter Chiefs and Loughborough Lightning, it was essential to put in a good performance and get back to winning ways against Wasps.

"We knew it was going to be a very physical encounter and they didn't disappoint. We had to work really hard to keep a foothold in the game.

"It was extremely close throughout; however, we managed to win the game by one point after a penalty kick in the dying minutes, that gave us the lead for the first time.

"I did score a couple of tries, but I was more satisfied with the way we worked as a team to find a way to win.

"We have had a difficult few weeks but the performance showed we are mentally tough and as a group we are very resilient.

"It was also great to play against Lucy and Carys, which bodes well for the RAF side and added a bit of spice to the game."

Having played 12 games Quins sit second on 46 points, behind



TRY, TRY AGAIN: Main, Amy breaks away supported by her teammates, inset, Wasps players try to halt the RAF girl back
PHOTO: OLLIE TYCER
INSTGRAM: @OLIE_TYCER.

Saracens on 50. Wasps sit fourth on 40 points, having played one game less game than Quins.



MOTORSPORT

Duo set for RAF lift-off

Regular and Reserve team announce riders for 2021

RIDE ON: The RAF team, Vickers (left) and Rollo; below, Vickers in action last season

PHOTOS: CRAZY LEGS PR/TIM KEETON-IMPACT IMAGES



Daniel Abrahams
HQ Air Command

RAF REGULAR and Reserves team owner Lee Hardy promised to reveal his 2021 team line-up when he spoke to *RAF News Sport* recently and he has not failed to deliver.

Hardy has announced his two riders for the coming season's Bennetts British Superbike Championship and Pirelli National Superstock 1000cc series.

Ryan Vickers will return to the team for his third straight in the BSB, while Rollo will compete in the Pirelli championship.

In the championship's 25th anniversary year, the RAF team will be linking up with Kawasaki, with the team yet to unveil its colours for the season, along with the all-new 2021 Kawasaki Ninja ZX-10RR bike the team will be riding in both Superbike and Superstock classes.

Hardy said: "The 2021 season looks set to be an exciting one for us as we mark our eighth year in the championship. To have Ryan remaining in the team means we have continuity, which is so important in racing."

"Lewis has really impressed me with his

performances in the championship, especially last year, so we are excited to see what he can deliver on board the new Kawasaki."

The team were in receipt of the new bikes and will be undertaking testing before their debut bow.

Former Pirelli National champion (2018) Vickers said: "I am really excited to be riding for the team again. We have had some great results together – last year we got a fifth place, my best result in Superbike class."

"I am still learning, but I have been training hard during the winter and cannot wait for the first official testing to start."

Rollo, who finished third in the Pirelli championship last year, said: "I am really pleased to be joining the team. Last year I had an amazing season and I learnt a lot, I want to build on that this year and keep progressing."



Axe man runs to it

SERVICE BIG-HITTERS from RAF Akrotiri Fire & Rescue Service have some added punch in their fundraising bid with boxing ace SAC Brad Axe onboard.

The middleweight, who has represented the Service at UKAF level and at the Haringey Cup, is part of the eight-man team taking on the very popular, very tough David Goggins four x four x 48 challenge as a fundraiser for Neuroblastoma UK.

Neuroblastoma is a childhood cancer that affects 100 children each year in the UK, usually under the age of five, and can even occur before a child is born. It is the most common tumour in childhood after brain tumours.

The challenge is an ultra-marathon with a twist.

Each member of the team will run four miles, every four hours, for 48 hours – completing 48 miles by the finish.

Axe (above right) said: "We

are all very excited about this challenge, but the most important part is raising as much money as we can for the charity."

"We've just started fundraising and have already raised £600. We know it's going to be extremely difficult, but I know that the group of guys taking on the challenge are fit and won't back down when it gets hard."

■ To fund the team's effort visit: justgiving.com/fundraising/akifireservice

Wheelchair rugby

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Robinson's Olympic odyssey funding boost

GB wheelchair rugby star aims for Tokyo, then Paris

Daniel Abrahams
HQ Air Command

VITAL UK Sport funding has provided some calm to the last four years of chaos for former RAF Regiment gunner Cpl Stu Robinson and his Team GB colleagues.

Robinson, 38, has formed an integral part of the GB wheelchair rugby team. He welcomed the announcement which arrived just after the team had been derailed by last month's news that this year's Tokyo Olympic Games was to be pushed back to 2022.

Robinson, injured by an IED in 2013, added: "We had battled on as an unfunded sport for the last four years. We had to simply make do, and manage whatever issues arose."

"In some ways the adversity of it all has bonded us. What with qualifying for Tokyo, we became European champions in 2017 in Germany, and 2019 in Denmark, along with fourth in the World Championships in Australia in 2018. Now we have received the funding from UK Sport to get us

through to the Paris (2024) cycle of qualifications – so we really want to push on again from this moment."

The funding issue coupled with pandemic restrictions had seen training camps cancelled over the previous months, and team members having to find work to continue in the sport.

Robinson said: "Some of the guys had to get jobs to continue to play, that impacted on training and, well, everything really. It took them away from the group, especially in the aspects of fitness."

Robinson, who is supported by the RAF Benevolent Fund, said: "Since I was injured in 2013, the Ben Fund have been there for me. Be it an arm around me or helping with my leaving the Service, whatever, especially with my sport, they were incredible. I cannot praise them enough."

He added: "I feel immense pride representing the GB squad, but also my former Service and, of course, the RAF Benevolent Fund. There have been a few military guys involved in sport at this level."

Jon-Allan

Butterworth

(SAC(T)) is one of those who made a huge impact [Team GB Paralympic track cyclist 2012 London Games, three times silver medallist and former World champion], so it's

"We had battled on as an unfunded sport for the last four years. The challenges have bonded us massively"

great to follow that."

The former RAF Regiment man played a lot of sport before he was injured, but never rugby. He first came across the wheelchair version of the game just before he was deployed to Afghanistan in

"I was sat watching the London 2012 wheelchair rugby before my deployment. I thought it was amazing. It must have had some sort of subconscious impact, because when I was injured it became something that I wanted to try out."

The pandemic saw the team cancel their January training camp, but they finally returned to Lilleshall in February. With further camps planned the sport's hierarchy are now striving for the team to go full steam ahead for Japan.

Robinson said: "It was amazing to see everyone. We had a brilliant laugh as well and it was something special to see the team."

"Overall, the challenges have bonded us massively. When the lockdown started, we wanted to get fitter and stronger, or be as close as we could."

"We noticed the difference once we got to face each other at the camp. It is the same for other teams, so we will simply deal with it."

Follow Stu Robinson on Twitter or on Instagram: @LeglessRobbo.



ESPORTS



TRACKS OF MY TEARS: RAF Esports gamer Sassy crashes into the barriers on lap four and out of the RAF F1 Championship's final race of the season in Russia; below, another gamer crashes into the wall in dramatic style

Just champion: first F1 rolls into history

Kennet Pike
HQ Air Command

WITH THE chequered flag barely unfurled on the RAF's first-ever virtual F1 Championship, the Esports association has set its sights on Tri-Service championship glory later this year.

The inaugural event was won in dramatic style by gamer JackLemmonMD on the virtual Russian GP track Sochi Autodrom, built around the Sochi Olympic Park.

Chairman of the RAF Video Gaming and Esports Association, Wg Cdr Daniel Penter, said: "I am really pleased to see

the popularity of the RAF F1 Championship continuing to grow through its first season – it has proved to be a gripping competition that has required the dedication and professionalism of the competitors."

"Given the success of the RAF championship in finding some fresh talent, and the professional approach taken by our online drivers, I can't wait to see how the RAF does when the second Tri-Service championship starts later this year."

The final race of the RAF VR F1 championship was packed with thrills and spills, especially when the race and championship leader

Connor_LS crashed out, with Lemmon placed in last.

Lemmon's second-place finish was enough to secure the title and make RAF VR history.

Wg Cdr Penter added: "The RAF F1 Championship embodies the very best of the RAF Video Games and Esports Association."

"It has been entirely self-generated by the players, has grown audiences on our Twitch channel/RAFesports and has allowed engagement with any interested drivers across our serving, veteran and MOD civil service community."

Follow RAF Esports on Twitter @RAF_Esports.





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