



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

Johannesburg

P.O. Box 69726

BRYANSTON 2021

info@rafoc.org

www.rafoc.org

President:	David MacKinnon-Little	
Vice Presidents:	David Lake, Geoff Quick, Basil Hersov	
Chairman:	Bruce Harrison	bruce@jbharrison.co.za Tel: 011 673 0291 Cell: 083 325 0025
Vice Chairman:	Jon Adams	vice-chairman@rafoc.org Tel: 011 678 7702 Cell: 082 450 0616
Hon. Secretary:	Colin Francis	Tel: 011 706 4554 Cell: 082 853 8368
Hon. Treasurer:	Jeff Earle	Tel: 011 616 3189 Cell: 083 652 1002
Committee Members:	Russell Swanborough	Tel: 011 884 2611 Cell: 083 263 2740
	Karl Jensen	Tel: 011 234 0598 Cell: 082 331 4652
	Jean-Michel Girard	Cell: 083 659 1067
	Geoff Fish	Tel: 012 667 2759 Cell: 083 660 9697
	Rob Tannahill	Tel: 011 888 6074 Cell: 082 806 6779
Bank Account:	Nedbank - Melrose Arch	Br: 19 66 05 Account 19 66 278 063

NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2017

AUGUST LUNCH:

Lunch saw 47 members and guests turning out on a mild August day (whatever happened to Winter?) to enjoy another great Silvasale meal of Blue Cheese Galette Starters followed by Fillet of Beef with Morels Sauce and Roast Vegetables, with accompanying wines. Our speaker, member Rob Jonkers (past President of the Aeronautical Society of SA), gave an excellent, profusely illustrated talk on his recent visit to Boeing, and their Museum of Flight in Seattle, USA, and then to the Paris Air Show, with video clips of the latest and greatest aircraft being put through their paces, including the first public appearance of the Lockheed-Martin F35 Lightning Mk II. Rob is Program Director at Aerosud, a wholly South African company which has the distinction of supplying both Boeing and Airbus with composite components and sub-assemblies for their latest aircraft – another SA private enterprise success story. The Raffle was something special, with prizes of a selection of excellent Whiskies and Vintage Port sponsored, introduced and run with Gallic flair and élan by Jean-Michel Girard, standing in for Russell Swanborough.

BIRTH OF THE RAF CENTENARY: AUGUST 1917:

In August 1917, the Oubaas, General Jan Smuts, presented the famous Paper to the British War Cabinet recommending the formation of an independent Air Force from the amalgamation of the RNAS and RFC which led to the formation of the RAF in April 1918. Not many remember that the Paper was drafted by Lieutenant General Sir David Henderson, KCB, KCVO, DSO (11 August 1862 – 17 August 1921), the senior leader of British military aviation during the First World War, having previously established himself as the leading authority on tactical intelligence in the British Army – in South Africa. With the outbreak of the Second Boer War in late 1899, he was posted to South Africa, where he was wounded at the Siege of Ladysmith. He received promotion to Lieutenant-Colonel on 29 November 1900, and in February 1901, the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, Lord Kitchener, appointed Henderson his Director of Military Intelligence, a post he held until the end of the war in June 1902. He served as the Commander of the Royal Flying Corps in the field during the first year of the First World War and, as a Staff Officer reporting directly to General Smuts on the War Cabinet, was thus instrumental in establishing the Royal Air Force as an independent service. After the war Henderson became first Director-General of the League of Red Cross Societies.

CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF VISITS RAF PERSONNEL ON NATO MISSION:

Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, Chief of the Air Staff, in late July, visited Royal Air Force personnel conducting the NATO air policing mission which safeguards the integrity of Allies' sovereign airspace. On arrival at Mihael Kogalniceanu Air Base in Romania, the CAS was greeted by Wing Commander Andrew Coe, Commanding Officer 135 Expeditionary Air Wing (EAW) and given a tour of the detachment which operates four Typhoon aircraft. The multi-role fighters have been based in Romania since May as part of wider NATO assurance measures designed to demonstrate the commitment of Allies to collective defence and deterrence. After meeting personnel from the individual sections which comprise the EAW, ACM Hillier met with his Romanian counterpart, Lieutenant General Laurian Anastasof whom he thanked for the support afforded to the

RAF detachment. ACM Hillier said: “This is our first significant detachment into Romania, and demonstrating that commitment I know is reassuring to them. It’s also an important message for the UK overall in NATO is to say that the breadth of our capability is significant. I think it very much demonstrates with air power, what the Royal Air Force can contribute for a relatively small detachment, we’re really sending an important strategic message which is definitely heard by others.” The CAS then visited the NATO Command and Air Operation Centre (CAOC) which monitors NATO airspace over an area greater in size than the continental United States. Situated north of Madrid, CAOC Torrejón has been fully operational since October 2014 forming part of a new NATO command structure established following the Lisbon Summit in 2010.

Full story: <https://www.raf.mod.uk/news/archive/chief-of-the-air-staff-visits-raf-personnel-on-nato-mission-26072017>

DUNKIRK: OPERATION DYNAMO:

Courtesy of two generous members of the Club, a number of us watched the new film “Dunkirk” at IMAX recently. It is well worth seeing, celebrating the “Miracle of Dunkirk” and the part played by the RAF. The ‘little ships’ are central to how Dunkirk is remembered and portrayed. They were the more than 700 privately owned vessels that participated in the evacuation, including motor boats, sailing ships and vessels towed across the Channel. They represented the full range of seafaring activities of the nation, including fishing trawlers, cockle boats, yachts, lifeboats, paddle ferries, pleasure cruisers, a fire tender, rubbish barges and vessels owned by the Pickfords removals company. The names tell a story of their own: Lord Collingwood and Lord St Vincent served alongside Yorkshire Lass, Count Dracula and Dumpling, but Churchill’s ‘mosquito armada’ did play an important role. Many men would not have got home without them – and they paid a high price, coming under constant attack from the Luftwaffe and having to brave mines, fast tides, fog, and waters cluttered with ever more wrecks. More than 100 were lost, including many that were unidentified. The little ships deserve their place in history.

ISRAEL 6 DAY WAR: 50 YEARS ON:

The 50th Anniversary of the “Six Day War” of 1967 was commemorated by a special screening of the film “Above and Beyond” on the 27 July at the EAA Auditorium at Rand Airport. The film, compeered by Brian Appleton, was introduced by Scully Levin, who recounted the part played by South Africans in the formation of the Israeli Air Force. A notable contributor was the late Justice Cecil Margo, a SAAF veteran of WW2 and long-standing member of RAFOC. Although he declined Command of the infant IAF when offered it by Ben Gurion, he played a major role in planning the development of the IAF out of the crucible of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The film was produced by producer by Nancy Spielberg, the youngest sister of Steven Spielberg, and thus had an American influence – ably redressed by Scully!. Many young South Africans with Air Force experience, both Jew and Gentile, volunteered for service and played their part in one of the great dramas of modern military history. General, later President of Israel, Ezer Weizmann, Commander of the IAF in 1967, earned his Wings in 1942 in Rhodesia at RAF Thornhill, part of the RATG, and later made numerous private visits to that country.

64th ANNUAL KOREAN ARMISTICE DAY MEMORIAL SERVICE: 27 July 2017:

Commemorating another conflict, this Memorial Service, hosted by the South Korean Embassy, took place at Bay’s Hill on 27 July 2017. At dawn on 3 July 1950 Seafire and Firefly aircraft took off from HMS Triumph to attack the North Korean airfield at Haeju. Thus, with the first carrier air strike of the conflict, Britain entered the Korean War. In due course, South Africa committed 2 Sqn SAAF to the conflict, where they served with distinction. Many continued to serve in the SAAF and others in SAA. Some veterans, amongst whom Gen Denis Earp, Piet Visser, Ivan Holtshausen are still with us in the SA Korean War Veterans Association which meets annually under the Chairmanship of Col Dirk Louw. Today, some 67 summers later, no formal peace treaty has been signed. In fact, as the recent eruption of tensions over North Korea’s alleged sinking of a South Korean vessel (the Cheonan) demonstrates, the peninsula remains very much divided. At the end of the Second World War, Korea was split at the 38th Parallel, with the Japanese occupying forces replaced by troops from the USSR in the north and the USA in the south. However, as the Cold War’s icy chill began to spread east from Europe, Kim Il-Sung’s communist government in North Korea (in power since 1945) decided to take over the whole peninsula. When subversion failed, it began to plan for war.

PASSCHENDAELE CENTENARY:

In partnership with The Royal British Legion, the National Memorial Arboretum is commemorating the Centenary of the Battle of Passchendaele and investigating the social change which occurred as a result of

the Empire at War. Also known as the 3rd Battle of Ypres, the Battle of Passchendaele was known for the treacherous muddy conditions which took their toll on morale and lengthened the time it took for the Allies to recapture the village of Passchendaele. British casualties alone were estimated at around 270,000, over 500 000 on both sides. Whilst this 1917 Summer / Autumn offensive was taking place in Europe, Britain was engulfed in much social change. Women maintained the economy by leaving families at home and taking jobs in factories and on farms as conscription sent more young men off to war. This newly found independence, in part, fuelled the rise in the women's suffrage movement and the way families 'operated' on a day-to-day basis. Alongside this massive social shift were families struggling to cope with loved ones at war, fathers who were missing, sons who had been killed and returning soldiers with life-changing injuries that would forever affect family life, standards of living and the way society would engage with them. Propaganda was widely prevalent, spy fever growing, but patriotism higher than ever.

NSRI 50th ANNIVERSARY:

The National Sea Rescue Institute, which a number of RAFOC members support, is 50 years old this year. There are a number of Anniversary events around the country. Little did Captain John Payn realise, when he decided, as President of the Society of Master Mariners of SA, to participate actively in the formation of a sea rescue service, that his decision would directly affect the lives of thousands of people over the following 50 years. He died in 1992 – his legacy lives on, and we salute his memory! Last year the NSRI saved 1306 lives around the Coast and inland. Visit their site: www.searescue.org.za

NO MORE PILOTS?

Pilotless aircraft, flying electric vehicles and bespoke air cabins are the future of flight, Airbus said Thursday. Paul Eremenko, the European plane-maker's chief technological officer, painted a picture of skies buzzing with new flight forms at the RISE tech conference held in Hong Kong recently. Airbus is already testing out what it calls a "module" cabin concept - passenger planes being tailored to different demands. "You can imagine on a flight to Vegas, you might have a casino module," said Eremenko. "Or in a more general sense, you may have a sleeping module and you go and pay 50 bucks an hour to have the ability to sleep in a sound-proof, climate-controlled area," he added. Airbus has been working on the project for a year already, including user trials. Airbus has also been working on a self-piloted flying car, the Vahana, with testing on a full-size prototype to be done by the end of the year. "Our goal really is to open up the third dimension in cities and we believe that the time is right," said Eremenko, describing the growth of mega-cities, increasing congestion and technological developments as factors fuelling the development of electric short-hop flight travel. Pilotless flight was also on the cards, he said, playing down safety fears. "We believe the first autonomy will come in the domain of urban air mobility where the vehicles are smaller and there are fewer occupants," he said, adding it was easier to fly autonomously than to drive autonomously. "That, I have fairly high confidence that we will get to in single-digit years," he said, adding the problem was not a technical one but of social acceptance. Artificial intelligence was the main focus of the sprawling RISE conference which on Wednesday included a debate between two lifelike disembodied robot torsos on the future of humanity.

DR JAMES BARRY - LEGEND OF THE CAPE:

On 25 July 1826, Dr James Barry was faced with a terrible decision – one that no surgeon ever wanted to make. In the middle of a lashing rainstorm, he'd been called out from Cape Town, where he was a surgeon with the British garrison, to attend to a Wilhelmina Munnik's labour. The midwife had admitted defeat. A brief examination confirmed to Dr Barry that this baby would not be born in the normal way. A caesarean operation would have to be performed – a procedure invariably fatal to the mother, done only as a last resort to save the baby. Mrs Munnik, in an extremity of anguish, consented, and Dr Barry prepared his instruments. There was no anaesthetic; Mrs Munnik was held down firmly on the bed. With his renowned deftness, Dr Barry made the first incision – a long vertical cut from below the navel. Nobody present knew that James Barry – described by Charles Dickens as a "fair-faced slender youth", "as clever as he was impudent" – was the only qualified surgeon in the world who knew from personal experience what childbirth was like. Beneath his military attire, this strangely small and smooth-skinned gentleman was in fact a woman. Through deceit and disguise she had become the first – and, for many decades, the only – woman to qualify and practice as a physician and surgeon. Her real name was Margaret Anne Bulkley, born in Cork, Ireland, in c.1789, the daughter of a hapless shopkeeper who ended up in a debtors' jail. Margaret was a brilliantly intelligent and bold girl. At the age of 19, having borne a child (the result of a rape at the hands of a dissolute uncle) and with no prospect other than a bleak life as a governess, she audaciously disguised herself as a man in order to study medicine. Margaret Bulkley lived as James Barry for 56 years. Her true identity remained a mystery until author Michael du Preez discovered her real name in 2008.

BLACK TOT DAY:

31 July 1970 was Black Tot Day. It was the final day of rum rationing in the British Navy.....Yo-Ho-Ho but no bottle of Rum!

CRANWELL SOLILOQUY: 86 ENTRY (Apologies to John Gillespie Magee!):

Oh! we have slipped the surly bonds of earth
 But do not dance, there is no dearth
 Of poundage clinging to the waist
 Nor things no longer done in haste
 But we recall those carefree joys
 When trapped at Cranwell, merely boys
 We worked and played, and learnt to fly
 In ancient craft and sunlit sky
 There were no setbacks, no alarms
 Prevailing past the Houblon Arms
 Parades were always freezing cold
 But we were young, and fit and bold
 And they were times beyond compare
 That's surely so, for we were there!

NEXT FUNCTION:

Battle of Britain Ladies Lunch on Friday 8 September 2017, 12h30 for 13h00 at Wanderers.

There will be a fly-past by the Flying Lions at 13h00 which will be viewed on the lawn outside the Vista Room, with a drink in hand.....

We have invited a Speaker who has agreed to be in South Africa at that time and will be flying in especially for the occasion. We will keep you posted closer to the time. Watch this space and your in-boxes.

NOTICE FOR LADIES LUNCHES: **Ladies Lunch Fees now R200 pp** and if you pay by EFT please use your name as "reference" Unfortunately we have had to increase the Ladies Lunches, where a three courses meal, plus additional wines are served.

NEDBANK Melrose Arch, Branch 19 66 05 Account 19 66 278 063

MEMBERS LUNCHES: We will be holding the Members Lunch price at R180 as it is a two course meal and our Treasurer is balancing the books with some of our retained earnings.

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

Rob Tannahill	Tel: 011 888 6074	Cell: 082 80 66 779	tannahill@vitalitybroadband.co.za
Jon Adams	Tel: 011 678 7702	Cell: 082 45 00 616	vice-chairman@rafoc.org

Look forward to seeing you there!

Cheers, Bruce.