

Meet the Mascots

Lucky mascots are thought to bring good luck and, over the years, many people in the RAF have had their own special mascots. Find out about some of their fantastic stories and then join in the fun by making your own mascot or puppet.



Scotch Jock

I served in the First World War as a lucky mascot to my owner Lieutenant W MacLanachan.

Some of the pilots even started to look a bit like us teddies.

It could get really cold flying aeroplanes, so teddy bear makers used our special woolly material to make flying clothes for the pilots to wear in the air.

Twinkletoes

On 14 June 1919, I set off on a big adventure with my owner, the navigator Arthur Whitten Brown.

My friend Lucky Jim, who is also a black cat, came too. His owner John Alcock, was the pilot of our Vickers Vimy. We went as their lucky mascots ... and it must have worked, because after 17 hours they became the first people to cross the Atlantic in an aeroplane.

These days, I am looked after by the RAF Museum and the staff at the Science Museum look after Jim.

Find out more

rafmuseum.org.uk/blog/a-transatlantic-tale

collection.sciencemuseumgroup.org.uk/objects/co8408130/lucky-jim-toy-cat-mascot-toy



Gremlins

During the Second World War when aircraft didn't work properly, it was blamed on devilish spirits called gremlins.

Of course, these spirit gremlins didn't really exist but even so, some air crew carried a 'lucky gremlin' mascot like me just in case.

Roald Dahl, who was an RAF pilot in the war, even wrote a book about us.

Find out more

rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/things-to-see-and-do/exhibitions/aviation-lucky-charms-mascots/lucky-gremlins.aspx



Percy

I was the lucky mascot of Flight Lieutenant Stan Chapman. He used to take me with him on operations in his Halifax bomber.

One night in 1944 we were over Berlin when our aircraft was hit by flak and badly damaged. It was going to crash so we had to bale out. Stan parachuted from the aircraft carrying me inside his leather flying jacket. Glad to land safely, we were soon captured by German soldiers and spent the rest of the War as prisoners in Germany.

Stan said I was lucky because I made sure that he and all his crew mates survived being shot down that night.

Own your own Percy!

A toy replica of the lucky mascot is available from the RAF Museum online shop, visit rafmuseumshop.com/percy-the-penguin-soft-toy.html

Even real animals have been mascots



Sergeant Sparky McDougall

Hi, I'm Sparky. I was chosen by 1 Radio School at RAF Locking to be their mascot.

How did I get the name Sparky? Well, in the RAF Radio operators are known as Sparky or Sparks!

Jeffrey

Bonjour (hello).

My owner, Vernon Castle, was a famous ballroom dancer before the First World War but he joined the Royal Flying Corps as a pilot.

He bought me from a shop in Paris and I became his lucky mascot. I entertained the whole squadron with my mischievous behaviour.

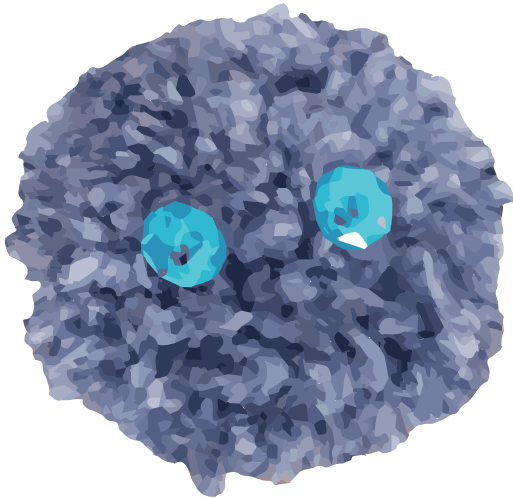
Vernon even took me flying with him, I had to hold on tight, so I didn't fall out.



Join in at home

Here are some mascot-themed ideas for you

- Make your own lucky mascot to help keep your spirits up (or perhaps you already have one). You could make one out of many different materials – wool, paper, card, playdough etc.
- Put on a mascot puppet show – your puppet show could tell the story of one of the Museum's mascots or you could make up a story. To make your puppets you could draw pictures and stick them to a straw, spoon or lolly stick. You could make sock puppets or even just use your hands to make shadow puppets.
- Make a backdrop or theatre set for your puppet show.



Make your own pom-pom mascot

You will need

- Card
- Wool
- Two round items to draw around (one smaller than the other)
- Scissors
- Pencil



Step 1

Draw two sets of circles on your card and cut them out.



Step 2

Hold the two circles together and wind your wool round and round them (keep going until the hole in the middle is full).



Step 3

Carefully cut the wool around the edge of the circles.



Step 4

Tightly tie a piece of wool in between the two cardboard circles and then take the circles off.



Step 5

Cut off any bits of wool which are too long (give your pom-pom a hair cut).



Step 6

Add eyes and anything else your mascot might need (you can make these out of paper and glue them on). Don't forget to give your mascot a name!



You could make another ball and have a head and a body!

Make a puppet



Stick puppet

Draw and colour a picture of one of the Museum mascots (use paper or card). Carefully cut it out and stick it on to a stick/straw/wooden spoon (whatever is handy). Use your stick puppet to tell a story about the mascot.

Shadow puppet

All you need is your hands and some light! Try making the shape of a cat, a dog or a gremlin with your hands and acting out a story. This is a great activity to do outside on a sunny day. You could also use your stick puppets as shadow puppets.



Sock puppet

You simply need an old (clean) sock and a couple of buttons. Sew or glue the buttons on to the end of the sock for eyes and then put the sock on your hand – you've made a quick and easy sock puppet! You could add more things if you wanted such as ears, nose and mouth – cut them out of paper or card and stick them on.



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