

The Forces' favourite paper

Win
WWII military jigsaws
Win!
● See p23

On a charge
Johnson on AC/DC return
● RnR p3



Win
Monster & chiller DVDs
● RnR p3, p5

ROYAL AIR FORCE
Friday **November 13** 2020
No. 1503 **70p**

RAF News



Anglo-French airpower landmark
● See pages 16/17



Football
Plate final goal fest



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Alpine sports
Boarders' Covid call



● See p28

Lockdown hits Remembrance



LOW-KEY CEREMONY:
Above, Forces veterans were unable to gather at the Cenotaph. Main picture, HM The Queen looks out from the Buckingham Palace balcony
PHOTO: PA



Simon Mander
ROYALS AND political leaders paid tribute to Service personnel at a Cenotaph ceremony closed to the public because of the coronavirus lockdown.

Earlier, the Queen led socially-distanced commemorations alone and wearing a mask at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey.

Covid-19 restrictions prevented the annual march past the Cenotaph – unveiled by King George V on Armistice Day 1920 – to keep veterans and the public safe.

Before the event Veterans Minister Johnny Mercer said: "Remembrance Sunday holds a special place in our national life, and I know that many people will be disappointed that they won't be able to attend this year."

"But the key part of Remembrance is taking a moment to recognise those who have given their lives protecting this country."

"I hope that everyone will still be able to reflect on this sacrifice this year, despite the different arrangements."

● Continued on p3



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“It was all for Malcolm...”



AC/DC
vocalist
Brian
Johnson on
the band's
new album,
in memory
of guitarist
Malcolm
Young
See R'n'R p3

“I am
privileged
to have the
opportunity
to join such a
dedicated
team”

Future
BBMF
boss
Sqn Ldr
Mark
Long
See p15



“It's fantastic to open
this facility. I can see all the
benefits...”

Halton Station
Commander Gp Capt
Dan Startup on new
e-games centre
See p9 & p27



RAF News

RAF News

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Silence falls at Cenotaph as vets keep their distance

● Continued from front

Just 145 uniformed Service personnel and 30 veterans attended the Cenotaph ceremony with the Chief of the Defence Staff, Sir Nick Carter, laying a wreath alongside chiefs of the RAF, Royal Navy and Army.

It followed the traditional Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance the night before at the Royal Albert Hall, broadcast on BBC One for the first time without an audience.

In an open letter to Service personnel Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: “With imagination and determination, you can play your part alongside the Royal British Legion in helping the UK mark this milestone that remains at the heart of our national calendar.”

He said people could take part in remote and socially-distanced Remembrance activity by wearing a poppy, displaying posters and pausing for a two-minute silence – at home or on their doorstep.

Other Remembrance Sunday



SOLEMN: RAF personnel march past Cenotaph; inset right, Duchess of Cambridge at Buckingham Palace
PHOTO: CPL SALLY RAIMONDO/PA

ceremonies took place around the world, including in countries where the Armed Forces are currently deployed, such as Afghanistan,

Cyprus and Somalia.

Over the past year, UK troops have been deployed on 35 operations in 30 countries worldwide.

This Week In History



1941

Mozzie joins fight

THE MOSQUITO enters full squadron service with 105 Sqn at RAF Swanton Morley, taking on a light bombing role. The first raid is not carried out until May 1942.

1962

Long-haul Vulcan

THREE VULCAN bombers launch a round-the-world flight, covering 30,000 miles in just 50 hours flying time. The aircraft stop at Perth, Australia to mark the 25th anniversary of the Commonwealth Games.



1990

Chinook deploys on Granby

THREE 7 Sqn Chinooks arrive at Ras Al Ghar in USAF C-5 Galaxy aircraft, as part of the RAF's deployment on Operation Granby in the Gulf.

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

'Remembrance is etched on our bodies... and our souls'

Simon Mander

AIR FORCE mum Sgt Lisa Mallett led a unique tribute to the fallen by frontline fighters in the Gulf by baring the tattoo of her tragic one-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son.

She is among a group of RAF personnel to tell the personal stories behind their body art to support the Royal British Legion through its 'Tribute Ink' campaign which focused on how body art reinforces military values.

Tragedy struck when her daughter Jadene had a convulsion in the bath which stopped her heart. She was brought back to life by paramedics but died three days later in hospital, on Remembrance Day in 2002.

Sgt Mallett suffered another heartbreaking tragedy in 2017 when her son Kaden was struck and killed by a falling barrier.

She said: "My tattoo is of my son and daughter and it means that even though I can't see them (as it's on my back) they are with me every day."

"I joined the Royal Air Force after I lost my daughter to follow in my families' footsteps and to provide a better life for my oldest son."

"Remembrance is a time to reflect on our past – to look at lives lost and to remember they were lost fighting for the freedom we have today."

"I feel proud to be serving in the RAF, especially as my grandad was a very proud RAF Regiment World War II veteran and all four of my uncles have served over 100 years between them."

Airmen and women told the personal stories behind their body art as part of the Tribute Ink project after the RBL's plan for a national touring exhibition featuring military markings was cancelled due to the latest Covid-19 lockdown.

Sgt Mallett is among more than 20 Air Force personnel backing the campaign by proudly showing off their designs, while deployed against Daesh Islamist terrorists in the Middle East.

According to the Legion, military tattoos commemorate friends who have served, illustrate personal sacrifices and mark the lasting bonds formed between men and women who live, train and fight together.

Sometimes they are deeply personal, unconventional acts remembering those who have fallen – like war memorials preserving the memory of friends, relatives and people who have made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

Cpl Askey, RAF Police, said: "The tattoos on the right side of my body are about family and remembering those people who sacrificed something to protect our freedom and values."

"The tattoos on the left side of my body are in styles and imagery I like and do not necessarily mean something to me personally."

Some of the symbols used have a range of origins; some ancient, others new – many are timeless.

As Honington-based RAF Regiment Reservist SAC Keen explained: "I have a cross on my chest to symbolise that I am a Christian. But I also have a rose and a vine entwined to remember the passing of someone close to me."

"I also have a scorpion on my back to symbolise that



it is my star sign. For me tattoos will also hold a personal message and will tell part of a story in my life."

Other motifs are specific to a generation. Facilities Manager WO Butterworth said: "My tattoos symbolise my love for my favourite band, Metallica, but also just because I like tattoos, they are personal to me."

Some pay homage to relatives waiting at home through war and conflict. Sgt Mills, Flt Operations, said: "My tattoo represents my family, quoting 'Family, where life begins and love never ends'. The three birds are a symbol representing myself, my son and daughter."

SAC Rowe of Joint Force Support said: "My tattoos have many meanings, for example a couple of them are in remembrance of lost souls in my family. Others are a more symbolic meaning, with a nice design going through the dimensions."

Some designs are simply expressions of individualism, fashion, or just a way to chill out.

Honington-based RAF Regular SAC Suarez said: "My black Polynesian piece wasn't the first tattoo I had in mind. After a couple of individual tattoos, I then found a specific style for me, that I love, and think is smart (even if your mates still call them awful). That's what it's all about! It's your choice."

While according to ICT Tech Sgt Francis: "My tattoos are an artistic expression of things that I love. Each has its own individual meaning and combined they represent people, places and moments in time that have shaped who I am as a person."

Joint Force Support's Pte Storey said: "Being tattooed allows me time to truly sit and do nothing, not worry about work, just allows me to sit and relax. The tattoo itself, weirdly, is an afterthought."

● For more tattoos and the stories behind them see: www.britishlegion.org.uk.

LOSS: Sgt Lisa Mallett had the image of her two children with an angel inked on her back to help cope with their tragic loss. Left, Lisa on duty with 83 EAG



CPL RICHARDSON-LEE



SGT MILLS



SAC SUAREZ



SGT FRANCIS



IED blast medic's Cranwell honour

Tracey Allen

A FRONTLINE medic who battled to save a stricken comrade during a Taliban bomb attack despite her own horrific injuries joined the list of Forces living legends as she signed on at the Cranwell Wall of Gallantry.

Hayley Ridgeway was serving with First Battalion the Rifles when her platoon was hit by a command wire improvised explosive device, in 2011.

The blast shattered her legs but she was so focused on saving her commanding officer, Lt Dan Clack, and other platoon members, that she didn't realise the extent of her injuries until later.

She said: "I knew I had been hit but I thought it was a rock. I had shrapnel and ball bearings in both legs but I dealt with everyone else first."

"When a quad bike came to take my boss, I couldn't understand why I couldn't keep up when I was running behind it."

Lt Clack was evacuated to hospital by helicopter within an hour but sadly died later of his injuries. He was 25.

She said: "I can't remember being scared, the whole incident was just chaos, with bodies everywhere."

"You feel guilt when you survive and others don't..."

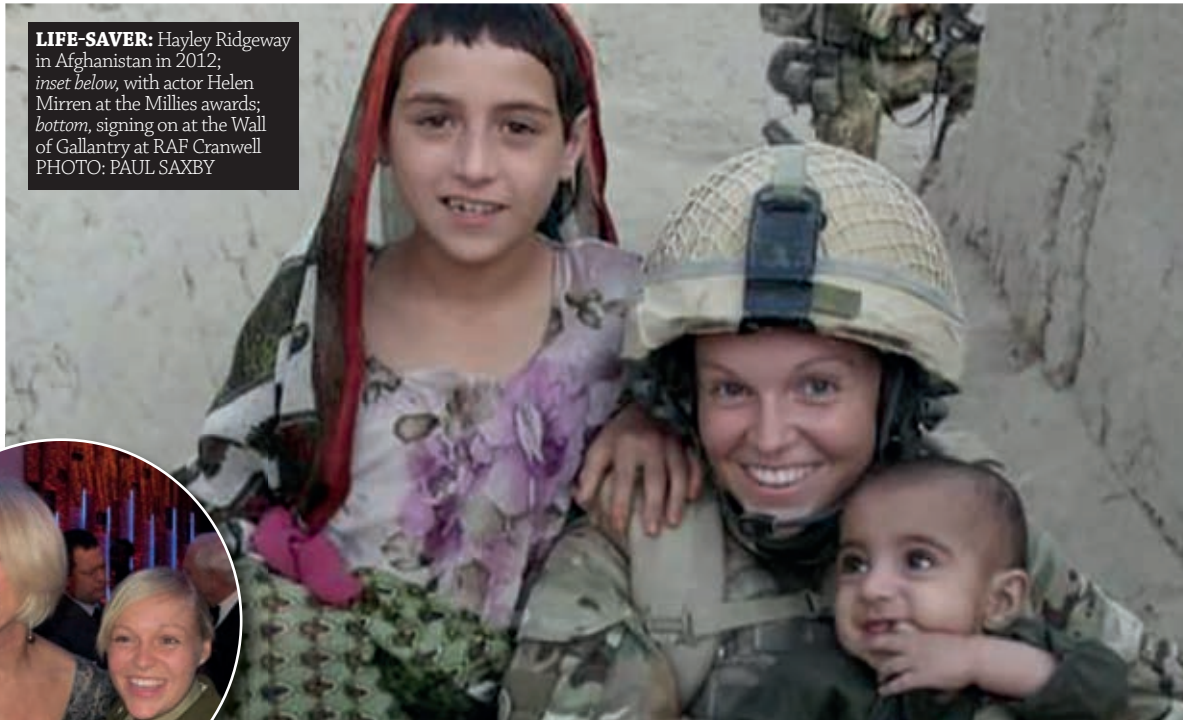
"Your training takes over and the adrenalin kicks in. You become a different person."

Hayley waited five hours for a helicopter to take her to hospital. But despite her own trauma she revealed that she felt guilty for surviving the attack when others had lost their lives.

She said: "I think anyone in that situation feels guilt if you survive and someone else doesn't. I was so gutted Dan didn't make it."

"I couldn't have done any more but at the time it was very difficult to see past that. Dan was a wonderful human being, the best

LIFE-SAVER: Hayley Ridgeway in Afghanistan in 2012; inset below, with actor Helen Mirren at the Millies awards; bottom, signing on at the Wall of Gallantry at RAF Cranwell
PHOTO: PAUL SAXBY



boss you could have had."

She had several operations on both legs at Camp Bastion and in the UK and could have lost her left leg.

She said: "I had to give permission for amputation if they couldn't get the last ball bearing out because of the infection risk."

"I remember waking up after an operation, being in a lot more pain and thought they'd taken my leg but it was just where they had chipped away a lot to get the last ball bearing."

Hayley was unable to walk without crutches and accepted a posting to the remote Brecon Beacons to prove she was still fit enough for frontline duty.

"There was a danger of getting medically discharged, so I decided to take a post in Brecon to prove I was fit and able enough to get up mountains," she said.

As well as her physical injuries – she still has metal shards in her legs and suffers from arthritis – Hayley developed PTSD. Her own experience of therapy for the condition has inspired her to change her military career.

She is now training in psychiatric nursing with the Queen Alexandra



Royal Army Nursing Corps and is studying full-time for a degree with Birmingham University.

She said: "I had to see a therapist for my PTSD and came through the other side. It made me want to give something back."

She spoke about her ordeal to aircrew students at the Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape Training Centre at Cranwell. She added: "It was an honour. The students were so interested in my thoughts on spotting signs of PTSD in colleagues."

"Lt Clack was so good at that –

he knew his people inside out. If I have been able to pass on the advice he gave us, that's all that matters."

Despite winning a Lifesaving Award at the Millies in 2012, Hayley doesn't consider herself a hero.

She said: "I would definitely not call myself a hero, though I'm proud of being given the award."

She now lives in the Peak District with her three-year-old daughter Isabelle and hopes to commission as an officer. She added: "I go hiking a lot, that's my own therapy – I'm a big promoter of that."

News bulletin



ART WORKS: RAAF and UK personnel chalk it up to experience
PHOTOS: CPL TRISTRAN KENNEDY

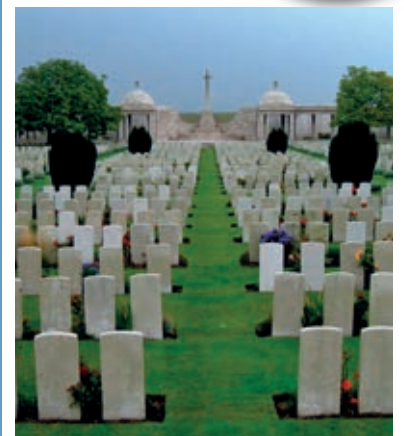
It's good to chalk

FRONTLINE FIGHTERS based in the Gulf have teamed up to help combat the risk of PTSD by expressing their feelings creating artwork using chalk.

RAF and Royal Australian Air Force teams with 906 Expeditionary Air Wing hit the tarmac for a therapy session organised by medical officer Sqd Ldr Sophie Foxen.

She said: "We should take every opportunity to encourage people to become more educated and open about discussing mental health."

"Whether it is sharing a post on social media or really listening to the answer when you ask someone how they are feeling Everyone has their part to play."



Remembrance starring role

PEOPLE ARE being urged to name stars after one of the 1.7 million war dead after Covid-19 restrictions stopped traditional Armistice Day ceremonies.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission hopes encouraging the public to use its extensive records and search facility to pay a celestial tribute will make up for the absence of gatherings at memorials and workplace two-minute silence tributes caused by lockdown.

CWGC director Barry Murphy said: "Whilst we can't come together in person, we can still make sure their names burn bright. Not just for one day, but for all the days and nights to come."

Fourth Poseidon for Lossie

A FOURTH P-8 Poseidon maritime surveillance aircraft has been delivered to RAF Lossiemouth.

The UK's latest subhunter has been christened 'Spirit of Reykjavik' in honour of the role played by the Icelandic capital and its people in the Battle of the Atlantic during World War II.

The P-8As are equipped with

sensors and weapons systems designed for anti-submarine warfare.

The aircraft are also capable of carrying out surveillance and search and rescue missions and have been used to monitor asylum seekers crossing the Channel.

The UK has ordered nine of the Boeing-built aircraft.



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In brief



LOCAL HERO: WO Walcott with wife Loretta

Brize tribute to WO Joe

BRIZE NORTON chiefs have paid tribute to veteran Warrant Officer Wendell 'Joe' Walcott, who served for more than 30 years, by naming a station building in his honour.

The trail-blazing Jamaican born airman joined up in 1945 and spent most of his career at the Oxfordshire station, rising to the rank of WO Quartermaster.

After leaving the RAF he stayed in the area and became the first black councillor in Oxfordshire, as a member of Carterton Town Council. He served as Mayor for two years, when he campaigned for better access to local amenities for Service personnel at Brize. He died in 2018, aged 92.

A station spokesman said: "Joe was always hugely proud of his Jamaican roots and believed that its place in the Commonwealth meant that he had a responsibility to play his part."

NEWLY WEDS: Joe and Loretta

Grow on my son...

Tracey Allen

AN AKROTIRI-BASED airman is hoping to spark a growing trend with a crusade to honour his dad and get green-fingered Forces pals to plant a tree for Christmas.

Flight electrician SAC Henry Lavery launched his campaign in memory of his dad Bernard (pictured right) whose record-breaking giant veg made him a legend among gardeners worldwide.

He said: "Dad passed away in September and I wanted to do something in his memory that would help the environment, because he was a keen gardener."

"I thought the project would help take people's minds off the gloom of the coronavirus crisis and think about something positive instead."

"I think Dad would have been very proud of the idea. I am sure he would have helped to roll it out to the wider gardening community."

Bernard scooped a long list of world records for growing huge vegetables including a gigantic 28lb radish and the world's heaviest

pumpkin – weighing a staggering 710lb.

The nursery owner, who set up his own seed company, even wrote a book, *How To Grow Giant Vegetables*.

More than 50 people have joined the tree-planting project already, many in Scotland.

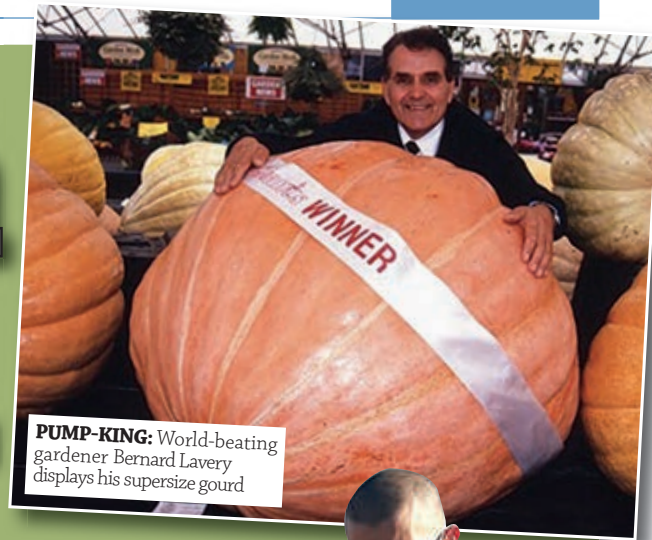
Henry said: "Quite a few silver birch and pine trees have been planted so far because they tend to grow well in Scotland. I'm planning to plant a couple of palm trees here on the base."

The SAC is hoping hundreds more will join his eco-mission and post their planting pictures on social media under the hashtag #PlantatreeforXmas and has even put up a prize for the best image.

He added: "All you have to do is get a photo of yourself planting your tree, share it on social media, 'like' our Plant a Tree for Xmas page and share the post."

"I'd love it if someone were to plant a really unusual tree, that would be impressive."

● Go to: facebook.com/PlantatreeforXmas2020.



PUMP-KING: World-beating gardener Bernard Lavery displays his supersize gourd



DIG IN: SAC Henry Lavery gets his tree planting crusade off to a start in Akrotiri

Air Force superfan Jacob tops £30k for charity

Tracey Allen

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD fundraising superstar Jacob Newson has refused to let the coronavirus crisis stop him netting cash for Air Force good causes.

The aircraft-mad youngster has raised around £30,000 to date for the RAF Benevolent Fund, with dad Andy, and they have just completed their latest challenge – walking the 30-mile route from the former site of RAF Manston in Kent to the Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne, near Folkestone.

The pair were forced to shelve plans to walk 25km from a World War II crash site in Belgium to Dunkirk following the Covid outbreak. So instead of taking on the challenge in Europe that they had planned for the school half-term holidays,

they decided to tackle the walk in Kent. Andy said: "I've been going to France every year since 2003 for the anniversary of the Dunkirk evacuations, so it was a great shame not to be there this year."

"I'm a frontline clinician with the ambulance service, so in the grand scheme of things there were far more important things going on."

The father and son duo finished their UK challenge on October 31, the 80th anniversary of the official end date of the Battle of Britain – and Jacob's birthday.

They previously raised £6,500 for the Benevolent Fund climbing Pen-y-ghent in Yorkshire, one of the county's Three Peaks, last year. They were inspired to start fundraising for the RAFBF after Jacob met the Red Arrows at the Royal International Air Tattoo in 2019.

Since starting his fundraising challenges, Jacob has been invited



WALK ON: Jacob Newson and dad Andy arrive at Capel-le-Ferne, Kent

to RAF stations and military museums across the country and met Spitfire ace Allan Scott and the last Dambuster, Johnny Johnson.

Aaron Tillyer of the RAF

Benevolent Fund said: "Jacob did a fantastic job fundraising for us last year, so we're thrilled that he and Andy made this challenge work in spite of all the obstacles."

FlightPRO is Oceans apart



AI-ENHANCED:

Cloud based web apps allow data to be shared across Ops area reducing risk and boosting interoperability

FOR OVER 25 years, Ocean Software has been producing class-leading time, task & resource management software optimised for military air operations.

Its principal product, FlightPRO, is now the cornerstone air planning tool for 13 militaries globally, providing a scalable and configurable system for the precise management of operations and training processes.

Data Driven

FlightPRO delivers a single source of data truth from which any number of reports can be generated to understand and analyse performance data such as utilisation rates, capability and readiness. Currency and qualification recording, together with automatic conflict resolution, significantly reduce the burden of scheduling and flight authorisation, while enhancing safety.

Meanwhile, FlightPRO's training management application set allows the planning and tracking of course syllabi and training assets, including simulators and classrooms, which can also be integrated with Learning Management Systems and student reporting.

Other FlightPRO features include MS Outlook notifications, an electronic logbook, a long range planner and an airspace deconfliction



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- Maintenance reports
- Logistical Ops
- In-flight catering
- Ordnance control
- Customs/immigration
- Airspace coordination
- RAF Regt & security
- Contractor services

tool. The list is not exhaustive.

Yet, whilst an increasing number of flying squadrons benefit from a superior level of situational awareness and data management, the same cannot be said of the myriad units and organisations that support flying operations across an air base, with many still using stand-alone tools and processes such as whiteboards, spreadsheets and emails.

Fully integrated

Indeed, the lack of IT systems' integration across air bases overall is inefficient by modern commercial standards, reducing interoperability over a range of crucial base functional areas and exposing personnel to unnecessary operational risk.

To address the apparent disparity, Ocean Software is now deeply invested in evolving the core facets of FlightPRO into a

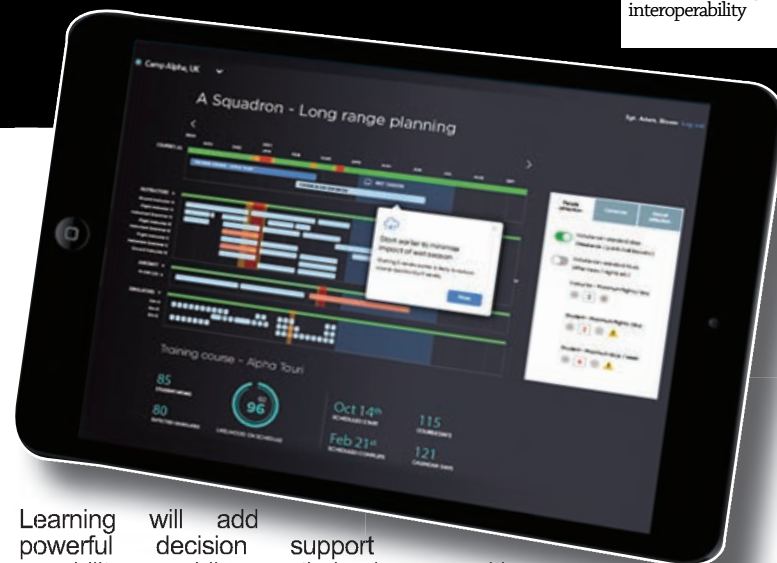
far broader capability to address the burgeoning need for an Integrated Base Management Solution (IBMS).

Machine learning

An IBMS could be best described as a single repository for data sharing and system integration that reduces duplication of effort and communication errors and improves interoperability across all air base functional areas. In short, Ocean is developing the concept of a 'smart' airfield and is calling it SmartBase.

Recognising information as its lifeblood, SmartBase will deliver an unprecedented level of coordination, situational awareness and governance through a real-time, collaborative Common Operating Picture for commanders and operators alike.

The addition of Artificial Intelligence and Machine



Learning will add powerful decision support capability, enabling optimised scheduling recommendations delivered through an intuitive visual user interface.

With affordability in mind, SmartBase is being developed as a modular and totally scalable tool. Functional areas of an airbase can be added over time to suit the scale of operational need and budget.

For some air bases, the IBMS may need to comprise only the sharing of fundamental data: planning, resourcing, asset availability, scheduling, reporting and readiness.

Train as you fight

The inclusion of automated conflict detection and alerts, automated notifications where required, and custom-built drill-down dashboard reporting on targeted KPIs for commanders, constitute an effective and affordable IBMS entry

proposition.

As a cloud-based web application that integrates and shares all required inputs, system data can be relayed on monitors around all common operating areas. And, in-keeping with the philosophy of 'train as you fight', SmartBase will be operable and supportable from deployed locations.

SmartBase will help to modernise air bases, embrace networks and data, and create a world-class, integrated, capable and inclusive Air Force. It will continue the legacy of FlightPRO's future-proofed technology platform delivered in a COTS environment to ensure supportability and sustainability. SmartBase will place data at the heart of an air base ecosystem, while protecting against cyber threat, enhancing compliance with appropriate standards of governance and improving efficiency.



RIAT is brought to book for 50th

A NEW history marking the 50th anniversary of the Royal International Air Tattoo has been published.

Aviation journalist Ben Dunnell has written the complete history of the Air Tattoo, from its birth in 1971 to the present day, featuring hundreds of dramatic photos by some of the world's leading aircraft photographers.

Charting the growth from its beginnings at North Weald airfield, *Air Tattoo 50 - The Story of the World's Greatest Airshow* describes how a small band of volunteers went on to create one of the most popular airshows in the world.

Air Tattoo founder member Tim Prince said: "This wonderful book gives an insight into the impressive RIAT 'family' that has worked tirelessly to uphold its reputation as the best, whilst overcoming some daunting challenges."

● Go to: www.airtattoo50book.com for more details.

Heading for a fall

New Falcons line-up eye anniversary chute-out

FOUR NEW parachutists have joined the RAF Falcons as the Forces chute stars prepare for the team's 60th anniversary display season next year.

Flt Lt Stuart Philpott comes in as the Deputy Officer Commanding while Sergeants Doug McAll and Paddy Guillois join as first year Falcons and Cpl Ross Gill is the team's new second survival equipment technician.

Flt Lt Philpott said: "Becoming a Falcon has been my ambition ever since I joined up 10 years ago. It is a huge privilege to be selected."

As Deputy Officer Commanding, he won't be display jumping this season but acts as Drop Zone Safety

Officer. Sgts McAll and Guillois will be conducting free fall training to attain the coveted instructor qualification.

Sgt Guillois said: "I grew up in Carterton so I saw the Falcons display frequently but never truly knew if it would be possible to do that myself."

"From the age of 15 I started to look into how to become a Falcon and began gearing my training towards it. This has always been my biggest goal."

Cpl Ross added: "I feel honoured and privileged to have been selected to join the team."

"I would like to use this opportunity to inspire the next generation of potential RAF recruits."



FLT LT PHILPOTT



SGT GUILLOIS



CPL ROSS



SGT MCALL

Gamers X-Box clever with esports gym

FORCES ESPORTS fans are combating the effects of Covid social distancing by turning their station gym into a gaming arena.

Halton personnel netted funding from RAF charities to equip the facility with the latest specialised kit which can be networked to take part in national contests.

The e-arena was set up by the Air Force Video Games and Esports Association, which secured backing from the RAF Central Fund and Nuffield Trust to buy 10 high-powered gaming PCs and two of the latest X-Box X consoles.

Station chiefs gave the scheme the go-ahead as part of a range of measures to reduce problems caused by the pandemic.

Halton Station Commander Gp Capt Dan Startup



said: "I can see all the benefits and it has real high-level backing and support, it's been a long time coming. It will allow people to connect with each other while doing something they love in safe and modern surroundings."

Esports is the Force's fastest growing activity and the esports arena allows users to connect with 1,000 other users and take part in more than 40 of the most popular games.



SPEED KING: Bloodhound driver Wg Cdr Andy Green during testing in South Africa in 2019

Bloodhound still in hunt for speed title

Staff Reporter

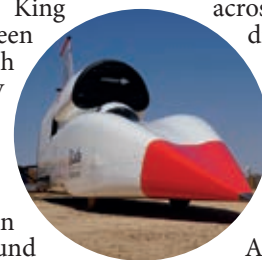
WORLD SPEED King Wg Cdr Andy Green says his bid to smash his own record by hitting 1,000mph in the rocket-powered Bloodhound car is still alive.

The project stalled in 2018 when Bloodhound plunged more than £20 million into the red and was placed into receivership.

The project was bailed out by UK

engineering tycoon Ian Warhurst and the team hit more than 600mph across the Hakskeen Pan - a dry river bed in South Africa - before the team hit financial problems once more.

Speaking in a Channel 4 TV documentary to be screened this Saturday, former combat pilot Andy says Bloodhound is still in the running to break the 770mph record he set with entrepreneur Richard Noble in the Thrust SSC in 1997.



See Sport p27 and p31

GAME ON: Gp Capt Dan Startup tests out the new Halton e-arena

Downed but not out



GUNNERS AND Chinook crews teamed up to hone their rescue skills during Exercise Crimson Warrior.

Trained teams from 3 Force Protection Wing and 15 Sqn RAF Regiment equipped with unmanned air systems

worked with Joint Terminal Attack Controllers to locate and recover 'downed' aircrew.

The missions marked the end of Exercise Crimson Warrior – the largest military manoeuvres run by the RAF for more than a decade.

At its height the training saw RAF, Royal Navy, United States Marine Corps and United States Air Force fast jets, multi-engine aircraft and helicopters operating from stations across the country.



Trio wing it at Cranwell

Staff Reporter

A TRIO of new RAF Weapons Systems Officers have graduated from 45 Sqn at Cranwell.

Flying Officers Alex Connor, Christian Sugden and Dan Wilkes received their coveted badges after completing their final three-week course learning the fundamentals of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance following a

rigorous flying phase with 57 Sqn and 750 NAS.

They will now join one of the RAF's cutting-edge ISTAR units.

OC 45 Sqn Wg Cdr James Radley said: 'I offer my congratulations to Alex, Christian and Dan, who have been awarded their flying badges after completing their WSO training.'

"I wish them every success as they move on to their next stage of training within the ISTAR Force."



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Photo of the week

AIR FORCE photographer Cpl Lee Matthews captured this shot of a C-17 Globemaster framed by a rainbow at RAF Brize Norton.



MINI ME: All-terrain buggy controlled by tank crew put to the test on Salisbury Plain

Downsize demo

DEFENCE CHIEFS have showcased cutting edge micro-military kit during trials at Salisbury Plain.

Tiny handheld surveillance UAVs and remotely operated all-terrain vehicles and buggies are among the developments that could soon be used on the frontline as part of a military technology drive.

In brief



MYSTERY: Gunner Corrie McKeague

Corrie inquest to be launched

Staff Reporter

AN INQUEST into the death of RAF Gunner Corrie McKeague is set to take place following a request by his family.

The 23-year-old Serviceman disappeared after a night out in Bury St Edmunds, close to RAF Honington where he was stationed, in the early hours in September, 2016.

A police search of a landfill site following claims Corrie may have climbed into a recycling bin to sleep failed to offer any clues.

DNA tests on human remains found in bin bags near a Suffolk river in 2018 were also inconclusive, Suffolk Police said.

A pre-inquest review will be held in early 2021 followed by a full inquest later in the year.

Speaking to reporters, Corrie's mother Nicola Urquhart said: "We'll never get closure, but this is just our way of being able to deal with what's happened and know that we have done everything that we could."

PLEA: Nicola Urquhart



FRENCH CONNECTION: President Macron and PM Boris Johnson



Anglo-French unit ready to deploy to global hot spots

Simon Mander

BRITAIN AND France have announced they are now capable of deploying a 10,000-strong joint military force to combat shared threats.

The announcement comes as both countries mark the 10th anniversary of the Lancaster House defence, security and nuclear treaties which established a long-term military partnership which will continue after the UK exits the EU.

The deal set up a Combined Joint Expeditionary Force of two of the world's strongest militaries.

And despite the impact of Covid-19 on training and exercises the force has now reached full operating capacity – ready to respond to high-intensity operations, peacekeeping, disaster relief or humanitarian assistance missions.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace



RAPID DEPLOYMENT: RAF and FAF Force Protection teams during training drill; inset right, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace

said: "The UK and France face a range of security threats of increasing scale and complexity. Having a highly capable, high-readiness force is essential if we are to protect both UK security

and the security of our Nato allies.

"It is testament to our close defence relationship that we have achieved all the milestones set

out in the Lancaster House treaties 10 years ago, working together to protect our mutual interests."

British and French paratroopers marked the milestone by joining forces for Exercise Wessex Storm on Salisbury Plain.

The Lancaster House treaties included other goals such as building a joint nuclear facility, increasing cooperation around the aircraft carriers and developing the UK and French complex weapons sectors.

Both nations are deployed in the Middle East, to combat Daesh, and Estonia, as part of Nato's Enhanced Forward Presence.

And in Mali, RAF Chinooks and 100 UK personnel support French counter-extremist operations.

● See p16-17 for full report





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Chinooks hit Mali mission milestone

Simon Mander

CHINOOK CREWS have praised the tanker team that keeps them flying as they mark two years supporting French counter-insurgency operations in West Africa.

The RAF detachment recently changed over its air frames with new helicopters being flown out by RAF Brize Norton-based 99 Sqn C-17s to allow vital maintenance to the heavy-lift battlefield workhorses.

Meanwhile, at Gao Air Base in Mali a four-strong Joint Helicopter Command Tactical Supply Wing team keep the 1310 Flight Chinooks topped up using giant Oshkosh Aircraft Refueller tankers holding 15,000 litres of fuel.

TSW detachment commander Cpl Russ Purcell said: "It's very satisfying to be able to put all of our training into practice in such a challenging situation and to see that our skills contribute to the successful completion of the various missions we are supporting."

Since 2018, the unit's role has increased, and they now routinely refuel RAF C-17 and Atlas A400Ms that sustain the operation.

Additionally, they support Danish Merlins and French Tiger helicopters at Gao by refuelling them without the engines being



shut down and the rotors still turning – a skill the RAF and Army Air Corps specialise in.

The UK's National Component Commander Lt Col Steve Brining said: "The role of JHC has been

critical to the success of the UK's helicopter operations in the African Sahel region."

Boeing Wedge pledge



COMMAND AND CONTROL: New Wedgetail will replace RAF's fleet of E-3D surveillance aircraft (inset below) PHOTO: BOEING

Simon Mander

CONVERSION WORK to turn commercial airliners into the RAF's latest battlespace management fleet will begin in the New Year.

Fuselage sections for the first two E-7 Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning Mk1 aircraft have arrived at STS Aviation Services in Birmingham.

Britain is expected to buy a fleet of five Wedgetails under a \$2 billion deal to replace Waddington's ageing E-3Ds.

"The arrival of the first fuselage sections at STS Aviation is a significant

milestone for the E-7 Wedgetail Programme," said Air Cdre Richard Barrow, who runs the procurement programme.



The 737 Next Generation airliner fuselages will house the E-7's multi-role electronically scanned array radar, to be installed in January.

Fellow defence contractor Leonardo will deliver its integrated defensive aids system, Thales UK will provide its Elix-IR threat warning system and Vicon XF the intelligent countermeasures dispensing system. Northrop Grumman makes the MESA radar.

Boeing Defence UK managing director Anna Keeling said: "We look forward to meeting the RAF's need for this advanced aircraft by delivering it on time and on budget."

The Wedgetail can track airborne and maritime targets simultaneously, allowing crews to direct forces while maintaining continuous surveillance of an operational area.

Currently in service around the world with the Royal Australian Air Force, it has seen action against Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

A total of 14 aircraft are in operation worldwide with others being used by the Korean and Turkish air forces.

Boeing began building military command and control aircraft in 1977, when it first modified a 707 airliner for the United States.

News bulletin



NEVER FORGET: The time capsule is put in place at the National Memorial Arboretum

Time to honour WWII heroes

Tracey Allen

THOUSANDS OF messages paying tribute to the men and women who took part in the Battle of Britain have been sealed in a time capsule to mark the 80th anniversary of the Battle's end.

The Royal Air Forces Association invited the public to document their gratitude so that future generations could experience the appreciation felt by people in 2020.

Almost 6,000 tributes – including some from celebrities – were sent to the charity, which sealed them in a capsule for burial in the Association's Remembrance Garden at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire.

The burial ceremony marked the 80th anniversary of the last daylight raid in the UK by the Luftwaffe – October 31, 1940.

Tributes inside the capsule included many from those whose family members served, and, in some cases, died, while in RAF service during the Battle of Britain. Others were written by serving and former RAF personnel paying tribute to their predecessors.

Former RAF fast jet pilot and ex-England rugby international Rory Underwood submitted a tribute for the capsule.

Among those present at the time capsule's burial was veteran Terry Whittaker, 83, from the RAF Association's Erewash branch in Derbyshire.

He said: "I salute all those who were involved – 'The Few' who flew and 'The Many' who supported them. Their sacrifices were great, but their legacy of freedom was greater."

AM Sir Baz North, the RAF Association's president, said: "We don't know when our time capsule will be dug up and opened, but we do know that whoever reads these tributes in the future will be bowled over by today's society's overwhelming gratitude to everyone who contributed to the Battle's hard-won victorious outcome."

finding
it tough?

~~MENTAL WELLBEING~~ COURSES 2020

 **ROYAL
AIR FORCES**
Association
The charity that supports the RAF family

"No really, it's all ~~good~~"

too
much!

Okay.

So if you really want to know - yeah - things are a bit tough at the moment. I'm a 27 year old mum, and sometimes I look at my friends whose partners come home every night, regular as clockwork, and I do feel a bit envious.

I'm so proud of Simon but I do have moments when he's away when it all gets on top of me a bit. Trying to juggle kids, work - I feel just a bit overwhelmed sometimes I guess. I know it's stupid - he's always there on the end of the phone and he's so supportive -

I just can't help how I feel sometimes.

He's due back next week. I can't wait for him to get home and everything to be normal again. We just need to get through the first few days of all living in the same house together again - he'll be tired, the kids will be over the top excited and I'll be in the middle....

But I'm not moaning. There's plenty worse off than me. Si's a great husband and a great dad. I just need to be positive. Get on top of things.

Then I'll be fine.

Promise x

Are you or someone you care about finding it tough? We are holding mental wellbeing training courses online for non-serving members of the RAF family.

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News bulletin



AWARD: Kitchen designer SAC Sean Carter

Reservists get Carter

A RESERVIST who volunteered for frontline Covid duty has scooped a top regional award.

Benson-based kitchen designer SAC Sean Carter was named as Oxfordshire's Best Reservist for helping to ensure Forces personnel deployed in the UK's fight against the virus have the kit they need.



RESTORATION: WWII bomber at Cosford

Welly reboot

THE RAF Museum Cosford's Conservation Centre Open Week has been cancelled due to the coronavirus lockdown this month. The Museum said it was hoped the event could be rescheduled for March 2021.

Experts were revamping a collection of iconic World War II aircraft including the legendary Wellington bomber.

Running total

A GROUP of runners who took on a gruelling challenge in aid of the National Memorial to The Few and the Kent Battle of Britain Museum Trust have smashed their £3,000 fundraising target.

FS Christopher Marsh and two civilian pals raised more than £7,400, running 80 miles over five days to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, along with profits from 'Running For The Few' T-shirts.

Supersonic display ace slows pace

A FORMER fast jet display pilot has been selected as a future leader of the iconic Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

RAF Coningsby-based 29 Sqn Executive Officer and instructor Sqn Ldr Mark Long will take command in 2024 to cover for the 2025-2027 seasons.

The four-year lead-in to the role is required to enable him to gain the necessary experience and instructor ratings on all the unit's single-engine aircraft types – Chipmunks, Hurricanes and five different marks

of Spitfire – and to become the public face of the high-profile flight.

Sqn Ldr Long, who was the Typhoon Display Pilot in 2016, said: "I am privileged to have the opportunity to join such a dedicated team."

Before then, the current OC BBMF, Sqn Ldr Mark Discombe, will hand over to his successor Sqn Ldr Mark Sugden, who will have completed four display seasons as a volunteer on the Flight by October 2021.



OLD SCHOOL RULES: Sqn Ldr Long will train on Spitfire and Hurricane ahead of move to BBMF
PHOTO: CPL SALLY RAIMONDO

Closing time at 'Syn City'

Matt Titchener

A SPECIALIST simulator centre developed to train frontline aircrews to operate with ground forces during the conflict in Afghanistan is to close after more than a decade.

The RAF Waddington-based Distributed Synthetic Air Land Trainer was set up as part of the Air Battlespace facility to help Army, RAF and Navy teams to hone their combat skills together in realistic synthetic battle scenarios.

The unit, launched in 2008, is to be replaced by a new Defence operational training centre next summer.

A spokesman said: "Initially commissioned as a capability and concept demonstrator, it was later expanded to become a key component for air and land integration training during the ISAF mission in Afghanistan."

"All participants were put through their paces with the use of highly demanding and realistic scenarios in a highly realistic training environment."

The centre was equipped with Tornados GR4, Typhoon and the E-3D via role-specific cockpits and mission simulators which could be networked across remote training centres to create complex combat training missions.

WHO DARES SIMS: Tornado GR4 simulator in action at the DSALT facility at Waddington. Inset below, Army teams join the virtual training during a live combat exercise
PHOTOS: MOD



In 2016 a Navy Type-45 from the training system at HMS Collingwood was linked for the first time, during Exercise Virtual Fury.

It has also been digitally linked to the USAF and Canadian Royal Air Force during large scale synthetic

training exercises, supported by defence contractors QinetiQ, Boeing Defence UK, Inzpire and Plexsy.

A spokesman added: "Over the years there have been many awards bestowed on us, including a Royal Aeronautical Society medal and

industry innovation award.

"Perhaps though the highest plaudits came from Army units, many of whom reflect upon DSALT as having provided high quality, invaluable training that was widely acknowledged to have saved countless lives on operations."

DECADE OF NEW ENTENTE CORDIALE

Joint Anglo-French expeditionary force 10th-year landmark



AFRICA OPS: RAF Chinook helps the French military in war-torn Mali under the joint cooperation agreement

B RITISH AIRCREW who have fought alongside French allies as part of the new Combined Joint Expeditionary Force have told *RAF News* of their experiences.

Their accounts mark the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Lancaster House agreement, which set up a 10,000-strong joint military force to combat shared threats.

Fast Jet Weapons Systems Officer Capitaine, or Flight Lieutenant Alex Lock, is the sole British aviator deployed in a combat role on Op Barkhane – the French counter-Islamist insurgency campaign in Africa.

The Tornado veteran (pictured right) is embedded in a French fighter squadron operating the Mirage 2000D.

He said: “Eight years on the Tornado GR4 allows me to share my own previous operational experience whilst at the same time observing a different perspective into combat operations, specifically those in the Sahel region of Africa.”

Flt Lt Lock graduated from the Mirage 2000D Operational Conversion Unit in March and was posted to the frontline 3/3 ‘Ardennes’ Escadron de Chasse, based in Nancy, North East France.

“This training included a variety of different missions in order to understand the different

tactics and techniques used by the French Air Force, as well as learning to operate effectively in a second language,” he said.

“The missions were several Close Air Support exercises with French and German Air Controllers to master the weapons systems before deploying to Africa.”

He then joined nine flying crews arriving at Niamey Air Base in Niger, 250km south of the border region between Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali.

“As the only Fast Jet air asset based in this theatre, it was our detachment’s responsibility to provide air support to all deployed European and local ground forces in the Sahel,” said Flt Lt Lock.

“Along with air-to-air refuelling aircraft, we would typically launch two patrols each day, as well as having two aircraft on a permanent 24/7 alert status; ready to scramble in case of an emergency situation developing on the ground.”

He said each patrol lasted for five to six hours and could include: providing air support to infantry units and supply convoys; searching for suspicious activity or improvised bomb emplacements; or photographic reconnaissance tasks providing up to date imagery for intelligence analysts.

“After already having spent a year embedded

within this squadron, it is clear that our two nations have much that we can learn from each other,” he said.

A 400M pilot Flt Lt Geoff Craggs has seen first-hand some of the 47 French casualties of fighting in Mali and the Sahel.

“I have had the sad but privileged occasion to repatriate fallen French colleagues on two different occasions,” he said.



POWER COUPLE: A Royal Air Force Typhoon of 1(F) Squadron (top) and a French Air Force Mirage 2000N practise their formation flying skills during Exercise Capable Eagle in 2013



TRAINING: RAF Regiment and French colleagues in 2019

“It reminded me entirely of the times I have been called upon to furnish the same service to my British colleagues and how important it is to the families that their loved ones are returned with respect and speed.”

After tuition at the Airbus Training Centre, Seville, with four French colleagues, Flt Lt Craggs was posted to 1/61 Transport

Squadron, where he is now an instructor.

“I am using my knowledge and experience to train young French pilots to operate in destinations ranging from French Guyana to Martinique, to the Island of La Reunion in the Indian Ocean,” he said.

“I spend the majority of my time in support of Operations in

the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa, where I have conducted aerial delivery and landings on unprepared runways both for operational and training purposes.”

The former C130-J veteran, who developed Night Vision Goggle training at RAF Brize Norton, is now teaching French aviators how to operate the A400M tactically in darkness.

Joint Force Facts



TIES: Former CAS Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton and his French counterpart Général Denis Mercier renew the annual agreement between their respective countries (2013)

● Since 1995, France and the United Kingdom, Europe’s only nuclear powers, have clearly stated that they can imagine no circumstances under which a threat to the vital interests of one would not constitute a threat to the vital interests of the other.

● The two nations invest nearly 40 percent of Europe’s defence budget, and more than half of its spending on research and technology.

● By the early 2020s both countries hope to deploy a UK-French integrated carrier strike group – HMS Queen Elizabeth will begin working with the Charles de Gaulle on this next year for the first time.

● Both countries are developing the Sea Venom anti-surface missile, soon to enter UK service, and an autonomous mine-hunting system.

● Under the Teutates Treaty both nations signed up to a joint nuclear facility at Valduc in France to model the performance of nuclear warheads and materials – supported by a joint Technology Demonstration Centre at Aldermaston.



COOPERATION: Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford and General Denis Mercier at RAF Leeming in 2013

Announcements

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- Puzzles**
- P8

R'n'R



**Win: DVD
comedy
collections**
● p5

**The power of dance –
Strictly live ● p4-5**

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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A boarding community of over 580 youngsters, aged 7 to 18, live in comfortable houses, looked after by dedicated houseparents and a wide range

of professionals from nurses to caterers, all offering the most caring pastoral support. This gives just a flavour of what makes a Bromsgrove pupil so successful in their future careers.

Pupils start at the Prep School at age 7, many progressing from the School's own Pre-Preparatory School.

At Prep School academic and extra-curricular horizons naturally wide; the curriculum is broad and enriching and the opportunities for sport and extra-curricular activities are extensive.

With national level sports teams, award winning choirs and musicians, and multiple individual honours, whatever your child shows a talent or interest in we aim develop

them to their full potential.

Senior School is where pupils become more independent in their learning both in and out of the classroom.

The activities programme encourages them to take on responsibilities and to develop more skills whether that's in programming robots, taking part in music and drama, CCF and kitcar teams or editing the award winning pupil magazine there is something for everyone.

***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.**

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NEW ALBUM: Rockers are back

SINCE THEIR last tour in 2016 – with vocalist Brian Johnson's withdrawal due to hearing issues, bassist Cliff Williams' retirement and the tragic loss of founding member Malcolm Young – it might have looked like the curtain had come down for AC/DC – but the legendary band are back.

They recently released their comeback single *Shot in the Dark* from their new studio album, *Power Up*, that reunites mainstay Angus Young with Johnson, Williams and drummer Phil Rudd, and cousin Stevie Young, alongside long-term producer Brendan O'Brien. It's their first new music since 2014.

Cliff said: "We finished the last tour and took a break for a little while. Sony got in touch with Angus and asked him if he wanted to do something, so he contacted Brian, Phil and myself to see if we would like to do another album, very much with Malcolm in mind. We leapt at the chance to do it."

Brian agreed, adding: "When we got into the studio in Vancouver, there was a real electricity in that room. I can't quite describe it and we aren't spiritual people, but Malcolm was there. He was such a very strong character, I don't think him passing away would change anything. It's a tribute to Malcolm, as *Back in Black* was a tribute to Bon Scott."

Asked to pick his favourite tracks from the new album that he would add to the setlist, Brian said: "*Through the Mists of Time* is a real favourite of mine. All I could see was the good times and the happy times that the song was written about, back in the 1980s. Things were simpler then than they are now and we had a ball just playing rock 'n' roll. I can see Malcolm in it too, so I really love it."

With the current Covid-19 pandemic, it'll be a while before fans can see AC/DC – formed in 1973 – on tour again.

Cliff said: "Maybe next year if everything is more on an even keel, we can get to do some live work."

Four years ago, Brian's hearing loss forced him to withdraw from the band, leaving Guns N' Roses frontman Axl Rose to step in for the final dates of AC/DC's *Rock or Bust* world tour.

Brian said: "It was a bad time, like being separated from your family. I was despairing a bit, to be



BIG LOSS: Original member Malcolm Young

honest, so I had to man up a bit. I said to myself: 'You're 68 and it's not terminal. There's people around the world going through terrible things, so stop feeling sorry for yourself.'

"I didn't think I would ever have a chance to get back out again, but thankfully technology came to the rescue. A fella called Stephen Ambrose, an inventor and a professor of audio, came to see me in Florida and sat with me for two days. I couldn't believe what I was hearing – and I was hearing. His device was huge though, so we had to miniaturise it, which took three years."

That last tour also saw Cliff retire from the band at its close but, like Brian, he couldn't say no when the chance to get the old gang back together arose.

He said: "I couldn't face doing another two-year tour, so it felt over for me. Then this new album came up and it was going to be Brian, Phil, Angus and Stevie. I leapt at the chance to do it, but again, very much with Mal in mind. It was a no-brainer, I definitely wanted to be there."

Brian added: "Getting back together with the lads was great. We didn't know if it would work really. As I said, it was all for Mal. For us too, but it was all for Mal."

■ **Go to:** pwrap.acdc.com for more information.

Interview by Jules Boyle

WITH HALLOWEEN just gone and the dark winter nights drawing in, it's the perfect time of year for a spooky film fest, and we have teamed up with the guys at Network to give away some fright night favourites.

Network is the one-stop website for classic TV and cinema, providing an extensive catalogue of both nostalgia and new releases for film buffs of all ages. It also has a streaming service on its networkonair channel with cult TV series

collections from *Dangerman* and *The Professionals* to *Within These Walls* and comedy classics such as *The Lovers* and *The Likely Lads* movies.

We have a collection of Blu-ray titles from Network to win, including Nigel Kneale's spine-tingling adaptation of Susan Hill's *The Woman in Black*. It is the first time the original 1989 ITV production of the Gothic horror has been available. Or watch Kim Stanley and Richard Attenborough in *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, where



Win!

fright night film bundle

a weak-willed husband is persuaded to fake a kidnapping by his highly-strung spiritual medium wife.

And there's *Edgar Wallace Presents: Circus of Fear*, from the classic 1960s TV series.

Comedy legend Frankie Howerd engages in some hilarious shenanigans in the 1970s British horror *The House in Nightmare Park*. The film sees Howerd as Foster Twelvetees, a struggling actor invited to a country house to perform for a well-off family,

before the comic chills begin.

We have two prizes to give away – the first winner selected will receive a copy of *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, *Edgar Wallace Presents: Circus of Fear* and *The House in Nightmare Park* plus *The Woman in Black*. The runner-up wins the first three titles.

To view the full catalogue of films and TV shows

available visit: networkonair.com.

To enter, simply answer the following question:

What is the name of Frankie Howerd's character in *The House in Nightmare Park*?

Email your answer, marked: Horror Blu-ray competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk or post it to our usual address – see page three of the main paper, to arrive by November 27.





Music
Chris Kamara
...And A Happy New Year

Kam all ye faithful ...Chris returns with a new festive cracker



UNBELIEVABLE:
Kammy is a surprise
hit as a crooner

HE WAS one of the surprise contenders for the Christmas charts last year and now Chris 'Kammy' Kamara is ready to go again.

The Sky Sports reporter's 2019 festive album *Here's To Christmas* got to number eight in the UK album charts. The follow-up, *...And A Happy New Year*, is released on November 27.

Kamara said: "I had a wonderful experience the last time, but I thought that would have been it. It was so well received and to have a Top 10 album, to coin a phrase, was unbelievable. My label had other ideas and told me they were planning a 21-date tour for November and December, which sadly got cancelled due to Covid."

Recording the second album under Covid restrictions meant a change in how it was done.

Kammy said: "Last year was such a wonderful experience with the big band, it's a shame we never got to do that again. I had a 23-piece band with a conductor – the stuff that dreams are made of."

"This time around, each section, understandably, had to record on different days for safety reasons. The string section had to record remotely from Sofia, Bulgaria, and I did my own part separately too. It's all been put together brilliantly though."

"It's devastating for these musicians not to be able to get out and do what they do. The entire band and conductor had the tour booked in their diaries for last November and December. At least each section managed to get back together for the first time in many months to make music together."

He added: "I still can't quite believe how well the first album did. As well as the main charts, we were five weeks at number one in the Jazz Charts. It was such a privilege and an honour to have achieved that."

He has no plans to give up the day job. As one of the most well-known faces on Sky Sports' *Gillette Soccer Saturday* and *Goals On Sunday* he's doing something he loves, even if it's a whole new ballgame in 2020.

He said: "It's been 22 years I've been doing it and I love it dearly. Covid has changed everything, including the game itself, so understandably it's also affecting football coverage. *Goals On Sunday* was dropped because of it back in March and it still hasn't come back with the new season as there's not enough Premier League games on a Saturday to justify a show on a Sunday morning, which is disappointing and sad. It's the absence of fans that's the real sad thing, though."

"We could get 33 per cent of fans in any stadium, all socially distanced. If they can do it indoors at the London Palladium, why can't they do it outdoors at a football game? I understand it's football at a time when society is closing down and people are losing their jobs, so I fully appreciate safety and health is paramount, but there must be a way to do it. I really hope they work it out soon. There are still some great games being played but football really misses the fans."

As well as hoping to see fans back at football stadiums, Kammy has his own more personal hopes for the future.

He said: "The 21-date tour was cancelled, but if the new album is successful, who knows? Maybe we can get to do it next year when it's safe for everyone to come and see it. The dream of all dreams is to sing at the Royal Albert Hall, but just to get out and tour with the band, to play in front of people and hopefully put a smile on their faces, I'd truly love that. Wouldn't that just be unbelievable?"

Interview by Jules Boyle

The Big Event

C4 festive viewing

Make a date with Fred

Dish of the day could be right up your Street this Christmas

EVERYONE'S FAVOURITE maitre d', Fred Sirieux – breakout star of *First Dates* – is among the top names heading Channel Four's Christmas and New Year schedule.

In the *Snackmasters* Christmas special Fred pits a top chocolatier against a virtuoso pastry chef to replicate one of the nation's most-loved festive chocolate brands – Quality Street.

The chefs must work out the secret techniques and recipes behind these household favourites before creating their own replicas to be judged by a panel of Quality Street insiders and experts.

As you'd expect for the time of year, food looms large in the schedule, with two festive specials from Jamie Oliver, plus the *Great Christmas Bake Off* then the *Great Festive Bake Off*, which sees the hosts and judges reunited after Christmas and back in the tent. Joining them are four bakers from previous series, all hoping to impress Paul and Prue (inset below) with their skills and creativity to take home the coveted Festive Star Baker title.

In *Luxury Christmas For Less* Sabrina Grant and Helen Skelton will lift the lid on the Christmas supermarket shop and show viewers how to get the best quality items for the lowest prices. They speak to supermarket insiders who spend all year developing the top Christmas ranges and across all the major supermarkets Sabrina and Helen uncover what goes into our favourite foods and find out how to get a luxury Christmas for less.

They reveal when it's cheapest to buy your Christmas essentials, how supermarket prices fluctuate wildly in the run-up to the big day, which products in



FAMILY FAVOURITE: But can top chefs replicate Quality Street chocs for Fred Sirieux (above)?

discounted stores are the same quality as in the more expensive supermarkets – and which aren't, the secret role party food plays in getting us to spend more than we need to and how to get the same amount of fizzy bubbles for half the price.

This year, for *Kirstie's Handmade Christmas*, Kirstie Allsopp has got herself an elf – in the shape of her *Location, Location, Location* co-presenter Phil Spencer. A Channel Four spokesperson said Phil will be 'crafting up a storm, from ice sculpting to woodworking, he'll be throwing himself into the Christmas crafting vibe.'



As well as showcasing Phil's crafty talents, in the 10-part series Kirstie will oversee a daily competition among the country's best crafters, battling it out to be crowned champion.

A Christmas childhood fantasy for many comes true for three celebrities who will be spending *One Night In... Hamleys*. The show sees three of the nation's best-loved comedians (to be announced) locked overnight in world-famous toy shop Hamleys on London's Regent Street.

With no security guards or 'grown-ups' there to hamper the fun, the comics can run wild for the night and do all the things they dreamed of doing in a toy



WALLIAMS: On a flight of fancy with film car Chitty

shop when they were kids. It's *A Night At The Museum* meets *Big* as the celebs run amok, snoop around, raid the shelves, chat about Christmas, invent daft games to play, test toys and reminisce with funny festive stories, as they hang out after hours and unsupervised in the fun emporium.

They'll be set challenges they have to complete within the store, and the only rules are – no sleeping and if they break

it, they pay for it. They can do anything they like, just as long as they're out of the store before the cleaners arrive and the shutters go up the next morning.

And to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the film *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* bestselling children's author and die-hard Chitty fan David Walliams presents *Chitty Flies Again*, in which he attempts a phantasmagorical engineering feat like no other – he wants to bring magic to life by building a real life *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* car that will actually fly.

To help him in this madcap experiment of a lifetime, he'll be recruiting his very own Caractacus Potts (aircraft engineer Tony Hoskins) to build his car. And a class of eight-year-old primary school children will help him unpack each magical ingredient that went into creating one of the most enduring children's films in history.

Walliams will delve into the history of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, from its inception by James Bond author Ian Fleming, to its adaption for the screen by another literary legend, Roald Dahl.

He'll explore a wealth of unseen behind the scenes material and meet original cast and crew members, super-fans and real-life inventors inspired by the original.

This feature-length film follows Walliams's attempt to achieve a world first and pull off a Christmas miracle – can he make Chitty fly?



IN DEMAND: *Strictly*
pro Dianne Buswell



Competition DVDs

Ted Thunder Buddies Collection/Smokey and The Bandit: The Complete Collection – both Fabulous Film Ltd/Fremantle Media Enterprises

Win!

Seth's bear necessities

FAMILY GUY creator Seth MacFarlane not only wrote and directed the hit comedy *Ted* about a cherished childhood toy that comes to life, he also voiced the drinking, smoking, teddy bear that's the best friend of his owner John Bennett (Mark Wahlberg, *The Departed*).

The soft toy, brought to life by a shooting star and a magical wish, causes chaos for John in the film that went on to win best comedy title at the Empire Awards.

MacFarlane even co-wrote the movie's opening theme *Everybody Needs a Best Friend*, sung by Norah Jones.

The cast also features Mila Kunis (*Bad Moms*) and Giovanni Ribisi (*Avatar*).

We have copies of the *Ted & Ted2 Thunder Buddies Collection* box sets on DVD up for grabs. For your chance to own one, simply tell us:

Who wrote and directed *Ted*?

Email your answer, marked Ted Box Set 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 November 27.

We also have the box set of a classic comedy caper to win – *Smokey and The Bandit: The Complete Collection*, starring Burt Reynolds as The



Bandit, Sally Field as Carrie and Jackie Gleason as The Bandit's arch-enemy Sheriff Buford T. Justice

In the first of the trilogy, *Smokey and The Bandit*, Reynolds's character is hired to illegally deliver 400 cases of Coors beer from Texas to Atlanta in 28 hours... without getting stopped. In the sequel *Smokey and the Bandit Ride Again*, Reynolds, Field and Gleason team up again as a raucous political race results in the comeback of The Bandit's wild ways. And in *Smokey and the Bandit III* Gleason, Paul Williams, Jerry Reed and Pat McCormick reprise their original roles, with a special appearance by Reynolds as The Real Bandit.

To be in with a chance of winning this entertaining box set, answer this question correctly:

Who plays Carrie in *Smokey and The Bandit*?

Email your answer, marked Smokey DVDs competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk or post it to the address opposite to arrive by November 27.



Competition Blu-ray

Mothra (Eureka Entertainment)

Win!

The winged avenger

THE CLASSIC Japanese monster movie *Mothra* is now available on Blu-ray in the UK for the first time – and you could win a copy in our competition.

The Blu-ray release is part of the *Masters of Cinema Series* in a limited edition set of only 3,000 copies, featuring a hardbound case, 60-page perfect bound collector's book and reversible poster.

Mothra (pictured), described as a stunningly-inventive monster adventure-fantasy, was directed by the influential film maker Ishiro Honda, credited as the creator of Godzilla.

One of the most iconic Japanese kaiju (a Japanese genre of films featuring giant monsters), *Mothra* has appeared in more than a dozen feature films. Here, she stars in her 1961 debut.

Following reports of human life on Infant Island, the supposedly deserted site of atomic bomb tests,

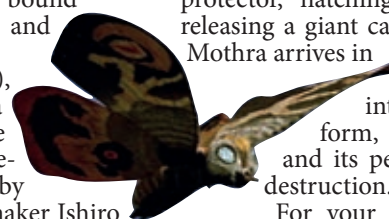
an international expedition to the heavily-radiated island discovers a native tribe and tiny twin female fairies called 'Shobijin' who guard a sacred egg.

The overzealous expedition leader kidnaps the Shobijin to exhibit in a Tokyo stage show but soon they summon their protector, hatching the egg and releasing a giant caterpillar. When *Mothra* arrives in Japan and transforms into her final form, the nation and its people face their destruction.

For your chance to win one of the special limited edition copies of *Mothra* on Blu-Ray, send us the correct answer to this question:

Who directed *Mothra*?

Email your answer, marked Mothra Blu-Ray competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk or post it to our usual address (see page 3 of main paper) to arrive by November 27.



Strictly hoping for return of big live shows

STRICTLY COME DANCING fans are in for a treat once live entertainment venues re-open – over the next 18 months there will be three live *Strictly* shows touring the UK.

The *Strictly Come Dancing Live Arena Tour* will return in 2022, kicking off in Birmingham on January 20. A host of celebrities and professional dancers from the hit BBC One series will perform 33 shows in some of the UK's biggest arenas in Leeds, Newcastle,

Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, Glasgow, Nottingham and London.

As a result of Covid-19 restrictions – and to keep everyone safe – the 2021 arena tour will not go ahead, but tickets for the 2022 arena tour are now on sale.

For those who can't wait until 2022 to see their favourite *Strictly* stars hit the dance floor, summer 2021 will hopefully see two productions touring the country, with *Strictly* professional dancers and special guests.

Following the success of the 2019 event, *Strictly Come Dancing: The Professionals* will return for a month-long tour, opening on May 7 at the Brighton Centre, then visiting venues including London, Liverpool, Nottingham, Birmingham, Oxford, Portsmouth and Cardiff, before finishing in Edinburgh on June 4.

The show will feature a line-up of pro dancers including Australian open champion and 2018 finalist Dianne Buswell, two-time ballroom and Latin world champion Nadiya

Bychkova; Italian Latin champion Graziano Di Prima; professional world mambo champion and former *Strictly* finalist Karen Hauer; 2017 *Strictly* champion Katya Jones; undefeated four-time British national champion Neil Jones; 2017 *Strictly* finalist Gorka Marquez; four-time Italian Dance championship winner Luba Mushtuk; two-time *Strictly Come Dancing South Africa* finalist Johannes Radebe

and *Dancing With the Stars* Ireland professional dancer Kai Widdrington.

Next year will also see a nationwide touring show – *Strictly Presents: The Power of Dance*, with professional dancers Janette Manrara, Dianne Buswell, Amy Dowden and Neil Jones, together with two special guest stars to be announced soon.

Kicking off in Halifax on June 22, 2021, the tour will

then travel around the UK for 23 dates, before culminating in Wolverhampton on July 17.

For more details and to buy tickets go to: strictlycomedancinglive.com, strictlytheprofessionals.com and strictlypresents.com.



Your Announcements

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

Birthday

FORMER Warrant Officer Reginald Parsons has celebrated his 100th birthday. Gp Capt Mike Trace, a Deputy Lieutenant for Cornwall, and Sqn Ldr Val Lomas and WO Alfie Bass from RAF ST Mawgan attended WO Parsons' birthday celebrations at his home in Goonhavern, North Cornwall, on November 1. Gp Capt Trace presented WO Parsons with a birthday card from The Queen.



WO Reginald Parsons

WO Parsons' RAF career spanned 34 years and he has written two books about his military service – *Z for Zebra* and *Curve of Pursuit*. During World War II he served as a flight engineer and air gunner with 230 Squadron on Sunderland flying boats. WO Parsons and his crew undertook operations against enemy submarines and shipping above the Arctic Circle protecting convoys bound for Russia. In Burma they carried out attacks against shipping in the Gulf of Siam and the South China seas, search and rescue missions and, at the end of the war, the delivery of humanitarian supplies. Today's 230 Sqn, a Puma helicopter squadron at RAF Benson, sent WO Parsons a birthday card, a signed print of a Puma helicopter and a framed photograph of the Tiger-painted Puma HC Mk2 helicopter.

Death

FIELD-RICHARDS Nigel Wg Cdr, passed away on July 26 after a long struggle with cancer. He was born in 1939 and, after attending Wellington College, joined the RAF in 1958 as a cadet at RAF Henlow. There he achieved an HND in Electrical Engineering. He also attended an RAF Aerosystems Engineering Course (MSc) and spent time at the Staff College. He became an Engineering Officer on assignments in the UK for avionic, radar and sighting systems. This included time at RAF Wattisham, supporting Lightnings, Binbrook and Upavon. He spent two years at Fort Worth, Texas in General Dynamics' production facility for F111s. After returning from the USA in 1971 he became project manager for post design services for French helicopter weapon systems. This continued until 1974 when, as Wg Cdr, he joined the Skyflash missile programme.



Wg Cdr Nigel Field-Richards

In 1976 he was appointed Officer Commanding Tactical Communications Wing, a combined RAF/Army unit providing mobile communications and navigation aids worldwide in support of air operations. He served out the remaining two years before retiring

from the RAF in 1979 as Senior Officer on the staff at HQ Strike Command, involved in the development of communications systems. As a change of career at the age of 40, he joined Rockware Plastics Ltd where he became managing director of a subsidiary of the original company (Rockware Plastics (Kingston)). In 1989 he left to become managing director of Precision Mouldings Ltd within the CH Industrials Group, recruited to turn round a business that was losing money and in decline. After a successful time with the company he took up a post in Malaysia with Swilynn International Holdings as general manager for a plastics moulding and tape coating factory. From 1993–1994 he took the TEFLA (Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults) course at Concorde Language School in Folkestone and then taught freelance for a year. From 1994–1995 he became general manager of a Saudi company based in Jeddah making PVC pipes and windows. From 1995 until he retired in 1998 he joined the African Management Services Company (AMSCO) supporting a family-owned company based in Nairobi, Kenya, making plastic containers and sheeting. He and his wife Jeannie retired to Somerset, enjoying village life in Chiselborough where golf became a frequent pastime (as well as visits to the Alps for skiing when possible). They became occasional 'expats' living for several months a year in the Lot-et-Garonne region of France where they played host to their many friends and relatives. Sadly Jeannie died of cancer in 2019 shortly after Nigel was diagnosed with the same condition. He is survived by a son, Nicky, and five granddaughters.

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@telco4u.net 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 2021. Email: peterpriscott@aol.com or call: 01842 878554.

RAF Bawdsey Reunion Association. Due to the coronavirus pandemic we regrettably had to cancel the annual reunion in the summer. We have provisionally planned the next reunion for Saturday, June 5, 2021 and look forward to seeing our friends again then. In the meantime we wish you all a safe and healthy time during this unprecedented period. If you have any queries please email: doreen.bawdseyreunion@btinternet.com or call: 07513 301723.

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.

RAF Scampton window

VULCAN FANS can buy collectable signed photographs of XH558 – signed by Wg Cdr Bill Ramsay who captained and piloted the aircraft on its final journey – for the Scampton Church RAF Scampton commemorative stained-glass window appeal.

Project co-ordinator Joe Bartrop said all proceeds from sales will go towards the Commemorative Window Appeal. Email: rafwindow@scamptonchurch.org.

Association pays tribute to 84 Sqn

A COMMEMORATION at the National Memorial Arboretum was held by 84 Squadron Association to honour those who had served on the squadron in the Far East from January 1942 onwards.

The squadron suffered many losses during World War II and up to 450 members were taken as prisoners of war.

The former Chaplain-in-Chief of the RAF, The Venerable Ron Hesketh, officiated and two wreaths were laid. The first, on behalf



Award winners join in virtual ceremony

DESPITE ONGOING Covid-19 restrictions, the annual LG Groves Awards Ceremony went ahead this year, held remotely via conferencing facility Zoom.

Presented annually since 1946, the awards were established in memory of Sgt Louis Grimble Groves, RAFVR, of 517 Squadron Coastal Command, who lost his life while flying on a meteorological sortie on September 10, 1945.

Intended to encourage the safety of aircraft and flying personnel and to stimulate research in the science of meteorology to aviation, while also recognising the work of those involved in meteorological observer duties, the awards are open to personnel from all three Services, the Meteorological Office and civilian support staff.

Hosted by Project Officer Sqn Ldr Nick Anthony, the award winners were praised

of the current 84 Sqn, was placed by Christopher 'Mick' Girlow, now 102, (pictured, inset) who served on 84 Sqn from July 1942 onwards as a Wireless Operator. The second wreath was placed by Jane and Robyn Lisle, the daughter and granddaughter of Wg Cdr Arthur Gill, who became OC 84 Sqn towards the end of WWII.

Paul Critchley, the Association's chairman, opened the ceremony with a brief history of 84 Sqn's Far East involvement.

Association President Mr Brendan Cottrell concluded the event, reading the names of 10 of the PoWs who regularly attended the 84 Sqn annual reunions, followed by the Kohima Epitaph.

A spokesman for the association said: "Despite the Covid restrictions the setting and the commemoration created a fitting tribute to every member of 84 Sqn who 'Gave Their Today' in the Far East."



Your Announcements

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

Former RAF nurse Joan is 101

A FORMER member of Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service, who remembers marching in the first Battle of Britain parade, celebrated her 101st birthday recently.

Joan Cool joined PMRAFNS in 1943 at RAF Halton and reached the rank of Flying Officer.

She remembered: "I think there were about eight sisters taking part, but we had never done any drilling and we marched past the King on the saluting base at Buckingham Palace."

She was later posted to the RAF Hospital at Wroughton, Swindon, a casualty clearing station for D-Day. "We used to take in casualties every other night so we could deal with things that needed doing, then they would be passed on



MANY HAPPY RETURNS: Joan Cool, 101, with pilot birthday bear Rupert. Inset, in uniform in 1943

to a hospital probably nearer to their hometown. It was sad in a way because they were the youth of our generation. It was such a waste," she said.

After the war, Joan got a job as an industrial nurse at hat manufacturers Christy and Co, where she met her husband John. They married in January 1948 and had two children, Jaqueline and Michael.

Asked about her longevity, Joan said: "I had two great-aunts, one lived until 102 and the other lived until she was 105."

A resident of care home

Regis, Joan celebrated her special birthday with lunch with Michael, a retired Air Traffic Control Officer, and her daughter-in-law.

Joan was presented with a 'pilot' teddy bear by the Royal Air Forces Association's Bridport and Lyme Regis branch. She has named it Rupert after a Sqn Ldr she first met during WWII at the Aircrew Receiving Centre at RAF Abbey Lodge in London who had escaped after being shot down over France. Their paths crossed again when she was posted to the RAF Hospital in Gütersloh,



Flight of a lifetime

THE DAUGHTER of a World War II Hurricane pilot has achieved a long-held ambition after she flew in the same aircraft her father piloted during combat.

Eugenie Brooks fulfilled her dream of flying in Hurricane BE505 L-XP last month in memory of her father, Pilot Officer John William Brooks DFC DFM, who served with 174 (Mauritius) Squadron.

With pilot Anna Walker, Eugenie took off for an unforgettable trip from Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar – in what is now the world's only two-seater Hurricane – to the white cliffs of Dover, before flying over RAF Manston, Plt Off Brooks' wartime base.

Throughout the flight Eugenie carried a photograph of her father in the aircraft's

After her memorable flight, she said: "I did this not only for my Dad but for all those brave pilots who did not survive. My Dad was the best in the world and this flight in his old aircraft with his serial number has made my life complete."

The two-seater Hurricane is currently part of Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar's fleet. Eugenie revealed it was her father's favourite aircraft.

Robin Brooks from Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar said: "Eugenie's day at the Hangar and her flight was filmed for a feature-length TV programme to be shown early next year on the Yesterday channel."

READY FOR TAKE OFF: Above, Eugenie Brooks in Hurricane BE505 L-XP's cockpit; inset, her father Plt Off

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. 285

Solve the crossword, then rearrange the 10 letters in yellow squares to find an RAF word

Across

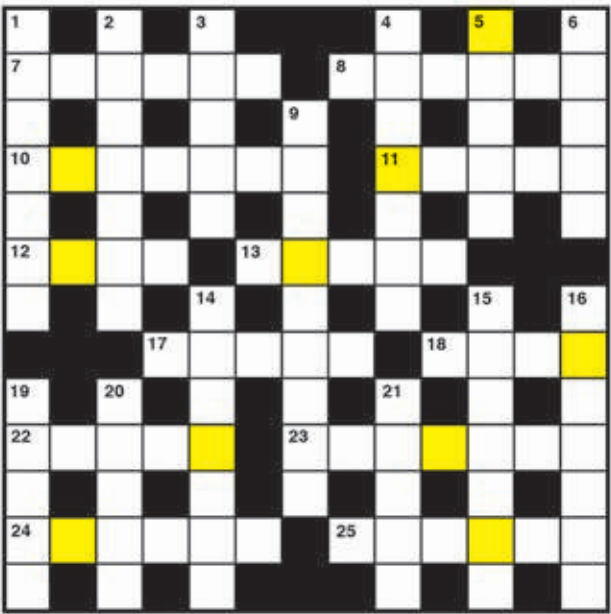
- 7. A group of directors sailing (6)
- 8. State Cameron returns in middle of North Atlantic (6)
- 10. For all that, Theresa's first idea was the answer (7)
- 11. First percussionists used large sticks establishing rhythm (5)
- 12. I swindle Winston Churchill, say (4)
- 13. Show off female Whip (5)
- 17. Pleasantly warm for graduate left outside Mandalay (5)
- 18. Ancient queen accomplished nothing (4)
- 22. Duck has grim smell (5)
- 23. One turn produces particle (7)
- 24. Leonard returns issue featuring his column (6)
- 25. And 5 Down. US plane hit bird of prey (6,5)

Down

- 1. Maybe Football Association train at one of our ranges (3,4)
- 2. Working alone, my French king is very wise (7)
- 3. Green jumpers (5)
- 4. Storm around RAF's next combat jet (7)
- 5. See 25 Across
- 6. See 9 Down
- 9. And 6 Down. Good man merciful to Scandinavians in church (2,7,5)
- 14. See 19 Down
- 15. Perhaps attack pointlessly dire aria (3-4)
- 16. At this stage of competition the Spanish use our mark (7)
- 19. And 14 Down. Exercise knee, for example, on fighter (5,7)
- 20. Cycling great has lines of Christmas shrub (5)
- 21. Wind round with enthusiasm (5)

Name
Address
.....
.....
RAF word Crossword No. 285

The winners of Prize Crossword 285 and Prize Su Doku 295 will be published in our November 27 edition. Send entries to the address printed in the Su Doku panel opposite

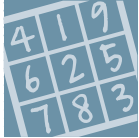


■ The winner of Crossword No. 284 is Mr F Brown of Portsmouth.

Solution to Crossword No. 284:

Across – 7. Norton 8. Heroes 10. Chapati 11. Plate 12. Raid 13. Blood 17. Brize 18. Bomb 22. Tiara 23. Indiana 24. Flight 25. Geneva
Down – 1. Unicorn 2. Croatia 3. Royal 4. Help For 5. Molar 6. Ashes 9. Big Lizzie 14. Breathe 15. Voyager 16. Abraham 19. Stiff 20. Panic 21. Adder

RAF word – Dambusters

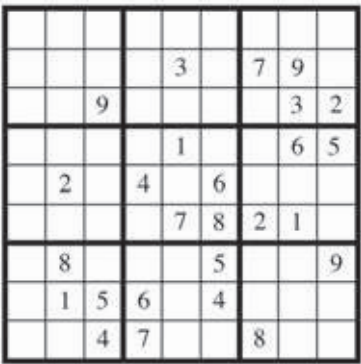


Prize Su Doku

No. 295

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 November 13, 2020.

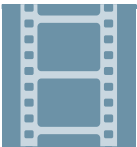


Name
.....
Address
.....
..... Su Doku No. 295

Solution to Su Doku No: 294



■ The winner of Su Doku No. 294 is J Acott of Ipswich.



Film Review

The Three Kings (12)

In cinemas now and on DVD and digital download from November 16. Available to pre-order at: <https://amzn.to/3gYgleA>

The three wise men

Exploring football legends Shankly, Busby and Stein

DIRECTOR JONNY OWEN returns to the world of football documentaries in superb form with *The Three Kings*, the story of iconic Scottish managers Shankly, Busby and Stein.

Following on from the stunning *I Believe in Miracles*, which followed the indomitable rise of Brian Clough and Nottingham Forest in the 1980s and the films *Senna* and *Amy*, Owen has produced a masterclass in *The Three Kings*. It traces the careers of Liverpool's Bill Shankly, Manchester United's Sir Matt Busby and Glasgow Celtic's Jock Stein. All three could be seen as Britain's first rock 'n' roll managers whose success and personalities eclipsed the game itself and achieved the unthinkable on the pitches of Britain and Europe.

Owen expertly interweaves footage of the three men and the times their ascension unfolded. Supported with excellent interviews from sports journalist Patrick Barclay and commentator



FRIENDLY RIVALS: Busby (right) presents Stein with Team of Year trophy in 1967, watched by Celtic players with European Cup. And Stein, below left, with Shankly

Archie MacPherson, Owen follows the three men who blazed a trail that is revered to this day.

Born within 20 miles of each other in the tough mining communities of Lanarkshire and Ayrshire, the trio, whose careers as players were almost wiped out by World War II, then helped or inspired each other to begin in management. Busby advised Liverpool to employ Shankly, and inadvertently started a Beatles and Stones-style battle for top spot in the English game, as United and Liverpool traded First Division title wins and FA Cup triumphs.

Shankly, with his socialist approach, became a man of the people, uniting a city and its club with workmanlike displays.

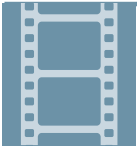
Busby's desire to nurture players, and allow creative expression, saw him mould the Busby Babes, only to see one of the greatest teams of promise taken so cruelly in the Munich Air Crash in 1958.

Rising again to finally dominate Europe, Busby had to play second fiddle to Stein, a man who crossed the sectarian divide in Glasgow to win the European Cup with Celtic's Lisbon Lions in 1967, beating Inter Milan.

The achievements of the three can be put into perspective when the documentary reveals they fought the Football Association to allow their clubs to play in Europe, while Stein's team was created from players all natural to Glasgow – both things the modern game could only dream of.

The Three Kings is an absolute pleasure to watch and an emotional rollercoaster, even if these are not your teams. Owen shows the truth about the people's theatre and how each of the cities and its folk had a role to play in the success of their beloved teams.

5 rounds out of 5 Review by Daniel Abrahams



Film Review

Looted (15)

In select cinemas and on download



A 'pool of despair

THE ECONOMICALLY suffering town of Hartlepool provides few options for its youth and so they must make their own meaning – even if that means a life of petty crime.

Rob (played with a believable apathy by Charley Palmer Rothwell, pictured) is a directionless 20-something, introduced to us when he's stealing a car. Bored, optionless and under the influence of ne'er-do-well Leo (a wayward Thomas Turgoose, *This is England*), he is tempted into a job that may be more serious than first thought.

Ambitionless or simply disillusioned from continued rejections, Rob spends most of *Looted* in a white shirt and tie, dressed for an interview that either went horribly or didn't exist in the first place. His prime motivator is his father Oswald (Tom Fisher) for whom he is sole carer – a seemingly cold and withdrawn man, who only

speaks with fondness about the past and his life at sea, an escape not afforded to his son.

Hardened now, he romanticises memories of his job as a merchant seaman despite it being the cause of his condition – dealing with asbestos without proper protection and not given compensation when becoming largely debilitated – laid out and relying on young Rob to feed and bathe him.

Though he has a predilection for breaking the law, we get the impression that Rob is sharp and means well, but hasn't been given the opportunity to overcome his circumstances. Told that he lacks experience during one particular interview, it becomes a damning prophecy that has him at a loose end, not caring for anything, or the consequences that will inevitably follow.

3 out of five rounds Review by Sam Cooney

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Ready to strike



THIRSTY WORK: RAF Typhoon takes on fuel, shadowed by another Typhoon and F-35Bs

PHOTO: SAC CRAIG WILLIAMS



PARTNERS: US Marine Corps aircraft technicians at RAF Marham prepare an F-35B for the exercise

PHOTO: SAC CRAIG WILLIAMS

Carrier Strike Force all set for deployment



TANKS VERY MUCH: Brize Voyager provides refuelling
PHOTO: SAC CRAIG WILLIAMS

By Chris Warr

BRITAIN'S CARRIER strike force is set for deployment world-wide following the completion of one of the largest UK-based combat exercises in decades.

The scaled-up Crimson Warrior drill follows Nato's multi-national Joint Warrior exercise, honing the operational capability of UK F-35 squadrons which will be based on board the Queen Elizabeth Carrier in its first operational deployment next year.

The UK's stealth fighters operated alongside US Marine F-35s, swing role Typhoons and US F-15s in a series of air to air and maritime trials, supported by Voyager tankers.

Exercise Crimson Warrior has evolved from the annual Cobra Warrior war games to test F-35B Lightnings and helicopters that will form the Carrier Strike Group Air Wing during next year's operational deployment of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

More than 70 RAF, Royal Navy, British Army, United States Marine Corps and United States Air Force fast jets, multi-engine aircraft, helicopters and UAVs operated from stations across the country during the three-week mission.

Officer Commanding 617 Sqn, Cdr Mark Sparrow RN, said: "The last few months have seen a period of intensive training for the squadron having conducted Joint Warrior from HMS Queen Elizabeth alongside our United States Marine Corp and Nato partners.

"To have our colleagues from 211 Sqn USMC embedded at RAF Marham has been fantastic and has really enhanced our relationship with them as we put the skills and qualifications that we have gained into practice to show that we are ready to deploy next year."

Crimson Warrior has also tested Joint Personnel Recovery procedures, led by RAF Regiment Gunners from 3 Force Protection Wing and 15 Sqn RAF Regiment.

Fg Off Scott Harrison said: "Crimson Warrior has been a fantastic opportunity to utilise the full spectrum of Air Force and defence assets associated with personnel recovery in an environment which we could not hope to replicate at the wing and squadron level."

Joint Helicopter Command took part in land and maritime training scenarios in the complex air operations testing training tactics, deploying RN Lynx Wildcat and Merlins and RAF Chinooks and Pumas.



CHOP GUNS: Chinooks take part in Exercise Crimson
PHOTO: SAC GARETH MCGARVIE



READY, WHEN YOU ARE: F-35 tech salutes pilot
PHOTO: SAC CRAIG WILLIAMS



EXTRACTION FORCE: Gunners hone recovery skills
PHOTO: SAC CHARLOTTE HOPKINS

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Figures shown are for comparability purposes; 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, variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.

Difficult times, but still we remember

As Covid restrictions hit the UK's annual Remembrance commemoration to the fallen, The Officers' Association President Air Marshal Sir Baz North and Chief Executive and Navy Falklands veteran Lee Holloway reflect on the importance of honouring those who have served and died in the line of duty

“FOR THE first time in 100 years there will be no gathering at the Cenotaph to mark Armistice Day this year. We will still remember the sacrifices of all those who fell during both world wars and those from more recent conflicts, but it will be rather different.

Another first this year has been that younger generations have seen our Armed Forces in action, in their home towns and cities across the UK, as the 20,000-strong Covid Support Force has built hospitals, set up and run testing stations and transported urgently needed PPE to the NHS frontline.

As we struggle to adjust to the shifting sands of our new normal, an interesting recruitment phenomenon is also occurring.

Although rising job losses will continue to dominate the headlines in the weeks and months ahead as eye-watering unemployment numbers become worryingly familiar, for those businesses that are adapting and recruiting, the abilities of former military Service personnel are cutting through.

When you have a crisis of uncertainty like the coronavirus pandemic – that arrived at great speed and affects every walk of life – paralysis can impact even the smallest decisions.

For businesses of every sector and size, each day has brought fresh challenges. Firms soon began to recognise the importance of resilience and the need for teams to be led by people of sound judgement and character, able to make decisions and create structure based on incomplete and uncertain information.

Former military personnel who have



RESPECT: Her Majesty The Queen at a past Remembrance ceremony at The Cenotaph in central London

made the transition to civilian employment have distinguished themselves as problem solvers; agile, diverse in thought and able to motivate others despite the uncertainty, yet still able to make the tough judgement calls when necessary. Even if it means passing on difficult messages to the boardroom.

No one has a crystal ball but the ability to anticipate different

outcomes and make tough decisions quickly as the implications of a crisis unfolds is second nature to former officers.

From manufacturing, infrastructure and logistics through to cyber, professional, and financial services, the intelligence coming back from employers is the same.

Former serving officers are delivering results and making an impact across a wide range of commercial settings. Their resilience, sound judgement and ability to 'get things done' has been noted by the Boston Consulting Group. As cyber security specialists Marclay put it, 'they are simply problem solvers par excellence'.

Just as the Minister for Defence, People and Veterans, Johnny Mercer, recently observed: "Business support for our Armed Forces continues to grow... with more and more business leaders understanding how a military background can be a valuable asset."

Good news may be in short supply right now, but this bodes well for all our futures as we get better at living, working, and doing business in this new normal. It is also a source of immense pride for the Armed Forces and the Officers' Association, which is committed to providing life-long employment services for serving and former officers.

As we mark this year's Armistice Day, let us reflect on the military's outstanding service; past, present and what may be possible in the future.



CHIEFS: Officers' Association's Air Marshal Sir Baz North and, above, Lee Holloway

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Competition

While away those dark lockdown nights

WHEN THE UK had to cope with its first lockdown at the end of March it prompted a surprise rise in the popularity of jigsaw puzzles.

With England currently in a second lockdown and the rest of the UK under Covid-19 restraints, Zee Productions' new range of jigsaws based on military history presents the perfect puzzle challenge for aviation enthusiasts.

The Keith Burns Collection features 10 stunning World War II combat depictions that will interest any military history fan. Keith is an award-winning aviation artist and commercial illustrator.

He has illustrated comics for the past decade, most recently *Johnny Red*.

He joined the Guild of Aviation Artists in 2012, and in 2015 won the Messier Dowty award for best acrylic painting in show. In 2016 he was made a full member of the Guild, had his first solo exhibition at the RAF Club in London, and won Aviation Painting of the Year. He currently illustrates the Ladybird WWII series written by James Holland.

The Keith Burns Collection is part of the Bellica military range for Zee Productions.

Steve Beatty, CEO of Zee



● BUMPER PRIZE

Productions, said: "I read a ton of military history and found out about Keith via the *Iron Cross* magazine and was very impressed with his work.

"His art is simply fantastic and has a definite wow factor. We have so much coming and I intend to make Bellica the home of military puzzles."

The Bellica 1,000-piece puzzle range includes sleeve notes by Steve. He said: "Each depiction

comes with an explanation of the subject matter. You will know what the illustration is about, the conflict, the equipment and the protagonists. Hopefully, we can draw military enthusiasts into the pleasure of puzzling and puzzle enthusiasts into the world of military history."

We have teamed up with Zee Productions to offer four readers the chance to win a fabulous prize – six puzzles from the Keith Burns

Collection – worth a total of £360.

The puzzles you can win are: Butcher Bird Down, Ju88 Attack, Beaufighter Long Run Home, Mosquito Attack, Typhoon Attack and Lancaster When We Are Back.

The other puzzles available in the range are: Convoy Attack, Convoy Duty, Fw 190 Over Normandy and S-Boat Attack.

For your chance to win one of these unmissable prizes, tell us the answer to this question:

Who is the CEO of Zee Productions?

Email your answer, marked Keith Burns Collection 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 November 27. Please include your full postal address.

Bellica puzzles are available from www.zeeproductions.co.uk.

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Sqn Ldr Tom Rosser OBE, DFC

Obituary

Burma Spitfire recon pilot who helped mark RAF 100

Sqn Ldr went on to reach his own century

SQUADRON LEADER Tom Rosser, who has died aged 100, flew 60 missions in his unarmed Spitfire taking photographs over Burma. He was awarded the DFC.

Born in Scotland, he enlisted in the RAF in 1940 and trained as a pilot. After gaining his 'wings', he was sent to 232 Squadron to fly the Hurricane from airfields in the north-east of the UK for convoy patrols. He was transferred to 122 Squadron, flying similar operations, but this time in the Spitfire.

In March 1942 he joined a party of reinforcements for hard-pressed squadrons based in India and he joined 79 Squadron at Kanchrapara near Calcutta.

He arrived in India in the spring of 1942 and joined 79 Squadron flying the Hurricane. Towards the end of the year, No. 3 Photographic Reconnaissance Unit (soon to become 681 Squadron) began receiving Spitfires. Rosser, with his Spitfire experience, promptly volunteered to join the new unit.

Flying from an airfield near Calcutta, the Spitfires roamed over most of Burma, parts of Thailand and sometimes to the Andaman Islands. During these flights, often over four hours long, enemy airfields, railways and other lines of communication, including river traffic, were photographed.

Early in 1943, the first sortie was flown over Rangoon, 500 miles from the squadron's airfield. Rosser flew the second and third such operations, and his photographs, taken from 30,000 feet, were made into a mosaic and used for mapping purposes.

He also flew at low-level using an oblique mounted camera to take photographs for the Army when he made numerous sorties to Mandalay. It was during these types of missions that he came under heavy attack from anti-aircraft fire.

The Spitfires often flew to the limit of their range and Rosser and his fellow pilots feared engine failure and the violence of the monsoon more than pursuit by enemy fighters. Over some targets, particularly Rangoon, anti-aircraft fire was a major threat. Rosser recollected that there were no navigation aids, apart from the aircraft's radio.

Compass courses were flown over the jungle-clad Arakan range, and then pinpoints identified by



DAY TO REMEMBER: Tom Rosser hands over the RAF 100 baton during the 2018 celebrations. Below, in his 681 Sqn days

map reading over the Chindwin River and then the Irrawaddy. If there was cloud on the return journey, Rosser normally made a generous time allowance to clear the hills, before descending over the flat ground beyond, hoping to pick up a visual fix.

The air commander in India described the development of the photographic reconnaissance organisation as a 'notable feature of the period' and went on to say: "No. 681 Squadron operated magnificently during the whole of the monsoon period of 1943."

The noted air historian Hilary St George Saunders wrote in his *History of the RAF*:

"The hazards of flying in the monsoon were the worst that had so far been encountered by man in his conquest of the air, and of them all, the greatest was that created by



the cumulo-nimbus cloud, which towered to over 30,000 feet."

Rosser remained with 681 Squadron until May 1944. The citation for his DFC commented on his 'outstanding operational record' and went on to describe him as 'an exceptional flight commander who was an inspiration to all in his flight.'

At the end of his time in Burma, Rosser left for the Middle East to command the photographic reconnaissance training flight of 74 Operational Training Unit based in Palestine, where he remained for a year.

After a period in Egypt he returned to England having been overseas for almost four years. He had hoped to remain in the RAF but slight colour blindness thwarted his attempts.

Rosser joined

the Colonial Service and was soon posted to Nigeria. Following the announcement in October 1958 that Britain had agreed that Nigeria would become an independent state on October 1, 1960, he was responsible for making the necessary arrangements for the Independence Day celebrations attended by the Princess Royal, representing The Queen. For his services, he was appointed OBE.

In October 2016 he took to the skies in a Spitfire again, 71 years after he last flew the iconic aircraft. Two years later, as part of the RAF centenary celebrations, he was one of two veteran Squadron Leaders chosen to hand over the commemorative RAF 100 baton to a new generation of RAF cadets at Biggin Hill, having been flown from Northolt in an aircraft of the Royal Squadron.

He enjoyed the day 'very much' and said it was 'a different style of flying being in The Queen's Flight in comfort.'

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5 pages of **RAF Sport** start here

● Win a pair of Golf Lover's guides: P28

e-GAMES



e-Games go online at Halton

New VR centre aims to help increase resilience

Staff Reporter
RAF Halton

WITH THE OPENING of its new esports arena, RAF Halton has become the frontline venue for everything Virtual Reality gaming and sport.

As the world of actual sport continues to be impacted by Covid-19, the opening has come as the stock of esports and VR events continue to rise in the Service.

Since the introduction of lockdown 1.0 earlier in the year, cycling, motorsports and athletics have all staged virtual events.

Now, the Halton venue, which is partly funded by the Nuffield Trust and the RAF Central Fund, has opened featuring 10 'highly specialised' gaming PCs and will later adopt two new Xbox X consoles, which allow for the 'full spectrum' of gameplay across multiple platforms and genres.

Ross Perriam, RAF Central Fund CEO, said: "As the charity that

Halton centre is one of several opening over the coming months thanks to our support."

The Service's Video Games and Esports Association (RAFGVEA) believes the arena helps combat isolation and increases mental resilience through contact to more than 1,000 gamers, playing more than 40 games. Personnel also have the opportunity to compete at UK level esports events through the new Halton venue.

Halton's Station Commander, Gp Capt Dan Startup, opened the facility and played Augmented Reality Dodgeball.

Continued on page 31:



GAME ON: Wg Cdr Jonathan Young tries on a VR headset. Far left, the Halton arena filled with gamers during its official opening
PHOTOS: LUKA WAYCOTT

safeguards the health and wellbeing of serving personal through sport and physical activities, we recognised esports as an opportunity to engage a group of personnel that are often overlooked.

"Through our funding the RAF Video Games and Esport Association is now the quickest growing activity in the RAF, and the new

Sport

GIVEAWAY



PRIZES: *The Golf Lover's Guide* books are a great read for all fans of the game

Book giveaway well above par

SOME SPORT has escaped the Covid clampdown, golf being one, so to help inspire current play and future dreams, *RAF News* has teamed up with Pen and Sword books for a brilliant giveaway.

We have two pairs of Michael Whitehead's stunning *Golf Lover's Guide* titles to win, one for England and one for Scotland. They are the perfect playing partner for all enthusiasts.

The comprehensive guides of the best courses in both countries are ideal for planning golfing trips, packed with all the information needed to enjoy not only the perfect round – with yardage, par scores, green-fee price indicators and booking procedures – but a history and playing guide to each course featured.

The books are crammed with evocative images of the courses, featuring icons such as Sunningdale, Royal Lytham and St Anne's, St Enodoc and Walton Heath in England, and

Gleneagles, Dundonald Links, Kingsbarns and Prestwick in the Scotland edition.

With no course being the same, Whitehead does a fantastic job of pointing out the idiosyncrasies, while highlighting the lesser known playing pitfalls for the enthusiast's greatest chance of playing in the hallowed footsteps of the game's legends.

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Deadline for entries is November 30.



BUNKER: Castle Stuart 11th hole, bathed in beautiful evening sunlight

WINTER SPORTS

Boarders set to battle on

Chairman vows Covid won't beat them



ALL EARS: Above, boarders at last year's IS event; below, a female boarder at the start line in Meribel

PHOTOS: SAC SAMANTHA HOLDEN

Daniel Abrahams
HQ Air Command

SERVICE SNOWBOARDING chairman Wg Cdr Nicola Duncan has promised not to let the Covid-19 pandemic halt the association, following news of the recent IS event's cancellation.

Speaking after organisers pulled the plug on the 2021 championships set for March, Duncan said she was already planning to hold training sessions across the UK.

"I think the only word to describe the season being cancelled – which includes our summer, winter and performance camps, along with the RAF and the UK Armed Forces championships – is gutting," she added.

"Whilst we all know it had to be done, it does not make the pill any easier to swallow.

"There is nothing else left to do other than brush it off and look at ways in which we can continue to train, utilising UK venues such as Greystone and other snowdomes.

"That is exactly what we have done, we have already had a very successful squad competition at Milton Keynes, facilitated by RAFWSAA. Even though some of the riders had not been on snow since February, the standard of riding remained high and produced a great competition.

"As the restrictions are very fluid with local lockdowns, we've



remained at the top of our game with the planning. We have already seen two sessions lost, so we are looking to move the sessions to another location where we can ensure we are conforming with government guidelines.

"We are in the final stages of kickstarting the monthly sessions for squad and development riders, and we are working closely with Hemel Hempstead Snow Centre in the hope that we can facilitate the station-run sessions.

"As we move into the heart of winter, we remain ever hopeful that we will be able to undertake a week

in Aviemore utilising the Central Fund cabins nearby, so we have started looking at the logistics of that.

"Our supporters, as ever, have been brilliant and due to their continued support we are looking to provide some online coaching performance, nutrition guidance and individual 'off-snow' fitness training plans."

■ For further information on RAF Snowboarding visit: RAF Snowboarders on Facebook and @RAFSnowboard on Twitter or email: nicola.duncan363@mod.gov.uk.

TENNIS



Nurses court action

Rescheduled event is perfect fillip

Staff Reporter
RAF Halton

A COVID-RESCHEDULED Dame Joanna Cruikshank PMRAFNS Tennis Tournament took place in glorious sunshine at Halton.

Having moved from its usual July date, the three-day event was reduced from its normal five days.

It featured three competitions, the ladies' and men's singles and mixed doubles – with a field of 30 competitors.

Flt Lt Rachael Kidner took the ladies' crown, Cpl Simon Ford the men's and FS Julie Adamson and Cpl Melissa Brookes

the mixed doubles; while Sgt Laura Jenkins was nominated most improved player.

Sgt Brown PMRAFNS said: "Nurses across the land are bracing themselves for the next wave of Covid. The chance to 'reboot' and re-engage was precious. The whole Service can take pride in the PMRAFNS and can rest assured that we shall continue to give care where others cannot go."

With the field open to nurses, regular serving personnel and reserves, sunshine greeted the first day's action, which began with a series of coaching exercises. This was followed by the singles tennis.

Day two saw the start of the doubles, as well as the ladies' and men's singles semi-finals.

The final matches of the day, the doubles semi-finals, were played indoors.

On the final day, FS Adamson lost to Flt Lt Kidner in the ladies' final, to take the Dame Joanna Cruikshank Trophy, while Flt Lt



SERVICE CALL: Top left, RAF players serve and return during the Halton Tennis Centre event; above, the players line up before the action begins; right and inset left, action from the mixed doubles matches
PHOTOS: GREG MANDY

Beynon lost to Cpl Simon Ford in the men's to take the Williams Trophy, while FS Adamson and Cpl Brookes won the Forward Trophy, beating Flt Lt Redgate and Sgt Muckle in the mixed doubles final. Sgt Jenkins received The Helen McGregor Memorial Trophy from Gp Capt Bradley.



FOOTBALL

Cosford produce a 5-star display

Plate final is one to remember after cracker in delayed match

RAF Cosford	5
RAF Digby	1

Staff Reporter
Velocity Stadium, Oxford

DUE TO a 'Covid incident' (see RAF News 1502) the RAF FA Plate final became the match of the day, and Digby and Cosford provided plenty of action in a six-goal thriller.

The buzz in the crowd at Velocity Stadium, home of Oxford City FC, was of the strong team Cosford had fielded, and it proved to be too strong for Digby – who they beat 5-1.

Digby were out of the blocks at speed, with forward Cpl Richard Bingley seeing his shot glance the crossbar after six minutes.

Moments later Cosford's Cpl Max Gaskin's left-wing cross found SAC Greg Lawrie, but his effort was cleared by Eg Off Sal Hill.

Digby were again looking buoyant, but it was Cosford who produced a brace of chances with

Digby keeper SAC Luke Baron denying Cpl Robbie Bennett and Sgt Luke Toner.

On 18 minutes Cpl Jack Hadden-Becker opened a hole in Digby's defence with a clever turn, before firing in. Digby then began to be pinned back as Bennett and Toner linked up well, but Baron was equal to everything they could throw at him.

With 10 minutes left in the half, Bennett went close for his team.

Having duped Baron with a neat turn, the Digby keeper injuring himself during the attack, he somehow dragged his effort wide with the goal gaping.

A determined Digby midfield now began to press and, following a free kick which was cleared for a corner, Cpl Radley Dyson headed over the subsequent ball into the box.

Minutes later Cpl Bingley fired in a thumping low 20-yard free kick, which alluded the wall but found



PITCHED BATTLES: Action from the delayed Plate final, with Cosford in burgundy jerseys PHOTOS: SAC SAMANTHA HOLDEN

the bottom corner of the net for 1-1.

A minute after the restart Cpl Jack Hadden-Becker tested Baron yet again, before Cosford had a 48th-minute goal disallowed for offside.

Baron saved several more efforts, before AC Luke Preen crashed a left-footed shot in for 2-1.

Cosford's third came quickly after, as Toner worked the ball into space, before firing a rocket into the bottom left-hand corner.

Victory was sealed three minutes later as Preen added a fourth with a neat finish, with 20 minutes left on the clock.

To their credit Digby rallied, but Cosford were just too strong and Preen sealed his hat-trick from Hadden-Becker's exquisite lob over the defence, volleying home superbly.

Digby did not give up and their Man of the Match, Cpl Richard Bingley, went close at the death, but could not alter the scoreline.



GOAL-FEST: Cosford's players celebrate another one in the back of the net during their win



GIVEAWAY

Fund is fit for lockdown 2.0



FIT FOR IT: Thriving through lockdown with the Les Mills and RAF Central Fund link-up; inset, the RAF Central Fund advertisement PHOTOS: Les Mills & RAF Central Fund



FITNESS AND exercise can remain at the top of every lockdown list after another RAF Central fund tie-up with Les Mills fitness.

The Service charity, which supports sport and physical activities across the RAF, produced a similar campaign with Les Mills On Demand during the first lockdown. It is now offering new joiners 30 days of free access to the world-famous fitness platform, along with a specifically designed six-week start-up programme for all RAF subscribers.

Ross Perriam (pictured, top right), CEO of the RAF Central Fund, said: "With the changing of the clocks and worsening weather, alongside a second lockdown due to an increase in coronavirus infections, we wanted to offer our beneficiaries a safe

alternative that enables them to work out from the comfort of their own home with little or no equipment. We hope our six-week workout plan in conjunction with Les Mills gives serving personnel the motivation to improve or maintain fitness levels in the run-up to Christmas. Maybe they'll even lose a few pounds before the festive eating and drinking puts them back on."

Since the launch of the first Les Mills™ On Demand offer, more than 1,700 serving personnel have registered with the platform and hundreds are still regularly using the online classes.

Along with the 30-day free trial and six-week workout plan, serving RAF personnel can also receive a £20 discount on LMOD's

equipment bundles thanks to the RAF Central Fund partnership. ■ Visit: shop.lesmills.com/tech/shop-all and enter the discount code RAF20 at checkout and to sign up visit: rafcf.org.uk/get-fit-for-christmas. Follow RAF Central Fund on Twitter @RAFCentralFund.

Esports land at Halton

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He said: "It is just fantastic to open this facility. I can see all the benefits and it has high-level backing and support.

"It's been a long time coming. I think it will provide people with a way to connect with each other while doing something they love in safe and modern surroundings."



SCREEN STARS: Gp Capt Startup at a Halton session

PHOTO: LUKA WAYCOTT

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