



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 64 – 25th JUNE 2021

GREETINGS:

Day 456: “To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day”.... Lazarous Baloyi (Secretary of SADTU) was shot and killed inside the Buyani Primary School premises, Ennerdale, of which he was principal. “Mr Big” in the rhino poaching syndicates “shot own troops” in Bushbuckridge.... Mkhize does the walk of shame – only he’s not walking... Low vaccination rates on weekends due to budget constraints.... SA's vaccine train limps into Soweto – on diesel power – after cable theft delays its arrival... Massive cocaine haul found in 'animal food' container in KZN... Suspended ANC secretary-general Ace Magashule's court case against the ANC is set to start this week... The French Connection - South Africa is set to get a new hub to manufacture vaccines... Blessed Relief from CSA politics: BLM stumped by Quinton de Kock , and Keshav Maharaj's Test incredible hat-trick - the first for a South African since 1960 - sealed the team's victory over the West Indies. England hit with familiar fear as bold Scotland frustrate... “Harry Kane looks like a man whose head is scrambled.” UK holiday costs more than Europe as demand grows.... summer travel will be filled with “hassle and delays”.... Merkel urges countries to quarantine UK tourists... Brussels takes heat out of sausage trade war in NI... UK and EU expected to declare sausage war ceasefire... UK denies Russians fired warning shots at Navy ship... “One Britain, One Nation” song strikes wrong tune... The UK government is facing growing pressure from pilots and airlines over its handling of COVID-19 travel restrictions... Crackdown on democracy: Hong Kong police arrest Apple Editor

ARMED FORCES WEEK:



Monday 21st June marked the start of Armed Forces Week, a series of events, videos and articles celebrating the range of activities and people comprising Her Majesty's Armed Forces. Beginning with an opening message from the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Mike Wigston, the week explores the work of the UK Armed Forces at home and around the world and closes with Armed Forces Day on Saturday 26th June

RED ARROWS IN SEASON:



Stunning video footage of the Red Arrows' latest aerobatic formations have been released as the team gets the go-ahead to display for the first time in two years. (Pictures taken from the back seat of Red 10 show nine jets in Feathered Arrow (Fred) Formation during a loop in glorious Greek sunshine ahead of the forthcoming air show season). The award of Public Display Authority marks the start of the unit's 57th season at events across the UK for the first time since July 2019, after the pandemic forced organisers to cancel dates last year. The 2021 season will also see the Red Arrows led by a new Team Leader, Sqn Ldr Tom Bould. The former Typhoon pilot, who flies as Red 1, said: "I am hugely proud of what the whole team has achieved in being awarded Public Display Authority and being ready to perform for people in the UK, and beyond, across the new season." The Arrows deployed to Greece to carry out essential preseason training in a five-week visit known as Exercise Springhawk, which finished at the end of May. The deployment provided the chance to fly up to three times a day in settled weather, with the aim of improving every sortie and testing each manoeuvre ready to perform for millions of fans. The superb aerial images were captured by team photographer Cpl Adam Fletcher, flying with Sqn Ldr Adam Collin

RESOLUTE: PEENEMUNDE REMEMBERED



Celebrating VE Day outside the Officers' Mess



George Dunn DFC (Age 20)

Two very different books are linked by the daring raid on the Nazis' secret rocket research establishment at Peenemünde on 17/18 August 1943, and by one of the Bomber Command veterans who survived it. And they illustrate two very different ways of telling his story, approaches starkly summed up by Joe Stalin's terrible truism that to the human psyche: "A single death is a tragedy; a

million deaths is a statistic.” That Halifax pilot George Dunn, his flight engineer Ferris Newton and the rest of his crew didn’t suffer the same fate as 245 of their comrades killed that night on what was codenamed Operation Hydra, he, perhaps too modestly, puts down to... the weather. Told that the target must be wiped out the first time or they would go until it was, on the orders of Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur ‘Butch’ Harris, George’s No 4 Group was originally scheduled to fly in the last wave. But a change of wind direction presented the possibility that smoke would shield the target, so they went in first. “Our aiming point was the living quarters of the scientists and technicians, and these could be clearly seen by the bomb aimer as it was a brilliant moonlit night and the target had been well marked by the pathfinders,” said George. “As far as we were concerned it was a piece of cake. The flak was only light to start with. We went in, bombed and out straight away. By the time the later waves reached the target the German night fighters, realising the attack on Berlin by Mosquitos was a diversion, arrived. “Our good fortune in going in first was sadly not so for the later waves.” (Appropriately, George writes the foreword for Mike McLeod and Sean Feast’s masterful investigation into the aircrew left behind whose fresh young faces stare ghostlike from the book’s cover. In many ways “The Lost Graves of Peenemünde” is the ideal companion to George’s memoir, an intensively researched, well written and slim volume that examines the wider context of the raid and its aftermath – including whether it was worth the human sacrifice – which is a contentious issue to this day About that aftermath, and the fate of the 40 crews that never came home, more in a later Ramblings.) Staying with George’s memoir “Resolute”, which underplays his and his crew’s heroism on 44 operations in Halifaxes and Mosquitos with 10, 76 and 608 Squadrons, this book is a delightful insight into the Service life of the Bomber Boys; their gallantry and character. Among the best anecdotes are recollections of the completely informal way crews formed themselves on the basis of friendships made – though George admits choosing Ferris partly because his mother and wife ran a pub called The Old Ball (or Knackered Bollock) which they frequented in his Morris 8; Air Gunner Joe Scrivener landing George in hot water by smuggling a WAAF officer called Cecile on an air test flight on the first day after he was commissioned; Ferris escaping a bomb hit on his block killing everyone except one chap on the toilet: “Blast knocked poor Jack out of bed. Lucky for him the bomb fell at the other end. MY end. Lucky for me I was out night flying.” As author Steve Darlow rightly points out, the terrible attrition rates among Bomber Command crews show George and his friends more than lived up to the 76 Sqn Motto – they were Resolute in every sense, and we will not see their like again.

<https://www.memorialflightclub.com/blog/george-dunn-dfc-ldh-%E2%80%93-new-book-%E2%80%93-resolute%E2%80%93>

SPARKS CENTENARY:

An RAF radio expert who went on to build the first colour television in Swansea has celebrated his 100th birthday. Called up for the Air Force aged 20 in 1941, former radio mechanic Hubert Jones saw service in India and the Far East. After two years at RAF Deform, near Worcester, he was sent to India. He said: “Our first stop was Bombay where I was absorbed into a Mobile Signals Unit of about 50 men. We set up under canvas at Sangli State, south of Poona, where we trained with American Radio Transmitting Units. The object of our small unit was to land in Malaya and pass information back to South East Asia Command HQ in Ceylon. “Eventually I was sent back to Bombay Docks to supervise the loading of a cargo boat. I sailed with her and went ashore at a deserted beach on the west coast of Malaya. “The equipment we carried was short-lived due to batteries running out. “After penetration into Malaya and travelling well up north, I lost touch with all my mates who had landed with me and was on my own. I covered miles of land and rivers using only the sun and a compass as I wasn’t allowed to carry maps.” Hubert managed to get back to Malaya and from Kuala Lumpur drove a truck to Singapore. He said: “Arriving at Singapore, it was turmoil. I encountered prisoners being released from Changi jail, some alive, others seemed half-dead. “Joining up with the other RAF boys who had landed there I was absorbed into 2 Base Signals Radar Unit.” With the Army, his unit worked on upgrading landing facilities at Tengah airfield where Hubert organised the erection of 100ft tall communication masts. He then went to Sumatra to help develop an airfield at Medan, where there was just a grass strip to take small aircraft. He explained: “Sumatra was occupied by the Japanese and as Japanese Units were rounded up, the Indonesian population rose up against the Dutch

settlers. “The native/Dutch problem grew and attempts to improve the airfield were abandoned. I returned to Singapore with my colleagues. Soon, my demob came up and I went back to the UK.” Hubert’s son-in-law Roger Knight said: “Hubert is remarkably independent and keeps himself busy with his lifelong passion of carpentry and furniture making. “After the war he opened a radio repair business and, in 1964, a shop. He built the first ever colour television in Swansea, which is now in Swansea University’s museum. He installed more than 20,000 television aerials in Swansea.” Roger added that Hubert, who was 100 in April, received 98 birthday cards in total from family, the local junior school where his memoirs were read out to the pupils, from many RAF veterans from the Swansea Branch of the RAF Association and members of the RAF Changi Association.

RAF GLOBEMASTER 20th ANNIVERSARY:



C-17 PILOTS and engineers will get world-leading interactive training following the award of a £274 million contract. The news comes 20 years after the RAF’s first Globemaster transporter arrived at Brize Norton. And the deal with defence giant Boeing UK will see the aircraft to its expected out-of-service date of 2040. Air Mobility Force Commander Air Cdre David Manning said: “The training service will support C-17 global operations, increasing fleet availability and enhancing the training delivered to our personnel.” Over the next 19 years Boeing will teach RAF crews at its International Training Centre in Farnborough on interactive flight simulators – from 2023 in a purpose-built facility. Engineers will learn to diagnose faults and practice repairs without having to work on ‘live’ aircraft. Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said: “This £274 million investment will allow air crews to operate this aircraft to its highest capability, maintain critical defence outputs, and extend our use of modern synthetic training techniques. OC 99 Sqn Wg Cdr Kevin Latchman said: “It’s difficult to put into words the value the C-17 has provided over the last 20 years and the countless number of people it has provided support to in times of crisis, all over the world. “Having first flown the C-17 as a junior Flight Lieutenant over a decade ago, it’s been a true honour to return to Brize-based 99 Sqn celebrates 20 years of combat Ops and humanitarian missions with the Globemaster C-17 transporter the fleet to command 99 Sqn. “Flying the C-17 is just as rewarding and exhilarating today as it was when I first qualified as a co-pilot in 2007.” Since entering service in 2001 the C-17 has maintained airbridges between the UK and combat zones overseas, first to Afghanistan, then Iraq during Gulf War II and most recently to forces on Operation Shader and the battle against Daesh.

CHINOOKS CLOCK 3000:



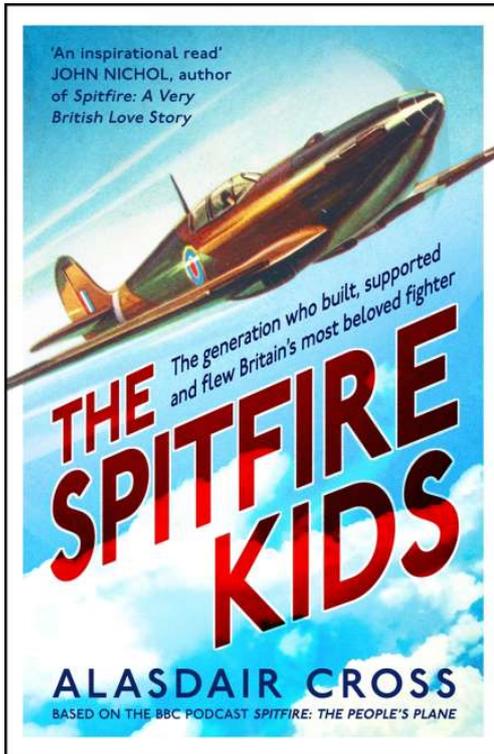
CHINOOK crews backing up French counter terrorism operations in West Africa marked a campaign milestone with a dramatic display of flares. The Odiham-based aircraft of 1310 Flight have clocked up 3,000 operational flying hours since arriving in Mali in July 2018. And not a single sortie has been missed due to the global coronavirus pandemic. RAF Detachment Commander Sqn Ldr Sam Bennett said: “This deployment has been particularly challenging due to Covid-19, however, our mitigations have kept the detachment 100 per cent free of the virus, resulting in no lost sorties. “In addition, the harsh conditions in which we operate have added a number of substantial technical issues that test the engineers on a daily basis. Despite this, the team has managed to provide over 100 flying hours per month and so achieve our mission to support our French allies.” So far, the CH47s have moved more than 1,500 tonnes of freight and 18,000 French soldiers to forward operating bases and desert locations around Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. The aircraft are currently flown by 27 Sqn crews supported by Tri-Service personnel from Joint Helicopter Command. Since arriving in mid-January, the latest detachment has transported more than 1,000 soldiers in temperatures exceeding 45°C in frequent dust storms. Flying out of Gao Airfield Chinooks regularly under-sling armoured fighting vehicles and ferry French commandos to pre-assault forming-up points. *(Simon Mander; RAF News)*

FRELIMO FOOTSHUFFLING:

Mozambique needs to be persuaded that SADC aims to stabilise Cabo Delgado, not undermine or compete with the government. Three months after a major attack by insurgents on the town of Palma in north-eastern Mozambique, the situation remains volatile, with an average of one assault per day in Cabo Delgado province. The defence and security forces lack the capacity and discipline to contain the violence and protect civilians. Despite this, Mozambique’s government is reluctant to accept help from the Southern African Development Community’s (SADC) standby force to combat the insurgency threatening to spread to other provinces. Why is this? Ahead of another SADC leaders’ meeting on 23 June to discuss the crisis, the question needs answering. Analysts have suggested that the ruling Frelimo party wants to conceal its alleged involvement in the trafficking of drugs and other contraband. Or that the state is intent on hiding the local dimensions of a conflict that is officially attributed to external aggression. However, other reasons might better explain the government’s doubts about SADC military intervention. Interviews conducted in Mozambique reveal a perception among the political elite that SADC’s involvement could represent a greater threat to the regime – and the elites themselves – than the insurgency happening 2 000 km from the capital, Maputo. Frelimo’s strategy allows elites to enrich themselves through international aid and foreign direct investments. Frelimo’s leadership has developed and maintained its grip on power through a strategy of extraversion. This sees the ruling elites siphoning off the fees generated by international

aid and foreign direct investment for their enrichment at the expense of the country's intended beneficiaries. (*DefenceWeb*)

GOOD READ:



'An inspirational read celebrating the incredible young people who gave so much for this iconic British aircraft'. John Nichol, bestselling author of *Spitfire: A Very British Love Story*.

Despite the many films and television programmes over the decades since the end of the Second World War that portrays our allied heroes as grown-up men and women, the Battle of Britain was in the main actually fought and won by teenagers. The average age of an RAF fighter pilot was just twenty years old. Many of the men and women who designed and built their planes were even younger. Based on the hit BBC World Service podcast *Spitfire: The People's Story*, we use contemporary diaries and memoirs, many of them previously unpublished, to tell the story of the Spitfire through the voices of the teenagers who risked everything to design, build and fly her.

"Draws on unpublished diaries and archive recordings to chronicle the extraordinary national effort to construct the fighter aircraft that gave the Allies a critical edge over the Luftwaffe". (*The Times*)

This isn't a story of stiff-upper lips, stoical moustaches and aerial heroics; it's a story of love and loss, a story of young people tested to the very limits of their endurance. Young people who won a battle that turned a war. (*Via Gordon Dyne*)

B 737 MAX 10:



Boeing's 737 Max 10 lifted off from Renton Municipal airport at 10:07 local time on 18 June, beginning a maiden flight expected to last 2 hours. Under clear skies [unusual for Seattle], the aircraft (registration N27751) took off to the north on a flight plan expected to bring it over Everett and then east toward Spokane, according to pool reports. According to the plan, the jet will then fly between Spokane and Moses Lake, where it will conduct a touch-and-go, and land at about noon at Boeing Field in Seattle. A few hundred Boeing staffers were on hand to watch the take-off at Renton airport, among them Boeing Commercial Airplanes chief executive Stan Deal.

The first flight kicks off the Max 10's certification programme. Boeing aims to deliver the first -10 in 2023. The company had previously expected to deliver the first -10 in 2020 but delayed the timeline amid the Max grounding and Covid-19 pandemic. (Via Bruce Prescott)

CRYPTO CLUES:

The Intergovernmental Fintech Working Group (IFWG) has published a position paper on crypto assets in South Africa, and its plan to regulate these assets in South Africa. Members of the IFWG include the Competition Commission, the Financial Intelligence Centre, the Financial Sector Conduct Authority, the National Credit Regulator, National Treasury, the South African Revenue Service, and the South African Reserve Bank. The IFWG said that its position on crypto-assets is neither explicitly 'hostile' nor explicitly 'friendly', with the regulators aiming to remain neutral with the objective of enabling responsible innovation in the crypto-asset ecosystem while ensuring a level playing field between both incumbent and new role players. In the domestic context, the main concerns around the use of crypto assets are around their well-documented use for illicit activities, including but not limited to tax evasion, money laundering and terrorism financing. Other concerns raised by the IFWG include:

- The potential longer-term impact on the effectiveness of monetary policy tools;
 - The potential longer-term impact on financial stability through developments including but not limited to the creation of parallel payment systems;
 - The flight of capital abroad through the evasion of South African exchange controls.
- "There are then also consumer risks and consumer protection issues. Customers may invest in risky products or services that they do not fully understand and which are unsuitable to their needs, or may fall prey to fraudulent players running scams purporting to relate to crypto asset products," the IFG said.

RAF SQUADRON BADGES:



WATCH THIS SPACE:

“Hood Boy! The s#&t is reportedly spitting in the hallowed halls of the South African regulator in Midland following a very recent call from their counterparts in the US FAA that they are planning a visit in a few weeks to conduct an oversight audit of our regulator. Mention was even made that specific interest will be made of the Part 121 (airline operations) division. From other sources we have established that a whistle-blower with detailed knowledge of the current status within our regulator has provided such detailed information to the US regulator, including details that current Part 121 inspectors do not hold Airline Pilot licences; that many have never operated jets or aircraft with pressurised cabins. There are loads of other accusations that this disgruntled person has reportedly provided to the FAA. Being the astute entity which they are, the FAA decided to come see for themselves what is going on in South Africa to make their own assessment. Now this information is unsubstantiated. So, let us sit back and see what happens. I would like to think our regulator can satisfy any external audit that they meet international standards. This is a developing story; we will keep you posted.” (*Duncan Gillespie in the Fly Africa forum*)

CHEERS! FOR TODAY

Now 456 days since the start of the great panicdemic, this is the sixty-fourth weekly Newsheet - “Members News, Reminiscences and Ramblings” - items of Air Force interest, or greetings to the Club or any other happenings of interest (preferably not on the antics of Ministers (various) or NCCC!) that will help us all to keep in contact and entertained through the lockdown, now back to Level 3. We’re hanging in there...

Please continue to take care – we’ve made it so far – continue to keep safe in these very unsettling times: wash your hands, cover your face, make space, avoid gatherings (do not give the ungodly reason to persecute you further) Don’t spread alarm and despondency... the media is doing their best at that... remember that all this, too, shall pass.... Given the gloomy outlook we’ll keep informal lunches on hold for now and monitor further developments at Wanderers as they progress....

TAILPIECE:

We live in a world that sometimes delivers,
But often all I see gives me the shivers,
Now a promise made,
Is a debt unpaid,
Is some wisdom in poetry that figures.
(*The Sherriff of Nottingham Road*)

"The winds and waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators."

Edward Gibbon

As a butcher is shooing a dog from his shop, he sees £10 and a note in his mouth, reading: "8 lamb chops, please." Amazed, he takes the money, puts a bag of chops in the dog's mouth, and quickly closes the shop. He follows the dog and watches him wait for a green light, look both ways, and trot across the road to a bus stop. The dog checks the timetable and sits on the bench. When a bus arrives, he walks around to the front, looks at the number, and boards the bus. The butcher follows, dumbstruck. As the bus travels out into the suburbs, the dog takes in the scenery. After a while, he stands on his back paws to push the "stop" bell, and then the butcher follows him off. The dog runs up to a house and drops his bag on the step. He barks repeatedly. No answer. He goes back down the path, takes a big run, and throws himself -whap! - against the door. He does this again and again. No answer. So he jumps on a wall, walks around the garden, barks repeatedly at a window, jumps off, and waits at the front door. Eventually, a small guy opens it and starts cursing and shouting at the

dog. The butcher runs up and yells at the guy: "What the hell are you doing? This dog's a genius!"

The owner responds, "Genius, my ass. It's the second time this week he's forgotten his key!"

MATT



'We're having 30 guests at the reception, plus 2,500 UEFA VIPs'

MATT



'Majorca was wonderful. Would you like to see our Covid test results?'

