

# ARIES

The Magazine of RAF Shawbury

 **ROYAL  
AIR FORCE  
SHAWBURY**

Edition 3  
2021





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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION



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The Royal British Legion is celebrating its 100th Anniversary this year with a special programme of activity, culminating in a Centenary Poppy Appeal. Born in the aftermath of the First World War, the RBL's founding mission was to fight for the rights of those who had given so much and come back to so little.

Over the last century the RBL has successfully campaigned for a series of landmark changes which have benefitted serving personnel and veterans. More recently the charity has been at the forefront of calls for the Armed Forces Covenant to be enshrined in law. For the first time in history, a military question was included in the Census in England and Wales this year after a successful campaign led by the RBL and Poppy Scotland.

With 100 years of experience, the RBL provides lifelong care and support to all serving and ex-serving personnel and their families. This ranges from [expert advice and guidance](#), to [recovery and rehabilitation](#), through to transitioning to civilian life.

One of the RBL's earliest interventions after the First World War treated tuberculosis, rheumatism and arthritis which were widespread among the veteran population. In an age before the National Health Service, the British Legion implemented specialist treatment facilities for these conditions. Twenty years later these hospitals and wards became some of the foundation building blocks of the newly established NHS.

At the height of more recent combat operations in 2011, the RBL opened its Battle Back Centre in Lilleshall to support wounded and injured service personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. That same year, the RBL also helped fund and establish the Centre for Blast Injury Studies at Imperial College London. This was the first collaboration of its kind, bringing together civilian engineers, medics and scientists to work alongside military doctors to reduce the effects of roadside bombs and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). In 2018 the Royal British Legion also funded the Complex Trauma Gym at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre, Stanford Hall.

**The Royal British Legion's Head of Armed Forces Engagement, Alexander Owen said:**

*"Over the last 100 years the military community has helped the RBL build our proud legacy which continues to this day. In this special year we pay tribute to the passionate and dedicated support given to us by generations of serving personnel and their families."*

*"From volunteering during the Poppy Appeal, to taking on fundraising challenges or being a part of our Remembrance and commemorative events, these contributions help make the RBL what it is today."*

*"For a century the Royal British Legion has been a symbol of hope for the Armed Forces community, and we want to inspire the next generation to support our vital work to create better futures for all those who serve with the British Armed Forces."*

The Armed Forces Community is being encouraged to visit the Centenary Hub online at [www.rbl.org.uk](http://www.rbl.org.uk) to get involved and also find out about volunteering opportunities.



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# Wright Aromas

At Wright Aromas we create a wide range of home fragrance products to suit everyone's needs. We are a small family-run business that hand-pours all our beautiful products.

Our candles and wax melts are all made with soy wax to ensure they are vegan and eco-friendly along with our packaging.

So if you are in need of new product to ensure your homes smell incredible then why not head on over to our website [www.WrightAromas.com](http://www.WrightAromas.com) to check out our products and use **WA10 for 10% off**





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[www.facebook.com/RAFShawbury](https://www.facebook.com/RAFShawbury)

## Editor's Welcome

*By Warrant Officer Nick Williams,  
Deputy CERO*

**H**ello and welcome to the latest edition of RAF Shawbury's Aries magazine. What a packed edition this is with stories showing the excellent work both on and off the unit.



We were thrilled to see some of our personnel recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list with WO1 Bartaby being awarded an MBE and a further 6 personnel and 2 teams receiving military awards. We also saw two personnel on 202 Squadron reach their 8000 flying hours milestones – what an achievement. We bid farewell to 3 of our Defence Partners' staff who left the unit after over 60 years' combined service. The excellent work of our personnel who managed to raise money for many different charities throughout COVID-19 is also highlighted with over £18,000 in total raised throughout 2020.

We were excited to show both the Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire and High Sheriff of Shropshire around the unit demonstrating the world-leading training being undertaken at both No. 1 Flying Training School and the Defence College of Air and Space Operations. Finally, we managed to thank our families and colleagues for their support shown during a difficult time at our Families Day with stalls, flying displays and good cheer and food. And on a more sombre note, we recognised the sacrifices paid by our predecessors at the annual Battle of Britain service held in the Quarry.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue.

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### COVER PICTURE:

**RAF Shawbury Families Day**  
**- see pages 6-7 for more...**



# FOREWORD

by Wing Commander Phil Spencer MBE MA BSc (Hons) CEng MIET RAF

**A**fter a little over three years in post, I have been asked to write my second foreword to the Aries magazine.

When I arrived at Shawbury in 2018, it was in the midst of the biggest set of changes to the Station for a generation, or so I thought. The upheaval caused by the arrival of a new fleet of aircraft, different Defence partners, a new way of delivering training, the rebadging of the Defence Helicopter Flying School to No.1 Flying Training School, the arrival of the School of Aerospace Battle Management and its merger with the School of Air Operations Control, (now both under a single command as the Defence College of Air and Space Operations). We took all this in our stride and then ... COVID.

The outbreak of the pandemic and the subsequent lock down had an impact everywhere. Every aspect of our lives, our families and friends, colleagues, whole force partners and of course the wider community of which we are a part of and on whom we depend. Everything stopped. We took a long look at what was considered essential and we followed the government guidelines. Home working, social distancing, face coverings, hand sanitiser, lateral flow tests, Perspex screens and a whole new way of working.

It was made clear by the MoD that some of the Phase 2 training delivered at Shawbury was essential work. Without our output providing trained helicopter crews, Air Traffic and Weapons Controllers, Aerospace Battle Managers, Flight Operations Officers and Air and Space Operations

Specialists, as well as their supporting specialists, the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force would have skills shortages at the front line that could not be recovered. And it was from that front line that many armed forces personnel were deployed in support of the NHS and wider government to help build the Nightingale Hospitals, vaccinate people, deliver essential PPE and provide logistics and other operational support around the country. Not forgetting of course, that Shawbury also had a number of personnel deployed in direct support of the government's response to COVID-19.

At Shawbury we worked out how best to continue to operate. Fortunately, we had invested time and effort into making the new contractual arrangements work, so that in early 2020 we had forged effective working relationships, understood our inter-dependencies, and pulled together. The Whole Force at Shawbury of regular Service personnel, reservists, civil servants and Defence partners were working to a common aim. That clarity of vision and focus on our output meant that when the demands of the lock down hit us and there was a need to rapidly develop new ways of working, we all understood our contribution and continued to work together. What became apparent was who were the key enablers. The unsung heroes without whom work stopped.

The cleaning staff who kept us safe by enhanced cleaning, the team in Station workshops that provided screens; the C4i staff that enabled us to work from home; the team of young people awaiting training



who worked alongside the Physical Training Instructors conducting lateral flow testing so we could continue to work together and the innovators who thought of new ways to deliver training. Then there was the Covid Cell who, alongside the Health and Safety team, reacted to the dynamic changes to government guidance and kept us on track; the caterers who worked out how to feed hundreds of people in communal dining facilities and still keep social distance; the mess staff who provided the facilities for people to self-isolate when necessary and many, many more.

In my previous foreword I suggested that change could be unwelcome and disruptive, and I was not wrong. But I also said that it could be creative, refreshing, and formative and it has had to be.

As we reach the end of the restrictions and emerge into a world where we will have to live with COVID-19, we can look back and be pleased with what we have achieved. We kept each other safe, we have been good neighbours and we have found new ways of working many of which will endure. It has been a very dynamic three years. I hope that the next few will achieve a steady state that will enable us to consolidate everything we have learned so far and continue to keep each other safe.

“ The Whole Force at Shawbury of regular Service personnel, reservists, civil servants and Defence partners were working to a common aim. That clarity of vision and focus on our output meant that when the demands of the lock down hit us and there was a need to rapidly develop new ways of working, we all understood our contribution and continued to work together. ”





# A Day of Family Fun for RAF Shawbury

**F**amilies' Days have always been an important and highly anticipated event in the military calendar. They provide the opportunity for serving personnel, civil servants, Defence partners and their families to let their hair down, as well as to provide an insight into what their respective family members do. But not only that, it also gives the opportunity to thank all those people for their constant support they selflessly give.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 event had to be cancelled, something that was disappointing for all. At one stage, the pandemic also threatened to do the same again this year. Thankfully though, due the easing of the social distancing and the opening up of outdoor events, the event was confirmed and all set to go.

On the morning of the event, the main dispersal on the airfield was transformed into a bustling hive of activity. There was lots for families to see and do, including a series of modern and vintage static aircraft to explore, a massive collection of exotic super cars to admire, as well as countless activities and stalls for



*Danny Jones performing for families.*

the whole family to enjoy. There was childrens face painting, a climbing wall, axe throwing and a falconry display just to name a few. There was also lots of charitable organisations who got stuck in interacting with the crowds. A special mention must also be made to Danny Jones, an Ascent employee, who wowed the crowds with his fantastic singing.

A particular highlight of the day, and thanks to the support from Airbus and Ascent Flight Training, was the opportunity to re-introduce families flying and also the simulator experience. Family members were given the opportunity to experience actual flying, both in the aircraft and in the synthetic environment. This was

*The Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows, performing their fantastic display*



*"The event was a huge success with over 2000 tickets distributed and nearly £2500 raised for the event's nominated charity, Young Minds – a mental health charity for young people"*





thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who was able to take part, and we hope it can continue to be included in future events.

As the afternoon approached and everyone had gorged themselves on all of the fantastic food that was available, the flying displays started. The crowds were treated to a whole host of aircraft displays including the Red Arrows, the RAF Typhoon Display Team, a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Spitfire, the RAF Chinook Display Team and Extreme XA41. There was also a glider aerobatics display from the RAF Shawbury Gilding Club and an impressive jump from the Falcons Parachute Display Team. A

commentary of the flying displays was provided by Flight Sergeant McAllister, which also provided a great deal of entertainment for the crowd!

Once the flying had been completed, the Sporting Bears Motor Club got to work providing high speed runway experiences in their collection of performance cars in exchange for donations to their chosen charity. The event organisers would like to thank everyone for coming and to everybody that helped make the event so spectacular. The event was a huge success with over 2000 tickets distributed and nearly £2500 raised for the event's nominated charity, Young



*A falconry display was just one of the attractions available for families to enjoy*

Minds – a mental health charity for young people.

This event would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the Families Day Committee. Organising an event of this size is never easy, but with the added complications that COVID-19 presented, this year's event required even more work than normal to make it such a successful day.

We look forward to next year's Families' Day!

**By Capt McCrea – RAF Shawbury  
Families Day Committee**



*Families enjoying the range of flying displays, stalls and exhibits*



*Families getting ready to enjoy an Air Experience Flight.*



# RAF Shawbury welcomes the local community to the Annual Reception



*The Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment entertain the Reception guests*

**I**t's not been an easy time for the Station or its local community over the past 18 months, the challenges associated with COVID-19 meant that the usual engagement opportunities were few and far between. As restrictions began to ease though and the light at the end of the tunnel became brighter, diaries were reopened and all eyes turned to Thursday 9th September for the Annual Reception.

The Annual Reception is a key date in the Station's calendar, providing an opportunity for the Station Commander to host members of our valued community in the Officers' Mess. Any event set against the backdrop of a global pandemic is going to look and feel a little different from previous iterations and this event was no exception – a reduced guestlist, extra spacing in the Mess and changes to the provision of refreshments meant the 2021 Reception was somewhat scaled down from its predecessors but no less significant. On the subject of change, the theme for the event was "What's new at RAF Shawbury?" – a lot has happened on Station since

people were last here: the rebadging of the Defence Helicopter Flying School to No.1 Flying Training School, the amalgamation of the School of Air Operations Control and the School of Aerospace Battle Management under a single command to form the Defence College of Air and Space Operations, the development of cutting edge helicopter and aircraft control simulators, not to mention breaking ground for the new Youth Activity Centre and the arrival of the Station's very own gliding club. As well as talking about changes at RAF Shawbury, the Annual Reception also provides the opportunity for the Station to thank industry, military and community



*Mrs Gail Moore, Mrs Clare Morris-Eyton, The High Sheriff of Shropshire Mr Tony Morris-Eyton, Wing Commander Alan Jones, Councillor Simon Jones*



*Councillor Vince Hunt, Mr Chris Trippick, Mr Des Payne, Major Andy King*





**Mr Jonathon Griffiths, Commander Scott Hughes, Councillor John Kennedy, Ms Carol Griffiths**

partners for all they do in supporting our output to Defence.

This year saw several VIPs in attendance including the Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP; the High Sheriff of Shropshire, Mr Tony Morris-Eyton; the Chairman of Shropshire Council, Councillor Vince Hunt; alongside a large number of distinguished guests. The attendance of such high-profile guests underlines the importance of the event for the Station and reinforced the close links RAF Shawbury has with the wider local community.

As with previous events, guests were hosted by Station personnel and enjoyed a variety of canapes and refreshments from the Officers' Mess kitchen, while The Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment (The Band plays by permission of the Air Force Board of the Defence Council) provided excellent background music during the event. The Station Commander took the opportunity to address the

audience, thanking guests for their continued support and assistance, as well as explaining the changes at RAF Shawbury during the past 18 months and how we have continued to safely deliver essential training during the Pandemic. At the end of his address, the Station Commander invited guests outside to watch the flypast and the Sunset Ceremony. Luckily, by this time the clouds had started to clear, and the skies had started to brighten.

The Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment were back again taking centre stage with a polished and inch-perfect marching display prior to the first flypast of the evening. Sadly, the weather across the rest of the country was not as favourable as that in Shropshire and the Spitfire from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight just couldn't quite make it; luckily RAF Benson were on hand to provide an alternative in the form of the Puma. For the final part of the evening, trainees from the Air and Space Operations



**Mrs Claire Crackett, Group Captain Phil Wadlow, Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP**

Training Squadron, ably lead by Sgt Tomkinson, made up the Ensign Party and Guard of Honour, treating guests to some excellent rifle drill. Not to be outdone by its older cousin from down south, it was the mighty Juno that closed the event, a stalwart of the skies above Shawbury and much-loved by all the guests.

We would like to thank everybody that attended the event and we look forward to hosting another reception again next year.

**By Flt Lt Scothern - Project Officer for the Annual Reception**



**Group Captain Phil Wadlow, RAF Shawbury Station Commander, salutes as the Ensign is lowered**



# RAF Shawbury commemorates the 81st anniversary of the Battle of Britain

On Sunday 12th September, personnel from RAF Shawbury commemorated the 81st anniversary of the Battle of Britain.



*Flight Lieutenant Pepper and the standard party parading the Squadron Standard of Sixty Squadron*

In Shrewsbury, personnel from RAF Shawbury paraded the Squadron Standard of No. Sixty Squadron, part of No.1 Flying Training School, before forming up at the Quarry Park War Memorial where a service of commemoration was held.

At 11 O'clock, a Trumpeter from the Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment sounded the Last Post and all present



*RAF Shawbury's Padre, Reverend (Wing Commander) Bissell leading the service*

held a two-minute silence. Overhead Hurricane PZ865 from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, in the all-black No. 247 Squadron night fighter paint scheme, flew over the Quarry Park.

For the final part of the service, a wreath laying ceremony was held. Wing Commander Spencer, Officer Commanding Engineering and Logistics Wing at RAF Shawbury, laid a wreath on behalf of all personnel at the Station, alongside local dignitaries, and Associations. Also present at the service were cadets from No. 1119 (Shrewsbury) Air Training Corps who marched proudly alongside personnel from RAF Shawbury.



*Wing Commander Spencer lays a wreath on behalf of all personnel at RAF Shawbury*



*1119 (Shrewsbury) Squadron march into the Quarry*



*As the parade falls silent a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Hurricane flies overhead*



*Local dignitaries prepare to lay their wreaths at the War Memorial*

By Mr Haycocks



# RAF Shawbury welcomes the High Sheriff of Shropshire

On Wednesday 11th July, RAF Shawbury's Station Commander, Group Captain Philip Wadlow, welcomed the High Sheriff of Shropshire, Mr Tony Morris-Eyton, to RAF Shawbury.

Having taken over the role of High Sheriff of Shropshire in April 2021, the working visit allowed Mr Morris-Eyton to see the world-leading training delivered at the Defence College of Air and Space Operations and No.1 Flying Training School, alongside the community and welfare facilities available to serving personnel at RAF Shawbury.

Welcomed by the Station Executives, the High Sheriff's first delve into the training delivered at RAF Shawbury was the rotary wing training provided at No.1 Flying Training School. Since 1st April 2018, the rotary wing element of the UK Military Flying Training System at RAF Shawbury and RAF Valley has been delivered via a contract with Ascent Flight Training. Their General Manager, Mr Harry Palmer, showed the High Sheriff around the Duke of Cambridge Building and explained that trainee pilots and rearcrew undertake classroom based learning to start their flying careers, before moving on to the synthetic training devices prior to live flying. The building contains seven state-of-the-art flying training devices with an eighth under construction, four combat tactical training devices and two virtual rearcrew training systems. Additionally, there are platforms simulating the rear of a Chinook helicopter and a 40-meter-high winch training platform. This, alongside the fleet of 7 Jupiter and 29 Juno helicopters, is part of a £1.1 billion

investment by the Ministry of Defence, securing the future of RAF Shawbury for the next 25 years. During his visit the High Sheriff was also able to see inside the Juno and Jupiter helicopters used by No.1 Flying Training School and was able to compare how accurate the synthetic training platforms mimic the cockpit of the real helicopters.

Speaking about his virtual flight in a Flying Training Device, Mr Morris-Eyton said: "I enjoyed a virtual flight from RAF Shawbury to the military airfield at Chetwynd and over my home. This is an absolutely superb facility and shows the huge importance of RAF Shawbury to the UK's defence capability."

Following his tour of the flying training facilities, Mr Morris-Eyton was then shown around the Defence College of Air and Space Operations by the Officer Commanding, Wing Commander Vamplew. The college trains all military Air Traffic and Weapons Controllers, Identification Officers, Flight Operations personnel and Air and Space Operations Specialists. Whilst visiting the College, Mr Morris-Eyton was shown how training is delivered and even had a go himself at directing Typhoon aircraft to an incursion into UK airspace, all simulated of course!

Mr Morris-Eyton was impressed by the scale of operations at Shawbury, which has 1,700 personnel. Some are in accommodation on the site, while



**Mr Morris-Eyton inside one of the State-of-the-art Flying Training Devices.**

others live in military accommodation in Shrewsbury, Donnington, Tern Hill and Market Drayton.

He said: "We talked about the Armed Forces Covenant, which plays a powerful role in helping personnel on leaving the forces. In addition, I toured the sports facilities, which are second to none, with an enormous multi-purpose sports hall for indoor football, basketball, badminton and gym work. The base also has a very good welfare centre."

He added: "RAF Shawbury works hard on building and maintaining good community relations. The base's increasing level of sophistication helps this greatly – using high-tech simulators cuts the number of actual training flights, reducing the base's impact on the local community."

Speaking about the High Sheriff's visit, Group Captain Wadlow said: "It was a pleasure to welcome the High Sheriff of Shropshire to RAF Shawbury and demonstrate the world-leading training that takes place here, in addition to discussing how we can work together in the future to help make a difference in Shropshire."

**By Mr Neil Thomas and  
WO Nick Williams**



**The High Sheriff inside the cockpit of a Jupiter helicopter**



**The High Sheriff experiencing the training delivered at the Defence College of Air and Space Operations**

# Puma Flyover

for RAF Shawbury

**O**n Wednesday 7th July, RAF Shawbury received a flyover by a formation of 10 Puma helicopters as part of a training sortie that incorporated flypasts of notable locations for the Puma Force. The flyover was organized to mark 50 years of the Puma Force, with the first two aircraft being delivered into service in January 1971.

The formation was led by XW224, the aircraft that has recently been unveiled with a special Puma 50th paint scheme. The scheme was designed to pay homage to the aircraft's history, with the colours replicating those used on the Puma HC Mk 1 and the badges of all Squadrons who have flown the Puma HC Mk 1 and Mk 2 emblazoned on the engine housing.

The flyover was a special moment for a number of the Whole-Force personnel that work at RAF Shawbury. Many of our personnel have previously supported the Puma Force during its 50 years of service, including many instructors at No.1 Flying Training School who have previously flown the Puma.

The Puma, a medium-lift support helicopter, has flown on combat and humanitarian operations around

the world over the last five decades, including Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Mozambique and the Caribbean. As part of the training sortie, the Puma Force worked with the Grenadier Guards to conduct an extensive troop movement for an air assault as part of their training. The Puma Force have worked with the Grenadier Guards on numerous previous operational tours having both served in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

The helicopters have also supported UK resilience such as providing a helicopter lift capability to flood relief efforts and more recently the COVID-19 response. Based at Kinloss Barracks, the Pumas deployed at short notice in the early stages of the pandemic to provide vital transport for personnel and equipment in Scotland and Northern England, as well as being on standby 24/7 to support any task required in the UK.

Group Captain Nick Paton, the Puma Force Commander and Station Commander at RAF Benson, said: "Since the Puma first came into service in 1971, it has successfully contributed to operations and humanitarian missions around the globe. Today is a poignant day for all who have served and continue to serve on the Puma Force as we mark 50 years of outstanding service. The commitment and professionalism of the whole team, whether aircrew, engineers, or support staff, has been exceptional. They deserve to be proud of everything they have achieved together over the past five decades."

**By Mrs Gasan (RAF Benson) and Mr Haycocks (RAF Shawbury)**

*A Puma helicopter up close*



*A Juno helicopter operating on the airfield with the Puma formation overhead*





# RAF Shawbury says goodbye to familiar faces

**R**ecently, we have seen a number of familiar faces retire from our Defence partners at RAF Shawbury. With a combined service of over 60 years, personnel at RAF Shawbury have recently said goodbye to Mr Paul Gresty, Mr Jim Greer and Mr Leslie Powell.

## Mr Paul Gresty

**M**r Paul Gresty retired from RAF Shawbury's Met Office on Fri 25th June 2021, after 47 years and 9 months service with the Met Office. Paul has worked two spells at RAF Shawbury, totalling 31 years, with his last "tour" starting in June 1995.

Initially, Paul started his career as a weather observer, but then trained to become a weather forecaster and provided weather forecasts to enable the delivery of safe flying training at

RAF Shawbury. He was also a ground school trainer, teaching meteorology to a range of different courses at Shawbury.

Paul was a key member of the Met Office team at Shawbury and his skills and experience will be greatly missed. On his last shift in the Met Office, RAF Shawbury's Station Commander, Group Captain Wadlow, visited Paul to thank him for his long service at RAF Shawbury and wish him well for his retirement.



*Group Captain Wadlow thanking Mr Paul Gresty for his long service and wishing him well for his retirement.*

## Mr Jim Greer

**A**fter 11 years, Mr Jim Greer has decided to retire from his role as Supply Manager at RAF Shawbury.

After a full-service career within the logistics branch, he dabbled with a few other career choices working in the automotive and horticultural industries. He soon realised though that his heart truly laid working within the Military, dedicated to supporting RAF Shawbury through a range of different contracts. Jim has epitomised the whole force construct, working with his colleagues to ensure that the Station received a constantly high level of service, whilst also being innovative and driving change through the organisation.

There can be no doubt about the level of service received. The Supply section was recognised with an Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Team Award in the New Year's Honours 2020. Alongside this, a visiting senior military officer praised the excellent performance of the RAF Shawbury supply team to Wing Commander Spencer, Officer Commanding Engineering and Logistics Wing at RAF Shawbury.

Jim has always put his team first and has campaigned tirelessly to have the Supply section refurbished. He was heard to say that the one thing he would do before he leaves would be to get the windows and doors replaced. The new doors and windows have



*Mr Jim Greer with his leaving gift presented to him by the Supply team*

been installed and, true to his word, Jim has decided to retire!

On behalf of RAF Shawbury, we wish both Jim and Jen all the best in their new adventures.

## Mr Leslie Powell

**F**or the last 6 years, Mr Leslie Powell has provided the Station with his knowledge and skills that have been invaluable to the output of Station Workshops.

His welding and fabrication prowess, coupled with his machining skills, have been seen by many grateful customers. Requesting a task is never straight forward, and once Les had told you what you actually need and not what you thought you wanted, he would turn his hand to anything.

Over the years, Station Workshops has supported many different tasks, including supporting local engagement. Les was always available to offer sage advice and he could provide a workable solution to most difficult tasks.

On behalf of everybody that has benefitted from Les' skill set, we wish him and Sue all the very best for their retirement.

By RAF Shawbury Met Office, Supply Section, Station Workshops



*Mr Leslie Powell being presented with his leaving gift by RAF Shawbury's Babcock Site Manager, Mr Rich Barley*

## Bob the Bus helps vaccinate RAF Shawbury

**D**ue to RAF Shawbury's relatively young, trainee population, many of our personnel were unable to be vaccinated until very recently. This led the Station's COVID Cell to a unique issue; how do they get the most amount of people vaccinated in the smallest time?

The answer lay in NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin's unique vaccination service, Bob the Bus. This unique mobile vaccination service is proving to be an effective tool in ensuring that people are easily able to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

The COVID Cell arranged for them to visit on two separate occasions. The first was a single day, where the main gym was converted into a vaccination centre. During this visit, the team managed to administer 31 doses to the Whole Force of Service personnel, civil servants, and Defence partners, as well as their dependants and members of the local community.

The second event involved a presence at the RAF Shawbury Families Day. Anyone who attended the event could turn up and be vaccinated, while a Typhoon distracted them overhead! On Families Day, the Bus managed to achieve a staggering 57 doses administered, a new record for the mobile vaccination team. By the time you read this article, Bob the Bus will have also visited RAF Shawbury for the third time at the Shawbury 10K Airfield Race.

COVID vaccination remains one of the biggest things personnel can do to prevent serious COVID infection.



It significantly reduces the chance of hospitalisation and 'Long COVID', while reducing the rate at which the virus is transmitted.

Though we now live in as close to a pre-COVID world as possible, following Hands-Face-Space-Air is the best way to avoid COVID infection.

**By RAF Shawbury COVID Cell**

## NO.1 FTS NEWS

### 202 Squadron Aircrew Reach Flying Milestone

**R**ecently, two instructors from 202 Squadron, part of 2 Maritime Air Wing within No.1 Flying Training School, reached 8,000 flying hours whilst delivering a training sortie! What are the chances of that happening I hear you cry? Not wishing the truth to get in the way of a good story, let me begin...

Flight Lieutenant Conner joined the RAF in June 1986 and, besides a 4-year support helicopter tour, has operated in the search and rescue role for his entire career. As an A2 Qualified Helicopter Instructor, he continues to pass on his expertise to staff and trainees alike and will be sorely missed by the unit when he retires in October 2021.

Mr 'Woody' Woodward has been on loan to 202 Squadron from Sixty Squadron. As an A2 Qualified Helicopter Crewman Instructor he has been vital in the cascade of staff training as 202 Squadron prepared to re-commence maritime output in August 2021. His varied career includes submarine hunting from a Nimrod and more recently search and rescue. As a respected member of the Ascent team, he also will be missed on his return to Sixty Squadron.

Lieutenant Commander Lockett, Senior Pilot 202 Squadron, said: "On behalf of the Officer Commanding



and everyone at 202 Squadron, I would personally like to thank Flight Lieutenant Conner and Woody for their efforts and congratulate them on this distinguished achievement."

Watch this space for the next milestone – a year in the air!

**By Lieutenant Commander Lockett,  
Senior Pilot 202 Squadron.**



# St Clement Danes Church

## - The Central Church of the Royal Air Force



*Hello and welcome from St Clement Danes Church in the heart of London*

**D**id you know the Royal Air Force is the only armed service which has a permanent church in central London? Our beautiful Grade 1 listed, Sir Christopher Wren church was built in 1682, on a site that has seen worship since the 9th Century and stands on its own island opposite the Royal Courts of Justice on the Strand. It is synonymous with the children's nursery rhyme *Oranges & Lemons*, which the bells play every hour to this day.

St Clement Danes Church was destroyed by fire in the London Blitz of May 1941 and rebuilt, largely by public subscription, in 1958. The church was re-consecrated on 19th October 1958 as the Central Church of the Royal Air Force. In doing so it became the 'Spiritual Home of the Royal Air Force' in central London. It is a place of immense architectural beauty and one of peace and tranquillity, normally open for all to visit for peace and quiet, reflection, prayer and so much more.

Apart from our regular services held each Sunday morning, Wednesday and Friday lunchtime, the church hosts important services including the RAF Founders Day service, carol services, memorials, music concerts by RAF Bands and visiting choirs and groups from all over the UK and the world.

The church is also an important national memorial, housing the unique handwritten Books of Remembrance, which contain the names of over 125,000 men and women who have paid the supreme sacrifice whilst serving in the Royal Air Force. All are welcome to visit and view the books to pay their respects to family and colleagues who are named in the books.

As a serving member of the RAF, did you know you can apply to be married in the church? Also, that you can use the church for Baptisms, memorials and for functions.

St Clement Danes is a focus of 'Value, Hope and Resilience' for

the RAF. Its memorials enshrine the 'Value' and contribution of the past and current service personnel, its ongoing activity and engagement represents the renewing 'Hope' of the RAF family and its regular pattern of 'prayer, worship and reflection' helps to develop the 'Resilience' of those who serve and support the RAF in so many ways.

2020 was a difficult year for your church. Once the silent and deadly enemy of the Covid pandemic struck, the church had to close and fall silent, with the doors remaining closed for the majority of the year. All events were cancelled, and services moved into a virtual world. Fortunately, we had just launched our new website and social media portals, so we are able to continue to serve you as best we can.

As we could no longer welcome you or the public into the church, sadly all our income from tourists, visitors and events has dried up. The church is now in a serious financial situation, and we need your support more than ever. Each year we receive just under £100,000 in donations from our visitors, but during 2020 the figure was less than £10,000. More than ever, we need your help.

With over 38,000 personnel in the RAF, you can provide much needed support by signing up for our free quarterly newsletter "Eagle & Anchor", containing news, information of events, articles from our archive and appeals. It's easy to sign up via our website at: [https://](https://stclementdanesraf.org/)



[stclementdanesraf.org/](https://stclementdanesraf.org/), and a copy will be emailed to you.

We also need your help to raise funds for your church.

**Could you fundraise for us?** Would you sit in a bath of baked beans, run a marathon, do a cake sale or cycle to Paris for us? St Clement Danes Church is your church, and we need your support more than ever.

2021 is an important year for the church. It is the 80th anniversary of the church receiving a direct hit from a German incendiary bomb, which all but destroyed the historic building. This year, we will be launching the most ambitious campaign to restore and expand St Clement Danes Church, to secure its future for generations to come.

In the 1950's the RAF launched a worldwide fundraising campaign to rebuild the church, securing £250,000 for the project. This year, we will launch a worldwide fundraising campaign to raise £10 million to rebuild the Spire and open the crypt, to provide a community hub with a cafe, function area, new cloakroom facilities and small retail outlet. This will ensure your church can welcome future generations of RAF personnel and the public.

Please support us and help save your church by setting up a regular or one-off donation via our website.

If you wish to raise funds for us, Jules Sherwood our Development Director would love to hear from you. Email him at [jules.sherwood@stclementdanesraf.org](mailto:jules.sherwood@stclementdanesraf.org)

I hope you will support your central church. My team and I look forward to welcoming you to St Clement Danes whenever you are in London.

**By Padre Osborn**  
**- St Clement Danes Church**  
**Resident Chaplain.**

# DCASO Dits

**D**espite the dastardly COVID trying its best to de-rail us at every turn, the Defence College of Air and Space Operations (DCASO) has continued to forge ahead, delivering training to those lucky enough to join the mighty Air Operations empire! We have seen people come and people go, babies have been born and good times have been had. Sport has been achieved and injuries have been sustained... read on for a quick canter around the DCASO paddock!

## AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TRAINING SQUADRON

The past few months have been active ones for the Squadron with the first social of the year taking place in late July with 20 personnel heading to Alderford Lake to climb, jump and bounce on the giant inflatable obstacle course. This was a great opportunity to socialise outside of the office and have some fun – and also to laugh when movements weren't quite as graceful as one may have hoped! Mr McArdle participated in a Lake District Fell Run and WO Blake competed in the RAF Golf 'B' championships in Skegness followed by the RAF Golf Pairs competition. He is now set to compete in the Inter Station Championships in September. Flt Lt Jefferies represented the RAF Cycling Association in the Army Cross Country Mountain Bike Championships, finishing 21st in the championship race.



*Aerospace Battle Management Training Squadron training the next generation*

Squadron personnel have been completing courses, extending families, welcoming new faces, as well as saying farewell. Sqn Ldr Milne completed Intermediate Officers' Development 4 at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Shrivenham, and Sgt Armitage welcomed his first born, Arlo – a healthy baby boy.

The Air Traffic Control Training Squadron also welcomed six new trainers - Lt Yates, Flt Lt Crosthwaite, WO Bate, WO Carmichael, FS Munro and Sgt Clasper – well done on the achievement, a very successful Air Traffic Control Training Course! This past month has also seen the return of a couple of familiar faces – Flt Lt Shenton returned from a deployment and Flt Lt Barber returned after

successfully extending her family. We temporarily say goodbye to Flt Lt Grant who has been deployed throughout September and we also say farewell and good luck to Flt Lt Truss on his move to RAFU Swanwick, as well as FS Officer as he begins his next tour. Thank you for your hard work and enjoy your future endeavours!

## AEROSPACE BATTLE MANAGEMENT TRAINING SQUADRON

Recently the Squadron has seen an increase in Weapons Controllers coming through, but Aerospace Battle Management Training Squadron have met the challenge to provide sufficient simulator pilots to support this training with the arrival of three new LAC's to allow the Squadron to further increase its training capacity.



*The Air Traffic Control Training Squadron*

We also saw members of the section receive in-house merit for their hard work, with Cpl Halliwell receiving the Squadron Commander's Award and SAC Bradshaw receiving the Chief Instructor Award – well done to both! Recent months have seen a significant period of change for Aerospace Battle Management Training Squadron with Sgt Lown and Sgt Enright leaving to gain their commissions at RAF College Cranwell; they will hopefully both return as Flying Officers in the near future. Flt Lt Ashcroft has finally managed to escape and has handed the duty of Officer Commanding Surveillance Training Flight to Flt Lt Perks. The Squadron has also



welcomed a new arrival for Corporal Brown, with baby Jax making an appearance in late June.

Aerospace Battle Management Training Squadron has been particularly active with sporting events. SAC McGeachy successfully attended the trials for the RAF Under 23s Men's Development Squad at RAF Northolt, and we also saw Cpl Benson and SAC Bradshaw complete 4 miles every 4 hours for 48 hours, raising a total of £1,145 for The Brain Tumour Charity. Furthermore, SAC Harris represented the RAF at the UK Armed Forces Inter-Service Tennis Championships held at the All England Lawn Tennis Club. Back at Shawbury, we unfortunately suffered a blue-on-blue incident during the Commanding Officer's Cup event in July, where an unfortunate mishap between Surveillance Training Flight and Simulator Support Flight ended with an injury to a team member. By the end of the event, the team were down to three members from six, but still didn't come last!

### AIR AND SPACE OPERATIONS TRAINING SQUADRON

So, what's hot with Air and Space Operations Training Squadron? After years of talk and anticipation, Air and Space Operations Training Flight (Flight Operations) and Air and Space Operations Training Flight (Aerospace



**Cpl Benson and SAC Bradshaw on their 48 hour running challenge for The Brain Tumour Charity.**

Systems) finally came together to form mega Air and Space Operations Training Flight on 1st April 2021; a single training flight delivering the Flight Operations Specialist Course, Aerospace Systems Specialist Course and Flight Operations Rotary Course. As part of a wider Defence College of Air and Space Operations merry-go-round, Air and Space Operations Training Flight also moved buildings. Flight Operations Specialist Course trail-blazed the first move, claiming squatters' rights of the Accreditation Centre, allowing the Flight Operations Specialist Course to operate wholly under one roof.

Air and Space Operations Training Squadron welcomes Flt Lt Metcalfe, Flt Lt Crosthwaite, and Cpl Moss-Jones. There was also a fourth addition to the Air and Space Operations Training Squadron family; huge congratulations to Cpl Adams, who gave birth to a baby boy named Harrison. We say farewell to Sqn Ldr Craig, Officer Commanding Air and Space Operations Training Squadron, and Flt Lt Wells, Deputy Officer Commanding Air and Space Operations Training Squadron, who have both recently departed. Whilst this looks like a mutiny, their departures are purely coincidental! Sqn Ldr Munro assumes command of Air and Space Operations Training Squadron with Flt Lt Green as Deputy.

Fg Off Ben Green, holding with Flight Operations Training Course until September 2021, has been hosting his own radio show on The Crew Rock Radio station 1000-1200 every Saturday morning. If banging tracks are your thing, then I'd highly recommend tuning in. On the topic of radio, Sgt Turner made his BBC Radio Shropshire debut, conducting an interview promoting the RAF Shawbury 10K Race. It was ABSOLUTELY amazing.

That marks the end for this edition of DCASO Dits, however, look out for more in the next edition of the Aries Magazine.

**By The DCASO Diarists**



**A trainee Air & Space Operations Specialist (Flight Operations) practising flight planning at the Defence College of Air and Space Operations**



*Ben Elephant starting the RAF Shawbury 10K Airfield Race held in February 2020 before COVID-19 restrictions began*



## RAF Shawbury personnel support charities throughout COVID-19

**D**espite COVID-19 hampering the amount of fundraising activities that could take place, personnel have continued to support Station Charities throughout 2020. With the final totals confirmed, the RAF Shawbury Charities' Committee has distributed cheques to the nominated charities selected in 2020.

Following a very successful 2020 Motorcycle Safety Weekend raising £8000, a generous donation from the Air Traffic Control Charities 59 Club Lottery of £1550, donations from the Station Christmas Jumper Day, as well as ongoing contributions from all members of the Officers' Mess and Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess, RAF Shawbury raised an impressive total of over £12,000 for Station Charities in 2020.

In addition to this total, the Shawbury 10K Run which took place back in February 2020, prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, raised an additional £5400 for the RAF Benevolent Fund. This meant that overall, over £18,000 has been raised for Station Charities during 2020, all the more remarkable given the limitations and cancellations that the COVID-19 pandemic has imposed on the Station and its fundraising activities. Once distributed, the totals led to cheques for £3600 given to both Hope House Children's Hospices and Diabetes

UK. For the RAF Benevolent Fund, with the money raised at the Shawbury 10K added, they received an incredible £9034.

Sadly, due to COVID-19 restrictions, it has not been possible to welcome the nominated charities to RAF Shawbury to be presented with their cheques, however, we have had some great feedback from the 3 charities concerned. Hope House have awarded RAF Shawbury with their 'Flying Colours', as a thank you to the Station personnel at Shawbury who have donated and worked hard to raise funds; this amazing artwork was created by the children at Hope House Hospice in Oswestry. Finally, in recognition of our outstanding efforts, the RAF Benevolent Fund has shortlisted RAF Shawbury for their RAF Stations' Challenge Cup award at this year's annual RAF Benevolent Fund Awards Ceremony in London in October.

In addition to the donations to the Station Charities, the Charities' Committee also agreed contributions of £50 towards a defibrillator for Astley Village and a £100 donation to the War Widow's Association, as well as other contributions and donations. Furthermore, Station personnel washed cars, grew moustaches, and attended open air cinema showings amongst



*Flt Lt Molloy with the Hope House Flying Colours, made by children at Hope House Hospice in Oswestry*

other activities to raise a further £950 for a number of other charities close to their hearts. Charities benefitting from these funds included Sport Relief, the RAF Association, Save the Children and the Royal British Legion.

As always, if you're based at RAF Shawbury and are interested in raising money for a good cause or have an idea in mind, please contact the Station Charities Committee. More details and specific event request forms can be found on the RAF Shawbury SharePoint charities page under the community tab.

**By Flight Lieutenant Molloy**



*Personnel collecting donations for Station Christmas Jumper Day.*



# Happy 100th Birthday to the Royal British Legion



**In May 2021, the Royal British Legion (RBL) celebrated its' 100th anniversary. To commemorate this significant achievement, the team at the RBL reached out to RAF Shawbury to ask for support with their event in the middle of Shrewsbury Town Centre.**

At short notice, a team of volunteers from across the Station were assembled to support this event, which consisted of supporting a charity stall along with

leafleting to raise awareness of the RBL's 100th anniversary.

The Royal British Legion is a military charity, supporting personnel from the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force, veterans and their families. Every year in November, they run the Poppy Appeal, distributing paper poppies to raise vital funds to help today's Armed Forces community.

The last year has been difficult, not least for the RBL, who were unable to hold their usual Poppy Appeal in November 2020, which would

have been their 100th Poppy Appeal. As such, they lost a major fundraising stream, so it was all the more important for the Station to turn out in force to show their support.

Thankfully, the weather even held true for the event...right up until it came time to take down the stall, when the heavens opened!

At the end of the day, the money was counted, and the team raised a grand total of £509 for the RBL which was greatly received.

**By Flying Officer Rae**



*RAF Shawbury personnel showing their support for the RBL in Shrewsbury*

## RAF Shawbury RAFALO team recognised at RAFA Awards

**A**t the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA) launched Operation Connect, their emergency relief programme, which is dedicated to supporting the Royal Air Force family during these unprecedented times. The Royal Air Forces Association Liaison Officers (RAFALOs) at RAF Shawbury were quick to join the Operation and offer their support to help local veterans during this unprecedented time.

RAFALOs from RAF Shawbury provided their assistance by shopping for local veterans who had been recognised as clinically extremely vulnerable,

allowing them to stay safe and home. While dropping off their shopping, RAFALOs stopped for a socially distanced doorstep chat to make sure that local veterans were keeping well.

In January 2021, following the cancellation of RAF Shawbury's annual Veterans' Tea party, usually held in September, the team worked alongside other volunteers from RAF Shawbury to create hampers for local veterans. Over 60 hampers were hand deliver by volunteers to local veterans across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. While delivering the hampers, volunteers stopped again to chat to the veterans to make sure that they were well and listen to their tales.

While the COVID-19 Pandemic has meant that many fundraising events were cancelled or postponed, the team tried to think of new innovative ways to try and raise money for the Association. The RAFALOs held non-contact fundraising at the main gate and, when Government Guidelines allowed, held socially distanced coffee mornings. Alongside this, personnel



*Sqn Ldr James delivering shopping to local veteran Les Vaughan.*



*The certificate awarded to the RAFALO team.*

from RAF Shawbury were encouraged to participate in virtual events and show their support for RAFA.

Following the RAF Shawbury RAFALO Team's dedication and support to local veterans throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, the team have recently been recognised by the Association and awarded the Wales, Midlands, and South Western Area - RAFALO Team of the Year Award by the Area President, Air Vice-Marshal Martin Clark (Retired). It is testament to the hard work that the team have put in over the last 18 months to help keep our local veterans safe and well.

Congratulations from everyone at RAF Shawbury!

**By Mr Haycocks**



## REMEMBERING SREBRENICA

**O**n Tuesday 6 July, Wing Commander Turner, Officer Commanding Operations Wing at RAF Shawbury, joined children, local dignitaries, councillors and members of the interfaith forums to help dress a very special memorial cherry tree with flower and leaf promises, in a ceremony held outside Shirehall in Shrewsbury. This ceremony linked in with Remembering Srebrenica Day, which falls on Sunday 11th July, and for which the 2021 theme is "rebuilding lives", as well as with ongoing local efforts to mark the Holocaust and other genocides.

Remembering Srebrenica is a charitable organisation funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and supported by the Foreign Office. Its aim is to raise awareness of the genocide in Bosnia and bring people together to tackle hatred and help build safer, stronger communities in the UK.

The children from Mereside C of E Primary Academy, where a first memorial cherry tree was planted in 2015, read the Srebrenica Prayer to Councillor Kirstie Hurst-Knight, representing Shropshire Council; Wing Commander Turner from RAF Shawbury, representing the armed

forces; members of the interfaith forums; and the Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, Mrs Anna Turner JP.

The ceremony focussed upon prayers and memories, with Wing Commander Turner reading a Christian prayer, and Mr Michaels and Imam Sohayb Peerbhai from the South Shropshire Interfaith Forum reading a Jewish prayer together. These were both written for Srebrenica.

Everyone then came together to dress the cherry tree, before Reverend Ken Chippindale, from Shrewsbury Interfaith Forum, closed the ceremony with the reading of the Muslim prayer for Srebrenica.

Councillor Kirstie Hurst-Knight said: "It was a very moving occasion for me. I was really pleased to have the opportunity to share that my own grandfather, William Grant, who was from Scotland, was picked to be part of a reconnaissance troop to go to Belgium ahead of other British troops. He then helped to liberate Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in April 1945, along with people



*The Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire and Wing Commander Turner dressing the memorial cherry tree*

who served in the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. He stayed in touch with a family after the war, and he said he remembers the smiles on their faces, but also the sadness in their eyes.

"We must never forget the humanitarian roles played by the armed forces, and we must never forget those who died and those who carry on without them. The children have reminded us of this, with their words and their actions today, where they have dressed the tree with their promises. I promise on behalf of Shropshire Council to help to look after our Remembering Srebrenica tree, and I know that Wing Commander Turner, on behalf of the armed forces, will help to do the same."

Mr Michaels from the South Shropshire Interfaith Forum said: "I recognise what Councillor Hurst-Knight says about the sadness in people's eyes, and I share with you the names of the husband and sons that a woman called Hatidza lost at Srebrenica. Her husband was called Abdullah, known as Salko, aged 44, and her sons were Azmir, who was 21, and Almir, who was just 18. I will never forget her dignity, poise, and infinite sadness; and I share these names so that they are not forgotten either, and so that we can extend their memories together."

Mrs Anna Turner, Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, said: "It is really important to remember the lives that have been lost, and occasions like this help us to make sure that these losses are never forgotten."



*Flower and leaf promises on the memorial cherry tree*



*Wing Commander Turner with Councillor Kirstie Hurst-Knight, members of the interfaith forums and children from Mereside C of E Primary Academy by the memorial cherry tree.*

**By Mrs Dale – Shropshire Council**





## RAF Shawbury personnel honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2021

**The Station Commander and personnel at RAF Shawbury were delighted to see that Warrant Officer Class 1 Bartaby AAC had been awarded an MBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours List 2021.**

WO1 Bartaby has had a long and distinguished career in the British Army serving as a Qualified Helicopter Instructor. He is currently serving as a Central Flying School Examiner at RAF Shawbury, parented by the Central Flying School based at RAF Cranwell. As a Central Flying School Examiner, WO1 Bartaby is an outright leader in his field. During his career he has flown over 30 different types of aircraft with the UK Armed Forces and international partners throughout the world. He is one of only five A1 Qualified Helicopter Instructors currently serving in the UK Armed Forces, the highest instructional category awarded. WO1 Bartaby has been responsible for the creation and implementation of multiple Central Flying School regulations, maintenance of instructional standards and sustaining the output of Qualified Helicopter Instructors to frontline operations. With his sustained commitment, vision, and innovation, he has made an outstanding and vital contribution to UK and International Defence.

In addition, we were also delighted to see military and civilian personnel

from RAF Shawbury being honoured in the Military Commendations List, announced in conjunction with The Queen's Birthday Honours List 2021.

**A Deputy Commander Operations and Air Member for Operations Team Commendation was awarded to RAF Shawbury Air Traffic Control.**

**Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Commendations were awarded to the following personnel:**

- Flight Sergeant Marcinkowski
- Flight Sergeant Wood
- Corporal Jones
- Mr Duckfield
- Mr Haycocks
- Mr Roberts

**An Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Team Commendation was awarded to the Aerodrome and Precision Approach Control Course**

RAF Shawbury's Station Commander, Group Captain Phil Wadlow ADC BEng (Hons) MA RAF said: "I am extremely proud to see that military and civilian personnel from RAF Shawbury have been recognised in this way. I would



*WO1 Bartaby in front of a Juno helicopter*

like to thank you all for your hard work, dedication, and all that you have directly contributed to RAF Shawbury and the Central Flying School. I look forward to congratulating the recipients when they receive their awards at special ceremonies later this year in front of their families, friends and colleagues."

**By Mr Haycocks and WO Williams**

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# 1st Shawbury Air Scouts visit RAF Shawbury Gliding Club

In the early stages of planning the move of the gliding club from RAF Cosford to RAF Shawbury there was an enquiry from the Air Scouts – would they be able to visit the gliding club once it had settled into its new home?

So, it was with great delight that that on the evening of Friday 10th September, RAF Shawbury Gliding Club (RSGC) welcomed a group from 1st Shawbury Air Scouts. Following a welcome and introductory talk with a Q&A session by the Chief Flying Instructor, Ian Gallacher, the party of young potential aviators split into three groups for the tour of Hangar 4, the home of RSGC. For the tour, the scouts were also invited to participate in a gliding quiz which all added to the fun of the whole evening.

Hangar 4 had been organised into a circuit of 3 stands with groups of scouts spending 20 minutes at each stand. Stand 1 was a planning exercise run by RSGC instructor Colin Haynes. The aim was to give our young visitors some idea of what went into planning a glider flight before setting off (without an engine) on a cross country navigation exercise, a great exercise that invited numerous questions about flying gliders.

Ian and Darcy Gallacher, together with RSGC's Max Thompson, provided the expertise at Stand 2 where the scouts were given an insight on how a glider is derigged and serviced. With a canopy



*Flight Lieutenant Robinson showing the Air Scouts the cockpit of a glider*

removed on the club's K21 aircraft, the Air Scouts were keen to know more about the controls. There was also a discussion about what the adjacent long (glider) trailers contained, and we were able to confirm that they were neither a horizontal Giraffe recovery system nor a Crocodile circus wagon! Will Dean, an RSGC instructor, and Flight Lieutenant Robinson shared their knowledge and experience on Stand 3 where our visitors were able to sit in a glider and get their hands on the controls; it provided a great opportunity for selfies. It wasn't long before some with wilder imaginations wandered off into the world of "Top Gun" (complete with accompanying sounds).



*The Air Scouts learning how to plan a glider flight*

The evening ended with a treat of pop and crisps in the clubroom, the quiz answers and some fantastic gliding videos from Ian Gallacher's library of achievements, including a video of an inverted glider on tow over Dubai that really caught the interest of the Air Scouts.

It would be hard to imagine a more enthusiastic and inquisitive group who were a great credit to their scout group. We look forward to seeing some of them on the airfield in the near future and, who knows, some amongst these young people may well be the RAF pilots of the future.

**By Mr Geoff Catling**



*The Air Scouts arrive at Hangar 4 ready to find out more about gliding*



# Flying Officer Parker swaps Air Traffic Control for Army Rugby Control

On Friday 23rd July, Flying Officer Parker, a trainee on the Joint Air Traffic Control Course at the Defence College of Air and Space Operations, swapped learning how to control air traffic to trying to control the REME and the Infantry in the Army Rugby League Lawson Cup final.

With the playoffs completed three days prior, the big game between the REME and the Infantry was ready to take place. Which team would be taking home the Lawson Cup? The REME were trying to make it their third 3rd win in 3 years, meanwhile this was the Infantry's first time in the final. With an intense atmosphere building at Aldershot, it was time for Flying Officer Parker to get ready to blow the whistle to start the game.

The final itself was an intense fixture with REME leading 26-16 at half time. However, the Infantry dominated the second half playing some champagne



*Flying Officer Parker (Centre) with the teams and other officials before the Lawson Cup Final*

rugby. The final score ended 26-42 to the Infantry, marking the first time that the Infantry had taken home the Lawson Cup.

Speaking after the final, Flying Officer Parker said: "It's always a great honour to officiate any final as they don't come along often; even more so to represent the Royal Air Force in one of the most

prestigious finals within military rugby league.

He added: "As the first final held in 2 years due to COVID-19, I knew it was going to be highly competitive. However, it surpassed all expectations and the game was fantastic, I thoroughly enjoyed officiating it."

**By Flying Officer Parker**

## Corporal Rowe gets ready to rumble!

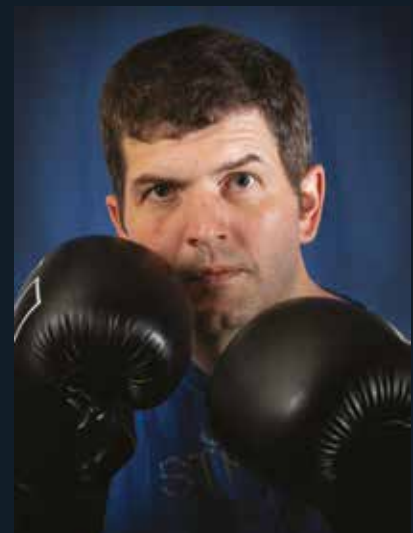
I am Corporal Rowe, a trainer on Air and Space Operations Training Flight, part of the Defence College of Air and Space Operations, and having recently spotted a Facebook advert for something called 'Ultra White-Collar Boxing' I took the leap and signed up to take part. Having never boxed before, this is a step into the unknown for me and a massive challenge.

Throughout my 8-weeks of training, I am also raising funds for Cancer Research UK. Friends, family, work colleagues, and anyone else that has an interest in me getting my face punched are able to sponsor me on my boxing journey! The grand finale at the end of my training is taking part in a black-tie boxing event being held at the Buttermarket in Shrewsbury, where I will be in the ring for three

2-minute rounds against another opponent from the training camp. At the time of writing this article, I am approaching the halfway point in my training and have gotten quite used to being hit in face! Thankfully, my skills and fitness are improving day by day and I am really starting to enjoy boxing now.

The training camp consists of 3 training sessions a week at a local boxing gym in Shrewsbury, alongside my own fitness training and practicing here in the gym at RAF Shawbury. Although I will make no secret that the training is hard, ultimately the main fight will be harder. This will all be worth it in the end though, to raise funds and awareness for a great cause.

If you would like to sponsor me or find out more about my training, don't hesitate to stop for a chat if you see me around.



**Watch out for the next edition of the Aries Magazine to find out how I got on!**

By Corporal Rowe

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- Tennis Court & Weekly Tennis Lessons from a Coach
  - Forest School



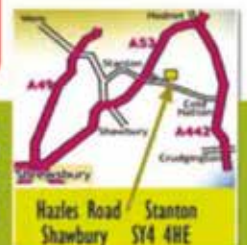
**Baby and Toddler  
Drop In Session at  
Hazles Farm  
Thursday 9.15am - 11.15am**

**Jungle Gym available  
for party hire**

**Established 20 years with an  
excellent reputation**

Open 7:00am - 6:00pm

Term Time Only Spaces Available  
A Variety of Sessions Available



The  
Mulberry Bush  
Ditherington Road,  
Shrewsbury  
SY1 4DQ  
01743 360300

Crowmoor Day Nursery,  
Crowmoor Road,  
Shrewsbury,  
SY2 5JJ  
07908704532

High Ercall Day Nursery,  
Church Road,  
High Ercall,  
Telford,  
TF6 6AF  
01952 771305

Hazles Farm Day Nursery,  
Afterschool & Holiday Club  
Hazles Rd, Shawbury SY4 4HE  
01939 250234