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The Magazine of RAF Shawbury

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Edition 1
2022



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Editor's Welcome

By Squadron Leader Kim Leach

Hello and welcome to the first edition of the Aries Magazine for 2022.



This edition is packed with articles, showing just some of the excellent work that has taken place at RAF Shawbury during the final few weeks of 2021 and the first months of 2022.

One of the highlights in the final weeks of last year was being able to welcome back senior citizens from the local area to enjoy a festive luncheon at RAF Shawbury. This lovely event usually takes place annually, but like so many other events, it was unable to take place during 2020.

2022 is off to a busy start already with No.1 Flying Training School celebrating their fleet of Juno helicopters passing the significant milestone of 50,000 flying hours. At the Defence College of Air and Space Operations, courses have managed to find time in their busy training schedule to get out in the local community, supporting St Andrew's Church, Stanton-Upon-Hine Heath, and Barnabas Community Church, Shrewsbury.

In this edition you can also read about the changes in Air Traffic Control with the rollout of Programme Marshall, a new cutting-edge Air Traffic Management System. RAF Shawbury is the first unit to transition to operational service and the programme will now be rolled out to more than 60 Ministry of Defence sites.

RAF Shawbury has also recently said goodbye to Flight Lieutenant Doug Brown and Warrant Officer Eddie Partyka as they retire from the Royal Air Force. Between them they have over 75 years exemplary service and they will be sadly missed; we wish them both good luck with their future plans. Finally, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the new Station Warrant Officer, Warrant Officer Paul Owens, who joins us on promotion from No. 1 School of Technical Training, RAF Cosford.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition.

COVER PICTURE:

Wing Commander Vamplew with Ben Elephant at the RAF Shawbury 10K Charity Road Race - Read more on Page 10

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FOREWORD

Foreword by Lieutenant Colonel Stew Pearce, Commanding Officer of 9 Regiment Army Air Corps

A very warm welcome to the first edition of the Aries magazine for 2022. At the time of writing this foreword, the Christmas break feels like a distant memory, but it was only a few weeks ago. I do hope you all managed to have a welcome and relaxing break with friends and family and are looking forward to what 2022 has in store.

By way of introduction, I am Lieutenant Colonel Stew Pearce, the Commanding Officer of 9 Regiment Army Air Corps (9AAC) and this is the first opportunity I have had to write the foreword for this great, informative magazine. I have been in the job a little over a year now (although it only feels like a few months), having arrived from an enjoyable role in the Military Aviation Authority. I have had an extremely rewarding and enjoyable career to date and for the past 21 years it has mostly involved flying instruction and command of tri-Service personnel. It was, and still is, an immense honour and privilege to be selected for this current role.

I know some of you will know what goes on in my small part of RAF Shawbury, but for those that don't, in simple terms, 9AAC is the Battlefield Helicopter Wing of No.1 Flying Training School and delivers advanced aircraft performance techniques and tactical training to Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force battlefield and support helicopter pilots, rearcrew and observers. Within No.1 Flying Training School, based in state-of-the-art facilities, we work alongside our sister Wing, 2 Maritime Air Wing, commanded by Commander Scott Hughes and in partnership with Ascent Flight Training, our civilian colleagues. 9AAC consists of two flying squadrons, 670 Squadron AAC and Sixty Squadron RAF, ably and effectively led by Major Andy King and Squadron Leader Nick

Summers respectively. Arriving at RAF Shawbury from Air Army Air Corps Centre, Middle Wallop, Hampshire, in 2018, 670 Squadron AAC delivers the Operational (Tactical) Training Phase to Army and Royal Navy pilots destined for Joint Helicopter Command (JHC), Apache and Wildcat front line units. Trainees learn to operate as both a single aircraft and as a tactical pairs patrol in a simulated threat environment, conducting tactical tasking and reconnaissance. They also learn how to direct Joint Air and Artillery Fires. The recent restructuring within No.1 Flying Training School has seen the Squadron now deliver Procedural Instrument Flying, Mountain Flying techniques and advanced, low-level Night Vision Device training.

Sixty Squadron has been operating and instructing on Juno and Jupiter aircraft since 2018. In the past 2 years, Sixty Squadron has undergone a period of growth in size and complexity, teaching a number of different courses for Royal Navy and Royal Air Force pilots and rearcrew in preparation for their conversions onto mainly Support Helicopters in Joint Helicopter Command. They have also recently inherited the Royal Navy Observer training and 'grey' pilot training. Rearcrew conduct the entirety of their training on Sixty Squadron, while the remainder of the courses cover applied techniques for pilots and rearcrew; flying with an Under Slung Load, Procedural Instrument Flying, and how



to achieve their core business in the night flying environment. The crux of the pilot and rearcrew courses is the tactical phase; teaching the trainees battle concepts and tactics that they will encounter and most likely utilise on the Front Line, whilst flying mainly in formation.

Both squadrons have delivered in spades during 2021 and I continue to be extremely impressed by their professionalism, dedication, and the strong ethos. But it doesn't escape me that their efforts cannot be achieved without the help and contribution of everyone within RAF Shawbury. No.1 Flying Training School is supported by a huge amount of people that have teamwork at the heart of everything they do, and their resilience, professionalism, and pure hard graft is all focussed on the wider demand in output. The whole force effort here is truly remarkable.

As we step further into 2022, I will welcome the re-introduction of Mess events, Families Day, socials, formal graduations and other opportunities that will restore an important element of Service life and contribute to a general improvement in morale. I also promise to get Colonel Tim Peake, Honorary Colonel of 9AAC, back for a longer period so he can meet many more RAF Shawbury personnel and families.... Stay safe – it will soon be Spring.

“No.1 Flying Training School is supported by a huge amount of people that have teamwork at the heart of everything they do, and their resilience, professionalism, and pure hard graft is all focussed on the wider demand in output. The whole force effort here is truly remarkable.”

Introducing RAF Shawbury's new Station Warrant Officer

For those of you that have not yet met me, whether virtually or in person, I am Warrant Officer Paul Owens, the new Station Warrant Officer (SWO) at RAF Shawbury. I took over the role in early December 2021, arriving here from RAF Cosford, where I was part of the Mechanical Training Squadron within No. 1 School of Technical Training.

As the SWO I am responsible to the Station Commander for the maintenance of discipline, standards, welfare, and morale across the Unit. I also accompany the Station Commander when he hosts visits or VIPs. My first impressions of RAF Shawbury are very positive, I have found everyone very welcoming and friendly, although you could say that, as the SWO, everyone wants to keep on my good side! The biggest challenge so far is to understand all the new abbreviations, from trades that I haven't had much contact with before, but I am learning, slowly.

My career started in 1988, as an RAF Halton Apprentice making me a Mechanical Aircraft Engineer by trade. I have spent most of my time on or around fast jet aircraft but mainly the mighty Tornado, having done tours on 56 Squadron, XIV Squadron, II(AC) Squadron and 2 tours on XI(B) Squadron. In addition, I have also completed tours within 2nd line maintenance facilities and training

schools. I have been to 5 continents with the RAF, on operational deployments and detachments, some of which have been more enjoyable than others!

I have been married to Chantal for 12 years and have 4 sons and 3 daughters, ranging in age from 8 to 30. Evenings and weekends are occupied as a Chair of Governors for a Telford Primary School, walking our 3 dogs, and keeping fit to compete in Sprint triathlons. My biggest passion though is Rugby Union. After playing the game for over 30 years and wanting to give back to the real beautiful game when I retired, I picked up the whistle and referee service and civilian matches across the North Midlands. I am also a Sale Sharks supporter, but don't really get to see them live as often as I would like to.

My key goals for my tour as SWO are to increase mental health awareness and understanding within RAF Shawbury, championing a working



environment where everyone feels they can openly discuss issues in a safe forum. I also want to improve the offer for the Junior ranks, who are unusually outnumbered at Shawbury by Senior Non-Commissioned Officers and Commissioned Officers.

I look forward to meeting more of you all in the coming weeks.

By Warrant Officer Owens



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RAF Shawbury leads the way with a new Air Traffic Management System

A new cutting-edge Air Traffic Management (ATM) System has been installed at RAF Shawbury as part of a £1.5 billion contract that will transform air traffic management for the UK military.

Designed to ensure safe and resilient military flying operations, the contract will integrate and support modern, innovative equipment with existing infrastructure. Variations will be rolled out across more than 60 Ministry of Defence sites in the UK and overseas by 2024, including Cyprus, Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands.

The equipment allows controllers improved situational awareness enhancing flight safety, with digital upgrades including touch screen communications, clearer radar pictures and improved flight information and positioning - all of which will be available on upgraded controller consoles.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Jeremy Quin, said: "Ensuring our drones, fighter jets, helicopters and cargo aircraft operate safely and efficiently is critical to maintaining our capabilities and supporting our service personnel. This state-of-the-art system is another example of how we are putting innovation at the forefront of everything we do."

The £1.5 billion programme, known as Marshall, provides improved reliability, quality of service and cost savings



An Air Traffic Controller at RAF Shawbury using the new equipment installed under Programme Marshall

by using Aquila Engineering teams to maintain the equipment. The programme is expected to save the UK taxpayer up to £317 million across the next 22 years.

The air traffic system includes a £400 million investment in advanced surveillance radars and a wide range of sophisticated equipment such as tower systems, new surveillance and navigation aids and radios.

Sir Simon Bollom, CEO of Defence Equipment & Support said: "This is a key milestone in a programme that is vital to front-line capability. It is an excellent example of collaboration between DE&S, the RAF and industry to provide the Armed Forces with the technology to do their job safely and effectively."

Squadron Leader Steve Leech, Senior Air Traffic Control Officer (SATCO) at RAF Shawbury said: "As the first unit to transition to full operational service, the last year has naturally been both a challenging and exciting period of change. I am immensely proud of my team in turning this advanced equipment into an operational capability."



The upgraded consoles provide clearer radar pictures and improved flight information and positioning for Air Traffic Controllers

"Working in ever-closer partnership with Aquila, controllers and duty holders now have a much deeper understanding of the air traffic management surveillance solution than ever before."

Michael Stoller, CEO of Aquila said: "The full Marshall ATM Solution entering operational service at RAF Shawbury marks the achievement of a major milestone in the Marshall programme. This new technology will transform air traffic management for our military in the UK and overseas and enable our customer to realise significant operational and cost saving benefits."

**By Programme Marshall
Delivery Team**



The new STAR NG Radar

RAF Shawbury welcomes back local senior residents for a festive luncheon

On Wednesday 8th of December, approximately 50 senior residents from Shawbury village and the local area were invited to RAF Shawbury for a traditional festive lunch and entertainment. The luncheon usually takes place annually and is an important event in the RAF Shawbury calendar. Sadly though, the event was unable to take place in 2020, due to COVID-19. Thankfully, this year, with COVID-19 precautions in place, we were able to safely welcome back local senior citizens.



Trainees from Flight Operations Specialist Course 18, who helped serve guests

The luncheon was held in the Officers' Mess at RAF Shawbury, with guests collected from Shawbury village and taken by bus onto the Station. On the guests arrival at the Officers' Mess, they were welcomed and served drinks by Station personnel and ESS Staff, before the hosts took them through to the dining room. Once seated, guests were formally welcomed by RAF Shawbury's Station Commander, Group Captain Phil Wadlow.

After a good-humoured grace by the Padre, Reverend (Wing Commander) Bissell, a three-course traditional Christmas lunch was served by trainees from Flight Operations Specialist Course 18, alongside ESS Staff and military, civilian and contractor personnel from across the Station. Throughout the meal, personnel talked with the guests about their memories of the local area and the Station, with



Some of the ESS team that cooked and served the lovely Christmas lunch with Mrs Jones and Mrs Barke

many having served or worked at RAF Shawbury. Meanwhile, Master Aircrew Diable provided the festive playlist for the afternoon and kept proceedings moving as Master of Ceremonies.

After enjoying the lovely Christmas meal, it was time for the entertainment for the afternoon. Guests had all been given raffle tickets at the start of the

event and it was now time to see who would be lucky enough to win one of the great selection of prizes on offer.

After all the prizes has been all given out, it was time for Wing Commander Jones, Officer Commanding Base Support Wing, to say the final words of the afternoon and thank the guests for coming, as well as for their continued support to RAF Shawbury. As a final Christmas treat, everyone who attended was given a chocolate treat to enjoy over the Christmas period.

The luncheon, organised annually by RAF Shawbury's Community Support team, was a huge success, with many of the guests commenting on how much they had enjoyed the event. We look forward to welcoming the guests back to RAF Shawbury in the future.

By Mr Haycocks



Mrs Foster with Mr Fowles, who presented a copy his latest book to the Station.



Wing Commander Vamplew serving Ms Powell and Mrs Cross



Lieutenant Commander Bane talking with Mr Atkins

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RAF Shawbury hosts annual charity 10K race



They're off! The start of the RAF Shawbury 10K 2022.

Usually, RAF Shawbury's airfield is home to Juno and Jupiter helicopters from No.1 Flying Training School. However, on Sunday 27th February 2022, the airfield once again saw runners line up to compete in the RAF Shawbury 10K Charity Road Race.

The RAF Shawbury 10K race has now become an annual event in the Station's Calendar, with all profits made from the event going to charity. This year, like in previous years, the RAF Benevolent fund, an RAF Welfare Charity providing practical, financial, and emotional support to RAF personnel, veterans, and their partners and children, was the nominated charity for the event.

Taking place on the airfield, the route for the race takes competitors down the main runway, around the perimeter of the airfield and along the taxiways. These flat surfaces provide competitors with the perfect opportunity to gain a new personal best or to experience their first 10K.



The unique race included running down the runway.



Ben Elephant cheering runners on

This year the event saw over 300 people enter, with 275 people taking their place on the start line. With a frosty, windy start to the morning, Corporal Wilson made sure that everyone was suitably warmed up and ready for the race. Competitors and spectators were then treated to a flypast by a No.1 Flying Training School Juno Helicopter, before Wing Commander Vamplew, Officer Commanding the Defence College of Air and Space Operations, sounded the horn to start the race.

With a strong, cold wind, the race was tough in places, but the 275 runners gave it their all, with some fantastic times recorded on the day. The overall winner of the race and also taking 1st Male was Jack Hindle in a time of 33 Minutes 20 seconds, 2nd over the line was Adrian Puchala in a time of 34 minutes 51 seconds and 3rd was John Mason in a time of 35 Minutes and 25 Seconds. The 1st Female to cross the line was Alexandra Walkley in a time of 40 Minutes 9 seconds, 2nd was Victoria Williams in a time of 40 minutes 58 seconds and in 3rd was Jo Pugh, finishing in a time of in a time of 42 minutes 6 seconds.



The first 3 male runners to cross the finish line with their trophies (L to R) 3rd Place - John Mason, 1st - Jack Hindle, 2nd Adrian Puchala.

To celebrate the achievements of everyone who took part in the race, all finishers received a medal and a goody bag filled with RAF Benevolent Fund merchandise. Competitors were then able to join their families and friends to enjoy some of the other attractions at the event, which included static Juno and Jupiter helicopters from the No.1 Flying Training School and a Red Arrows Hawk from the Air Maintenance and Storage Unit. Additionally, there

were stalls for everyone to enjoy, including food and drink vendors serving up coffee, doughnuts, and pizzas; perfect for that after race treat!

The final amount of money raised from the event is yet to be fully confirmed, but it is estimated that over £3000 has been raised from the RAF Shawbury 10K for the RAF Benevolent Fund.

A special thanks must go to Flying Officer Fisher, the Project Officer for the RAF Shawbury 10K, and her committee for their time organising the race. The event would also not have been possible without the incredible support provided by the RAF Benevolent Fund, Cadets from 28 (Shawbury) Squadron ATC, the Military Provost Guard Service, West Mercia Police Special Constables and personnel from the Defence College of Air and Space Operations and No.1 Flying Training School, all of whom gave up their weekend to support the event.

Most importantly, thank you to everyone that took part in the race and helped raise a substantial amount for the RAF Benevolent Fund. While it may have been tough at times, we hope that everyone enjoyed the event and we look forward to hopefully holding another 10K race again next year.



The first 3 female runners to cross the finish line with their trophies (L to R) 3rd - Jo Pugh, 1st - Alexandra Walkley, 2nd Victoria Williams.

By Mr Haycocks

DCASO Dits

Wrapping up the year in style, the Defence College of Air and Space Operations (DCASO) continued full steam ahead delivering top quality training, whilst also flying the flag in supporting the wider Station. With us now firmly into 2022, it looks like its going to be another busy year for the College, with plenty of activity already.

Read on to find out more!

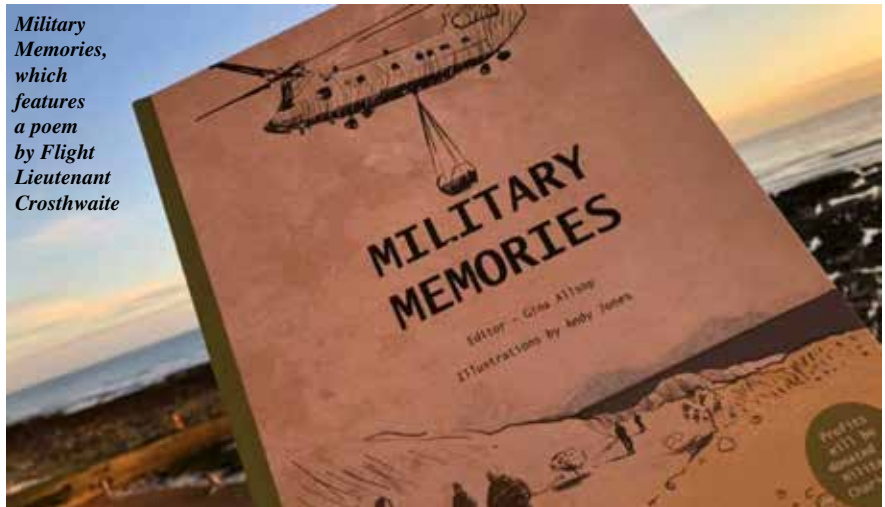
AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TRAINING SQUADRON

It has continued to be a busy time for Air Traffic Control Training Squadron. Holding students were recently involved in planning task forces across the United Kingdom supporting NHS England with the roll out of the COVID-19 booster vaccine. Working with both the NHS and the Army, our trainees provided support, logistics planning and effective liaison, representing the Royal Air Force to a high standard.

The RAF Shawbury football team went into the RAF Cup, well represented by DCASO personnel. Having initially beat RAF(U) Swanwick 12-2 they went on to score a win against RAF Brize Norton, against the odds, with a score of 3-2 which places them in a strong position for the quarter final against RAF Northolt.

Flight Lieutenant Crosthwaite has recently had his poem published in a book, which is a collection of poems by serving personnel, veterans and their wider families. The collection was brought together by a British Army veteran, Gina Allsop, in tribute to her late brother Spencer, with the poems illustrating the journey taken by those who join the Armed Forces, showing a lighter side to our families' lives, but also the trauma we sometimes face. The book is brought to life with the illustrations of the poets' photographs, beautifully drawn by the books' illustrator Andy Jones. The book is now available to purchase with all proceeds

Military Memories, which features a poem by Flight Lieutenant Crosthwaite



going to various military charities throughout the UK.

AEROSPACE BATTLE MANAGEMENT TRAINING SQUADRON

Aerospace Battle Management Training Squadron have had multiple development opportunities and interactions with the local community in recent months. Simulator Support Flight took part in a community engagement project where they renovated plots of land to be used in future by members of the local community. Several members of Simulator Support Flight also took part in a day of adventure training at Climbing the Walls in Shrewsbury, which saw many of the Senior Aircraftmen build their confidence by challenging themselves with unique obstacles and boosted morale for many. In the run up to Christmas, many members from each section participated in the 12K's of Christmas challenge, running 12 kilometres for 12 days consecutively, in order to raise money for Combat Stress. You can read more about the challenge on Page 25.

Simulator Support Flight has once again welcomed an additional three new Leading Aircraftmen who are now rapidly progressing through their training and are due to carry out their Trade Ability Tests in the near future. Unfortunately, warm welcomes are often matched with goodbyes as Acting Corporal Hodgkinson is leaving Simulator Support Flight and we temporarily say goodbye to Senior Aircraftman Harris, who has been deployed.



Simulator Support Flight supporting Barnabas Community Church

AIR AND SPACE OPERATIONS TRAINING SQUADRON

The Air and Space Operations Training Squadron production line continues with the Squadron recently graduating Flight Operations Training Course (Officer) 8, Flight Operations Specialist Course 17 and FORC 11. We say farewell to Corporal Ward and Corporal Mcvay, but this wouldn't be Air and Space Operations Training Squadron if we didn't also welcome a new addition to the family, congratulations to Corporal Wright on the birth of her baby boy.

Community engagements included Flight Operations Specialist Course 18 serving at the Senior Citizens Christmas function and assisting in the Christmas Jumper bucket collection. In addition, Flight Sergeant Lee and Sergeant Sullivan took part in the Officer V SNCO football match; the Officers' winning by

some margin. Warrant Officer Morley and Sergeant Turner served Christmas dinners at the Junior Ranks Christmas function, where the Battlespace Management Force Commander and the Station Executive Team joined the Junior Ranks for a "West-End worthy" rendition of the 12 days of Christmas. Bitten by the bug, Corporal "the Paveway" Rowe took to the boxing ring again; his previous vanquished foe narrowly defeating him on points, all the while raising money for Cancer Research. There are rumours of a decider, so watch this space.

Continued Professional Development and staff training has continued throughout the end of 2021 and into 2022: 5 staff completing the Coaching and Mentoring course, 2 qualifying in sims and 1 completing the DTS. Flight Operations Specialist Course 18 completed a day of Adventure Training, this time around it was the trainees "Climbing the Walls" rather



This time it was the trainees climbing the walls!

than the staff!

2021 was a busy year for the Squadron and we should be immensely proud

of our achievements. We've dusted ourselves off and we go again in 2022!

By The DCASO Diarists

HONOURS & AWARDS



New Year Honours List 2022

RAF Shawbury Personnel recognised in New Year Honours 2022

Military and civilian personnel from RAF Shawbury were honoured in the Military commendations list, that was announced in conjunction with the New Year Honours List 2022. The Station Commander and personnel at RAF Shawbury were delighted to see a total of 6 awards, which have all been announced within the main honours list for individuals and teams.

Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Commendations were awarded to:

Flight Lieutenant L Bexon
Flight Lieutenant R Scothern
Squadron Leader M Whitfield
Lieutenant T Griffin RN

An Air Officer Commanding 22 Group Team Commendation was awarded to:

Aerospace Battle Management Training Squadron, Surveillance Training Flight, Defence College of Air and Space Operations comprising of: Flight Lieutenant N Smith – Team Leader, Flight Lieutenant C Ashcroft – Deputy Team Leader, Flight Lieutenant J Perks,

Flight Sergeant K Chadwick, Sergeant D Booth and Sergeant A Lown.

An Air Officer Commanding 2 Group Team Commendation was awarded to:

Battlespace Management Standards and Evaluation, 2 Group Battlespace Management, based at RAF Shawbury, comprising of: Squadron Leader D Cobb – Team Leader, Squadron Leader K Janes – Deputy Team Leader, Flight Lieutenant N Byrne, Flight Lieutenant A Cobb, Flight Lieutenant M Jones, Flight Lieutenant M Plank, Flight Lieutenant N Winder, Warrant Officer A Cracknell, Warrant Officer N Hamer, Warrant

Officer B Wise, Flight Sergeant M Jones, Flight Sergeant G Tudor-Smith, Corporal A Healy, Corporal J Morrison, Mrs D Lloyd-Brown.

Group Captain Phil Wadlow, the Station Commander at RAF Shawbury said: "I am delighted to see that our personnel have been recognised in this way. All the recipients have worked hard to deliver a high standard of training and support during a very challenging period. I am immensely proud of all the recipients and I look forward to congratulating them and their families during special ceremonies throughout 2022."

By Squadron Leader Leach

Number 1 Flying Training School's Juno fleet passes 50,000 flying hours milestone

No.1 Flying Training School has recently achieved the significant milestone of 50,000 flying hours on its fleet of Juno Helicopters.

The fleet of 29 Juno (Airbus H135) helicopters are used alongside 7 Jupiter (Airbus H145) helicopters to train military helicopter aircrew from the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force, as part of the UK Military Flying Training System. This significant milestone was reached during a training flight on Monday 31st January.

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, who sub-contract to Airbus Helicopters. The modern fleet of Juno and Jupiter helicopters, fitted with glass cockpit technology and an advanced touchscreen avionics suite, support this world-class military



A Juno helicopter used by No.1 Flying Training School, as part of the UK Military Flying Training System

flying training solution. Ascent has also delivered state-of-the-art infrastructure, including the Duke of Cambridge Building housing advanced Flying Training Devices, which the trainees use to hone their skills throughout their flying training.

Group Captain Phil Wadlow, Commandant of Number 1 Flying Training School and RAF Shawbury's Station Commander, said: "It is fantastic to celebrate No.1 Flying Training School's modern fleet of Juno helicopters reaching the significant milestone of 50,000 flying hours. This milestone is testament to the great partnership we have at RAF Shawbury between the MoD, Ascent Flight Training, and our industry partner Airbus, in delivering world leading military helicopter training. I look forward to seeing many more milestones reached as No.1 Flying Training School continues to train military helicopter aircrew for the frontline."

By Mr Haycocks



A Juno helicopter being used to deliver Under Slung Load training at No.1 Flying Training School



THE DAMBUSTERS RIDE

2022

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CFS(H) says goodbye to Flight Lieutenant Douglas Brown

After a career spanning 37 years and 9200 flying hours, of which 3000 were instructional, Flight Lieutenant Douglas Brown has recently retired from the Royal Air Force.

Doug joined the Royal Air Force on 2nd September 1984, graduating from Basic Flying Training at RAF Cranwell in November 1986. He was streamed to fly helicopters and graduated with his wings from his helicopter course at No. 2 Flying Training School, RAF Shawbury on 2nd September 1987.

His first 2 tours were on the Wessex at Aldergrove and Sek Kong. During the latter tour, he was part of a crew who were awarded the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators Grand Master's Commendation following their rescue of 8 men from a life raft in the midst of a typhoon. In November 1992, Doug began a lengthy association with Search and Rescue, with tours on 202 Squadron at RAF Boulmer and RAF Lossiemouth, plus 4 detachments to 78 Squadron in the Falkland Islands, notching up a total of 248 rescues. During a rescue on the Isle of Skye on 24 November 1996, his Sea King aircraft suffered an engine failure during the winching phase in low



Group Captain Wadlow congratulates Doug after his final sortie and wishes him well for the future

light and poor weather conditions. He was subsequently awarded a Green Endorsement for his superb reactions and handling of the emergency, which ended with a safe landing at Glen Brittle Landing Site.

Becoming a Qualified Helicopter Instructor in November 1998, Doug has had multiple tours with the Defence Helicopter Flying School (now No. 1 Flying Training School) including 660

Squadron, the Search and Rescue Training Unit, Sixty Squadron and Standards, plus multiple tours on the Central Flying School (Helicopters) (CFS(H)) Squadron.

A highly respected pilot and true professional, Doug will be missed at RAF Shawbury by his colleagues and friends who send their best wishes for the future.

By Squadron Leader Leach



Doug with his family and colleagues after his final sortie

Goodbye Warrant Officer Partyka

On Wednesday 19th January, Warrant Officer Partyka retired from the Royal Air Force after nearly 40 years of selfless service.



Squadron Leader Smith (right) thanks WO Partyka (left) for his outstanding Service and wishes him well in his future plans.

Throughout his 39 Years and 10 Months of Service in the RAF, WO Partyka served in a multitude of roles within Air Traffic Control and Air Operations, both in the UK and abroad. Having joined the RAF in 1982, he started his career at RAF Finningley before embarking on a tour of Germany.

He began his long association with RAF Shawbury in 2003, starting as a trainer in the Trade Training Flight, now known as the Flight Operations Training Flight, part of the Defence College of Air and Space Operations. Following a tour at Shawbury, he was posted to RAF Waddington and then on to RAFC Cranwell, where his brilliance in leadership, mentoring and coaching were honed as an Initial Officer Training Leadership Instructor. Such was his skill, he was awarded the prestigious Jack

Holt Memorial Pace Stick for dedication and support to the Officer Cadets.

WO Partyka returned to RAF Shawbury in 2012, initially joining the Training Design Team, before taking up the post as the A Squadron Warrant Officer for the Flight Operations Training Course. Here, he drove forward changes and ensured that trainees received the absolute best possible coaching and mentoring prior to graduating and being exposed to the rigours of military life. In 2017, his all-round excellence was rewarded by being selected to take on the role of Wing Warrant Officer, and latterly as the Acting Station Warrant Officer at RAF Shawbury.

After 36 years of outstanding Service, WO Partyka retired from regular service, joining the RAF Reserves and taking

up a full time reserveist post as Officer Commanding Station Operations Flight at RAF Shawbury. Undertaking Reserve Service saw no let up in his continued commitment and hard work. As Officer Commanding Station Operations Flight, WO Partyka has been at the forefront of Station efforts to support both the local community and Station personnel.

A calm, sincere and devoted individual, WO Partyka has had a significant impact for the better on the lives of all those he has interacted with. He will be sorely missed by everyone that worked alongside him.

From everyone at RAF Shawbury, we wish WO Partyka and his family all the very best for their future plans.

**By Mr Haycocks and
Squadron Leader Smith**

1 FTS and CFS(H) Instructors celebrate flying milestones

Three instructors at Number 1 Flying Training School (1FTS) and Central Flying School (Helicopter) Squadron have recently celebrated significant flying milestones. With nearly 25,000 flying hours between them, it shows the significant experience of both military and civilian instructors at RAF Shawbury.

Captain Glyn Price RM – 9000 Hours

Captain Price recently passed the significant flying milestone of 9000 hours. He was congratulated on his significant achievement by Wing Commander Turner, Officer Commanding Operations Wing, alongside friends and colleagues.

Captain Price started his flying career in 1985 as an observer on both the Lynx and Gazelle helicopters at 3 Commando Brigade Air Squadron, and then 655 Squadron.

In 1988, Captain Price was awarded a place on the Army Pilots Course and, after qualifying as a Gazelle helicopter pilot, he carried out several operational tours. He was later selected for a place on Qualified Helicopter Instructor (QHI) Course No.263 in 1992, operating the Gazelle helicopter, before attending a Lynx conversion course. On the successful completion of his Lynx

conversion, he was posted as a QHI to Middle Wallop.

Captain Price was reunited with 3 Commando Brigade Air Squadron and 847 Naval Air Squadron as a QHI in 1994, flying both the Gazelle and Lynx helicopters. Within this time, he toured in locations across the world and achieved over 1000 deck landings. He also served as the Training Officer for a period of time.

In 1999, Captain Price was posted to fly the Seaking helicopter, in the Junglie role, on operations. Whilst still operating the Seaking helicopter, 2004 witnessed Capt Price being selected to fly an exchange tour serving in Australia.

His calling to RAF Shawbury came in 2007 when he was nominated to serve on Central Flying School (Helicopters)

Squadron, flying the Squirrel. In 2010, Captain Price moved to serve on Sixty Squadron, flying the Griffin helicopter, before a spell serving with the prestigious Central Flying School Standards. He returned to his beloved Central Flying School (Helicopters) Squadron in 2012, again flying the Squirrel, and later converting onto the Juno HT1, where he serves until the present day.

Captain Price is a valued member of the Central Flying School (Helicopters) Squadron and remains a highly motivated individual both in his role and in his willingness to help others around him. Congratulations on achieving this significant milestone of 9000 hours, a goal which makes him one of the most experienced pilots currently serving today in the Royal Navy/Royal Marines.



By Mr Dan Haycocks, Squadron Leader Leach and Major Pemble

Flight Lieutenant Sean Leach - 8760 Hours (1 year in the air)



During a night flying sortie whilst delivering rear crew staff training for low level night vision goggle operations, Flight Lieutenant Sean Leach completed his 8760th hour of flying, which is the equivalent of spending 1 year in the air.

Sean gained his wings at RAF Shawbury in 1987. He later became a Qualified Helicopter Instructor in 1992 and taught ab-initio students at RAF Shawbury for 3 years. Following a long period of operational experience on the Puma and Merlin, he returned to RAF Shawbury in 2013 where he has completed a number of instructional related roles.

Sean said: "I never imagined that I would have been lucky enough to have such a long flying career. Some of my flying experiences have been some of the highlights of my life and I feel immensely privileged to have flown with so many professional colleagues and friends."

Mr Rick Loe – 7000 Hours

Mr Rick Loe has recently passed the significant milestone of 7000 Flying Hours whilst on a training sortie.



Rick joined the Army Air Corps in 1984 as a Junior Leader. After gaining his Army Pilots Wings in 1991, he went onto fly the Lynx Mk1 in Germany. Rick served nearly five years on operations flying Lynx Mk 7, before further operational tours flying Lynx Mk 7 and 9. In 2001, Rick suffered severe injuries following a tail rotor control failure in a Lynx. Later that year though, he returned to flying and went on to qualify as a Qualified Helicopter Instructor at RAF Shawbury.

Following an Instructional tour on Lynx, he returned to RAF Shawbury to fly the Squirrel until retirement from the Army in 2007. Rick then flew the EC135 T1/T2 with Central Counties Police before returning to RAF Shawbury as a Civilian

Instructor in 2009. He joined Ascent in April 2018, on transition to the UK Military Flying Training System.

Rick said: "I look back at my flying career and feel very lucky and privileged to have got to this milestone. Following the Lynx tail rotor failure in 2001, I was left with serious injuries, but I just wanted to get back flying quickly. Some great friends and colleagues helped me with my recovery process and within 6 months I was flying again."

"I have served and flown with fantastic people in some of the more challenging operational environments around the world and without them I don't think I would have been here today. I look forward to the next 1000 hours!"

Double Paralympian helps develop RAF Shawbury personnel

Recently, RAF Shawbury's Force Development Squadron invited Mr Sean Rose, an accomplished guest speaker, double winter skiing Paralympian, as well as a world skiing and water-skiing champion, to give a moving and emotive speech about how he turned his accident whilst serving in the RAF, into a positive life changing experience based on 'Dreams and Challenges'. His story was outstanding, heartening, humorous and totally inspirational.



Mr Sean Rose delivering his presentation at RAF Shawbury

Early on in his career as an RAF Physical Training Instructor, he found a passion and love for the outdoors and accumulated numerous outdoor qualifications. He was fortunate to be posted to his dream job in Germany (Keil), teaching sailing and racing yachts throughout the summer in the Baltic Sea and around Denmark. In the winter months he became a Ski Instructor on the NATO Winter Survival School, Oberammergau, in Bavaria.

On the 25th February 2000, after a morning skiing on the Osterfelder with aircrew students, he turned onto a marked pisted run, his skis stopped

dead and threw his weight right over the tips. He tried to recover but was ejected from the bindings and landed headfirst like a Javelin into the hard-packed snow. He immediately tried to sit up, but he couldn't move or feel anything from the chest down. It was obvious to him at that point he had broken his back.

Sean spent several years undergoing intense rehabilitation, including time at Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre Headley Court. His inspirational presentation gave the audience a glimpse of how his sheer determination wouldn't allow his

story to inspire and influence others into never giving up on their dreams.

He generously gives up his own time to arrange motivational talks in schools on disability and how people can reach their full potential. Since retiring from competition, he has now set different career goals, including TV presenting and he has been selected to join the Channel 4 team at the Winter Paralympics in Beijing 2022.



Mr Rose with the equipment he uses to allow him to continue skiing

accident to define him. He explained how he wanted to re-frame his goals in life and still strive to be the very best he could be with his disability. His accomplishments not only as the forefather of British Winter Paralympic Skiing, but his triumph in overcoming many setbacks of personal doubt on his intimate journey was moving. Now a retired athlete, Sean uses his personal

Sean's presentation demonstrated how he successfully channelled his energy and personal resilience into refocusing on what he could achieve despite his life changing injuries. This element of refocusing was particularly relevant, as the COVID pandemic is forcing our Whole Force personnel at RAF Shawbury, and indeed our nation, to refocus on new and perhaps different priorities and develop a different type of resilience.

Sean gave an outstanding Force Development presentation with the overall aim of enhancing operational effectiveness through a better trained and educated workforce.

Speaking about delivering his presentation at RAF Shawbury, Sean Rose said:

"It's always a special and emotional moment for me entering an RAF camp, it brings back so many great memories. Thanks, Flight Lieutenant Martin, for the invite and opportunity to speak with a broad spectrum of the base and for such a warm welcome. It felt like I was still in the RAF."



Personnel listening to Mr Rose talk about his accident and subsequent recovery journey

**By Flight Lieutenant Martin
- Training Specialist Advisor**

Elite disability footballers raise awareness of disability sport at RAF Shawbury

As part of International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPWD), members of The Football Association (FA) England Elite Disability Talent Pathway team visited RAF Shawbury to raise awareness of Disability Sport.

The FA Talent Pathway Manager, James Watkins, accompanied by coaches and players from the England Blind, Cerebral Palsy and Powerchair disciplines, visited RAF Shawbury to complete a brief on England disability football. Staff and trainees from RAF Shawbury were also able to experience the different disciplines, allowing everyone to play with and against the players.

Accompanying James and representing The FA and England squads, was Jonathan Pugh (Head Coach of the England Blind Squad), Adam Bendall (Assistant Coach of England Blind Squad), Owen Bainbridge (England Blind Footballer), Andy Palmer (Interpreter England Deaf Football Squad) and Adam McEvoy (Wheelchair Football Association National Development Manager). In addition, the Station was also extremely proud to be able to host Team GB Paralympian and England Cerebral Palsy former player and captain, Jack Rutter.

During the event, personnel gained a better understanding of disability sport and in particular football through the FA and the Talent Pathway for Elite Football. It also allowed staff and trainees to see how individuals perform at the highest level with either a visual or physical impairment.



Personnel from RAF Shawbury getting involved and having a go at powerchair football

Group Captain Phil Wadlow, RAF Shawbury's Station Commander said: "We were very privileged to be able to host this excellent Force Development event with the inspirational England disability players and coaches on International Day of People with Disabilities. The staff and trainees from RAF Shawbury have experienced an educational and thought-provoking day, interacting with the elite players. Thank you to the FA England Elite Disability Talent Pathway team for assisting us in further developing our personnel at RAF Shawbury."

Wing Commander Neil Hope MBE, who is based at RAF Shawbury and sits on The FA as the RAF FA Council Member and on The FA Disability Committee, said: "This was a fabulous day, and everyone had great fun whilst learning more about disability football. I would like to thank James Watkins and his team for bringing these inspirational footballers to RAF Shawbury"



Personnel working together to practise the skills needed to play blind football

James Watkins, The FA Disability Talent Pathway Manager, said: "This is the fourth time we have visited RAF Shawbury to assist in their Force Development. Every event has been a huge success and we are proud to be able to continue our links into the RAF and RAF FA through RAF Shawbury and its staff and trainees."

By Wing Commander Hope and Mr Haycocks



Adam McEvoy, Wheelchair Football Association National Development Manager, explaining powerchair football to staff and trainees



Personnel at RAF Shawbury received a brief on England disability football by James Watkins, FA Talent Pathway Manager

RAF Shawbury selects its Station Charities for 2022

By Flight Lieutenant Molloy

Each December, the Station Charities Committee selects 3 charities to be RAF Shawbury's nominated charities for the following year. These charities, which must provide benefit to serving personnel, veterans or their families, are put forward by Station personnel, and typically consist of a national, local and military charity. This year, we had a good amount of interest from Station personnel, with 9 different charities being put forward for consideration.

At the Annual General Meeting, held in December 2021, the Charities Committee discussed all those put forward and came to a decision on the final three.

In 2022, the charities supported by RAF Shawbury will be: YoungMinds, BLESMA and The Shrewsbury Ark.



YoungMinds are a mental health charity for children, young people, and their parents, making sure all young people can get the mental health support they need, when they need it, no matter what.

This charity was put forward for nomination by a number of Station personnel, making it a strong candidate for the committee in the decision-making process. This Charity has provided help and assistance to the Shawbury community in recent years and months, supporting several serving personnel and their family members.

At the Station Families' Day in 2021, the Sporting Bears and a classic car group offered high speed sports car rides down the runway for a donation, which raised nearly £2500 for Young Minds. This year we are hoping to take that further, and Young Minds will receive nearly a third of all the money the Station raises for the Charities' Fund in 2022.



Blesma, The Limbless Veterans, is dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight in the honourable service of our country.

Whilst there are many worthwhile military charities to support, the committee felt that BLESMA was one that had been overlooked in recent years. Its tri-service nature also reflects the make-up of personnel at RAF Shawbury. To raise awareness of this charity and to provide them some much-needed funds, it has been selected to be one of RAF Shawbury's nominated charities for 2022.



The Shrewsbury Ark provides ongoing support and day centre facilities for the homeless and vulnerable in the local community. They never charge for their services and never turn anyone away. RAF Shawbury has a long-standing history of helping support The Shrewsbury Ark. They were last chosen as a nominated charity in 2019, when personnel from Shawbury helped to raise over £2000 for the Ark, which was used to help them expand their premises in Shrewsbury.

In the same year, trainees and staff from the Defence College of Air and Space Operations also assisted in 'The Big Busk' event, which saw musicians and entertainers dotted over the streets of Shrewsbury busking to raise an incredible £7500 for the charity in one day.

Since then, the College has conducted further appeals to provide equipment and warm clothing, and a 'Big Sleep Out' event to highlight the plight of homeless people and raise more money for the cause.

We look forward to raising more funds for the Shrewsbury Ark throughout 2022.

NOTABLE MENTIONS

Also coming close in the voting were the Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA), Severn Hospice and Hounds for Heroes. The committee will seek to offer some support to these charities through 2022 where we can, such as the RAFA Wings Appeal being held in September.

We have also kicked off 2022 with the Shawbury 10K run on Sunday 27th February, which looks to have raised a notable sum for the RAF Benevolent Fund as it did in 2020 and 2021.

HOW DOES RAF SHAWBURY RAISE MONEY FOR ITS STATION CHARITIES?

The Station holds a handful of big events each year, such as the Station Families' Day, Shawbury 5s Football Tournament, and Motorcycle Safety Days. These events raise our largest sums, but otherwise it's through Station personnel!

If you work at RAF Shawbury and have any fundraising ideas or events that you would like to organise or get involved in, for all or any of the above causes, or for a different charity that is personal to you, please get in touch with the Station Charities Committee. You can contact Flight Lieutenant Molloy, Officer In Charge of the Charities Fund, or check out the Charities SharePoint site under the Community tab.

Taking Football To Africa and beyond appeal

RAF Shawbury based charitable appeal embark on Kenya delivery visit

A charitable appeal operated from RAF Shawbury has embarked on an extensive delivery visit to Kenya, in East Africa and, in doing so, will pass a number of huge milestones.

The RAF Football Association (RAF FA) Taking Football to Africa and Beyond Charitable Appeal delivers "aid through football" by collecting donated items of football kit and redistributing them to children and adults across the globe. The Appeal is organised by Wing Commander Neil Hope MBE and was set up in 2006 to deliver kit to Africa. It quickly became global and to date has delivered over 298,000 items of kit, including over 86,500 football shirts to 59 countries worldwide.

The Appeal team, led by Neil, with the assistance of Flight Lieutenant Mark Smales, have recently headed to Kenya with a mixed military and civilian team of 14 people to complete 28 separate deliveries in and around Nairobi and in Gilgil, 3 hours north of the capital on the Great Rift Valley. In completing the deliveries, the team interacted with children and adults in the major slum areas of Kibera, Kibagare and Mathare as well as schools, orphanages and football teams who are all in need of the essential aid. Kibera is Africa's largest slum with over one million people living in an area of around 3



Kit donated by Shrewsbury Town Football Club at Mathare slums, Nairobi, Kenya.

square kilometres with no permanent running water or electricity supplies and no sewerage system.

The Appeal continues to increase its formidable successes and 2021 saw the busiest year yet, with 21 separate deliveries across 9 countries totalling 32,000 items. Whilst the Appeal has not been able to make any "in person" delivery visits for 2 years during the COVID-19 pandemic, it has continued to deliver through partners, especially BATUK (British Army Training Unit Kenya) and Braeburn Garden Estate School in Nairobi. Many deliveries have also been made through multiple other charities and organisations. Whilst Kenya was the main recipient, deliveries were also made to Egypt, Mali, Guinea, Lesotho, Nepal, Ghana, Tanzania and Zambia.

Kits delivered by the team included items donated by football teams and individuals from across the United Kingdom from England (Football Association) and Premier League clubs including Leicester City, Brighton & Hove Albion, Aston Villa and the Manchester United Foundation. Also



Royal Air Force Football Association kit donated through the Taking Football to Africa and Beyond Charitable Appeal at the Brain House Academy in Mathare slum in Nairobi, Kenya

delivered has been a large amount of kit donated by the Appeals local club, and one of its top links, Shrewsbury Town Football Club, as well as items donated by clubs throughout Grassroots Football including County Football Associations (CFA); member clubs of Sheffield & Hallamshire CFA, Hampshire CFA, Essex CFA and Worcestershire CFA amongst many others.

Neil said: "It is pleasing to embark on another "in person" delivery visit and we are very excited about renewing our friendships across Kenya. 2021 was undoubtedly one of the most successful years we have completed, which is amazing given the current pandemic and its restrictions. This is my 15th Kenya delivery trip with nearly 100 people taking part over the years. Another milestone on this visit is that we will deliver our 300,000th item since we began back in May 2006. I would like to thank all the people, clubs and schools that donated items delivered on this visit and to the Appeal, as well as everybody who has helped us achieve this amazing goal, especially the team at Shawbury who help with the Appeal, including Supply, Receipt and Despatch, and also RAF Brize Norton Air Traffic Control Squadron. We look forward to another exciting year which will, hopefully, include the rescheduled Nepal delivery visit in September, delivering kit to villages as we take on the Everest Base Camp Trek."

A full report of the delivery visit will be in the next edition of the Aries Magazine.

By Wing Commander Hope



Flt Lt (Retd) Tony Kinchley delivering kit to Kimta School in Kibera Slum, Nairobi as part of the Appeal



The Taking Football to Africa and Beyond Appeal donated kits through Musa Otieno to the new Kenya Amputee National Team



Personnel at RAF Shawbury urged to get on their bikes for RAFA Rides

Not much about the last two years has been certain, but one thing that has remained constant is the Royal Air Forces Association's (RAFA) support of the RAF community.

On 5th June 2021, 810 riders joined together from around the world to take part in RAFA Rides 2021. This included 250 who cycled routes around the beautiful Leicestershire and Rutland countryside, with the rest joining virtually.

Friendship and maintaining connections are key elements in much of the welfare delivered by the Association and RAFA Rides shares these values. Service personnel and their families, civil servants and Defence partners at RAF Shawbury can be part of RAFA Rides 2022, taking place on Saturday 11th June 2022. You can show your support for those who are serving, those who have served and their families, and have some bicycle-related fun at the same time!

The event, made possible thanks to generous ongoing support from security and aerospace company Lockheed Martin UK, was created so people across the world could join together both in person and virtually, in support of the RAF community.

While a great deal of the Association's work is for more vulnerable members of our community, serving personnel can benefit also from support. This can be a bedtime story recorded for a child while you are working away from home, online mental wellbeing courses, affordable and nurturing early years childcare on RAF stations or an online forum for those caring for people living with dementia.

Air Vice-Marshal Gary Waterfall, RAF Association ambassador and RAFA Rides founder, said: "RAFA Rides 2021 surpassed all our expectations. In just four years, this annual ride has become a real highlight in the cycling calendar. As the last miles were ridden, we were already thinking about the next year's ride and it is going to be bigger and better. I urge everyone with a bike to sign up."

Amy Petterson, Head of Community Fundraising at the RAF Association, added: "The support for RAFA Rides from within the serving RAF community is incredible, as is the atmosphere of (mostly) friendly competition! Many riders enjoyed the sense of all riding together for a cause close to their hearts, even if they were cycling alone out on the roads or in their home."

Anyone who loves cycling and wants to join riders around the world in supporting the RAF community, can



Gary Waterfall, RAF Association ambassador and RAFA Rides founder, finishing RAFA Rides 2019

sign up now for RAFA Rides 2022 on Saturday 11th June. You could challenge other trades or branches at RAF Shawbury. You could challenge other stations. Or you could challenge yourself. Whoever you challenge, sign up now and start training and fundraising!

If you are based at RAF Shawbury and would like to join the whole force team from the RAF Shawbury Cycling Club in supporting RAFA Rides 2022, please contact Squadron Leader Summers, Officer Commanding Sixty Squadron. Alternatively, you can visit rafa.org.uk/rafarides to start your journey.

By Squadron Leader Summers and the Royal Air Forces Association

Visit rafa.org.uk/rafarides to start your journey.

RAF Shawbury personnel take part in a charity endurance challenge

A team from RAF Shawbury recently took part in an endurance challenge in support of Combat Stress, a mental health charity for veterans.

The team were one of 12 teams from across the Royal Air Force taking part in an endurance challenge, named the '12Ks of Christmas', running 12 kilometres every day for 12 consecutive days.

The challenge was the idea of Flight Sergeant Lunn, from RAF Boulmer, who wanted to increase awareness of the work that Combat Stress does and raise funds for the charity, so that they can continue to support veterans. For over a century, Combat Stress has helped former servicemen and women deal with mental health problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety and depression.

The RAF Shawbury participation in the challenge was organised by Sergeant Benson, a member of Simulator Support Flight, within the Defence College of Air and Space Operations. The team from RAF Shawbury completed the challenge in their spare time, running in various locations to complete the required 12K each day.

The RAF Shawbury team consisted of:

- Flight Lieutenant Furlong
- Flight Lieutenant N. Crostwaite
- Flight Lieutenant K. Crostwaite
- Flight Lieutenant Davis
- Flight Lieutenant Scothern
- Flying Officer Nicolas
- Flight Sergeant Fearon
- Sergeant Benson (Team Captain)
- Corporal Hodgkinson
- Corporal Quiney
- Senior Aircraftman Bradshaw
- Senior Aircraftman Gisborn

Sergeant Benson, the Team Captain for RAF Shawbury, said: "After hearing about Flight Sergeant Lunn's idea for the challenge to support Combat



The team getting ready to run for Combat Stress

Stress, I just had to be involved. When I mentioned the idea to my colleagues, they got on board straight away and we soon had our team formed. Combat Stress provide incredible support to veterans, both locally and across the country, and it's an honour to be able to support the charity and help increase awareness of their work."

He added: "It was tough at times. When we completed the challenge, the weather was wet and very cold, making the pavements quite slippery for the team. The support though was fantastic, seeing people's donations and their kind words really helped spur us on."

In total, nearly £12,500 was raised for Combat Stress by RAF Shawbury and the other 11 teams across the Royal Air Force taking part in the challenge, exceeding their original target of £12,000.

Congratulations and well done to everybody involved!

By Mr Haycocks



Sergeant Benson getting ready to complete one of his 12K runs, as part of the challenge

FOTC(O)9 and FOSC 18 give St Andrew's Church a helping hand

Just 4 minutes drive from RAF Shawbury sits the picturesque Shropshire village of Stanton upon Hine Heath. For over 1000 years, a church has been present on the spot where St Andrew's currently stands, a beautiful building with extensive views towards Moreton Corbet and Shawbury.

On Wednesday 2nd February, 13 volunteers from the Air and Space Operations Squadron (ASOTS), made up of trainers and trainees from Flight Operations Training Course (Officers) 9 and Flight Operations Specialist Course 18, spent the day alongside the local community in St Andrew's Churchyard to carry out some much-needed maintenance and tidying as representatives of RAF Shawbury.

With a small congregation, the Parish had requested support from RAF Shawbury in order to tidy and increase the safety of the surrounding churchyard. The volunteers quickly got to work, carefully restoring and cleaning gravestones (including one from the 15th Century), clearing a large amount of ivy from a Grade II Listed wall, weeding and gardening. The Parish had brought-in a large skip which was filled before the day was complete, with a significant amount

of manual labour dutifully and happily carried out by the volunteers.

Any visitors to the churchyard will now see a drastically improved set of paths, cleared of dangerously, slippery moss. Graves from the early 1800's were finally uncovered after years of ivy growth and a significant amount of work was done to clear the weeds and debris from around the base of the church walls. This problem had contributed drastically to a damp problem which could have ultimately threatened the church's structural integrity.

Members of the local community were extremely hospitable and remarked upon the impact this project had. The lay chair of the Parochial Church Council, Mrs Claire Crackett, wrote: *"The impact is amazing, as I hope the photos will show. What they will not have captured is the impact on the congregation and the wider community. Improving the approach to the church and the final resting place of so many from our local community will be very positive for everyone who enters the churchyard. The work was beyond the small congregation, but now we will be able to far more easily complete the ongoing maintenance and keep the churchyard up to the high standards you have set for us. Thank you so much!"*



Working as a team to get the job done!



The courses worked hard to cut back ivy from around the churchyard walls



St Andrew's Church located in Stanton upon Hine Heath



The trainees assisting with weeding and clearing slippery moss off the paths



Trainees and staff helped tidy up the churchyard for the local community

This project, led and delivered by Air and Space Operations Training Squadron, within the Defence College of Air and Space Operations, based at RAF Shawbury, was gratefully appreciated by the local community and has further strengthened the relationship between RAF Shawbury and local residents.

By Flight Lieutenant Metcalfe

Simulator Support Flight assist Barnabas Community Project

Recently, Simulator Support Flight (SSF), part of the Defence College of Air and Space Operations, assisted in the local community by working with Barnabas Community Project. Barnabas Community Project was established as an independent charitable company in 2014 to manage and develop the social action initiatives associated with Barnabas Community Church, Shrewsbury.

The Project Officer, Flight Lieutenant Davies, and Deputy Project Officer, Senior Aircraftman Brown, arranged to take Simulator Support Flight to the Barnabas Community Church, Shrewsbury, to assist in clearing the surrounding area of shrubbery to allow space for the Barnabas Community Project to use as a plant bed. By having the area as a plant bed, it allows the charity to develop the social initiatives associated with the centre.

Arriving at the centre in the morning, Simulator Support Flight got to work straight away by digging up shrubbery, cutting down small trees and clearing the ground of weeds. This work meant

that upon completion there was a empty plant bed for the project to use, as well as improving the aesthetics of the area. Furthermore, the complex was covered in leaves from Autumn. Simulator Support Flight assisted in clearing up the leaves, tidying up the area and making it more aesthetically pleasing.

Simulator Support Flight would like to thank Barnabas Community Project for making them feel so welcome and for providing lunch, comprising of a variety of sandwiches, savoury treats and plenty of hot and cold drinks to keep the team energised throughout the day.



Personnel helped clear a plant bed so that it can be used as part of the project

The team were glad that they could assist Barnabas Community Project in tidying up the area and we look forward to seeing how they use it in the future.

By Senior Aircraftman Brown

SPORTS NEWS

New Year, New Station Fitness Programme

With a new year upon us, there have recently been some new exciting updates to the Station Fitness Programme.

The Physical Education Flight will now be offering Yoga sessions on Thursdays at 12:15 in Jubilee Hall. This fantastic opportunity is open to all Jubilee Hall Gymnasium members from the whole force, including Service personnel and their families, civil servants, and Defence partners. There are limited spaces in this class, so avoid disappointment by booking your slot in advance. This can be done by contacting the Physical Education Flight in Jubilee Hall.

With Yoga now being included in the Station



Fitness Programme, the weekly Spin class has now been moved to Tuesdays at 17:00. There is no need to book in advance, just turn up to Jubilee Hall and finish your working day with some fun filled cardio!

In addition to the Yoga and Spin classes, to help prepare personnel for their fitness test, the Physical

Education Flight are also holding weekly 30-minute fitness test workshops every Thursday at 11:30. This is a fitness test specific session that will prepare you and give you the best chance possible to pass the fitness test. You can sign up for the workshops on the Physical Education Flight SharePoint page, where you will also be able to find the "Return to fitness package". If you would like more information about



the workshop or have any questions, please contact the Physical Education Flight, or come and chat with one of the Physical Training Instructors at Jubilee Hall.

Alongside the weekly classes and workshops, fitness testing will be still running three times a week. The timings offered are:

Monday at 17:30, Tuesday at 12:15 (Including the Army SCR test) and Thursday at 9:30. Make sure you're booking on a chosen test via the RAF Shawbury Physical Education Flight SharePoint page under "Fitness Test Booking" to avoid being out of date.

We look forward to welcoming you to Jubilee Hall in the coming weeks and months.

By Corporal Wilson

militarywives Choirs

Shawbury Military Wives Choir prepare for a busy year ahead

Below: Shawbury Military Wives Choir performing at Blists Hill in December 2021



This year, the Military Wives Choir as an organisation marks its 10th Anniversary, after it was created in 2012, following the Gareth Malone TV show. Following the establishment of the organisation, Shawbury's choir began meeting and singing in February 2012. Michelle Gee, who is currently our choir lead, was quick off the mark and soon had the ladies practicing 'do-re-mi!' Since then, the choir has gone from strength to strength, performing with celebrities, appearing on TV, recording CDs, and performing many times in public with a wide and varied repertoire. Staying true to its ethos of 'Stronger Together', the group has been a constant presence at Shawbury and provided a place where military wives, mums, sisters, and daughters can come together to support each other and have their spirits lifted by singing together and performing.

The past two years have thrown new challenges at the choir. The COVID-19 pandemic required all of us to rethink how we do things and Shawbury Military Wives Choir was no different. Just prior to the national lockdown, we carried out a public performance at Cheshire Oaks to promote the Military Wives Choir movie, which was about

to be released. We never imagined that our next performance would be twenty months later, commemorating Remembrance. We were forced to cancel many engagements and had to rethink how we could continue to sing together and support each other. Our remarkable M.D, Catherine Douglas, led the choir on Zoom for two years, providing us with a place to meet, sing, and to share stories, good and bad. Sometimes we talked more than we sang, but we always sang to lift our spirits. It worked really well and we consistently had good numbers turning up, we even managed to recruit new members during that time!

As things start to return to normal, our choir is excited to get back to face-to-face rehearsals. We were delighted to be able to return to Blists Hill Museum in December to perform Christmas Carols for visitors during the museum's Christmas weekend. We are also looking forward to performing at the many anniversaries and commemorations that will be marked in 2022. We begin with our own 10th anniversary celebrations which will see us later this year plant a tree outside the Station Church to mark the event. In June, we will join the nation in celebrating Her Majesty The Queen's

Platinum Jubilee. We are privileged to have been invited to attend the beacon lighting ceremony for the Jubilee, as well as giving choir members the chance to perform with Katherine Jenkins at the Platinum Jubilee Concert at Sandringham House. In addition, we will be marking the 40th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict by performing at the Military Tattoo in Wrexham, before we come full circle to mark Remembrance Sunday in November. It's going to be a very busy and exciting year and we can't wait to get started!

If you would like to get involved, we are always keen to recruit new members. The nature of military life means that people often don't stay in the same place for long and whilst we have a core of long-term members, we love welcoming new ladies and help settle them into their new community. There are no auditions, and you don't need to be able to read music, you just need to love to sing! We meet at the Station Church every Wednesday evening.

Anyone interested in joining can find us on Facebook or can email the choir at: shawbury@militarywiveschoirs.org

**By Ms Gwen Marsh
Photos by Mr Paul Reardon**

Being a Service club, RAF Shawbury Gliding Club offers a warm welcome to all in the Service community, including Service personnel and their families, civil servants and Defence partners. Since our arrival at RAF Shawbury, we've enjoyed a super year and, despite the interruptions of COVID-19, we have completed nearly 600 flights and flown over 320 hours in our gliders.

At 4,300 feet and on the way up!



RAF Shawbury Gliding Club *soaring to success*

The club have something to offer for everyone, whether that is to go first solo, like the 7 people who have already done so since our arrival, or taking a 5000ft trip over Shropshire, flying inverted or to just relaxing and taking in the view. Subject to the height and weight safety criteria set out on our website, anyone can take a trip in a glider. If you're up for a bigger challenge, learning to fly a glider can start from as young as 13 years, going solo from 14, and there's no upper age limit!

Typically, a first flight, from aero-tow launch to landing, lasts around 25 minutes and the views are striking. We know how much a visual memory

means and you can take photos with your favoured device. If a trip in a glider is not on your bucket list we'd be surprised! All of the information that you need to know to enable you to take the controls on your first flight with us is on our website at: <https://www.rafshawburygc.co.uk/trial-lessons>. So as we approach the summer season, if you'd like a trial lesson to soar with us and the buzzards overhead Shawbury, then please book in; we'd love to see you.

If this has attracted your attention and you'd like to join the club, please contact Squadron Leader Alan Swan alan.swan143@mod.gov.uk, or Ian Gallacher Ian.Gallacher375@mod.gov.uk.



High over Shropshire with RAF Shawbury Gliding Club's Chief Flying Instructor Ian Gallacher in the front seat and a dependent in the rear

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>

By RAF Shawbury Gliding Club

High above the clouds over Shropshire, sit back, relax, and enjoy the view!



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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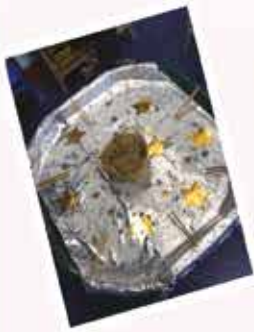
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Hazles Farm Childcare Ltd



We have been busy this past year changing our focus and developing new ways of learning.

The exciting news is that we have signed up all our nurseries for The Curiosity Approach Accreditation. This innovative and modern approach brings together the best ideas from Reggio Emilia, Montessori and loose parts play, helping to create the "thinkers and doers" of the future. We are passionate and excited about the changes we have already seen and those we plan for the future. Our exciting journey includes ideas from children, parents and the schools we work with to ensure we use our spacious environments to meet the needs of everyone we are working with.

We recognize that all four of our settings have space and lots of it. We are unique at the Hazles in Shawbury to have our 3 acre forest school on site and at the Mulberry Bush in Shrewsbury a huge forest school and 4 separate play areas for children to access. Crowmoor School nursery has a well developed forest school and large playground and High Ercall Nursery shares the wonderful forest school with High Ercall School. Catherine, our Forest School Leader, is dedicated to support all our nurseries and is developing working with real tools on all sites.

We are creating beautiful play spaces for children to support self directed and experiential learning both inside and outside. As well as the new sensory room at Mulberry Bush and Crowmoor Nurseries, we have a jungle gym at Crowmoor and a new dedicated library at Mulberry Bush. Qualified Teachers work with children and families to prepare children for school. Developing close links with all the schools the children move onto next.

There are changes for the good everywhere, children, parents and nursery staff are enthusiastic and we can all feel the benefits. Children are calm, full of purpose, inspired by the carefully chosen items. Children have the space to create, think, learn, develop and follow their interests.

**We invite you to find out more about us and to join us
on our journey.**

It will be an adventure we can all enjoy.

Contact Us:

Kelsie - Manager
Hazles Farm Day Nursery
Breakfast, After School and Holiday Club
Shawbury
01939 250234


Faye - Manager
Mulberry Bush Day Nursery
Shrewsbury
01743 360300

Amy- Manager
Crowmoor Day Nursery
Wrap Around Club and Holiday Club
07908 704532

Leah - Manager
High Ercall day Nursery
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