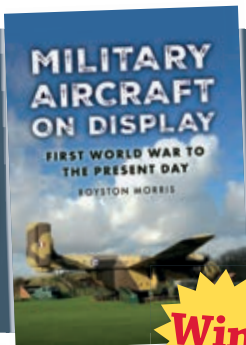


**The Forces' favourite paper**



**Top new aviation book up for grabs**

● See R'n'R page 5

**Win!**



**Military Wives to welcome star Ellis**

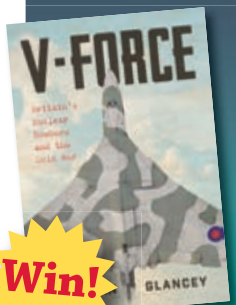
● See page 13

**ROYAL AIR FORCE**

Friday, August 22, 2025  
Edition No.1615

**Only 99p**

# RAF News



**UK's graceful but deadly Cold War stars**

**See pages 14-15**

**Win!**

**Cricket IS double**



● See page 24

**Rugby World Cup fever's here**



● See pp26-27

**Cycling Open title joy for men**



● See page p28

# Silence for VJ 80th



**Simon Mander**

VETERANS AND the Royal Family led the nation in a two-minute silence marking the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. As the Red Arrows and Battle of Britain Memorial Flight soared overhead, survivors of the conflict, families and military personnel joined HM King Charles and Queen Camilla and political leaders to commemorate the end of the conflict, at the National Memorial Arboretum.

● See page 2



## BiteSize

“Experiences in RAF are like nothing else,”

Logistics pro AS1 Terry Neville See p19

“Travelling the country with a two-year-old brings its own stresses,”

Stacey Dooley tours in play 2:22 *A Ghost Story* with partner Kevin Clifton – and they’re taking daughter Minnie along with them See R’n’R pp4-5

“The pride in representing the RAF and my wee country is something I never take for granted,”

Scotland Rugby’s Fg Off Sarah Bonar See pp26-27

# Nation falls silent to mark VJ 80th



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

#### RAF News

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A SERVICE of remembrance to mark VJ Day took place on board the flight deck of aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales, as the UK Carrier Strike Group continued its deployment to the Indo-Pacific.

Defence Secretary John Healey MP said: “Our Armed Forces continue the legacy of the Greatest Generation – protecting the peace they secured through their courage and commitment across the world.”

“As the nation unites to mark the 80th anniversary of VJ Day, we honour those who served and remember those who gave their lives. Thirty thousand British personnel, alongside many more from Commonwealth and Allied forces, lost their lives in the Far East campaign. Their bravery and resilience forged a brighter future and, after years of conflict, a lasting peace.”

The Service of Remembrance honoured thousands of soldiers who served alongside the British from India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Nepal and various African nations.

It was attended by Burma Star recipients, a veteran of the British Indian Army and those involved in the Battles of Kohima and Imphal, former Prisoners of War, the Prime Minister, and the Japanese Ambassador.

A total of 400 Armed Forces personnel and military bands played as The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight led a flypast featuring Dakota, Hurricane and Spitfire. Broadcast live, a national two-minute silence was held at midday.



**REMEMBERING THE FALLEN:** Veterans Ronald Gumbley (left) and Owen Filer at the Memorial Arboretum. Inset above, Japanese, UK and American personnel fall silent on board HMS Prince of Wales in the South Pacific

Hundreds of iconic buildings across the country were lit up to mark VJ 80, including Buckingham Palace, 10 Downing Street, the Houses of Parliament and the Tower of London.

Commemorations took place throughout the week, including a reception for veterans hosted by the Prime Minister and Lady Starmer.

At dawn, military bagpipers performed at The Cenotaph, in the Far East section of the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, and at Edinburgh Castle.

The Imperial War Museum’s new contemporary film, *August 1945: It Was Over Then*, was shown in screenings around the country.

VJ Day 80 marked the culmination of this year’s commemorations, following four days of events in May to mark VE Day.

Military personnel on duty in the UK and on operations and exercises around the world paused to mark the anniversary, remembering those who died.



# Surviving the Hell of PoW camp

**Susie Wood**

A FORMER St Mawgan storeman survived a torpedo attack, a brutal Japanese PoW camp, and saw the A-bomb drop on Nagasaki.

After the war, Tom Humphrey worked quietly as a storeman at the RAF station in Cornwall until his retirement. But his experiences in the Far East during the final weeks of World War II reveal the human cost and courage of those fighting to end the most devastating conflict in human history.

In March 1942, the former Royal Navy Petty Officer was aboard HMS Exeter when it was torpedoed by a Japanese warship in the Java Sea. It sank with the loss of 55 lives. Tom was one of 600 captured.

His daughter Alicia recalls her father's four-and-a-half-hour survival in the freezing water clinging to ship debris and how he saved the life of his friend George Darley, who had sustained life-threatening burns, by holding him afloat.

She said: "Shocked, but his survival instinct prevailed, his only goal was to survive against all odds. After his capture he found an old notebook, which he took; this became his war diary."

Tom was imprisoned with 1,400 others at the Fukuoka No 2 camp five miles from Nagasaki Bay.



**TOM HUMPHREY:** Rarely missed a reunion with his Far Eastern PoW Association comrades in later life

Conditions for prisoners, which included RAF pilots, were brutal – weeds and grasses from around the camp were used to flavour the rice issued, it was cold, wet, and with little to no clothing inmates faced daily severe beatings from their captors.

Prisoners were forced to watch beheadings. Many died from disease, including pneumonia and tuberculosis, malnutrition, mistreatment, and critical injuries they suffered whilst working in the mines and the shipyards.

Tom himself contracted beriberi and suffered stomach



**LIBERATION:** Allies free brutalised PoWs at Fukuoka No 2 camps, Nagasaki, 1945

All photos courtesy Alicia Conium



**SERVICE:** Petty Officer Humphrey aboard a ship, 1942



**FAMILY MAN:** With wife Kath and children Brenda and Alan

issues for the remainder of his life.

Great niece Cara Biggs said: "Following his imprisonment he must have had moments of despair, life seemed bleak and uncertain. Prisoners were forced to watch horrific atrocities. His diary entries reflect his strength, hope and desire to return home. I believe that gave him the strength to carry on."

Tom captured his feelings in his diary, which he had to hide from the guards.

Alicia said: "On August 9 1945, he watched in horror as an atomic bomb was dropped at Nagasaki

Bay. Describing an ear-shattering roar that shattered windows and buildings; a detailed account is in his diaries, which are on display in the Imperial War Museum."

Despite his inhumane treatment, a guard gave Tom a Service medal for fighting the Chinese, which he later turned into a necklace for his wife, Kath. Fifty years later, in 1995, Tom returned it to his former jailer's family, helped by author Guy Stanley.

From reading his diaries, Tom tried to keep up morale amongst the prisoners by sharing what little food he had.

For 18 months his family had no idea whether he was alive or dead. Only sporadic postcards later gave any clue to his whereabouts or condition.

On returning to the UK Tom joined the Far Eastern Prisoner of War Association and the Royal British Legion.

He died aged 91 in 1998, rarely having missed a reunion with his comrades.

Seventy years after liberation a memorial commemorating the 72 people who died at the camp, now a high school, was unveiled in 2015 in a ceremony attended by Alicia.

## Pet rules relaxed for Forces families



**MAN'S BEST FRIEND:** Aviator with spaniel Stan

DEFENCE CHIEFS are hoping to make life on the home front more appealing by relaxing rules on owning pets, decorating and allowing Forces families to run small businesses from Service accommodation.

The move is part of a drive to improve living conditions and cut back on red tape and make military housing more family friendly.

It means families living in Service housing will be able to keep up to two dogs, cats or smaller pets without going through the complicated approval process, and recognises the role pets play in family life and wellbeing – especially when a partner or parent is

away on deployment.

Other changes in the new Customers' Charter announced this month include easing regulations allowing tenants to run their own small businesses and carry out decorating work to personalise their homes.

Minister for Veterans and People Al Carns said: "As a dog owner and Royal Marine who served for 24 years, much of it in Service accommodation, I'm delighted to be making it easier for our dedicated personnel to own family pets."

"Recognising the unique demands of Service family life, it is also right that we make it easier for family members to run businesses from military housing."



**FAMILIES CAN** have a hoot this summer at the RAF Museum Midlands.

There's an action-packed programme of activities, games and unforgettable experiences designed for all ages, running until Sunday, August 31.

Set against the backdrop of iconic RAF aircraft, a vibrant event village in the heart of the museum will host sessions

## Have a hoot

including mini-golf, quizzes, a sleuth trail for budding detectives, laser tag battles, giant Jenga and displays by birds of prey soaring overhead.

Many activities are free, while others cost up to £5. Admission to the museum, from 10am, is free.





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# Royal welcome for Poseidon squadron

**Staff Reporter**  
RAF Lossiemouth

THE NEWEST squadron in the RAF got the Royal seal of approval when The King visited Scotland.

His Majesty attended Lossiemouth for the parade for 42 (Torpedo Bomber) Squadron and re-presented it with its standard before viewing a flypast.

Afterwards, in the Atlantic Building hangar, The King met members from the Typhoon Air Wing and toured a P-8A Poseidon maritime reconnaissance aircraft equipped with weapons for anti-submarine warfare, surveillance and search and rescue missions.

Before departure, His Majesty met children from the Airplay Youth support programme and their families, who live on, or near, the Moray base.



# Victims of Forces gay ban could net £70,000 payout



**BOULMER FIGHTER** Controller Wg Cdr Graham Crow is handing over command of 19 Sqn and leaving the Service after a 23-year RAF career.

He said: 'It's been an incredible honour to command 19 Sqn and lead the talented team that keeps our airspace safe 24/7.'

'As the first fighter

squadron to fly the Spitfire, it has a proud history of defending our skies through the decades. I now pass the baton on.'

New boss Wg Cdr Kev Wills added: 'We will maintain our operational focus as we continue to develop our capability to meet the evolving challenges of an ever more uncertain world.'

## Simon Mander

**GAY MILITARY** personnel who were dismissed or prosecuted under the UK Forces ban on homosexuality could receive compensation payments of up to £70,000 each.

The latest offer comes two years after an independent report into the plight of up to 5,000 personnel forced out of the Services, stripped of their medals and pensions and prosecuted under the hardline regulations.

An initial government funding pledge of £50 million was raised to £75 million in December last year following pressure from campaign group Fighting with Pride, set up to battle for compensation for those who suffered financial hardship and mental health problems.

Under the latest offer LGBT veterans who were dismissed between 1967 and the axing of the regulations in 2000 will be eligible for a dismissal payment of £50,000 and could qualify for another £20,000 impact payment.

Other measures include the restoration of rank and medals and the issuing of the recently introduced Etherton Ribbon, named after the author of the report.

The treatment of gay members of the military was laid bare in a hard-hitting survey released



**CAMPAIGN:** Fighting with Pride lobbied for compensation following publication of report into the prosecution of gay members of the Armed Forces

by Fighting with Pride and Northumbria University, in 2023.

The first academic study of its kind, it involved interviews with more than 100 veterans dismissed from the Armed Forces because of their sexuality.

More than 80 per cent were subjected to intrusive investigations, often including intimate medical examinations, while more than 70 per cent say they were treated like criminals.

All those forced out of the Services were stripped of their

medals and pensions, leaving many destitute and struggling to find work.

Fighting with Pride Chief Executive Officer Peter Gibson said: 'We have continued to press for faster payment to veterans.'

'Application for financial reparations must be made by December 2026, and we would encourage all affected members of the LGBT community to contact Fighting With Pride as soon as possible to get their claims underway.'





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# Cobra nations set to strike



**COMBAT DRILL:** RCAF F-18 prepares for a sortie during last year's UK-based Cobra Warrior exercise; above, RAF Typhoon

## Simon Mander

**FRONTLINE FIGHTERS** from Air Forces across the world will fill the skies above Lincolnshire next month.

American F-35 Lightnings, F-15 Eagles, Canadian CF-18 Hornets and British, German and Italian Typhoons will fight it out as part of the latest Exercise Cobra Warrior.

The large-scale, multinational training exercise also features RAF P-8A Poseidon, A400M Atlas tankers, C-17A Globemaster,

CH-47 Chinook, and the RC-135W Rivet Joint.

The drills are hosted by RAF Waddington through September to practise warfighting techniques and are deliberately designed to be challenging to all participants.

Organiser Gp Capt Ray Morley said: "Cobra Warrior is about pushing ourselves and our partners to the limit in realistic, high-pressure scenarios that reflect the demands of modern combat operations. It's a proving ground for tactical excellence, innovation and Allied interoperability."

Participating aircrew will seek to develop the joint mission planning, integration and tactical skills needed to launch composite air operations and British personnel will hope to complete Qualified Weapons Instructor courses.

Other aircraft taking part in live, real-time, simulated combat sorties are Canadian CC-130 Hercules, Luftwaffe Top Aces aggressor aircraft, USAF B-52 Stratofortress, KC-135 Stratotanker, KC-46 Pegasus, CV-22 Osprey, C-130J Super Hercules and Italian Conformal Airborne Early Warning aircraft.

## In Brief



## Airplay marks anniversary

THE GROUND-breaking Airplay scheme for Forces youngsters marked its 15th anniversary with a fun-packed, four-day festival.

The RAF Falcons dropped in at RAF Wyton to get celebrations off to an exciting start, giving more than 150 youngsters the chance to take part in a range of activities including bungee trampolines, climbing and VR gaming.

Set up by the RAF Benevolent Fund in 2010, the Airplay scheme is designed to provide a safe environment for five to 18-year-olds to socialise and play with their peers at 24 air stations in the UK and Cyprus.

RAFBF spokeswoman Maria Lyle said: "We are proud to support such a dynamic and engaging programme for young people in the RAF Family. It was truly rewarding to see them enjoying a wide range of fun activities and connections with their peers."



# Search for lost bomber heroes

## Staff Reporter

**RESEARCHERS ARE for the first time to investigate losses sustained by RAF crews in the Far East.**

In the aftermath of VJ Day, historians at the International Bomber Command Centre near Lincoln are to examine the fate of Bomber Command personnel assigned to Tiger Force to support the Allied advance against Japan.

Ultimately, it was never deployed, as America dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but to fund the research the centre is selling

ceramic poppies arranged in the silhouette of a Lancaster.

"Once the research on the Far Eastern theatre is complete, our Losses Database will have honoured and recorded every life lost in any of the Second World War bombing commands," said IBCC chief executive Nicky van der Drift.

"This will provide a huge additional resource, not only for military historians and visitors to our site, but also for family history websites. Eventually, our hope is to raise the funds needed to build further memorial walls, which would take the numbers

commemorated to more than 80,000.

"Buying a commemorative ceramic poppy is one way in which people can support our mission and make sure these brave men and women are remembered and honoured."

Since its opening, the centre has welcomed over 660,000 visitors from 58 different countries, including more than 35,000 schoolchildren. It has received 40 different awards including one from VisitEngland for Best Large Visitor Attraction.

● Visit [internationalbcc.co.uk](http://internationalbcc.co.uk) to order a poppy, priced £39.99.







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# Air drop kit is right on target

## Kiwis snap up RAF duo's pioneering device

**Simon Mander**

FRONTLINE PARATROOPERS can now be air dropped into the combat zone with greater precision thanks to a pioneering device designed by a pair of RAF officers.

The new app has now been sold to the Royal New Zealand Air Force which has signed a two-year contract for the handheld Ballistic system, which measures wind speed with pinpoint accuracy, to integrate with its newly introduced C-130J fleet, and is being considered by other air forces worldwide.

Co-designer Sqn Ldr Pete Kennedy said: "It shows what's possible when we give our people the tools and empowerment to create capability, not just bolt it on from the outside."

The latest version of the iPad operated software is now in use on the RAF's A400M and C-17 fleet and has also been adapted for use on board the Chinook used for low level insertion and extraction missions, and a number of civilian aircraft used in training.

While serving with the RAF's Air Mobility Force on the Hercules



**PRECISION:** Paras jump from an Atlas A400 M, insert, the handheld Ballistic device in the cockpit

C130-J, Sqn Ldr Kennedy and Flt Lt Dan Leedham identified the need for a faster, more accurate, and user-friendly method to calculate parachute release points for high-altitude jumps.

Aware of the limitations of established wind and altitude calculations used during missions, the duo designed a prototype delivering instant

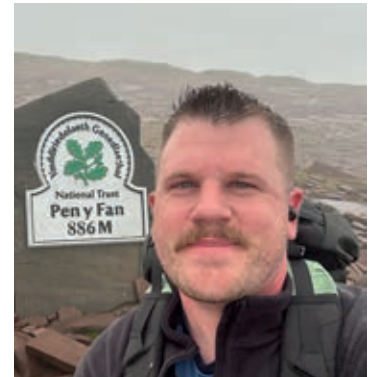
and accurate wind and altitude vectors from a handheld device.

They designed and built the first version of Ballistic before joining forces with the RAF Digital team to develop the software.

Peter said: "This is people in uniform who have created something and made it real. It's not just grass roots innovation

which is then picked up by a bigger organisation.

"I think about the tradition of Barnes Wallis and Frank Whittle, - we've done it from within the Service, rather than industry chucking something over the fence. I'm proud of the fact that a couple of C-130 guys have been able to help bring on A400 capability."



## Nathan's peak performance

RECRUITMENT INSTRUCTOR Nathan Wilson is preparing to climb South Wales' highest peak 10 times in 24 hours - the equivalent of summiting Mount Everest to raise cash for a military charity.

The 32-year-old from Halton will tackle the 886m Pen y Fan in the Brecon Beacons wearing full military kit, including a 35lb bergen, in under 23 hours for SSAFA.

He said: "Doing the challenge in full weighted kit adds a whole new level of difficulty. I want to push myself."

Nathan has already completed the gruelling Royal Marines Commando Endurance Course, raising funds for the Devon Air Ambulance.

Nathan's training includes hill sprints, loaded runs, and strength workouts - all in full kit and all-weather conditions.

He hopes to raise at least £1,000 for SSAFA. "If I can smash that target, I'll be over the moon. Every penny goes towards helping those who've already given so much," he said.

Nathan also plans to livestream parts of the challenge so supporters can cheer him on in real time.

## In Brief



## Padre pops in

RAF PADRE the Reverend Sqn Ldr Jonathan Newell has been visiting personnel on Op Kipion in the Middle East.

Following a four-month tour Padre Newell (pictured) will return to Lossiemouth before commencing his next appointment at Odiham, the home of the Chinook Force.



## Swim star takes Channel plunge

ATHLETIC FLT Lt Juliette Lewis completed a three-person relay swim across the English Channel to raise funds for Dementia UK after her mother was diagnosed with the condition.

Together with teammates Vikki Chester and Anne Radovic she completed the challenge in 16 hours and 20 minutes.

Cranwell-based Flt Lt Lewis said: "We were two miles from France, and I thought the hard part was over. Then the pilot warned us that we had to swim for the next three hours as the wind had picked up and the tide flow was against us."

"I have done some challenging events in my life, but this one was

just incredible. From the training sessions to completing it, I feel such a sense of achievement. And this was enhanced by the generosity of people who donated to Dementia UK.

"I really hope that I have made a difference, especially to my stepfather who is absolutely amazing with his care and support for my mother."

She said around one in two people will be affected by dementia either as carers or sufferers.

Cranwell Deputy Commandant Gp Capt Steve Harrison said: "By conquering the waves of the English Channel, Flt Lt Lewis has shown us that determination knows no bounds."



News

# High and mighty

Simon Mander

BRITISH AIRCREW joined forces with their Japanese and Korean counterparts to keep UK F-35s flying during training sorties launched from the Navy's flagship Prince of Wales and airbases in the Pacific.

The mission, dubbed Operation Hightower, demonstrated the RAF's ability to project air power globally with aircraft from the UK Carrier Strike Group currently in the Indo-Pacific region, the MOD said.

A Brize Norton-based Voyager tanker provided air-to-air refuelling to keep the fast jets from Marham in the fight during the latest multi-national war drills with the RAAF, USAF, Japanese Air Self-Defense Force and Republic of Korea Air Force.

Air Force personnel deployed to Darwin, Australia, where UK Lightnings and a Voyager, which joined the recent large-scale

combat exercise Talisman Sabre, took part in the latest maritime drill.

During simulated combat sorties a Voyager tanker and three F-35s conducted joint training with the Japanese and Koreans and carried out the first F-35 landing on the deck of a Japanese carrier.

A spokesman for the RAF added: "During the Operation, the Voyager and UK F-35s will conduct joint training with JASDF and ROKAF, focusing on tactical integration and shared mission planning."

"Operation Hightower highlights the RAF's reach, resilience, and its ability to deliver strategic air power in partnership with allies across the Indo-Pacific region."

More than 3,000 UK military personnel, including 600 from the RAF, are taking part in Operation Highmast.



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# In Concert

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Band of the Royal Air Force College

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**Epsom Playhouse**

Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment

7.30pm Friday 3 October 2025

**Terry O'Toole Theatre, Lincoln**

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## Training deal

THE RAF and Royal Navy are joining forces to integrate training for frontline fighters with a new agreement.

The five-year pact will see Service training specialists swap places in the classroom to highlight the challenges of multi-domain warfare.

The deal was signed by Air and Space Warfare School chief Wg Cdr George Moreton and Cdr Tim Leeder.

Wg Cdr Moreton said: "Modern warfare demands an integrated approach across all domains. This formalises our commitment to training that reflects the reality of the operating environment."



## 'Wicked' diva Kerry leads prom tribute to The Few

Staff Reporter

BROADWAY STAR Kerry Ellis will be joining Cosford's Military Wives choir and a host of other acts at the summer Proms to celebrate the 85th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

Performing in front of a classic line up of WWII aircraft at the RAF Museum's Midlands site, Kerry is set to headline both nights of the two-day event to honour The Few – the airmen who halted the Nazi airborne invasion in 1940.

A long-standing Forces supporter, she has starred in West End and Broadway musical hits *Wicked*, *Les Misérables*, and the Queen tribute musical *We Will Rock You*.

The Battle of Britain Proms also includes a host of nostalgic wartime tunes performed by the Ida Girls, The Lymm Concert Band, featuring over 45 woodwind and brass musicians, and the station's own Military Wives Choir.

RAF Museum Midlands organiser Mike



Groces said: "The Battle of Britain Proms promises to be an uplifting and unforgettable tribute to the courage and sacrifice of The Few."

"As we commemorate the 85th anniversary, we'll honour their legacy through stirring music, moments of reflection and a true celebration of British spirit."

"We're absolutely delighted to welcome an outstanding line-up of performers, including the incredible Kerry Ellis, to help make this a truly special evening."

● Go to: [rafmuseum.org/midlands](http://rafmuseum.org/midlands) for details.

## Nuke test vet Ben honoured by Shawbury



Simon Mander

A NUCLEAR veteran whose father helped build the runways at Shawbury during World War II has been honoured for his role in Britain's H-bomb tests.

Ex-RAF air traffic instructor 84-year-old Bernard 'Ben' Tomnay was visited by the Defence College of Air and Space Operations' Wg Cdr Mark Paxman and two trainees to present the medal.

Mr Tomnay, who served three tours at the Shropshire station, was posted aged 18 to Christmas Island for just over a year, where he witnessed the testing of nuclear weapons.

His son Gerard said: "He, and I, felt very proud and it was lovely to see him remembering his time in uniform and listening to his words of wisdom to the trainees."

Shawbury is marking 75 years of continuous Air Operations this year and the trainees presented Mr Tomnay with a booklet detailing the base's history.

After retiring from the RAF in the early 1980s, Mr Tomnay remained at RAF Shawbury working as a civilian contractor.



## Forces children have their say

YOUNGSTERS ARE to be quizzed about their experiences when a military parent leaves the Armed Forces in a new study.

An estimated 120,000 children aged eight to 21 years old have at least one Service parent but little is known about how they found the transition to civvy street.

Forces in Mind Trust Chief Executive Michelle Alston said: "There remain significant gaps in our understanding of Service children as they navigate their own transition away from the military community."

The Trust has awarded

£250,000 to Brunel University, the University of Portsmouth, Forces Children Scotland and Academic Consulting and Education Services to fund the new study.

The 24-month project will begin in September 2025. Brunel University researchers Anne Chappell and Ellen McHugh said: "As a project team, we have been awarded this research funding to work innovatively with children and young people to research into their experiences at a particular transition point in their family life."



# Britain's Cold War V-Force bombers were awe-inspiring in flight but had a deadly role as UK's nuclear strike jets



**NUCLEAR DETERRENT:** B2 Vulcan with crews and its full array of weapons

**W**RITER AND broadcaster Jonathan Glancey has a vivid memory from his youth of seeing camouflaged Vulcan bombers flying from RAF Waddington over a poppy-filled Lincolnshire field one summer.

"Stunning-looking, evidently powerful, and somewhat smoky, the aircraft nosed up over the field. They created, at first, elongated delta-shaped shadows, and then, as they passed over, a collective Jovian roar shot through with a demonic chorus of unearthly howls. ...There was something strangely primeval about the noise," he said.

## Hiroshima

Now the former architecture and design correspondent of *The Guardian* has written *V-Force, Britain's Nuclear Bombers and the Cold War* (atlantic-books.co.uk). The book has been described as the definitive account of the rise and fall of Britain's nuclear strike force – the Valiant, Victor and Vulcan RAF bombers – and the country's changing role through the Cold War.

As World War II came to an end and America's nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki shocked the world, it was believed that Britain was very vulnerable to nuclear attack.

The three models of V class bombers that constituted Britain's strategic nuclear strike force – the Vickers Valiant, Avro Vulcan and Handley Page Victor – entered service between 1955 and 1957.

The V-bombers were Britain's premier Cold War aircraft. The Royal Navy took over the country's nuclear deterrent role in 1968 but despite this, the aircraft enjoyed a second life as conventional bombers – the Valiant gained fame in the Suez Crisis, Victors in the Indonesia-Malaysia confrontation and Vulcans undertook the longest bombing raid in history for Operation Black Buck in the 1982 Falklands War.

Glancey explained: "The Avro Vulcan first flew in 1952, seven years after the end of the Second World War. It had been on the drawing board in 1947, five years after the Avro Lancaster went into service with Bomber Command...

These two famous aircraft types belonged to eras separated by the atomic bomb.

"I last saw one of these venerable machines [the Vulcan] flying at air displays between 2008 and 2015, XH558 The Spirit of Great Britain, restored by the Vulcan to the Sky Trust. It was wonderful to witness this mesmerizing V-bomber put through its paces – flying, as pilots have said, like a jet fighter.

"Of the other two V-Force bombers, I never witnessed a Vickers Valiant, the first of the trio into service and the first to be withdrawn from flight. I did,

though, marvel at the Handley Page Victor. It would be hard not to. Low-slung on the ground, the Victor, especially when viewed head-on, had the appearance, surreally, of some enormous and deeply strange fish."

## RAF Marham

He added: "I watched Victors fly in and out of RAF Marham in Norfolk. They were aerial fuel tankers by then, retired in 1993. Until 2021, a Victor served as a gate guardian at Marham. With neither the resources nor the time to restore the aircraft, in 2020 the

RAF asked if anyone would like to take the Victor on. The last viewings were made on October 10, 2020, during the Covid pandemic. There were no offers. No Victor has flown since.

"Quieter – relatively so – than the Vulcan, the Victor sounded more like an early jet airline than a purely military aircraft. There were, in fact, proposals for civil airliner versions of all three production V-bombers, with that of the Valiant, the most conventional of them, coming closest to realisation."

Glancey explained that the



**SCRAMBLE:** Valiant QRA crew at RAF Gaydon



# lethal beauties

Delta-winged aircraft were the carriers of doomsday option atomic bombs



**VICTOR B1:** Landing with parachute brake deployed (RAF Museum, New Zealand)

**VULCAN XH558:** The Spirit of Great Britain



**VULCAN:** Falklands missions

Vulcan's airframe was largely invisible from the pilot's seat. "Not that pilots would have seen all that much in nuclear conflict," he said. "They were even trained to fly with a patch over one eye. The light of a nuclear explosion would have been blinding."

He noted: "Rarely has a team of aircraft rooted themselves so quickly and so deeply in the national consciousness. Their active life in the disturbing role of which they were destined proved to be fleetingly brief. Only one of them, the Valiant, released a nuclear bomb – and this, thankfully, on a test site, although

this was dangerous enough for anyone's good.

"The V-Force bombers, at their most deadly 60 years ago, were compelling machines fighting a strange, unfought war that we are still rightfully fearful of. Theirs was truly a terrible beauty."

## Terrifying

He added: "Many of us would like to see them flying again. Is it ever possible to separate the terrifying and ultimately insane purpose of a V-Force bomber from its sheer aeronautical allure? The answer, I think, is a very highly qualified 'yes'."



WE HAVE copies of *V-Force* by Jonathan Glancey (rrp £22) to win. For your chance to own one, tell us:

*In which year did Operation Black Buck take place?*

Email your answer, marked V-Force book competition, to: [tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk](mailto:tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk) or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by September 19. Please include your full postal address.

**Win!**



# Society urges government to honour new pension deadline



FROM the outset, the Forces Pension Society has urged the Government to fully resource the AFPS 15 Remedy Remediable Service Statement (RSS) rollout plan and to provide timely communications to affected members. It became apparent that the revised 30 Sep deadline would not be met.

On 9 July the MoD updated their RSS Delivery plan and will now write to all AFPS members who will not receive their RSS by 30 Sep.

The extension is to no later than 31 Dec 25 for so called 'non-complex cases' and 31 Mar 26 for 'complex cases' (such as those with pension

tax charges, pension sharing orders, medical awards and added pension benefits). You can read the MoD's update here.

Our sense is that delivery against this extension should be achievable



SCAN ME

given the extra resources now allocated by the MoD to achieve it. As ever we will keep our Members updated of any further developments.

**Maj Gen Neil Marshall, CEO of the Forces Pension Society said: "We had concerns from the beginning that without appropriate resources being allocated to deal with this important issue, deadlines would be missed. Unfortunately this is what has happened."**


**"Now, however, we are assured that action taken by the MoD should be sufficient to deliver against the new deadlines. They need to be, if they are to fall within the Regulator's stipulation on timing."**


**"This is a vitally important matter to so many in the military community. It has become a pressing concern for many of our Members measured by the number of enquiries our Forces Pensions Consultants have received."**

**"In line with both the letter and spirit of the Armed Forces Covenant, we look forward to the Government delivering against its obligations to all members of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme"**



*\*The Forces Pension Society is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that provides pension guidance to those serving and retired, across all three services, and represents the pension interests of the whole military community. Last year, the Society's expert Forces Pensions Consultants dealt with almost 30,000 pension enquiries. Membership of the Society is growing and numbers more than 66,000. For more information, visit [forcespensionsociety.org](http://forcespensionsociety.org)*





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# Leuchars lives on

## Former RAF airfield still has important role to play in QRA and ACE training



EXERCISE: A400M on Venture Spirit



ALLIES: Italian C-130



QRA: RAF Typhoon

**A SCOTTISH** airfield that shut as an RAF base 15 years ago is still a vital stop for fast jets.

RAF Leuchars closed in 2010 after 100 years and was placed under Army control but the aerodrome remained.

Now operated by a small Air Force team, as a satellite unit of Lossiemouth, its main role is as a diversion airfield for Typhoon Quick Reaction Alert aircraft.

Up to 70 RAF personnel and civilians work there as technicians, logisticians and firefighters.

Operations Support OC Wg Cdr Julius Jakubowski said: "The

THOUSANDS of personnel passed through the former RAF Leuchars over almost a century and, though closed as a station, it still hosts frontline fighters, as *Paul Bell* explains

Leuchars Aerodrome team have achieved incredible things despite their thinly-spread workforce. Through innovation, proactivity, perseverance and flexibility they have far exceeded their directed task."

With five hardened aircraft shelters and planning buildings,

Leuchars offers an attractive 'austere' training venue.

Since March 2024, it has hosted a Qatari Hawk Sqn, US Air Force Special Operations CV-22 Ospreys and Chinooks, Italian armed Typhoons and American C-17s.

It has also supported training for RAF 28 Sqn Chinooks and 22 Gp trainers including Hawk, Texan and Tutor.

Visiting detachments have increased by 400 per cent in the last 14 months and it has twice hosted A400M and C-17 as part of Exercise Venture Spirit.

### ACE

And with the RAF developing Agile Combat Employment – the ability to deploy rapidly to alternate locations to sustain operations – its future looks busy.

Personnel have worked hard to support ACE, increasing armed aircraft handling capacity and enhancing aerodrome utility.

Leuchars can now offer a Hot Pit and Rotors Running



**ADAPTABLE:** Leuchars offers Rotors Running refuelling to aircraft including Chinook

Refuelling capability to Typhoons and helicopters, allowing them to refuel away from their Main Operating Bases without the need to shut down.

In 10 months, Typhoons have conducted more than 80 hot pit refuels, taking on 360 tonnes of fuel.

General technicians have also been cross-trained to marshal aircraft, allowing more flexibility and resilience in the limited workforce.

The team can now carry out hot pit refuels with minimal

warning, sometimes with only 45 minutes notice.

Armed aircraft are to get more parking options so visitors can operate from and test innovative ways to rapidly increase fuel storage to support a surge in tasking.

OC Leuchars Aerodrome Sqn Ldr Samuel Courtenay said: "With us already planning to host further exercises later in 2025, we are looking forward to welcoming new visitors and developing our capacity to support future ACE activity."



**ARMED:** Italian Typhoons have been hosted by Leuchars Aerodrome team





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Young former factory worker AS1 Neville helps keep Typhoon flying

# Terry's career is soaring now

Ed Palmer

IN JUST four years, Terry Neville has transformed his life. While working in a factory in Grimsby, aged 20, he'd be the first to admit that his life wasn't going anywhere. Now, at just 24, he's managing critical avionics equipment for Typhoon aircraft at RAF Coningsby.

Terry first planned to join the Army, but switched to the RAF after deciding it offered "a better quality of life" and professions that translate directly into civilian qualifications.



He explained: "There are more trades in the RAF that you can take outside when you leave. Being able to have real qualifications and experiences feels more modern and in step with the real world."

After completing Phase One training at RAF Halton, Phase Two training at MOD Worthy Down introduced AS1 Neville to the complexity of military logistics.

Learning the intricacies of RAF Supply Squadrons proved challenging – "almost

like learning a new language," he said – but the structured support helped him develop both technical skills and personal confidence.

He recalled: "I was a bit shy and the course helped me to speak out and have the courage to ask questions."

His first tour took him 8,000 miles away to the Falkland Islands, where he managed stationery stores while also supporting technical and clothing stores.

His current role in repair management at Coningsby involves overseeing the flow of sophisticated avionics equipment essential for Typhoon operations. He ensures frontline aircraft have the technology they require, matching complex engineering paperwork with equipment



LOGISTICS: AS1 Neville at work at RAF Coningsby, and during Phase 2 Training, left

condition and availability.

"We make sure that the frontline aircraft have the avionics equipment they need. It's a busy and involved job, but really good," he said.

Looking ahead, AS1 Neville is focused on promotion to Corporal while remaining committed to logistics. He's eager to experience different

RAF stations and broaden his knowledge – he can't recommend the RAF as a career highly enough.

He said: "The experiences you get in the RAF are like nothing else – you go places, meet people. If you're shy it will improve your confidence exponentially. There's the sense of belonging and being in a big team."

# Silver screen idol's letters help raise money for Battle of Britain Memorial Trust

Malcolm Triggs

AN EXCLUSIVE event taking place at the RAF Club in Piccadilly this autumn features touching wartime correspondence between a star of the silver screen and her husband – soldier and journalist Peter Fleming, brother of James Bond creator Ian.



*Letters to the Moon* brings to life the relationship between Celia Johnson, star of the 1945 classic *Brief Encounter*, and Fleming, who served with the Grenadier Guards during World War II and, from 1942, was in charge of military deception operations in Southeast Asia.

The evening fundraiser on October 30 is in aid of the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust, the charity which cares for the National Memorial to the Few on the clifftop at Capel-le-Ferne, near Folkestone in Kent.

The correspondence provides a fascinating historical insight into a time of true austerity and, often, anxiety. With her husband away at war, Celia's letters share her wartime experiences, from running a large, isolated house full of evacuated children and learning to drive a tractor, to coping with rationing and becoming an auxiliary policewoman.

On October 2, 1944, she wrote: "I had lunch with Mr Coward, who read me his new film that he wants me to be in. There is no getting away from the fact that it is a very good part and



MEMORIAL: Tribute to The Few

one I should like to play. I have found myself already planning how I should say lines that I can remember from Noel having read it to me. It's about a woman, married and with two children, who meets by chance a man in a railway waiting room and they fall in love."

Celia was nominated for an Academy Award for that film, *Brief Encounter*, and went on to enjoy an acting career that spanned more than 50 years. She won a BAFTA for



CLASSIC FILM: Celia Johnson (also inset left) and Trevor Howard in *Brief Encounter*

her portrayal of the headmistress in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*.

The correspondence between Johnson and her husband is dramatised in the show by actress Lucy Fleming, Celia Johnson's daughter, and Lucy's husband, Simon Williams (pictured right), who, among other top roles, starred as Sir Humphrey in the stage adaptation of *Yes, Prime Minister*.

Fleming was one of the great travel writers of the 20th century, having begun his reporting

career as a special correspondent with *The Times*. Celia and Peter were married in 1935.

● Tickets for the fundraiser, at £85 including supper, can be booked by calling Patrick Tootal on: 01732 870809 or emailing [battleofbritain@btinternet.com](mailto:battleofbritain@btinternet.com)







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Tracey Allen

IWM Duxford Battle of Britain 85th

Feature



**MUSIC:** Singers at the 2024 air show

**I**WM DUXFORD'S Battle of Britain 85th anniversary air show next month will pay tribute to the late John 'Paddy' Hemingway, the last pilot from the aerial conflict, who died in March aged 105.

Vintage warbirds will once again grace the skies as more than 20 Spitfires and Hurricanes unite at the event on September 6-7.

"Commemorating 85 years since the pivotal World War II aerial battle, this year's signature Duxford Flypast Finale will feature over 20 Spitfires and Hurricanes to mark the historic occasion," said a spokesperson for the air show.

"The commemorative weekend will also pay special tribute to Gp Capt Hemingway DFC, with a special Missing Man Formation of Second World War aircraft flying in his honour."

This year's weekend-long event will see other icons of WWII take to the skies, with the return of the Junkers Ju 52, an iconic German aircraft and the only flying example of its type in Europe, last displayed at a UK air show a decade ago. The Bréguet Br.1050 Alizé, a French carrier-based anti-submarine patrol aircraft and the only airworthy Alizé, is making its Duxford Air Show debut. The Belgian Air Force NH90 helicopter display will pay tribute to the 29 Belgian pilots who took part in the Battle of Britain and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Avro Lancaster will demonstrate why this aircraft became one of the war's most important bombers.

#### Warbirds

While classic warbirds fly overhead, visitors can immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of the summer of 1940 at ground level as living history groups, music and dancing inspired by the era fill the showground. There will also be plenty of family fun to be had with a traditional steam fair complete with Galloper Carousel, Swing Boats and a Toy Town ride, while members of the Airfix team will be on hand to help make and paint a plastic scale aeroplane model. Tickets for kids aged 15 and under are free.

"Visitors can also learn more about Duxford's own role in the defining air battle of WWII with our dedicated Battle of Britain



**RECREATION:** Spitfires and a Luftwaffe Bf 109 Buchon take to the air at last year's event. Inset, last of The Few Paddy Hemingway (also below, left, in old age) and BBMF Lancaster

# Battle of Britain air show honours last of The Few, Paddy



hangar and Ops Block exhibition. You can hear an audio-visual recreation of the day the battle reached its climax on September 15, 1940 in The Operations Room, understand how RAF Duxford fitted into the air defence network that gave the RAF an advantage over the Luftwaffe and get up close to personal objects and aircraft from the time, including a Spitfire, Hurricane and Messerschmitt," the spokesperson added.

IWM Air Show Event Manager Phil Hood said: "Our Battle of Britain Air Show always takes on extra significance when it marks a major anniversary of the battle and for this

year's 85th anniversary we are looking to mark this occasion in true Duxford fashion.

"This September we will have one of our biggest finale formations of Hurricanes and Spitfires and a special tribute to the last surviving of 'The Few', Paddy Hemingway. As always, history and heritage will be at the heart of the event and we look forward to welcoming thousands of visitors, old and new, to IWM Duxford over the weekend."

● Go to: [iwm.org.uk](http://iwm.org.uk) for full ticket details.

**SHOW VISITORS:**  
Couple in vintage dress at 2024 Duxford event







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# Alfa's young pretender



- Pros**
- Sharp steering
  - Nicely-balanced handling
  - A sporty crossover

- Cons**
- Cramped rear space
  - Dim-witted gearbox
  - Too much scratchy plastic inside

## Alfa Romeo Junior

### Verdict

The Junior is usefully packaged, well-priced and feels solidly built. It has enough Alfa charisma to make it visually appealing and handles well, in relative terms. There are a few downsides. The gearbox

doesn't fit the Alfa image, the cabin materials aren't the plushiest and the EV version doesn't deliver class-leading range, but that's all balanced out, in spades, by its strengths. Petrol-heads love an Alfa. Costing from £27,895, this is one that you can buy with your head, as well as your heart.

## Junior takes the Italian marque down new path

THE ALFA Romeo Junior is a compact crossover that takes the Italian icon down a new path. Its name pays homage to the 1966 Alfa Romeo GT 1300 Junior, a fun little car that was affordable to buy. Alfa hopes that its new baby model will fill the same niche. If you want a blistering Alfa that fits the original brief, the Giulia Quadrifoglio is still on sale, but this is a neat entry-level machine.

The Junior comes with either electric or mild hybrid power and there's even a 'hot' version that hits all the right notes for an Alfa.

Petrol models are badged Ibrida and use the 136bhp mild-hybrid, while the electric version is badged Elettrica, powered by a 154bhp motor, with a 51kWh battery.

The hot Junior is the Elettrica Veloce, developing a 276bhp and 254lb ft of torque. More on that one in a later edition, but our test car here was the Ibrida petrol, so that's where we'll start.

### Outside

The Junior looks good. It's chunky, with well-rounded arches and a classy nose.

The Alfa shield features prominently, with a neat groove beneath the bonnet edge. Another nod to its 1963 GT ancestor. The tail-end is stylish too, giving Giulia vibes. Signature rear lights and Alfa alloys complete the vibe.

The Junior is 4.17m long, sharing the tried-and-tested Stellantis small car platform.

It's well proportioned, practical and a neat-looking machine. It certainly has Alfa flair.

### Inside

There's plenty of room up-front and the driving position is nicely judged. Space in the rear isn't fantastic, but it's not terrible either. There's plenty of headroom but legroom is rather tight, especially if you find yourself behind a 6ft driver.

Alfa Romeo prides itself on its stylish, charismatic design and there are plenty of details that catch the eye. Unfortunately, there is also plenty of hard scratchy plastic on display and

this really lets down an otherwise interesting interior.

There's a dual-screen display on the dash, that combines a 10.25-inch TFT dial display and another 10.25-inch touchscreen for the infotainment system. The driver's display can be configured in a number of formats and is set within Alfa's traditional arched shades. The shutdown display features the Alfa badge and adds a touch of class to the experience. It's a nice package.

The centre screen isn't remarkable, in terms of speed and graphics, but it can be set with various layouts that make it user friendly. Hard key shortcuts take you to the driver-assist screen and the climate functions are operated by actual buttons, so it's not a bad set-up, by any means.

### On The Road

Alfa has put some serious work into making sure the Junior handles well. The steering is quick, direct and well-weighted, allowing you to place the nose neatly into the corners. Body lean is well controlled and it has the precision you'd expect from an Alfa. It's not what you would call exciting, that's the job of the Veloce, but it is tidy and engaging, for a crossover.

Like other Alfa Romeo models, the Junior gets switchable 'DNA' drive modes – Dynamic, Natural and Advanced Efficiency – which allows you to adjust the weight of the steering and the throttle response. I spent most of my time in Dynamic – it's an Alfa, that's its default position, in my book.

The auto gearbox is the weakest link in the chain and lets down an otherwise excellent package. It's slow to shift, especially between Drive and Reverse, which makes it feel rather clunky. Not the sort of experience you'd expect from an Alfa. Fortunately, the rest of the powertrain is smooth and quiet. You hardly notice the engine kick in during urban running as it backs up the mild-hybrid motor.

It stays fairly hushed at full-chat too, when your boot is firmly on the boards. 0-62mph is achieved in 8.9 seconds, with a top-end of 128mph. You can use the paddles to select gears and the exhaust note is a sweet sound, by modern standards. In short, it's a good bit of kit on the open road.



## Sport

### CRICKET

# Owzat for a double?

## Aviators add 50-over crown to their T20 Inter-Services title

**Daniel Abrahams**

THE SERVICE'S cricket stars were crowned kings of the summer after winning the 50-over Inter-Service crown to go with their 20-over trophy.

Having kicked off the season with a win at Lord's in the shorter form of the game, with victories over the Royal Navy and Army, they continued where they left off at Aldershot – beating the Navy by 89 runs and the Army by 11.

Team captain Sgt Ross Diver said: "It was a real honour leading out the boys in the 50-overs Inter-Services. I felt we were well prepared having come off a great T20 campaign at Lord's. It was a complete team performance from start to finish. I'm hoping this is now the platform for us to progress and go on a long and prosperous run of form."

Kicking off the three-day tournament, the Navy won the toss and put the RAF into bat.

Sgt Tom Shorthouse, the star of the RAF's T20 triumph, delivered a brilliant 129 runs from 120 balls, leading to a 261-8 final score.

The Navy's big hitters could not get started with both Jack Bell and team captain Finlay Marks falling on 34, while a hat-trick of wickets from Cpl Jack Fuller sealed the win.



**BOWLED OVER:** RAF's Flt Lt Touseef Ahmad



**HIGH-SCORING:** Both RAF and Army batsmen piled on the runs

With the Army beating the Navy by nine wickets, a winner-takes-all battle was in store between the RAF and Army.

The RAF set a hefty target after being put into bat. Diver (56), Cpl Ollie Rogoff (72) and Shorthouse (52) all delivered half-centuries as the Air Force

ended their 50 overs with a score of 269/6.

The heavy task the Army faced was made that little bit tougher as Flt Lt Tom Berzins, Fuller and Flt Lt Luke Hansford shared the wickets across the RAF attack.

The Army's efforts took them to the final two balls of

the day with two sixes needed, but batsman Jake Benson was only able to direct Flt Lt Touseef Ahmad's delivery into the hands of Shorthouse, who sealed the RAF's win by 11 runs.

● Follow RAF cricket @royalairforcecricket on Instagram.

### DARTS



**HIGH SCORES:** Big checkouts thrown

## Wadd a night

RAF WADDINGTON recorded a 7-4 victory in the station's first ever darts match against RAF Cosford on a night of high scores and high tension.

The scorers were kept busy with a series of 140 finishes – highlighting the standard of play.

Cpl James Husband held his nerve to produce a 112 checkout, sealing the win under real pressure.

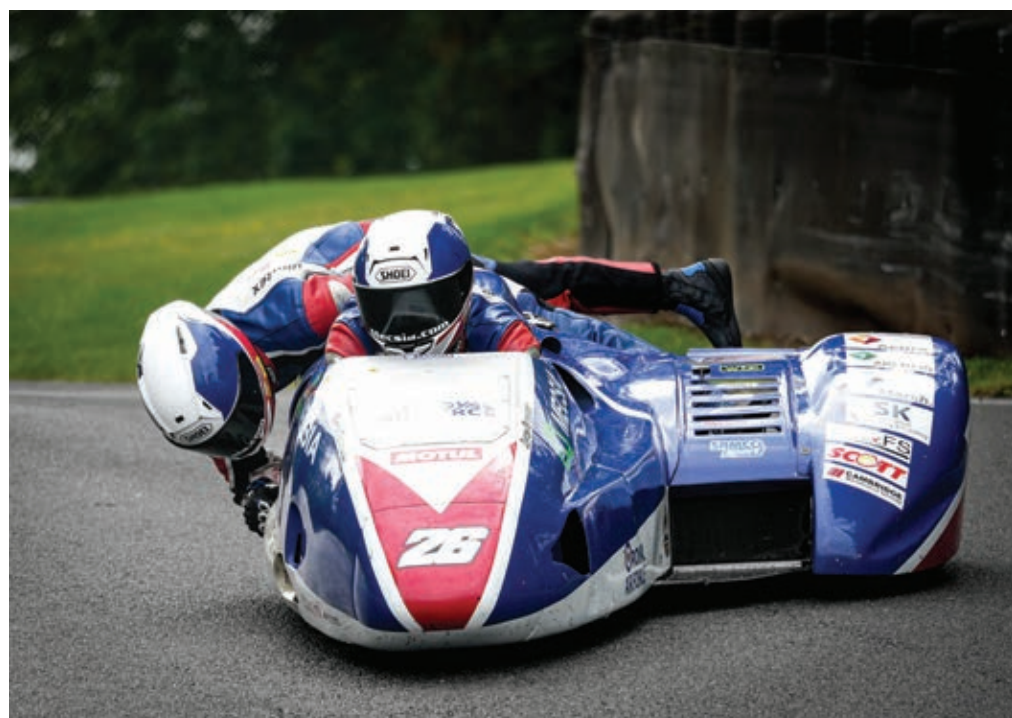
Waddington Darts 2IC Cpl Jack Grey said: "Given this was the first RAF v RAF fixture, the pressure was on – but everyone rose to the occasion."

"It was a great night, with brilliant competition and banter all round."

● Follow RAF Darts on Facebook.

### MOTORSPORT

# Cadwell podium finishes spark revival for sidecar pair



**CONSISTENT:** Atkinson and Middleton (also right) managed hat-trick of thirds

Ste McNorton Motorsport Photography

THE RAF sidecar duo bid farewell to Cadwell Revival with a hat-trick of third-place finishes and a personal best lap time.

Racing in Cup Class, the team of Cpl Robert Atkinson and Sgt Mark Middleton kicked off the weekend of speed at the famous Louth circuit with three superb practice sessions, recording lap times two seconds quicker than the previous year.

Middleton said: "Cadwell Park is a challenge for any crew but to come away with three class podiums and a significant increase in lap times is amazing; we fly over to Snetterton at the end of the month full of confidence."

The following day at free practice, battery issues meant the pair missed out, but having found a replacement they qualified 11th overall and first in class with a time of 1.37.7.

A poor start meant all their qualifying hard work was undone, meaning a chase was on to regain first. Another mistake at the chicane saw them lose touch, before producing a steady ride to come home third.



Changeable conditions on race day meant tyre choice was a major factor. Three quarters of the circuit soon dried and the wets the team had selected lost feeling, again losing sight of second place, but holding onto third.

Race three was more positive, with consistent lap times similar to qualifying. After clearing some traffic and lapping quicker than the second-placed duo, the RAF crew were reeling other outfits in, only to run out of laps to mount a challenge, settling for third to close out the weekend.

● Follow the pair @raf\_sidecarteam on Instagram.

To see your sport featured in **RAF News**, send a short report (max. 300 words) and a couple of photographs (attached hi-res jpegs) to: **Sports@rafnews.co.uk**



MARTIAL ARTS

# Karate Inters victory

## Five golds and two silvers seal championship title for aviators

Daniel Abrahams

THERE WAS a mixed return for RAF martial artists at the recent Inter-Service championships at HMS Nelson and HMS Temeraire, Portsmouth.

There was a first place in karate, with five golds and two silvers, and a third in Brazilian jui jitsu – despite winning eight golds, 14 silvers and nine bronze medals. A lack of entrants meant disappointment for the aviators in the taekwondo.

Karate captain Cpl Jonathon McGorian said: “The team put in some excellent performances to dominate the tournament. The experience gained at these events is clearly having a positive impact on our results.

“There are also areas for improvement, and we now need to try and grow the squad to ensure that the RAF’s success can be continued for years to come.”

The BJJ team saw golds in Gi for AS1 Harry Fields and AS1 Jade Henderson and golds in No Gi for AS1(T) Zack Hope, Flt Lt Jordan Jones, Sgt Matt Scargill, AS1 Ralph Slee and AS1 Will Hemingway.

Team captain

Cpl Simon Marshall said: “It wasn’t the team result we wanted but overall there were some outstanding performances in all categories. We showed immense determination and robustness and the team should be proud of maintaining the values set by the RAF.

“As captain I’ve never been as proud to lead such an amazing group of people at such a prestigious event.”

Cpl Richard Pope’s TKD team produced one gold and one silver, to leave him to ponder a tough day at the office.

“It was a tournament filled with highs and lows. The team started well with Sqn Ldr Diane Carbutt-McGill picking up individual patterns silver in the ladies’ Dan grade,” he said.

“Then Sgt Elizabeth Callan won gold in the ladies’ Kup Grade sparring.

“Unfortunately, things took a downward turn when Cpl James Morgan was forced to retire after a serious injury.

“It wasn’t the overall result we had hoped for, but the team will learn from this experience and develop towards future success.”



TAEKWOND-WOE: Results didn't all go the RAF's way

ANGLING

# There's no keeping up with the Hunt-Joneses



TOP PAIRING: Sgt Tony Jones and FS Matt Hunt had a successful 48 hours at Thorney Weir

THE SERVICE’S carp anglers couldn’t keep up with the Hunt Joneses at the third round of the RAFCAA Pairs Match at Thorney Weir.

Just 5lb 9oz separated the pairing of FS Matt Hunt and Sgt Tony Jones from the rest after an action-packed 48 hours of angling, with a total haul of 92lb 15oz from the 20 acre site in the Colne Valley.

Eventual runners-up FS Jim Thomas and Sgt Dave Jones (87lb 6oz), landed the first catch out of the 28 participants with a mirror carp weighing in at 18lb 7oz, setting the tone for the competition.

Hot on their heels were Sgt Bobby Harrison and Cpl Tom Walker, with a solid 20lb common carp. Not far behind, Cpl Jamie Page and Cpl Luke Davenport also got off the mark early, banking a 20lb mirror to keep the pressure on the leaders.

Despite the promising start, the first 24 hours

proved slower than expected but Thomas and Jones maintained their lead, with Thomas adding a second mirror, this time a 26lb specimen.

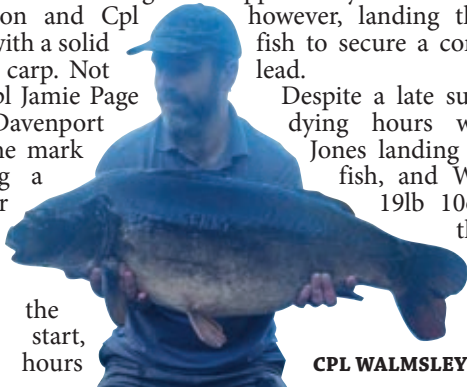
Climbing into second place were Cpl Danny Walmsley and Cpl Jordan Beck, who landed a stunning 30lb mirror, which would win Walmsley the biggest catch of the event.

The pairing would ultimately come third on 49lb 10oz.

Hunt and Jones lay in third and despite fishing well, the final 24 hours mirrored the slow pace of the first, giving the pairing an uphill task to take the round.

They made the most of every opportunity that came their way, however, landing three more fish to secure a commanding lead.

Despite a late surge in the dying hours with Dave Jones landing two quick fish, and Walmsley a 19lb 10oz mirror, the result sealed.



CPL WALMSLEY: Biggest fish



## Sport

### NETBALL

# Teamwork makes the dream work



**JOINT EFFORT:** Men's Trophy victors

TEAMWORK was key to netball success at the second Aki Sevens tournament as two combined set-ups took home the silverware.

Following a competitive tournament a combined team from RAF Wyton, RAF Cosford and Ayios Nikolaos claimed victory in the Women's Cup, while the RAF Akrotiri, Woodvale and Waddington's Men's team celebrated winning the Men's Trophy.

RAF Boulmer clinched the Women's Plate.

The Inter-Stations tournament at the Cyprus station attracted



**RAF BOULMER:** Plate winners

eight female and four male teams, with 99 personnel attending.

Sqn Ldr Kate Hemmings said: "Not only did this event offer grassroots players, umpires and coaches an opportunity to develop their netball skills, it also provided opportunities

to develop leadership and communication skills.

"Seven personnel also delivered coaching sessions to children at Akrotiri Primary School, promoting teamwork and the benefit of sport to the next generation."

### GLIDING

# Gliding scheme 100 landmark

SHAWBURY GLIDING Club's bursary programme saw its 100th student take to the air in the shape of AR Rebecca Hall.

The scheme is for personnel in Phase 2 training at RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury and has a waiting list.

AR Hall took her first flight in an ASK21 glider, with instructor AR Brad Leftley-Kemp.

Hall, stationed at Cosford, has her sights set on becoming a fast jet pilot. She said: "I loved the experience."

Leftley-Kemp said: "I was impressed with AR Hall's natural aptitude, it was noticeable how quickly she grasped the basics of handling the glider."



**FIRST FLIGHT:** AR Rebecca Hall with instructor AR Brad Leftley-Kemp

For details about the scheme contact Ian Gallacher, Chief Flying Instructor at RAF Shawbury Gliding Club, via the club's Instagram page @rafshawburygc.

### MOTORSPORT

# Classic wins despite the gremlins

THE RAF Classic Racing Team produced a weekend of highs and lows at Donington Park Classic Festival.

A series of engine and oil leak retirements hampered the efforts in the mixed GP250/350 and air-cooled 250 class, while Chf Tech Gavin Heggs (TZ350) achieved a podium spot in the last race of the day.

AS1 Dorian Eardley was back racing after a two-year layoff, and gained three wins and a second in the Classic Formula 750.

On his ZXR750, AR Joe Woodward found first in the classic solo 500 in his last race of the day.

AS1 Toby Welford (ZXR400) suffering from a series of engine issues, with one exploding during

his second race. He finished the weekend with a podium third-place finish with the backup engine.

Next up the ACU classic and post-classic races saw AR Joe Woodward qualify on the second row of the grid for the ACU Post-Classic Wheatcroft trophy.

The Classic saw rides from Woodward and Eardley on his Seeley G50.

A clutch problem meant a pit lane start for Eardley, which gave him a fight through the pack to finish eighth. Woodward stormed off for a convincing six-second lead which, despite a close battle with Mark Cronshaw, the aviator held on to.

● Follow RAFMSA on Instagram @classicraceteam.

### RUGBY UNION

# Women's

## The RAF trail-blazers helping Service sport to take international rugby stage by storm

### Daniel Abrahams

SERVICE WOMEN'S rugby will be front and centre at this summer's women's World Cup and 'Defence World Cup' with the tournaments marking three 'generations' of international aviators taking to the fields of play.

The journey started in 2011 with Sgt Sian Williams winning the RAF's first women's international rugby cap, for Wales, and now sees England star Flt Lt Amy Cokayne and Scotland's Fg Off Sarah Bonar playing in the World Cup.

And the UKAF team for the International Defence Rugby Competition (the Defence World Cup) features aviators Flt Lt Lucy Nye and Cpl Orla Procter among others in a healthy RAF contingent.

RAF News Sport spoke with the trail blazers, who, in 14 years, have turned the female service rugby world on its head.

### Head coach

Current RAF women's head coach Williams said: "My first cap was an incredible experience. I didn't fully grasp the enormity of being the first RAF women's professional international player at the time."

"Eventually, I understood the significance – not just for me, but for women in the military and in sport. I'm proud to have helped pave the way for others to follow." On the building blocks of RAFRUW, Williams added: "The work done by AVM Mark Jackson [2014] was groundbreaking – not just for RAF Rugby, but for women's sport across the RAF."

"At the time, we were laying foundations, and I don't think any of us could have imagined that those early steps would lead to three generations of internationals."

AVM Jackson, vice-chairman of RAF Rugby, added: "In 2015 RAFRUW were using the men's old kit and lost soundly. We put a five-year plan in place to build at grass-roots level and enhance our talent. We went on to win the Inter-Services competition in 2019."



**RED ROSE:** Flt Lt Amy Cokayne is a well-established member of the England squad



"This summer is another springboard for the game. To get here has been 15 years of hard work from everyone involved. This was not just the players



# generation game...



**PIONEER:** Sgt Sian Williams was the first RAF woman to play internationally, in her case for Wales (she is pictured left against England in the Six Nations in 2015). Now she is head coach for the Service female set-up (above)



**NEW TALENT:** Cpl Orla Procter on her way to a try against the Navy in this year's Inter-Services  
PHOTO: SBS

and backroom staff, but Air Marshals and AVMs who have championed sport, including CAS Harv Smyth."

Speaking from the Red Roses'

training camp, Flt Lt Cokayne said: "I think Sian, as the first woman from rugby union to play internationally, really showed me there was a pathway, and I wanted

to be part of that and to help pave the way for others.

"It's rewarding to know that the pathway is working and that others are benefitting."

Cokayne, currently the third-most capped Red Rose player with 83 appearances for England, said: "Great young players like AR Daisy Aspinall are now choosing Service life, and the momentum will keep building."

## AR Aspinall

RAF reservist Aspinall plays for England U20s and is part of the UKAF IDRC 2025 squad.

Scotland star Fg Off Sarah Bonar won her first cap in 2016. She said: "The pride in representing the RAF and my wee country is something I never take for granted."

"It's class to see so many RAF women representing in the IDRC. I'm excited to see them bring the trophy home."

England 7s star Flt Lt Lucy Nye is another huge talent. She said: "I remember when I joined up, Sian was in the Welsh 7s, I thought 'wow'."

"Amy and I are the middle

generation, Orla and Daisy are the rising stars, so to see another generation coming through proves the foundations are solid."

Cpl Orla Procter said: "To see three generations of RAF women on the national and international stage shows the strength of the culture we've built."

"I watched Amy play at Twickenham on the big stage. She didn't just represent England that day, she represented all of us who'd come through the RAF rugby program."

As the kick-offs get underway, Cokayne added: "Representing England is a dream, pulling on a UKAF or RAF shirt is about service, camaraderie and representing something bigger than yourself, while remembering the pioneering women who went before us."

"We're definitely standing on the shoulders of giants."

Both the World Cup and IDRC take place across Britain and conclude in September.



**SCOTLAND STAR:** Fg Off Sarah Bonar  
PHOTO: CRAIG WATSON

## TRIATHLON

# Triathletes triumphant

THE SERVICE'S triathletes had a bumper month topped with an Inter-Service's podium double in the Men's Open from Flt Lt Jack Hindle and AS1 Sam Murray in Cleveland.

Tackling a 1500m swim, 40km bike ride and 10km run, Hindle led the aviator charge coming home second, with Murray third.

Flt Lt Harriet Haywood (6th overall) was the first RAF female, AS2 Georgia Robinson (14th overall) second and Fg Off Alexandria Fitzpatrick (15th overall) third RAF female to finish.

Murray said: "Racing in possibly the worst conditions I've seen, middle of a thunderstorm. Love it. PB for the swim chasing the front pack, laid down the fastest bike and cruised the run with a 10-minute lead. I'll be back next year for another crack."

The IS was followed by the RAF standard distance championships, which saw the same challenge on the cards, with Fg Off Lloyd Bebbington coming first, Sgt Patrick Cutmore second and Flt Lt Simon Flynn third in the men's event, with FS Derek Bond taking the Male Masters crown.

AS2 Georgia Robertson won the women's senior title, ahead of Sgt Leigh Lloyd and Sgt Becca Ryder, with Cpl Emily Brown taking the Female Masters crown and Wg Cdr Penny Butterfield the Female Super Masters title.

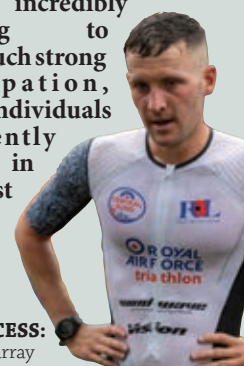
Closing out the month, Sgt Arthur Sargeant completed one of the UK's most demanding multi-sport challenges, The Monster Triathlon.

The challenge spans seven days, and saw the aviator complete a 3km swim in Loch Ness, and 1200km bike ride – including Loch Ness to Fort William, Fort William to Glasgow and Glasgow to Carlisle – followed by a 50km ultramarathon in London.

RAF Triathlon Engagements officer Fg Off Katie Edge, said: "Since the beginning of the season, we've seen outstanding results from all those involved in the association."

"It's incredibly rewarding to witness such strong participation, with individuals consistently putting in their best efforts on race day."

**OPEN SUCCESS:** AS1 Sam Murray





# 5 RAF Sport

pages of



Pages 26-27

## CYCLING



ON THE FRONT LINE:  
RAF cyclists pile on the  
pressure in a downpour  
PHOTO: CPL ADAM  
FLETCHER (RAF)

## CYCLING

### Stegeman has designs on success



STEGEMAN: Won by a country mile

HAVING DESIGNED the 2025 cross-country Inter-Service cycling course in Wales, AS1 Thomas Stegeman crowned it with a stunning victory a huge 11 minutes ahead of his rivals.

In the middle of the blistering season Stegeman was red hot favourite for the men's race at the BFBS UK Armed Forces Inter-Services XC Championship event at One Giant Leap bike park at Llandegla.

With the Army taking the team and women's titles, Stegeman's win was the only bright light on a tough day of cycling action, with burst tyres and split chains strewn across the Welsh countryside.

The challenging DISTANCE course saw riders straight into an ascent, but with the surface too loose and too steep to ride, competitors were forced to dismount and push their bikes for an arduous 200m.

Stegeman was a long way in front and showed his fitness and finesse throughout the entire race, crossing the line first – a huge 11 minutes in front of Army rider Busby in second, with fellow aviator Sgt Rich Summerbell coming home third and AS1(T) Tom Whitworth sixth.

The remainder of the RAF team – Flt Lt Hattie Haywood, FO Tom Cambridge, WO Adey Hoyle, Sgt Craig Robinson, Sgt Rich Rogers, Sgt Lucy Kershaw and Cpl Sarah Toms – battled hard but could not stop the Army victory.

# Raining champs

## Historic Open first for men's road racers in Yorkshire

### Daniel Abrahams

THE SERVICE'S men's road cycling team became history makers taking their first Open title at the Inter-Service Road Race Championships in Yorkshire.

Manager Sgt Nick Munro said: "The team has firmly written its name in the UKAF Sport history books.

"I'm so proud of them. We've worked hard all year at training camps and races to form a cohesive bond which we knew would be pivotal for success at the IS Champs.

"The lads carried out the tactics to the letter, playing to our strengths, and led to us dominating the top 10 and taking the title home."

The championship featured a Women's and

Open event, with all three Services fielding strong teams across both.

The women's race, although won by a Navy rider, was dominated by the Army, which took the team spoils.

The RAF women's squad took the race to both Services but were unable to match the strength of the other riders, with Sqn Ldr Vicki Webb in sixth the highest-placed aviator.

Beginning amid torrential downpours, which made for exciting and hard racing, the start of the Open race was a tight and aggressive affair.

Things blew apart when a breakaway of four riders snapped the elastic with two laps remaining.

With two aviators in the break – Sgt Rich Summerbell (Brize) and AS1 James Bunting (Fylingdales) – the RAF were well represented against two Army riders, which soon reduced to one.

It took smart tactics from the Army athlete to break away from the RAF riders and ultimately cross the finish line in first place, with the aviators completing the podium in second and third respectively.

The remaining RAF riders battled for position in the bunch in order to stack the points positions and, finishing with six riders in the top 10, resulted in the team being crowned the Road Race Team Champions.

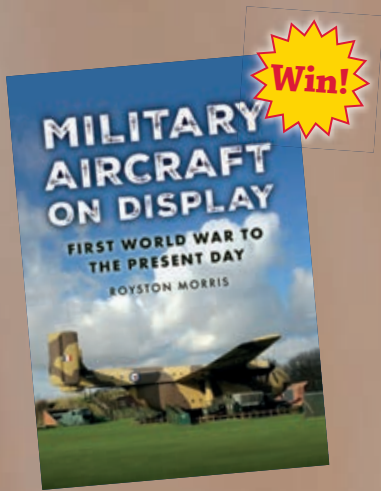
● Follow RAF Cycling on Instagram @rafcycling.



## Cricketers take 50-over title

Men add championship crown to their T20 trophy – see page 24





Win new aviation  
title ● p5

# R'n'R

## Stacey's stage return – 2:22 A Ghost Story

● See  
pages  
4-5





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

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



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

**COMBAT  
STRESS**  
FOR VETERANS' MENTAL HEALTH





## Theatre Here & Now The Steps Musical Nationwide tour

# Edward's Stepping out

**F**RESH FROM appearing in Stephen Sondheim's final work *Here We Are* at the National Theatre, Edward Baker-Duly is now looking forward to performing in quite a different musical.

Edward plays Max in *Here & Now The Steps Musical*, that starts a nationwide tour on August 29 at Aylesbury's Waterside Theatre and runs until May 2026 – he's in it for the whole tour.

"I haven't toured properly in about 25 years so I'm looking forward to it and revisiting some of the places I went to when I first came over here from South Africa," he said. "It will be exciting."

Born in Stockholm to a Swedish mother and English father who was an engineer and a maths professor, Edward (pictured right) lived in Ethiopia for a few years as a young child when his father worked at Addis Ababa University. The family then moved to South Africa where Edward attended drama school, after first wanting to be a pilot.

He explained: "My grandfather served in the RAF in World War II, I believe he was a tail gunner on the Lancaster, and my father learnt to fly through the RAF's cadet corps. I thought I would become a pilot."

"My mother took me to an orthopaedic specialist as she was worried about me having knock knees. He suggested sending me to ballet lessons to straighten my legs. I attended ballet school and

when I left still wanted to join the air force. Both my parents had degrees and my mother said I should go to university. So I studied for a drama degree and was bitten by the bug."

Edward used to live in New York and has appeared in both on and off-Broadway productions. His many other credits include *South Pacific* at the National, *The Wizard of Oz* at the London Palladium and on television *Downton Abbey*, *Hollyoaks*, *Holby City*, *Doctors* and *Emmerdale*.

He describes his *Here & Now* character Max as 'charming and ruthless.' The show is set in the Better Best Bargains superstore somewhere on the coast. It's Friday night and everyone's dancing in the aisles. But when Caz discovers the shelves are stocked with lies and betrayal, the summer of love she and her friends dreamed of suddenly feels like a tragedy. Have they all lost their chance of a 'happy ever after'? Or does love have other plans in store...?

Edward said: "It's funny, moving and very camp and full of all the Steps hits. It's a super, fun night out, a really feel-good show."

The show previewed at Birmingham Rep last November when the band themselves made an appearance. Edward said: "It was extraordinary, the audience went nuts." And there's a rumour that they might appear at the tour's gala performance at Manchester's Opera House during its run there from September 2-13.

● Go to: [thestepsmusical.com](http://thestepsmusical.com) for all tour details.  
By Tracey Allen



**GOOD CLEAN FUN:**  
Blow away the wash day blues with camp musical



## Theatre Single White Female UK tour

### Single White Female play to premiere

**K**YM MARSH (*Coronation Street*, *Waterloo Road*) will star in the world premiere stage production of *Single White Female* – based on the iconic 90s psychological thriller – that begins a major nationwide tour from January 2026.

Opening on January 9, 2026 at Brighton's Theatre Royal, the show then embarks on a tour across the UK and Ireland until June 13. Full casting is to be announced.

Written by author, journalist and broadcaster Rebecca Reid, the stage production is described as a bold and modern reimagining of the hit 1992 movie from Columbia Pictures, and the bestselling book by John Lutz.

Allie is a recently divorced mum, balancing being a single parent with the launch of her tech start-up. When she decides to advertise for a lodger to help make ends meet, the delightful Hedy (Marsh) offers her a lifeline.



**KYM MARSH:** Leading lady

But as their lives intertwine, boundaries blur and a seemingly perfect arrangement begins to unravel.

Kym Marsh said: "I am so excited to be bringing this brilliant, brand new and thrilling play to theatres across England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland."

"I remember being totally gripped by the movie when I first saw it in the cinema and could never have imagined back then that I'd be starring in the world premiere of its life on stage."

"Get ready to be thrilled, shocked and entertained and watch out for those stiletto heels!"

● Go to: [swfonstage.com](http://swfonstage.com) for full booking details.



## Cinema Sorry, Baby (15) In cinemas now

### The anguish of Agnes

**S**OMETHING BAD has happened to Agnes. What exactly, we learn in time, but life goes on despite the weight of it all, in Eva Victor's semi-autobiographical *Sorry, Baby*.

Agnes is a literature professor at the same New England grad school where she was once a student, and where she was sexually assaulted. This event – referred to as "the Bad Thing" by Agnes and her loving friend Lydie (Naomi Ackie) – is the source of a long, confounding pain, which the film explores over several years, but through the blackly comic lens of an indie drama.

Played by the film's writer-director, Agnes remains the emotional centre throughout. Told out of sequence and divided into chapters, *Sorry, Baby* reveals the lasting ripple effects of trauma. What makes the film stand out is its unusual blend of humour and heaviness: a refusal, perhaps, to treat the bad thing with the clinical

seriousness so often expected. The comedy isn't used to distract or diffuse tension, it arises naturally from Agnes's perspective, where pain, absurdity and reality blur.

The film opens with Lydie visiting from New York. There are vague allusions to past events that hang over the present. More is revealed when we jump back to Agnes's final year at school, where she earns praise for her thesis and is invited to a one-on-one session with mentor Decker (Louis Cancelmi) at his house. The assault is neither staged conventionally nor fully shown, but the events will be relayed and more than once. Survivors are often forced to repeat their stories for institutions that fail to listen.

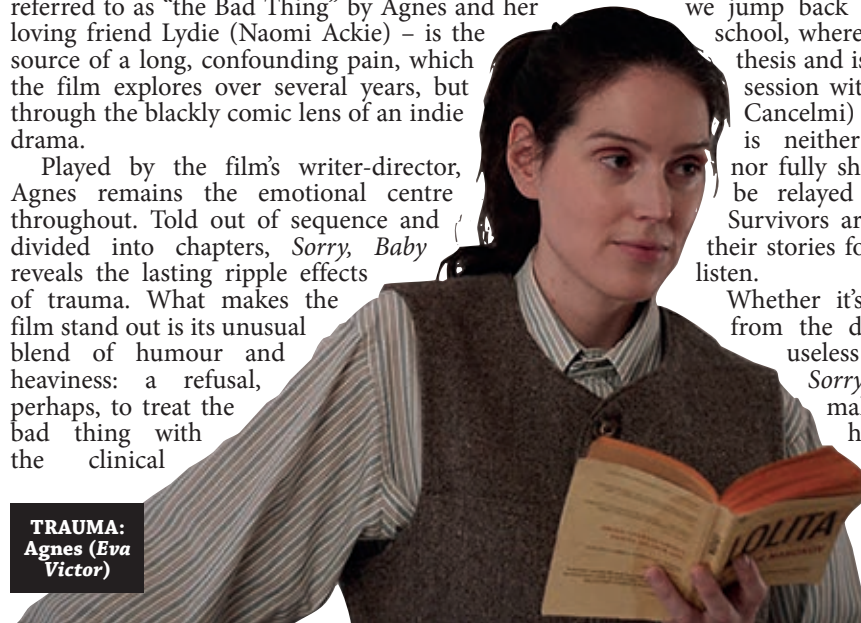
Whether it's the lack of sensitivity from the doctor, or the comically useless reps from the school,

*Sorry, Baby* seems to be making a larger point about how this subject is talked about, and offers a bold alternative: brave, honest and deeply felt.

Three out of five roundels

Review by Sam Cooney

**TRAUMA:**  
Agnes (Eva Victor)







**Museum**  
**Jane Austen Festivals**  
Chawton, Hampshire



**AUSTEN STYLE:** Dress Up Day at the House (by Luke Shears) and, below, first editions (by Peter Smith) © Jane Austen House

# Celebrating Austen 250



**T**HIS YEAR is the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth and Jane Austen's House in Chawton, Hampshire, is hosting a range of events in celebration of the revered author.

The Persuasion and Poetry Festival runs from September 12-21, featuring a poetry workshop by award-winning poet Maura Dooley, former poet in residence at the House, and other creative workshops including Botanicals of the Regency and Mindful Painting.

The Festival includes a series of talks from a Drawing Room lecture by acclaimed novelist Salley Vickers (*Miss Garnet's Angel*) to talks on Jane Austen's Garden by Molly Williams, how the

natural world features in *Persuasion* by Professor Michael Greaney and a dive into the darker side of Regency England with menswear historian Mark Wallis. Author Lucinda Hawksley will host an in-conversation event with novelist Emily Howes (*The Painter's Daughters*).

Fine artist Stephanie Smart has created wardrobe items, from gowns and coats to hats, gloves and shawls – all made from paper and thread – which will be displayed in each room of the House from September 9 to November 16. During the Festival, Stephanie will give a talk on how the work was created and a tour of the installation itself.

Visitors to Jane Austen's House in 2025 can view two new exhibitions: Jane Austen and the Art of Writing is a new, permanent exhibition which explores Austen's creative writing process, features objects that directly inspired her and displays a rare collection of first editions of all six of her novels, on display together for the first time at the house where she wrote them.

Austenmania! celebrates the 30th anniversary of the iconic Austen adaptations of 1995, from the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* to *Clueless*, featuring production shots, original cinema posters and press cuttings as well as two original *Pride and Prejudice* transmission scripts and handwritten production notes. Both exhibitions are free with House entry.

From November 19 the House will be dressed for Christmas with traditional Georgian decorations, scents and recipes, and will offer visitors the chance to explore the property by candlelight.

The remaining festival of the year is Jane Austen's Birthday Celebration Week, from December 13-21.

● **Go to:** [janeaustenshouse](#) for further information.



**HISTORY:** Jane's writing desk (by Luke Shears) © Jane Austen House



**Theatre**  
**2:22 A Ghost Story**  
UK tour

# Touring's a Strictly pa

## Stars are the first real-life couple to play leads in thriller

**A**S THE first real-life couple to star in the UK tour of *2:22 A Ghost Story*, Stacey Dooley and Kevin Clifton are relishing the chance to work together again. It's been seven years since they took the Glitterball Trophy on *Strictly Come Dancing*. "And that feels like a really long time ago," said Dooley.

The presenter, journalist and actress starred in the smash-hit thriller for a limited run in the West End in 2024. She played young mother Jenny, who, with her husband Sam, has recently moved into a house they are now renovating. Every night at precisely 2:22am they hear strange and disconcerting sounds. The nerve-shredding thriller goes to venues including Milton Keynes Theatre from September 15-20, Cheltenham's Everyman (October 20-25) and Buxton Opera House (November 17-22).

### Danny Robins

Written by Danny Robins and premiering in 2021, it was one of Clifton's favourite plays, even before he saw Dooley in it. "So that was another reason for us to say yes to the tour," he said.

The couple are parents to two-year-old Minnie, who is on the road with them during the tour which runs until late November. Stacey admitted: "Of course, travelling the country with a two-year-old brings its own stresses, but it's great that we can all be together as a family."

In the edge-of-the-seat story, Jenny is convinced the house is haunted but Sam is having none of it. When their old friend Lauren and her new partner Ben come for dinner, belief and scepticism clash and they agree to stay up until 2:22 to try to find out what's really going on.

For Stacey, Jenny is a relatable character. "We can either see parts

of ourselves in Jenny or we've got pals who remind us of her. She's a teacher, so she's got a lot going on work-wise. And she's a mum, so I can relate to her on that level too."

Kevin sees Sam as an equally recognisable character. "We all know at least one Sam in our circles – someone who's a bit of a know-it-all, who has read a few things on social media and now considers himself an expert."

### Little girl

Dooley was drawn to the play the first time around because of parallels with her own life. "I had just had a little girl and we had just moved house, so I could totally understand where Jenny was coming from. But Jenny's probably a bit more placid than I am and a bit sweeter. I don't think I'm patient enough to be a teacher."

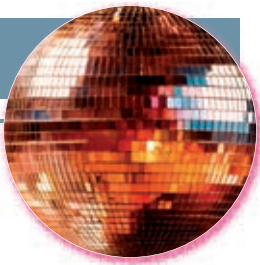
And is Kevin anything like Sam? "I don't think so but maybe I used to be. When I was in my early 20s I liked going against the grain of everyone's opinions. I've grown out of that now," he said.

There's another big difference. "Jenny and Sam's dynamic is a world away from how me and Kev interact," Stacey was keen to point out. "We're pretty chill. We haven't got the kind of head-buttie relationship that they have."

Since its premiere *2:22* has enjoyed a series of West End residences and played Los Angeles, Australia and Ireland, and Stacey thinks it attracts return visits because: "Once you've seen it, you're tempted to see it a second or third time because there's so much to it, and it's even more intriguing once







# a family affair for former partners Stacey and Kevin

Win!



## Books

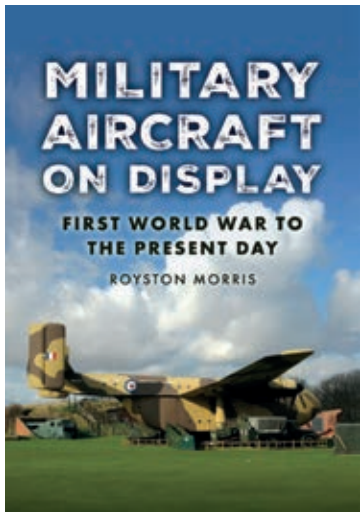
**Military Aircraft On Display**  
amberley-books.com

# Aircraft from WWI to the present day

**I**DEAL FOR aviation enthusiasts, *Military Aircraft On Display* by Royston Morris (amberley-books.com), published this month, features a broad range of aircraft from World War I up to the modern day that can be seen on display in the skies and on the ground in the UK.

The title, pictured, which boasts 180 illustrations, includes aircraft ranging from the monoplanes and bi-planes of the early twentieth century to the hi-tech supersonic jet fighters used by air forces across the world today. Gyrocopters and helicopters are also featured.

They can be seen giving displays at air days and airshows or as static exhibits at a wide variety of locations – military



and aviation museums, airports, airfields and aerodromes.

Some of the aircraft are also

found at military establishments around the country, where they are plinthed and act as gate guardians, or in the hands of private individuals.

We have copies of the book (rrp £15.99) up for grabs. To be in with a chance of winning one, simply answer this question correctly:

**How many illustrations does *Military Aircraft On Display* contain?**

Email your answer, marked Military Aircraft book competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by September 19.

Please include your full postal address.



## Music

**Jake Bugg**  
New album

**RE-RELEASE:**  
*A Modern Day Distraction*



# More bang for your Bugg

**F**OLLOWING THE release of his seventh studio album *A Modern Day Distraction* last year, Jake Bugg is back with a special deluxe repack of the celebrated record, which comes out on October 24.

Featuring four brand new tracks including new single *Never Said Goodbye*, *Oblivious*, *Too Late Now* and *Feels Like The Sunshine*, *A Modern Day Distraction Deluxe Edition* will be released on CD with 16-page booklet, white vinyl and digitally.

"After we released the album we realised we weren't finished creatively, so we headed back in the studio and made more tracks," said Jake, pictured.

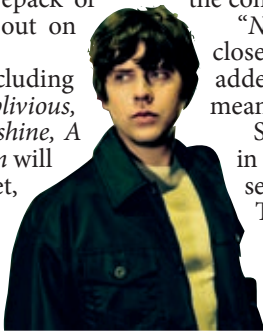
"All of these would have gone on the original, so we're releasing a deluxe version that feels more like the complete record."

"*Never Said Goodbye* is about losing someone close unexpectedly, which affects a lot of us," he added. "It's happened to me, so it's a song that means a lot personally."

Still only 31, Bugg has released seven albums in his 13-year career. He is currently playing a series of summer shows, including Darlington's Touchdown Festival on August 23.

He'll also be playing live at the HMV Empire, Coventry, on September 11 and Watford Colosseum on September 12.

● Go to: [jakebugg.com](http://jakebugg.com) for more details.



**REHEARSALS:** Stacey Dooley plays Jenny, alongside partner Kevin Clifton (below) as Sam

you're aware of how it ends." Luton-born Dooley came to fame as a documentarian, earning an MBE in 2018 for services to broadcasting. That same year she and Clifton were partnered on *Strictly Come Dancing* and were the winners.

## Dancer

Clifton started out as a professional dancer before his seven-year tenure on *Strictly* turned him into a household name. Since leaving the show he has starred in such musicals as *Rock of Ages*, *War of the Worlds*, *Strictly Ballroom* and *Chicago*, but 2:22 marks his first time appearing in a straight play.

Having been in the show already, Stacey said: "During

rehearsals you think you have an idea of how it's going to play out, then you hear the audience gasp. It's a thrill. There are points in the show where you hear them scream and you're delighted because you see how invested they are."

Getting to tour together in a play was one of the main draws for a couple whose busy schedules often keep them apart.

"Kev is on tour a lot and he'll be all over the place," Stacey said, "and if I'm at work, often my locations are further afield. The timing is right and it's probably the last time we can do something like this before Minnie will be three or four, and we'll be thinking about preschool and stuff like that."

Kevin smiles again. "We're striking while the iron is hot."

● Go to: [222aghoststory.com](http://222aghoststory.com) for full tour details.





## Your Announcements

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

### Seeking

**SEEKING** Flt Lt Bev Webb who was the station MO Medical Officer at RAF Wyton in the 70s, 1972-74. Any information will be gladly received. I was on Tactical Supply and we spent many weekends flying at Panshangar in the two Auster aircraft they had. Please call Maurine Boakes on: 0116 2849332 or contact me on Facebook.

**SEEKING** memorabilia relating to the Victor Bomber, in particular hanging china/porcelain wall plates. If you can help please contact Dick Squire on: [dick.squire4@gmail.com](mailto:dick.squire4@gmail.com).

I am seeking incidents of ghostly or paranormal phenomena at the ex-RAF base at Bircham Newton in Norfolk (now the Construction Industry Training Board), either on site or in the nearby accommodation. Thank you. Paul Lee, email: [paul@paullee.com](mailto:paul@paullee.com)

**SEEKING** Warrant Officer Morgan Russell Price, MBE, formerly stationed at RAF Leeming, born in Loughborough in 1969. Urgently need to get in touch with him. Email: [lyndasmart31@gmail.com](mailto:lyndasmart31@gmail.com)

**SEEKING** anyone who served with or knew WO Henry Hamar during and/or following WWII, any information will be gladly received, contact: [andyhilton75@hotmail.com](mailto:andyhilton75@hotmail.com)

**CALLING** ex members of 230 OCU RAF Finningley who served there during the 1960s. I am seeking 230 OCU's Squadron Crest to make a wall shield. Email: [rogerparker1944@icloud.com](mailto:rogerparker1944@icloud.com) maybe for a get-together some time in the future.

**225 Squadron** – I am seeking the current custodian of the 225 Sqn Association archives. Shortly before his death in 2011 my father, Maurice Potts

(pictured below in 1943), loaned his wartime logbook to someone in the Association for research purposes, but it was never returned – perhaps because of his passing. The last contact I can find is 225's former CO, Sqn Ldr Gordon Henderson, but he died in 2009. I am now pursuing my own research into the squadron with a view to publication of my father's extensive wartime diary, and would be very grateful for the safe return of his logbook so that I can ratify various facts. Please email: [marcus@cmcgraphics.co.uk](mailto:marcus@cmcgraphics.co.uk)



### Reunions

**309 Entry** RAF Hereford C Flt 4 Sqn Cooks, April 1967 to May 1968. If anyone knows anybody from that Entry and wants to get in touch, with a view to meeting for a 60th anniversary celebration in 2027, please call Ian Dell on: 01202 722058

**ALL** ex Clk Secs who were trained on the Apprentice Wing at RAF Credenhill in the 1960s and 1970s are cordially invited to contact the undersigned with a view to arranging a reunion in 2025. Please email: [tibbett@ntlworld.com](mailto:tibbett@ntlworld.com)

**217 Craft** Apprentices RAF Halton, 55 years Reunion, September 30 and October 1 at the Petwood Hotel, Woodhall Spa, LN10 6QG. BBMF & IBCC trips planned for during the day with a

formal dinner on the evening of October 1. Please contact Gerry Evans on: 01793 764236 or email: [gerry.e.54@btinternet.com](mailto:gerry.e.54@btinternet.com)

**THE** RAF Masirah and RAF Salalah Veterans Association AGM and Reunion Gala Dinner is to be held on Saturday, October 4 at The Park Royal Hotel, Stretton, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 4NS. All members are welcome to attend. If you are interested in attending the reunion, please contact Alan Teasdale on: [joalteas@btinternet.com](mailto:joalteas@btinternet.com). If you would like to join the Association as a member, please visit our website: [omanrafveterans.org](http://omanrafveterans.org) for further information.

**103RD** Entry RAF Halton Apprentices Reunion October 17 at the The Park House Hotel in Shifnal, TF11 9BA, 7pm. Contact Mick Woodhouse on: 07811 401040, email: [mickjwoodhouse1946@gmail.com](mailto:mickjwoodhouse1946@gmail.com) or through: [103rd-entry.org.uk](http://103rd-entry.org.uk)

### Association

**THE** Association of RAF Regiment WOs and SNCOs 2025 AGM and Reunion event will take place from Monday, September 29 to Thursday, October 2, at The Parsonage Hotel and Spa, Escrick, York. For further information visit the association website (currently under construction) at: [www.rafregtwoandsnco.org.uk](http://www.rafregtwoandsnco.org.uk) or contact: [honsecr@rafregtwoandsnco.org.uk](mailto:honsecr@rafregtwoandsnco.org.uk)

### Spitfires Choir

**THE** RAF Spitfires Choir is currently looking for new members. The Choir's next rehearsals are from 10am–3pm on September 6 at RAF Northolt. Contact the choir on: [BZN-RAF-Spitfires-Choir@mod.gov.uk](mailto:BZN-RAF-Spitfires-Choir@mod.gov.uk) or email the co-managers: Aleathea. Hill586@mod.gov.uk and Sophie. Hobson400@mod.gov.uk

## Sgt son remembered



**HONOUR:** Brian Patton (left) with Newark Air Museum trustee Howard Heeley and the log books

**THE** TRUSTEES of Newark Air Museum have accepted a set of donations into the museum archive from long-standing attraction member and former aircraft cockpit opener Brian Patton.

Among the items were the log books of Brian's son Sgt Michael Charles Patton, who died aged 29, on September 22, 1996 while flying with 7 Squadron Special Forces Flight on Chinooks.

Having qualified with 240 OCU and flown operationally with 78 Sqn, Michael had an extensive flying career as a crewman on the Chinook, primarily with 7 Sqn.

He is remembered with a memorial stone cairn near Bosherton, Pembrokeshire and with a memorial plaque and tree at Newark Cemetery, Nottinghamshire.

Brian has been a long-term supporter of the museum's efforts to restore Boeing Chinook HC.1 ZA717, and the helicopter's

fuselage will eventually carry a plaque in Michael's memory, said Museum trustee Howard Heeley.

Mr Heeley accepted the log books on behalf of the museum.

He said: "Brian was a cockpit opener on our Vulcan aircraft. Over the years everyone at the museum came to learn a lot about Michael as Brian shared his memories of his beloved son."

"A particularly poignant event took place on July 31, 2017, in the form of a visit to the museum's Southfield Site by a 7 Sqn Chinook HC6."

"This special visit was the culmination of months of planning between the museum, the Patton family and personnel from 7 Sqn at RAF Odiham."

He added: "We are honoured to be entrusted with caring for Michael's log books in the museum archive, something that will allow future generations to reflect on the realities of operational service of our brave Armed Forces personnel."

## Northolt hosts BoB dinner

**TO** MARK 85 years since the Battle of Britain, the RAF Benevolent Fund is hosting its inaugural fundraising gala dinner at RAF Northolt on October 1.

Held in the historic setting of the Churchill Hangar, overlooking the airfield at Northolt, the Gala Dinner will include a poignant Sunset Ceremony to remember The Few and to recognise the commitment, bravery and sacrifice of those who fought in such a pivotal moment of World War II.

The Fund will also be joined by The King's Colour Squadron, the North London Military Wives

Choir and the Central Band of the Royal Air Force.

Ben Alonso, Director of Fundraising at the RAFBF, said: "Eighty-five years on from the Battle of Britain, we will gather not only to remember the courage of The Few but to act for those who serve or have served in the RAF. The Gala Dinner will raise vital funds to support today's RAF Family."

● Contact Ellen Brooks on: [events@rafbf.org.uk](mailto:events@rafbf.org.uk) or visit: [rafbf.org/thegala](http://rafbf.org/thegala) for more information including packages and costs, or to secure your place.

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## Cadet Cranwell is new recruit

OVER THE past decade RAF Cranwell has raised more than £16,000 for the charity Hounds for Heroes, founded by Royal Navy veteran Allen Parton.

New recruit Cadet Cranwell (pictured) is now training to become an Assistance Dog with the charity after successfully

passing his probation period.

A chance encounter with a Service dog transformed Allen's life following a traumatic injury sustained during military service.

Hounds for Heroes became a registered charity in 2010.

● Go to: [houndsforheroes.com](http://houndsforheroes.com) for more details.

## Dragon boat team race ahead

A MILITARY association has made a splash and helped raise money for an Armed Forces charity.

The Royal Yeomanry Regimental Association took part in the Kingston Dragon Boat Race recently representing the Royal Star & Garter and raising more than £800 for the charity.

The team – 12 rowers and one drummer – reached the finals after sailing their way through three heats.

The event took place on the River Thames near Canbury Gardens in Kingston.

Team leader Sgt Chris Smith said: "We were all happy to support Royal Star & Garter. We had an amazing time, and we all discovered the joy of dragon boat racing."

"We're looking forward to representing the charity again next year."

Halani Foulsham, partnerships manager at Royal Star & Garter, said: "We're incredibly grateful to the Royal Yeomanry for their fantastic effort and team spirit at this



DISCOVERING THE JOY: Rowers and their drummer (inset)



year's Dragon Boat race. Their energy and commitment made it a truly special day.

"Thank you to everyone who

supported, donated and helped make the event such a success."

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

## RAF News

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Crossword

No. 392

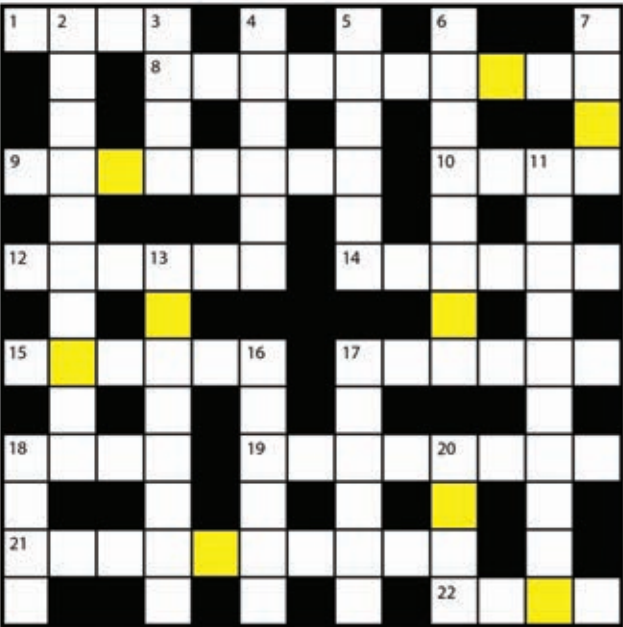
Solve the crossword, then rearrange the 9 letters in yellow squares to find an RAF word

This edition's Crossword and Su Doku puzzles are just for fun for you to do at home, no need to send your entries in.

- Across
- 1. And 22 Across. Bird pond returns as part of Red Arrows display (4,4)
  - 8. Speed up to create lace, perhaps (10)
  - 9. Read riot act when main hod's broken (8)
  - 10. In one starling's roost (4)
  - 12. Left out in thinking about sir (6)
  - 14. How most films conclude (3,3)
  - 15. Peter's upset favourite film star (6)
  - 17. Lets Capone slow up (6)
  - 18. Fly first Gulfstream, navigating and turning (4)
  - 19. First pie consumed on RAF plane (8)
  - 21. Have large drink on high ground of RAF station (6,4)
  - 22. See 1 Across

- Down
- 2. Odd wanting creation of RAF station (10)
  - 3. Its exercises often involve the RAF (4)
  - 4. Scottish rest in peace before the first hand (6)
  - 5. Outdated deerstalker? (3,3)
  - 6. Station where 100 excelled at athletics (8)
  - 7. Jets crashed? What a joke! (4)
  - 11. Maybe strode down to tell all (4,4,2)
  - 13. What centenarian has achieved during Victorian period, say (5,3)
  - 16. Post Office may reveal model occupation (6)
  - 17. Caustic tart in charge (6)
  - 18. Desert when given green light by British Intelligence, initially (4)
  - 20. Comprehensive stuffed (4)

Name: .....  
Address: .....  
.....  
.....  
RAF word: ..... Crossword No. 392



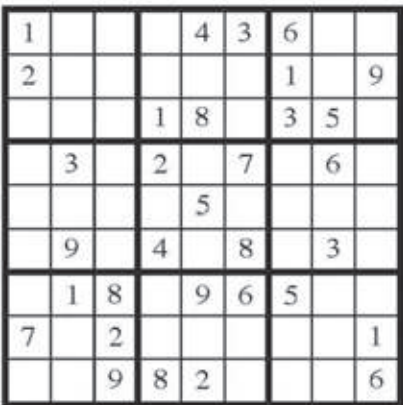
**Solution to Crossword No. 391**  
**Across** – 6. Band Aid 7. Canal 9. Hedge 10. Machine 12. Down Payment 14. Diego Garcia 18. Alberta 19. Jetty 21. Offer 22. Far Gone  
**Down** – 1. Cadet 2. Adagio 3. Air 4. Marham 5. Bar None 8. Tanagra 11. Knights 13. Airlift 15. Gee-gee 16. Ice Age 17. Sting 20. Ray  
**RAF term** – *Bomber*



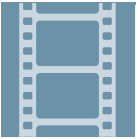
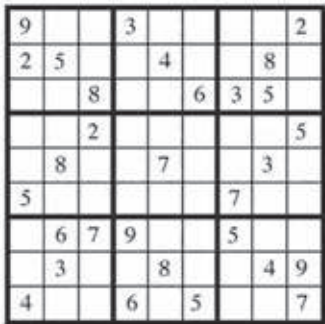
Su Doku

No. 402

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.



Solution to Su Doku No. 401



Film Review

The Ceremony (15)

Out now

Death at the dodgy car wash

JACK KING'S *The Ceremony* takes place at a Bradford car wash staffed entirely by illegal immigrants, where simmering tensions between Romanians and those from further east will end in tragedy. When a customer accuses the staff of stealing a Rolex from his glovebox, the incident sparks an explosive argument. One worker assures another: "This is normal." The accused, Nassar (Mo'min Swaitat), insists on his innocence, but Romanian Cristi (Tudor Cucu-Dumitrescu) is unconvinced, kicking him out of their overcrowded shared house. This act sets off a chain of events leading to Nassar's death. Fearing police scrutiny of the car wash's operations, Cristi enlists the reluctant help of Kurd Yusef (Erdal Yildiz) to dispose of the body. What follows is a darkly warped road movie in which Cristi and Yusef – divided by race,



GRIM MISSION: Illegal immigrants Cristi and Yusef have a body to dispose of

language and religion – drive into the desolate countryside, searching for a place without witnesses. Beautifully photographed in striking black and white, and punctuated with numerous (perhaps too many) close-up detail shots, the film mixes a grounded realism with moments that tip into the surreal. As they move further from their world and from one another, the pace slows to a hypnotic crawl. Cristi remains focused on survival, determined to keep moving forward, while Yusef, haunted by his past, wrestles with the morality of their situation. The film then turns inward, mining the conscience of both men through quiet reflection and vivid religious symbolism. By first establishing a world built on cultural divides and precarious survival, *The Ceremony* then strips its characters of their environment, leaving them in the cold void of the rainy moors. The result is a stylish, morally complex examination of culture clash among those living on society's margins. 4 roundels out of 5 Review by Sam Cooney



Theatre

What's Love Got To Do With It?

UK tour

Tina Turner story goes on

DESCRIBED AS a full-throttle, high-energy celebration of a musical family, Holly honed her craft for more than a decade performing semi-professionally before an audition on ITV's *Starstruck* changed her life. She said: "I had to audition as three of my musical icons, and Tina was an obvious choice for me. During lockdown, I studied her performances obsessively, getting into her moves, her walk, and her energy." It wasn't long before the team behind *What's Love Got To Do With It?* noticed Holly's raw talent and passion. Initially cast as a backing singer and understudy, she quickly stepped into the spotlight, making the lead role her own and earning standing ovations night after night. Go to: [musicalsontour.co.uk](https://www.musicalsontour.co.uk) for tour dates.



'TINA': Holly Bannis