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The Magazine of RAF Shawbury

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Edition 4
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Editor's Welcome

By Squadron Leader Kim Leach



Welcome to the final edition of the Aries Magazine for 2021.

This edition is packed with articles, showing that RAF Shawbury is really regaining a sense of normality. Landowners' and Rider Awareness Day, the Veterans Tea Party and the Aries Awards Evening were great successes and are just some of the events covered in this edition. At this time of year, we also remember those who have gone before us; tri-Service personnel from RAF Shawbury were honoured to attend 24 commemoration services throughout Shropshire, including a parade through the town of Shrewsbury to the memorial at the Quarry Park.

Many of you will know that sadly, Warrant Officer Nick Williams, the Deputy Editor will leave the team to take up a new post at RAF Cosford. Nick has been at RAF Shawbury for over 5 years and during this time, he has been a great friend and colleague. His willingness to go the extra mile, remain calm under pressure and deal with the unexpected has made him an invaluable member of the Corporate Engagement and Relations team. We wish him good luck in his new job and thank him for his service at RAF Shawbury.

I will finish by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Happy Reading!

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COVER PICTURE:

RAF Shawbury Station Commander, Group Captain Phil Wadlow honours the fallen on Remembrance Sunday after laying a wreath on behalf of station personnel at the War Memorial in the Quarry Park, Shrewsbury



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FOREWORD

by Group Captain Phil Wadlow, RAF Shawbury Station Commander, Commandant of No.1 Flying Training School and Commandant of the Defence College of Air and Space Operations.

Seasons Greetings to all! As you read this, Christmas will doubtless be fast approaching and the summer will now be a distant memory.

It is hard to believe I have been Station Commander for nearly a year now, it seems to have flown by (unfortunately with less actual flying than I would like!). The relatively dark days of January when we were all under the most severe COVID constraints do not seem that long ago and I am very thankful that we have managed to return to a semblance of normality during the summer that has continued to a greater or lesser extent ever since. I have been truly impressed by the manner in which Shawbury personnel have just got on with delivering for Defence across the board, be that running the COVID test centre, working in the messes or any of the other jobs that need to be

done. It was really great to be able to recognise some of our people at the Aries Awards in late October, and very humbling to see the achievements of all the nominees, but I know it is only the tip of the iceberg of the good work that goes on here every day.

It was equally humbling to host the annual Veterans Tea Party after a COVID enforced break last year. With 2 centenarians and a healthy turnout from all generations, it was an excellent opportunity to reaffirm the strong links RAF Shawbury has with the local community.



Stay safe over the holiday season, make sure you relax and enjoy it because I have no doubt that next year will be equally busy.

*Merry Christmas...
Happy New Year...*

RAF Shawbury says **thank you** to Shropshire landowners and welcomes local horse riders



The landowners, horse riders, hosts, and escorting officers outside the Officers' Mess with the Falcons Parachute Display Team

On Friday 1st October 2021, RAF Shawbury hosted its Landowners' and Horse Rider Awareness Day. The event is high priority on the Station's calendar and is usually an annual event, however, due to the impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic, the 2020 event could sadly not take place.

Landowners' and Rider Awareness Day is an opportunity for the Station Commander to thank the valued landowners who graciously permit our helicopter aircrew to use their land to conduct essential training exercises. Local horse riders and British Horse Society representatives are also invited to the event to meet aircrew and to discuss RAF Shawbury's "Be Seen, Be Safer" horse rider awareness campaign, launched in April 2015. The campaign promotes the wearing of high visibility clothing by riders in order that they are more visible and can be

seen earlier by the helicopter aircrew. Whilst high-visibility clothing may not prevent all over-flights, as there may be other safety considerations, it does provide a considerable, cost-effective improvement to rider safety.

The Station Commander, Group Captain Phil Wadlow, welcomed all the guests in the Station Briefing Facility and thanked them for their continued support. He was followed by Wing Commander Turner, Officer Commanding Operations Wing, who explained the training delivered by No.1 Flying Training School and the Central Flying School (Helicopter) Squadron. Wing Commander Turner also explained to the guests how Low Flying Area 9, covering Shropshire and the borders of adjacent counties, is used and the importance of good relations between landowners, horse riders and RAF Shawbury.

The guests were divided into four groups which enabled the Station to effectively showcase the world leading flying training

facilities in the Duke of Cambridge Building, provided by Ascent Flight Training as part of the UK Military Flight Training System. Ascent personnel showcased the Flying Training Devices, Command and Tactics Trainer, the Virtual Reality/cabin trainers and the Winch Trainer. The guests thoroughly enjoyed themselves, with some even having the opportunity to virtually land on their own land. As well as being able to tour the Duke of Cambridge Building, guests were able to see up close Juno, Jupiter and Hawk static displays, as well as experience the training delivered by the Defence College of Air and Space Operations (DCASO).

Horse riders were also invited to a presentation on the Be Seen, Be Safer Campaign, provided by Squadron Leader Leach, Corporate Engagement and Relations Officer at RAF Shawbury, and Captain Jones, a Staff Pilot on Sixty Squadron, part of No.1 Flying Training School. Horse riders were able to share their experiences when out riding as well as ask questions to aircrew about the training activities that take place in Low Flying Area 9.



RAF Shawbury Station Commander, Group Captain Phil Wadlow welcoming the guests and thanking them for their support



Guests having the opportunity to look at the Load Trainer inside the Duke of Cambridge Building



A landowner experiencing the Command and Tactics Trainer



Dr Ivan Grove talking about the use of drones in the agriculture industry



The guests were able to see the new Defence College of Air and Space Operations Visual Simulator



The Falcons Parachute Display Team demonstrating their carousel manoeuvre



Flight Lieutenant Ryall discussing the training delivered at No.1 Flying Training School with guests

After having a fun packed morning, guests were treated to a luncheon in the Officers' Mess, hosted by the Station Executives, developing an even closer relationship with landowners and the local riding community.

With lunch finished, guests congregated on the Sports Field in front of the Officers' Mess to witness the fantastic display by the Falcons Parachute Display team. The team performed their new carousel manoeuvre which was well received by the guests. The display was very nearly cancelled due to the increasing wind,

but thankfully the weather managed to stay good enough to allow the team to perform their display. The display ended with the Station Commander acknowledging their salute, as is the tradition.

A photograph of all the guests, hosts and escorting officers was then taken in front of the Officers' Mess, after which, guests were invited to attend a drone presentation by Dr Ivan Grove in the Station Briefing Facility. Dr Grove, of Curious Raven Imagery, highlighted the technologically advanced use of drones in the agriculture industry but also the

importance of respecting the airspace due to other aircraft operations, such as those from RAF Shawbury.

The day was different from previous years, due to the impact of COVID 19, but the Station hosted the Landowners and horse riders with much success and the event was no less significant. We would like to thank everybody who attended RAF Shawbury on the day, as well as all the Station personnel who helped to make the event so enjoyable for the guests.

By Flight Lieutenant Bull

RAF Shawbury commemorates the ARIES round-the-world flight with a gala awards evening

On Thursday 21st October 2021, the Officers' Mess at RAF Shawbury was the venue for a special gala evening to celebrate the achievements of personnel at RAF Shawbury.



The 2021 ARIES Awards winners with Group Captain Wadlow, The Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire and Mr Tom Hodgkinson

The evening formally recognised the military personnel, civil servants and contractors who, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, had made a significant contribution to the base and the surrounding community during a difficult and challenging year.

The evening also paid tribute to the aircrew who flew the ARIES first round-the-world flight. In 1944, RAF navigation training was centred at

the Empire Air Navigation School at RAF Shawbury. A Lancaster bomber PD 328 was offered to the School for research flying and was named ARIES. In October 1944, ARIES undertook the first RAF circumnavigation of the world, under the command of Wing Commander McKinley. The trip was successful, and ARIES returned after 53 days having flown over 200 hours, setting new world records.

At the event, the Station Commander, Group Captain Phil Wadlow, was delighted to welcome 2 special guests, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire Mrs Anna Turner JP and Mr Tom Hodgkinson, Team GB Paralympic Cycling Coach, who presented the following awards.

Most Outstanding Contribution to RAF Shawbury (Military)

Corporal Damian Powell

Most Outstanding Contribution to RAF Shawbury (Civilian)

Mr Dan Haycocks

Sporting Achievement Award

Corporal Victoria Needham

Unsung Hero Award

Ms Harriet Evanson

Community Spirit Award

Sergeant Scott Hill

Most Outstanding Team Award

COVID/Physical Education and Training Development Flight teams



The COVID, Physical Education and Training Development Flight teams were awarded the Most Outstanding Team Award at the 2021 ARIES Awards

Goodbye Mr Wade



Personnel clapping Warrant Officer Wade on his final tour of the station



Group Captain Wadlow presenting Warrant Officer Wade with a leaving gift on behalf of personnel at RAF Shawbury

On Friday 1st October, personnel at RAF Shawbury said goodbye to Warrant Officer Wade, the Station Warrant Officer and Officer Commanding Force Protection Flight at RAF Shawbury, as he will shortly be retiring from the service.

To wish him farewell, Warrant Officer Wade was given a traditional final tour of the Station, with personnel lining the route to wish him well for the future. He was met at the exit gate by the Station Commander, Group Captain Wadlow, who presented him with leaving gifts on behalf of Station personnel and thanked him for his Service.

Warrant Officer Wade has served in

the RAF Regiment for 37 years. During this time, he has been an incredible ambassador for the RAF, not only in the joint environment but also in the multi-national arena. His career has included operational tours in Macedonia, Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan.

An exceptional leader, manager and professional, WO Wade has a rare blend of authority, intelligence and courage

that makes him a role model and a highly effective leader. His leadership, ingenuity and influence have driven the pace in his many Service roles, and he is greatly respected by all who have been fortunate to serve with him.

Everyone at RAF Shawbury would like to wish Warrant Officer Wade the very best of luck with his future plans.

By Mr Dan Haycocks

Most Outstanding Individual Award Flying Officer Aidan Rae

The Lifetime Achievement Award Mr Paul Gresty

The Wing Commander McKinley Memorial Award Sergeant Jake Cowan

Speaking at the ARIES Awards, Group Captain Wadlow said: "We are here this evening for 2 reasons: firstly, to commemorate a special event that took place in 1944, when the ARIES set off on its round-the-world record breaking flight; secondly, to recognise the fantastic talent and commitment of all the nominated personnel here this evening. Today we Applaud and Recognise this same Innovation, Excellence and Service that the aircrew showed in their round the world flight in 1944 with the presentation of these prestigious awards this evening. Congratulations to all the nominees and award winners."

By Squadron Leader Leach



Sergeant Hill being presented with the Community Spirit Award by Mr Tom Hodgkinson



Mr Gresty was awarded The Lifetime Achievement Award



Flying Officer Rae being presented with the Most Outstanding Individual Award by Mr Tom Hodgkinson



The Wing Commander McKinley Memorial Award being presented to Sergeant Cowan by the Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire

Flight Lieutenant Trotman flies in to celebrate milestone birthday

On Thursday 9th September, Flight Lieutenant John Trotman DFC and Bar took to the air to celebrate his 100th birthday and landed at RAF Shawbury, a unit where he previously served as an instructor.

On his arrival, John was welcomed back to RAF Shawbury by Wing Commander Turner, Officer Commanding Operations Wing, and Commander Hughes, Commanding Officer 2

Maritime Air Wing. Personnel sang happy birthday to John as Squadron Leader James, Station Flight Safety Officer at RAF Shawbury, presented him with a birthday cake to celebrate his significant milestone. Believed to be

the oldest pilot in the United Kingdom, John was joined in the cockpit by his friend and flying instructor, Mr Walker.

During the Second World War, John served on two operational tours with Bomber Command, the first with 150 Squadron flying Wellingtons on 30 operations. After a period as a flying instructor, he volunteered to return for a second period of operational flying. This time he flew the Mosquito undertaking operational flights with 692 Squadron, part of the elite Pathfinder Force, flying a further 40 operational sorties. During the course of 5 and a half years, John flew 70 hazardous operational missions, amassing over 2000 flying hours and walking away from three crashes. His



Flight Lieutenant Trotman while serving in the Royal Air Force



John celebrating his 100th Birthday with a piece of birthday cake in the cockpit of his aircraft at RAF Shawbury

remarkable skill and bravery saw him awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and later the Bar to the Distinguished Flying Cross, a second award of the same medal.

In-between his operational tours, John served as a flying instructor; for several months he was based at RAF Shawbury and he still maintains a close relationship visiting the Station as part of the local veterans' group and the Shropshire Aircrew Association. After leaving the Royal Air Force in 1946 John stopped flying. However, in 2005 he returned to the skies, joining his local flying club in Shropshire to fly light aircraft.

Everyone at RAF Shawbury would like to congratulate John on his 100th birthday!

By Mr Dan Haycocks



John arriving at RAF Shawbury with Mr Walker alongside him in the aircraft

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RAF Shawbury personnel remember the fallen

On Remembrance Sunday, tri-Service personnel from RAF Shawbury commemorated the fallen at Acts of Remembrance across Shropshire.

In Shrewsbury, RAF Shawbury personnel from all 3 services marched through the town, alongside other military units, local dignitaries, veterans, cadets, military charities and civilian organisations. Under the command of Squadron Leader Summers, the parade escorted the Sixty Squadron Standard, which was carried by Flight Lieutenant Knapp. The parade formed up at the War Memorial in the Quarry Park, where members of the public joined them for an act of Remembrance.

After two minutes silence at 11 O' Clock, wreaths were laid on behalf of the local community. Alongside local dignitaries, other military units and veterans' groups, wreaths were laid by RAF Shawbury's Station Commander Group Captain Phil Wadlow; Lieutenant Colonel Pearce, Commanding Officer 9 Regiment Army Air Corps, and Lieutenant Commander Edwards, a Qualified Helicopter Instructor on 705 Naval Air Squadron.

Personnel laid wreaths at a further 23 acts of Remembrance in various towns and parishes across Shropshire, including Shawbury, Wem and Market Drayton. People from all faiths and backgrounds came together to pay their respects to those who sacrificed their lives and to show their support for those who continue to serve.

We will remember them.

By Mr Dan Haycocks



The War Memorial in the Quarry Park where wreaths were laid to honour the fallen



(L to R) Lieutenant Commander Edwards, Group Captain Wadlow and Lieutenant Colonel Pearce prepare to lay their wreaths



The Parade Commander, Squadron Leader Summers, leads the parade through Shrewsbury.



Local dignitaries, Service personnel, veterans, cadets, military charities and civilian organisations attended the act of Remembrance, alongside members of the public.

RAF Shawbury welcomes back local veterans for annual tea party

RAF Shawbury held its annual Veterans' Tea Party on Wednesday 27th October in the Officers' Mess, a highlight in the RAF Shawbury Calendar. While the event is normally held every year in September, last year's Tea Party was sadly unable to take place due to the all now familiar 'COVID factor'. Happily, with the Station Commander's authorization, this year's event was able to take place once again. Organized by the RAF Shawbury COVID Cell, in conjunction with Corporate Engagement and Relations team, invitations were sent out to local veterans' groups and organizations, inviting veterans of all ages to the event.

Veterans arrived shortly before 11:00 and were welcomed by Service personnel who had volunteered to be part of the event. Inside, the ESS Mess staff had laid on a fantastic selection of teas, coffees, sandwiches – and most importantly, cakes! The Station Commander, Group Captain Wadlow, gave a warm welcome back to all the veterans once they were all inside, warmly inviting them to the tea party.

Also present were Wing Commander Jones, Officer Commanding Base Support Wing (BSW) and Wing Commander Vamplew, Officer



The tea party was a tri-service event with personnel and veterans from all three services

Commanding the Defence College of Air and Space Operations, alongside staff and trainees from RAF Shawbury.

There were veterans from many different conflicts and walks of life who were able to attend: two veterans had fought in the Second World War, and others had spent time in Germany in the post-war period when the former Reich was divided into British, American, French and Soviet control. Hearing stories from those periods was certainly an eye-opener for some of the younger members of staff currently based at Shawbury!

There were also one or two veterans who had served at Shawbury over the years and were now returning to see how the station had changed since



Local veterans enjoying meeting up at the tea party



Personnel and veterans sharing stories of their Service

their time. And of course, there were some veterans who had evidently left the service more recently, having spent time in Iraq during the Second Gulf War.

Wing Commander Jones rounded off the event on behalf of the Station Commander by thanking everybody who attended, as well as everyone who helped to organise and prepare the tea party. He concluded by saying that he looked forward to welcoming back veterans to events at RAF Shawbury in the future.

By Pilot Officer Kee



Warrant Officer Murphy-Brown enjoying the tea party with local veterans



The tea party in full swing!

RAF Shawbury Personnel Receive Honours and Awards

At a ceremony held in the Station Briefing facility on Tuesday 19th October 2021, personnel from RAF Shawbury were presented with honours and awards by the Station Commander, Group Captain Phil Wadlow ADC BEng (Hons) MA RAF.

The ceremony was attended by family, friends and colleagues of the recipients, who were able to watch the following honours and awards be presented:

The Meritorious Service Medal was presented to Master Aircrew Brompton and Master Aircrew Diable

The Long Service and Good Conduct Medal was presented to Flight Lieutenant Dempsey, Flight Lieutenant Lloyd and Flight Sergeant O'Rourke

The Operational Service Medal Iraq and Syria was presented to Flight Lieutenant Ashcroft, Sergeant Asquith, Corporal Benson, Flight Lieutenant Blakemore and Sergeant Ford

A Commander Home Command Commendation was presented to Sergeant Palmer

Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Commendations were presented to Sergeant Ford, Flight Lieutenant Martin, Corporal McVay and Acting Flight Lieutenant Simons

Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Team Commendations were presented to No. 1 Flying Training School Standards Team, School of Aerospace Battle Management (SABM)



Acting Flight Lieutenant Simons being presented with an Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Commendation



Sergeant Ford being presented with an Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Commendation



Sergeant Palmer being presented with his Commander Home Command Commendation



Squadron Leader Steel collecting an AOC 22 Group Team Commendation on behalf of the No.1 Flying Training School Standards team

Controller Training Flight and Defence Rotary Wing Dangerous Goods School

A Flight Safety Award was presented to Flight Lieutenant Parkins

Congratulations to all of our honours and awards recipients!

By Mr Dan Haycocks

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DCASO Dits

As Winter creeps up on us and the heating kicks in, the Defence College of Air and Space Operations (DCASO) continue to forge ahead with delivering first class training whilst also finding time to enjoy many of the sporting, Force Development and Adventure Training opportunities available, burning those calories in preparation for mince pie season!

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TRAINING SQUADRON

Ex Kernow Eagle, at RAF St Mawgan, saw five DCASO trainers and a Physical Training Instructor take to the sea armed with boards, wetsuits, and helmets. Day 1 was centred around paddle boarding across waves more suitable for actual surfing and saw the group cover 4km on the water. The team took on coastering on Day 2; with the sea being a little shallower and calmer than expected, the highest jump the team completed was 20 feet. Whilst some of the team were eager to fall off the rocks into the sea during a thunderstorm, others found themselves facing their fear of heights, gracefully overcoming them with war-cries and flailing limbs as they fell. Day 3 was surfing and the whole team took to the waves to pull their best surfing poses and execute impressive face plants. Before the day was done, everyone had ridden a wave on their feet, knees, and in most cases, face. A challenging and exciting week for everyone involved!



Flt Lt Jefferies taking part in the Inter Service Cross Country Mountain Bike Championships

The Inter Service Cross Country Mountain Bike Championships took place on 29th September, hosted by the Royal Navy at Woodbury Common. A tough technical course featuring several steep climbs, single tracks and some fast descents with plenty of roots and mud to negotiate, made worse by torrential rain overnight. The race saw 10 riders from each service battling it out over 5 laps of the course, with points allocated for each finishing position which contributed towards the team prize and Inter-Service title. Our very own Flt Lt Jefferies finished in 21st position in his first Inter-Service race after a late call up to the team.

AEROSPACE BATTLE MANAGEMENT TRAINING SQUADRON

The Squadron has been heavily involved with sporting and Force Development events in recent months. Members of Surveillance Training Flight supported the Aerospace Systems Specialist Course Force Development navigation event, providing an opportunity for trainees to gain basic navigation skills whilst building team ethos. We also saw Controller Training Flight's Flt Lt Robertson compete at the RAF Powerlifting Champs, achieving 2nd place overall which qualifies her for the UK Armed Forces Championships in October. SAC McGeachy was in the winning team at the Shawbury 5s Football Tournament and SAC Harris competed in the RAF Tennis Champs final. Aerospace Battle Management Training Squadron also had a day paddle-boarding at Alderford Lake which saw teams pitted against each other, adding a competitive element to a fun day.

All trainees from Surveillance Foundation Course 21-4 successfully graduated on 21st October 2021 and are now waiting to start the next phase of their training. Three LAC's who recently joined Simulator Support Flight have now all completed their Trade Ability Tests and achieved the rank of SAC, however, they won't remain the 'newbies' for long as another three LAC's are due to join in the near future.

There have been warm welcomes and sad farewells; Surveillance Training Flight saw the departure of Flt Lt Ashcroft and his replacement, Flt Lt Furlong, joined us from RAF Waddington. Controller Training Flight lost Flt Lt Holmes, but gained Flt Lt Marrison and Sgt Langworthy. Meanwhile SAC Hilton-Jones from Simulator Support Flight is currently enjoying his very first deployment.

AIR AND SPACE OPERATIONS TRAINING SQUADRON

It has been a busy couple of months for Air and Space Operations Training Squadron, with the tempo of work and play not likely to slow anytime soon.



Assurance Squadron preparing to go stand up paddle boarding



Cpl Rowe being announced as the winner of his first boxing match

We say farewell and good luck to FS Bell, promoted and posted to RAF Northolt and welcome Flt Lt Mason to Flight Operations Training Course, FS Lee and Cpl Avery to Air and Space Operations Training Flight, and babies Lily (Cpl Crocker) and Marnie (Cpl McQuillan) to the Air and Space Operations Training Squadron family.

Charity has been a huge feature; Cpl Rowe decided late 30's was the right age to start his boxing career, knocking out his opponent in a white collar boxing match, raising £340 for Cancer Research and inspiring other members of the Squadron to follow suit. Sgts Turner and Loughran, Cpls L Moss-Jones & Quiney and trainees from Flight Operations Training Course (Officer) 8, Flight Operations Specialist Course 17 and Aerospace Systems Specialist Course 21-2 were all involved with the RAF Shawbury 10K Charity Road Race, raising approximately £2000 for the RAF Benevolent Fund. Cpl McBrinn pushed the bar higher, completing the London Marathon in a time of 3hr 57mins 28secs, raising approx. £3500.

The Squadron benefited from some Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Force Development, with personnel attending a Specific Learning Difficulties brief before enjoying either a ramble around Wem, a visit to the Cosford Air Museum or stand up paddle boarding at Alderford Lake. Sgt Healing, a Physical Training Instructor at RAF Shawbury, remains stand up paddle



The RAF Shawbury 10K that personnel from DCASO were involved in organising

boarding champion, much to the annoyance of all who attended.

ASSURANCE SQUADRON

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water after the Summer, Assurance Squadron visited Alderford Lake to try their hand at paddle boarding whilst also doing CPD by looking at the theory basics of Transactional Analysis.

The day was organised by Acting Sgt McVay who did a great job, the CPD element was facilitated by Flt Lt Martin with Sgt Tom Healing overseeing the paddle boarding.

The CPD on Transactional Analysis was kicked off by Lt Cdr Crompton who gave a brief on who Dr Eric Berne was and how he theorised Transactional Analysis. This was further explored by the team by discussing Ego states (Parent, Adult and Child), Strokes (positive and negative) as a form of human recognition, the 'Drama Triangle' and the roles we play (persecutor, rescuer and victim) and finally we discussed the 5 behaviour drivers that are common to Transactional Analysis ('be strong', 'hurry up', 'try hard', 'be perfect' and 'please others') and how to recognise and use these

behaviours in ourselves and others to good effect.

When it came to paddle boarding, the weather was favourable and the water was surprisingly warm with Sgt Beagley being the first to testify, closely followed FS Cookson to confirm his findings. This started a trend and before long all had experienced the waters warm(ish) embrace. Eventually, everyone managed to stand up - albeit some with more wobbly Elvis legs than others. Rounding off the day with a quick wash-up (body and mind), proving CPD doesn't have to be limited to the classroom.

That's all from the DCASO Diarists this month, look out for more in the next edition of the Aries Magazine.

By The DCASO Diarists



NO.1 FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL WELCOMES THE COLONEL COMMANDANT OF THE ARMY AIR CORPS

In September, RAF Shawbury was delighted to welcome Major-General Nick Borton DSO MBE, Colonel Commandant of the Army Air Corps.

Having been appointed as the Colonel Commandant of the Army Air Corps in December 2020, effective from 1st January 2021, the purpose of Major-General Borton's visit to RAF Shawbury was to undertake a two-week Army pilot familiarisation course at No.1 Flying Training School. The course would allow him to see how Army aircrew are trained, alongside their Royal Navy and Royal Air Force colleagues, as well as meet with staff and trainees at the School.

Major-General Borton was welcomed to the Station by the Station Commander and Commandant of No.1 Flying Training School, Group Captain Phil Wadlow and Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart Pearce, Commanding Officer 9 Regiment Army Air Corps (9AAC), the Battlefield Helicopter Wing within No. 1 Flying Training School.



Major General Borton holding a forum for staff and trainees at No.1 Flying Training School

For the first week of his course, Major-General Borton was hosted by 660 Squadron Army Air Corps, part of 2 Maritime Air Wing, within No.1 Flying Training School. After being fitted with his flying clothing by the Survival Equipment Section, the first week of Major-General Borton's familiarisation course comprised of basic helicopter handling techniques. This included learning the basics of how to operate a Juno helicopter, learning how to hover, fly the aircraft and general handling.

During the second week of his course, Major General Borton was hosted by 670 Squadron Army Air Corps, part of 9 Regiment Army Air Corps. Now that he had learnt the basics of flying a Juno helicopter, the course moved onto advanced handling techniques, as well as how to tactically fly the aircraft. Throughout the week he learnt how to navigate the aircraft, flying to Wattisham Flying Station, as well as learning tactical observation and patrol techniques.

While at RAF Shawbury, Major General Borton also held a forum with trainees, instructors, and staff at No.1 Flying Training School to learn more about their roles and the training delivered at the School. In addition, he attended a No.1 Flying Training School graduation ceremony, celebrating 23 tri-service



Major General Borton in the cockpit of a Juno helicopter preparing for a sortie

aircrew graduating to the frontline.

On completion of his final familiarisation sortie, Major General Borton was met on the dispersal by Lieutenant-Colonel Pearce, who congratulated him on completing his familiarisation course. Later that evening, Lieutenant-Colonel Pearce was delighted to award Major-General Borton with his honorary Army Flying Badge at an Army Led Dinner held in the Officers' Mess at RAF Shawbury.

Congratulations from everyone at No.1 Flying Training School and RAF Shawbury!

By Mr Dan Haycocks



Lieutenant Colonel Pearce congratulating Major General Borton on completing the final sortie of his familiarisation course



Lieutenant Colonel Pearce presenting Major General Borton with his honorary Army Flying Badge



RAF Shawbury Gliding Club *soar to success*

By RAF Shawbury Gliding Club

On a wet winter's day in December 2020, in between COVID-19 lock downs and winter weather systems, the club's gliders were aero-towed into RAF Shawbury from RAF Cosford and the Wrekin Gliding Club officially became the RAF Shawbury Gliding Club.

None of us could have imagined either the subsequent level of interest or the outstanding achievements of club members since arrival, despite the interruption to the flying programme created by the challenges of COVID-19. We are well settled in our new home in Hangar 4 which is warm, well-lit, and dry, ideal for our team of volunteer Civil Aviation Authority Part 66 licensed engineers who complete all the maintenance on RAF Shawbury Gliding Club aircraft.

With our team of volunteer instructors, our core task is to teach the Service community to fly gliders and encourage participation in competitions. We are particularly keen to inculcate airmanship in non-professional aviators. Our success can be seen in the 54% increase in our membership with 25 new members since arrival at Shawbury, including several drawn from the broader RAF Shawbury community including both

civil servants and Defence partners. It's also clear that the club have become a familiar site in the skies over Shawbury that has resulted in some 32 Service and community visitors enjoying a flight alongside our already busy schedule.

Service personnel embarking on their gliding hobby have called upon several funding streams, for example:

- We have 3 Junior Ranks awarded Go Solo paid for by the Malcolm Club Fund.
- We have delivered 50 days of publicly sponsored Gliding Adventurous Training through the Soaring Eagles Scheme.
- The club have been supported by RAF Shawbury funds to help with instructor and glider inspector registration. RAF Shawbury have also committed to supporting some of our new and junior service members.

This level of support translates into success. In our first summer season at RAF Shawbury we cannot recall a past year of achievement to match 2021, achievements that include:

- Five members have completed their first solo.



RAF Shawbury Gliding Club Officer in Charge, Squadron Leader Swan with Lieutenant Pottage RN after his first solo

- One member achieved their Bronze gliding qualification and Cross-Country endorsement, the gliding equivalent of a PPL.
- Two members qualified as gliding instructors.
- One member qualified as an aero-tow pilot in the motor glider.
- Two pilots challenged themselves by flying in the Inter-Services Regional Gliding Competition held in August.
- Soaring flights of over 3 hours in duration are regularly achieved up to heights of 10,000 feet over Shropshire.

In August, the club were delighted to be invited to take part in the RAF Shawbury Families Day where Chief Flying Instructor Ian Gallacher delivered a super glider aerobatic display in the club's 2-seat K21 training aircraft. We were also delighted to welcome the Shawbury Air Scouts to Hangar 4 in September and allow them to discover more about gliding and see the aircraft up close.



Family fly too! RAF Shawbury Gliding Club Instructor Will Dean (left) with Flight Lieutenant Parkins (right) and his Dad (centre)

Membership of the club is open to Service personnel and their families, MOD Civilians and Defence partners. If this has attracted your attention and you'd like to join us then, for an informal discussion and more information, contact Squadron Leader Alan Swan alan.swan143@mod.gov.uk, or Ian Gallacher: Ian.Gallacher375@mod.gov.uk, both of whom will be delighted to answer your questions. You can also find more details on our website at: <https://www.rafshawburygc.co.uk>

A win for RAF Shawbury at the RAF Benevolent Fund Awards 2021

In October, a small team attended the annual RAF Benevolent Fund Awards, after the Station was nominated for the RAF Stations' Challenge Cup award. Held at the impressive Plaisterers' Hall in London, the RAF Benevolent Fund celebrated a night of fundraising heroes. With some inspirational individuals in attendance, it gives the Fund an opportunity to highlight the efforts of those involved and thank those who have done so much to raise money and go above and beyond in the last 12 months.

The RAF Stations' Challenge Cup award recognises the station which has raised the most money strictly through sporting events on a per-head basis. Despite stiff competition from the teams of RAF Halton and RAF Odiham, who demonstrated some outstanding fundraising and incredible physical efforts, RAF Shawbury came out on top. In the end, an impressive turnout from around 500 runners all taking part and raising money for the RAF Benevolent Fund at the 2020 Shawbury 10K run sealed the victory, raising a whopping £5500 for the charity at this event alone. The award that RAF Shawbury gained is thanks to all those runners



Wing Commander Jones, Flight Lieutenant Molloy, Flight Lieutenant Tierney and Master aircrew Wakeham being presented with the RAF Benevolent Fund's RAF Stations Challenge Cup for RAF Shawbury

who took part, and to the organising team, led by Flight Lieutenant Tierney who was in attendance at the awards.

Also in attendance was Master Aircrew Wakeham, who played a major role in the organisation of the RAF Shawbury Motorcycle Safety Weekend which saw bikers from around the UK come to Shawbury to improve and test their biking skills on the airfield, raising a further £2600 for the RAF Benevolent Fund. In total, thanks to these efforts and others – such as the ATC 59 Club who donated over £500 to the cause – RAF Shawbury was able to present a cheque to the RAF Benevolent Fund for over £9000 in early 2021 for our efforts

over the course of 2020. It is great to give something back to an organisation who have done so much for the Station.

On collecting the award, Wing Commander Jones, Chairman of the Station Charities Committee and Officer Commanding Base Support Wing at RAF Shawbury, said: "It is an honour for RAF Shawbury to be recognised in this way and to be able to support the wider RAF family through our fundraising activities. We look forward to continuing to raise funding and awareness of the RAF Benevolent Fund, so that they can provide much needed support to the RAF family."



The 2020 RAF Shawbury 10K Charity Road Race that raised £5500 for the RAF Benevolent Fund

2021 has seen even more funds raised for the RAF Benevolent Fund; as well as this year's RAF Shawbury 10K, the Community Centre recently held a Battle of Britain Tea Party raising £228. Finally, despite being delayed for over a year due to Covid-19, the Battlespace Management 5-a-side Football Tournament was able to go ahead in October which saw 20 teams from all over the military come to Shawbury to take part and is set to raise a great total for a number of good causes including the RAF Benevolent Fund.

In addition to fundraising for the RAF Benevolent fund, there has also been a significant amount of other charitable activity taking place over the last couple of months.

A cheque for £100 was donated by the Station to Alzheimer's UK to celebrate the 100th birthday of local Bomber Command Veteran Flight Lieutenant John Trotman DFC and Bar. He was presented with the cheque and a card on behalf of personnel at RAF



Riders enjoying RAF Shawbury's 2020 Motorcycle Safety Weekend that raised £2600 for the RAF Benevolent Fund

Shawbury by Wing Commander Jones at his 100th Birthday celebration.

Recently, the Station also received a visit from the Parents Opening Doors (PODs) charity who gave a fascinating brief on the work they do and the support they give to families in our area, £100 was also donated to them by the Station.

As well as donations, there was also plenty of fundraising taking place. Corporal Rowe won his Ultra White Collar Boxing tournament in Shrewsbury, raising £340 for Cancer Research UK in the process. You can

read more about his training and the tournament on page 26 of this edition of the Aries Magazine. Finally, Corporal Moss-Jones ran a Quiz Night in the Aries Club, raising £210 for Cancer Research UK.

As always, if you 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 via Charities page of the RAF Shawbury SharePoint site at the Community tab.

By Flight Lieutenant Molloy

Hazles Farm Childcare has been caring for children since 1999. The company prides itself on the strong relationships built between parents, children and staff. We strive to meet the needs of the local community within Shropshire and Telford.

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Church Road,
High Erroll,
Telford,
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Hazles Farm Day Nursery, Afterschool & Holiday Club
Hazles Rd, Shawbury SY4 4HE
01939 250234

Runners return to the RAF Shawbury Airfield

Finally, after two delays, a lockdown and a fuel shortage crisis, the annual RAF Shawbury 10K Charity Road Race took place on the sunny morning of Saturday 25th September.

The RAF Shawbury 10k Race has become an annual event for the Station, usually held in February. Taking place on RAF Shawbury's airfield, it is a unique event in the local running calendar and is a favourite with local runners due to the flat runways and taxiways offering a good chance of a Personal Best. All profits made from the event are donated to the RAF Benevolent Fund, an RAF welfare charity, providing practical, financial, and emotional support to RAF personnel, veterans, and their partners and children. In 2020, the Fund spent nearly £35,000 supporting personnel and their families based at RAF Shawbury. This included the provision of Airplay youth clubs and Ben Clubs for younger children, as well as RAF-wide services such as the Fund's



Group Captain Wadlow sounds the horn to start the race



Corporal Needham and Ben Elephant warming up the runners

listening and counselling service, relationship counselling service, free Headspace memberships and Thrive wellbeing workshops for RAF partners.

Over 340 runners had signed up to the event, with 257 taking their place on the start line. With the slightly overcast conditions, the weather was pretty much perfect for the race and runners and spectators were in for a treat.

Corporal Needham, a Physical Training Instructor at RAF Shawbury, made sure that runners were ready, putting them through a warm up on the start line. With runners poised and ready to go, a flypast from a No.1 Flying Training School Juno helicopter and horn blast from the Station Commander, Group Captain Wadlow, signalled the start of the event.

It was a fiercely contested affair, with three trophies on offer: fastest male, fastest female, and fastest under 17. RAF Athletics claimed victory for both male and female categories. Ryan Jones won the male category with a time of 33 mins, 15 secs, the next runner unable to keep pace and coming in over a minute behind him. Victoria Williams won the female category with a time of 37 mins, 45 secs, followed by RAF Shawbury's own Corporal Needham; her plan of beasting everyone at the start clearly worked! The under 17 category was won by Sinead O'Neill of Market Drayton, in a time of 48 min 20 secs. Incredible as those times were, the effort of the day must go to Senior Aircraftman Bradshaw, who ran the whole course, every 10KM of it, in the RAF Benevolent Fund "Ben Elephant"



Runners enjoying the event

Runners showing their support for the RAF Benevolent Fund





Ms Ruth Gilford, RAF Benevolent Fund Regional Fundraiser, presenting Ryan Jones with a trophy for being the first male to cross the line



Ms Ruth Gilford, RAF Benevolent Fund Regional Fundraiser, presenting Victoria Williams with a trophy for being the first female to cross the line

mascot costume!

Pre and post event, the runners and spectators enjoyed the various vendors on offer in the event village, serving up coffee and cakes, ice creams and wood fired pizzas, the latter from a pizza company based in Ellendine Heath, who's mobile pizza oven is built into a Land Rover Defender. This was particularly popular with those who had attended the Officers' Mess Battle of Britain event the night before! In addition, the Station's COVID Cell arranged for "Bob the Bus", the mobile

vaccination service for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, to be present at the event, providing the opportunity for anyone attending the event to receive their COVID-19 vaccinations.

The event was a great success, raising approximately £2000 for the RAF Benevolent Fund.

A special thanks must go to cadets from 28 (Shawbury) Squadron ATC and personnel from the Defence College of Air and Space Operations who volunteered as support staff, alongside

the RAF Police, Military Provost Guard Service and West Mercia Police Special Constables for their support. We must also thank the committee for their time organising the event, the RAF Benevolent Fund for their support and all the runners that took part in the event.

You can sign up now to the 2022 RAF Shawbury 10K Charity Road Race being held on Sunday 27th February 2022 at www.entrycentral.com/RAFShawbury10km.

By Sergeant Turner

Community Support hold a Battle of Britain Tea Party in support of the RAFBF

To commemorate the 81st anniversary of the Battle of Britain and to raise funds for the RAF Benevolent Fund (RAFBF), the Community Support Team held a Battle of Britain Tea Party on Thursday 16th September.



Personnel joining in with the tea party to raise money for the RAF Benevolent Fund

The whole Station community were invited to join in the party at the Community Centre for tea, cake and a chat. A whole array of beautiful cakes were kindly donated by budding bakers and their families from around the Station for personnel to enjoy.

On the day we also saw an 'Exec's Bake Off', which included flapjacks, cornflake cakes, carrot cake, chocolate cake and red velvet cake, as well as chocolate cupcakes, banana loaf, fresh cream Victoria sponge and Spanakopita – a Greek feta & spinach pie. After intense deliberations by the judging panel, Wing Commander Spencer, Officer Commanding Engineering and Logistics Wing at RAF Shawbury, was crowned the winner of the bake off!

In addition to the excitement of the bake off, there was also a guess the name of the RAF Benevolent Fund Teddy competition. This was won by Mrs Amy Drinkald.

Overall a lovely morning was had by everyone that attended and a brilliant £228 was raised for the RAF Benevolent Fund. Thank you to everyone that came and showed their support and a special thanks to those who baked cakes.

By Flight Sergeant Bowyer



The Community Support team with just some of the lovely cakes baked by personnel and their families

Flight Lieutenant Martin supports Future 4 Heroes



Throughout October, Flight Lieutenant Martin from RAF Shawbury has been working alongside a veterans' charity 'Future 4 Heroes' in Ambleside in the Lake District.

Over the past 5 years, in his own time, Flight Lieutenant Martin has been involved in assisting the charity 'Future 4 Heroes' as a course trainer and mentor. His main motivation is to assist ex-Service personnel in getting back on track using his experience as a Defence trainer to support delegates to refocus on reaching their potential in life.

Future 4 Heroes is a charity organisation for Service personnel and veterans of any rank returning to civilian life. It was recognised that some personnel leaving the armed forces needed help in making the physical and emotional adjustments necessary to successfully adjust into civilian life. Once a military career has ended, a minority of our servicemen and women struggle to re-adjust to life as a civilian, the consequence of which can lead to lack of direction and poor choices. For some this might manifest itself as simple anxiety and nervousness about their future. However, for a few, it may be the start of a downwards spiral, beginning with a loss of identity and purpose that leads to a way of life that progresses

to disillusionment, uncertainty and/or loneliness.

The programme is a 4-day intervention held in the Lake District at Brathay Hall, Windermere. It focuses on participants achieving a deeper understanding of self-awareness, providing motivational techniques to strengthen what they may consider areas of development. It creates a safe environment to develop new skills and talents, giving them the confidence to transfer these skills into their civilian lives. It also introduces coping strategies such as managing stress, building physical, psychological and social resilience. A simple core theme forms the framework of the programme, which looks at the past, invites delegates into the present and sets goals for the future.

The charity holds up to 12 programmes a year and Flight Lieutenant Martin has the privilege of delivering alongside leading civilian sector facilitators to share trainer ideas, concepts and techniques. The learning environment predominantly



An early morning paddle on Windermere



Course delegates completing a high ropes challenge

uses the outdoors as a medium and includes activities such as high rope exercises, boating, canoeing, fell walking and lots of reflection.

A delegate that recently attended the Future 4 Heroes' programme shared his experience, saying:

"I personally enjoyed interacting with such a diverse and interesting group. The Future 4 Heroes' programme allowed open, frank and honest

discussion, which I believe was a real positive and inspiring element of the course; tears were shed, support was given, and positive reinforcement was gained."

"The programme, for me personally, confirmed that I wish to pursue a career path in which I can help others reach their own personal goals and aspirations. Since my attendance on Future 4 Heroes Course 44 I have enrolled on a teaching course and the future is bright!"

If you would like to know more about Future 4 Heroes (Registered Charity 1126396) visit www.f4h.org.uk, or please get in touch with Flight Lieutenant Martin in the Defence College of Air and Space Operations.

By Flight Lieutenant Martin



A local fell walk before breakfast

Plenty of fun at the Community Centre

Over the past 6 months the community centre has opened its doors again and welcomed back our tot's group, parenting classes and youth club.

In July, Racheal Thomson came in and entertained our toddlers with Sing and Sign lessons. This multi-sensory, musical class helped to simulate the children's speech and language development using action songs, props, pictures, and toys. Children typically use all kinds of sign and gestures as a natural part of learning to talk. By encouraging the children with a few extra signs such as "milk", "more", "tired" or "potty" it will help with their communication skills before they can talk.

September was Rhythm Time! Karen, Katie, and Georgie introduced the children to the wonders of music. The baby class concentrated on singing, dancing, massage, and social skills and the family class focussed on the children's



Parents and toddlers joining in with Rhythm Time

confidence, co-ordination and listening skills as well as their singing and dancing skills.

Both the children and parents enjoyed these classes, fun and laughter was had by all, new techniques were learnt, and new friends were made.

By Flight Sergeant Bowyer



Left: Parents and toddlers enjoying Sing and Sign lessons

Look out for more classes that will be taking place in the community centre in the future.

HALF-TERM HALLOWEEN FUN FOR AIRPLAY

By Mrs Cheryl Foster

During the half term holidays, the Airplay project at RAF Shawbury organised a week of activities for our young people here.

During the week, activities included visits to the Odeon Cinema in Telford, as well as Free Dome Trampoline Park & Adventure Golf. The week ended with a fantastic fancy-dress

Halloween party in the Community Centre. Young people got dressed up in their Halloween outfits and enjoyed spooky fun and pumpkin carving.



Airplay members getting ready to have some fun playing Adventure Golf!



Just some of the spooky outfits on display at the Halloween party

Airplay, funded by the RAF Benevolent Fund, is open to all children aged 8 – 18 years of currently serving personnel and veterans.

If you would like to know more details, please contact the Station Youth Worker, Suzanne Dunleavy, via email at:

Suzanne.Dunleavy@actionforchildren.org.uk

Warbirds

Over Shawbury 2021

By kind permission of the Station Commander, RAF Shawbury Warbirds has been held on the Station for the last 5 years. It is now very much a jewel in the crown of the Royal Air Force Model Aircraft Association (RAFMAA), attracting a wide and varied range of model aircraft, reflecting the full spectrum of what is available in the model aircraft world.

As could be expected, COVID-19 played a part in the organisation of the event by keeping some of the regular attendees away and also causing the event to be moved from its traditional mid-September date to the second weekend of October, which caused some to worry about the potential weather conditions.

The organisation of this event is a divided responsibility between Royal

Air Force Model Aircraft Association and RAF Shawbury Model Flying Club (RAFSMFC). The Royal Air Force Model Aircraft Association looks after the advertising and participant registration, with the RAF Shawbury Model Flying Club looking after the onsite elements including passes and permits. As one of the organisers and Chairman of RAF Shawbury Model Flying Club, I would like to personally thank Taff and Ivan in Passes and Permits for



Dave Franks checking the engine on his large F-16

the help they gave in the production of all the required passes. My thanks are also extended to RAF Shawbury Gliding Club who very kindly gave up a day of flying to give us the whole airfield to ourselves for the duration of the event, a gesture that was really appreciated and one that I am sure we will reciprocate if the need arises.

Early October is not a time of year that is normally associated with the best of weather and I have to admit that I did have some reservations as to whether we were doing the right thing by leaving it so late in the year, but as it turned out all of my fears were unfounded. On the morning of the start of the event, we were blessed with glorious sunshine and light winds that were to continue for the duration of the weekend.

Understanding the reservations about the potentially low attendance, an invitation was extended to the Jet Modellers Association offering 12 of their members the opportunity to take part in this unique event. This proved to be a shrewd move as a total of 38 people registered for the event, made up of 29 pilots and 9 helpers.



Geoff White on a low pass with his lovely Hawk

The resident club members flew the flag with these large piston engine models



A lovely model of a Dakota from Frank Fletcher used to tow the assault gliders



A busy pit area was typical of the weekend as pilots were keen to make the most of the great weather and flying site

On the day, prior to getting onto the airfield, an admin and insurance check is conducted. Once completed, participants are escorted onto the airfield by one of the resident Club Members and given a comprehensive briefing before flying commences. The final numbers were counted and with 4 no-shows that reduced the number of pilots to 24, a number that made for a very relaxed event.

Although only 24 pilots were in attendance, they brought with them a tremendous range of model aircraft that really did showcase the hobby and showed models from each end of the spectrum and everything in between. At one end we had the small scale models that come ready built and made from a strong foam material whilst at the other were the 1/4 scale Hawk and F-104 Starfighters all of which are very complex models costing in the region of £15,000. In between, we had all sorts of different models including a twin engined Dakota and a four engined Flying Fortress. We even had two assault gliders, a Horsa and a



Hadrian, that club members used to demonstrate at model shows across the country as part of the Assault Glider Trust that used to be based at RAF Shawbury.

While everyone is always amazed at the big and expensive models, it has to be said that any hobby is supposed to be fun and model flying is no different but, and I speak from experience, the level of fun is in no way related to the cost of the model. I have owned and still do own some very expensive models, but I get the most fun from a £200 model that I have owned for years. So, if anyone is thinking about taking up the hobby then please be rest assured that a lot of fun can be had for not a lot of money.

First take-off for Warbirds was just after 10 o'clock on each day and from that point onwards there were models in the air almost constantly throughout the weekend. Whilst all of the flying was of a particularly high standard there were some standout moments that made the event a little bit special. Notably, club members Graeme and Simon Illsley for their fantastic display of formation flying with their all foam Trojan T28 models, Jet Modellers Association members Luke Metcalfe and Steve Johnson for their flights with their 1/4 scale Starfighters, Geoff White another Jet Modellers Association member for his immaculate and very realistic scale flying with his 1/4 scale Hawk and who could forget that lovely little Flying Fortress that had its first flight at the event.

As Sunday came to a close and with work the next day for some, people started to be escorted off the site. At the end of the day, a comprehensive



Local club members Fred Clarke and Dave Edwards discuss the early stages of what will be a Chinook

FOD Plod ensured that the airfield was ready for flying the following day.

It was estimated that there was somewhere in the region of 150 flights undertaken during the weekend and I take great pride in reporting that there were no crashes and only a minor undercarriage issue on one of the Starfighters which brought about a wheels up landing with no damage to the model being a testament to the pilot's skills.

As we wound down from the event it was agreed that everyone had thoroughly enjoyed the weekend and were looking forward to Shawbury Warbirds 2022.

RAF Shawbury Model Flying Club operates on the airfield and are able to fly at times when the airfield is closed. Serving members can join free of charge whilst civilians pay a small joining fee and annual subscription. If you are interested in taking up the hobby, then please contact Stuart McFarlane at wsmcf58@gmail.com

**By Mr Stu McFarlane
Photos by Mr Bob Lazenby**

A KNOCKOUT NIGHT FOR CORPORAL ROWE

Article by Corporal Rowe/Photos by Ultrapix.co.uk

For regular readers of the *Aries* magazine, you will have seen my article in the previous edition about my boxing training camp and my preparation to take part in my "Fight night" in September. Read on to find out how I got on!

During the latter stages of my training camp, the fitness element lessened, with just the 20 minutes 'warm up'. Meanwhile, the sparring element ramped up with 3 x 90-minute sessions a week, involving sparring with different weight categories and stances to allow for the trainers to match us fairly.

All the way up until fight week, I was convinced I would be in the ring with my now friend Daz 'The Destroyer' Williams. The majority of the camps trainees were expecting this match; however, I received the news that I had been matched with southpaw (a left handed boxer) Max Lewis, who I had sparred with at the start of the matching process. This would be tricky for my first ever boxing match as I am a traditional right-handed orthodox fighter. There was no official training during fight week so that we could save ourselves for the actual fight night, but now I knew who I was facing, I did some light training in the Station Gym here at RAF Shawbury working on techniques of fighting a southpaw.

Fight night soon came around and I said goodbye to my family and set off for the venue, the Buttermarket in Shrewsbury, to have my mandatory

pre-fight medical. It was after I had my medical and referee brief, that I started to feel nervous. Before the fights commenced, we all paraded in the ring to the roar of the crowd as each competitor was introduced to the audience. After doing this, it was back to my final preparations for my match. It didn't seem like 5 minutes until I was being called up to start my ring walk. I stood in the entrance to the ring and felt the energy of the crowd as my chosen music of "Bonkers" by Dizzee Rascal was played. I was pumped and ready to make my boxing debut. I was first out, and as I entered the ring I was met by the trainer that would be cornering me. Whilst he was putting my gloves on, he asked me how I was feeling, needless to say I was a little nervous! Once I had been checked by the referee, I was given my pre-fight brief as my opponent made his entrance.

Now that all the formalities were complete, the referee set us off. I managed to slip Max's first shot, which I found immediately got the crowd on my side and I felt in control of the fight enough to 'showboat' and play some mind games with my opponent. During the post-fight debrief, a few of the trainers and boxers said that this was a brave move and could have gone one of two ways. In the closing moments of the first round, I managed to get a shot on Max which forced him into a corner. Straight away I knew this



Getting ready to rumble! Corporal Rowe in his vest, ready for action.

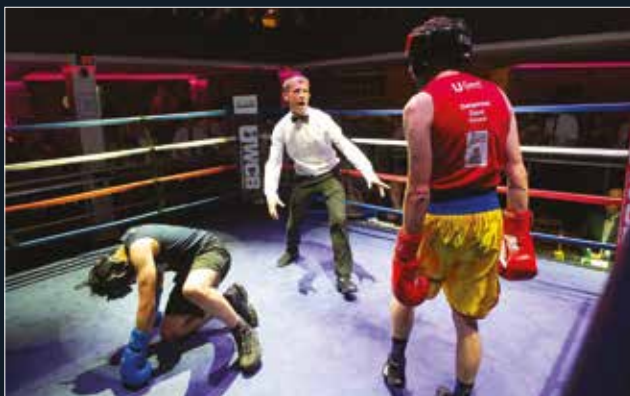
was moment to unload on him before the round was out. The referee gave Max a standing 8 count and we traded blows for the last few moments of the first round.

As I returned to my corner for the first break, I can't remember what was said to me, but what was about to happen took everyone by surprise. As the referee called a start to the 2nd round, Max again came at me but this time I spotted

an opening in his guard and used a 1-2 combination. This landed perfectly (for me) and I knocked him out and onto the canvas. The referee gave another standing 8 count for Max; however, this time the referee waved his arms, signalling a stoppage. To say I was happy is an understatement! The official timing was a stoppage after 13 seconds of the 2nd round, however, if you watch the video, I knocked him out just 3 seconds after the bell.

Although I won my fight, this is no slight on my opponent, who gave me a good fight and it was by no means an easy win.

I am now in training again for another boxing event, along with another DCASO member, Corporal Halliwell. We are now both halfway through our training and will be competing at the end of November. If you would like to sponsor us in aid of Cancer Research UK, please get in touch with myself or Corporal Halliwell.



Corporal Rowe knocking out his opponent and winning the match



The referee announcing Corporal Rowe as the winner



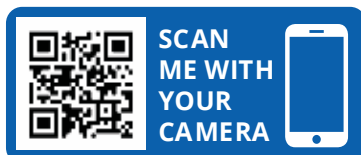
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