



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

Johannesburg

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BRYANSTON 2021

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NEWSLETTER – JULY 2018

LUNCH JULY 2018:

A goodly company of 37 members and guests assembled for lunch in the Marathon Room on a mild Friday afternoon, and, called to order, stood for the Grace. The Company also recognised Senior Member and WW2 Veteran Felix Mendelsohn's 96th Birthday and sang "Happy Birthday" to him. Newly co-opted Committee Member Colin Ackroyd was introduced and welcomed. John Page displayed the Waddington's silk escape map inherited from his late father. (*see below*) After an excellent lunch of Butternut Soup followed by Roast Beef with Cream Peppercorn Sauce presented by Silvasale, all enjoyed in a happy buzz of conversation, we were treated to an engrossing talk by member Col Keith Fryer SAAF, currently Director Aviation Safety, on the history and role of 21 Sqn SAAF which he commanded until January 2018. (*see below*) Supported by an excellent audio-visual of the Squadron's aircraft and routes, Keith gave an up close, personal and often amusing insight into the Squadron's experiences, particularly on the capabilities of the Boeing 737-7ED BBJ, to a rapt audience. Q&A followed. Keith was thanked for his talk by Jeff Earle and presented with a RAFOC cap. The Raffle followed, drawn fittingly by Keith. A Senior member wrote: "Well done to all for another seamless and enjoyable gathering. Good food and service and a great talk!"

21 SQUADRON SAAF: "ONOORWINLIK":

Formed on 8 May 1941 at Nakuru, Kenya, 21 Squadron moved to Egypt two months later with Martin Maryland light bombers. After taking over the aircraft of other squadrons which had re-equipped, this squadron was the last remaining operational Maryland bomber unit in the Western Desert when it withdrew to the Nile Delta in late January 1942. The squadron was non-operational at Amiriya until September 1942 when it re-equipped with Martin Baltimores, and later participated in the El Alamein battle. In the second half on 1943 the squadron moved to Malta and began operations over Malta. After flying from Sicily, the squadron moved to the Italian mainland and settled in at the big Foggia air base on 16 October 1943. Early in 1944 saw the squadron supporting the Anzio beach-head, the Monte Cassino Offensive and Tito's partisan operation in Yugoslavia. A respite came in July when the squadron stood down for conversion to Martin Marauders.

Disbanded in 1945, reformed in 1946 as a Lockheed Ventura bomber squadron at AFB Swartkop, the squadron was renumbered as 25 Squadron on 1 January 1951. In February 1968 the squadron was reformed again, this time as a VIP squadron equipped with a Vickers Viscount and three Douglas Dakotas, ex 28 Squadron. The squadron currently flies a VIP fleet, with the Dassault Falcon 50 (1982, plus another in 1985), two Cessna 550 Citation IIs (1983) and the Dassault Falcon 900 (1992). A leap in capability was made in January 2003 when the squadron received the Presidential Boeing BBJ ZS-RSA. "Inkwazi"

FARNBOROUGH: THE SHOP WINDOW FOR THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY:

Established in 1948 in the Hampshire town, which is home to the Royal Aircraft Establishment, 1500 trade exhibitors, 150 aircraft and 150,000 trade and public visitors will descend on it as it becomes the centre of the aerospace world for the third week of this month. Some of our senior members may recall the 1953 Airshow when the V-Bombers - the Victor, the Valiant and the Vulcan - flew in display for the first time, and Neville Duke was the top test pilot. The biggest draw for the general public is the hope of seeing the latest military jets being put through their paces, giant airliners in the skies above and thrilling aerobatics. The current airshow is now held every other year alternating with the Le Bourget show in Paris, with the event taking a turn to be the biggest in the aerospace calendar. Farnborough generates almost £40 million in turnover in its show years and has recently completed an exhibition centre at a cost of £33 million to expand its businesses. At the last airshow in 2016 there were £94 billion worth of deals signed (US\$ 124 billion). Britain's aerospace industry is the world's second largest with a £35 billion turnover and 123,000 direct employees. While Le Bourget show gets state backing, Farnborough operates independently. 70% of the exhibitors at Farnborough are international. *(From The Telegraph. Sent in by David Sleeman)*

TOKEN OF GRATITUDE:

On 25 May 1978, the SA Navy hydro graphic survey vessel, the SAS PROTEA under command of Capt. C.J.H. Wagenfeld rescued twenty-six crew members from the Japanese crab fishing boat, the Kaiyo Maru No 1, which foundered off the Skeleton Coast of Namibia. Shortly thereafter, SAS PROTEA was involved in another mercy mission to evacuate a heart attack victim from the tanker Texaco Sweden off the Namibian coast. SAS PROTEA was justly rewarded that year with the award of the SA Navy Sword of Peace for humanitarian efforts. About 10 years ago Mr Tielman Niewoudt, (now retired) who used to work as a DIRCO personnel attaché at several South African embassies and consulates, discovered a Japanese Lacquerware fine art box in the store room of the South African consulate in Tokyo, Japan, given to the Consulate-General as a token of gratitude for the rescue, by the SAS PROTEA, of the crew of the crab fishing boat Kaiyo Maru No1 when it was wrecked off the Skeleton coast. Mr Viljoen contacted the Naval Museum and delivered the Japanese lacquer box to the Officer in Charge SA Naval Museum who then contacted the Officer Commanding of the SAS PROTEA, Captain Glen Hallett, requesting the formal handover of the Japanese gift to the ship, at an appropriate occasion. This occasion came just at the right time, as the SAS PROTEA celebrated its birthday (46 years in service on 23 May) and the Captain's Divisions were scheduled for Friday 25 May to coincide with the actual rescue event off the Skeleton Coast in 1978.

RAF'S FIRST F-35S LAND IN ENGLAND:

The first of Britain's new F-35B Lightning II stealth fighter jets landed in the UK in early June. Four of the supersonic aircraft landed at RAF Marham in Norfolk, as the first of a batch of 48 which the Ministry of Defence has bought for a total of £9.1 billion, including training and maintenance. Marham will be the new base for 617 Squadron, the Dambusters, which has been reformed. The MOD has committed to buying a further 90 of the US built aircraft from Lockheed Martin. Each aircraft will cost £190 million! Although they will be based in Norfolk, they will be made available for duty aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth, the Royal Navy's new aircraft carrier. The Squadron Commander, Wing Commander John Butcher, has been based at the US Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina, since last August, and has had to undertake extensive ground school training in preparation for his first F-35 flight over the Atlantic Ocean, over 5000 miles to Marham.

CENTENARY CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE USAF:

Colonel TC Schultz, previously Air Attaché at the US Embassy in Pretoria, writes: “Bruce - My congratulations to you and the RAF Officers' Club members on the magnificent achievement of the Royal Air Force's 100th Anniversary. Well done indeed!

With best regards,

Yours truly;

TC”

RAF 100:

From noiseless gliders to pilotless drones, the Royal Air Force has come a long way. Nick Hammond visited the UK's largest base, **RAF Brize Norton**, and wrote in Country Life: “They wrestled Spitfires through blue skies over Britain, dodging the Luftwaffe and stalling Hitler's invasion. They helped shape the Second World War, perhaps even the world as we know it. The RAF suffered the largest casualty rate of all British armed forces during it – 55,000 aircrew died on bombing missions against Germany. Since then, magnificent men and women in their flying machines have flown millions of miles, carrying everything from soldiers, helicopters and nuclear bombs to water bottles, blankets and baby food. On April 1, Her Majesty's Royal Air Force celebrated its Centenary. On the day of my visit to RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire, there's a blizzard brewing and Storm Emma is gleefully flouncing her skirt across the Cotswolds; even the armed guard on sentry looks cold. However, the weather would have to be truly historic to affect operations here. Built in 1937, originally to train glider pilots, Brize Norton is the UK's biggest RAF base, with nearly 6,000 regular service personnel on the ground at any one time. Combine this with contractors and civil servants and there are about 8,000 people a day coming through these gates. They perform a mind-blowing diversity of jobs. Over the years, the force's focus has shifted between transport, reconnaissance, bombing and fighter capabilities and Station Commander Group Captain Tim Jones believes it's more relevant today than ever before. “When Hurricane Irma hit the Caribbean last year, we had people on the ground within 24 hours” he points out. “We had thousands more out there providing life-saving aid within the next few days. I'm very proud of that. That ability – to reach anywhere on the planet, with the right people, the right equipment, at the right time – has never been more important. And aeronautical engineering and related technology move at an incredible pace – there were only 50 years between the Wright brothers and Concorde” he says. “The RAF is a forward-thinking force, open to all, doing extraordinary things in extraordinary situations. And, after more than 20 years, that's still what I love about it most.” (*Sent in by Rob Tannahill*)

Read more at <https://www.countrylife.co.uk/country-life/celebrating-100-years-raf-175768#sAKRt6J3Cz85lqCZ.99>

“TIME FLIES- REFLECTIONS OF A FIGHTER PILOT”:

David Hamilton served in the RAF from 1967 until taking Premature Voluntary Retirement as a Group Captain in 1997. He has had a remarkable “Fast jet” Flying career: advanced Flying Training on the Hunter, a “first tourist” Lightning pilot (23 and 111 Squadrons 70-74) converted to the Phantom, with the RN on the Ark Royal in the mid 70's, FGR 2 Phantom at Wildenrath in Germany, then back to Lightnings at RAF Binbrook, and via Staff College to the MoD as a desk officer on the evolution of the EFA (European Fighter Aircraft) now Typhoon. Then on to the Tornado F3 Fighter world and as a Squadron Commander in the first Gulf war in 1990. He commanded the Red Arrows Support Wing and was deputy Station Commander at Leuchars before retiring in 1997. He joined BAE before joining the Eurofighter sales and marketing team as a U.K. representative until final retirement. David writes comprehensively about the operation of the fighters he flew, covering both aircraft flying characteristics and operational tactics, including some unofficial variations. He goes in to fascinating detail as to the pressures fighter aircrew confront at all operational levels. In particular I found his discourse on Carrier Operations illuminating. The later trials and tribulations of spinning up a new squadron on an incoming type (Tornado F.3) with pressures from above bearing down heavily on inexperienced and at times inadequate (or indifferent) allocation of resources will strike a chord with many managers. What really makes this book exceptional is his opinion, as an authoritative source, on the strengths and weaknesses of the types he operated. He is candid and unreservedly

opinionated on most issues. I found his account of the political saga of the Typhoon's evolution (both as an O.R. Desk officer and later in Eurofighter) quite gripping reading. He concludes the body of his narrative with some strongly worded comments on the claimed capabilities of the F-35 "Lightning II" now just coming in to RAF service. With his background and experience I would be very reluctant to challenge him!

(Reviewed by Geoff Quick) <https://www.amazon.com/Time-Flies-Reflections-Fighter-Pilot/dp/1781555842>

MONOPOLY MAPS:

Member **John Page** wrote in to say "I thought that you, and some of our members, might be interested in a bit more information on "escape maps" to add to Clive King's article "**Get out of Jail ... Free**". Together with his diaries, medals and other bits and pieces that my father passed on to me was one of the escape maps, not of Germany and Italy, but of North Africa (Square K titled Cyrenaica). I am amazed at the amount of detail and the fact that it is printed on both sides of the material. One side covers from Gibraltar through to the Egyptian Border and down to part of Chad, whilst the other side is a large scale map from the Gulf of Sidera to Cairo. It is about a 52 cm square and you would probably need to use a magnifying glass to read some of the smaller print! Considering its age, the map has survived extremely well which is a further tribute to those who printed them. I am open to correction but I believe my father got the map when he was part of Operation Torch – the landings in North Africa in 1942. In closing thank you for the very informative Newsletters that never cease stir up memories and other episodes of my service. Very best regards, John Page"

A CHAPLAIN REMEMBERS.....1 May 1940:

"Douglas Bader came in from a patrol. He has been doing more than his share of patrols. He landed with his undercarriage up. We all saw it. The aircraft isn't very good; but he isn't hurt. He is flying off on leave, so he strode with his parachute from the crashed aircraft to the Maggy [Miles Magister, two-seater plane]. He was still in a furious temper at landing with his wheels up, and all our soothing had no effect. He took his parachute and flung it hard on the wing of the Maggy, saying, "F*** everything." The parachute went straight through the wing, making a lovely hole in it. So that was the second aircraft he had temporarily written off in an afternoon. But it restored his balance. Another aircraft was found, and he took off in that...." (Extract from "Life and Death in the Battle of Britain" by RAFVR Chaplain Guy Mayfield, editor Carl Warner, is published by Imperial War Museums, priced £9.99, published 19 April 2018)

OBITUARY:

Syd Nomis, the Springbok winger who has died aged 76, played 54 times for his country, 25 of them in successive Test matches between 1967 and 1972, which was then a record. With Okey Geffin and Joel Stransky, he was one of the greatest Jewish players to have appeared in international rugby. Early in his career, playing for the Wanderers in Johannesburg, he was called a "blerrie Jood" ("bloody Jew") by an Afrikaner opponent, who was soon carried from the field after Nomis registered a forceful protest against this anti-Semitic remark....

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE: A CENTENARY OF OPERATIONS:

The Author of this new book, **Wing Commander Michael Napier** was Cookie Cookson's Pilot on Tornados, and is brother to Bob Napier. We anticipate he will be our Guest Speaker at the Battle of Britain Lunch in September. Bob brought a preview copy of the book to the April dinner - it is a splendid work. The publisher, Osprey, are not represented in SA. However, we can now confirm that

Mike will bring a small number of copies of the book with him in September and will sign them for buyers. At prevailing exchange rates the price is approx R350. Please let us know if you want a copy – we already have 8 firm orders to date.

NEXT FUNCTION:

Our Next **Ordinary Lunch** will be on **Friday 3 August 2017, 12h30 for 13h00** at Wanderers. We expect, subject to the exigencies of the service, that **Wg Cdr Kevin Rayner RAF**, Deputy Defence Advisor to the British High Commissioner will be giving us a talk on the Royal Air Force in this Centenary Year.

REMEMBER: Lunch Fees now R200 pp. We prefer you pay by EFT and please use your name as "reference." **NEDBANK** Melrose Arch, Branch **19 66 05** Account **19 66 278 063**

All bookings please to bookings@rafoc.org or if you do not have access to e-mail:

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Look forward to seeing you there!

Cheers,

Bruce.

UK ARMED FORCES DAY: RAF 100

Address given by Colonel Alan Litsten RM, at this event at the Pretoria Residence of the British High Commissioner to SA on Thursday 21 June 2018

"Good afternoon, ambassadors, senior officers from SANDF, fellow attaches, British and South African veterans and our friends. I'd like to add my welcome to that of Ben Llewellyn Jones our deputy high commissioner. First of all, I have to thank our High Commissioner Mr. Nigel Casey for letting a group of military people have a party in his fantastic house and gardens. I'm sure he knew what he was doing when he agreed to this but you will note that we're not running this event in my garden but as I only count a handful of Marines in the audience we should be ok!

I would also like to thank our friends and sponsors from BMW, Mabey Bridge, Babcock and Thales. BMW have laid on a fleet of vehicles to return you to your cars if you found yourself parking on the outskirts of Johannesburg in order to find a parking space! Special thanks also to our friends from the South African Air Force entertainment band who have played with their customary poise and professionalism throughout the afternoon.

Celebrating Armed Forces Day in the United Kingdom is a relatively new phenomenon. The first one was held in the UK in 2006, reflecting the fact that our armed forces were engaged in simultaneous operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan with the very obvious human costs involved in that tempo of operations. It was an event established so that our citizens could publicly thank and recognise their armed forces and has been going strong ever since. This, we believe, is the first such event that we have held in South Africa.

Speaking of Africa, I would like to highlight our contribution to peace, stability and security on the continent; in South Sudan we are providing much needed infrastructure support through our military engineers and our medics from all three Services are supporting the military field hospital which supports the UN Mission. In addition, we have a large number of staff officers deployed in Somalia and have a large number of female officers attached to various UN missions as gender advisers to help with the ongoing issues related to the prevention of sexual violence in conflict. We have also been closely involved in countering the effects of Ebola in various countries and, for the first time in our history, have placed UK military forces under the command of our department for international development, who have the lead for the multi-agency approach to this pervasive problem. Finally, we have military training and advisory teams based throughout the continent engaged in helping African nations develop and refine their peacekeeping capabilities.

Closer to home, we enjoy a close relationship with the SA National Defence Force, this reflects our shared history and common values. Indeed, the UK military were invited by your first democratically elected government to deploy an advisory and assistance team here to assist with the transition of the SADF and various liberation movements into the SANDF that we recognise today. They left the country last year, a glowing reflection of SANDF's confidence and development. Day to day, we now provide mostly technical and specialist assistance to SANDF capability development, notably with the SA Navy, Air Force and other niche areas.

Turning back to today, as well as celebrating our armed forces, we have a special emphasis on the Royal Air Force who are celebrating their 100th anniversary this year. The 1st of April 1918 this saw the amalgamation of the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service into the world's first independent air force. Over the last 100 years we have seen the RAF ruthlessly ensure that every major air base is located next to some of the world's finest golf courses and swimming pools. I am of course joking, mostly...as a Royal Marines infantry officer I can only sympathise with how hard life can be at 25000 feet.

But before Kevin, my RAF deputy, disowns me, I have to say that I have relied upon the RAF's skill and expertise many times whilst deployed on operations. The RAF are today deployed globally supporting many military tasks and have been at the forefront of our anti-Daesh campaign in partnership with many of the nations represented here today. The RAF are also inextricably bound into our history and national psyche since the events that inspired Winston Churchill to declare that 'never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few'. This year provides our nation the opportunity to thank the men and women of the Royal Air Force for their sacrifices both past and present and future.

As we are talking sacrifice, my final 'thank you's' are to my team for their hard work in making today a tremendous success. Kevin, Mauricio, Linda and Helen. Now, it is no secret in our High Commission that Helen and Linda take on a tremendous amount of responsibility on behalf of not just my team but the whole High Commission. They have taken my rather vague guidance and transformed it into the spectacle that we have enjoyed so far. Ladies, I have a gift for both of you of flowers I hope that you will join me in raising a glass to toast to our Armed Forces.

(Fly past overhead of a Vampire T55 jet, SAAF 277, from the SAAF Museum)