



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 133 21st OCTOBERBER 2022

GREETINGS:

New week, new UK Prime Minister... In SA, the mixture as before - Confusion, chaos, corruption and criminality... PIC inquiry: deals, leaks, witch-hunt, cover-ups... Prasa rocked by fresh scandals... Zuma backer's racist rant... The dodgy, motley crew defending Zuma... guns, houses and the Mafia in KZN... and a U –Turn on Ministerial perks... High Court slams Mkhwebane's bid to return to work – “Long on sophistry, short on legal authority”... SARB executes a court order against Markus Jooste assets – when thieves fall out... 18 months of regular loadshedding ahead... Dis-Chem Disaster... “Scurry for Murray” as M&R tanks... Brian Molefe's Limpopo house sold at auction... Pastor shot dead, two others wounded, armed robbery at Diepsloot Church... two dead in Barberton gang shooting... rains arrive: thunderstorms and flooding in Alberton... more Protea collapses... “Make a U- Turn, make a U-Turn” – UK now on Alice in Wonderland GPS... Truss premiership ‘hanging by thread’ which broke after Kwarteng sacking and latest U-turn... who will be next?... Jeremy Hunt rips up prime minister's economic plans... dream of a low-tax, pro-business UK is dead... Russia mourns loss of first drafted soldiers in Ukraine... Russian armoured vehicle cluelessly ploughed into a row of clearly visible landmines... many Russian reservists ‘likely’ buying body armour – prices soar... deadly shootout between Russian troops followed ‘argument over religion’ says Zelenskiy adviser... lack of access to PoWs in Russian-occupied region... Russia's new commander signals civilian evacuation from ‘tense’ Kherson ... West in no mood for concessions to Russia in Ukraine... Elon Musk under federal investigation over \$44bn Twitter deal... but he'll carry on funding the internet in Ukraine... Ghosts of 1968 haunt Macron as winter of discontent looms... Klopp rejects claims his comments on Man City were xenophobic... Sunny side up: Qatar solar plant to help power World Cup... Sussexes's upcoming Netflix documentary... Blind date: “My trousers were a bit tight for such a warm night”

FIRST PROTECTOR:



The first world-class Protector aircraft has been accepted off-contract by the UK MOD from General Atomics-Aeronautical Systems-Inc (GA-ASI). The handover last month followed the successful conclusion of the Acceptance Test Procedure performed jointly by UK MOD and GA-ASI. Ownership of the aircraft has now transferred to UK MOD and the aircraft will now fly with a UK Military tail number, PR005, under a UK Military Permit to Fly.

The aircraft remains in the USA to participate in the initial training programme for the RAF, with the first delivery of the Protector to the RAF in the UK planned for 2023. Acceptance Test Procedure was performed over the past two months at GA-ASI's Desert Horizon flight operations facility in El-Mirage, California, and included all inspections and tests performed on the hardware in operation for the aircraft and in conformance with the functional specification and technical requirements. To achieve full operational clearance, Protector is being assessed against stringent NATO and UK safety certification standards, meaning it could operate in civilian airspace. It is expected that Protector will achieve certification in 2024. Protector will replace Reaper and will be deployed in wide-ranging (ISTAR) operations where its ability to fly consistently for up to 40 hours, offers the RAF vastly improved armed ISTAR capability. It would also be available, if requested, to support civilian agencies in the UK, for example in search and rescue and disaster response missions. "It was a great pleasure to accept the first Protector aircraft off contract on behalf of the MOD. While this aircraft will remain in USA, it will be used to train RAF personnel with UK equipment and will be placed on the UK Military Register. We now look forward to the first delivery of this highly capable aircraft type to RAF Waddington during 2023". Air Vice-Marshal Ellard, Director Combat Air, at *Defence Equipment and Support (RAF News)*

JON EGGING TRUST (JET):



Head of the RAF, Air Chief Marshal Sir Mike Wigston, today supported youth charity the Jon Egging Trust in its signing of the Armed Forces Covenant at a ceremony at RAF College Cranwell in Lincolnshire. The Armed Forces Covenant was established in 2011 as a formal promise from the nation to recognise the sacrifices made by service personal and their families. In signing the covenant, organisations pledge their commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community and its veterans.

Flt Lt Jon Egging was killed in a flying accident while with the Red Arrows. "Since our foundation over a decade ago, the RAF and its ethos have sat at the heart of all we do. RAF College Cranwell hosted our very first ten students in 2012, and we have since worked with 25 military bases and 35,000 young people across the UK. Military personnel epitomise JET's core values of teamwork, leadership and resilience, and our RAF volunteers are exemplary role model to our students, supporting them during Blue Skies sessions and taking time to speak to them about their own journeys, which often involve overcoming adversity. To be back here today where it all began for JET, signing the Armed Forces Covenant with Air Chief Marshal Sir Mike Wigston, is hugely symbolic. Not only does it celebrate our commitment to service personnel, veterans and the wider military family, but it deepens the commitment of both the Jon Egging Trust and by extension our partners within the RAF family, to the local communities we serve around RAF bases" Dr Emma Egging JET CEO. "The unique gift that JET offers to our stations and our armed forces family, is its ability to reach deep into the local communities around our RAF bases, helping some of the most vulnerable young people in our society to think differently about their futures. I am delighted to support JET in their signing of the Armed Forces Covenant. As Chief of the Air Staff, I am proud that the RAF continues to support the Jon Egging Trust and the young people that together we serve". Air Chief Marshal Wigston, Chief of the Air Staff (*RAF News*)

EXERCISE BALTIC STRIKER:



This week, the RAF has been participating in intensive warfighting training with the Swedish Air Force as part of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF). Two RAF Eurofighter Typhoons from 6 Squadron RAF at RAF Lossiemouth and two Swedish JAS-39 Gripen conducted the routine training exercise in the vicinity of Ravlunda Range in southern Sweden. The training provided an opportunity for the Joint Expeditionary Force partners to plan and deliver high-value training as part of the continued development of Joint Expeditionary Force interoperability.

The exercise scenario was that the RAF and Swedish aircraft were required to repel an attack from a hostile maritime landing force along Skåne's east coast. The RAF Typhoons attacked targets on the ground and at sea, up to 2km from the coastline, with inert Paveway IV munitions. Meanwhile, the Swedish aircraft provided protection from threats in the air. These attacks were coordinated by Swedish ground units, known as Joint Terminal Attack Controllers, who identified the targets and then marked them using smoke grenades. The Joint Expeditionary Force is a British-led force comprising of 10 partner nations. The purpose of Joint Expeditionary Force is to act as a rapid response force in times of crisis. Joint Expeditionary Force can act on its own in a time of crisis or together with NATO. "Exercise Baltic Striker was an invaluable opportunity to work alongside the Swedish Gripen and Joint Terminal Attack Controllers. For the RAF and Swedish Air Force to be able to safely and accurately deliver munitions on target together requires a very high level of interoperability, something we proved today. It was a pleasure to work with the pilots of the Swedish Air Force's 172 Fighter Squadron, the ease of integration was a testament to their professionalism and capability". *RAF Pilot (RAF News)*

AMY JOHNSON, AVIATRIX:



Amy Johnson (1903-1941) was a pioneering British aviator who became the first female pilot to fly solo from London to Australia. It took her 19 days to complete the flight. Her flight, in 1930, was plagued throughout by poor weather, engine malfunctions, and accidents, but although discouraged, through sheer will and determination, she carried on. When she returned to Britain, she received congratulations from many dignitaries including the prime minister, and an honour, the CBE (Commander of the British Empire) from the king and queen. Songs were written in her honour, and her image was all over the newspapers. The "Daily Mail" wanted her to do a publicity tour around Britain, but Johnson needed time to rest and recover. Johnson made further record-breaking flights to Japan in 1931, and to Cape Town, South Africa in 1932, and again in 1936. After the disappearance of Amelia Earhart in 1937, however, she cut back on her flying, and took up gliding instead.

"The silence," she wrote in an article on gliding, "broken only by the soft swish of the wind in my hair, is rapture after the deafening roar to which I have been accustomed for so many years." But during World War II, Johnson was recruited by the Air Transport Auxiliary, who transported Royal Air Force aircraft around Britain. On January 5 1941, she went off course in adverse weather conditions, and

bailed out as her plane crashed into the Thames Estuary. An attempt to save by her life was made by the commander, Walter Fletcher, of a passing British vessel, the HMS Haslemere. Fletcher died of exposure in the attempt, and Johnson's body was never recovered. She was 37 years old. The cause of her death has not been solved, and the reason for her flight was never revealed. It is highly likely she was on a war-related government mission.

MEMBERS NEWS:

We are sad to report that Lee Grace, widow of our late senior member Des Grace, passed away...

Dave Evans wrote from the USA at the end of last month: "We've been here three weeks now - the 'admin' to get everything set up is driving us up the wall, although we are getting there - nothing of any consequence has gone wrong. The weather is edging from summer into autumn ('fall' here, of course) so still very pleasant."

Derrick Page is well on the way to recovery after heart surgery.

SA'S MILLIONAIRE MINISTERS PERKS – PAID FOR BY US:

South Africa's millionaire cabinet ministers – who get to enjoy luxury lives at taxpayers' expense – were to have been granted a boost in the number of personal staff they are allowed to have around them, giving them access to 'food aides', drivers and personal portfolio coordinators. Quiet changes to the ministerial handbook earlier this year increased the number of personal staff to 15 people, – up from 11 when the handbook was last changed in 2019 in cost-cutting measures. The roles of the aides are largely administrative and involve assisting the ministers when hosting meetings and dealing with official business, but insiders speaking to the paper criticised some of the positions as being excessive and unnecessary. The changes were set to cost taxpayers R87 million a year. President Cyril Ramaphosa signed off on the changes to the handbook in May, which also included upgraded motor cars. Ministers and their deputies can now spend up to R800, 000 for their vehicles. As per the handbook, the Department of Public Works pays for ministers' utilities – so taxpayers foot the bill for all these privileges and luxuries. The presidency told the Sunday Times that, given the public outrage over the changes, the ministerial handbook has been reviewed and rescinded. "The public outrage is appreciated considering the current social economic context and difficulties many South Africans face. As a government that listens as well as a president that is attuned to issues and concerns raised by South Africans, the ministerial handbook will be reviewed," it said. The backlash follows reports that South Africa's ministers and deputy ministers would not have to pay for water and electricity thanks to the same changes. The 2022 revision removed the R5,000 cap on municipal utilities covered by the government. Previously, ministers were only exempt from paying their bills so long as they remained below this amount. Meanwhile, as the rest of the country – including schools and hospitals – are subject to hours of load shedding, cabinet ministers' official residences are exempt as their private residences in Pretoria are on the same grid as the union buildings, which cannot be powered down due to its status as a national key point. Eskom implemented stage 2 load shedding last Saturday, 14 hours after suspending the rolling blackouts.

MARIE MARVINGT: "fiancée of danger"



Marie Marling (20 February 1875 – 14 December 1963) was a French athlete, mountaineer, aviator, and journalist. She won numerous prizes for her sporting achievements including those of swimming, cycling, mountain climbing, winter sports, ballooning, flying, riding, gymnastics, athletics, rifle shooting, and fencing. She was the first woman to climb many of the peaks in the French and Swiss Alps. She was a record-breaking balloonist, an aviator, and during World War I she became the first female combat pilot.

She was also a qualified surgical nurse, was the first trained and certified flight nurse in the world and worked for the establishment of air ambulance services throughout the world. In 1903 M. Château de Thierry de Beaumanoir named her the “fiancée of danger.” Marie’s aviation experience started as a balloon pilot in 1909, continued as an aeroplane pilot in 1910, and culminated with her obtaining, or attempting to obtain, her helicopter license in 1960, aged 85. She renewed her fixed wing license for the last time when she was 85 and passed the medical with flying colours. During her illustrious career and colourful adventurous life she also flew seaplanes, gliders and dirigibles. Her First World War vision to establish an air ambulance service for wounded troops was realized, and today both military and civilian medical evacuation organizations exist and operate with great success. Unlike many visionaries, she lived to see the full adoption of her proposals. Marie Marvingt was an excellent, accomplished athlete and intrepid adventurer, and combined with her intelligence, confidence, energy and drive she excelled and accomplished much. A friend of Marie once said that she could never quite decide on one thing to concentrate on, and thus simply did everything she could. Marie also admitted in interviews that she would never have accomplished what she did if she had been married and had children. She was quite private about her personal life, but was vocal about her freedom as an independent woman. She said, “I hope to have done some good in my life - I invented the ambulance-airplane, I fought at the front, I’ve tried to be useful in all circumstances. Everything I’ve done has been for humanitarian or scientific reasons.” Marie Marvingt was one of those rare women who, in spite of prejudice and gender limitations, excelled at anything she ever set out to accomplish and certainly made her indelible mark on the history of aero-medical evacuation. Perhaps Marie the trailblazer was indeed the Woman of the 20th Century. (*Wiki, various*)

SVI ARMoured LAND CRUISER:



Leading specialist manufacturer of armoured products, SVI Engineering revealed their latest addition, the MAX 3 six-wheeler at the Africa Aerospace and Defence Show (AAD2022). It is built on Toyota’s trusty Land Cruiser 79 chassis and likewise retains the Japanese firm’s proven 4.5-litre V8 turbodiesel powertrain. Just the job for the perils of Johannesburg roads... (*DefenceWeb*)

CHEERS FOR TODAY:

Well, what a week it’s been – amazing events in UK – Truss becomes the shortest-serving PM ever... Transnet strike mercifully over – or is it? More loadshedding, water shortages, Ukraine invasion a real and present international threat...

Our next Members lunch will be on Armistice Day, **Friday 11 November**, 12h30 for 13h00 at Wanderers... we will lay wreaths at the Wall of Remembrance before lunch. As normal, limited wine will be available on the table. Price remains R250 per head and we request you to pay by EFT to our account - Nedbank - Melrose Arch - Br: 19 66 05 - Account 19 66 278 063. Use your name and “November Lunch” as reference, please...

Please also note that we are committed to pay for the number of meals booked.

Look forward to seeing as many as possible...

Looking forward, we can confirm that Prof Anne Samson, noted author and historian, will be with us in December at the Ladies’ Christmas lunch.

And so... the first rains have fallen in Gauteng bringing welcome relief from the heat and more beautiful sunsets to enjoy, and enjoy this edition of Ramblings and the heart-warming piece at the end...

TAILPIECE:

In a Hole: A soldier with PTSD fell into a hole and couldn't get out.

When a SNCO walked by the Soldier called out for help, but the SNCO yelled back, "Suck it up son, dig deep and drive on," then threw him a shovel. The Soldier did as he was told and dug that hole deeper.

A Senior Officer went by, and the Soldier called out for help again. The Officer told him "use the tools your SNCO has given you", then threw him a bucket. The Soldier used the tools, and he dug the hole deeper still and filled the bucket.

A psychiatrist walked by. The Soldier called, "Help! I can't get out!" so the psychiatrist gave him some drugs and said, "Take this. It will relieve the pain and you will forget about the hole." The Soldier said "thanks" and followed his advice, but when the pills ran out, he was still in the hole.

A well-known psychologist rode by and heard the Soldier's cries for help. He stopped and asked, "How did you get there? Were you born there? Did your parents put you there? Tell me about yourself, it will alleviate your sense of loneliness." So, the Soldier talked with him for an hour, then the psychologist had to leave, but he said he'd be back next week. The Soldier thanked him, but he was still in the hole.

Another Soldier, just like him, happened to be passing by. The Soldier with PTSD cried out, "Hey, help me. I'm stuck in this hole!" and right away the other Soldier jumped down in there with him. The Soldier with PTSD started to panic and said, "What are you doing? Now we're both stuck down here!" But the other Soldier just smiled and replied, "It's okay, calm down, brother. I've been here before... I know how to get out."

No matter what you're going through, you are never alone. But don't be too proud to SHOUT OUT, 'HELP I'm stuck in this Hole' ...

We all get stuck in a hole from time to time but all it takes is to ask your mates for help and we will be there even if we have to jump in that hole with you....!!!





MATT

MATT



'Doom Loop - is that the bond markets or the Truss Government?'

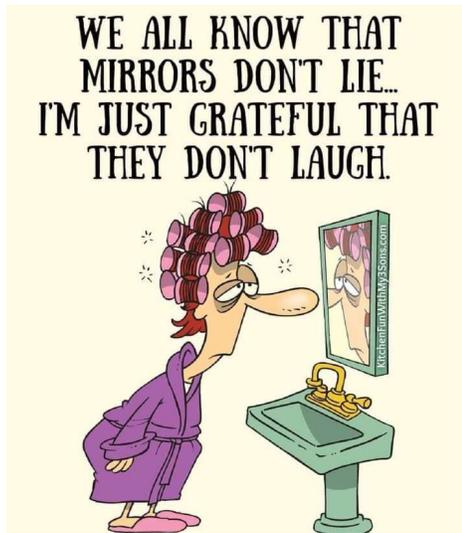


'Warning: viewers in other countries may find the next item hilarious'



New City terminology... a "kwarteng". The minimum amount of time you can be in job to be able to say you did that job.

Example "Were you at Barclays?" "Yep. But only for a Kwarteng".



THERE'S HOPE EVEN IF YOUR EYES HAVE LEFT YOU!

There is a handsome, spontaneous young man sitting in front of me, I sit and listen to him in awe and admiration. He looks me straight in the eye while sharing his story... but he doesn't see me. He says his eyes have left him. Marthinus and his twin brother, Hendrik, were born in Pretoria on 12 September 1983. They were born 2 months premature and as a result of unavoidable complications, their eyes were affected. As partially sighted Grade 1 boys, the two brothers enrolled at Prinshof School for the Visually Impaired in Pretoria.

Marthinus was a diligent pupil and well-loved by his teachers and fellow visually impaired friends. He was keen to earn his own money and decided to leave school at the end of Grade 10 to help support his family in their shop, just outside Hartbeespoort dam. He proudly remarks that he could cash up and balance the books without a calculator! Just by listening to him I can tell he is an intelligent man. Although his sight was very weak at that stage, he was still able to see enough to drive a car and to perform his duties efficiently in the shop. He later also met and married a love interest, but when he lost his sight after a failed cataract operation, she no longer saw a future with him, and they separated.

Marthinus says: "I never thought my eyes would leave me. The notion of a future without sight turned my life upside down and the darkness literally and figuratively engulfed my entire being. I

was convinced there was no hope for me as a blind person.” But then Marthinus heard about Innovation for the Blind, and a ray of hope shone over his dark path. Without delay he decided to take this opportunity to turn his challenges as a blind person into opportunities and to inspire others... and what an inspiration Marthinus is.

New doors have opened for Marthinus since he joined Innovation for the Blind in Worcester in January 2020 and his zest for life was rekindled. He enthusiastically learnt new life skills, mastered his orientation and mobility training and long cane skills. He is happily settled in his new home, De Villiers residency for visually impaired men. Marthinus even joined the Sport Club and once again participates in athletics, something that he was very successful in during his school years. But his inspiring endurance and fearlessness does not end there! In 2021 Marthinus passed his level 4 ABET training as top Innovation for the Blind student and is currently preparing to complete his Matric. He also partakes in informal Barista training to nourish his Coffee-shop-dream and he is employed in our Metal skills development department where he skilfully works on the lathe. Before losing his sight, Marthinus dreaded dirty hands, but now he comes home with dirty hands every day! He quickly adds that he wouldn't change his work for anything.

Marthinus and his twin brother are very close, even though they live thousands of kilometres apart, and they are making plans to reunite in the not-too-distant future. Marthinus chose to rise above his challenging circumstances and to seize opportunities that we as sighted persons often take for granted. This positive, charming man strives to be an inspiration to others every moment of every day. Marthinus truly is an ambassador for Innovation for the Blind, inspiring fellow residents, colleagues and staff.

“I am grateful to Innovation for the Blind for helping me believe in myself again. I now realise that being blind does not make me less competent than a sighted person, I must just approach my challenges a little differently. Yes, my eyes have left me, but this will not stop me from reaching my dreams... dirty hands and all!”

In Innovation for the Blinds' all-inclusive working and living environment, we work hard to support and empower persons with visual impairments, such as Marthinus, but even more importantly we work alongside them to create a better future for persons with visual impairments. A safe haven where their full potential can be developed and where they can face their challenges with dignity.

Innovation for the Blinds' aspiration to be light carriers for the visually impaired would be impossible without you, our compassionate friends, and for this we cannot thank you enough.

You can't change your circumstances, but you can, like Marthinus, choose to live life to the fullest despite your challenges!



Martinus at the lathe in our metalwork Section

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