

RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

“Gairl Power”



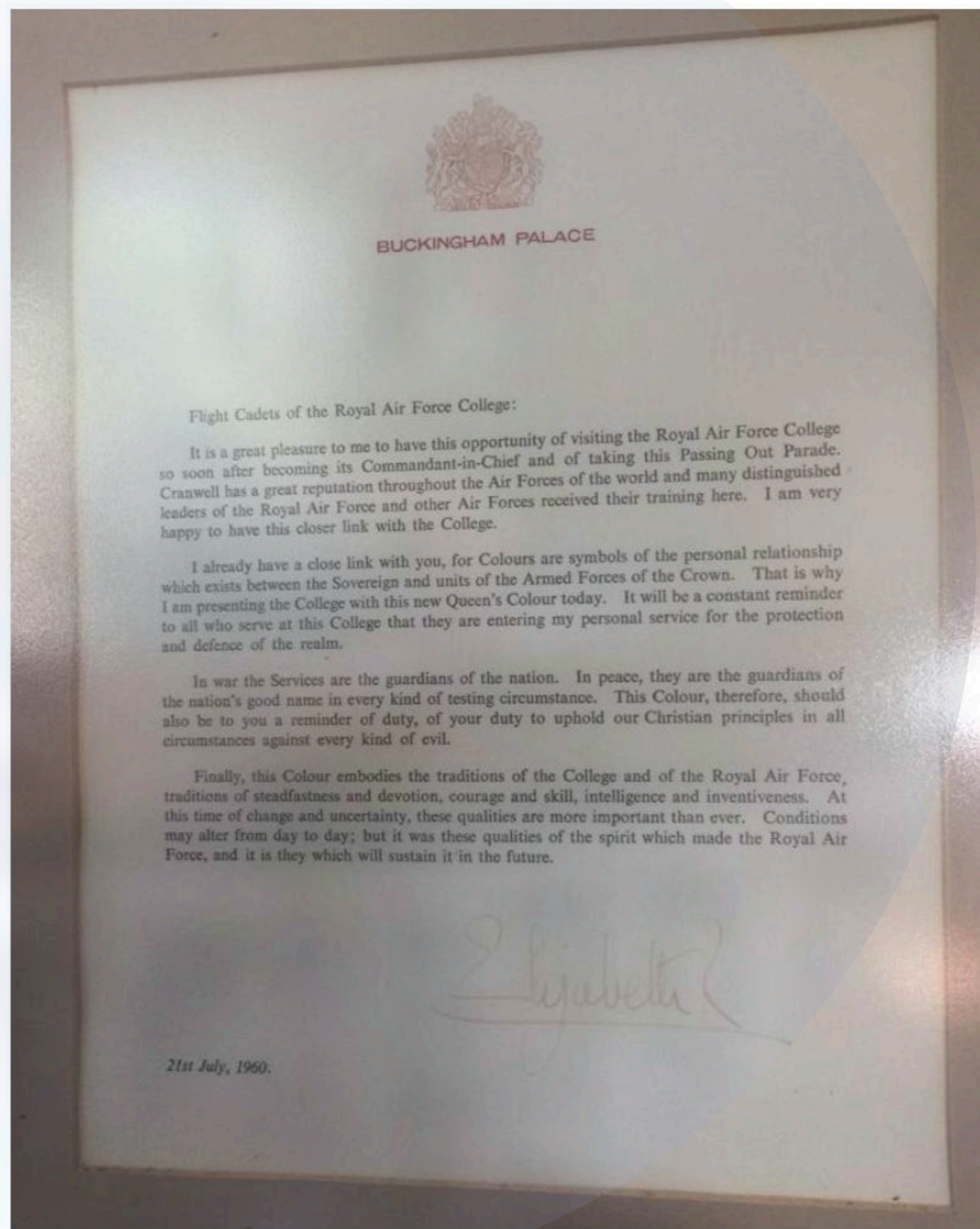
A Tribute to Leading Airwomen

(First released on International Women's Day 8 March 2020)

In its electronic form, this document contains underlined, hypertext links to additional material, including alternative supporting data and archived video/audio clips.

[To open these links in a separate browser tab and thus not lose your place in this e-document, press control+click (Windows) or command+click (Apple Mac) on the underlined word, image or icon]

RAF College Commandant-in-Chief 1960-2022



An Invaluable, Integral Part of the RAF

Edited Video of Pioneer Female RAF Aviators At:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-baV7zI0Sc>
by clicking on the URL above

Ever since the inception of the RAF in 1918, women have played instrumental and invaluable roles towards the success and cherished heritage of the RAF.

Initially, independently - as mechanics and drivers of the embryonic WRAF between 1918 and 1920; since 1939 as multi-disciplined tradeswomen of the WAAF, later renamed the WRAF in 1949 and fully merged with the RAF in 1994; as nurses of the RAF Temporary Nursing Service in 1918 reformed as the PMRAFNS in 1921; as musicians of the Central Band of the WRAF (disbanded in 1972); as 10% of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) in WWII - women have been pivotal to the success of our air power.


Entitled “Gairl Power”, this album pays tribute to their immense contribution during the past 100 years, a chronicle highlighting some key personalities and, in keeping with the 100th anniversary of the RAF College in 2020, citing the Cranwellian Women who have also made their indelible mark.

God bless you all, Ladies.

Three Pioneers of the WRAF

Gladys Powers



Born	10 May 1899 Lewisham, United Kingdom
Died	15 August 2008 (aged 109) Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada
Allegiance	United Kingdom 
Service/branch	Women's Army Auxiliary Corps Women's Royal Air Force
Years of service	1915–1920
Battles/wars	World War I

Gladys Stokes Luxford Powers (10 May 1899 – 15 August 2008) was born in Lewisham, London, the daughter of Frederick Charles Stokes.

During her childhood she lived in both Turkey and Australia.

In 1915, she volunteered as a barracks waitress for the WAAC despite the minimum age being 17. Later she transferred to the WRAF.

Dame Helen Gwynne-Vaughan

GBE



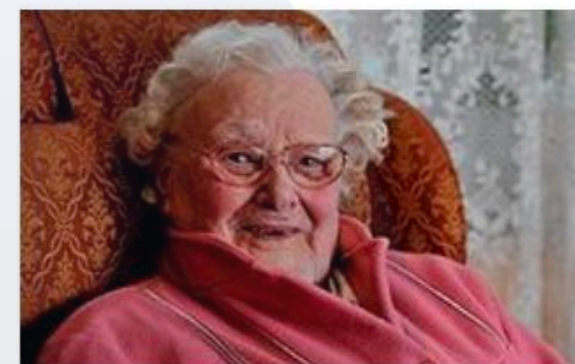
Born	21 January 1879
Died	26 August 1967 (aged 88)
Allegiance	United Kingdom
Service/branch	Auxiliary Territorial Service
Rank	Director
Unit	First Chief Controller, Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC) in France
Commands held	Women's Royal Air Force

Helen Charlotte Isabella Gwynne-Vaughan, GBE (née **Fraser**; 21 January 1879 – 26 August 1967) was a prominent English botanist and mycologist.

During the First World War, she served in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps and then as Commandant of the Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF) from 1918 to 1919.

During the Second World War, from 1939 to 1941, she served as Chief Controller of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS).

Florence Green



Born	19 February 1901 Edmonton, London, UK
Died	4 February 2012 (aged 110 years, 350 days) North Lynn, West Norfolk, UK
Allegiance	United Kingdom 
Service/branch	Women's Royal Air Force
Years of service	1918–1919
Battles/wars	World War I

Florence Beatrice Green (née **Patterson**; 19 February 1901 – 4 February 2012) was an English woman who was the last known surviving veteran of the First World War from any country. She was a member of the Women's Royal Air Force.

She joined the Women's Royal Air Force in September 1918 at the age of 17, where she served as an officers' mess steward. She worked in the officers' mess at RAF Marham and was also based at Narborough airfield.

RAF Temporary Nursing Service (latterly PMRAFNS)

Dame Joanna Cruickshank



Born	28 November 1875 Murree, India
Died	16 August 1958 (aged 82) Sussex, England
Allegiance	United Kingdom
Service/branch	British Army Royal Air Force
Rank	Matron-in-Chief
Commands held	Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service (1918–30)
Battles/wars	First World War
Awards	Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire Royal Red Cross

Dame Joanna Margaret Cruickshank, DBE, RRC (28 November 1875 – 16 August 1958) was a British military nurse and nursing administrator. She founded Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service in November 1918 and served as its first Matron-in-Chief from 1921 until her retirement in November 1930.

She was born the second daughter of William and Johanna Cruickshank on 28 November 1875 in Murree, India (now in Pakistan). She served as sister in the Lady Minto Nursing Association and later in the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (QAIMNS). She was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1931.

ASO Noor Khan GC MBE WAAF



Born in Moscow in 1914, **Noor Khan**, joined the WAAF in 1940, following her family's move from France to the UK; she trained as a radio operator.

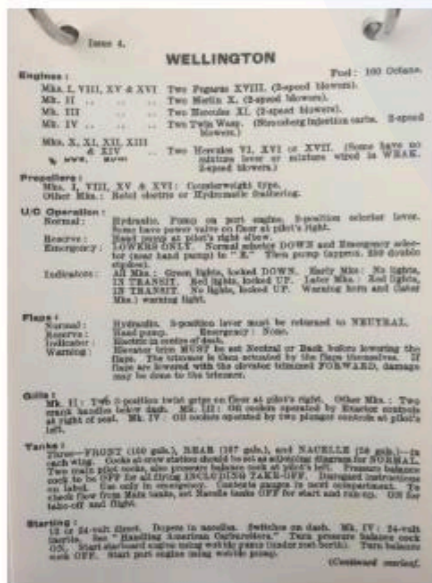
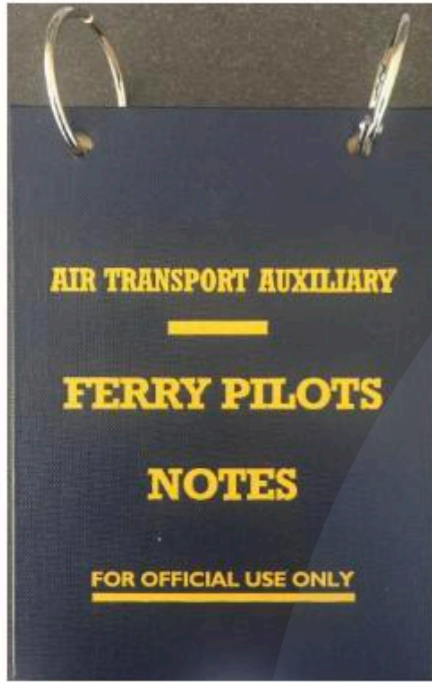
Owing to her knowledge of France and her fluency in French, she was asked to join the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and given the codename 'Madeline'. Parachuted into France on 17 May 1943, before she had fully completed her training, Noor immediately set about making contacts.

Following the arrest of other 'Prosper' agents - British agents tasked to deceive the Germans about allied plans for the D-day - Noor soon became the sole radio operator in Paris and managed to stay one step ahead of the German security services. Knowing the danger to which she was exposed, the SOE HQ in London pressed for her return; however, she continued to serve on the front line.

She was eventually betrayed and arrested on 12 October 1943, having inexplicably saved all her transmitted and received messages and security codes in clear English, in a notebook beside her bed. She resisted interrogation for months, even trying to escape twice, eventually being interred at Dachau concentration camp. It was here, at the age of 30, that she was shot at point blank range through the head.

Although her field career lasted only four months, from July to October 1943, she was awarded the GC and MBE in recognition of her bravery and sacrifice. Noor Khan was one of the 'groundbreaking' women who in the 1940s abandoned what was considered in those days the 'proper' role for women. She was one of only 39 agents who served in France and one of 13 who died in the performance of their duty.

Joy Lofthouse & Mary Ellis ATA



Born in Cirencester in 1923, Third Officer Joy Lofthouse (nee Hartman) joined Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) in 1943, having answered an advert in the 'Aeroplane' magazine. The ATA had run out of trained pilots and were therefore recruiting; Joy was selected amongst fierce competition even though she had never even driven a car.

She soon became one of 164 female ATA pilots of WWII, who ferried military aircraft to RAF bases around the UK. After qualifying, she flew Miles Magisters, Tiger Moths and, later, fighters including the Supermarine Spitfire. In total, she flew more than 18 different types of aircraft, relying on nothing more than a map and the view out of the cockpit for navigation.

The Spitfire was her favourite aircraft and she described it as being "the nearest thing to having wings of your own".

After the war, Joy said that she felt lucky that she was allowed to do something so rewarding and that it was good to have something interesting in her life. She was subsequently reunited with her beloved Spitfire in 2015, taking control for the first time in 70 years.

Joy Lofthouse died on 16 November 2017 at the age of 94.



Mary Ellis blazed a trail for female aviators, as one of the first women to fly Spitfires, heavy bombers and jet aircraft.

Born Mary Wilkins to a farming family in Leafield, Oxfordshire, she grew up close to RAF bases at Bicester and Port Meadow.

She was a member of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), which employed civilians to deliver planes from factories to airfields during the Second World War.

However, her contribution to the war effort was not always appreciated. At one RAF base, the ground crew refused to believe she was the pilot of the Wellington bomber she had just landed. "They actually went inside the aeroplane and searched it," she recalled. "Everybody was flabbergasted that a little girl like me could fly these big aeroplanes all by oneself."

When the ATA was disbanded in November 1945, First Officer Mary Ellis was invited to remain with the RAF, to test fly a Meteor jet - she was one of three ATA pilots asked to do so.

Mary Ellis died on 24 July 2018 at the age of 101.

Jean Lennox Bird - First Woman To Win RAF Wings

Jean Lennox Bird was born in Hong Kong on 8 July 1912, the second daughter of Lt Col Lennox Godfrey Bird, an architect who designed several buildings in Hong Kong and Shanghai. Her father retired in 1935, and the family returned home, eventually settling at the Old Farm, in Beech, near Alton, Hampshire. Bird started flying at the age of eighteen and took lessons, alongside her father, at the Hampshire Aeroplane Club in Hamble, during a visit home. Both qualified on 2 October 1930.

By the time Second World War broke out in 1939 Bird was an experienced pilot. She was commissioned into the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) as Assistant Section Officer (ASO) in 1940 and remained there for a year until invited to join the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA). Bird joined the ATA on 1 August 1941 and soon qualified as a First Officer. The aircraft she ferried included: Hurricanes, Spitfires, Wellingtons, Beaufighters, Mosquitos and Dakotas. She served with the ATA until the organisation closed down at the end of the war, on 30 November 1945.

In September 1949, Bird was commissioned into the Women's RAF Volunteer Reserve (WRAFVR), as a Pilot Officer, as were a number of the ATA women pilots.

During their 5-year commissions, several women took up the opportunity to become fully qualified RAF pilots and Bird duly became the first woman ever to wear the brevet of an RAF Pilot: the 'Wings'. She was awarded her wings, amid some publicity, at Redhill Aerodrome on 20 September 1952. By the time she qualified, Bird had 3,000 hours in more than 90 different types of aircraft.

Bird's main occupation in the 1950s was in the developing field of photographic aerial survey, working for Meridian Air Maps. On 29 April 1957, she was surveying the proposed route of a new road, when her 'Aerovan' twin-engined freight plane crashed and she was killed. The coroner's verdict was accidental death, although evidence was given that the aircraft had been fitted with an incorrect spare part. Bird is commemorated by the *Jean Lennox Bird Trophy* of the **British Women Pilots' Association**. This Chinese antique, a carving in jade to recall her early flying-days in Hong Kong, is awarded annually to a British woman pilot who has also made a noteworthy contribution to aviation.



First 'Non-Honorary' Female Air Officer - 57 IOT

Elaine West

Elaine West (then Air Commodore) in Cambridge, England (2011)



Air Vice-Marshal **Margaret Elaine West**, CBE (née **Brindle**; born September 1961) is a senior Royal Air Force officer and the first woman to hold a non-honorary Air Vice Marshal or equivalent rank in the British Armed Forces since the Second World War, and the first to achieve that rank in the regular forces.

She was born in 1961 and brought up in the Lake District.

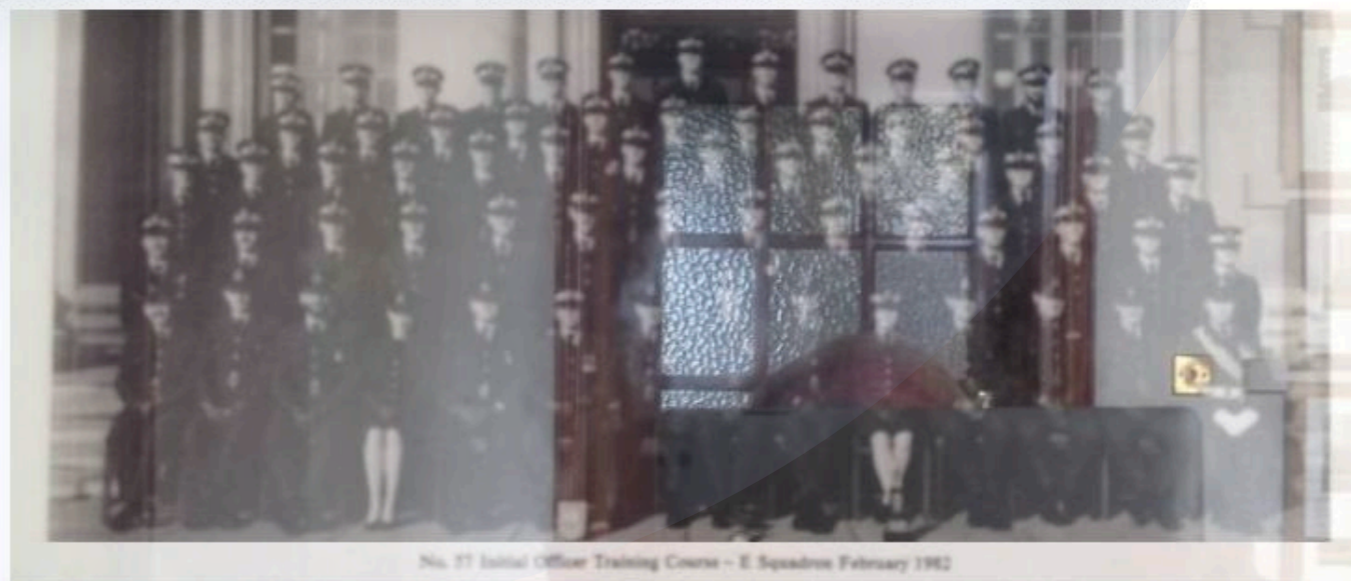
She joined the Women's Royal Air Force as an aircraftwoman in 1978 at the age of 17 and reached the rank of Senior Aircraft Woman, before being selected for officer training. She was commissioned on 25 February 1982 in the rank of Pilot Officer with seniority from 8 December 1980. She was promoted to Flying Officer on 8 December 1982.

On 21 March 1983, she transferred from the General Duties (Ground) Branch to the Administrative Branch of the RAF. She was promoted to Flight Lieutenant on 8 December 1986. On 26 October 1990, she transferred from a Short Service Commission to a Permanent Commission.

As a part of the half-yearly promotions, she was promoted to Squadron Leader on 1 January 1991, to Wing Commander on 1 January 1997, and to Group Captain on 1 July 2003.

She was promoted to Air Commodore on 1 July 2008. She served as Head of the Defence Estates' Operations Housing, taking charge of the renovation of service accommodation. With her promotion to Air Vice Marshal on 1 August 2013, she became the highest ranking female in the British Armed Forces and the first regular to hold a two-star rank. She has been appointed Director of Projects and Programme Delivery at the Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

Birth name	Margaret Elaine Brindle
Allegiance	United Kingdom
Service/branch	Royal Air Force
Years of service	1978 – present
Rank	Air Vice-Marshal
Awards	Commander of the Order of the British Empire



First Female Commandants of RAFAC



Barbara Cooper

Born	1958 (age 60–61) Canada
Allegiance	United Kingdom
Service/branch	Royal Air Force
Years of service	1979–2012
Rank	Air Commodore
Service number	8032068L
Commands held	Air Cadet Organisation
Battles/wars	Gulf War Iraq War
Awards	Commander of the Order of the British Empire



Dawn McCafferty

Born	18 April 1964 (age 55) Rhondda Valley, South Wales
Allegiance	United Kingdom
Service/branch	Royal Air Force
Years of service	1988–2006 (RAF) 2012– (RAF Reserve FTRS)
Rank	Air Commodore
Service number	8032390B
Commands held	RAF Air Cadets
Awards	Commander of the Order of the British Empire

First Female Pilot - 80 IOT



No 80 Initial Officer Training Course - C Squadron 22 November 1984



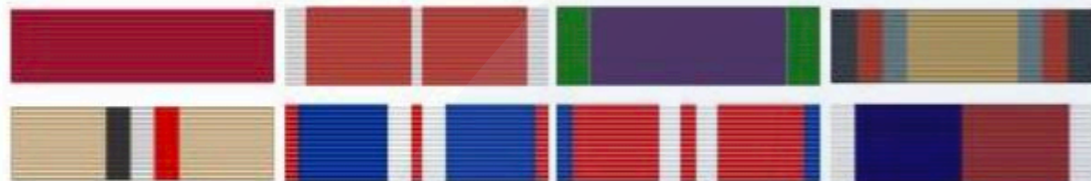
Flight Lieutenant Julie Ann Gibson was the first full-time female pilot for the Royal Air Force when she graduated in 1991. She learnt to fly while attending City, University of London and joining their University Air Squadron. She graduated in 1983 with a Bachelor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering.

Attending the RAF College in 1984, she graduated in November as an Engineer officer. Following her officer training, she was posted to RAF Honington in Suffolk. She was initially in charge of 75 engineers. In the following assignment, she commanded 160 men in the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II tactical weapons unit.

In 1989, the RAF opened up pilot training to women and, alongside fellow female pilot Sally Cox, Gibson took her first solo flights in 1990 in Tucano aircraft stationed at RAF Linton-on-Ouse. Having successfully applied for pilot training, she went on to train in the Advanced Flying Training Wing.

She graduated as the first female pilot in the RAF on 14 June 1991 at No. 6 Flying Training School RAF, within RAF Finningley. She was assigned to No. 32 Squadron RAF, where she flew Hawker Siddeley Andovers out of RAF Northolt. She was subsequently promoted to Flight Lieutenant, and assigned to fly Lockheed C-130 Hercules at RAF Lyneham.

Highest Ranking Woman in the RAF - 89 IOT



Sue Gray	
Birth name	Susan Catherine Jessop
Born	October 21, 1963 (age 55)
Allegiance	United Kingdom
Service/branch	Royal Air Force
Years of service	1985 – present
Rank	Air Marshal
Commands held	No. 38 Group
Battles/wars	Gulf War Iraq War
Awards	Officer of the Order of the British Empire Companion of the Order of the Bath

Air Marshal **Susan Catherine Gray**, CB, OBE, FREng (*née* **Jessop**; born 21 October 1963) is an engineer and the most senior female officer in the British Armed Forces.

She joined the Engineer Branch of the Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF) in 1985, was promoted to Flying Officer on 18 February 1986, and to Flight Lieutenant on 18 February 1989. In 1991, she was deployed with the Support Helicopter Force to Iraq as part of the Gulf War operations. On 15 June 1992, she moved from a Short Service Commission to a Permanent Commission, and therefore extended her service time to retirement age.

In 1994, the Women's Royal Air Force merged into the previously all-male Royal Air Force (RAF). Since then, Gray has served in the RAF. On 1 July 1994, as part of the half-yearly promotions, she was promoted to Squadron Leader. On 1 January 2001, she was promoted to Wing Commander. In 2003, she was once more deployed to Iraq, this time as part of Operation Telic (the Iraq War) and served as Chief Engineer for the Joint Helicopter Force.

She served as Director of Combat Air at Defence Equipment and Support in the Ministry of Defence (2014–2016), and as Air Officer Commanding No 38 Group (2016–2018). Since 2019, she has been Director-General of the Defence Safety Authority.

Longest Serving Reservist - 99 IOT

No. 71 of 100 Heroes

ROYAL
AIR FORCE

RAF
100

Wing Commander **Paula S Willmot MBE FTRS** graduated from the RAF College Cranwell as an Air Traffic Control officer in March 1987, later transferring to the logistics branch.

Both as a member of the WRAF and latterly as a full time volunteer reserve - currently the longest serving Full Time Reservist in the RAF - Paula has exploited her natural communications skills to promote the standards and traditions of the RAF in which she so passionately believes and has so selflessly served.

It was Wing Commander Willmot who managed the successful merger of RAF Reserves, including a multi-million pound media campaign, and who project managed the introduction of the AWACS' logistics into UK Military Airspace and, with it, the biggest inventory held in the UK's aircraft industry.

She was SO1 Strategic Communication & Engagement at the RAF College (2018-19), drawing on her vast experience from her previous roles in media and communications positions at Honington, Cottesmore and Marham. Many members of the general public too will have heard her dulcet tones as, in her spare time, she is frequently a commentator at many airshows and air displays.

For the past five years, Paula has also been a Club Membership Committee member at the RAF Club in Piccadilly, London.

No 99 Initial Officer Training Course — B Squadron 12 March 1987

First Female to Qualify as a Navigator - 103 IOT



Group Captain **Anne-Marie Houghton** (née **Dawe**; born 26 August 1968) was the RAF's first female fully qualified navigator in 1991.

She was born in Barnstaple in north Devon (the day before Jo Salter, the RAF's first female fast-jet pilot). She was brought up in Hornchurch, near Essex, and has an older and two younger brothers.

She was commissioned from the ranks of the WRAF on 27 August 1987. She began training as a navigator (on multi-engined aircraft) on Monday 18 September 1989 at RAF Finningley, when a Pilot Officer and aged 21, and with Pilot Officer Sally Hawkins from Wolverhampton, aged 20, and Flying Officer Wendy Smith from Bournemouth, aged 25.

On 1 March 1991 and after eighteen months specialist training, 22-year-old Flying Officer Anne-Marie Dawe successfully qualified from No. 6 Flying Training School RAF in South Yorkshire. She was posted to 242 Operational Conversion Unit at RAF Lyneham, on the four-engine Hercules.

From June 2010 to July 2012, she was the Officer Commanding 54(R) Squadron at RAF Waddington in North Kesteven, Lincolnshire; at the time, she was the only female commander of an RAF squadron. In 2011, she flew with 907 Expeditionary Air Wing.

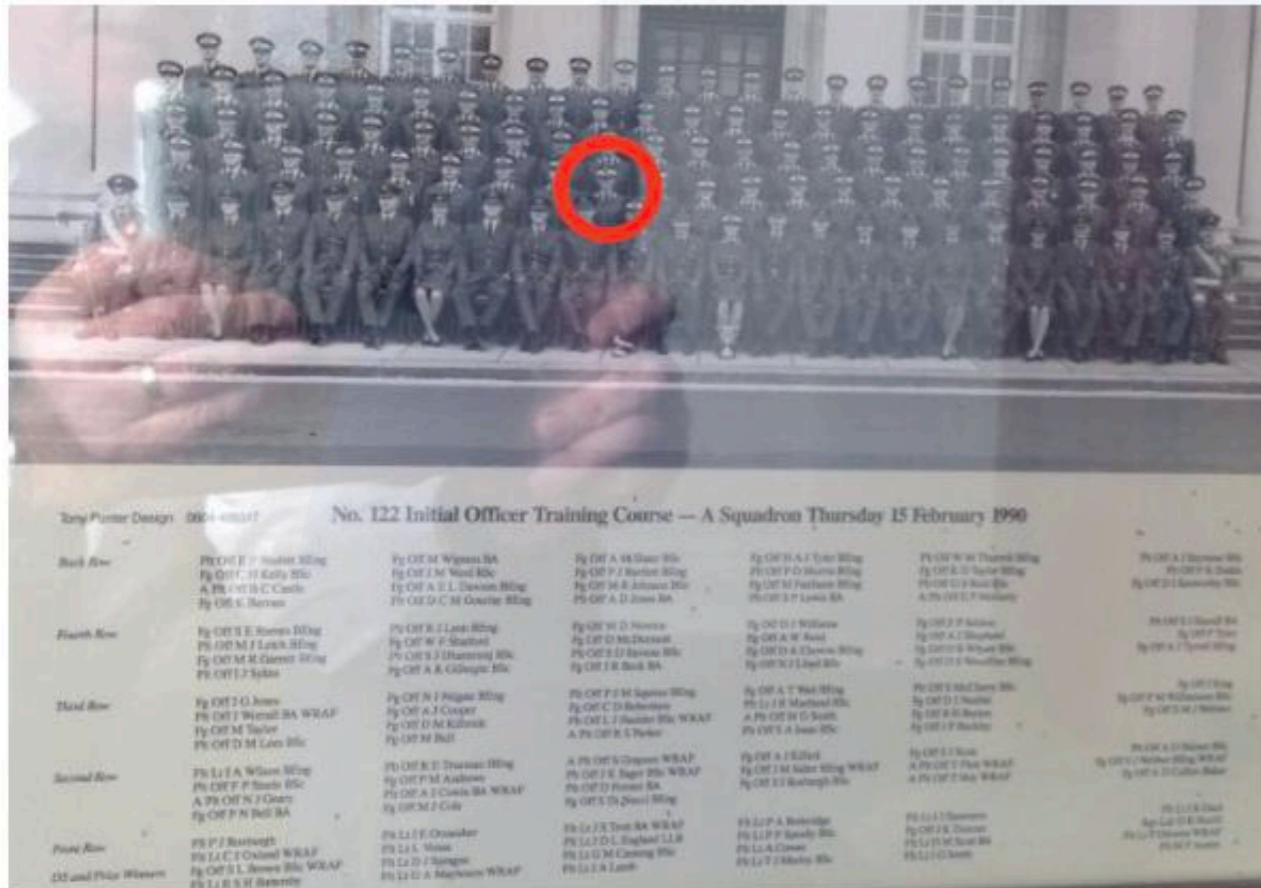
She works with the Royal Air Force Winter Sports Association, and RAF Swimming. She was promoted from Flight Lieutenant to Squadron Leader on 1 January 2003, to Wing Commander on 1 July 2008, and to Group Captain on 9 October 2017.

In 2019, she was Parade Commander for the RAF100 Celebrations conducted at Buckingham Palace.



Hawker Siddeley HS-125-2 Dominie T1 XS739 of 6FTS from RAF Finningley in September 1988; the Dominie replaced the Vickers Varsity in the early 1960s

First Female Fast Jet Pilot from 122 IOT



Joanna Salter

Director at PwC

Personal details

Born 27 August 1968 (age 50)
Bournemouth, England, United Kingdom

Known for First female RAF combat operational Fighter

Military service

Nickname(s) Jo

Allegiance United Kingdom 

Branch/service Royal Air Force 

Years of service 1986–2000

Rank Flight Lieutenant 

Unit 617 Squadron

Joanna Mary Salter (born 27 August 1968 in Bournemouth) was Britain's first female fast jet pilot, flying the Panavia Tornado ground attack aircraft with 617 Squadron.

Salter joined the Royal Air Force at the age of 18 to be an Engineering Officer, but she went on to train as a pilot after the British government announced that women would be allowed to fly jet aircraft in 1992. As part of her engineering training, she had studied at the Royal Military College of Science. Salter was awarded her wings on 3 Apr 1992 and, at the end of 1992, she finished her fast jet training at RAF Brawdy with Dawn Hadlow (*nee* Bradley), who became Britain's first RAF female flight instructor.

In August 1994, Salter joined 617 Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth as a Flight Lieutenant, and was declared *combat ready* by the RAF on 21 February 1995. She was the first woman to be an operational Tornado pilot and she later flew from both Turkey and Saudi Arabia in protection of the No-fly zone over Iraq. Whilst flying ground attack Tornados, Salter started a MBA course with the Open University in 1996, being sponsored by the MoD; she completed the course in 1999.

Following maternity leave, Salter left the RAF in 2000 to become head of technical services with an IT infrastructure company.

Fg Off JL Hamilton-Wilkes - 150 IOT



150 INITIAL OFFICER TRAINING COURSE PRIZEWINNERS
10 February 1994

Flying Officer J L Hamilton-Wilks BSc WRAF
The Sword of Merit

Pilot Officer P N Mounsey BSc
The Hennessy Trophy and Philip Sassoon Memorial Prize

Reviewing Officer
AVM P J Harding CB CBE AFC RAF

Flying Officer I M Bradley BSc AMIEE
British Aircraft Corporation Trophy

Officer Cadet A Al Razeei
Overseas Students' Prize

Pilot Officer W A Reed
The Group Captain Williams' Memorial Trophy

Flying Officer S D Priddy BEng AMIEE WRAF
The Sarah Moland Memorial Prize



157 INITIAL OFFICER TRAINING COURSE PRIZEWINNERS
28 July 1995

Gp Capt R D Iveson AFC

AOC & Command RAF College Cranwell
AVM A J Stables CBE RAF

Air Muhl Sir David Cousins
KCB AFC BA

Air Chf Muhl Sir Michael Graydon
GCB CBE ADC FRaE5

Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire
Mrs B Craycroft-Eley

Flying Officer J Roope BEng
The Queen's Medal

Flying Officer J L Hamilton-Wilks BSc
The Wilkinson Sword of Honour

Flying Officer A M Johnson BEng ACGI
Sword of Merit

HM The Queen

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

First Female to win Wilkinson Sword of Honour and the Sword of Merit

First Female College Commandant - 156 IOT



Air Commodore Suraya Marshall grew up in York, graduating from the University of Nottingham with a Law degree and becoming a member of East Midlands University Air Squadron before joining the Royal Air Force as a Navigator in 1994. During 3 tours flying on the Tornado F3, she participated in numerous operational deployments in Iraq, conducted Quick Reaction Alert in defence of the UK and the Falkland Islands, qualified as a Weapons Instructor and deployed on many overseas, multi-national training exercises.

Command appointments include Fast Jet Weapons System Officer Training, Officer Commanding No. 92(R) Squadron in the Air Warfare Centre responsible for operational Tactics & Training, Officer Commanding No. 55(R) Squadron delivering Rear Crew Flying Training and Deputy Commander of the Royal Air Force's Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance Force. She assumed command of Royal Air Force College Cranwell in December 2019.

First Female College Deputy Commandant - 181 IOT

Group Captain Joanne Campbell OBE RAF took over command of RAF Cranwell from Group Captain Gordon Bettington on 22 January 2021.

Group Captain Campbell joined the RAF in late 1999 as an Air Operations officer. During her 21 year career, she has served at RAF Leeming, RAF High Wycombe, RAF Brize Norton, RAF Waddington and RAF Scampton. Additionally, she has served on various overseas deployments.

Following promotion to Group Captain in 2018, she took on the role of Director Battlespace Management Support within the Space and Battle Management Force Headquarters.

On taking command Group Captain Campbell said:

“It is a huge privilege to be taking command of RAF Cranwell – the spiritual home of the Royal Air Force. This is an exceptionally busy station - I am very much looking forward to working with everyone here.”



Flt Lt Michelle Goodman DFC - 186 IOT



Born in Bristol in 1976, Flt Lt Goodman joined the RAF in May 2000. After five years of training, she became combat ready in May 2005 and joined the Merlin helicopter fleet with 28 (AC) Sqn at RAF Benson. She completed three operational tours on Op TELIC and in June 2007 was flying out of Basra in Iraq. Whilst a member of the Instant Reaction Team during her third deployment, she was called upon to recover a casualty from a high-risk area within Basra city. She was aware that this would be an unfamiliar and highly dangerous landing site and she would be operating under intense enemy fire at low level and operating on night-vision goggles. Despite this challenging and complex approach and operating at the limit of aircraft capability, Goodman was able to land her helicopter next to the casualty. She remained on the ground to allow medics to treat the casualty despite four mortar rounds landing close to her aircraft. Once the casualties were onboard, Flt Lt Goodman skillfully maneuvered her helicopter away from further mortar engagement and recovered her crew, casualties and aircraft safely to the British Field Hospital. Without her skillful, brave and calm airmanship skills, the casualty would have died. For her actions, she was awarded the DFC and is the first and currently only female RAF pilot to be awarded this honour.



NO 186 INITIAL OFFICER TRAINING COURSE - 29 MAY TO 23 NOVEMBER 2000

First British Woman KIA - 194 IOT

Sarah-Jayne Mulvihill (née Poole; 10 June 1973 – 6 May 2006) was a flight lieutenant in the RAF who died in Iraq, becoming the first British servicewoman to be killed in action for more than 20 years.

Born Sarah-Jayne Poole in Canterbury, Kent, she joined the RAF as an airwoman in May 1997. Sarah-Jayne Mulvihill was selected for officer training in October 2001. She graduated from the RAF College Cranwell in April 2002 and was commissioned into the Air Traffic Control Branch. She changed branch in 2003 and after completing Flight Operations Officer Training she was posted to RAF Northolt.

In May 2005, she was posted to RAF Benson, Oxfordshire as the Flight Operations Officer with No. 28 (Army Cooperation) Squadron, from where she was detached to Iraq. Married to another serving member of the RAF, Lee Mulvihill, she was on her second deployment to Iraq. She died with four other members of a flight crew when their Lynx helicopter was shot down over Basra in southern Iraq.

She was 32 years old at the time of her death, and is survived by her parents, her brother and her husband.



Behind every great man.....

In another album created to celebrate College 100 and the contribution made by Cranwellians to our heritage, we pay tribute to Geordie Gaskill - a Mess Steward of York House Officers' Mess, who gave unstintingly over 39 years of his life to the RAF and Cranwell, as did his wife Ada.

Ada and Bill married in August 1951 and lived in Cranwell AMQs from 1953. As well as bringing up a family of three daughters - Jean, Dennie and Amanda - she worked at the station as a cleaner and a music teacher.

She now lives in Bishop Auckland and still plays the piano and paints.

Thank you Ada for sharing Bill's memories with us and for your continued interest in our fortunes.



Autumn 1925 - Servicewomen at Cranwell



H.R.H. PRINCESS MARY AT CRANWELL.

PRINCESS MARY AT CRANWELL.

PRINCESS MARY VISCOUNTESS LASCELLES, who was attended by Miss Kenyon-Slaney, visited the Royal Air Force Hospital and the Royal Air Force Cadet College, Cranwell, on Friday, April 24th, 1925.

Princess Mary, who arrived shortly before noon, was received at the Hospital by Air Commodore A. E. Borton, Air Officer Commanding the Cranwell Station, Miss J. M. Cruickshank, Matron-in-Chief of Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service, and Air Commodore D. Munro, Director of the R.A.F. Medical Services. A guard of honour of 100 boys and non-commissioned officers from the Boys' Wing was mounted under the command of F./Lieut. Brown, and was inspected by the Princess. Her Royal Highness was then asked to accept a bouquet; and several officers and ladies of the station were presented.

Princess Mary inspected the Hospital, going through the wards and kitchens, where she spoke to the patients and to those in charge of each section. She next visited the Cadets' mess and quarters. At the Sisters' mess Her Royal Highness was entertained at lunch by the Matron-in-Chief and the Matron. The Cadet College Band played during lunch. The Princess shortly afterwards left for Grantham, to join the train for London.