



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 163

19th MAY 2023

GREETINGS:

Another week of the Great Goon Show... you can put your solar system where the sun don't shine (and other fables)... De Ruyter goes for round 2 on Eskom corruption in explosive tell-all book... Eskom suspends and restarts load-shedding at lower stage... parts of South Africa hit with increased load-shedding (How's that again?)... and pleas to us all to save electricity... Government showing South Africans the middle finger over loadshedding... US envoy slammed after international relations "blunder" leaves SA embarrassed... Mashatile's committee explores 'technicalities' to clear way for Putin's visit to SA... Drug lords declare war on TV 'Sizok' thola' Show host Xolani Khumalo... Is Joburg's new Mayor a fraudster? Is he even remotely qualified for the job?... Mbalula reads riot Act to KZN MEC Frazer over school feeding scheme swindle... Two shot dead in KwaMashu vehicle attack... Senzo saga sails on – another new (scared) witness: tears in Court... Heavy rains in Nelson Mandela Bay cause flooding and evacuations... AngloGold takes a big step away from SA, lists on Nasdaq... Tshwane acts to keep criminals out of Voortrekker Monument... Man alleged to be stealing flowers, and re-selling them at Durban cemetery....

Peace, love and gloriously diverse chaos triumph as UK hosts Eurovision... Sweden wins song contest in Liverpool with Loreen... Titanic scan may unlock secrets of 1912 sinking... Russian missiles strike hometown of Ukraine's Eurovision entry during song contest... Zelenskiy in Berlin to shore up support... Russian troops fall back to 'defensive positions'... Ukrainian drone unit quietly knocking out Russian targets... British Storm Shadow cruise missiles fired for the first time with devastating effect on Russian rear – up yer chuff, Tovarich!... Sunak food summit promises star guest and lots of rhubarb... There's trouble down at t'mill... King Charles 'doesn't want to live at Buckingham Palace': 'It's not his style!'... Piers Morgan ridicules Prince Harry over phone intercepts... row over Harry's security costs rumbles on... Harry and Meghan chased by "gang" of paparazzi photographers in a "near catastrophic car chase"- forced to take refuge in police stations... Prince Andrew refuses to move out of Royal Lodge... King Charles secret diet revealed... I only have three vices left: coffee, chocolate and salt...

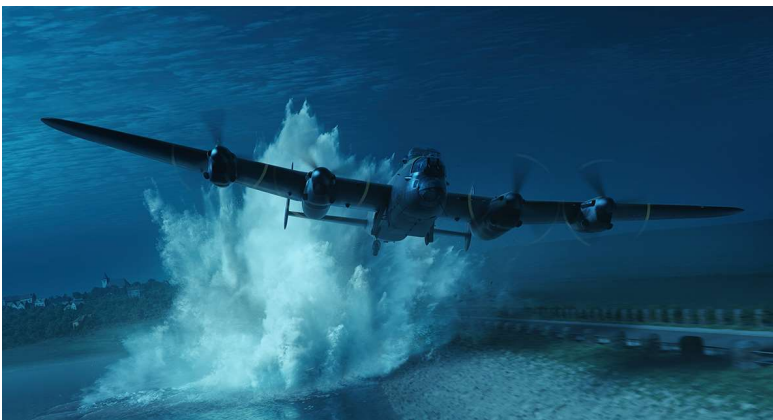
BELOVED SPITFIRE:



Alec Denham and his carer at the Imperial War Museum Duxford. Credit: PA

A 97-year-old veteran has been granted his lifelong wish to be reunited with a beloved Spitfire once again. Alec Denham, known as 'Ted', is one of just a handful of living survivors who worked with Spitfires during World War Two. Mr Denham is currently being cared for at Honey Lane care home in Waltham Abbey, Essex. He has been diagnosed with dementia. The care home's staff was determined to do something special for Ted, so they arranged for his dream to see a Spitfire again come true. He told ITV News the plane was "wonderful" and said he had a "great" day. When his carers discovered Mr Denham's history, they set about trying to reunite him with the iconic fighter plane. His care home team managed to arrange a trip to the Imperial War Museum in Duxford where he was shown a Spitfire and was able to see other planes take off. Mr Denham's team believed the sensory experience could bring him some relief and lucidity. Mr Denham signed up when he was 17, serving at Arnhem and then being deployed to Malaysia. One of Ted's carers told ITV News: "I literally had tears rolling from my eyes today, seeing him in uniform and bringing back those memories for him, it's just been absolutely overwhelming." (*IWM and others*)

DAMBUSTERS 80TH ANNIVERSARY:



This May, IWM is marking 80 years since the legendary 'Dambusters Raid'.

On the evening of 16 May 1943, 133 aircrew in 19 Lancasters took off in three waves from RAF Scampton. Their mission was to destroy three huge hydroelectric dams in the Ruhr Valley. The Möhne, the Edersee and the Sorpe dams held back millions of gallons of water. Germany used hydroelectricity to power its steel mills and produce materials for the war effort. Barnes Wallis, assistant chief designer at Vickers, designed the bomb to take on the job. Codenamed Upkeep, it would become known as 'the bouncing bomb'. A four and a half ton back spinning mine filled with Torpex explosive, the bomb would need to be thrown low and fast at the target. Wallis developed the idea by experimenting with bouncing marbles across a water tub in his back garden. He thought the new weapon could be used to attack moored battleships, but research soon focused on using it against the dams that were vital to German industry.

A hand-picked secret squadron of aircrew from Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the USA was tasked with carrying out the raid. In late March, they convened at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire. Initially codenamed Squadron X, 617 Squadron was led by 24-year-old Wing Commander Guy Gibson. With one month to go before the raid, they began intensive training in low-level night flying and navigation. Only Gibson knew the full details of the operation, codenamed Operation 'Chastise'. Intelligence reports had suggested that the Möhne dam was only lightly defended. This turned out to be incorrect. Gibson was first to attack. Dropped from just 60 feet, his bomb skipped over the water exactly as intended but fell just short of its target. Five bombs were dropped before the dam was breached. At 1:52am, the Eder Dam was also breached. Aircraft from the second and third waves attacked the Sorpe, but it remained intact. Of the 133 aircrew that took part in the raid, 53 were killed and three became prisoners of war. On the ground, 1,300 people were killed in the resulting flooding. Although the impact on industrial production was limited, the raid gave a significant morale boost to the people of Britain. On their return, the surviving aircrew of 617 Squadron were lauded as heroes. Guy Gibson was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions. The raid also established 617 Squadron as a specialist precision bombing unit, experimenting with new bomb sights, target marking techniques and colossal new 'earthquake' bombs developed by Barnes Wallis. In May 2023, IWM is marking 80 years since the Dambusters raid with a series of special events at IWM Duxford.

FISHY BUSINESS:

CAPE TOWN - In a tough economic climate, jobs at a fish factory along the West Coast may be at risk because of amended regulations. That's the word from community leader and Good party councilor, Thyron Williams, who says that the Lucky Star factory in Stompneus Bay has been around for more than 50 years and employs over 1,000 workers. He says that livelihoods are now in danger due to a sudden change in the factory's licence conditions, apparently following complaints from residents in a nearby estate about a stench coming from the factory. Williams says the community believes the new conditions, which include a reduced catching and processing period, are unreasonable. "They are complaining regarding the fishmeal smell that is here now for ages. All these years, no one was complaining and now all of a sudden there are people who decided that they cannot live with this smell. If they don't like the smell, then they must go back where they are coming from. When I was born, the factory was here!"

SHINY THREE:



On 12 May, current RAF personnel joined with members of 3 (Fighter) Squadron Association to attend an unveiling and dedication ceremony for a new Squadron memorial at the National Arboretum. The memorial to the oldest 'heavier-than-air' squadron in the RAF was unveiled by the Honorary Life President of the Association, Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns, along with its Chairman, Mr Phil Ward. Air Vice-Marshal 'Cab' Townsend, one of several former Squadron commanding officers at the event and the Honorary President of the Association spoke about how the magnificent memorial is a celebration of the history of this fine squadron, almost exactly 111 years after it was formed. It is also a fitting tribute to those of our comrades who lost their lives in its service. Wing Commander Buchler, the current Squadron OC explains how the Squadron has an extremely proud heritage, beginning before the RAF itself was formed, through both World Wars, and to the campaigns and events of the more recent past. 'This memorial is a reminder of the courage and faithful service demonstrated by our comrades in the past, an exemplar to myself and my squadron in the present, and an inspiration to those who will succeed us in the future: "The Third shall be First" Wing Commander Buchler OC 3(F) Squadron.

EXERCISE SWIFT RESPONSE:



Living up to their Motto, 'First In', the British Army's highly specialised troops within the Pathfinders jumped from a Royal Air Force C-17 Globemaster over Estonia as part of Exercise Swift Response this week.

The Pathfinders are 16 Air Assault Brigade's advanced reconnaissance force. They will jump ahead of everyone else to scout out enemy positions, mark drop zones and work with the main body of troops with tactical intelligence and offensive action support.

In this case, the paratroopers jumped over Rapla Air Base, Estonia, jumping at 12,000 feet from the Globemaster which is part of the Air Mobility Force, operated by 99 Squadron. The aircraft lifted out of RAF Brize Norton and flew the 1200 miles (as the crow flies) to Rapla. After locating the drop zone, the aircraft opened up, with the Pathfinders then despatched from the 'Moose' by a Royal Air Force Parachute Jump Instructor of the Airborne Delivery Wing. (RAF News)

VIGIL OF THE PRINCES:

Prince Harry has been barred from bearing military regalia while paying respects for the Queen, while his defrocked uncle Prince Andrew has been allowed to at the final state vigil. Buckingham

Palace confirmed on Monday that only senior working royals who hold military ranks will be permitted to don their uniforms, with the exception of the two non-working senior royals. The Duke of York has been granted special permission as a “special mark of respect” for his mother at the Vigil of the Princes, where none of the Queen’s grandchildren will be attending. Veteran Harry, who served for a decade, had his titles, including Captain General of the Royal Marines, removed by the Queen in 2020 following his departure as a working royal. At Prince Philip’s funeral in April 2021, a blanket rule was applied where no working royals wore military uniform.

MAX ORDER FOR BOEING 737-10 MAX:



Ryanair has announced a large order for up to 300 Boeing 737-10 MAX aircraft, the highest single order number for the largest member of the MAX family to date. This order makes Ryanair the second largest prospective customer for the MAX 10 after United Airlines. The MAX 10 is currently undergoing certification with completion now scheduled for 2024. Deliveries to Ryanair will begin in 2027 and run to 2033. Ryanair’s 737-10 aircraft will have 228 seats, perfect for increasing capacity on the carrier’s higher demand routes. The new aircraft will help replace older 737-800s as well as drive Ryanair’s growth strategy. The airline has said it plans to fly 300 million passengers per year by 2034. The deal between Ryanair and Boeing has been in the works for some time, with pricing being a key driver in the airline’s choice between ordering the upcoming MAX 10 or additional MAX 8-200’s. Michael O’Leary clarified the situation in March 2023, stating: “If they give us a good discount on the extra 30 seats, we’re more likely to take MAX 10s. If they don’t give us a good discount on the extra seats, we’re more likely to go with additional MAX 200s.” *(Sent in by Bruce Prescott)*

CHEERS FOR NOW:

Another week of the news cyclone... paparazzi chasing the Sussex’s through the streets of New York... King Charles and Queen Camilla in their first public engagement since Coronation... African States to mediate in the Russia Ukraine conflict... Toto, I’ve a feeling this ain’t Kansas anymore... Our next lunch is a Ladies Lunch at 12h30 for 13h00 Friday 2 June at Wanderers Club, Illovo... Price remains R250 per person, which includes wines at the table. Our speaker will be none other than Rob Hersov who is well known for his forthright views on South Africa 2023. This promises to be an outstanding event: we have 60+ bookings already and space is limited, so if you want to come – get your booking in asap with bookings@rafoc.org make your payment to the RAFOC Nedbank

account and send proof of payment to confirm your booking, please. Meantime, enjoy the read... and Dave Evans "Letter from America"...

TAILPIECE:

Charlie is my Darling... King Charles decided to take up walking every day. At the same street corner, he passed a hooker standing there every day. He learned to brace himself as he approached her for what was almost certain to follow. "One hundred and fifty pounds!" she'd shout. "No! Five pounds!" He said from the side of his mouth, just to shut her up. This ritual between him and the hooker became a daily occurrence. She'd yell, "One hundred and fifty pounds!" He'd yell back, "Five pounds!" One day, Camilla decided to accompany her husband. As the couple neared the hooker's corner, Prince Charles realised she'd bark her £150 offer and Camilla would wonder what he'd really been doing on all his past outings. He figured he'd better have a good explanation for his wife. As they neared the hooker's corner he became even more apprehensive than usual. Sure enough, there she stood. He tried to avoid eye contact as she watched the couple pass. Then, the hooker yelled, "See what you get for five pounds, you tight bastard!"

MATT



*'Hello, Eurovision fans.
Here are the results from
the rail unions: nul trains'*

MATT



MATT



*'And we can't get rid of her
now no-fault evictions
have been scrapped'*



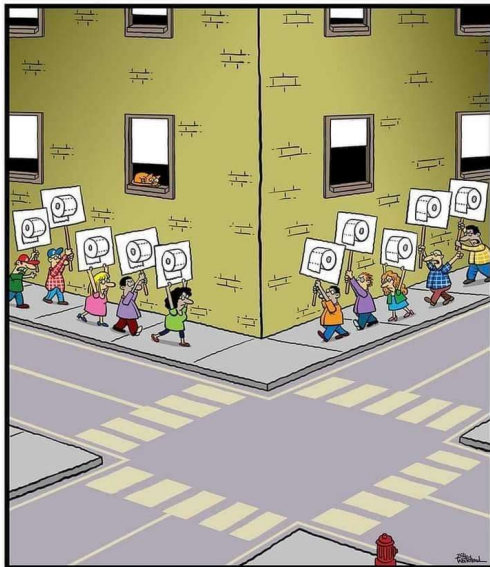
MADAM & EVE
by Stephen Francis & Rico



Hard to Believe

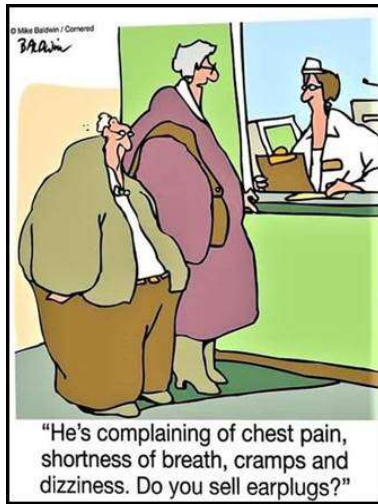
A recent survey indicates that the Smartphone is now the number one hand held device.

The penis has slipped to second place.



Watching these two as a kid was one of the main reasons our generation grew up to be so sarcastic...





WESTFIELD AIRSHOW:

Westfield Air Force Base, in Massachusetts, about an hour north of where I live, is the base of the USAF 104th Fighter Wing, who currently fly F15Cs, but are about to start re-equipping with F35s. Pratt & Whitney, who my son works for, were one of the major sponsors at their airshow on Mother's Day, so we had VIP access and front row seats! Being a USAF base, it was a very 'military' show. We did have Rob Holland – a 5 times world aerobatics champion, in an MXS-RH – an Australian machine I had never heard of, similar to a Zlin or an Extra, and he did a lot of impossible things in it which I suppose you could kinda expect from someone with that track record. How he managed to avoid blacking out, let alone the rest of what he did, I can't imagine. The statics included a good

dozen of their F15s, an F35, an F22, an F18G – the two seat ‘Growler’ with the ECM pods that replaced the Prowler versions of the Intruder for the US Navy, an A10, several choppers and ‘big stuff’ – a C17, a KC46 Pegasus (the tanker replacement for the KC135, based on the Boeing 767 airliner) a KC 135 and two C47s in World War 2 colour schemes with invasion stripes. One of them took up 10 ‘re-enactors’, who parachuted out in WW2 uniforms and chutes! We also had a Harvard take off halfway through, although it never came back, so I think that was just from the civvie end of the airfield – nothing to do with the airshow at all, but a pleasant reminder from my AFB Swartkop days. The show started with four of their F15s beating us up for about 10 minutes. We also had an excellent aerobatics display by a T33 Shooting Star in Korean War colours, two A10 Warthogs, a CH53 Super Stallion (giant chopper) and a fly-by by a Mitchell and a Mustang. After a dog fight demo by two of the F15s, the show ended, hardly surprisingly, with a display by an F35 – which was mindboggling. Its performance was out of this world – particularly some of the low-speed manoeuvres, which would not have been out of place in a Zlin. For all its cost, and the various other issues that the media focuses on, it is clearly in a league of its own, and loud – in addition to the stealth! A very enjoyable day! *(Dave Evans)*



Refueling demo: F15s and KC46



B25 Mitchell and P51 Mustang



'Heritage' flight of F35 and P51:



A10 Warthogs Tribute to past 'fallen heroes'