

**THE GREAT
ESCAPE**
*Recollections from
Stalag Luft III
75 years on*

**MILESTONE
ACHIEVEMENT**
*Club Chairman
appointed first female
Air Marshal*

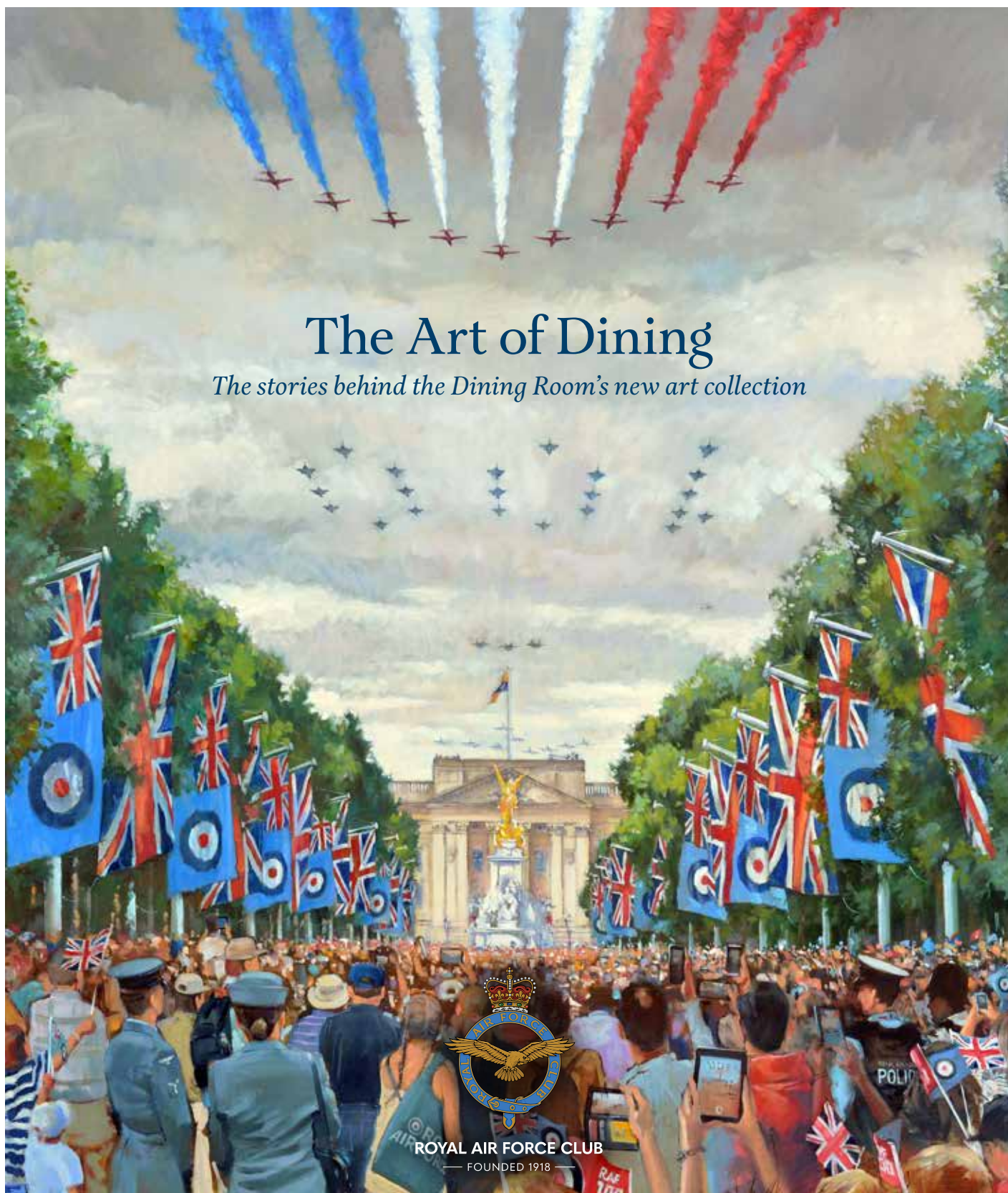
THE MAGAZINE OF THE RAF CLUB SPRING 2019

**LEAVING
A LEGACY**
*Help preserve
the future of
your Club*

**SUMMER
PACKAGES**
*Take advantage of
the Club's attractive
room rates*

The Art of Dining

The stories behind the Dining Room's new art collection



ROYAL AIR FORCE CLUB
— FOUNDED 1918 —



ROYAL AIR FORCE CLUB
FOUNDED 1918

The Royal Air Force Club,
128 Piccadilly, London, W1J 7PY

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ROYAL AIR FORCE CLUB
FOUNDED 1918

Onwards & Upwards

Maintaining momentum following 2018's centenary celebrations was always going to be difficult, but so far this year, the Club has very much risen to the challenge. We are delighted that members are fully utilising and enjoying our new facilities that opened in November.

2019 is proving to be a very exciting time for all of us, with a whole host of new initiatives and new faces. Already this year, we have seen the introduction of four new Trustees, all bringing substantial RAF and professional experience to the Club. We also officially welcomed Trustee John Fisher into his new role as Vice-Chairman. Read more about the new faces on pages 6 and 7.

The management and staff also gained a well-deserved award at The Sunday Times Top 100 Companies evening in February, which I was delighted to be able to accept alongside Miles Pooley. Improving on the 30th place achieved in 2018, we have started as we mean to go on and Miles reflects on the achievement overleaf.

The RAF itself is always transitioning and striving to remain at the forefront of technology and innovation, which inevitably means we have to wave goodbye to old friends from time to time.

Therefore it is with great sadness that the Panavia Tornado flew into the sunset for a well-earned retirement after almost 40 years of service in March. One of my fellow Trustees, Sqn Ldr John Peters, was particularly attached to the Tornado ZD 791, notwithstanding his ejection into the Iraqi desert 28 years ago, and he recounted his sobering, yet ultimately uplifting experiences to



"The RAF itself is always transitioning, always striving to remain at the forefront of technology and innovation, which inevitably means we have to wave goodbye to old friends from time to time."

a packed Sovereigns' Room earlier in the year, see page 23 for details.

Picking up the mantle within the fleet, the F-35 Lightning is now operating in the UK and we look forward to welcoming officers from the newly reformed 617 'Dambusters' Squadron based at Marham to the Club for tales of the new kid on the block.

Closer to home, in April I was very excited to move into a new role as Director General of the Defence Safety Authority and I will be sharing the early challenges and successes with members at a Club Dinner in the autumn. I am looking forward to being able to spend more time in the Club, as I am now based in London and I hope to get a chance to meet many of you over the coming months.

Continually striving for excellence, the Club continues to innovate, and with a solid management team, experienced

Board and a healthy, engaged membership, this year promises to be hugely successful. We look forward to welcoming old and new friends back to the Club in 2019.

Sue Gray

AIR MARSHAL SUE GRAY
CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Retention & Recognition

After the successes of the centenary year and the opening of the new extension, the main focus for the year ahead is our staff and management who make the Club so special.

I firmly believe that the importance of staff engagement cannot be underestimated, and is the key to achieving a professional, harmonious and productive working environment, which in turn is then reflected in the standard of service and hospitality extended to members.

As part of the extensive building work that took place in 2018, much of the basement has been transformed, enabling us to provide modern staff facilities. Our new canteen and offices ensure that staff have a quality space to enjoy their meals on duty and to work comfortably. Executive Chef Michael Dutnall works hard to ensure a balanced, varied menu is available for all employees, with a changing selection of hot and cold dishes, and the occasional treat, on offer.

On the human resources front, meaningful training and development is also a real focus for 2019 and beyond. As well as a new Apprenticeship initiative, and professional development sessions, two members of our Executive team have been awarded scholarship leadership courses with the Master Innholders.

It is in this context that we were delighted to learn that the Club has been ranked the 15th Best Not for Profit Organisation to work for in 2019 in The Sunday Times Top 100 list. This was an improvement of 15 places on last year, the Club's first year of entering. The prestigious listing was revealed in February, with the awards based on a number of criteria, recognising an organisation's approach to factors such as employee engagement, work life balance, training and development, leading to an overall employee satisfaction score.

The team is hugely proud of this achievement and recognition. Everyone has worked incredibly hard to bring these plans to fruition, so our thanks and congratulations to everyone at the Club for such a special achievement at such a

"It is in this context that we were delighted to learn that the Club has been ranked the 15th Best Not for Profit Organisation to work for in the UK 2019 in The Sunday Times Top 100 list."

momentous time in the Club's history.

Our Club refurbishment continues in to 2019 and we are continually looking at how we can improve the infrastructure and decorative order of the Club. Our plans for this year include converting the old study (Lancaster Room) into an additional function room, the overhaul of our main passenger lift in July and August and new carpet in all the bedroom corridors.

Finally, I'd also like to take this opportunity to recognise one individual in particular, one who over her thirty three years' service has done more to develop, grow and enhance the Club than perhaps anyone. Appreciated by members and staff alike, Club Manager, Kathryn Cooper was nominated and received the honour of the Freedom of the City of London in a ceremony at The Guildhall in January in recognition for all her efforts on behalf of the Club. Congratulations Kathryn – so well deserved.

Miles Pooley FIH MI
Chief Executive & Club Secretary



RESERVATIONS ONLINE

Booking a table or an overnight stay in one of the Club's 110 bedrooms online has never been easier, simply visit www.rafclub.org.uk/book-a-table or www.rafclub.org.uk/rooms and follow the simple steps.

For those members who have not yet visited the site and logged in - please follow the instructions here to create your password and enjoy member only content, Reciprocal Club information, special offers, social events and much more:

- Visit www.rafclub.org.uk/user/password
- Enter your email address (registered with the Club) and click 'Submit'
- On receipt of this email to the registered email account, please click on the link which will then direct you to a secure password creation page
- You will automatically be logged into the site at this point

For those members who still prefer to book with the Reservations team, we would also like to take this opportunity to introduce two new members of the team, Viola Tsifligkou, Reservations Supervisor and Hannah Cottenden, Reservations Assistant. Both ladies will be more than happy to help with your bedroom reservations via reservations@rafclub.org.uk, telephone 020 7399 1019 or in person at the Front Desk.

CLUB NEWS

Affiliate Membership Applications

Affiliate membership is open to those who have made or are making a positive contribution to the RAF family. Potential Affiliate members do not need to have served in the RAF but should have filled or be filling appropriate appointments with RAF connections. The Trustees are looking for individuals with proven sustained, significant and active involvement. In order to avoid disappointment when proposing a potential new Affiliate candidate, please contact the membership team to ascertain if the applicant is likely to be elected based on the information to be supplied. membership@rafclub.org.uk or call 020 7399 1001/2



Service Charge & Gratuities

The UK hospitality industry is finding it increasingly challenging to recruit high calibre staff and retain current staff and with uncertain times ahead it does not seem clear how this will improve.



Competition for quality candidates is high and the Board of Trustees has been considering ways in which the Club can improve the offer it makes to staff by making remuneration more competitive. From 1st January 2019, an optional 10% service charge was added to all Dining Room lunch and dinner bills and for all conference and banqueting functions (mandatory for non-member functions). This charge allows the Club to raise additional revenue, without increasing prices above any standard rises, and is shared amongst the service team.

Should members wish to recognise the Club's staff across all departments, we would encourage a donation to the annual Staff Fund. As always, your support is very much appreciated.

Club Security – Signing In Procedure

The Club sees hundreds of members and guests arrive through the doors each and every day, be it for dining, an overnight stay, events or business. To help manage and monitor this, all members are asked to kindly note that for reasons of security, when arriving or checking-in at the Club, all membership

cards must be placed on the card reader on the Concierge Desk. Any non-members must sign in using the Guest Book in reception. If meeting a non-member at the Club, the Concierge must be notified in advance and the guest directed to wait in the Lobby until the member arrives to receive them.



LEFT TO RIGHT
The Club's new canteen; celebrating at The Sunday Times Top 100 awards evening; Club Manager, Kathryn Cooper, receiving the Freedom of the City of London.

CLUB NEWS

Club Chairman Sue Gray CB, OBE RAF Appointed First Female Air Marshal

In February, the Club's Chairman Sue Gray became the first female to attain the three star rank of Air Marshal in the Royal Air Force, now making her the most senior ranking female within the British Armed Forces.

Having served as Chairman for two years and presiding over the Club's centenary year and Royal Visit by the Club's Patron, Her Majesty The Queen in October 2018 (pictured, AM Gray far right).

Appointed Director General of the Defence Safety Authority, AM Gray will now lead the way in overseeing the independent organisation, empowered by charter from the Defence Secretary, to undertake the roles of regulator, accident investigation and Defence Authority for safety.

AM Gray joined the RAF in 1985 and was commissioned into the engineer branch. During her career she has deployed to Iraq twice, during the First Gulf War in 1991, and again on Operation Telic in 2003 when she was Chief Engineer for the Joint Helicopter Force.



AM Gray will be joining us at a Club Dinner on September 10th to discuss her impressive career to date, including service in Iraq and her new role. Visit www.rafclub.org.uk/whats-on to book.

LEFT TO RIGHT
Club President Sir David Walker, Her Majesty The Queen, Gp Capt Mark Heffron and AM Gray in October 2018.



CLUB GOVERNANCE

Welcome to Mr John Fisher, new Club Vice-Chairman

Vice-Chairman since January 2019, John Fisher has been a Trustee since 2009, Chairman of both the House Committee since 2015 and the Centenary Building Project Board from 2016. It was in this role that John oversaw the design and build of the centenary extension, which was formally opened by Her Majesty The Queen in October 2018.

John is a former RAF Officer and pilot

and currently Chief Executive of UK Citizens Online, which specialises in Digital Skills & Digital Transformation. He is also the Chair of One Digital, a UK wide consortium of digital skills providers, and a former Director of Community & Leisure for Swindon Borough Council. In his spare time he is a keen golfer, saxophone player, walker and supporter of Forest Green Rovers.

CLUB GOVERNANCE

Welcome to New Club Trustees

Last spring, the Club sought applications from members to fill several vacant roles on the Board of Trustees. Applications were numerous, with many quality candidates considered. From this shortlist, the following four members were selected to add to the wealth of expertise and knowledge already residing within the Board. Congratulations and a warm welcome to Gp Capt Alan Lockwood AFC, Flt Lt Haig Tyler, Wg Cdr Paula Willmot MBE RAF and Gp Capt James Beldon MBE RAF.

Gp Capt Alan Lockwood AFC

Gp Capt Lockwood, a former Commander UK Air Forces during Bosnia Ops, Staff Officer UK Ministry of Defence and NATO, and Officer Commanding 5 Squadron, is also an Ex- Spitfire and Hurricane Display Pilot, private pilot and aircraft owner. A Flying Display Director and Safety Supervisor at several large public flying displays and Deputy Chairman of IWM Duxford Flying Control Committee, Alan is currently a non-executive Director for an NHS Trust and Director of a specialist Defence, Security and Aerospace PR Company.

Flt Lt Haig Tyler

Formerly an RAF Engineering Officer, Flt Lt Tyler has over thirty years of leadership and management experience in technical roles across Healthcare, Telecoms and IT. Currently heading up the technology function of one of the world's largest law

firms and specialising in the opportunities and risks of the digital sphere, along with cyber security, Haig brings this vast technical expertise and commercial acumen to the Club.

Gp Capt James Beldon MBE RAF

Serving Officer Gp Capt Beldon joined the RAF as a Weapons Systems Officer (Navigator) in 1994 and has extensive command experience in the Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance field. He has conducted operations across the globe, including Bosnia, the Kosovo Conflict, Iraq and Afghanistan and Syria. In his current role as the RAF's Director of Defence Studies, he has lectured internationally on security matters, and serves as the Chief of the Air Staff's speechwriter.

Wg Cdr Paula Willmot MBE RAF

Full time reservist Wg Cdr Willmot has been a Club Membership Committee member for five years and currently works as SO1 Strategic Communication & Engagement RAF College Cranwell. Previous roles include media and communications positions at Honington, Cottesmore and Marham. Wg Cdr Willmot managed the merger of RAF Reserves including a multi-million pound media campaign and project managed the logistic introduction of the AWAC into UK Military Airspace, including the biggest inventory in the UK within the aircraft industry.



With Thanks

Two long-standing Trustees, Air Cdre Wendy Rothery RAF and Gp Capt Ian Bruton, were dined out at the end of March following eleven years and twenty-five years' service respectively on the Board of Trustees. Air Cdre Rothery and Gp Capt Bruton have both undertaken sterling work on behalf of the Club and the Chairman and Board of Trustees would like to take this opportunity to thank them both for their endeavours and expertise in recent years and wish them good luck for their future ventures.



CLUB NEWS

New Conference & Banqueting Faces

The Club organises over 2000 functions a year and central to this is the Conference & Banqueting team. To work alongside Sue Smith, who has been in the Club for over twenty-five years, we welcome two new faces. Grace Dooley (right) joined us back in September 2018 and has recently been promoted to Meetings and Events Executive. Grace has proven herself to be an outstanding member

of our team and has been integral in helping plan and deliver exceptional member events.

Meetings and Events Executive newcomer, Victoria Spåre (left), has worked for a host of luxury hotel brands, including The Mandarin Oriental and Four Seasons. Welcome to the Club Victoria and congratulations on your promotion Grace!



To enquire about holding an event at the Club, please email confbanq@rafclub.org.uk or call 020 7399 1005. Remember – members do not pay room hire when booking a private lunch or dinner at the Club, so even more reason to hold your event with us.



Back by Popular Demand

Last year's limited edition bone china centenary mugs were snapped up by members in their droves and sold out before the centenary year was out. In response we've created a new Club keepsake inspired by the Club's iconic crest and one hundred year

heritage. Designed and manufactured in the UK by Stoke-on-Trent based Bone China specialist, William Edwards, who counts The Ritz, Claridges and Fortnum & Mason amongst its clients, the gift-boxed mug is available from <https://shop.rafclub.org.uk> priced at £15.00.

Member Benefits

Did you know that members are eligible for Club benefits when on active service or being formally recognised with an investiture?

Tour of Duty Overnight Stays

In pursuance of its charitable objectives, the Club recognises and supports serving Club members who have deployed on operations (unaccompanied commitment lasting at least four months) by offering discounted accommodation for one stay following return from deployment. Benefit from:

- 50% reduction on room charge (single, double, family) only for up to three days
- One offer per member every three calendar years
- To be taken within twelve months of returning from the deployment

Reservations are to be made by the member emailing the reservations department at reservations@rafclub.org.uk. Please note it is not possible to book the tour of duty rate online.

Members will need to advise the Club at the time of booking that they wish to take up the 'Deployed Personnel' offer.



Complimentary Investiture Lunch

The Club wishes to recognise Club members who have been awarded an investiture with a complimentary lunch for up to four people (from the Club Menu, not including drinks). Any additional attendees pay at the full published price. The qualifying criteria are that:

- The individual awarded the investiture must be a Club member at the time of notification. It is not possible to join the Club to take advantage of the offer.
- Tables are subject to availability.
- The offer is not transferable and no monetary alternative is available.

To make a booking for an investiture lunch, please email dining@rafclub.org.uk, or call 020 7399 1020 quoting name, membership number and 'Investiture'.



New Breakfast Options at the Club

In response to member feedback, the Club has introduced a lighter, quicker alternative to the traditional Dining Room breakfast and an even speedier 'Breakfast to Go' for early birds.

'CONTINENTAL IN THE COWDRAY'

Monday to Sunday
0800 to 1030hrs

With many members now seeking a 'Continental' style breakfast as opposed to the full Buffet and with the increasing popularity of the Club's Dining Room, this new breakfast offering in the Cowdray Lounge includes a selection of beverages, fresh fruit salad, croissants and pastries, toast and yoghurt, with all items priced individually.

The comfortable and elegant Cowdray Lounge, overlooking Green Park, is a beautiful space to enjoy a light breakfast or beverage and the Club team will

be on hand to welcome and seat members and guests on arrival.

The Dining Room will continue to offer the Breakfast Buffet priced at £11.75, which includes beverages, full English breakfast and a la carte dishes, along with a new take away option for early risers during the week.

'BREAKFAST TO GO'

Monday to Friday
0530 – 0700hrs

For those members who do not have the luxury of sitting down for a leisurely breakfast during the week or who need to leave the Club early, a quick take away breakfast is now available for collection in the Dining Room from 0530hrs Monday to Friday.

Priced at £6.00 per person, this speedy breakfast to take away includes: Bacon or sausage bap or two mini croissants or pastries served with tea or coffee, fruit juice and a piece of fruit.



RECIPROCITY

Reciprocal Clubs Overseas - Members' Views Requested

Many of you will have taken advantage of the links that the Club has established over the years with reciprocal clubs the world over. Member feedback regards some of these clubs has been both positive and negative, which suggests that the time is right to review the list. The Board of Trustees has tasked the Club's Membership Committee to undertake

the review over the coming months and in doing so also gain feedback from the membership. To this end, the Membership Committee would be interested in your views on the positives and negatives of reciprocal clubs that you may have visited or stayed in.

Should you wish to provide feedback, please email membership@rafclub.org.

uk or write to the Membership team with details of the Club/s visited and any comments, good or bad. Additionally, if there are any suggestions for new Clubs overseas that are in keeping with the Club's standards and ethos, and that also offer accommodation, the Committee is open to suggestions. We look forward to hearing your thoughts.



F&B

Focus on Food & Beverage

Following the whirlwind centenary year and all its successes, the Club continues to strive to attain even better standards of service, cuisine and member satisfaction.

Central to this is the newly appointed Director of Food and Beverage, Serge Pradier, who joins us this month. With a background in restaurants, Serge has worked in Michelin establishments both in Paris and London, going on to become Restaurant and Private Fine Dining Manager at The Hurlingham Club. With responsibility for all Food & Beverage and Conference & Banqueting and at the Club, Serge will bring vast expertise to the operational side of the business.

Alongside Serge, we are delighted to welcome a new Assistant Dining Room Manager to the Club. Celine Deliere has a wealth of food and beverage experience working at Threadneedles Hotel, The Sunborn, a luxury superyacht hotel, and more recently a selection of fine dining restaurants in London. Welcome to both Serge and Celine.

LOOKING FORWARD

Help preserve the future of your Club with a donation or legacy



Our Legacy Vision

2018 marked the centenary year of the Royal Air Force and its very own 'home from home', the Royal Air Force Club. Annual membership continues to offer a host of benefits, including use of the Grade II listed Club in central London, accommodation, fitness suite, exceptional dining and elegant private banqueting rooms perfect for reunions and celebrations.

For so many the Club is rich in memories created over the years, associated with good times spent with friends, colleagues and fellow members. With its shared Royal Air Force history, the Club is a uniquely special place, which celebrates the past endeavours of great men and women, whilst also looking to the future.

To help preserve this future for generations of serving and former serving officers to come, you can give today in the form of a donation – either a one off cash donation, a regular direct debit donation, or through a legacy for the future.

Why Support Us?

The Royal Air Force Club operates as a Charity, with its Charitable Aims and Mission designed to support members and their families in a comfortable RAF friendly environment:

To provide high quality and affordable facilities and services in central London for Club Members, in order to preserve, promote and foster the traditions of the Royal Air Force.

Annual membership subscriptions,

including the use of the Club's fantastic facilities and services, along with subsidised food and beverages, is available to many members for less than the equivalent of a two-course meal in the Dining Room, which means that other income sources are relied on to maintain the high standards of facilities and upkeep of the building.

The Club only exists at all through the generosity and goodwill of its founder, Lord Cowdray back in 1918 and we are forever mindful of this gift, which allowed the purchase and development of the clubhouse at 128 Piccadilly.

“With its shared Royal Air Force history, the Club is a uniquely special place, which celebrates the past endeavours of great men and women, whilst also looking to the future.”

The first Viscount Cowdray, first President of the Air Board, sent a letter outlining his practical support for the establishment of an RAF Club to the then Chairman of the Royal Flying Corps Club, Sir Sefton Brancker. Enclosed was a cheque for £100,000 “...sufficient to ensure a permanent Club House worthy of the airmen and of their ‘brilliant and superlative heroic work.’”

Today, although any surplus from the Club's day to day operation is reinvested to improve the facilities and services for members, individual donations and

legacies are crucial to help augment this work.

Our Promise To You

Your money will be used wisely and efficiently and retained within a dedicated 'Legacies & Donations' fund and utilised for special projects around the Club. If you have a particular project in mind that you would like to actively support, please do let us know.

Examples of past gifts that have had a long lasting impact are the iconic RAF stained glass window, an eye-catching focal point of the Club since 2009, only possible through a one-off donation. The Library has also benefited from generous donations in recent years, enabling us to add to the collection of post WWII books for members' benefit. More recently gifts also helped fund the installation of the new Centenary stained glass window, recognising the contribution of Women in the Service of the RAF, and the Dining Room's stunning new Art Collection featured on page 10.

Remember anything from 1% of an estate upwards can be given – a legacy does not need to be a large gift and costs nothing to give. Any donation is very much appreciated.

If you have any specific questions regarding making a donation or a legacy, please contact Head of Marketing & Communications, Charlotte Gray charlotte@rafclub.org.uk or call 020 7399 1082.

CENTENARY ART

The Art of Dining

Over the past six months, members dining at the Club will almost certainly have noticed an arresting new collection of RAF-inspired artworks hanging in the Dining Room. Five years in the planning and creation, the stunning new artwork has now transformed this most elegant of rooms.

To complement the refurbishment of the Dining Room in 2014, the Club's Art Committee recommended that rather than using paintings from the existing Club collection to hang in the room, the opportunity should be taken to commission a series of new works, retaining only the existing painting of St Clement Danes by Ken Howard OBE, RA.

With the Trustees' approval, past Chair of the Arts Committee Wing Commander Michael Gilbert and past Vice-Chairman Air Commodore Rick Peacock-Edwards were tasked with drawing up a brief and overseeing the project. Their brief envisaged that the overall theme would be a tribute to one hundred years of the RAF that respected the fact that the space is not an aviation museum, and that there would be a strong emphasis on personnel.

The artist awarded the commission was Tim O'Brien, a leading aviation artist of over thirty years standing. His outline proposals submitted to the Trustees in May 2017, summarised the philosophy that would inform his interpretation of the brief, namely to respect the splendour and traditions of the RAF's heritage but at the same time remembering that it is a dining room where members need to feel relaxed.

In this concept, the artwork should have an ambience that is uplifting and inspiring, indeed, to act as conversation pieces. Battle scenes, dog fights, and explosions would not be compatible with

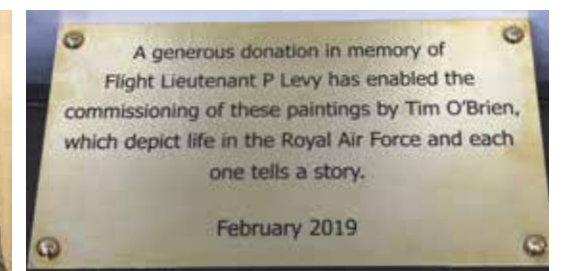
such an atmosphere! In his five themes: UK landmarks associated with the RAF; the RAF around the world; Ceremonial duties; "Field Catering" in two world wars; and reaching its climax in the RAF Centenary Fly Past, Tim has created realistic, yet visually appealing scenes of the RAF in many guises and locations.

The Club is greatly indebted to the Levy family who generously financed the project in memory of the late Flight Lieutenant Peter Levy, a long-standing Club member. It was with great pleasure that we welcomed the Levy family to the Club on the 22nd February 2019, where Tim O'Brien was on hand to describe to them the story behind each of his paintings.

The following pages give an insight into some of the paintings on display in the Dining Room, featuring first-hand accounts from the artist Tim O'Brien.

With thanks to Wing Commander Michael Gilbert

“The artwork should have an ambience that is uplifting and inspiring, indeed, to act as conversation pieces”



LEFT TO RIGHT

Michael Gilbert (far left), current Vice-Chairman John Fisher (second from left) and Rick Peacock Edwards (far right), pictured with the artist Tim O'Brien and the Levy family whose generous legacy helped finance the project.



1. REMEMBRANCE

The Royal Air Force Memorial, designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield (monument) & William Reid Dick (eagle) was unveiled on 16th July 1923 by the Prince of Wales. It is dedicated to the memory of the casualties of the Royal Air Force in the First World War and, by extension, all subsequent conflicts.

2



2. PER ARDUA AD ASTRA

The iconic tower of the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell; seen here in the early 1970s with Jet Provost T5s of 'The Poachers' aerobatic team overhead, having performed a flypast at a graduation ceremony.

3. LEST WE FORGET

The unveiling of the much anticipated Bomber Command memorial, Green Park on 28th June 2012; while the BBMF Lancaster drops poppies overhead in an act of remembrance.

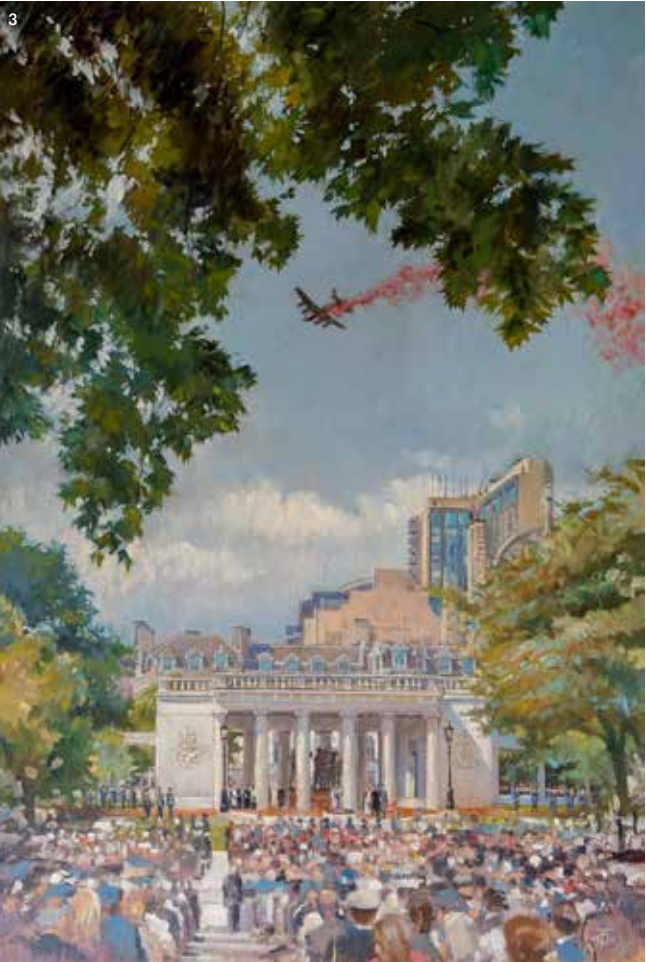
4. DRILL & CEREMONIAL DISCUSSION

"As RAF Halton has played a major part in Royal Air Force heritage, I was keen to include it. The country house was originally built for Alfred Freiherr de Rothschild before the estate was purchased by the Air Ministry at the end of the First World War."

5. CORFE CASTLE, SWANAGE

A pair of Hawker Typhoons over Corfe Castle, Dorset after a sortie over Northern France; the lead aircraft is flown by Sqn Ldr Roland 'Bee' Beaumont DFC, 609 Sqn,

3



April 1943. Steaming through the countryside below, along the Jurassic Coast, is a Lord Nelson class 4-cylinder 4-6-0 locomotive of the Southern Railway as it heads towards Wareham.

6. MALTA

Hawker Hurricanes fly low over the ancient walled city of Mdina to defend the island of Malta from another enemy attack by Italian and German forces who besieged Malta, then a British colony, from 1940 to 1942. The George Cross was awarded to the island by King George VI in a letter to the island's Governor, Lieutenant-General Sir William Dobbie, so as to "bear witness to the heroism and devotion of its people".

7. MATRICULATION CEREMONY

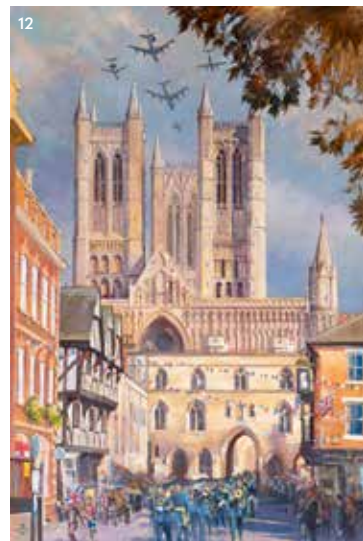
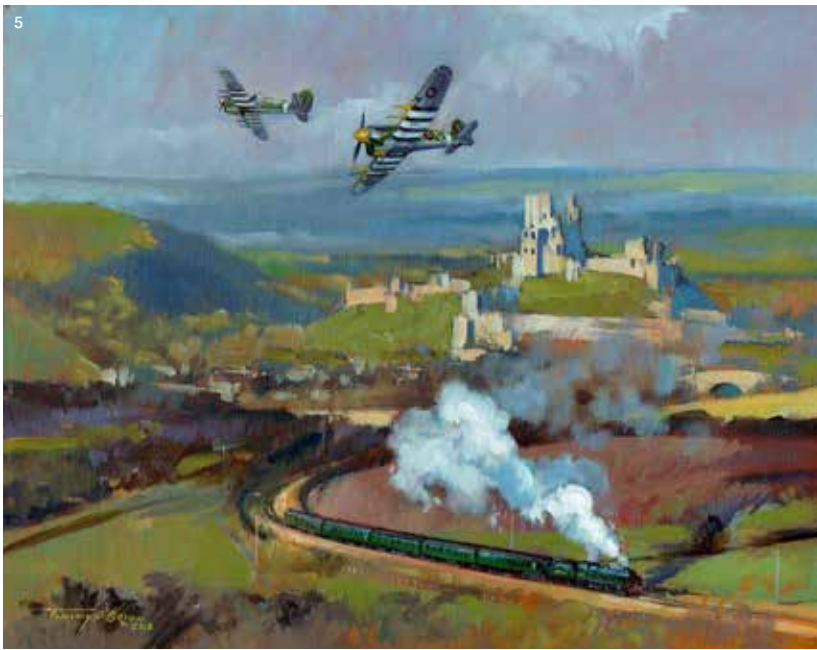
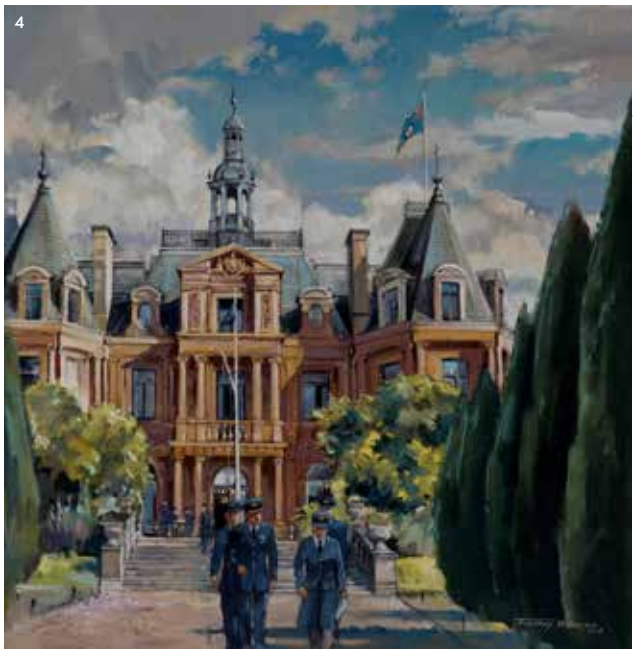
"On Wednesday 4th October 2017, I spent a morning with the Royal Air Force Salon Orchestra. I was keen to portray them in one of the paintings, especially as they are present at many official functions, as their principal role is to provide musical support for Royal, State and Service engagements by bringing a sense of occasion to concerts, receptions and formal dinners."

8. YORK

"Having visited 72 Squadron at RAF Linton-on-Ouse in the summer of 2017 to sketch and photograph the aircraft, plus being given the opportunity to fly the sim, I was keen to include the Short Tucano in one of the paintings. York was a location I felt needed to be included as there is always a lot of focus on landmarks in Lincolnshire, but the north of England is often overlooked. During wartime, the skies would have rumbled with the noise of heavy bombers such as the Halifax; so it will be a shame when the skies around Linton and York fall silent when the station closes in the near future."

9. FALKLAND ISLANDS

"Keeping the peace suitably describes this scene from 1983. A year after the conflict, a Union flag flies proudly above some dwellings on the island while a couple of Harrier GR3s are on patrol, against an 'angry' sky. An islander tends his vegetable plot; and a Chinook can be seen in the distance unloading supplies to a Type 42 destroyer."



10. BELIZE

The British military have maintained a presence in Belize since full independence was granted in 1981. However, Guatemala refused to recognise the new nation because of its longstanding territorial dispute with the British colony (British Honduras), resulting in 1,500 British troops remaining in Belize to deter any possible incursions. This has been supported by the Royal Air Force, mainly with the Westland Puma HC1 and Hawker-Siddeley Harrier GR3.

11. GERMANY

"As the Panavia Tornado bowed out after forty years of service in March 2019, I was keen to include the type somewhere in this interior design project. RAF Germany was also a location I wanted to portray as it had played an important role from the end of the Second World War until the permanent RAF presence came to an end. Tornados are here seen flying over Hohenzollern Castle, a hilltop castle located on the Berg Hohenzollern approximately thirty miles south of Stuttgart."

12. 'THE LINCOLNSHIRE AIR-FORCE'

Lincoln Cathedral is always symbolic of the county and its rich aviation heritage. Today the county is home to the Red Arrows aerobatic display team, often seen practicing over Lincoln's skies, the magnificent International Bomber Command Memorial, and bases such as Waddington and Coningsby. Tim adds: "I have lost count of how many times I have been asked to paint Lincoln and its famous cathedral with a Vulcan or Lancaster overhead, so on this occasion I wanted it to be different."

13. HONG KONG

"For this painting, I could have chosen an array of historic aircraft that have been associated with Hong Kong; but in the end chose to depict the aircraft that were there at the very end: The Westland Wessex HC2. The painting depicts the six Wessex on their final flight through the New Territories, along the Chinese border and finally along the 'fragrant' harbour, with flags and ensigns flying in commemoration of the Squadron's disbandment."

14. TEA BREAK

January 1946: A Short Stirling Mk.V transport aircraft of 46 Sqn dominates the backdrop at RAF Stoney Cross, Hampshire, while the crew enjoy a cuppa at a NAAFI van in the foreground before departing for Berlin. A DC-3 Dakota is in the circuit overhead; one of the new replacements for the Stirling that was rapidly being withdrawn from service.

To see all twenty-five paintings in the new collection, book a table or visit the Club's Dining Room.



COVER IMAGE

A day to remember

And what a day to remember it was; the RAF100 Centenary flypast over London on Tuesday 10th July 2018 was a spectacle that won't be repeated for a long time. Tim takes up the story:

"So I could get a view for the painting I was invited by AOC No.1 Group, AVM Gerry Mayhew and Wg Cdr Kevin Gatland, the flypast co-ordinators and the New Zealand High Commission to join them and other invited guests at New Zealand House to witness the formation over the Palace to gain inspiration. I wasn't disappointed as views don't get any better than that. Having taken snapshots earlier by wandering through the gathering crowds along the Mall I managed to get

a sense of what to include to make the scene 'on-trend' for 2018. So, lots of tablets and smartphones to accompany the flags that had been given away by service personnel. It was also an opportunity to include an RAF and civilian policeman in one of the paintings. At 5x4ft this painting on canvas is by far the largest and most complex I have undertaken to date and one that was completed in only six weeks after the sketch received final approval, so I did feel as though I was painting 24/7. Thankfully, with careful coordination with my frame-maker and specialist art courier the painting was delivered in time for the Club's centenary celebrations on 30th October 2018."

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Tim O'Brien GAvA, a full member of the Guild of Aviation Artists is a professional artist, illustrator and author born in 1970. Even though he creates a wide variety of subject matter for commercial clients and private individuals, he is best known for his military, maritime and aviation themed art, plus his books, magazine features and talks where he promotes local and military history to a wider audience. In Tim's own words: "the opportunity to specially create a series of twenty-five paintings to enhance the interior of a prestigious aviation-related venue such as the Royal Air Force Club is the pinnacle of my art career to date. It has been a joy to create and I hope will be enjoyed by members for many years to come while they dine at the Club."

You can view more of Tim's work on his website at: www.timobrienart.co.uk



RAF BENEVOLENT FUND

'We must reach the 'lost' generation of veterans before it is too late'

The RAF Benevolent Fund has been standing side by side with the RAF almost since its inception and this year, as the RAF's oldest friend, celebrates 100 years of support for the RAF Family.

As part of our centenary celebrations, the RAF Benevolent Fund is asking the public to help us double our impact and support even more members of the RAF Family.

From the first airman needing a place to sleep in 1919, to the 53,000 members of the RAF Family who received help in 2018, the RAF Benevolent Fund's mission remains the same; to ensure that no member of the RAF Family faces adversity alone.

Now, more than ever, there is an added sense of urgency to our work. RAF Club members, like me, will be saddened to have lost so many RAF veterans in the past year; Battle of Britain ace Geoffrey Wellum, ATA pilot Mary Ellis, Bomber Command veteran Bill Moore to name but a few, together with the thousands of others whose names did not appear in the national newspapers.

Which is why we must act now, while we still can, to support those RAF veterans who are now in their twilight years. Today, legions of once young men and women who served our country are, along with their dependants, fighting new battles, often associated with

older age. Rather than fighting insurgents or handling the mess and chaos left by the Second World War or undertaking National Service, many are now dealing with financial hardship, bereavement or loneliness.

Currently, many of these people are facing these challenges without the support that they need. Yet there is no need for them to do so. Consequently, during our centenary year we intend to reach out to these members of our RAF family and double the numbers of individuals helped, from 53,000 to 100,000 a year. The RAF Benevolent Fund sees it very simply – these people donned RAF uniform when our country needed them to, the least that we can do is be there for them when they themselves need help.

We know the scale of the challenge is large, but together it can be overcome if we all play our part.

**Air Vice-Marshal David Murray,
Chief Executive, RAF Benevolent Fund**

The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund is there to support all of the RAF Family – from those currently serving, to veterans and their dependants, including those who did their National Service in the RAF. To refer someone in need, get in touch via www.rafbf.org or call 0800 169 2942.

Two RAF veterans chat about old times at the Fund's respite centre on the South coast. Photos: RAF Benevolent Fund



HISTORY

Great Escape 75th Anniversary Commemorations

On Wednesday 13th March 2019, the Club was privileged to host member & Stalag Luft III POW Air Cdre Charles Clarke OBE and veteran actor John Leyton 'Willie The Tunnel King' from the classic 1963 film The Great Escape.

Ahead of the official 75th anniversary screening and commemorations on 24th March 2019, the pair were hosted by the Club for a string of media appearances and interviews. Ninety five year-old Club member Charles spent time recounting memories from his time as look out in the camp and much to the amazement of those present, produced his original standard issue cutlery set from the camp and, even more poignantly, his battered POW tag, still intact all these years later.

Only twenty one at the time, Charles was aware of the plans being made by Sqn Ldr Roger Bushell 'Big X' after being transferred to the camp only a month prior to the planned escape, following capture after his Lancaster was shot down over Germany. Navigator Charles heard the shot fired by camp guards once the tunnel was discovered and shared in the grief felt by those left behind, once the news fifty escapees had been murdered.

Actor John Leyton, one of only two of the main cast members still remaining from the original film, was thrilled to meet a real life hero at the Club and



spent time comparing stories over lunch with Charles in the Running Horse Tavern. Rookie actor John went on to star in many other films, enjoyed a pop career in the 1960's and even headlined with The Rolling Stones on tour in 1964.

Charles commemorated the anniversary, as he does each year, by paying tribute in Zagan, Poland, close to the site of the camp. Assembled guests included Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, along with a guard of honour made up of RAF and Polish Air Force personnel and flypast by an RAF Hercules and four Polish F-16 Falcons.

Back in London, members attended the 75th Anniversary event presented by the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, with Dan Snow at the Eventim Apollo, Hammersmith. The evening featured a host of other experts, including member and historian Paul Beaver and University of Cambridge engineer Dr Hugh Hunt, who recreated the tunnels back in 2011, along with the 4K film playing out on a 40ft screen.

The evening also featured the TR6 Triumph motorcycle, from Steve McQueen's famous fence-flying scene on show after restoration, and stunt man Tom Gibbes, who had flown in especially from New Zealand. Now eighty five, Tom recalled memories on and off set with Steve McQueen and the moment a stunt backfired, breaking the leg of the camera man. Luckily no lasting damage was done and Tom's stunts contributed towards some of the most iconic motorcycle screen footage of all time.

The day was a fitting tribute to the courage and determination of the seventy-six brave men from thirteen countries who embarked on the greatest war time break out of all time and the Club has been immensely privileged to call many of them members.

ABOVE
Charles's original POW tag; Great Escape Film Screening; The D-Day Darlings performing; John Leyton as 'Tunnel King Willie'.

LEFT
Actor John Leyton with Air Cdre Charles Clarke OBE and Chief Executive Miles Pooley.



MEMBER NEWS

Flt Lt Colin Bell awarded his wings at RAF Linton

In February of this year, we were delighted to learn that Club member and veteran World War Two Mosquito pilot Flight Lieutenant Colin Bell DFC AE FRICS RAF (Retired) was to receive his Royal Air Force pilot's wings at a ceremony at Royal Air Force Linton-on-Ouse in February. The ceremony came as a complete surprise to Colin, who could not be more pleased after all these years.

Born in 1921, Colin was presented with his coveted Royal Air Force flying badge by Deputy Commander Operations, Air Marshal Stuart Atha CB DSO MA BSc RAF who also presented pilots' wings to current Royal Air Force and Royal Navy pilots graduating on Number 270 Basic Fast Jet Training course.

Colin Bell joined the Royal Air Force towards the end of 1940. His flying

training was carried out in 1941 in the United States under the 'Arnold Scheme'. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941 and having successfully completed his flying training, Colin was commissioned into the Royal Air Force; however, he was retained in the United States by the American Army Air Corps as an advanced single-engine flying instructor



responsible for training United States and British pilots flying Stearmans, Vultee and Harvard aircraft types. Unlike his Royal Air Force pilot colleagues who returned to the United Kingdom immediately after their flying training, Colin was never formally presented with his Royal Air Force 'wings'.

On his return to the United Kingdom in 1943 he converted to twin engine Mosquito Bombers and joined 608 Squadron (Pathfinder Group) based at Downham Market in Norfolk. During his operational tours he carried out fifty bombing raids over Germany, thirteen of them over Berlin. He experienced much action and survived many close scrapes.

As those members who know him can testify, Colin, is often to be found entertaining in the Club or in the Running Horse Tavern. Please do take a moment to raise a glass to Colin; we are delighted to learn those Wings have now finally been presented, over sixty years later.

Tribute to Flt Lt Jack 'Tiger' Lyon

The Club was saddened to learn of the passing of member and former Stalag Luft III POW, Jack 'Tiger' Lyon in March aged 101, shortly before the 75th Anniversary of The Great Escape.

Jack was sent to the infamous camp in 1941 after his bomber was hit over Dusseldorf. Along with the iconic Great Escape, Jack also assisted in what became known as the 'Wooden Horse' break-out in 1943, which allowed three prisoners to escape through a makeshift tunnel under the ingenious cover of a gymnastics vaulting horse and make their way back to England.

Jack acted as a lookout or 'stooge' in The Great Escape of March 1944, and got his place in the escape line-up by means of a raffle. He didn't make it through the tunnel, a fateful moment which Jack credited for his subsequent survival. Following the torturous Long March across a snow-covered northern Germany in January 1945, in response to the advance of

the Russians, Jack finally arrived back in London in May 1945 (referred to by Jack, with his usual wry sense of humour, as the 'Long Walk Home').

Born in Bexhill-on-sea in 1917, after schooling in south-east London, Jack joined Shell as an accountant in 1939. A colleague at Shell, Douglas Bader, became known as a flying ace in later years and both men spent time at Stalag Luft III.

A friend of fellow member and POW, Air Cdre Charles Clarke and a member himself for over fifty years, Jack was most recently in the Club to share our centenary celebrations in October 2018, meeting Her Majesty The Queen. Charles recalled many fond memories of his friend Jack, both truly remarkable men, modest and understated in their achievements.



MEMBER OFFERS

Summer Packages

This summer, take advantage of the Club's attractive room rates and fabulous location with an overnight stay in July and August for all the family.



Summer Afternoon Tea Package

Enjoy a delicious Summer Champagne Afternoon Tea in the Cowdray Lounge combined with an overnight stay for one or two nights, inclusive of breakfast and newspaper plus late checkout.

Prices start from £185.00 for a standard double room for a one night stay for two people, other room types and non-member rates are also available.

Summer Holiday Family Package

With the wonders of Kensington's Natural History Museum and Science Museum on the Club's door step, keep the kids entertained this summer with a city stay combined with a museum visit.

Both of these world-class attractions offer free entry and this summer the Science Museum is also hosting a free Code Breakers Bletchley Park exhibition, which will almost certainly appeal to RAF-loving mums and dads too.

The Club is family friendly and offers Children's menus in both the Dining Room and Running Horse, perfect for little ones. Prices start from £189.00 for a one night stay in a family room for two adults and two children under twelve sharing, inclusive of breakfast and a welcome gift for the children. Two night stays and non-member rates are also available.

TO BOOK

Email reservations@rafclub.org.uk or call 020 7399 1019

COMING SOON

Father's Day Brunch Sunday 16th June 2019

For those already planning ahead for Father's Day this year, we have an extra special Father's Day Brunch in store, including whisky truffles, half a bottle of wine and an amazing selection of brunch choices for £32.00 per person. Sure to be popular, to book a table visit www.rafclub.org.uk/dining-room, email dining@rafclub.org.uk, or call 0207 399 1020.

In pictures

For photo galleries featuring the following events and more visit rafclub.org.uk/news



21ST NOVEMBER 2018

Club Dinner with BBC Security Correspondent Frank Gardner OBE VR FRGS

Towards the end of last year, we had the honour of welcoming BBC Security Correspondent Frank Gardner OBE VR FRGS to the Club. Frank gave an incredible speech in which he discussed his long and enormously varied career, leading up to insights into the current political landscape. From studying Arabic at University, to working in Investment Banking, to becoming the BBC's first full-time Gulf correspondent in 1997, setting up as a freelance journalist in Dubai – his career has been anything but dull.

TOP RIGHT
Past Trustee Wg Cdr Gilbert and Mrs Hope Gilbert.

BOTTOM MIDDLE
Left to right: Air Cdre Barbara Cooper, BBC Correspondent Frank Gardner and Chief Executive Miles Pooley.

25TH NOVEMBER 2018

Club Dinner with Professor Brian Cox OBE

In November, the Club was delighted to welcome a very special guest speaker back to the Club, Professor Brian Cox OBE. Following his sell-out member event in 2017, once again Professor Cox, Professor of Particle Physics at Manchester University and best known as one of the UK's foremost scientists, writers and presenters on Cosmology, enlightened a packed Sovereigns' Room – vividly bringing his accessible and entertaining brand of science to life. The evening was a huge success, with members and guests all privileged to hear Prof Cox's thoughts on such varied topics as the 'Big Bang', shaping of the Galaxies and his work with the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, the famous scientific research centre in Geneva.





28TH NOVEMBER 2018

St James's Palace Royal Reception

This prestigious event marked the final celebration in the centenary calendar, with over three hundred Club members toasting the founding of the Club with fellow guests, Trustees and staff in the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Eugenie of York. The Princess spent over an hour meeting assembled members, including Honorary Life Member ninety five year old Air Commodore Charles Clarke OBE (pictured). Charles has been a member of the Club since 1952 and was a Prisoner of War at Stalag Luft III – the camp best known for the daring bid by Allied POWs which came to be referred to as the Great Escape. Read more on page 18.



15TH FEBRUARY 2019

Club Dinner with Historian and Author, James Holland

From the genesis of the RAF and early aerial warfare, to the futurism of the V-Force, guest speaker and member, James Holland vividly brought this slice of aviation history to life in February. Author of *RAF 100, The Official Story*, James could have entertained the assembled audience for hours with the exhilarating subject matter and impassioned delivery. Members keen to hear and learn more can do so at James's annual Chalke Valley History Festival in June. Visit www.cvhf.org.uk for further details on speakers, topics and tickets.

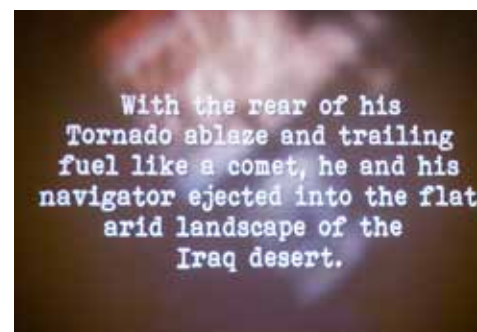


13TH MARCH 2019

'Tornado Down' Club Dinner with Sqn Ldr John Peters

Members and guests were treated to an enthralling Club dinner 'Tornado Down' with Club Trustee, Sqn Ldr John Peters recalling his time as an Iraqi POW during Operation Desert Storm. John previously flew the Panavia Tornado ZD 791 with XV Squadron during the first Gulf War in 1991 and on his first mission on an ultralow level daylight sortie on Ar Rumaylah airfield, was hit at fifty feet by a shoulder-launched SAM SA-14. Following ejection into the desert, pilot John and his navigator John Nichol were captured and displayed bruised and apparently beaten on television across the world.

John recalled those forty seven dark days of captivity and the international media attention that followed with honesty and humour.



CLUB EVENTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEASON

Club Dinner with Deputy Commander in Chief Operations, AM Mayhew CBE 'Planning & Delivering the RAF100 Flypast'

Tuesday 21st May 2019,

1830hrs for 1900hrs

Dress Code: Black Tie

with miniatures / Mess Dress

£60.00 members / £65.00 guests

In the year following the centenary of the RAF, the Club will be holding a special dinner with AM Mayhew, the man responsible for the planning and delivery of the RAF 100 Flypast over Buckingham Palace in July 2018. The evening is sure to be a fascinating one, going behind the scenes to discover more about this once in a lifetime RAF celebration. The evening will include a drinks reception, three-course dinner with wine and a talk from AM Mayhew.

NEW

100th Anniversary Celebration of Alcock and Brown's Transatlantic Flight Club Dinner

Thursday 20th June 2019,

1830hrs for 1900hrs

Dress Code: Black Tie

£50.00 member / £55.00 guests

In June we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Alcock & Brown's first transatlantic flight with guest speaker Mr Peter McMillan. British aviators John Alcock and Arthur Brown made the first non-stop transatlantic flight in June 1919 flying a modified First World War Vickers Vimy bomber from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Clifden, Connemara, County Galway, Ireland.

Peter constructed his own Vickers Vimy which undertook three epic flights including a transatlantic crossing and

will be joining us to talk about the history behind the flight and his personal journey to build a replica of the World War I twin-engine biplane.

The evening will include a Champagne reception and three-course meal with wine.

NEW

'Freedom of the City' Club Lunch: Tales of the Freedom

Monday 24th June 2019, 1200 for 1230hrs

Price Member: £45.00 / Guests: £50.00

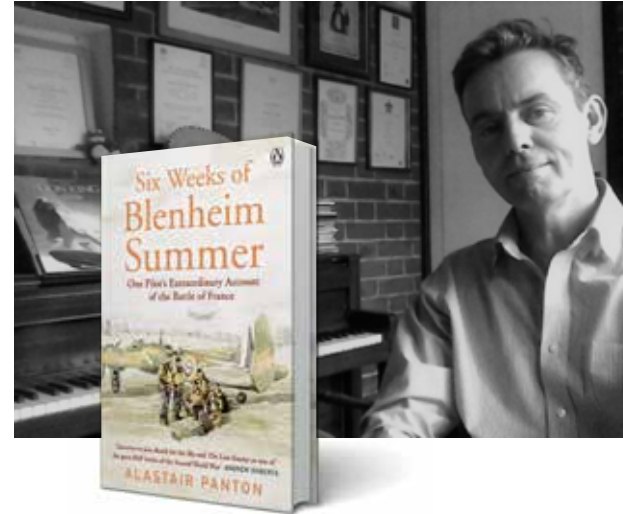
Dress Code: Jacket & Tie

Join us this June to learn about the tales of the Freedom, its history and the famous Freeman and Women over the years, narrated by special guest speaker, Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court, Mr Murray Craig.

The Freedom of the City is an honour bestowed by a municipality upon a valued member of the community, or upon a visiting celebrity or dignitary. Arising from the medieval practice of granting respected citizens freedom from serfdom, the tradition still lives on in countries such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand – although today the title of "freeman" confers no special privileges.

The Freedom of the City can also be granted by municipal authorities to military units which have earned the city's trust; in this context, it is sometimes called the Freedom of Entry. This allows them the freedom to parade through the city, and is an affirmation of the bond between the regiment and the citizenry.

The afternoon will include a Champagne reception, two course lunch with wine and a fascinating talk.



NEW

'Six Weeks of Blenheim Summer': An Evening of Music & Memoirs

Wednesday 3rd July 2019,

1800hrs for 1830hrs

Dress Code: Jacket & Tie

£50.00 members / £55.00 guests

Join us for a unique evening of music and memoirs based on the books by two bestselling authors, Victoria Panton Bacon 'Six Weeks of Blenheim Summer' and Rhidian Brook 'The Aftermath', inspired by the events of WWII and the true experiences of their grandfathers in Bomber Command and the reconstruction efforts of post-war Hamburg.

'Six Weeks of Blenheim Summer'

'The best account of the chaos and confusion of war outside the pages of Evelyn Waugh.' The Times

'The Aftermath' now a major feature film starring Kiera Knightley

'This masterly novel wrings every drop of feeling out of a gripping human situation.' The Mail on Sunday

Victoria's grandfather, Air Commodore Alistair Panton CB OBE DFC, was just

twenty-three when his squadron deployed across the Channel in the defence of France, flying dangerous low-level missions in support of troops on the ground. He ended his career as Provost Marshal and Head of RAF Security.

Rhidian's grandfather, Colonel Walter Brook, served as governor of the district that included Hamburg and opted not to banish the German family whose home had been requisitioned whilst he supervised the rebuilding and denazification within the British-controlled district. By 1946 he'd seen active service in two world wars and in 1915 fought with distinction alongside friend T.E. Lawrence, 'Lawrence of Arabia'.

Through readings by both authors, the roaring Blenheims and the rebuilding of post-war Germany are brought to life, beautifully accompanied by an original music 'Late Closing' created by composer William Drew-Batty. The evening includes a Champagne reception with canapes and a two-course Club Dinner with wine.

To book for any Club Social event, please visit www.rafclub.org.uk/whats-on, call 020 7399 1042 or email events@rafclub.org.uk.

FULL EVENTS LISTING: 2019

Details for every event taking place at the Club this year.

Keep up-to-date via www.rafclub.org.uk/whats-on

MAY

Club Dinner with Deputy Commander in Chief Operations, AM Mayhew CBE 'Planning & Delivering the RAF100 Flypast' Tuesday 21st May, 1830hrs £60.00/£65.00

'The Kamikaze Hunters' Club Dinner with Will Iredale, Flt Lt Colin Bell & Lt Keith Quilter Wednesday 29th May, 1830hrs £60.00/£65.00

JUNE

Borough Market, 'Secret Food Tour' Wednesday 5th June, 1045hrs £75.00/£80.00

Summer Gourmet Dinner Tuesday 11th June, 1830hrs £90.00/£100.00

FULLY BOOKED

Fathers & Daughters Dinner I Friday 14th June, 1830hrs £65.00/£65.00

FULLY BOOKED

Fathers & Daughters Dinner II Monday 17th June, 1830hrs £65.00/£65.00

100th Anniversary Celebration of Alcock and Brown's Transatlantic Flight Thursday 20th June, 1830hrs £50.00/£55.00

Freedom of the City' Club Lunch: Tales of the Freedom, its History and the famous Freeman and Women over the years' Monday 24th June, 1200hrs £45.00/£50.00

JULY

'Blenheim Summer' WW2 Memoirs Club Dinner with Victoria Panton-Bacon & Rhidian Brooks Wednesday 3rd July, 1800hrs £50.00/£55.00

RAF Club Masquerade Summer Ball, see page 27 Saturday 20th July, 1900hrs £100.00/£120.00

AUGUST

FULLY BOOKED

Private Guided Tour of St Paul's Cathedral & Club Dinner Tuesday 27th August, 1345hrs £80.00/£85.00

SEPTEMBER

XXV Year Lunch Tuesday 3rd September, 1200hrs £40.00/£45.00

FULLY BOOKED

Private Tour of the Royal Opera House & Club Lunch Saturday 7th September, 0945hrs £85.00/£90.00

Club Dinner with Club Chairman AM Sue Gray CB OBE FREng Tuesday 10th September, 1830hrs £60.00/£65.00

Gourmet Grouse Dinner in the Library Thursday 12th September, 1830hrs £70.00/£80.00

Battle of Britain Dinner Monday 16th September, 1830hrs £50.00/£55.00

Literary Lunch with Author Jacky Hyams, 'Spitfire Stories' Friday 20th September, 1200hrs £50.00/£55.00

[MORE >](#)



New Members'
Reception & Club Dinner
Thursday 26th September, 1800hrs
£50.00/£55.00

OCTOBER

Club Dinner with Flt Lt Michaela
Harrison, 'A Year in the Life of
the RAF Falcons'
Thursday 3rd October, 1830hrs
£50.00/£55.00

Murder Mystery Dinner
Friday 11th October, 1830hrs
£90.00/£95.00

FULLY BOOKED

Churchill War Rooms,
Private Tour & Club Dinner
Wednesday 16th October, 1400hrs
£90.00/£95.00

FULLY BOOKED

Club Dinner with Veteran
Broadcaster Peter Snow
Tuesday 29th October, 1830hrs
£65.00/£75.00

NOVEMBER

Winter Gourmet Dinner
Wednesday 6th November, 1830hrs
£90.00/£100.00

FULLY BOOKED

Stow Marie's Great War
Aerodrome, Lunch & Club Dinner
Thursday 14th November, 0730hrs
£95.00/£100.00

Club Dinner with the Royal
Air Force Aerobatic Team:
The Red Arrows
Friday 29th November, 1830hrs
£65.00/£75.00

DECEMBER

Festive Afternoon Tea & RAFBF
Carol Service & Club Lunch
Thursday 5th December, 1500hrs
£40.00/£45.00

Christmas Family Day
Sunday 15th December, 1200hrs
£45.00/£50.00
£45.00 Children

Christmas Lunch I
Monday 16th December, 1200hrs
£40.00/£45.00

Christmas Lunch II
Tuesday 17th December, 1200hrs
£40.00/£45.00



'Per ardua ad astra –
Challenging Stereotypes':
Club Dinner with Chairman
AM Sue Gray CB, OBE, FREng
Tuesday 10th September 2019,
1830hrs for 1900hrs

£60.00 members / £65.00 guests
Dress Code: Mess Dress /
Black Tie with Miniatures

We are delighted to welcome Club
Chairman, AM Sue Gray as our keynote
speaker this autumn, as we consider
the many obstacles and stereotypes
overcome in attaining the position of
first ever female three star Officer in
the British Armed Forces earlier this
year. AM Gray will be joined by other
trailblazing ladies, who have helped
push the limits of possibility in the Air
Force in recent years - challenging
stereotypes across the service.

AM Gray joined the Engineer Branch
of the Women's Royal Air Force
(WRAF) in 1985. In 2014, Gray was
promoted to Air Vice-Marshal and
appointed Director of Combat Air at
Defence Equipment and Support in the
Ministry of Defence. Gray is a recipient
of three campaign medals; the General
Service Medal, the Gulf Medal, and the
Iraq Medal. In February 2019, following
her promotion to the three star rank
of Air Marshal, AM Gray was
appointed Director General of the
Defence Safety Authority. The evening
includes a Champagne reception and
a three-course dinner with wine.



Club Dinner with the Royal
Air Force Aerobatic Team:
The Red Arrows

Friday 29th November 2019,
1830hrs for 1900hrs
£65.00 members / £75.00 guests

Dress Code: Black Tie with miniatures
Join us and enjoy a Club Dinner with a
difference, as we enter the adrenaline
filled world of The Red Arrows. We are
delighted to announce Sqn Ldr Martin
Pert, (Red 1 & Team Leader) will be our
guest speaker and will be joined by other
members of the Red Arrows, who will
discuss the thrills and spills of life in the
world's premier aerobatic display team.

The evening will begin with a
Champagne reception, followed by
three-course dinner and the main event
- discussion with members of the Royal
Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red
Arrows. The evening is guaranteed to
sell out quickly. Where possible, a
member of the Red Arrows will also be
seated on each table to allow members
the opportunity to learn more about the
thrills and spills of team life first hand.

QUESTIONS WANTED

**We are also offering members the chance
to address a question to Sqn Ldr Pert and
the Reds in advance of the event – with
the top answers to be published in the
next edition of '128'. From the meticulous
flight training schedule to the hours
spent in the gym or the mess bar in
preparation, now is your opportunity
to ask that burning question, email
events@rafclub.org.uk by 31 July 2019.**



Summer Masquerade Ball

Saturday 20th July 2019, 1900 until Late

Following last year's resounding success, join us for our Masquerade
Ball extravaganza, including live music, casino with prizes, cocktails
and a delicious buffet created by Executive Chef Michael Dutnall
and his team. This exclusive Club evening includes all live music,
entertainment, hot and cold buffet and Club wine. Cocktails, spirits
and other soft drinks will be available to purchase from the Cash Bar.

We encourage members to join in and wear Masquerade-themed
attire: "Choose a mask and wear it well, so your true identity,
no one can tell." A prize for the most dazzling outfit will be
awarded on the evening.

Entertainment includes the talented 'Mississippi Swamp Dogs' and the
popular 'Satin Dollz' both back for the second year running, along
with a photo-booth to capture the highlights of the evening and create
unforgettable memories. There will be further surprises on the evening
to keep members entertained and amused until the end of the night.



**Why not combine this fantastic evening
with our Summer Ball Overnight Package?**
Double Room B&B for two people sharing
Saturday 20th July, inclusive of event ticket
at £175.00 per person for members

Price: £100.00 members, £120.00 guests
Dress Code: Black Tie/ Masquerade Glamour
Book now: visit www.rafclub.org.uk/whats-on,
call 020 7399 1042 or email events@rafclub.org.uk



ROYAL AIR FORCE CLUB
FOUNDED 1918

New Year's Eve Gala Dinner

Tuesday 31st December 2019, 1900hrs until 0100hrs

This year we are offering members and guests the opportunity to celebrate New Year's Eve at the Royal Air Force Club, dining and dancing the night away at our exclusive Black Tie Gala Dinner combined with an overnight stay in the heart of Mayfair.

The evening will commence with live music and a Champagne & canapé reception followed by Chef Michael Dutnall's gourmet hot and cold buffet in either the Dining Room or Sovereigns' Room with half bottle of Club wine included per person.

After dinner, the Sovereigns' Room will be transformed with a dancefloor and live music courtesy of the 'Mississippi Swamp Dogs', who entertained members so brilliantly at the Centenary Summer Ball, before the countdown to midnight and fireworks on a big screen and of course a celebratory glass of bubbles in either the Sovereigns' Room or Cowdray Lounge. Places are strictly limited, so early booking is advised for an unforgettable New Year's Eve experience with fellow members and friends in the best Club in town!



Package from £399.00 for a standard double, £219.00 for a single room for members (Prices vary depending on the room type) and includes the Gala Dinner and one night stay & breakfast with late check out 1300hrs.

Book now: visit www.rafclub.org.uk/whats-on, call 020 7399 1042 or email events@rafclub.org.uk

Terms & Conditions: Preference for seating in either the Dining Room or Sovereigns' Room can be given, but is subject to availability and group size. Members dining in groups of 8 or more will automatically be allocated Sovereigns' Room seating. Bookings are restricted to 1 member room plus 1 guest room (non-member). Payment for the event will be taken in full at the time of booking. The accommodation charge will be due on check-out. Black Tie/Evening Attire must be worn. Over 16's only.

Cancellation Policy: Any package cancellation is required in writing one month prior (Saturday 30th November 2019) with full event cost refunded. Refunds will not be given after 30th November 2019 and a £25.00 per person room cancellation charge will be applicable after this date.