Happy New Year to you all and welcome to the first edition of Air Cadet magazine for 2015 – it promises to be an exciting and challenging year.

The past few months have been as busy as ever for the Air Cadet Organisation with the appointment of our new Honorary Ambassador, television presenter Carol Vorderman, who has already attended her first official engagement and been “bowled over by the Air Cadets’ enthusiasm and skills”.

In her foreword to the magazine, Air Commodore Dawn McCafferty recalls the many highlights of 2014 and looks forward to what this year – and the next, when the Organisation celebrates its 75th anniversary – will bring. She also lifts the lid on her recent trip to Hong Kong that, aside from cementing the strong relationship between the ACO and the Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps, also brought some personally memorable moments, including a karaoke session – you can read all about it on page 22 of this issue.

Elsewhere in the magazine, we drop in to No. 10 Downing Street, travel to South Africa to hear about a life-changing expedition and journey to Bavaria where, for the past quarter of a century, cadets have been given the opportunity to complete their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition.

Happy reading!

“I have gained invaluable life skills from the voyage. It was everything I had anticipated it to be – fun, adventurous and challenging.”
AirCadet

Contents

Insight

4 From the top
10 RAF Charitable Trust

Duke Of Edinburgh

32 Golden opportunity
Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition in Bavaria

Features

6 Carol Vorderman joins the cadets
12 Planting Roots In The Garden Province
Once in a lifetime expedition to South Africa
22 Orient Express
Commandant In Hong Kong
30 Making music
ACO National Concert Band records CD
40 Leading the way
Sussex Wing’s Adventure Training Team

News

6 Lightning On Its Way
8 Cadets deliver Christmas cheer to No.10
18 Sail Away
24 Red Arrow jets in to meet cadets
28 Blue Bull Challenge
36 Atlas touches down
UK’s first A400M Atlas unveiled at RAF Brize Norton
41 Falklands challenge

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It has been an incredibly busy year but, as I look forward to 2015, I can genuinely feel a buzz in the air, with lots of exciting projects being developed that we hope will continue to make the air cadet experience fun, exciting, relevant and, of course, safe.

Soon I will release a comprehensive update on the 2020 Strategy so that you can all see how we are doing on our journey so far. In this foreword, I will simply highlight a few key issues.

The first, which we can’t ignore, is of course the continued pause in cadet gliding. This is hugely frustrating, not least to the staff of 2FTS who are desperate to get airborne again and take cadets gliding.

Much of the delay in securing authority to fly is down to factors beyond our control and I would be lying if I tried to tell you there is an easy fix.

There isn’t, and we will have to continue to be patient as the contractors and project staffs do their best to recover all the airframes to flight. In the interim, a limited number of cadets and staff will benefit from gliding opportunities with the RAF Gliding and Soaring Association and the British Gliding Association, and we continue to roll out the excellent VGS Simulators, funded by generous donations from the RAF Charitable Trust.

Exciting
The good news is that for most cadets, access to AEF has improved and we are seeing increasing numbers of cadets flying in the Grob Tutor. My thanks go to all the AEF volunteers for making possible this essential component of the air cadet experience.

Looking back on the year, we saw some exciting events which included: the first Cadet Strategy Day; our inaugural Drill and Ceremonial Camp; our hosting of the IACE Convention; significant success at Bisley for our cadet hot shots, and an incredible Drill and Band Championships at RAF Halton.

We also delivered thousands of cadet camp places, both in the UK and overseas, hundreds of cadets completed Ten Tors and Nijmegen, hundreds more competed in sports at the highest levels, and many cadets completed BTECs and other qualifications.

Significantly, we also saw many examples of cadets and staff putting their first aid skills to excellent use in real life scenarios and lives have been saved or injuries minimised as a direct result. Well done.

Significant
Our decision to lower the cadet entry age seems to be paying dividends, and the recent appointment of our new Honorary Ambassador, Gp Capt VRT Carol Vorderman, has already made a significant impact, with TV and national media promoting her role and helping to support volunteer and cadet recruitment.

We look forward to hosting Carol at many air cadet events next year and will follow with huge interest her solo flight around the world, scheduled for late 2015.

Exciting projects on the horizon include the emerging plans to celebrate our 75th Anniversary in 2016. Watch
this space for information on how you can get involved as there should be something for everyone, from sports challenges and fundraising, to ceremonial events, tree-planting, music concerts and the design of a 75th Anniversary Time Capsule.

Work is also in hand to deliver specialist cadet camps, focusing on drill and ceremonial, aerospace and STEM, and we are at the early stages of exploring how to embed cyber education within our syllabus.

So, there is lots to celebrate and lots to look forward to. I close by thanking the staff and adult volunteers who make this all possible. It is a genuine privilege to command the ACO and I look forward to what 2015 has in store.

Air Cadets and staff from 78 (Wembley) Squadron were among the army of volunteers that helped remove the field of ceramic Remembrance poppies from the Tower of London’s moat.

The team of 27 spent three hours on site pulling up some of the 888,246 hand-made flowers that made up Blood Swept Lands And Seas Of Red, despite heavy showers. The ceramic flowers that captured the nation’s imagination were then taken to a factory where they were cleaned and packaged in commemorative boxes to be sent to hundreds of thousands of people who paid £25 for a bloom, each of which represents a British or Commonwealth death in the First World War.

Civilian Instructor Shaun Campbell said: “The weather was not very kind to us with heavy rain throughout our three hour shift and removal of the poppies was an extremely delicate task as the ceramic poppies easily broke. However, we all felt very proud to be a part of this prestigious event.”

The weeping window and wave segments of the installation, designed by artist Paul Cummins, were the final sections to be removed and will go on tour until 2018 before being permanently based at the Imperial War Museums in London and Manchester. Prime Minister David Cameron said: “The poppy display at the Tower of London has in a very short space of time become a much loved and respected monument. We want to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to witness it, and the government is providing money and working with charities to do so. By displaying parts of the installation around the country and then permanently in the Imperial War Museum, we have ensured that this poignant memorial will be saved for the nation.”

It is thought about five million people visited the artwork. The Royal British Legion said it hoped the sale of the poppies would raise in excess of £15m.
Carol Vorderman has “flown in” as the new Ambassador for the RAF Air Cadets ...

At RAF Syerston, Nottinghamshire, where Carol was warmly welcomed by staff and cadets, she said: “I am truly honoured to be appointed as an Ambassador for the RAF Air Cadets. “I can’t wait to meet the cadets, and the adult volunteer staff who give so much of their time to support them. The cadets themselves are a shining example of the best of British youngsters - standing with them on a parade square will be a great privilege.”

Carol has long been associated with RAF linked charities including the Royal Air Forces Association, the RAF Benevolent Fund and the Bomber Command Memorial committee, leading the Salute Area in Green Park when the Queen unveiled the memorial in June 2012.

She added: “I am the mother of two children who have been either part of Air Cadets or University Air Squadron and they both loved it.”
"This is like coming home. I was studying for an engineering degree at Cambridge in 1978 and desperately wanted to join the RAF as a pilot, but sadly back then they wouldn't accept women in that position, so after I graduated I went off into another life. I finally got my Private Pilot's Licence just over a year ago."

Carol's two children were both members of the Combined Cadet Force at school, and Carol's daughter Katie holds an Officer Cadet rank within the Cambridge University Air Squadron and will have to salute her mum when they meet in uniform!

Commandant Air Cadets Air Commodore Dawn McCafferty said: “We are thrilled that Carol has agreed to be our Ambassador.

“Her legendary mathematics skills and enthusiasm for engineering, combined with her new-found aviation expertise, will inspire our young people and promote the air cadet experience to new audiences.”

Carol has already undertaken her first official engagement with the Organisation – presenting the awards at the Air Cadet National Band Championships at RAF Halton.

She said: “I couldn’t have been prouder to have had the chance to meet the winners. This is my second week and I’m already bowled over by the Air Cadets’ enthusiasm and skills. The music today was of an incredibly high standard and I can’t wait to see what else they’re capable of.”

Cadets from Devon and Somerset looked every inch the professional unit and resisted stiff competition from other squadrons throughout the UK to win the top prize as Best Band. They also took the trophy for Best Ensemble.

Drum Major, Flight Sergeant Tim Salvidge, 17, of 1955 (Wells) Squadron who led the winning band only had time to say: “It was wonderful to win,” before being asked to lead his band to perform their winning routine again in front of proud parents and visiting VIPs.

Other prizes on the day were presented to Cadet Warrant Officer Sarah Owens, 18, from 886 (Ripon) Squadron for Best Solo Bugle. She was full of enthusiasm for the Air Cadet Organisation, saying: “You get out of it what you put in. Go for it.” and added “I never really expected to do this, but I’m delighted I did.” She has done a lot with the Air Cadets, travelling from her home in Yorkshire to Cyprus and camps at many UK bases since she joined five years ago.

Corporal Lisa Baker from London and the South East, was recognised as Best Solo Drummer. The Best Drum Major was from 114 (Ruislip and Northolt) Squadron.

“ I can’t wait to meet the cadets, and the adult volunteer staff who give so much of their time ... ”
Sixteen-year-old Cadet Edward Simmons from 291 (Westminster and Chelsea) Squadron represented the Air Training Corps as part of the presentation of the RAF Benevolent Fund 1914 Carol of Christmas CD to No.10. The single, which features an ensemble of military voices and soloists accompanied by the RAF Spitfire Choir, had received more than 60,000 hits on Youtube in the run up to Christmas.

Composed by Chris Eaton and Judd Field, the song marks the Centenary of WW1 and is raising money for the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, and ABF The Soldiers’Charity.

Squadron Leader Anne MacKean said: “It has been a real honour to be a part of this song. As a personnel officer I have looked to the Service Charities to assist personnel and their families in times of significant hardship and crisis. It means so much to all the participants to be involved in, not only such an important act of remembrance, but to be part of raising money for service personnel and their families in need. We know that getting the song to number one and keeping it there means lots more money for charity - so that is our aim!”

Meanwhile, cadets from 276 (Chelmsford) Squadron also visited Downing Street as special guests of Prime Minister, David Cameron and his wife, Samantha, for the annual ceremony to switch on the Christmas lights.

Cadet Corporals Luke Egleton and Chloe James together with cadets Kade Rendall and Anthony Blanc represented the squadron at the big switch on which was also attended by a number of cadets from the other cadet forces as well as the growers who took part in a competition to provide the enormous tree.

A spokesman for the squadron said it had been an exciting evening. “The countdown commenced and the lights were switched on, with music played by the Band of the Welsh Guards. Everyone cheered and laughed and David Cameron took the opportunity to walk around and chat whilst everyone was trying to take photos.”

Before the big switch on, the cadets were invited inside No. 10 where they each got the chance to shake hands with the Prime Minister and chat to him about their cadet activities.
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Michael Jennings, 19, from Drumbo in County Down, was presented with the 2014 Royal Air Force Charitable Trust Trophy for Flying Excellence at the RAF in Concert event at the Cadogan Hall, in London.

He received his award from Squadron Leader David ‘Monty’ Montenegro, the leader of the RAF’s aerobatic display team, the Red Arrows.

The Trophy is awarded annually by the Trust to the top-performing Air Cadet who, in the opinion of the Air Cadet Organisation (ACO), has shown both outstanding flying ability and personal qualities.

Currently a Cadet Warrant Officer with 817 (Lisburn) Squadron and 664 Volunteer Gliding Squadron (VGS) at Newtownards, Michael leaves the cadets this month to rejoin as an adult Civilian Gliding Instructor at 664 VGS.

He says: “My vision is not 20/20, so unfortunately I can’t join the RAF as a pilot, but I’d like to gain my PPL and fly civilian aircraft, and also fly the Grob Vigilant at the VGS, teaching cadets how to fly.”

He is currently studying Electronic Engineering at the University of Ulster.

Michael added: “I would have never been able to fly if it wasn’t for the Air Cadets and so I’m eternally grateful to the Organisation.

“During my time in the cadets I’ve been all over the UK, I’ve been mountain climbing, shooting, adventure training, biking, teaching and learning first aid etc. I’ve learned a lot from the cadets, mainly how to become independent and be confident in myself. When I was 13, prior to joining, I wouldn’t talk to anyone but a year later you couldn’t shut me up!”

Looking back on the award presentation, he says: “The Concert and presentation were absolutely incredible. I had the opportunity to talk to all the Red Arrows and their Engineering Officer, and I chatted to James May and the Chairman of the RAFCT, Air Marshal Sir Kevin Leeson too.

“It was an honour to meet so many new and friendly people thanks to the Charitable Trust. I cannot thank them anymore!”

And his advice to those thinking of joining the Air Cadets? He says: “My advice is to do it immediately! The opportunities that are presented to you are far beyond what you would ever think of doing in your day-to-day life.

“I started as a cadet who had never flown before and now I can fly an aircraft solo. I always tell my new cadets to put their name down for absolutely every activity they can: my only regret was not doing that sooner!

“I had never visited anywhere else in the UK other than Northern Ireland until I joined the Air Cadets. It just shows when you put some effort into it, the rewards last a lifetime!”

The concert was the scene for another presentation when, on behalf of the Charitable Trust, Top Gear presenter James May presented Group Captain Jim Leggat, Regional Commandant Air Cadets Scotland & Northern Ireland, with a cheque for £250,000. This is the latest instalment of an overall grant of £625,000 to fund 25 flight simulators for Air Cadets.
Applying for a grant - Easy as One, Two, Three ...

Are you fundraising for something that would make a real difference to your squadron? If so, have you considered applying for a grant from the RAF Charitable Trust?

From this month, the process will be more straightforward as the Trust and ACO have been working together to produce a new application form, specially designed for use by Air Cadets. Squadron Leader Dave Taylor, ACO Radio Communications Officer, explains: “We wanted to encourage more grant applications and felt that simplifying the form and making it more user-friendly might help.

“By making the process more straightforward we hope to encourage more people to apply, and also make it easier to assess applications. This should ensure there’s a clear email trail to follow so we can check that everyone who needs to has seen the application.

“The new form will be available from our intranet Bader SHAREPOINT (at www.bader.mod.uk) and we expect a flood of applications to come in after that.”

Amanda Butcher, Director of the RAF Charitable Trust, adds: “The Trustees are huge supporters of the ACO and happy to consider bids for a range of projects. They are particularly keen to help units that have already done some of their own fundraising to get a project off the ground.”

Still not sure? Check out the RAFCT website for details of bids that have been successful in the past - be inspired! The three page form comprises:

Page 1 - Here you say what the application is about, who it’s from, how much you’re asking for and describe the project in detail;

Page 2 - This includes how you’ll measure the success of your project, how you’ll publicise it (doing so is one of the conditions of getting a grant), how you’ll recognise the Trust’s support, and a supporting statement from wing, region or headquarters as appropriate;

Page 3 - This is the page for financial details including any other grant applications, any fund-raising a unit has done on its own, the number of cadets who will benefit from the grant, and the number in the unit.

SHAREPOINT will also have Guidelines for completing the Application if you need some extra help.
The youngsters spent three weeks in South Africa labouring on a life-changing project, trekking, visiting battlefields and big game spotting.

Now the five girls and eight boys from 346 (Tynemouth) and 404 (Morpeth) Squadrons have spoken of their amazing adventure, with several of the party determined to return to help continue their transformational aid work.

The cadets, aged 15 to 18, spent the first week of their trip at the Entabeni Education Centre in KwaZulu-Natal in northern South Africa, where they were tasked with creating a sustainable garden at a school in Insonge, an hour’s trek from their base.

The teenagers dug trenches, tilled the earth, planted trees and vegetables and turned an unpromising patch of dry earth into what will soon be a productive garden producing healthy fruit and other crops for use by the village children and their families.

Insonge’s elders were so impressed with the group’s efforts they invited them to a coming of age party for two villagers where they tried the local food and joined in with traditional Zulu tribal dances. The experience has had a lasting and positive impact on the cadets, with some now reassessing what they want to do with their lives.

Cadet Sergeant Elliot Rogers, 17, from 346 (Tynemouth) Squadron, said: “I was planning on going to university after my A levels, but now I want to go back and volunteer at Entabeni.

Amazing

“It was an amazing experience. I had no expectations before I went but everyone was so welcoming. The work was hard but once you have met the people and seen the lives they lead you have a better understanding. It was a great feeling knowing we had made a difference and that the work we did is going to continue...
Teenage air cadets have returned home after working with an impoverished African community on a once-in-a-lifetime expedition in South Africa’s Garden Province.

Having a positive impact on the villagers’ lives for years to come.

Elliot was joined on the trip by his 346 colleagues Cadet Flight Sergeant Liam McConville, 16, Corporals Josh Gribbin, 17, and Ben Hennessey, 18, and cadets Patrick Quinn, Jack Sherrin and Kai Korzonek, all 15, and Callum Watt, 17.

The 404 contingent comprised Corporals Alexandra Sikkink and Rebecca Reed, both 18, Megan Milbourne, 17, and Ellie McGrady, 16, and Cadet Lisa Hunter, 15.

They were accompanied by Adult Sergeant Sarah Robson, a 27-year-old veterinary nurse, and Civilian Instructor Kirsty McVay, 23, a staff nurse at North Tyneside General Hospital, who both volunteer with 346 (Tynemouth) Squadron.

**Legendary**

The cadets – who each had to raise £2,500 to meet the cost of the South Africa expedition – also went trekking in the Drakensberg Mountains where they walked nearly 2,000m to the top of Mount Lebanon and slept overnight in caves; camped out on the rugged Ithala Game Reserve where they saw elephants, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, giraffes and monkeys, and visited the legendary battlefields of Isandlwana and Rorke’s Drift on the Natal border with Zululand.

It was here they met the descendants of some of the warriors who fought in the Zulu wars against the British and heard their unique perspective on the 19th century battles.

They were particularly moved by a 10km walk along the rocky and steep Fugitives’ Trail along which the few British survivors of the battle of Isandlwana escaped.

Corporal Ellie McGrady recalled: “All the way along the route there were piles of stones marking the mass graves of the British soldiers who fought and died. They are still maintained by the locals and painted white so you can see them for miles around.

“There were hundreds and hundreds of these cairns. It was really eerie and seeing all those memorials was very emotional.”

It was only on her return to the UK that Corporal Megan Milbourne discovered that her great-great-grandfather had fought and died in the battle.
“It was a strange feeling knowing I had been to where he died. I know nothing about him, but I now want to find out more.”

The highlight of the group’s trip was Entabeni, however, and spending time with the Insonge villagers. Corporal Alex Sikkink said: “Without a doubt the best bit for me was the coming of age party. It was a wonderful experience. “Going on safari was amazing, but to go to South Africa and then as a stranger be invited to a 21st birthday party and be welcomed into the community like that, was a real privilege.”

Cadet Jack Sherrin added: “On the way to the party we walked down a tunnel of Zulu warriors with their spears and shields. It was incredible and it was a great chance for us all to learn something about their culture and get to know them. “We got an understanding of the people and the way they live that we never thought we would.”

Corporal Josh Gribbin summed up the feeling of his friends: “They have nothing, yet they were willing to give so much of the little they have to complete strangers.”

Surprisingly, none of the cadets missed the comforts of home. “You think you need so much, but you don’t,” said Corporal Rebecca Reed. “I enjoyed not using my mobile phone, and it shows that you can still be happy without those things. One of the things that really struck me was how excited everyone was by our cameras. Every time we went to take a photo everyone crowded around and wanted to be in the pictures.”

There are many memories that will stay with the cadets. For Cdt Flt Sgt Liam McConville it was “seeing the happiness on the kids’ faces when we played football with them.”

And for Cadet Kai Korzonek “knowing we made a difference and that the people of Insonge will remember us.”

Proud

Cpl Ben Hennessey admitted he thought it was ‘going to be a holiday, but it was a lot harder than I expected. But it’s not every day you get to go to South Africa and see and do the things we did. I am very proud of what we achieved.”

All feel their South African adventure has changed them for the better. “I know I am a different person after coming back,” said Cadet Lisa Hunter. “I feel I have matured since I went away and I have realised there is more to life than I thought. I’m now making a conscious effort to be happier every day.”

“Despite having nothing, everyone we met was so enthusiastic about everything. We have nothing to complain about.”

Sgt Sarah Robson believes she is more open-minded, optimistic and patient. “Would I do it all again? Without a doubt. South Africa is an amazing country, the people are wonderful and I would love to see how the project we worked on develops. All the cadets worked incredibly hard raising money just to go on the trip and I’m thrilled that they all got so much out of it.

“They learned a massive amount about another country and its culture and they were all a credit to themselves, the Air Training Corp and their squadrons.”
Air Cadets Features

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**Top sports cadets**
The best sports cadets for the Air Training Corps have been announced. Cadet Sara Daffy from 2160 (Sleaford) Squadron was named best Female Sports Cadet and Cadet Flight Sergeant Lewis Boyle, 1156 (Whitley Bay) Squadron, was named best Male Sports Cadet.

Lewis, who takes part in most sports, said he was “over the moon” to receive the award.

Sara competes in hockey, athletics and netball and said she was shocked when she found out she had won. “It’s a big achievement. I’m very proud,” she said.

The ATC’s Sports Officer, Alex Maddison, said: “Both Sara and Lewis had to overcome strong competition to win their sports cadets of the year award - a testament to the level of candidates put forward for the award and the achievement in coming out on top.”

The Gillan Trophy for Best Sporting Wing went to Merseyside Wing for an incredible 11th year in succession and Central & East Region collected the Terry Eyre Trophy for Best Sports Region – a trophy that they have won 14 years in a row - every year since the trophy was first introduced.

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**James flies off with title**

A Longbenton air cadet is flying high after being recognised as the best pilot in the Air Cadet Organisation and won a scholarship to gain his Private Pilot’s Licence.

Nineteen-year-old James Nealings received the John Cunningham Bust in front of dignitaries at the presentation held at the old RAF Second World War Fighter Command Headquarters at Bentley Priory. The bust is awarded annually to the cadet who is considered to be the best all-round individual pilot with their leadership skills, academic performance, air-mindedness, inter-personal qualities as well as flying ability being assessed.

James, who has also completed his gliding and advanced glider scholarship training, said: “To have won hasn’t really sunk-in. It was incredible just to get my flying wings. I was really proud of getting to the top four and never intended to get this far; I just had the aim of flying to my best and gaining my scholarship.”

He went on: “Joining Longbenton Squadron is the best decision I’ve made. I love flying and will hopefully make a career out of it, but it’s also helped me in lots of other ways.”

Proud squadron boss, Flight Lieutenant Gary Richardson said: “Piloting an aircraft is never easy, and to do it at such a young age shows exceptional aptitude, maturity and gumption. James is an excellent role model to others and we all wish him continued success.”

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**VIP tour**

Five lucky rafa YOUTH members, all Air Cadets, were treated to a VIP tour of the Bomber Command Memorial and lunch at the RAF Club.

The group was joined by special guest Flight Sergeant (Retd) Jim Gooding. He was a Lancaster Rear Gunner in 622 Squadron of Bomber Command and is now President and Chairman of the Thurrock Branch of the RAF Association.

Jim was able to describe to the young people what it was like to fly in a Lancaster during the war and to be part of a squadron.

He made the day very special. Jim said: “It was a big day for me. It was the first time that I was able to get up to the Bomber Command Memorial and the rafa YOUTH team made it all the more special - it made my day, more so as you have made me an honorary rafa YOUTH member! You made me feel very proud.”
Defence Secretary Michael Fallon has announced that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) has reached agreement in principle on an order for the first production batch of four Lightning II stealth combat aircraft – which will operate from both the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers and RAF land bases.

A formal contract is expected to be placed within weeks for the F-35B aircraft, which form part of the MOD's investment in Lightning II over the next five years to procure an initial 14 of these multi-role fifth generation aircraft, together with the necessary support arrangements and infrastructure.

Mr Fallon said: "The Lightning II will equip the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force with a highly advanced multi-role stealth combat aircraft. They will form part of the first UK-based squadron of F-35s, which will take up station at RAF Marham in 2018."

Air Commodore Mark Hopkins, Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for Lightning II, said: "Lightning II will be a genuinely transformational aircraft when it enters service with the RAF and the Royal Navy. It will offer a quantum leap in terms of capability and, alongside Typhoon, will offer the UK flexible and adept Air Power for the foreseeable future."

Leaders of the future
Twenty-six air cadets from across the UK have been learning how to become leaders of the future at a week-long Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) course run by education charity CVQO.

During the course, hosted by training specialists Outposts, the cadets completed a series of command tasks, including trebuchet construction, canyon crossing and raft building, in addition to classroom-based theory sessions, to achieve the ILM Level 3 in Leadership.

Cadet Andrew Dial (pictured) of 200 (Torquay) Squadron said: "I chose to come on this course because it will look good on my CV and aid me to lead cadets when I return to my squadron. I feel that it has taught me a lot about different leadership models and how to motivate teams."

Cadet Jake Gallagher of 2469 (Exeter St Thomas) Squadron added: "This has been one of the best courses I have ever been on. As a cadet, you tend to go on camps where you meet different people and experience working in groups, but I'm hoping to pursue a career in the RAF and this qualification will really help my application."

The ILM Level 3 in Leadership and Management is an important part of the development of young learners, as they move into further education or employment. It brings out key skills in leadership, management and teamwork.

Cadets Commended
Cadets from 864 (Marham) Detached Flight and 42F (King's Lynn) Squadron have received a very special honour.

The two units have been awarded a Station Commander’s Commendation for their efforts at RAF Marham's Friends and Families Day and the award was presented in person to the units by RAF Marham Station Commander, Group Captain Harvey Smyth. He said: "Both units thoroughly deserved this award: they are staunch supporters of RAF Marham, and did a brilliant job last August whilst supporting the Station's Friends and Families Day. Had it not been for their sterling performance, be that guiding traffic or selling programmes, the event would not have been so successful."

"The cadets are always professional, polite, and well turned out – they represent all that is good about the ATC and I am proud to have them so closely associated with RAF Marham." Flight Lieutenant Tony Hall, Officer Commanding 864 (Marham) DF, said: "Commendations such as this are not handed out every day. We are proud to have served the Station and will continue to do so in future."
Senior cadets spent a week during the summer taking part in the annual HQ Air Cadets/Ocean Youth Trust Scotland West Coast Challenge offshore sailing expedition.

Sailing out of Oban onboard Alba Explorer under the watchful eyes and expert guidance of the OYT Scotland sea-staff, the novice crew was to experience a challenging and demanding seven days crewing the 72’ yacht around the remote and stunning Western Isles.

It was an incredible achievement especially as none of the cadets had any such previous sailing experience. Yet, thanks to the dedicated and experienced OYT Scotland sea staff, by the end of the week the cadets had acquired the skills and knowledge required to obtain their competent crew qualification and also be able to fully operate and run the 72’ yacht themselves.

Civilian Instructor Charlotte Hughes said: “The team managed to sail and navigate around some of the most beautiful places in the Hebrides including Vatersay, Lochmaddy, Scalpay and the Isle of Rum and on some occasions were able to go ashore and explore the beautiful islands.”

And at the end of the week on the return journey to Oban, the cadets were given the incredible opportunity to take over the complete running of the yacht under ‘light-touch’ supervision from the sea staff.

The 10 senior cadets took up the challenge, using the skills and knowledge they had learnt throughout the week to plan the route, navigate and sail the vessel safely and with a high degree of competence.

“To see the difference in the cadets’ knowledge and understanding of the running of the boat from when they first stepped aboard was incredible and it made me feel especially proud to watch them working as such a tight knit team, allowing the yacht to arrive safely into Oban on the Saturday night,” said Charlotte.

For many of the cadets, it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Cadet Sergeant Peter Bache from 328 (Kingston upon Thames) Squadron, pictured at the helm, said: “Never in four years as a cadet have I experienced a week so challenging, learned so much or explored to such a degree. The highlights include the beautiful remote landscape of Scotland, dolphins leaping with glee and simply being able to steer a 72ft yacht through crashing waves.”

Cadet Sergeant Fabian Noble from 1036 (Bury) Squadron added: “Sailing around the western isles of Scotland was an amazing, unforgettable experience.

I have gained invaluable life skills from the voyage. It was everything I had anticipated it to be - fun, adventurous and challenging.”

All taking part would recommend the week to others. Cadet Flight Sergeant Adam Edwards from 333 (Ludlow) Squadron said: “I’ve had such an amazing week being part of an amazing team. It’s been spectacular doing something new which I would never have done without the opportunity given to us by the ATC.”

The OYT Scotland Voyage for 2015 will take place from the 3rd to the 9th of August. If you will be 18 years or over and you are interested in a place, keep an eye out for details.
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215 City of Swansea Squadron ATC at the Armed Forces Parade – Cardiff
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SUPPLIERS OF MARCHING BAND EQUIPMENT
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A Mablethorpe cadet enjoyed a trip to remember on board the Lancaster bomber ‘Just Jane’ thanks to the Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, Tony Worth.

Mr Worth received the offer of a ride down the runway on ‘Just Jane’ at the county’s Poppy Appeal Launch at Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre in East Kirkby, where he presented an honorary award to the cadets from 1228 (Mablethorpe) Squadron.

However, he generously offered one of the cadets the chance to take his place and Cadet G Lippolis was chosen by his fellow cadets for his outstanding performance in all areas of the cadet organisation including parades, community work and sports.

He has represented the unit at local and regional level in hockey and athletics. He said: “I can’t believe it, it is my first ever time in an aircraft. It is an extremely kind gesture and I am so pleased and grateful for the experience.”

‘Just Jane’ taxied around the runway at East Kirkby as Cdt Lippolis sat in the cockpit. He also had a tour around the Lancaster where he learned about the history of the magnificent aircraft. After the run he had the opportunity to tour the inside of the plane.

He said: “It was a tight squeeze getting into the gunner position at the rear of the aircraft although it was incredible to sit in the seat of a gunner. It really did bring home how it must have been for the servicemen during The Second World War and I will remember this experience for the rest of my life.”

“I would like to say a big thank you to Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire Tony Worth for this unique opportunity.”

Santa dash
Sixteen Air Cadets from 460 (Dunstable) Squadron took part in the annual Santa Dash charity fun run, which is organised by Leighton Buzzard charity Kids Out, and former Commandant Air Cadets, Gordon Moulds (pictured).

The cadets completed the two and a half mile course, dressed as Santa, and marched the last 200 metres together as a squadron to warm applause from fellow runners and supporters.
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Every once in a while, an invitation is made that you’d be mad to refuse and the chance to visit the Hong Kong Air Cadets Corps (HKACC) to review their 2014 Annual Parade fell into that category.

For those of you not too sure about the HKACC, the Corps was formed in 1971 and now has approximately 3,000 cadets led by 1,200 adult volunteers.

Cadets meet in schools and universities and their training syllabus is based on the UK’s syllabus, with ACO staff visiting every now and then to train the volunteers.

The HKACC is a fellow member of the International Air Cadet Exchange Programme (IACE) and every year the UK and HKACC send cadets and staff to each others’ countries to exchange ideas and experiences.

The HKACC have no access to internal gliding opportunities or fixed wing AEF but they do access helicopter AEF via privately operated and Government Flying Service helicopters and they have an excellent programme called DragonAir which sees older cadets mentored by members of Cathay Pacific, with many cadets going on to aviation careers cadets and staff study BTechs with the CVQO and there is a strong focus on community service, sport, camps and drill.

The HKACC have very limited Government funding and cadets and staff have to buy their own uniforms. They are fortunate to have several highly influential and generous honorary officers who support projects that are beyond the normal budget - my visit was only possible because of their generosity.
Day 1 saw me travelling from the UK to Hong Kong via Dubai, a trip that took over 16 hours door-to-door.

Hong Kong is eight hours ahead of the UK so I was well and truly shattered by the time we reached our destination, the very impressive Marco Polo hotel in Kowloon.

On arrival, we were met by a large and enthusiastic hosting party and we were escorted throughout the next five days by a group of dedicated volunteers who could not do enough to help. Even though it was late when we arrived, we were taken on a short tour of the local area so we could take in the spectacle of the Hong Kong night skyline, truly an impressive view.

Day 2 was set aside for sightseeing and adjusting to the local time and temperature - a very pleasant 23 degrees after the damp chill of Lincolnshire.

Our first call was a visit to The Peak on Hong Kong Island, a famous landmark that allows incredible views down over the City and across to Kowloon and beyond to mainland China. After a short but respectful stop at the Stanley Commonwealth War Graves site, we visited Deep Water and Repulse Bays, admiring the beautiful beaches and stunning scenery across the islands.

At Stanley, we wandered around the local market, admiring the silks, jade and other local souvenirs before returning to Central for a delicious Cantonese lunch and my first attempt at using chopsticks - failed dismally, but got better as the days passed! Lunch included lots of green tea but we opted not to try the hairy brown crabs, a local delicacy, all tied up (alive!) and ready for the pot.

After lunch we hopped on the Star Ferry across to Hong Kong Island, just to experience this iconic method of transportation. Then it was back to Kowloon for a delicious meal in the Shanghai restaurant - sampled fried jelly fish - surprisingly crunchy! After dinner we walked to a local night market before finally heading back to the hotel, heads buzzing with new sights, sounds and smells.

Day 3, scheduled for liaison meetings began with a swim in the hotel pool and a walk to Kowloon Park to watch the Tai Chi lessons in progress - looks a lot easier than it is!

We were collected by our hosts and escorted to the HQ of the HKACC, which is collocated with the Aviation Club. After a delicious lunch hosted by Group Captain Wing Lee, we toured their very basic but effective facilities and met the small team of staff who support the cadet experience in Hong Kong.

The host team, led by Wing Commander Wilson Chan, then gave a presentation on the Corps, which led into a very constructive meeting during which we discussed past, present and future partnerships between our two organisations.

We were absolutely aligned in our aspirations for the future and saw the emergence of youth aviation education programmes in Shandong Province in mainland China as a particularly exciting development. Indeed, a representative from the Shandong Aviation Industry Association was a fellow guest later in the week and, despite the language barriers, there was clear affinity between the UK, Hong Kong and China in supporting youth aviation.

After the meeting, we headed back to the hotel to change and were then taken to the New Territories for an incredible dining experience. It started at the fish market, where we chose from a vast range of live fish and various seafood delicacies, which were then bagged up and taken to the restaurant for cooking.

I have never eaten such fresh or delicious fish and the meal was also certainly one of the noisiest I have experienced, with lots of families sitting around huge tables, feasting on similar delicacies. A great evening and, once again, we were hosted wonderfully by a group of superb hosting officers.

Day 4 will probably go down as one of the most remarkable of my life (shortly followed by Day 5!).

We returned to The Aviation Club to be met by Gigi, our helicopter pilot, who took us on what was supposed to be a 20-minute sortie that lasted 80! We were flown all around Hong Kong, including landing at the former Sek Kong airfield, which is now a People’s Liberation Army base. We also flew around some incredible coastal scenery north of Hong Kong Island, with views into mainland China, landing on Gigi’s private yacht for a minute, which was simply amazing.

On our way back we flew across the famous Victoria Harbour and I was allowed the privilege of handling the controls, a unique opportunity which once again proved why I did not pursue a career as a pilot! On returning to The Aviation Club, we were hosted to lunch and then went to visit 407 Squadron, briefly popping into the Old Walled City of Kowloon on the way. At 407 Squadron, which is based in La Salle Boys School, I inspected a very smart parade and was then taken on a tour of cadet activity, ranging from aviation classes to foot and weapons drill and an excellent presentation on the Squadron.

A lively Q&A session with the cadets rounded off the visit and I was very proud to present some awards.
Air Cadet Features

and to promote a cadet to corporal. It was wonderful to see just how similar a HKACC unit visit was to the many I have conducted back in the UK and I have to say there was little to differentiate between the two organisations in terms of cadet and staff enthusiasm and professionalism.

After a short break, we were on our way to another highlight of the visit - a formal Dining-in Night at the Aviation Club. Wearing No 8 Mess kit for the first time in my 30-year career, it was wonderful to meet so many members of the HKACC, including some cadets and honorary officers.

I believe we made history that night as the top table hosted a senior UK RAF officer and a mainland Chinese senior representative for the first time. Toasts were made and speeches given (I even ventured a few words in Cantonese) and I exchanged gifts with the HKACC Commandant as a token of our mutual respect and support.

As if Day 4 were not incredible enough, Day 5 was the main reason for my visit and will never be forgotten.

After a morning brief on the parade, I dressed in No 1s, including sword and white gloves, and was taken to the Officers’ Mess at the Hong Kong Police Training College to meet key players before the parade itself. The weather was hot (26 degrees or so) and I envied the HKACC their lightweight uniforms.

At the appointed time, I arrived at the parade square to inspect the 400 cadets and staff on parade - an impressive sight and one that will feature as one of the highlights of my time as Commandant. The parade itself was very well executed, including march pasts and an advance in review order.

After the parade, I watched an equally impressive continuity drill display and was then hosted around a variety of displays demonstrating the range of HKACC activities. I managed to meet lots of staff and cadets before returning to the Mess for some refreshments. This memorable day was topped off by a celebratory Chinese buffet hosted by Honorary Group Captain Alfred Chan at the famous Aberdeen Marina Club.

I don’t think I have ever dined anywhere quite so grand and the meal was exquisite. Wasn’t quite expecting the pre- and post-dinner karaoke sessions (I kid you not!) and I don’t think I will ever forget singing along with the HKACC Commander, both in No 1s and cheered on by fellow officers - surreal, but ... when in Rome ...

The evening included an exchange of gifts between the ACO and the HKACC and repeated promises to continue to enhance the wonderful relationship between our two organisations.

Our final day was another one of relaxation and sightseeing. We returned to Stanley to do some souvenir shopping before lunch and then packed our bags to head back to the airport.

Hosted again by a group of escort officers in a members’ Club in the terminal itself, we took the chance to celebrate Wilson’s 50th birthday and then bade farewell to our wonderful hosts, each extracting promises of return visits and reciprocal hospitality. The long journey home was uneventful albeit another 20-hour journey. All in all, a quite incredible six days, which has left an indelible and incredibly positive impression upon me.

I have made so many new friends on the other side of the world and know that we share a passion for our respective air cadet organisations that we can and will develop to mutual benefit. My thanks go to Squadron Leader Tommy Thomson, our Liaison Officer, and all the staff and volunteers in Hong Kong for making my visit so enjoyable and informative.

It was such an honour to review the parade on behalf of the RAF and the ACO and I thank the Commandant HKACC and his team for making it possible.
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New cadet centre opens

A new Air Cadet Regional Activity Centre has been officially opened at RAF Lossiemouth by Group Captain Phil Dacre.

The ‘Dacre’ centre houses the Highland Wing HQ, an Activity Centre with a Flight Simulator, Radio Communications Training Room, IT Suite and several briefing rooms, plus overnight accommodation for 48 cadets and eight adult staff.

A spokesman said: “The Centre will benefit not only cadets and staff from the north of Scotland, but also from across the entire Air Cadet Organisation by providing a footprint for gaining the ‘all-round’ RAF experience at this busy, fast-jet operating base.”

Group Captain Dacre and his family have a long association with the Air Training Corps, with the Dacre Sword and Dacre Brooch being awarded to the Best Male and Best Female cadets across the Corps. Group Captain Dacre is a former Regional Chair for Scotland & Northern Ireland, a former Wing Chair for Highland Wing, and he remains the Civilian Committee Chair for 423 (Elgin) Squadron.

The opening ceremony was attended by Air Commodore Dawn McCafferty, Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Gerry Mayhew, Air Officer Scotland, local Station Executives and Air Cadet Region and Wing Staff.

Red Arrow jets in to meet cadets

Air cadets are on cloud nine after a high-flying member of the Red Arrows aerobatic display team dropped in to see them.

Tyneside-born Squadron Leader Ruth Shackleton is the ‘Reds’ team manager. And the 39-year-old who grew up in South Shields and Northumberland took time out of her busy schedule to deliver an inspiring talk to the cadets from 346 (Tynemouth) Squadron.

Squadron Leader Shackleton chatted about her rise to the heights within the RAF and her immense pride at managing the Red Arrows during their 50th anniversary year.

Her presentation also covered how the Red Arrows – regarded as one of the world’s top aerobatic display teams – was formed, how the pilots perfect their formations, the important role they play in promoting Britain both at home and abroad and what her job involves.

As the team manager, Squadron Leader Shackleton is in charge of co-ordinating everything from where the Red Arrows stay if they travel away to aerobatic shows to how they reach their daredevil displays, organising engineers, photographers and flight planners.

She said of her visit: “I always enjoy meeting young people, especially air cadets. They are the future of our country and potentially they may be inspired to join the RAF. To come to Tynemouth was particularly special given that I’m from the region. The cadets were a real credit to the Air Cadet Organisation.”

Squadron Leader Shackleton’s visit to 346 comes just weeks after the widow of Red Arrows’ pilot Jon Egging also chatted to the cadets.

The 33-year-old Flight Lieutenant was killed when his Hawk T1 jet crashed at the Bournemouth Air Festival in August 2011. Dr Emma Egging spoke about the work now being done in her husband’s memory via the Jon Egging Trust to motivate underachieving youngsters.

Flight Lieutenant Dan Laidler, Officer Commanding 346 (Tynemouth) Squadron, said it had been a privilege to welcome two such inspirational women to the group’s North Shields headquarters.

“It was a great opportunity for the cadets to meet Dr Egging and we’re thrilled that Squadron Leader Shackleton has taken the time to travel back to her native Tyneside too to visit us.

“She sets a fantastic example of how a passion for and career in aviation can evolve from being a cadet herself to reaching the top of her chosen profession. She shows where dedication and hard work can get you, and for our cadets who are just taking their first steps into the adult world, she is an incredible role model.”

Words by: CI Jane Hall
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Blue Bull challenge
Cadets from all over Norfolk recently took part in the Blue Bull Challenge – a newly-created military skills’ competition held at RAF Marham.

Following kit checks, a briefing and some final words of encouragement from the Station Commander, the teams made their way to the first of the challenges, all of which had been designed to test the skills of new and seasoned cadets alike.

Individual challenges included an aircraft recognition and First Aid tests as well as a general service knowledge quiz, whilst the remaining challenges required leadership and teamwork for success.

For the final challenge, the cadet teams completed a simulated fire-fighting drill with one of the large trucks operated by RAF Marham’s Fire Section. Then it was back to competition control where everyone gathered as the scores were tallied and the results revealed.

The team from 1895 (Cromer) Squadron took first place and the Blue Bull Challenge Trophy. Cadets from 2534 (Fakenham) Squadron came second with the team from 864 (Watton) Squadron in third place.

RAF Marham’s Air Cadet Liaison Officer, Flight Lieutenant James Pettit, presented Cadet Corporal Eleanor Richards with the trophy and said: “Seeing so many teams from across the county in action has been fantastic and I hope they’ve all enjoyed the day as much as I have. I look forward to welcoming them back next year to see if anyone can wrestle the trophy away from Cromer Squadron!’

Band helps make dreams come true
Members of the Air Cadet National Marching Band, at the request of the charity, Dreamflight, ensured nearly 200 young children with a serious illness or disability had a rousing send off on the holiday of a lifetime to Orlando, Florida.

Dreamflight operates the annual holiday for the children who are all aged between eight and 14.

The charity believes that fun and joy are just as important as medical research and equipment – especially for children who perhaps can’t wait long enough for the breakthrough they need or whose illnesses and treatments have brought pain, distress and disruption to their lives.

As the children waited at London’s Heathrow Airport before boarding the specially chartered British Airways Boeing 747, nearly 50 members of the Air Cadet National Marching Band performed a range of music including Lord of the Dance, a medley of Disney tunes (especially arranged for the event by Squadron Leader Andy White, the band’s Director of Music) and the RAF march-past – all received with rapturous applause and several guest appearances by ‘new’ Drum Majors and conductors!

For many cadets, including those who have played at Downing Street and Buckingham Palace, the event was the highlight so far of their musical careers. Cadet Sergeant Lisa Baker from 1408 (Cranleigh) Detached Flight said it had been “absolutely fantastic” playing for such a good cause.

This was echoed by clarinettist Cadet Dominic Copestick from 1312 (Southend) Squadron who felt the whole experience of working with the children and helping to give them a good time before they jetted off to Florida had been really eye-opening.

Cadet Sergeant Aaron Hall from Ryde School CCF (RAF) section on the Isle of Wight said that while “a hangar may not the best of venues, it was great to be a part of the event and gave the best feeling to help in such a good cause”.

Squadron Leader Andy White said: “In over 30 years of playing in a variety of events, I can safely say that Dreamflight was the most fulfilling and enjoyable performance yet.

“The reaction of all the children in the room was so very special. More so, though, was the excellent manner in which the Air Cadets represented the Organisation. The standard of music was tremendous and the engagement that the cadets had with the children was absolutely spot on. I cannot wait until next year!”
Making history

Youngsters from 1406 (Spalding) Squadron have made history by becoming the first Air Cadet unit to donate money back to the RAF Charitable Trust.

In 2013 a Trust donation of £10,600 helped the squadron to replace its old tired minibus with a brand-new vehicle which was handed over in May.

So far the squadron’s new vehicle has taken cadets to venues including the RAF Hendon Air Museum, the Shuttleworth Collection in Bedfordshire, the Path Finders Museum at RAF Wyton, and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight at RAF Coningsby.

At the end of last year, as a thank you, the cadets held a bag-packing fundraiser at their local superstore and were able to send a donation of £250 back to the Trust.

Amanda Butcher, Director of the Trust, said: “The RAF Charitable Trust supports the ACO in a number of ways, from high-profile expensive projects to smaller grants at grass-roots level.

“The award to 1406 (Spalding) Squadron was one of the larger grants paid direct to a unit and the squadron’s decision to raise money to support the Trust is a great example of community spirit and will help us to help other units. We are very grateful for this gesture of appreciation.”

Cadet Cameron McGeown, 14, said: “Having the minibus allowed me to go to the Farnborough Futures Day where I was lucky enough to speak with RAF aircrew.

“That reinforced my decision to join the Royal Air Force, with the ambition of becoming a fast-jet pilot.”

Flight Lieutenant Keith Bate, Officer Commanding, added: “The minibus has taken cadets to a wide range of events, and allowed them to try an ever-increasing range of activities.

“This would not have been possible without the generous grant from the RAF Charitable Trust, and we cannot thank the Trust enough.”

Learning to Lead

Cadets from Devon and Somerset Wing have taken part in Exercise Phoenix Griffin – a packed week of training at Swynnerton Camp in Staffordshire.

It also included a visit from the RAF Motivational and Leadership Team who put the cadets through their paces in a series of practical exercises, designed to develop leadership and teamwork skills. Among the visitors to the exercise were Lady Elizabeth Gass, the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, and Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Squire.
Making music

An 11-track CD, recorded by the ACO’s National Concert Band, should be released this month.

The CD, recorded at the at the state-of-the-art recording facilities of the RAF’s Central Band at RAF Northolt in London, is all about the “stage and screen” and features tracks from major film and theatre productions such as Les Misérables, Oliver and Chicago.

The cadet musicians, drawn from both the ATC and the CCF( RAF) from across the country, spent four days rehearsing before it was into the recording studio. For most cadets, it was their first time in a recording studio. Seventeen-year-old Cadet Sergeant Milly Luddington said: “It was a really good experience and great to have the support of the RAF’s musicians.”

Cadet Sergeant Natasha Puttick (pictured left) from 2493 (Alsager) Squadron, a Grade 8 clarinet player in the band, was chosen to sing a solo as part of the recording and although the recording process meant she had to stop and start in the middle of a performance, she took it all in her stride. “The song is phrased so that having to pick-up in the middle of the tune is not that difficult,” she said.

The band’s drummer was Cadet George Topham from King’s School CCF in Grantham. Another Grade eight player he auditioned for the band and said that he was really enjoying playing with the big ensemble and was learning “a lot of really good stuff.”

It took two days to record all the tracks, which had been specially chosen by the Band’s Director of Music, Squadron Leader Alan Glover and Training Officer, Squadron Leader Ken Bell.

Sqn Ldr Glover said: “This is the first time that we have used these wonderful facilities and the cadets really responded well. The music standards were as high as I have ever known them.

“Thanks are due to the Music Services Officer, Squadron Leader Sue Leighton and her team for running all the behind-the-scenes operations that made the week run so smoothly.”

Commandant Air Cadets, Air Commodore Dawn McCafferty, visited the band during the week and was very impressed with the “exceptional musical performance” she witnessed.

She said: “If the quality of the rehearsals is anything to go by, it will be a fantastic CD and I for one will buy one and recommend it to all.”
Simulators through the ages

By Captain Chris Rigby of Flight Simulators Midlands

Like many professions, the job and simulators have changed hugely over the years. I was very fortunate to have been trained at the College of Air Training, Finningley, by the then BCAC and BEA, back in 1970. At Finningley we were introduced to our first instrument flying on the infamous Link trainer. A small dark box with a basic screen and ADI needles on which you practiced hold entries, maintain altitude and following a procedural approach. Definitely a black art and I don’t think any of us enjoyed it overmuch.

I graduated in summer 1971, but then having joined BCAC my group were kept waiting for over 6 months before finally told us that we were not needed and would do ground jobs for up to 2 years, or transfer to BEA. So one minute I was scheduled to operate 747’s worldwide and next minute I was Vanguards around Scotland. Out of the blue an opportunity came up to fly for Cyprus Airways on Trident 1’s and 2’s, so off I went to be a real jet pilot! Off that is to Cranefield, BEA’s training centre where we did our ground training followed by the simulator, where the visuals were a large model of a village glued to a curved wall and came from a motionised aircraft which actually tilted the picture to the flight deck. This was really a systems trainer and you still had to fly Chucks and simms in the real aircraft.

After Cyprus I joined the then Birmac Airways, the UK launch customer for the Boeing 737. They had slightly more sophisticated simulators which had just forward view right lighting on runways only. Better motion systems were now starting to creep in and with the next round of development, no fly simulators evolved. These were judged good enough to qualify a pilot on type without actually doing circuits and bumps in the real thing. So a new age of simulation was born.

New simulators today cost up to £10 million and have axes of motion. The motion axis is an interesting subject in that the machine seeks to replicate the accelerations one would feel in the real aircraft. However the question is “if pilots are taught not to believe their senses and just fly the instruments” why would you need to replicate the motion anyway? Good question.

Then an interesting thing about the brain is its ability to cancel out feelings that it is expecting! So if the aircraft pitches nose up, very often the pilot does not feel anything as the simulator increases pitch. But if the simulator does not pitch or roll at all but the brain sees the aircraft doing such a manoeuvre, the brain gets confused and you can feel motion sickness. It is a black art!

Two of the simulators we operated at FSM are genuine machines used previously by airlines for their training. The third one we have is an Airbus A320 nose cone, back engineered into a simulator. Here we can replicate the sights, sounds and motion of real flight to a level where you will really think you are flying. We can take you over 2000 airports worldwide and show you what it is like to operate one of these fantastic bits of kit. So why not come and have a fly. Special rates for air cadets and squadrons.

Welcome aboard - Captain Chris Rigby

Special offer for Air Cadets and their Squadrons

The AirCadet can report that Flight Simulators Midlands, situated at Coventry Airport, who started flying in May 2012 with a Boeing 737-800 NG simulator, have now acquired a Boeing 747-400 and an Airbus A320. Both the Boeings are genuine simulators and are regularly used by a Midlands airline for their pilot assessment.

The Airbus is a real aircraft, G-BUSF, which was operated by GB Airways under British Airways colours and has been back engineered into a simulator. The Boeing 737 and the Airbus have partial motion to enhance the experience.

FSM, through the AirCadet, have kindly offered the use of their simulators to either Air Cadet Squadrons, as a group, or individual members at a discounted price. A half hour voucher can be purchased at more than 50% discount at £59 (normally £125). This is limited to 1 per person and is a weekday flight. Extra time, weekends, motion and observers are optional extras and can be purchased at the time of booking.

Please read the terms and conditions of booking on their website – www.flyfsm.co.uk. Bookings can be made by ringing 08454 747 737. Squadron Groups should contact Captain Chris Rigby at FSM for details. Squadron visits are usually on Sundays. All cadets must wear uniform to qualify.
Gold expeditions are a challenge that will really test a young person’s skills. For the past 25 years, air cadets have been given the golden opportunity to complete this challenge amongst the spectacular Bavarian countryside.
From stunning snow-capped mountain peaks and dark forests to lush Alpine, flower-strewn meadows, Bavaria in south-eastern Germany has been home to a Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition since 1990. The trip’s founder, and leader to date, is Lieutenant Colonel Mike Gerrish, the Army Cadet Force’s DofE Advisor on expeditions. Since that first successful expedition, Lt Col Gerrish has been running similar trips, supported by staff from both the Army Cadet Force and the Air Training Corps, with some 450 cadets achieving their Gold Expedition in Bavaria.

“The area is made for walking,” said Lt Col Gerrish, “and routes go right into the foothills of the high Alps. This accessibility means we can allow the participants to enjoy their expedition without intrusive supervision; the staff can back off and watch from a distance, which gives the participants real ownership of their expedition.”

He added: “Watching the reactions of the young people to the mountain scenery is always a great joy, and knowing they have achieved an exceptional experience makes it all the more worthwhile.”

Last summer’s six-day expedition comprised 36 cadets from both the ATC and the ACF. Teams of participants and staff from both organisations planned and undertook four days of walking through stunning Alps. Early rain challenged kit and character, but by the start of day three clear skies and clear air lit dark green forests and slate grey mountain tops.

All the way, the soundtrack of the fields is the low tones of cowbells, the roofs of towns and villages orange in the bright sunlight.

**Exceptional**

The participants got a truly Bavarian experience, supported by the joint staff, a dedicated crew who work seamlessly despite the different organisations, united by the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award.

In addition to the mixture of blue and green, the trip to Bavaria united participants from Scotland with staff from Thames Valley, participants from London and the South East with staff from Northumbria and participants from the South West with staff from Yorkshire.

The trip last August was Lt Col Gerrish’s last as organiser and this year the driving force for Bavaria passes from the ACF to the ATC as Flight Lieutenant Andy Browell, the Cumbria and Lancashire Wing Adventure Training Officer takes over. The trip will continue to be a team affair with light blue and green working together to deliver DofE expeditions.

**Interested?**

However, new staff are being sought to ensure the continued success of the trip. The minimum qualifications to supervise are ML and assessors need to be accredited at Gold level.

If you are interested please contact Flt Lt Browell at WATTO.CLancs@aircadets.org
Graduation ceremony for volunteers

Presided over by the charity’s chairman, The Lord Lingfield, CVQO’s annual graduation ceremony took place recently at RMA Sandhurst.

More than 60 graduate volunteers from all cadet forces, including the Air Cadet Organisation, celebrated receiving their City and Guilds and ILM qualifications, as recognition for their hard work and time spent mentoring cadets nationwide.

Graduates arrived at RMA Sandhurst’s famous Old College building for welcome drinks in the morning, before moving to the Royal Memorial Chapel for the Graduation Ceremony.

CVQO Chairman The Lord Lingfield opened proceedings, before handing over to Chief Executive Guy Horridge to announce the nominal roll.

Honoured guests, Peter Williams, Master at the Worshipful Company of Educators, and Chris Stephens, Director at City and Guilds were also on hand to offer their congratulations.

After having their photographs taken outside the famous Old College, graduates, guests and VIPs filled the Old College Dining Room for a celebratory lunch.

Speaking at the event, Government Chief Whip and MP for Surrey Heath, Michael Gove, said: “Today is a fantastic day to celebrate the achievement and the commitment of the people that do so much to provide young people across the country with an example to look up to.

Cadet forces do an enormous amount to help instil character in young people and provide them with opportunities they wouldn't otherwise enjoy.

“Those volunteers who make sure cadet forces work are heroes and heroines of every community.

“Any chance to celebrate them and also to recognise that they are passing on really valuable skills that will have a dramatic effect on the employability and future of young people is worth taking.

“One of the great things about CVQO is that it provides a recognition for those people who have that twin spirit; the spirit of educators, but also that spirit that comes from recognising the advantage of a military ethos in cultivating self-discipline, resilience, grit and character.

“The people we are celebrating today are people who take time out of their leisure time in order to help inspire young people and it is absolutely right that we should celebrate what they do - they are the best of Britain.”

CVQO Chief Executive Guy Horridge said: “Graduation is always a tremendous occasion and RMA Sandhurst offers a prestigious and fitting location for our ceremony. Sandhurst is a place of education and development where officer cadets are not only taught their military skills but start their careers with education that will be relevant throughout their lives.

“It’s highly appropriate therefore that in this seat of learning, people enter as one type of person and leave as someone very different, having demonstrated their commitment, worth and value.”

The first of the UK’s A400M Atlas next-generation military transport aircraft has been officially unveiled by the MOD at its new home at RAF Brize Norton.

The aircraft will replace the existing fleet of C-130 Hercules which have been the workhorse of the RAF’s Air Transport Fleet for decades. Manufactured by Airbus Defence & Space, A400M Atlas will represent major advances on its predecessor, capable of flying almost twice as fast, twice as far and carrying almost twice as much cargo.

With a cargo capacity of 32 tonnes and a hold optimised for carriage of heavy vehicles, helicopters or cargo pallets, the aircraft is capable of supporting a wide range of operational scenarios.

The UK is the third country to operate the aircraft, after France and Turkey and the £2.8bn programme will see a total of 22 aircraft delivered to the RAF in the coming years.

Atlas touches down

Final fixtures of the year
The final events of the Air Cadet sporting year were held RAF Cranwell as teams from all six Regions contested the 2014 Senior Rugby and Netball Championships.

The Netball was won by Central and East Region led by captain, Cadet Warrant Officer Hazel Mann (pictured) from 2028 (Southam) Squadron. Eighteen-year-old Hazel said that all members of the team had “played brilliantly” but she paid tribute to the ‘amazing’ shooters who had helped the team to a convincing win.

On the rugby field South West Region came out winners. Their captain was Cadet Sergeant George Huish, 17, one of three cadets from 1024 (Isle of Wight) Squadron. He said: “We took a little time to get going as a unit, but were able to put all our skills to effective use culminating in South West’s first win in five years”.

London & South East Region were runners up in both competitions. Alex Maddison, ATC Sports Officer at HQ Air Cadets, said: “It had been a day of close fought games and a fitting end to the year.”
Air Cadet News
www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets
37

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UK’s Top 138 Independent Boarding Schools
2014 Daily Telegraph % A*/A Levels and equivalent qualifications

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Overall National Table ranking
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2 | Rugby School                | 80 |
3 | Westminster College          | 79 |
4 | Eton College                | 75 |
5 | Harrow College              | 72 |
6 | Rugby School                | 69 |
7 | Eton College                | 69 |
8 | Rugby School                | 67 |
9 | Westminster College          | 67 |
10 | Sevenoaks                   | 65 |
11 | St. Mary’s College           | 65 |
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41 | Rugby School                | 65 |
42 | Eton College                | 65 |
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Sussex Wing’s Adventure Training Team has extended its annual staff development training to include staff cadets for the first time ...

The team has gone from strength to strength since it was formed 15 years ago by Squadron Leader Neil Banks with more qualified staff on board than ever before. Each year, the team spend time at one of the National Air Cadet Adventure Training Centres at Llanbedr or Windermere to develop staff skills and maintain currency in qualifications such as the Mountain Leader Awards, Single Pitch (Rock Climbing) Award and British Canoe Union Coaching qualifications.

It was decided that this year’s week would be opened to eight staff cadets with an interest in developing their skills in Adventure Training and give them something to focus on as potential new members of staff. The week, led by Acting Wing Adventure Training Technical Officer

**Competition**

The Cadet Kit Shop, has been kitting out cadets since 1949. In association with the Air Cadet magazine, we invite you to compete for our prize of the season. Our winner will receive the Official MK3 Cadet Forces Training Vest MTP Compatible which is the latest piece of equipment, designed by cadets - for cadets. Simply answer the question below and then email your answer together with your name, address and squadron to competitions@cadetkitshop.com

The closing date for entries is 28th February. One winning entry will be picked at random after the closing date.

**Question:** Who is the Honorary President of 233 SQN ATC?

The winner of the Autumn 2014 Cadetkitshop competition is Flt Sgt Alex Fido of 17 Coningsby Sqn.
CI Mark Sinclair, focused on Mountain Navigation, Canoe and Kayak Skills plus both Indoor and Outdoor Climbing. In addition, it was important for the cadets to gain an understanding into the roles of a staff member.

The cadets were given the same duties that would be expected of staff members such as Equipment Officer, MT Officer and Admin Officer while being carefully overseen by one of the team members.

This provided them with a greater insight into what happens ‘behind the scenes’.

Cadet Flight Sergeant George Levey of 2464 (Storrington) Squadron said: “I truly learnt how much the staff do behind the scenes to allow these camps to run smoothly, for example daily risk assessments, food checks, MT duties, centre admin etc.”

Keen to progress further in Adventure Training, George added: “I am especially keen to get my climbing and paddling awards.

“Gaining qualifications will also allow me to become more helpful to the AT Team as well as Sussex Wing as a whole and allow me to take cadets out and allow them to experience AT and fall in love with it in the same way as I did.”

Since returning from Llanbedr, the buzz for Adventure Training is back in the air for Sussex Wing. The eight cadets have been meeting weekly to improve their skills on indoor climbing walls and dates are now being confirmed for these cadets to undertake the Basic Expedition Leader (BEL) Award, Introduction to DoE course and Site Specific course to run the L&SER Mobile Climbing Tower (MCT).

Acting WATTO, CI Mark Sinclair said: “I feel we need to promote specialist teams within the Corps and keep the over 18s interested - they are the future of the Organisation.”

Falklands challenge

The Founder of the RAF Air Cadet Junior Leaders will take part in a 120km yomp across the Falklands Islands for the RAF Benevolent Fund.

The expedition aims to replicate the legendary 1982 Yomp taken by 45 Commando during the liberation of the Falkland Islands.

Squadron Leader John Fay MBE RAFVR(T) Ret’d and his team from the April Fools Club hope to raise £150,000 to build respite homes for RAF families.

The team will set off from San Carlos Bay on February 9th and yomp across peat bog, tussock grass and loose rocks whilst taking on 20mph winds, aiming to arrive in Stanley around five days later. John was Commanding Officer of 391 (Wilmslow) Squadron before he founded the J.Ls. He commanded the unit between 1999 and 2006.

Under his leadership and recently that of Squadron Leader Steve Williams, the J.L course developed into the toughest and most challenging programme available to cadets in the UK. In 2004, John was awarded the MBE by Her Majesty The Queen for his dedication to young people, The Junior Leaders and the wider Air Cadet Organisation.

The April Fools Club Falklands Yomp has raised more than £46,000 so far for the RAF Benevolent Fund and it hopes to raise £100,000 with this Yomp towards their goal of £150,000.

To support this cause, all in aid of the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund. Visit John’s page - www.justgiving.com/John-Fay-Falkland-yomp or text RAFY82 with your donation to 70070.
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