



# 51° NORTH



Issue 2 2024

The Magazine of RAF Brize Norton



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Royal Air Force Brize Norton





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To mark our 25th anniversary, we are taking on the iconic Three Peaks Challenge. We have a team ready to lace up their hiking boots to conquer the peaks together, but there are a few spots left. Could you join them? Critical Care Paramedic Barry would be one of those walking beside you.

**"This really is a once in a lifetime opportunity. We would love to have you on team Thames Valley Air Ambulance."**



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Barry, Critical Care Paramedic



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# Are you looking for a Boarding School?

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Claire Calder

Knowledgeable Caring Experienced

Are you considering a boarding school for your child?

I am Claire Calder and I run my own child-centred educational consultancy to help parents looking for advice on their child's education from prep school through to university.

At the heart of our service is boarding school advice; knowing how challenging it can be to narrow down the plethora of school choices has shaped my work to support families with their own boarding school decisions. My clients have included UK Forces and FCDO families and international families from all over the world, wanting a British education for their children.

It's a real privilege to share my experience and support families as they make crucial decisions about their children's education. As a former pupil at a premier boarding school in the Cotswolds and as a mother of two children who have attended boarding school from Year 4, I have very personal experience of the decisions you are currently considering. My husband has 36 years' experience in the British Army, and, as a family, we have had 16 moves and 4 overseas postings, most recently in Nigeria and Saudi Arabia.

I first considered boarding school for my two children when Edward, at the age of 7, was faced with moving to his fifth school. He was upset to be losing friends again, had started to fall behind in his educational attainment, and was always the new boy in any clubs he joined. Once I started on this boarding school journey, I realised how difficult it was to choose settings that best suited the individual needs of my own children which has led me to the service I offer today.

At the heart of my guidance is a child-centred approach that recognises the whole family's needs. I work with my families to understand what is important to them and curate choices tailored to their personal requirements.

Please do get in touch for an initial consultation to discuss how I can help.



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2024 DEADLINE DATES**

	DEADLINE	DELIVERY DATE
<b>ISSUE 1</b>	20 JAN	23 FEB
<b>ISSUE 2</b>	12 MAR	19 APR
<b>ISSUE 3</b>	12 MAY	21 JUN
<b>ISSUE 4</b>	12 JULY	23 AUG
<b>ISSUE 5</b>	12 SEPT	18 OCT
<b>ISSUE 6</b>	12 NOV	12 DEC

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# 51° NORTH



ROYAL  
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## EDITOR'S FOREWORD

As Tommy Cooper would say "just like that" (if you are old enough to remember him!) we find ourselves steaming ahead through 2024.

Hot cross buns, chocolate and easter egg hunts are now all behind us; however, we now have a glimpse of some much-needed sunshine and lighter nights. I am sure you are all now looking forward to getting outside and enjoying the great outdoors as we head towards what I hope will be a long warm summer.

The Station has continually worked at full throttle as we continue to see amazing achievements across the whole force, and I am delighted to be sharing them with you all in this latest edition.

From exercises to charity events, our personnel have been at the helm. More recently we celebrated International Women's Day with the Carterton Branch of the WI, a great afternoon working alongside inspirational women and not forgetting World Book Day with RAFAKidz Nursery; Padre Kit had a great time reading to them all. Our STEM Ambassadors

have had an amazing time with local schools, engaging with children, through education, highlighting the importance of all things science related.

As we look ahead to the coming months with a busy calendar, we will endeavour to bring you news of all the latest activity including the 80th Anniversary of D Day, National Armed Forces Day and the upcoming changeover of command on Station as we prepare to say a fond farewell to our current Station Commander and Commander Air Wing.

I will leave you all for now to enjoy this latest edition and capture all our latest news. Please remember the media team are here to help promote the work you do; share your stories and showcase this amazing Station - please do get in touch.

Until next time.

*Anita – MCO  
Editor 51 Degrees North*



## DEADLINE

### PLEASE SUBMIT ALL ARTICLES BY 12TH MAY 2024

Your article should aim to be between 300-500 words in length, with a high resolution picture over 1MB for every 100 words you write. You should ensure that personnel/activities in photos are named and that you provide the author's details, in case we require any more information. Send your completed articles to [BZN-51DegreesNorth@mod.gov.uk](mailto:BZN-51DegreesNorth@mod.gov.uk). We look forward to receiving your articles and make every effort to publish as many of them as possible.

# Embracing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the RAF

## A Look Back at a Recent Diversity and Inclusion Event in Association with Asian Voice news.

In our interconnected world, diversity, equity, and inclusion are vital for organisations to thrive. Our forward-thinking organisation proudly advocates for workforce inclusivity and recently participated in the "Women in Conversation" event, which promoted awareness and open dialogue about women's careers and their impact on their lives. The event featured three panellists, Sandeep Mahal MBE, Priya Guha MBE, and Mamta Singhal MBE, discussing topical questions affecting multiple industries. Our RAF contingent, led by our very own Air Commodore Wendy Rothery, Head of Diversity and Inclusion, Conduct Equity and Justice Directorate for the RAF, joined other colleagues at The Taj, St James' Court, London, to demonstrate our commitment to this important cause.

### The three key takeaways from the event being: Sponsorship and Mentorship:

**Sponsorship:** These are both essential leadership commitments, with distinct focuses. Sponsorship is centred around organisational growth, where leaders create environments that support the workforce in obtaining career-enhancing opportunities. In contrast, mentorship focuses on individual development, with leaders providing guidance and support to help individuals grow personally and professionally. Leaders are asked to create such opportunities.

**Asking for help:** is a vital, yet frequently undervalued aspect of career progression. Seeking assistance showcases self-awareness, humility, and a readiness to learn, rather than incompetence and weakness which are contrary misconceptions. It fosters stronger professional relationships and a supportive work environment by allowing colleagues to share their expertise. Proactively asking for help prevents mistakes, expedites problem-solving, and improves workplace performance and

*Flt Lt Margaret Welton, RAF Brize Norton and AS1 Mandeep Golhar, Avionics Technician, RAF Waddington.*



reputation, paving the way for career growth and shared successes.

**Menopause Policy:** Menopause, a natural biological process affecting millions of women is often overlooked in the workplace. As more women work through their menopausal years, organisations must assess their provisions for supporting these colleagues. Senior leadership's commitment, including that of male counterparts, is crucial for making this transition less daunting and

fostering an inclusive culture. Leaders should exemplify inclusive behaviours and champion diversity initiatives, holding themselves accountable for creating a supportive environment.

The RAF contingent were featured in the Asian Voice News and other global Asian newspapers showcasing our involvement and commitment. The recruitment team received numerous questions and expressions of interest, highlighting the event's positive impact.

# RAuxAF Centenary Honours & Awards

As part of the RAuxAF 100 Honorary Air Commodores', Squadron Commanders' and Warrant Officers' conference at RAF Cranwell, Air Marshal Paul Lloyd, Deputy Chief of Air Staff declared that he was "honoured to attend the conference and to be asked to present the annual RAuxAF Awards".

The Clyde Trophy, donated by former OC and later Honorary Air Commodore, 7644 (Press & PR) Squadron, is awarded annually to the RAuxAF unit judged to have had the highest performance in Public Relations during the year.

The recipient unit won the award through its publicity for a wide range of exciting activity including personnel being deployed to RAF

Lossiemouth, RAF Waddington, the Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT), Norway, the Netherlands, USA, Cyprus, Qatar, The Falkland Islands and Gibraltar, in support of routine and operational work along with other significant operational support work overseas.

The Clyde Trophy was awarded to 4624 (County of Oxford) Squadron based at RAF Brize Norton.



# EX ARCTIC PHOENIX

At the end of November multiple contingents of RAF personnel were deployed on Exercise Arctic Phoenix in Bardufoss, Norway, located approximately 300 kilometres within the arctic circle.

Amongst the personnel were regiment gunners, tactical communicators, engineers, drivers, chefs and medics. The premise of the exercise was to test their capabilities and begin to understand how best to remain operationally effective in the extreme cold weather environment.

At the beginning of the exercise, arctic survival experts from the Norwegian military arranged a course for all personnel taking part in the exercise. This consisted of theory lessons in the classroom and culminated in spending the night outside in shelters built from materials foraged from the woodland around where the camp had been set up.



The medical team consisted of Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) and Critical Care Air Support Team (CCAST) staff and a technician. The aim was to test electric medical equipment in the extreme cold, to determine its limitations. There was also opportunity to integrate with regiment gunners doing some scenario-based training, which highlighted areas that could be improved upon going forward that could potentially provide some excellent learning opportunities while operating in the arctic environment.

An Atlas C Mk.1 (A400M) from 30 Squadron was also deployed, which the medical team was able to utilise and run in-flight practical aeromedical scenarios integrating the MERT and CCAST teams.



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# Standing With Giants

Several personnel from RAF Brize Norton have volunteered their time to support the Standing with Giants charity and their work supporting the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

**S**tanding with Giants will install 1475 silhouettes across the meadow fields of the British Normandy Memorial in April. The silhouettes are made of recycled aluminium, cut to shape, and painted in the Standing with Giants workshop by volunteer groups from across Oxfordshire.

Groups from RAF Brize Norton attended on different days, including members of the Air Wing, General Duties Flight and Command Support Team, who were volunteering alongside West Oxfordshire's local MP, Robert Courts.

The Station Commander of RAF Brize Norton, Group Captain Claire O'Grady, said: "We have a range of people from our Whole Force at RAF Brize Norton volunteering their time for this. Sometimes, we need opportunities to be able to step away from our current operations and reflect on what happened in the past. This project has given myself and our personnel the chance to come together and have fun while contributing to a cause with a fantastic purpose. I have a personal family connection through my grandfather who was there on D-Day with The Royal Yeomanry Regiment, so for me, contributing to this project means a lot."



Sections including the Air Mobility Force, 1 Tactical Police & Security Squadron, 4624 Squadron and the Joint Air Delivery Test and Evaluation Unit from RAF Brize Norton also volunteered their time to help prepare the silhouette statues.

The aim of the project is to get 80 different groups or organisations to take part in preparing the installation, getting it ready for the April deadline.



Dan Barton is the founder of Standing with Giants. He said:

***"Thank you to all RAF Brize Norton personnel who have come to help. It means a lot to us and it's lovely to see the enthusiasm and passion from military people coming to help with our project"***



# WO YVONNE CONWAY CELEBRATES 40 YEARS SERVICE

Celebrating a varied career after enlisting in 1984, Warrant Officer Yvonne Conway has worked at 11 different UK bases in many roles, including Medical Centre clinical staff, medical and advanced clinical course instructor, Aeromed Instructor and Flight Sergeant Aeromed Control Centre, and lead in the return of injured personnel from Iraq.

**A**fter 24 years of regular service and promotion to Warrant Officer in 2004, she decided to have a career change and subsequently moved across to Full Time Reserve Service in 2008, as the RAF Brize Norton Service Community Support Officer (SCSO). The SCSO is responsible for providing front line support to service families accommodated in Service Families Accommodation and is the interface between the occupant, landlord (DIO), Industry Partner and Maintenance Contractor. In addition, assisting Service Personnel and their families, with welfare related issues and signposting to the various welfare agencies.

WO Conway found the most rewarding part of her career was undertaking Aeromed Flying Duties at RAF Lyneham, repatriating injured or sick service personnel, service families and entitled civilians from various locations around the world to the UK. WO Conway found escorting patients escorting patients back to the UK to receive urgent medical treatment and returning them to their family and loved ones was highly rewarding.

Warrant Officer Yvonne Conway said:  
***"Throughout my career, the Royal Air Force has given me so many amazing job opportunities with the various trade roles, the ability to travel, undertake an overseas posting and participate in unit sports and Force Development expeditions. My transition from Regular to Reserve Service was seamless and would definitely recommend joining the RAF Reservists to personnel looking to leave the service in the near future."***



# Ex High Wire

As part of Defence Engagement, 11 members of 4626 AE Sqn, led by Wg Cdr Lorrie Lawton (OC 4626 AE Sqn), visited 315 AES, AFB Charleston, USA, to continue to develop their sister relationship focusing on clinical/medical procedures and interoperability working practices.

Following briefings by 4626 Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, 315 AES personnel provided a practical demonstration of Tactical Combat Clinical Care. The demonstration included the evacuation of a building and the removal of casualties to safety. It was interesting and informative to see how the manoeuvres were carried out by the US and what clinical procedures were used.

The next day focused on observing and using the various aeromedical pieces of equipment. The team had the opportunity to move out to the aircraft (US C-17) to become familiar with the layout and how the aircraft would be prepared ready for patients, to install the aeromed stantions and go through safety evacuation procedures.

An early start allowed the team to prepare patients and equipment to fly



from Charleston to Ohio (1 Hour 15 min flight). As part of the flight, live passengers and freight were boarded, which again showed how the US combined their assets to meet their operational need.

The visit concluded with a cultural day and arrangements were made for the UK team to visit Charleston, where a member of 315 AES, conducted an historical tour around the old town highlighting poignant areas of the town.

The four days proved to be extremely rewarding from an operational perspective, but also allowed the teams to fully integrate in both a work and social perspective. Under the Defence Engagement banner, our relationship continues to grow, and we look forward to members of 315 AES visiting the UK.



# TACTICAL MEDICAL WING KEEP SKILLS UP TO DATE

Tactical Medical Wing (TMW) are keeping their life saving medical skills up to date through a partnership with Capital Air Ambulance, who provide rapid UK aeromedical services similar to TMW.

**T**MW's Critical Care Air Support Team (CCAST) are a specialised team who provide the medical capability to move critically ill patients through aeromedical evacuation. CCAST is routinely trained with real life scenarios, and this new partnership will enable RAF personnel to keep their live skills up to date by flying missions with Capital Air Ambulance.

Officer Commanding Tactical Medical Wing, Wing Commander Adam Smith said: "What's really important for us is to maintain the skills of our medical specialists while we hold them at readiness. The opportunity with Capital Air Ambulance for our people to work with them on their day-to-day operations, learn from one another, and ensure that when the time comes for the next RAF mission our CCAST are ready to deploy is fantastic."

The partnership not only gives TMW personnel access to live patients, but also allows Capital Air Ambulance medics to work with a group of medical specialists they wouldn't normally get the chance to, building strong relationships and sharing knowledge between both organisations.

Flight Lieutenant Travis Belcham said "This collaboration with Capital Air Ambulance gives us the chance to consolidate our CCAST skills which we provide for Defence, whilst working

with a civilian partner. Not only do we get access to regular live patients it also gives us the opportunity to work on different aircraft with different people all trying to achieve the same goal. It's an invaluable opportunity."

Tactical Medical Wing personnel will now complete a period of training and clinical checks with Capital Air Ambulance to make sure they're ready to begin flying on live missions later this year.



## 99 SQUADRON OC HANDOVER

Command of 99 Squadron at RAF Brize Norton has officially been handed over from Wing Commander Will Essex to Wing Commander Nikki Lofthouse, who becomes the first female commander of the Squadron, now the largest in the Royal Air Force.



**T**he handover took place on the RAF Brize Norton airfield next to the Globemaster (C-17) aircraft which 99 Squadron operate.

Wing Commander Essex said: ***"It has been an absolute privilege and honour to command 99 Squadron for the past two and half years. From supporting operations in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, to undertaking our element of Op LONDON BRIDGE/OVERSTUDY with the dignity and solemnity that it deserved, the people of 99 Squadron have performed exceptionally well in every respect. Collectively, in addition, we have delivered new capabilities onto the aircraft and improved the contingent readiness of the Sqn in the last two years. This has all been down to the hard work and professionalism of the personnel of 99 Sqn and I am hugely thankful for their support."***

On taking command, Wing Commander Lofthouse said: ***"Thank you to Wing Commander Will Essex whose leadership has set the Squadron so well for the future. It is an absolute privilege to take Command of such an incredible group of people and I am already proud of how they deliver for Operations every single day. As Officer Commanding 99 Squadron, I promise to do my very best for each and every one of our team. Quisque Tenax – 'Each Tenacious' "***

# RAFA ARMISTICE VISIT

Six members of the RAF Brize Norton RAFA Committee travelled to Belgium and France to participate in the Armistice Commemorations and to visit several War graves to pay their respects.

On arrival in Belgium on the first night the group participated in the nightly Memorial Ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres, laying wreaths of remembrance. The ceremony takes place 365 days a year, whatever the weather. Also in attendance were members of the RAFA Great Glenn Branch.

The following day we travelled to Chateau Thierry, in France, via War Graves including: Thiepval, Newfoundland Memorial, the Irish Guards Ulster Tower and the Lochnager Mine Crater, created by the detonation of underground mines by Royal Engineers on the first day of the Battle of the Somme.

Friday was an opportunity to meet with the President of the Médaillés Militaires, M. Jean Thomas, who gave an insight to how the RAFA link to the local community was formed and his impressive military career. In the afternoon the group visited the American cemetery at Belleau Wood.

Over the weekend the group attended several Armistice services, centred around the nearby towns of La Ferté-Sous Jouarre, Basseville and Ussy Sur Marne where we joined representatives of the Médaillés Militaires, local dignitaries and members of the public in paying our respects and laying wreaths. Following the services, the group were invited to formal receptions hosted by the local towns with food, wine, and some dancing.

The last two days of the trip we enjoyed taking in some local history, culture, and sites of historical interest. We were once again hosted by local dignitaries who arranged a visit to an air museum on the outskirts of Paris and a tour of Fontainebleau, once the home of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte.

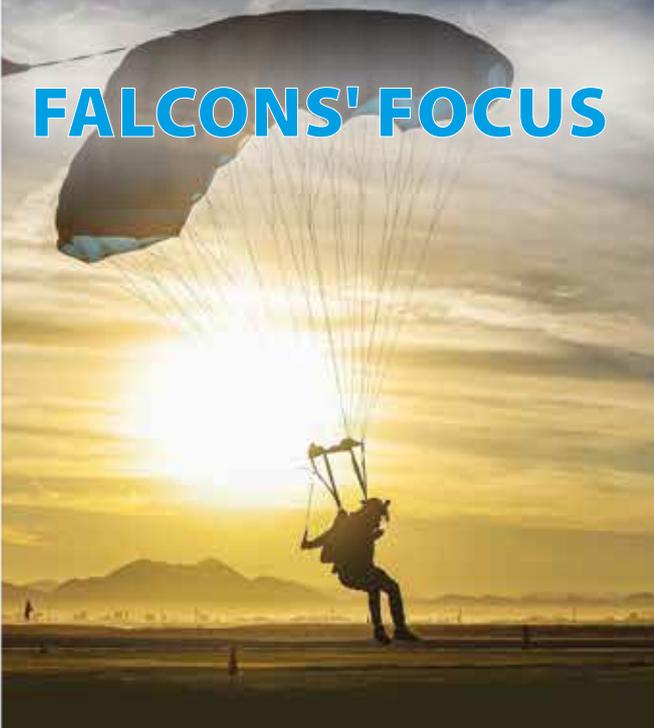
Overall, the trip was a fantastic opportunity for the RAFALO's to build on existing relationships with the communities of La Ferté-Sous Jouarre,



Basseville and Ussy Sur Marne and enhance our knowledge of the battlefields and sacrifice made by those who fought across two World Wars and the lasting impact they had on the landscape and people of France and Belgium.



# FALCONS' FOCUS



The RAF Falcons have returned home from their second winter training exercise of the season, Exercise Falcon Stack, and are now straight into training on home soil.



Whilst California provides the perfect conditions to practice the display in clear blue skies, the team must now get used to the UK weather conditions and test their accuracy skills by landing into tighter drop zones. The next block of training will take place at RAF Brize Norton and the surrounding area and will be followed by a final week of training at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus. An additional week of training in Cyprus allows the team to test their skills further by navigating different weather conditions and jumping from different aircraft types; they will use the Atlas C Mk.1 (A400M) and Puma helicopter.

The RAF Falcons 2024 season Launch Day will take place on 25th April at RAF Brize Norton, where they will showcase their display to Station personnel, local schools and their sponsors. The first public display of the season will take place on 4th May at Truckfest, Lincoln and the season will culminate with the LAVAL Aero Show in France on 22nd September.

With over 60 displays planned for the 2024 season, seven of which being overseas, it's going to be a busy and exciting few months for the RAF Falcons. The full display programme will be released over the next few weeks, so to find out if we're jumping near you, follow us on Instagram, Facebook and X.



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West will take you to the Crossguns at Avoncliff. Or purchase a picnic or cream tea from Noahs pantry. [contact@noahspantry.co.uk](mailto:contact@noahspantry.co.uk) and head East to Semington where you can have lunch and be back to base on time. Or purchase a picnic or cream tea from Noahs pantry. [contact@noahspantry.co.uk](mailto:contact@noahspantry.co.uk)



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The joy of canal boat holidays is that there is something for everyone to enjoy. There is an abundance of wildlife, stunning scenery, and a variety of activities to take part in. You can explore the canal at your own pace and make frequent stops along the way to explore the local area.

Perhaps the best part of a canal boat holiday is that you can truly relax and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the canals. From the comfort of your own narrowboat, you can watch the world drift by, take in the beautiful surroundings, and enjoy spending time with your family. Whether you are looking for a peaceful getaway or an exciting adventure, a canal boat holiday.

Why not enjoy a lazy day afloat on the beautiful Kennet and Avon Canal aboard one of Sally Narrowboats' Dayboats, Jacy, Emily, Sally or Grace. A typical day on our Day boat is West to the Aqueduct at Avoncliff. If you travel East, you can go as far as the locks at Semington.

Day boats are designed to carry up to ten people (including children and infants), but you don't have to have that many on board - two adults can easily manage the boat.

Whether you want to celebrate a special occasion, reward your staff or valued customers, or simply enjoy a day out with friends and family, a trip on our Day boats will be a memorable day out.

You can order a full cream tea, or a grazing box when you book with us. If you order Cream Tea's, or a grazing box you are giving your approval to be contacted about your dietary requirements.

We show you how to operate the boat safely and make sure you are comfortable before heading out, this can take up to half an hour as we will ensure you are happy with the instructions before handing the boat over. We can provide a skipper if you would prefer to just enjoy the trip. (A skipper will be included in party's number)

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**BRIZE NORTON** ISSUE 2 2024

# Memorial Bench Presentation

A memorial bench was unveiled at the Ground Engineering Flight (GEF) on the 17th of January to remember two members of the Trade Group 5 family who sadly lost their lives in motorcycle accidents. Jnr Tech Tony Payne and Cpl Jamie Tutt were both out on separate ride outs with friends when they tragically lost their lives. Tony was a General Technician Mechanical working in GEF based at RAF Brize Norton and Jamie was a General Technician Electrical Instructor at the No 4 School of Technical Training based at MoD St Athan. Tony died in August 2006 and Jamie died four years later in August 2010.

Past and present members of GEF at Brize Norton have held annual charity football matches for the last 17 years to remember both whilst raising funds for the National Association for Bikers with a Disability.

To preserve the memories of Tony and Jamie, FS Chris Revell engaged with SSAFA representatives Mr Kev Trethowan and FS Emma Ludlow to seek the funding for the bench. The Memorial Bench has now been placed inside the recently refurbished Crew Room in GEF.



*The Bench with Flight Sergeant Revell, Mr Kev Trethowan and Officer Commanding GEF directly behind, and Chief Technician Dyer and Air Specialist 1 (Technician) Pugh sat down with a host of GEF Colleagues surrounding the bench.*



*A close up of the Plaque.  
In Memory of our TG5 Family  
Jnr Tech Tony Payne 08 Nov 1978 – 21 Aug 2006  
Cpl Jamie Tutt 10 Feb 1984 – 30 Aug 2010  
Sadly Missed But Never Forgotten.*



*SSAFA Rep Mr Kev Trethowan and Flight Sergeant Chris Revell sat on the bench.*



*The Bench located in the GEF Crew Room.*



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# International Women's Day

Celebrated annually on March 8th this is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women, while also marking a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

It is a day for people around the world to recognise the contributions and accomplishments of women and as we look back on the history of International Women's Day, it is also a great opportunity to explore women's contributions throughout history.

Here at RAF Brize Norton we have been privileged to, not only celebrate this special day, but also to learn about the history of the Women's Institute (WI), and in particular, the Carterton Branch of the WI with some amazing ladies.

The 2024 theme for International Women's Day is Inspire Inclusion and the Carterton ladies certainly have this in abundance.

The colours that represent International Women's Day have a significant meaning, purple signifies justice and dignity, green symbolises hope and white represents purity.

Civil Servant Beverley Masters said:

"It has been a fantastic afternoon, spending time with amazing ladies from across a diverse community. If ever inspiration was needed, then these are most definitely the women to talk to."

To find out more about Carterton WI please visit their website.



Jan Barnard Carterton WI said:

*"It's been a great day for Carterton WI to share our fundraising afternoon tea event with the ladies from RAF Brize Norton as we celebrated International Women's day alongside Carterton Community"*



# Science Week

An aircraft designed with the sole purpose of making people happy, using big speakers that play Taylor Swift music and a lock box to put all the sad in – why didn't I think of this?

It turns out that each of 300 Primary School children aged 7-11 are far more creative than I could ever imagine being! Provided with a whole wealth of future business ventures for life after my RAF career, the least I could do is get them a turn in a Globemaster (C-17A) aircraft pilot seat.

All of this was during RAF Brize Norton STEM Team's contribution to British Science Week, which despite being labelled "week" is actually 10 days each year. For those that don't know what British Science Week is, it is a national STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) initiative aimed at celebrating the diversity in careers in those subjects, in order to inspire children to consider their future careers and to challenge the classic stereotypes that exist such as scientists are always white males that wear lab coats and look like Albert Einstein. This year's dates were 8-17 March 2024.

So how did we attempt to inspire all these children you ask? **The venue:** a combination of the Millennium Amenities Centre, the Brize Norton Families' Club and 99 Squadron. **The participating schools:** St Josephs, Stanford in the Vale, Carterton, Gateway & Edith Moorhouse Primary Schools. **The schedule:** half a day of engaging and fun activities, which involved the children thinking about technology advancements through comparing a WW2 aircraft with a modern day aircraft, working in a team to design their own aircraft, including thinking about things such as cost, sustainability & safety, and then finally building and testing their own foam gliders, adjusting the centre of mass through use of blue-tac and a coin, and then competing to throw their aircraft furthest (although I quickly became the target...). The other half a day was a trip to the mighty 99 Squadron for an aircraft tour around the Air Mobility fleet workhorse that is the Globemaster (C-17A).

The week was a massive success, with seemingly every child leaving

with a big smile on their face, glider in hand to throw at home (sorry parents!) and telling tales of their time piloting the Globemaster. We even managed to secure the RAF Brize Norton Station Commander to speak to and inspire the children on two of the days and the head of aircraft engineering at the Station to join in with the children on one day. A huge amount of effort went





into organising the week, with notable mentions to RAF Brize Norton STEM team, 99 Squadron, Motor Transport section, RAF Brize Norton Military Provost Guard Service, the Station Photographers, the schools teachers

for enabling the visits and, of course, the children for their abundance of enthusiasm.

**Bring on next year!**

*Flt Lt Justin Suter, JEngO, 99 Sqn.*



*Station Commander speaking to the children.*





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# STEM TEAM

The Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) Engagement Team have had a busy beginning to the year.

Following a successful event at Carterton Library last year STEM ambassadors were asked to hold another event in February half term and during the Easter break. The activity involved encouraging children to understand and use coding with Lego Spike equipment. Those taking part really enjoyed being able to get hands-on experience of designing and coding a robot.



National Museum of Computing.



National Museum of Computing.



Carterton Library.



Carterton Library.



Carterton Library.

In March, STEM volunteers attended Teen Tech Week at the National Museum of Computing (NMoC) in Bletchley Park. The NMoC held the event for five schools and invited some of our team to host

an activity for secondary school age children. Using the Spheros Bolt and an iPad, the schools were able to code a robot ball from changing the colour to following a programmed track, the options were endless. The students

became competitive, and some showed their excellent skills with complicated block coding.

The team will now be working towards their annual event Summer of STEM as well as supporting other events happening locally.



National Museum of Computing.

# Defence Vegan and Vegetarian Network



## Who, what, why?

The Defence Vegan and Vegetarian Network has members stationed and deployed all over the world with RAF Brize Norton being home to some of the Network committee. The Network supports Ethical Vegans (who are also protected under the Equality Act) as well as welcoming anyone interested in plants for health, the environment, ethics, or any other reason.

## Activities and Information

Volunteering, for example at Coppershell Animal Sanctuary, a 33KM challenge to raise awareness of the 3.3 million land animals killed for food every day in the UK and educational talks are some of the events that the Network has organised. We also feedback on deployed and mess food (pun intended!) We provide recipes on our Sharepoint, Defence Connect and Teams site.

## Personal Health, Planetary Health and Choice

The Network wants everyone to be able to choose a nutritious plant-based option whenever they want (whether one is vegan or vegetarian, or not). We know that reducing consumption of animals (of which the vast majority are factory farmed) is good for our planet with huge potential health benefits.

## The Future

With the increasing number of vegans and flexitarians in the working age population we believe it is becoming increasingly important to ensure that there are healthy and varied sources of nutrition for those who are plant-based, as well as developing aspects such as vegan kitting and culture. Otherwise, the military may miss out on top talent.



## World Environment Day 5 June

With World Environment Day coming up on 5 June, what can you do to help the planet? Can you switch to fortified oat milk from bovine mammary secretions?

Can you halve the amount of dead animal in your chilli and switch half to beans? Can you try a vegan starter at a restaurant? Or even a Greggs vegan sausage roll (other vegan sausage rolls are available)? We have a leaflet about this and will be running virtual challenges in June.

## Network Members, Comments:

*'I went Vegan 5 years ago, after I realised the impact that my lifestyle was having on the planet and also becoming aware of the cruelties within the meat and dairy industry. I volunteer for Candy Cane Rescue and I don't now see any difference between the dog meat industry in China to the industry in the UK.'*

*'Even if you ignore the ethical and health reasons for going vegan, supporting a plant-based diet is a no-brainer from an environmental standpoint. It would be amazing to see the MOD leading the way here.'*

*'I was always told that to be athletic you need meat. From personal experience I know this isn't true. I am an RAF rower and I play rugby.'*

Thanks for reading!

**By Sqn Ldr Sophie Foxen – Medical Officer and Chair of the Network**  
[Sophie.Foxen330@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Sophie.Foxen330@mod.gov.uk)

## Want to know more?

If you would like more information about the Defence Vegan and Vegetarian Network please email [Sophie.foxen330@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Sophie.foxen330@mod.gov.uk)

Even if you feel you can't be an active member, please join, as the statistics help our Network have power, it is a short Word document form.





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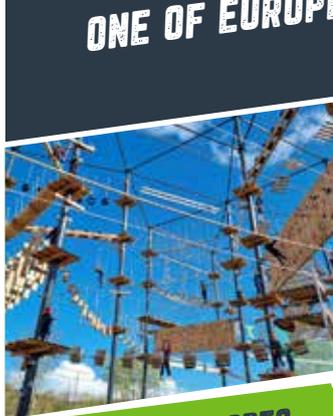
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Which of the levels you can access will depend on a few factors such as being a certain age and height, and certain ages will require adult supervision. Some of the levels also have multiple routes, but whichever ones you experience they all offer a heady test of strength, balance – and nerve!

The Low Ropes are for primary-school aged children and those not that as confident with the higher levels. There's two different routes to enjoy and they start from a more gentle 1 metre from the ground.

In addition to being the starting point for the high ropes, there's also a number of adrenaline-inducing activities to be found on the awesome Activity Tower including a thrilling 18m high Freefall jump, a classic 130m long Zip Line and fun 4m Leap of Faith element for younger ones. If you get a chance in-between the aerial action, you can enjoy some spectacular views of the Cotswold hills and surrounding countryside!

Whether you're looking for a fun day out, or a new activity to push yourself physically and mentally on, 270 Climbing provides great adventure for individuals, families and groups of all sizes and offers some of the most rewarding and memorable high-wire experiences in the country!

That's not all – 270 Climbing also has plans to become one of the most comprehensive bouldering and climbing gyms in the UK with a range of indoor and outdoor activities for all abilities suitable from complete novices to expert professionals. Construction of these is due to start soon and they should be open late 2024/early 2025. Once complete, 270 Climbing Park will be an incredibly impressive and welcoming attraction for friends and families as well as a unique facility for adrenaline seekers of all ages.

# GEF FOREST

**In January I led a team of GEF engineers in a project to create a new forest classroom learning space at Carterton Primary School.**

It has been my goal to try and improve the school during my time as a school governor or when helping out the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The forest school project came about when Simon Jackson, the recently appointed head teacher, mentioned about plans for the development of the new forest classroom area. I suggested that as a section, General Engineering Flight (GEF) could put together a group of volunteers to come and assist with the project and help to build the community relationship between the Station and the school.

I asked fellow members of GEF if anyone would be interested in helping and had a great response with 11 people all willing to lend a hand. I spoke with Simon and Alice, the forest school lead, to let them know we had a working party of 12 including myself. They were thrilled and started to plan the work that could be carried out. The day of the project arrived, and we were taken to the area assigned for the forest classroom. Looking at the list of jobs and the area in which we were stood, we wondered if the three hours we had assigned would be enough to achieve what was required.

Alice had kindly made up some to do lists, so we split into smaller teams and started to get to work; the first group began digging out a play pit area with a little trench coming off one end, the idea being that children could continue digging it out and when it rains it can create a small water habitat for bugs and animals that the children could try and identify. Another group started on arguably the biggest task, cutting back a large area of brambles which had overgrown. Luckily, we had a few sets of cutters to assist with the removal, however this wasn't enough to avoid some of the thorns and we had a few cuts and scratches throughout the afternoon but nothing serious enough to stop us in our tracks! The final team started to clear an area of logs and sticks from outside the area; we used some to create an entrance to the forest classroom and others we moved to the den building area where the children will be able to create their own spaces with their friends.

Throughout the afternoon we moved some pallets into the forest classroom that can be used as tables and installed a new mud kitchen that had been purchased by the school. We also built a new firepit surrounded by the newly created circle of log seats.

Alice and Simon were very pleased with what we had achieved and

thanked us all for our hard work.

All in all it was a very satisfying and productive day and it continues to build the community relationship with RAF Brize Norton and Carterton Primary School. We look forward to working together on future projects.

**Cpl Dean Anderson**

CPS Headteacher, Mr Simon Jackson said:  
***"Massive thanks to you and the RAF team for all their help with the Forest School area. They got so much done and the area is looking really good."***

Alice Fox, Forest School Lead said: ***"We're very appreciative of Dean and his team who got straight to work and transformed the Forest School in just a few hours. They cleared so many brambles (sorry if you're still taking splinters out!!); made a large seating area; and dug a great pit, channel and muddy mound. I can't wait to see the children enjoying the area at Forest School – it's such a great addition for CPS. Thank you!"***



**Rear left to right – AS1 (T) Thompson, FS Smart, AS1 (T) Bailey AS1 (T) Newton  
Front Left to right – Sgt Airey, AS1 Thompson, Sgt Wright, Sgt Welsh, Cpl Anderson,  
AS1 Cochrane-Edwards, AS1 Brobin, AS1 (T) Dodwell**

# Ox Trail Herd

A 'herd' of 135 fibreglass oxen were delivered to Oxford Brookes University's Harcourt Hill Campus, with the support of 30 Squadron from RAF Brize Norton led by Flight Sergeant Joe Ainsworth.



The oxen will be displayed as part of the Sobell House OxTrail across Oxford in the summer 2024.

The 30 Squadron team helped to unload and prepare the 'full size' and 'calf size' fibreglass oxen for further transit to participating artists and schools to begin their decoration.

The oxen will be moved into various places across the city of Oxford and the wider county ready for painting ahead of the art sculpture event.

OxTrail will launch to the public on 6th July 2024 and the art will be on display until early September 2024. After this, the sculptures will be auctioned to raise money for the hospice. The mini ox will then be placed in 'local herds', which will appear in publicly accessible buildings for eight weeks, alongside over 30 large oxen that will appear at iconic landmarks and places of interest in the city.

OxTrail has been brought to Oxfordshire by the region's largest hospice, Sobell House Hospice and its charity. Over 80 schools and community groups reaching over 37,500

resources being made available for lesson planning. A Workshop will also be provided to give the school the tools and inspiration to help with the creation of its ox design.



young people are supporting OxTrail. Thanks to OxTrail's learning programme, sponsored by Oxford Brookes University; participating schools will benefit from a range of engaging and inspirational

Visit the project's dedicated website at [www.oxtrail2024.co.uk](http://www.oxtrail2024.co.uk)



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# DONATE FOR DEFIB

Since August 2023, Corporal Thomas Farrand based at RAF Brize Norton has raised an amazing £19,600 as part of the Donate for Defib Weston-Super-Mare project. The team have been able to provide an incredible 15 defibrillators to Weston-Super-Mare and nearby areas.



CHARITY



For more information about the Donate For Defib Weston-Super-Mare Project, visit the website at [www.donatefordefibwsm.co.uk](http://www.donatefordefibwsm.co.uk) or email the team via [donatefordefib.wsm@gmail.com](mailto:donatefordefib.wsm@gmail.com).

**T**homas Farrand and his co-leader Josh Bell, saw a need for more devices in their local area and set about raising money through charity events including raffles, bingo, and race nights. Thomas has taken part in the Weston Super Half marathon and in April the London Marathon to continue raising funds for more devices.

The project has improved the community's awareness regarding the importance of defibrillators in the first few minutes in a cardiac arrest event. In addition, they will be running teaching sessions where the community can attend and learn basic CPR to be ready if they attended a cardiac arrest.

A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest. This high energy shock is called defibrillation, and it's an essential part in trying to save the life of someone who's in cardiac arrest.

Cpl Thomas Farrand, RAF Medic said:

***"From working in healthcare, it is vital that we increase the number of defibrillators around our local town. The opportunity to potentially enable the survival of members of our community makes the project more worthwhile. Giving back and helping within the community is what it's all about and why I have the drive and continue to work alongside Josh and the team."***

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[forcesmutual.org/mortgages](https://forcesmutual.org/mortgages)



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