

100 YEARS OF
OUR CLUBHOUSE

*A history in
pictures*

HERTZ THE
LIFE SAVER
*RAF Police Dog
wins top award*

128

THE MAGAZINE OF THE RAF CLUB SPRING 2022

WHEN TOP GEAR
MET TOP GUN

*McLaren Speedtail
races F-35B Lightning*

DATES FOR
YOUR DIARY

*Battle of Britain
Dinner*



A Royal Celebration

Our Patron's Platinum Jubilee 2022



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

Much to celebrate

I am honoured to have been selected as the new Chair of the RAF Club, to take over from Dame Sue Gray who has done an absolutely outstanding job during probably the most challenging period of the Club's long history. I know that you will join me in thanking her for all that she has done on our behalf over the last five long and trying years.

Sue's efforts, coupled with those of the entire Trustee team and, of course, the massive contribution from Miles and our brilliant staff, have allowed us to weather the storm of COVID so that we can now focus on rebuilding and reconsolidating. That said, your RAF Club remains the best Club in London and will just get better and better!

My appointment as the 41st Chair of the RAF Club caused me to think hard about what the Club actually is and what it means to me. As a member for over 42 years (since graduating from Cranwell as a callow 19-year-old), I have come to regard it as a welcoming safe haven in London where I will always find kindred spirits.

It is the closest thing that I have experienced to an Officers' Mess outside of the Service and it reflects much of the RAF ethos, *esprit-de-corps* and standards of excellence. Consequently, it is an institution that I believe in and cherish and I want to contribute to ensuring its long-term sustainability and growth for you, its members.

The Club is, of course, not an Officers' Mess: it is a charity (and business) with all of the associated legal requirements and I am fortunate that since leaving



"The Club is the closest thing that I have experienced to an Officers' Mess outside of the Service and it reflects much of the RAF ethos, esprit-de-corps and standards of excellence"

the RAF, I have been able to gain a lot of charitable and business experience, first as the Controller (CEO) of SSAFA for four years then as the Controller of the RAF Benevolent Fund, again for four years.

In terms of my personal focus for the next few years, I am constantly drawn back to our *raison d'être*, our charitable aims, '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'.

All very simple really. The RAF Club is entirely about all of its members but I am acutely conscious that full members – Serving and Former Serving officers – are, and always must be, at the heart of all that we do, as was the original intention of Lord Cowdray when he bequeathed the initial £350 000 to set the Club up.

In the immediate future, we have much to celebrate, including our own 100th anniversary of

being at 128 Piccadilly and, of course, the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen. I hope that you enjoy the articles on both in this edition of 128.

Finally, you will know that traditionally, the Club has been chaired by a currently serving officer, so my appointment marks a significant change. To ensure that we maintain the absolutely vital link to the serving RAF, I am absolutely delighted that we have managed to attract the considerable talents of Air Commodore Adam Wardrope, CBE DFC as the new Vice-Chair (Serving) to the Trustee Board.

AIR VICE-MARSHAL THE HON. DAVID MURRAY CVO OBE DL
RAF CLUB CHAIR

FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Recruitment and Retention

As we strive to rebuild our team, we continue to focus on the engagement and wellbeing of the staff together with the service delivery that we provide for our Members

With this being the first 128 Magazine since the Pandemic began, it allows me to reflect on what has been such a challenging and turbulent time for the Club. The Trustees and Management have navigated their way through uncharted waters with all the lockdowns and restrictions that we have all had to endure. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the membership for their unwavering support and appreciation of both the Club and the staff over the last two years. Every department at the Club has had their staffing level reduced but, as we continue to recruit, we are committed to providing excellent service. In fact, we have taken that one step forward and come up with a new 'strapline' which was agreed at our recent Management Away Day: 'Delivering excellence together'. This ethos will be a core value moving forwards.

As I am sure you will have read in the Press, it has become increasingly challenging to recruit staff in the hospitality industry, with a severe shortage of suitable candidates applying for the vacant roles. Certainly, in central London the Clubs and hotels are all "fishing from the same

"We look forward to seeing many of you during the year and please do let me, or a member of my team, know if we can help at all"

pond" as they try to fill vacancies. I wish to acknowledge the commitment, hard work and loyalty of the management and staff over the last year. We have seen some great examples recently of colleagues going above and beyond in the service they have provided to Members.

Earlier this year, I was delighted to have welcomed AVM David Murray as the new Club Chair and I wish to sincerely thank AM Sue Gray for all the support and guidance she has given the Executive team and myself over the last five years. A welcome initiative that the Board of Trustees have recently introduced is a 'Staff welfare fund' which will enable the Club to provide financial aid for any member of staff should they face need, hardship or distress. We are also very aware that many of the staff are alone in London with families far away and they will also be supported in other ways.

Recently, the Club arranged a new Members reception and dinner which was very well attended. Naturally, during the pandemic it was not possible to hold these events and the number of new members joining the Club was also significantly reduced. I am pleased to share that currently there are approximately 24,000 Members which is 98% of the pre-pandemic level. As we began to see our trading levels in March return to those of March 2019, it allowed us focus again on building our Reserves and planning the infrastructure requirements required at the Club over the next five years. We will share more of these plans with you through our monthly e-news.

We look forward to seeing many of you during the year and please do let me, or a member of my team, know if we can help at all. We appreciate the feedback you give us very much as we do not rest on our laurels and we are always looking at ways we can improve your Club – your 'home from home' – and your experience here.

Miles Pooley FIH MI
Chief Executive & Club Secretary



The Club was the proud host of the RAF Gallantry Medals Dinner in March – see page 13

PLATINUM JUBILEE

A Tribute to our Patron

On 6th February this year Her Majesty The Queen became the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, marking 70 years of service to the people of the United Kingdom, the Realms and the Commonwealth. We are also celebrating 70 years since Her Majesty became the Patron of the Royal Air Force Club.

To celebrate this anniversary, events and initiatives will take place throughout the year, culminating in a four day UK bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June. This will provide an opportunity for communities and people throughout the United Kingdom to come together to celebrate this historic milestone.

The four days of celebrations will include public events and community activities, as well as national moments of reflection on The Queen's 70 years of service.

In addition, initiatives including The Queen's Green Canopy and the Platinum Pudding competition will create a lasting reminder of The Queen's Jubilee, while The Queen's private estates will also join in with special Jubilee themed events offering more opportunities for members of the public to celebrate the historic milestone.



Our Patron's visits to the Club, clockwise from top: in 2005, 2012 and, most recently, in 2018 as part of our centenary celebrations



Platinum Jubilee Celebrations at the RAF Club

The Club will be running a special themed Queen's Platinum Jubilee Afternoon Tea in the Cowdray Lounge along with Her Majesty's favourite Dubonnet cocktail. Our Executive Chef Michael Dutnall has also prepared a special 'Dine like the Queen' Menu in the Dining Room, containing some of Her Majesty's favourite dishes.

For more information visit our website: www.rafclub.org.uk

A WEEKEND OF CELEBRATION

Thursday 2nd June
The Queen's Birthday Parade – Trooping the Colour

Friday 3rd June
Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral

Saturday 4th June
The Derby at Epsom Downs; Platinum Party at the Palace

Sunday 5th June
The Big Jubilee Lunch; The Platinum Jubilee Pageant

For more information: royal.uk/platinumjubilee



CLUB GOVERNANCE

Welcome to Air Commodore Adam Wardrope CBE DFC, new Club Vice-Chair (Serving)

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Air Commodore Adam Wardrope, who recently became a Vice-Chair (Serving) of the Royal Air Force Club and joined the Board of Trustees. Air Commodore Wardrope will be serving alongside the Club Vice-Chair John Fisher, maintaining the absolutely vital link between the Club and the RAF. He currently serves in his role as the Head of Capability Planning at the Ministry of Defence.

“Having spent 31 years serving in the RAF and 25 as an Officer, I fully appreciate the cultural importance of establishments like the RAF Club. The Club plays an important part for those who have previously served or who are still serving in the RAF. It provides a highly visible link to our heritage and our ethos. Therefore, having the opportunity to contribute and play a key role in strengthening the vital connection between the Club and the RAF is one I am relishing.”



A TRIBUTE

Squadron Leader Lawrence 'Benny' Goodman

The Club was saddened to learn of the passing of Member and last surviving wartime RAF pilot from the RAF's Dambusters' Squadron, Sqn Ldr Benny Goodman, in July 2021, aged 100.

Awarded France's highest honour after carrying out 30 operations against enemy targets in the Second World War, Benny helped to demolish Germany's Arnsberg railway viaduct with a 22,000lb Grand Slam bomb in March 1945. He also took part in a raid which aimed to destroy the German battleship the Tirpitz in October 1944, after it had been damaged by bombs a month earlier. And, in April 1945, he was part of the team which bombed defeated Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler's 'Eagle's Nest' in southern Germany.

Friends and family of Benny were able to celebrate his life at a Memorial Service held at St Clement Danes Church on 4th February 2022, followed by a reception here at the Club.



CLUB STAFF

Let's have some fun!

We can't quite believe it's been almost two and a half years since our wonderful Club team has been able to get together to recognise their hard work and commitment. On Monday 28th February, we enjoyed a night out at 'All Star Lanes' for some bowling, drinks, food – and even Karaoke!

We were grateful to have the time to celebrate being together and to share our excitement for the year ahead at the Club.



Chef Awards 2022

We are delighted to announce that two members of the Club's talented kitchen team have won incredible awards in the culinary world.

Chef De Partie Harry Donnelly (right) was one of the youngest Regional Finalists in the prestigious Roux Scholarship competition – a premier cooking competition for Chefs in the UK with an acclaimed panel of judges, including Michel Roux Jr., Alain Roux and Clare Smyth MBE.

Our Kitchen Apprentice Kai Le-Tran won a Bronze medal at the International Salon Culinaire, regarded as one of the world's top cooking competitions. Kai won his award in the international Butchering Skills Test, in which he had to butcher a whole chicken for sauté in under 30 minutes.

Congratulations to Harry and Kai on their tremendous achievements.

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

We are delighted to announce that we have created two new teams within the Club, made up of representatives from all departments. Our Charity and Community Team's aim is to support other charities and our local community, by running initiatives within the Club and sharing our diverse skills outside of the Club. This has seen us offer support and help to those affected by the crisis in Ukraine.

Our Green Team will develop the Club's Eco and Sustainability initiatives to ensure we are reducing our impact on the environment as much as possible. Watch this space!



OUR HOME FROM HOME

100 years at 128 Piccadilly

24th February 2022 marked a special milestone for the Club, as 100 years ago on this day, the then Duke of York opened its doors to Members. Michael Gilbert, the Club's historian and a former Trustee, tells the story of 128 Piccadilly, from its transformation in 1967 to its evolution over the years

The success of the 'Colonels' Revolt' not only rescued the Club from bankruptcy, but effectively re-founded it in the spirit of Lord Cowdray's vision of 1918: to provide the Service with a "social Club/hotel where officers and their wives can stay and where they can entertain their friends." (Working Party Report 1965). This

transformed its relationship with the Royal Air Force - 75% of serving officers becoming members by 1975, secured charitable status, and financial help from the RAF Central Fund. This financial security provided for a thorough overhaul of facilities through the 1970s, and a regular programme of refurbishment and development thereafter.



Reception Area

The 'hotel' atmosphere is well caught in the Reception Area as seen in the photograph above from the late 1960s. Subsequent updates have produced the present day computerised area and our Front Desk staff provide a warm welcome when members first walk through the doors.

The Buttery/Battle of Britain and Running Horse Tavern

Leading down from the reception area is the stairway giving access to the Piccadilly side of the basement. Previously used as a storage area, it was transformed into The Buttery in 1967 which served as a brasserie style restaurant and was furnished in a classic late 1960s style. The Buttery continued as such until 2000 when it was refigured as Committee Rooms, now remodelled as the Battle of Britain Suite, currently being used for member functions such as weddings, special occasions and private meetings.

The Club Disco originally held in the

Victoria Bar from 1967 to 1970 was transferred to the purpose built room alongside the Buttery. The venture failed to sustain interest, so in 1974 the room was re-ordered as the Study, and following the opening of new Business Suite in our Centenary Wing in 2018, it was turned into another function room, now known as the Lancaster Room.

In 1977 a further storage area was developed into the 'Running Horse Tavern'. £25,000 was spent to alter the basement snack bar providing the perfect Old English Pub atmosphere hoping to attract younger members and drinkers from the Cowdray Lounge.

"The Club Disco originally held in the Victoria Bar from 1967 to 1970 was transferred to the purpose built room alongside the Buttery"

Opposite: Piccadilly at the turn of 20th Century. Clockwise from top left: Reception Area (1967), The Buttery (1994), The Dining Room (1967), Running Horse Tavern (1994)

Given the identity of the previous coach stables and Public House which had originally stood on the site between 1740s and 1872, there could only be one appropriate name for this new Club facility. Several eighteenth-century pewter tankards inscribed 'The Running Horse' were recovered in 1920 and are still displayed in the Club.

The Dining Room

The Dining Room transferred from the first floor to the ground floor in 1956 and it has evolved from the male dominated 'Mess' atmosphere, through the "carvery" period to the present attractive room.

Today, the Club's elegant Dining Room overlooking Green Park, can be enjoyed by all. It offers beautifully presented seasonal Club menus created by Executive Chef Michael and his talented team.



Gentlemen's Bar/Churchill Bar

The Ground Floor Bar area has seen revolutionary changes. Until 1987 this had remained the last exclusively male bastion in an otherwise integrated Club, complete with Fruit Machine and TV. Then in 1987 the gentlemen suffered their final defeat and it became the Club Bar. It has now been developed into the 'Churchill Bar' with appropriate portrait and artefacts and serves as a function bar.

Writing Room/Library

Leading from the Bar, the male-only Writing Room also succumbed in 1987, gradually acquiring a growing collection of books until formally becoming the Club's important Library in 2002 and is run by a small team of volunteer librarians.

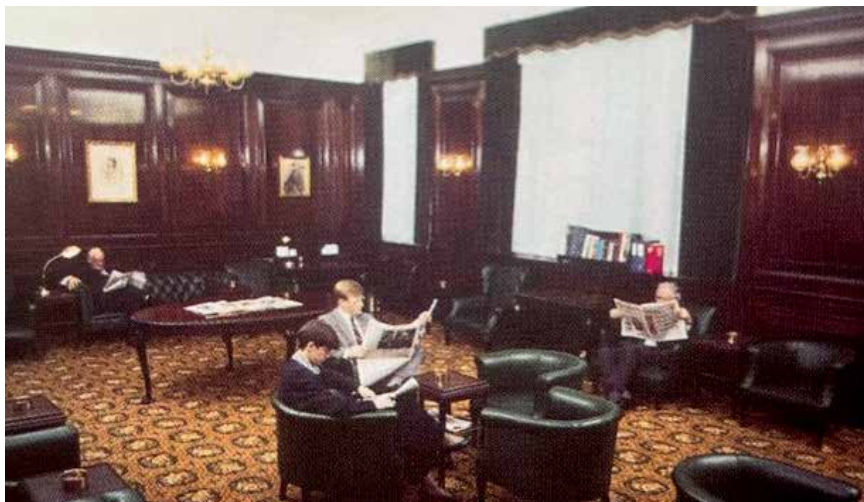
"The Ground Floor Bar area has seen revolutionary changes. Until 1987 this had remained the last exclusively male bastion in an otherwise integrated Club"

Cowdray Lounge

Perhaps the most visually striking changes have been made to the former men-only Smoking Room on the First Floor overlooking Green Park which in 1956 had been transferred here from its original ground floor position.

In 1967 this was transformed into the Cowdray Room and Club Bar. As seen in the accompanying illustration this was a striking example of contemporary design and furnishing. Since then regular redecoration and refurbishment

have kept in tune with contemporary décor and, indeed, fashion. Today, the Cowdray Lounge serves as the main Club Bar and it is the perfect setting for a relaxed Afternoon Tea with friends and family. With stunning views of London's Green Park, the Cowdray Lounge is at the heart of this exceptional Club and its walls are graced with the portrait of Lord Cowdray, the Club's Patron Her Majesty The Queen and many other important figures in the Club's history.



Clockwise from top left: Gentleman's Bar (1987), Cowdray Lounge (late 70s), Ladies' Cocktail Bar (1960s), Squash Courts (1994), Ladies' Lounge (1967), Writing Room (1994).



Ladies' Lounge/Presidents' Room

The former Ladies' section of the Club has changed in usage completely. The Lounge to which women were largely confined is shown as it was in the 1960s - purposely feminine in décor - and as it is now, the Presidents' Room housing portraits of our Presidents, and serving as a meeting room and dining facility.

Ladies' Cocktail Bar/Victoria Bar/601 Squadron Room

Also illustrated is the Ladies' Cocktail Bar, which from 1970 became the Victoria Bar. Available to all members, the re-ordered bar had now sadly blocked the

window arrangement as seen so clearly in the picture of the Cocktail Bar. The room has recently been renovated as the 601 Sqn Bar.

Linking these rooms was the Ladies' Ante-room which from 1967 to 2018 became little more than a cluttered passage. It was then transformed into the setting for the second of Helen Whittaker's stained glass windows: 'Women in the Service of the Royal Air Force', dedicated by Her Majesty The Queen during her 2018 visit.

The landing outside this suite of rooms is the perfect viewing point for the first of Helen's windows 'The Royal Air Force-

Past and Present' installed in 2008.

Present day members have of course witnessed the most substantial of these additions to Club facilities flowing from the fundamental change brought by the 'Colonels Revolt' 50 years before, when in 2018 Her Majesty The Queen formally opened the new 'Centenary' extension, adding not only much needed new bedrooms, but also a Business Suite and a well-equipped Fitness Centre. Previously this part of the building used to house two squash courts.

With thanks to Honorary Archivist Wing Commander Michael Gilbert

In pictures

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



3RD & 6TH SEPTEMBER 2021

Fathers and Daughters Reception and Dinner

One of the first events of 2021 saw over 150 Members and guests celebrating this ever so special relationship. With exceptional dining, courtesy of Executive Chef Michael Dutnall and team, and wonderful hosting by the Trustees, Gp Capt Al Lockwood and Sqn Ldr John Peters, both evenings were an unqualified success.



Left to right: Miles Pooley, Rick Peacock-Edwards, Colin Bell, Al Lockwood

13TH SEPTEMBER 2021

Battle of Britain Dinner

A perfect opportunity for Members and their guests to commemorate the Battle of Britain.

17TH & 24TH FEBRUARY 2022

'100 Years at 128 Piccadilly' Celebrations

To mark the centenary of the opening of the Royal Air Force Club at 128 Piccadilly, the Club held two celebratory events.

Wg Cdr Michael Gilbert, the Club historian and a former Trustee, gave a very interesting and informative talk over lunch on 17th February. We then celebrated again with an evening reception on 24th February - the day marking exactly one hundred years since we first opened the doors to the Club. One hundred Members and their guests were welcomed by Club Chair AVM David Murray. The RAF Salon Orchestra were a wonderful addition to the evening.



27TH MARCH 2022

Mothering Sunday Afternoon Tea

This year the Club hosted its Mothering Sunday celebrations amongst the grandeur of the Sovereigns' Room. Members and guests toasted those dearest with glasses of Prosecco before sitting down to enjoy the Club's signature Afternoon Tea, crafted and presented by our wonderful Pastry Chef, Gerol. Guests were treated throughout the afternoon to the stunning artistry of London Harpist, Natalie Luire.

31ST MARCH 2022

Gallantry Medals Dinner

The Club hosted a Royal Air Force Gallantry Medals Dinner, attended by over 100 guests and 60 Gallantry Medal holders. Vice-Chair (Serving) Air Cdre Adam Wardrope CBE DFC hosted this prestigious event and began proceedings by reading a letter of greetings from our Patron, HM The Queen. HRH The Duke of Cambridge was also kind enough to send his congratulations and his letter was included within a souvenir book of awards and citations of medal recipients in the room. Those present included gallantry medal recipients from across multiple commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, roles (including SAR and Bomb Disposal) and aircraft types from the Second World War, the Falklands, Gulf War, Afghanistan and Syria to the current day.

Poignantly, the evening began with a video of the last surviving VC recipient from World War II, Flt Lt John Cruickshank VC. Whilst it is almost impossible to single out any one individual in a room full of RAF heroes, we were privileged to dine with Sqn Ldr Ian MacFarlane, who is a recipient of both the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross and a Distinguished Flying Cross, but also AVM Phil Robinson who has won the DFC three times.

The evening was closed by speeches from the BBC Security Correspondent Frank Gardner, followed by AVM Harvey Smyth DFC, who both provided insightful, witty, inclusive reflections on valour and gallantry. The evening closed with a preview of the film, Lancaster, which inspired the indomitable Flt Lt Colin Bell DFC, a World War II Mosquito pilot, to provide us with a rousing impromptu speech reflecting on his generation and Bomber Command. What a fitting end to the evening.

The evening was kindly sponsored by Team Lewis.



CLUB ART COLLECTION

RAF Regiment Badges Area

Twenty four new heraldic unit badges of the Corps and associated forces are now proudly on display in the Club

Visitors to the RAF Club since mid-2021 may have noticed that the ground floor stairwell area by the RAF Commemorative Window has been transformed with the addition of an array of new unit badges. The Royal Air Force Regiment and Associated Forces badges area was created in 2021 to address a long-term paucity of the Corps' representation in the RAF Club's 1st floor Badges Corridor.

So successful was the project that the resultant number achieved could not be accommodated on the first-floor and a new area had to be found. After much debate with the Arts Committee and Air Cdre Rick Peacock-Edwards, the bespoke display area was provided generously by the Club.

The path to this was quite drawn out. Some 12 years ago, Wg Cdr Martin Hooker - the then Regimental Secretary to the RAF Regiment and, previously, a serving Regiment officer for some 38 years - deduced that the Regiment was not represented at all well in the Club's Badges Corridor and resolved to address the issue. However, his initial attempt was thwarted by the high cost of the College of Arms' production and the idea was shelved for the time being.

Moving forward to 2020, now retired but still frustrated at the Regiment's poor representation in the Badges Corridor, he decided to revisit the project and,



having targeted No 58 Squadron RAF Regiment's badge as the start point, he raised the required £700 through individual £50 pledges in just 12 hours. Spurred on with the success of 58 Squadron's badge, he used the same process with No 63 Squadron's badge - with equally rapid results - and the business model was laid down. Thereafter, it was not unusual to commission two badges in a single week, although some units did take a little longer to fund than others. However, the principle of funding by modest individual pledges was maintained 'as a team effort' and some 200 Regiment officers and Corps supporters contributed no less than £14,000 towards the initial cost.

"There is sufficient capacity in the area for another 20-24 badges to be displayed and the project is truly 'work-in-progress'"

During the period 2020-2021, some 20 RAF Regiment unit and formation badges were commissioned for display in the RAF Club and they were installed in mid-2021, with the official presentation to the Club being celebrated with a contributors' Luncheon on 15th September 2021.

The new, framed badges joined four that were already present in the Club, namely those for the RAF Regiment, RAF Regiment (Malaya), No609 Squadron RAuxAF Regiment and No1 Armoured Car Company.

With the first Tranche of RAF Regiment badges now complete, the second Tranche is now well in train, with

the Aden Protectorate Levies badge close to completion; the RAF Levies (Iraq) badge will follow shortly. There is sufficient capacity in the area for another 20-24 badges to be displayed and the project is truly "work-in-progress".

The RAF Regiment would like to record its sincere thanks and appreciation to the RAF Club for its support in the venture and, no less, for the outstanding and prestigious location allocated. Special thanks are also due to Matthew Kent, the Front of House Manager, for his personal commitment and on-going support to the project.

Per Ardua.

Wg Cdr Martin Hooker MBE (Retd)
RAF Regiment Badges Coordinator



RAF Aircraft Collection 1918 – 2018

In January 2017 Club Member Wg Cdr Mal Grosse offered to paint miniature paintings of all aircraft operated by the RAF over the 100 years since its inception in 1918. This offer was accepted and, as a result, a collection of four aluminium frames containing 220 oil paintings was presented to the RAF Club in June 2019.

All the paintings are oil on canvas paper, varnished and mounted; each measuring approximately 5¼ x 3½ inches. Displayed in four aluminium frames, each holding 55 paintings, the collection can be found in the corridor outside the Running Horse Tavern.

Mal Grosse

Mal was born in 1944, and joined the RAF as a pilot in 1962. Among several other types, he flew the Hunter and Buccaneer, and was awarded the Air Force Cross and a Queens Commendation. He completed several staff tours, including attendance at the RAAF Staff College, retiring from the MoD as a Wing Commander in 1988. He then spent 12 years with British Aerospace as its Eurofighter PR and Marketing Director, the last four years



in Canberra, Australia leading the Typhoon sales campaign.

In 2000, he retired from BAE Systems, and took up his dormant passion for oil painting, specialising mainly in aviation topics. In 2015 his eldest daughter encouraged him to take up miniature oil painting.

New Addition to the Club's Art Collection

On 18th October 2021, the Club was honoured to welcome honorary member HRH Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia, to formally donate 'The Few', a painting by the well-known aviation artist, Michael Turner. The Chair of the Arts Committee, Wg Cdr James Poynton, received the painting on behalf of the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Prince Bandar is very well known in the RAF, aviation and diplomatic circles. He attended the RAF College Cranwell as a member of Number 96 Entry and qualified as a pilot, going on to fly aircraft such as the iconic Lightning. Later he became the Saudi Ambassador in the USA and resided for many years in Washington. His son is currently the Saudi Ambassador in London, and his daughter the Saudi Ambassador in the USA.

As well as presenting the painting, which hangs in the Churchill Bar, he hosted a lunch attended by members of his entry at Cranwell.



FUNDRAISING

Friends of the RAF Club

"It's my privilege and pleasure to donate to the RAF Club and I shall certainly be continuing to do so for as long as is welcome and helpful. It truly is a home from home."

Club Member & Silver Friend

The Royal Air Force Club is founded on philanthropy, thanks to the goodwill of Lord Cowdray, and it is this continued ethos that has enabled our 'home from home' to ride the many hospitality restrictions over the past two years - thanks to the generosity of our Club Members.

The Club operates as a charity "to preserve, promote and foster the traditions of the Royal Air Force". Any surplus from the Club's day to day operation is reinvested to improve the facilities and services for Members and to keep subscriptions and food and beverage costs affordable.

The pandemic has, however, exposed the financial vulnerabilities of the Club when the unexpected happened and Covid restrictions prevented the Club fully opening its doors during the government lockdowns in the UK. In response to this, the Board has determined that fundraising must become an integral part of our strategy.

To support our fundraising strategy



and fulfil our charitable aims, we have recently launched the Friends of the RAF Club initiative to acknowledge Members who make an annual donation of £120-£499 (Bronze Friends); £500-£2499 (Silver Friends) or £2500+ (Gold Friends).

Many of the Club's major projects have been augmented by donations and legacies, such as the iconic stained glass windows. Donations made by the Friends of the RAF Club will continue this tradition and be invested back into the Club to help fund those capital projects and rolling refurbishments that have been put on hold for the past three years, as well as rebuild reserves.

The Trustees and Staff would like to thank every Member for their support to the Club by renewing their Membership; using the Club's facilities; and all those Members that have made donations over the years to the Club's charitable fund.

If you would like to find out more about the Friends of the RAF Club then please contact Director of Fundraising Claire Dakin T: 020 7399 1082 or email Claire@rafclub.org.uk.

THANK YOU

We would like to acknowledge all new Bronze, Silver and Gold Friends of the RAF Club including those supporters who wish to remain anonymous. Due to the volume of Bronze Friends, we will write to them separately with their supporters' pins. Thank you.

GOLD FRIENDS

Capt A Budagher; Mr P R Eddleston; Sqn Ldr V Gupta; Mrs P J Moore; Sqn Ldr B S Naidoo; Mrs M E Rex; Lady Squire; Mrs G Summers; Mr R M Williams

SILVER FRIENDS

Mr A W Barnett; Flt Lt C S Bell; Maj T Benke; Gp Capt J Brock; Mrs E Burns; Wg Cdr A D K Campbell; Mr B Cooper; Lord Craig of Radley; Sqn Ldr A T Crichton; Sqn Ldr G Day; Flt Lt D M Embrey; Mr K D Farley; Sir Michael Graydon; Wing Cdr D Green; Mr M J Green; Mr Thomas Hawkins; Sqn Ldr J S Hemmings; Sqn Ldr M J Hollingsworth; Mr A C Jackson; Sqn Ldr M K Johnson; Major S R Johnston; Sqn Ldr M Kelson; Mr J McGarvey; Capt A H McKibbin; Air Cdre R Montague; Sqn Ldr K Ottaway; Lt J S Schaefer; Lt Col W T Shearer; Capt P T Sinclair; Sqn Ldr M L Sinel; Dr A C E Stacey; Dr I F Symes; Sqn Ldr R J Taylor; Lady Tunnicliffe; Lord Tunnicliffe; Wg Cdr C E Upton; Mr I L Whittle; Lt Col R Williams; Mr P W Yockney.



Gold Friends Lunch and Silver Friends Reception

Wednesday 29th June 2022

Open to all Gold and Silver Friends

The inaugural events for our Friends of the RAF Club will be held on 29th June to acknowledge Gold and Silver Friends. Club President Sir David Walker will present Gold Friends with their supporters pin over Lunch in the Library and Silver Friends will be presented with their supporters pins during the Friends Reception that evening.



IN THE KITCHEN

Life is better with sprinkles on top

Pastry Chef Gerol Nulud joined the Club in 2018 and her passion for pastry has made her a popular member of the kitchen team. Gerol tells us about her baking journey, what inspires her and what we can expect to taste soon on the sweet trolley...

When you were younger, what was your dream career?

"As much as I would love to say I've always wanted to be a Pastry Chef, I did want to be a flight attendant, but soon realised that I was not tall enough to reach the overhead lockers, so the second best option was to become a Pastry Chef."

When did you first realise that you could bake?

"I started baking when I was 8 years old and loved it. Growing up, our family had a gas oven which had to be lit with a match and I remember nearly singeing off my eyebrows while trying to make peanut butter cookies. Clearly it was not enough to put me off baking."

How do you like to start your day in the morning?

"With a double espresso - always! I wake up at 4am to be at the Club for 6am, so coffee is very important to my morning routine."

What is the best thing about working at the Club?

"It has to be all the people that work here. You can really feel that we are all a family, especially in the kitchen. I always brag that Chef Michael is one of the best Chefs I have ever worked with. The people make this place very special. I am especially grateful for the new pastry kitchen that was built in May 2021 - it's my happy place."

Tell us more about the new Pastry Kitchen and how has it changed the way you work?

It is the hub for our in-house baking, where you can find all of the Club's delicious treats. Previously we only had the capacity to make 10% of our pastries and had to buy 90% from a wholesaler, whereas now we make 90% in-house. We were also able to expand the team and in 2021 welcomed two new pastry apprentices, Janet Anim and Asmaa Ahmed. This enabled us to raise the standard and quality of our offering and it also allows me to be more creative.

Who inspires your baking?

"I follow a lot of celebrity chefs on social media and always like to keep up to date on the latest trends, so lots of accounts and chefs inspire me."

What can we expect to see from you this year?

"Lots of delicious themed Afternoon Teas, starting with the Chelsea Flower Show, 'Royal' inspired Afternoon Tea for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Wimbledon Special and many more."

You can follow Gerol's delicious baking on her Instagram account: @gerols_bakes.

MEMBER OFFERS

Promotions

Among this issue's exclusive offers for RAF Club Members are discounted tickets for the RIAT's VIP Aviation Club enclosure

Royal International Air Tattoo

15th – 17th July 2022

The Royal Air Force Charitable Trust Enterprises, organisers of the Royal International Air Tattoo, would once again like to offer members of the RAF Club tickets to the VIP Aviation Club Enclosure at a specially discounted rate of only £125.00 (usual price £160.00) on Friday 15th July 2022. An established favourite for many guests, the Aviation Club offers a very special day out in a relaxed, informal environment. The private garden and grandstand are an ideal location to watch the flying display and inside the marquee, the cash bar serves everything from soft drinks to champagne.

The Aviation Club ticket includes

- Private marquee and toilets
- Private grandstand and garden (unreserved seating)
- Morning tea, coffee and infusions
- Two-course lunch
- Afternoon tea
- Guest car parking
- Complimentary Souvenir Programme
- Full access to the showground

THE ROYAL INTERNATIONAL
AIR TATTOO
15-17 JULY 2022 RAF FAIRFORD

Find out more and purchase tickets here: www.airtattoo.com/airshow/tickets/hospitality/aviation-club using promotional code ACF22 at the checkout. Or call 01285 713 456 (9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday). Please note a general admission ticket is required in order to buy an upgrade into the Aviation Club.

RIAT 50th Anniversary Book

This special publication has been commissioned to commemorate and celebrate the 50th year of The Royal International Air Tattoo in 2021. For the first time ever the complete history of the Air Tattoo, from its birth in 1971 at North Weald to the present day, has been captured in a beautifully illustrated book featuring hundreds of dramatic photos, many taken by some of the world's leading aircraft photographers.

We are pleased to support RIAT by offering an exclusive Club discount - simply use the code BOOK10 at checkout for a 10% discount off the RRP of £30.00. Order your copy at www.airtattoo.com/shop or call 01285 713456 (Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm) quoting the discount code.



Summer Bedrooms Offer

Use the Club as a base for your perfect staycation

Take advantage of our attractive bedroom rates and enjoy a complimentary full English breakfast for two people in the Dining Room and a box of chocolate truffles on arrival.

Prices start from £100 for a single room, £155.00 for a classic double/twin room or upgrade to one of our superior rooms or Family Rooms.

There is so much to do in London this summer, from visiting Museums to theatre shows such as *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, *Back to the Future* and *Grease the Musical*. Explore the Great Gatsby Immersive Experience, book a Tour of Buckingham Palace or visit London during the Notting Hill Carnival. There is something in London for everyone. Visit visitlondon.com for some inspiration and get booking.

And don't forget the Club is family friendly, with spacious family bedrooms and plenty of choice from our children's menu - the Club is the perfect place for your next family staycation. All children receive a complimentary welcome pack and a special RAF Club treasure hunt.

Do not miss this incredible offer of a fun filled stay with us!

TO BOOK

Use the code 'SUMMEROFFER2022' under special requests when booking online or email reservations@rafclub.org.uk or call us on 020 7399 1019.

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Please note, this offer is valid for members only from 18th July to 31st August 2022 and rooms are subject to availability. No other promotion or offer can be used during the same time and one box of complimentary chocolate truffles are given per stay (chocolates may contain alcohol and traces of nuts). Members may cancel a reservation without charge up to 9.00am one day prior to the scheduled arrival date. Cancellation after this time or failure to arrive (no-show), will be liable to a cancellation charge for the first night and the room will be re-let for the remaining nights booked. To read our full bedroom booking T&C's, please visit our website: www.rafclub.org.uk/terms-conditions.



Hon Gp Capt Sally Bridgeland
& Hon Gp Capt Paul Beaver

The Cocktail Collection

Created by Club Member and cocktail connoisseur, Paul Beaver, this beautifully-illustrated book contains over 30 unique RAF themed cocktail recipes, including our very own 128 Piccadilly Martini.

The proceeds from each sale go towards the St Clement Danes Church phase 1 of the 1941 Appeal, to raise the urgently required funds to restore the 1719 James Gibbs Steeple.



Members receive a 10% discount off the RRP of £15.00 by using code 1941spitfire10 at checkout. Visit <https://shop.stclementdanesraf.org>



CLUB SHOP

Just the tonic

From the bottle design through to the botanicals, Club Member, Phil Howarth of Hawkrig Distillers, takes members through the curation of '128 Piccadilly' - the Club's very own London Dry Gin

I was a member of Yorkshire University Air Squadron back in 1991 to 1993, based at RAF Finningley. I have always felt a great connection with the RAF, though my career took me in a different direction with me ending up running a wonderful craft distillery in Berkshire, making gins for some of the country's top hotels and Michelin Star restaurants.

Among our clients are The Stafford London and Alain Roux's Waterside Inn. We also make commemorative gins and recently completed a project for RAF Benson to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Puma helicopter. I approached the RAF Club to explore interest in the creation of a quality London Dry gin which would reflect the

character of the Club and appeal to the Club's membership.

We worked with the Club to develop the product from scratch, carefully choosing the bottle and label design, stopper shape and even the flavour profile. We explored many names which would resonate with members and, at the same time, work well as a classy brand. We all agreed that the iconic address '128 Piccadilly' was perfect.

After lots of deliberation on bottle options, the Club opted for the smart, stylish and distinctive "Quartz" 70CL: a premium bottle that reflected the Club's image. To mirror the opulent feel of the Club's décor and design, we selected a robust mahogany stopper which we have embellished with the Club's insignia.



As well as the Club's gin, Phil recently completed a project for RAF Benson to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Puma helicopter

In the creation of the gin, we carefully selected botanicals which reflect the 'Britishness' of the Club: flavours which would be found all over the United Kingdom. We developed four different flavour varieties using botanicals such as blackcurrant leaf, wild gorse, local honey from Berkshire, rose and even lavender. On one test distillation we even brought in some spices to reflect some of the more exotic, overseas stations of RAF history. In the end, the Club opted for a very traditional London Dry blend which delivers a beautifully subtle juniper, well balanced and complex

with wonderful citrus notes and lovely floral flavours.

We are a multi-award winning distillery based in the village of Compton in West Berkshire. Last year our 'Blowing Stone' won the country's best London Dry Gin at the World Gin Awards. All of our gins are designed to be super smooth. We dilute with minimal alcohol to ensure the full impact of the botanicals we use - this delivers a gin which can be sipped neat over ice as well as drunk with a premium mixer.

TRY FOR YOURSELF

'128 Piccadilly' can be purchased at £55.00 from the Club Shop or our Front Desk team. Also available, from the first week of June, is a special Platinum Jubilee edition mug at £24.50 - pre order yours now from Club Shop website: <https://shop.rafcclub.org.uk>.



THE AVIATION COCKTAIL

One of my favourites.

- 100ml RAF Club gin
- 50ml lemon juice
- 50ml maraschino liqueur
- 25ml crème de violette
- Ice (Lots of!)
- Blueberries and lemon zest, to garnish

Pour the gin, lemon juice, maraschino liqueur and crème de violette into a cocktail shaker with a handful of ice and shake well. Taste, then add a splash of chilled water to dilute, if you like. Strain into four chilled cocktail glasses and garnish with blueberries and lemon zest.

Luxury leather accessories from ASALI

ASALI Designs is a British brand offering luxury leather gifts inspired by aviation and travel. ASALI was born when founder Mindy Arora spotted a gap in the market for aviation gifts and with them a solution to her eternal gift dilemma of what to get her husband for his birthday! Attending airshows with her husband, an RAF fighter pilot, Flt Lt Jim Peterson MBE, Mindy noticed that the aviation merchandise on offer did not cater for those looking for high end, long lasting pieces made by artisans.

After actively researching the market on the ground at airshows, Mindy took the plunge and merged her design ideas, family connection to a leather factory in Kolkata and her newly acquired

license with the Ministry of Defence, to create the ASALI brand. In 2017 ASALI started production of a small number of licensed Red Arrows gifts and collections have now grown to include the Spitfire, Lancaster, Typhoon and Chinook.

MEMBER OFFER

With clear parallels between the brand and the RAF Club we are delighted to collaborate with ASALI, firstly as a stockist within the Club and secondly to offer members a discount across all collections when shopping online. Please use code CLUBA and enjoy 15% off: visit www.asalidesigns.co.uk or call 07376 399719.



AWARD WINNER

Life Saver

Pioneering RAF Police Dog receives Animals' Victoria Cross at the RAF Club for his life-saving devotion to duty, protecting British and Allied troops while serving in Afghanistan in 2013

A pioneer in his field, Hertz is the first dog in British military history to detect electronic communications equipment such as mobile phones, voice recorders, SIM cards and GPS devices.

Throughout his time in Afghanistan, Hertz was responsible for finding more than 100 items of contraband, including drugs and Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs), all of which posed a significant threat to the lives of servicemen, women and civilians.

The ten-year-old German Shorthaired Pointer was formally presented with his PDSA Dickin Medal – the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross – by veterinary charity PDSA's Director General at a special ceremony held at the RAF Club on 22nd February 2022. Hertz is the 74th recipient of the PDSA Dickin Medal; joining a prestigious line-up of brave dogs, pigeons, horses and a cat.

Hertz's Story

Originally bred in Croatia, Hertz joined the Royal Air Force Police as a one-year-old puppy after showing exceptional skills in drug detection. His natural talent saw that he was selected as the first-ever Military Working Dog to be trained to detect the presence of Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs).

Having never trained a dog to find such items within the British military before, advice and effective training methods were sought from the Prison



Clockwise, from left: Hertz with his PDSA Dickin Medal; handlers Jonathan Tanner and Simon Dack

Service, where sniffer dogs are used frequently to detect electronic contraband. After weeks of intense specialist training, Hertz quickly showed signs of exceptional skill and it wasn't long before he and his handler, Warrant Officer Jonathan Tanner, were deployed to Afghanistan.

The duo worked together daily within numerous military and local civilian compounds within Camp Bastion and, on his very first search, discovered a find that comprised both drugs and electronic devices – the latter successful in supporting intelligence purposes. In doing so Hertz secured and protected Camp Bastion against the threat of both an intruder and insider attacks. These

threats had previously claimed the lives of UK and US servicemen and women.

News of Hertz' success spread fast, and he was deployed to locations throughout Helmand and Kabul, where his role was the same: to ensure that areas were free of PED's and drugs to secure the safety of military personnel and local people.

“Many of the items he found led directly to the gathering of intelligence about potential threats and attacks on British and Allied personnel”

At the end of Warrant Officer Tanner's deployment, Hertz was assigned to work with Corporal Simon Dack and, despite the change of handler, continued to work with pinpoint accuracy.

Many of the items he found led directly to the gathering of intelligence about potential threats and attacks on British and Allied personnel. Hertz's impact was without parallel – his ability to remove potentially dangerous items, undoubtedly, saved many lives. During the 13 months of Hertz's tour, there was not a single rocket attack on Camp Bastion. His unique set of skills had never been seen before in military theatre. His specialist training prevented attacks and uncovered intelligence and in the ever-changing environment of military conflict, Hertz was at the cutting edge of defending troops from the ever-evolving advances in digital intelligence. His work undoubtedly saved many lives, making him a worthy recipient of the PDSA Dickin Medal.

PDSA Dickin Medal

Instituted in 1943 by PDSA's founder Maria Dickin, the PDSA Dickin Medal acknowledges outstanding acts of bravery displayed by animals serving with the Armed Forces or Civil Defence units in any theatre of war, worldwide.

The PDSA Dickin Medal is a large, bronze medallion bearing the words “For Gallantry” and “We Also Serve” within a laurel wreath. The ribbon is striped green, dark brown and pale blue to symbolise the naval, land and air forces. Recognised worldwide as the animals' Victoria Cross, the PDSA Dickin Medal is awarded to animals displaying conspicuous gallantry or devotion to duty.

Hertz is the 74th recipient of the PDSA Dickin Medal. Other recipients of the PDSA Dickin Medal include 36 dogs, 32 World War II messenger pigeons, four horses and one cat.

About PDSA

PDSA provides a vital service for pets across the UK whose owners struggle to afford treatment costs for their sick and injured pets. For many vulnerable pets, PDSA is there to help when there is nowhere else for their owners to turn. PDSA receives no government funding and is supported by the generosity of the pet-loving public who donate to make sure we can be there for a pet when they need us most.

For more information, visit:
www.pdsa.org.uk/hertz

International Club for Air Force Officers Wives

On Wednesday 2nd February 2022 the International Club for Air Force Officers Wives (ICAFOW) met in the Sovereigns' Room for the first of their Meetings / Luncheons of 2022.

They welcomed their speaker Jon Singleton, Station Commander at Soho Fire Station, (pictured with Lady Wigston), for a very interesting presentation on the work of the London Fire Brigade. Following his presentation Jon arranged for a fire engine to come to the Club for the members and

guests 'to have a play on'.

This meeting also welcomed nine Attaché partners, rekindling the international part of our title.

ICAFOW meets for six luncheons with speakers each year and welcomes all officers and Attaché's wives or partners as members.

For further information please contact
Mrs Denise Stone denisehillstone@gmail.com



MEMBER STORIES

When Top Gear met Top Gun

*Club Member and the RAF's Media Officer, Sqn Ldr Nick Downs,
on recreating an iconic piece of television 10 years on*

Let me start with a history lesson. In 2008, about 12 months after the RAF received the blisteringly fast Typhoon into frontline service, *Top Gear* presenter Richard Hammond approached the RAF with a blisteringly fast Bugatti Veyron and asked for a race. The outcome of this - a drag race over a mile - was new, unconventional and exciting...a truly iconic piece of television. The aircraft won...easily.

Two years before this, a couple of whizz kids working for PayPal invented a video dating service called YouTube. History tells us that it failed miserably in this respect but it's fair to say it went on to do rather well in other ways. Recognising this, the BBC set up a YouTube channel of its own and

uploaded the *Top Gear* piece. To date, this race has been viewed over 39 million times on YouTube...it is still the BBC's most viewed article, ever.

Ten years later, the Producer of the new *Top Gear* called me and asked for a rematch. Why me? Because I have the enormous privilege of being the RAF advisor to the Media Campaigns Team in the MOD. It is my job to promote and protect the brilliant, but annoyingly modest, people in the RAF who I have the honour to call my friends and

“To date, this race has been viewed over 39 million times on YouTube...it is still the BBC's most viewed article, ever.”

‘family’. Oh, and there's some rather amazing ‘kit’ as well, but that stuff speaks for itself.

“You have a brand new aircraft,” said the Producer, “and we have a brand new car that we know will win this time!” Brave words. They were of course referring to, in the ‘light blue’ corner of the ring, the absolutely beautiful and technically phenomenal F-35B Lightning aircraft all the way from Fort Worth in Texas. Opposite this was its 4-wheeled adversary in the red corner; a local lad from Woking in Surrey - the McLaren Speedtail.

To begin with we said no, for many reasons. The race was not new; plus the old Clarkson-era audience, whilst generally huge supporters of the UK Armed Forces, was not primarily our



target demographic. Putting speed to one side for a moment, we also needed to focus now on the aircraft's brilliant STOVL capability (Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing) designed for use on our two new aircraft carriers. Then there was our people; only 5% of the RAF are aircrew, but over 50% are engineers and we need lots of them, so we also needed to focus on Youth and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), not just the aircraft and the pilot.

Top Gear totally understood and were equally keen to tell a whole new story in as many ways as possible. The audience demographic issue was rectified

instantly with the introduction of Paddy McGuinness to the cast of presenters. Paddy brought with him a loyal fan base that made the new viewing audience significantly younger, and with more women watching the programme now than ever before.

With the support of Lockheed Martin and McLaren, STEM was addressed with an 8-page article in *Top Gear* magazine and online, showing the F35 and Speedtail production lines in Texas and Surrey. Articles were also promised on technician ‘avatar training’ and on Low Observability (“stealth” to you and me) technology for British Science Week and in BBC Science Focus magazine. This was turning into a proper media campaign, which I was now confident could deliver on key messages and be cost-effective in every sense. So guess what...we said yes.

As the project manager, with the viewing figures already the right side of 4 million, I would be lying if I didn't admit to enjoying the success of the programme. But this entire project wouldn't have made a half-decent tweet, let alone a full PR campaign, without the energy of so many other people. The sheer skill of the

pilot; the granular detail and diligence of RAF Marham Air Traffic; the largely unseen speed and professionalism of the engineers; the counsel and guidance of the Air Secretariat and Commercial teams; the can-do attitude of Lockheed Martin and British Aerospace...so many others I have missed...this was the absolute epitome of ‘Whole Force’.

So...did I manage to demo STOVL and manoeuvrability in the programme? One of these pics might give you a clue. And did I manage to highlight the importance of engineers and STEM? And probably most importantly...did *Top Gun* beat *Top Gear* second time around?

Did you honestly think I was going to tell you that, when you can log on to BBC iPlayer and watch it; or on YouTube, or on TopGear.com, and bump up the viewing figures even more? Watch it, enjoy it, like it, share it and tell others. If you don't like it, tell me. I bet you will though...it's brilliant.

The long-awaited movie *Top Gun 2: Maverick* will be released in the UK on 27th May 2022.

RECIPROCITY

New Reciprocal Clubs in Germany, Hong Kong, USA & UK

Six new reciprocal clubs have been added to our already extensive list of clubs around the world for members to benefit from:

- International Club, Berlin, Germany
- Union International Club, Frankfurt, Germany
- United Services Recreation Club, Hong Kong
- The University Club of Washington, USA
- The Union League of Philadelphia, USA
- Royal Air Force Yacht Club

The Union League of Philadelphia (pictured), founded in 1862, occupies an entire city block in the centre of downtown Philadelphia's commercial and cultural district. The Club has 84 bedrooms, three restaurants and a fitness centre.



For more information, to view our full list of reciprocal clubs or to obtain automated letters of introduction, visit rafclub.org.uk/reciprocal

CLUB EVENTS

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEASON



Club Lunch with Preston Smith
*Spitfire: An American WWII
Fighter Pilot in the RAF*
by Parke F. Smith
Friday 27th May 2022
1200hrs for 12.30hrs

Dress Code: Jacket & Tie
£55 members, £65 guests

Join Club Member Preston Smith for a drinks reception and three course meal with wine, followed by a talk about his father's book, *Spitfire: An American WWII Fighter Pilot in the RAF*.

Parke F. Smith was the last US pilot accepted into the ranks of the RAF via their training exchange programme at War Eagle Field, Los Angeles. After completing his course, he sailed to England on board the HMS Queen Elizabeth, swore allegiance to the King, and was offered a coveted spot training as a fighter pilot. From 1942 to 1946, Smith flew 129 missions in North Africa, Italy, and over the North Sea. Amazingly, he made it home, unlike so many of his friends and comrades. It is to them he dedicated his writing.

Annual Battle of Britain
Dinner with Dilip Sakar MBE
Thursday 15th September 2022
1830hrs for 1900hrs

Dress Code: Black Tie with miniatures
£70 Members, £80 guests

Join us in the week when we mark the anniversary of one of the most important events in Royal Air Force history; the ferocious battle fought over Britain between 10th July and 31st October 1940. Your evening will start with a Champagne reception followed by a three course Dinner.

We are delighted to have Dilip Sakar as our guest speaker. Dilip's presentation, *I Knew The Few*, uniquely illustrated from survivors' personal albums, focusses entirely upon the personal stories of a small number of the many members of the exulted Battle of Britain Fighter Association he knew so well.

Well-known 'aces' like Group Captain Peter Townsend are featured in addition to 'also rans', as Sergeant Peter Fox, a

nineteen-year-old Hurricane pilot in summer 1940, famously described himself, and, most importantly, support staff too. Indeed, it is the untold stories of the 'also rans' that primarily fascinates Dilip, and which he has spent over forty years recording and sharing.



Club Dinner with Colonel the
Rt Hon Bob Stewart DSO MP
Peacekeeping in Bosnia with
the United Nations

Tuesday 11th October
1830hrs for 1900hrs
Dress Code: Black Tie
£60 members/ £70 guests

Bob Stewart is the son of the late Squadron Leader A A 'Jock' Stewart MC, who was a Bomber Command signaller in World War 2. After being commissioned from Sandhurst in 1969, Bob was an infantry officer of the Cheshire Regiment for the next 26 years. At various times he was an intelligence officer and company commander in Northern Ireland,

a Sandhurst instructor, a staff officer in Military Operations within the MOD and Military Assistant (Lieutenant Colonel) to the Chairman of NATO's Military Committee in Brussels. In March 1991 he assumed command of 1st Battalion the Cheshire Regiment. As Commanding Officer he was the first British Commander under United Nations command in Bosnia during 1992-93. Promoted to Colonel, he then took up the appointment of Chief of Policy at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe.

He left the British Army in September 1995 and worked in business and the media. In 2010 he was elected as Conservative MP for Beckenham. In Parliament he has served on the Defence, Arms Control and Northern Ireland committees. Currently he remains on the Northern Ireland and is a member of the Intelligence and Security Committee.

Bob will be talking about his time as British United Nations Battle Group Commander in Bosnia during 1992-93. The evening will include a drinks reception, three course meal, wine and port.

KEEP UP TO DATE

Follow us on our social media accounts and be the first to know about latest Club updates, events and offers.



FULL EVENTS LISTING: 2022

*Details of events taking place at the Club this year.
Keep up-to-date via www.rafclub.org.uk/whats-on
or by following the Club on its social media channels*

MAY

FULLY BOOKED

Honey Gourmet Dinner
with RAF Beekeeper
Friday 20th May, 1830hrs
£75/£80

Club Lunch with Preston Smith -
*Spitfire: An American WWII Fighter
Pilot in the RAF* by Parke F. Smith
Friday 27th May, 1200hrs
£55/£65



JUNE

FULLY BOOKED

Fathers & Daughters Dinner
Friday 17th June, 1830hrs
£75/£80

Fathers, Mothers, Sons
and Daughters Dinner
Monday 20th June, 1830hrs
£75/£80

Gold Friends of the
RAF Club Lunch
Wednesday 29th June, 1200hrs
By Invitation Only

Silver & Gold Friends of the
RAF Club Drinks Reception
Wednesday 29th June, 1800hrs
By Invitation Only

JULY

50 Year Reception I
Tuesday 26th July, 1230hrs
By Invitation Only

AUGUST

50 Year Reception II
Sunday 7th August, 1230hrs
By Invitation Only

SEPTEMBER

Annual Battle of Britain Dinner
with Dilip Sakar MBE
Thursday 15th September, 1830hrs
£70/£80

New Member's Reception Dinner
Tuesday 20th September, 1800hrs
£50/£55

OCTOBER

Club Dinner with Colonel the
Rt Hon Bob Stewart DSO MP:
Peacekeeping in Bosnia with
the United Nations
Tuesday 11th October, 1830hrs
£60/£70



NOVEMBER

Private Tour to Fullers' Brewery
& Club Buffet Lunch
Thursday 10th November, 1200hrs
£70/£80

DECEMBER

Members' Christmas Dinner
Friday 16th December, 1830hrs
£65/£75

Members' Christmas Lunch
Monday 19th December, 1200hrs
£60/£70

To book for any Club Social event please visit: www.rafclub.org.uk/whats-on,
email events@rafclub.org.uk or call 020 7399 1081



ROYAL AIR FORCE CLUB

— FOUNDED 1918 —



Meetings and Events at the Royal Air Force Club

The RAF Club offers a wide range of versatile function rooms suitable for every occasion. From large meetings and conferences to gourmet dinners in the Library, relaxed lunches and black-tie cocktail receptions, we've got the space for everything. The dining is always exceptional and the Club's usual excellent service can be expected each and every time.

Visit www.rafclub.org.uk/private-dining and take a look at what we have to offer.

Full details on rates, menus and availability can be obtained from the Meetings & Events Team on 020 7399 1004/5 or email meetingsevents@rafclub.org.uk.

