



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 172

21st JULY 2023

GREETINGS:

And great cold lay upon the land... snow joke... Cape Town's thirty year event of storms, floods and wild winds... And darkness was upon the face of the land (again)... Sheer relief greets announcement that Putin will not attend BRICS summit in SA... VIP Protection Unit revealed on social media for the lawless thugs they really are... the Mad Hatter - theoretically in charge - goes to ground... King Paul of the Mashatleite's mysterious multi million rand mansion... "Mashatle must fall" plot denied... Ace throws ANC under bus... Zuma gaps it to Russia... will only return to South Africa once Russian doctors clear him - to dodge Concourt ruling... BRICS Conference under way in Boksburg - the "demographic dividend" and other delusions...

The Wallabies given a snotklap of note at Loftus last Saturday week... One brandy too many as drunk Springboks fanned fight at Loftus Versfeld - keeping up the tradition - brandewyn het geen breekie nie... and then the Boks forgot to play rugby against All Blacks and threw the game... South Africa ranked as one of the worst places to live right now - Oh dear... and the identity of the reptile we mentioned previously is revealed - its Eddie Jones...

Heatwave grips Europe and parts of USA... spectacular wildfires in Greece and Canada... betting fever grips UK - betting ads up 3500 times on last year... McDonalds apologies for toxic workplaces - (but not toxic food?)... King Charles gets shirty with Poor Old Joe... BBC in never-ending crisis... Cluster bombs fragment NATO... Ukraine wants in to NATO... S Korea to Ukraine's rescue with weapons systems...

SCOTLAND'S CROWNING GLORY:



GUNNERS marched proudly down the Royal Mile and the Red Arrows staged a spectacular flypast over Edinburgh Castle on 5 July 2023 to mark the Presentation of the Honours of Scotland to The King and Queen. The RAF Regiment were among more than 700 military personnel escorting the oldest Crown jewels in Britain through the Scottish capital for the National Service of Thanksgiving at St Giles' Cathedral.

Made of gold, silver and precious gems, the priceless crown, scepter, and sword of state are objects of immense historic significance. The procession included mounted Scots Dragoon Guards and the Shetland Pony mascot of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, Cpl Cruachan IV. The Scottish and North Irish Yeomanry provided a Quarter Guard in Crown Square as the Honours began their journey to St Giles, receiving a fanfare from the Royal Marine Band as they reached the Drawbridge. The Tri-Service Guard of Honour was accompanied by The Band and the Pipes, Drums and Bugles of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, who led Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment troopers from Holyrood Palace in the procession. (RAF News)

AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING AND CONTROL:



A joint vision statement has been signed between the Heads of the Royal Air Force, Royal Australian Airforce, and the United States Air Force, setting out their mutual intent to work collaboratively on the development of their countries' Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft.

The Royal Air Force Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Rich Knighton, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, General Charles Q. Brown Jr. and the Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force, Air Marshal Robert Chipman signed the document at a ceremony held during the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in Gloucester.

The trilateral agreement is a commitment by the three nations to work together for mutual benefit through cooperation relating to Wedgetail capability development, evaluation & testing, interoperability, sustainment, operations, training, and safety. (RAF News)

RIAT:



The Royal Air Force enjoyed a fantastic weekend of aviation as The Royal International Air Tattoo 2023 (RIAT), celebrated 100 years of air-to-air refueling.

To mark the anniversary, the RAF's refuelling aircraft — Voyager — flew with colleagues from a range of countries to demonstrate the aircraft's capability. The RAF were joined by allies and partners from around the world, including the Italian Air Force, which was also celebrating — with 2023 being the centenary of its formation. An impressive 253 aircraft from 25 different nations took part in RIAT this year, with 48 Air Chiefs from countries all over the world in attendance. *(RAF News – and many reports and much footage on various sites)*

CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE:



The UK will provide 17 specialist firefighting vehicles to Ukraine's fire and rescue services, primarily sourced from the Royal Air Force and Defence Fire and Rescue, with one provided by the Welsh Government.

Due to arrive in the coming weeks, the urgently needed equipment will help bolster Ukraine's ability to respond to damage caused by Russia's continued use of cruise missiles and one-way attack drones against Ukrainian infrastructure. The specialist

vehicles - Rapid Intervention and Major Foam Vehicles - were delivered from locations around the UK to RAF Wittering in Cambridgeshire to allow RAF personnel to conduct the required preparations before their onward movement to Ukraine. (RAF News)

FIRST SPITFIRE:



This year marks the 85th anniversary of the first Spitfire to be delivered to RAF Duxford. The IWM is marking the occasion on Saturday 5 August 2023 with a day dedicated to all things Spitfire!

Featuring talks from expert speakers including current Spitfire pilots and engineers, plus stands from Airfix, The Spitfire Society and more, the day will culminate with a private out of hours solo flying display from Spitfire MH434.

VICKERS VISCOUNT:



This week also saw the anniversary of the first flight of the Vickers Viscount on 16 July 1948. The Vickers Viscount is a British medium-range turboprop airliner first flown in 1948 by Vickers-Armstrongs. A design requirement from the Brabazon Committee, it entered service in 1953 and was the first turboprop-powered airliner. The 9 July 1950 a flight between Northolt and Paris – Le Bourget Airport with 14 paying passengers was the first scheduled airline flight by any turbine-powered aircraft. The Viscount was well received by the public for its cabin conditions, which included pressurisation, reductions in vibration and noise, and panoramic windows. Against the run of the progressive wrecking of the British aviation industry by misguided civil servants under the

Brabazon Committee, it became one of the most successful and profitable of the first postwar transport aircraft; 445 Viscounts were built for a range of international customers, including in North America.

ALL SINGING, ALL DANCING, ALL FIGHTING:

Even on the best of days there can be something that takes away from the good and that was the case at Loftus Versfeld during the Springboks' 43-12 win over the Wallabies, as some intoxicated South African fans brawled in the stands. The video starts with the fight well and truly underway with one man crouching over the other, repeatedly swinging punches before he is pulled away from him and so was his shirt. Other people in the group started breaking up the fight before another angry fan emerged from the right wanting to have a go himself. Fortunately, there are enough people between him and the other two fighters. Things seemed to be calming down when the shirtless man suddenly gets the man he was punching in a neck lock. The third man is desperate to get involved again but still held back on the right. It becomes chaos with arms swinging everywhere, people being grabbed and the video ends before the fight does. Not a great look for the Springboks fan base. *(Maybe they should volunteer for the VIP Protection Unit - there are vacancies...)*

PUSHING THE PRESIDENT:



King Charles 'appeared to lose patience when trying to get President Joe Biden to move along during their meeting'... King Charles reportedly appeared to lose his patience when he tried to get President Joe Biden to move along during their meeting. The 74-year-old monarch – who acceded to the throne in September last year following the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth – hosted the 80-year-old US leader at Windsor Castle on Monday (10.07.23), for the first time since his coronation in May 2023. Mr Biden appeared reluctant to end his conversation when Charles tried to get him to stop talking during their inspection of the Welsh Guards in the middle of a welcome ceremony. The US president grabbed Charles' arm as they embraced and shook hands, then put his hand on his back during their lap of the quadrangle – and clutched the handrail to get on stage for the playing of the 'Star Spangled Banner' after forcing Charles to wait for his SUV to drive through the castle. At one point, the monarch tried to get Mr Biden to keep walking while he spoke to one of the guards –

and the Daily Mail reported Charles then appeared to direct his anger at the guard before walking away with the president.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE:

Incentives for municipalities and businesses to procure their own power have become more evident amid the energy crisis, says James Beatty, the CEO of Enpower Trading. Enpower Trading is a National Energy Regulator of South Africa (Nersa) licensed electricity trader that aims to accelerate the wheeling of energy and trading as a municipal service. Eskom regards “wheeling” as allowing privately generated power to be transmitted across the national grid to customers who want it through a willing buyer/seller model. James Beatty, the CEO of Enpower Trading, said that the company aims to increase electricity supply by transporting energy on behalf of independent power producers (IPPs) to customers, businesses and the government. According to Beatty, it seeks to ensure municipalities operating on the local distribution grids retain their profits (revenue surplus-neutral) while providing customers with cheaper and cleaner electricity. “Wheeling” ultimately allows IPPs to use the existing grid infrastructure to supply a household. Both the City of Cape Town and Johannesburg have introduced a wheeling program. Beatty said that some of the benefits of wheeling include assisting municipalities to meet consumers’ energy needs from renewable sources and generation projects located within the municipal grid. “More importantly, a trading solution ensures that a municipality does not lose its customers but enables them to purchase cheaper and cleaner electricity – ensuring the municipal income from these customers is retained.” Wheeling and trading also mitigate “off-grid flight”, which threatens the municipality’s electricity income, traditionally accounting for more than half of municipal revenues. Additionally, using this model would lead to municipalities increasing their autonomy and reducing their dependence on Eskom as its sole electricity supplier, he added. Beatty said that a pilot project in George Municipality has been successful, with Enpower Trading wheeling electricity directly through the municipal grid to four of its own low-voltage customers. *(BusinessTech)*

MIMICING MARS:



A group of four NASA volunteers last week started on a 378-day “mission” where they will be locked in a ground-based simulation of the planet Mars.

- The mission is one of 3 year-long Mars surface simulations where volunteers will live and work in a 1,700 square foot 3D-printed habitat, simulating the challenges of a human mission to Mars.
- The simulation will include resource limits, equipment failures and other challenges and delays.
- I have to wonder how many dropouts there will be. Not my idea of fun!

(Sent in by Bruce Prescott)

CHEERS FOR NOW:

Your scribe is on a walkabout around the country to visit friends and relatives after “retiring” (for the 4th time) on 30 June. We made it to Hermanus after 3000 Km via South Coast, Rhodes (in the snow), adventures in the snow on Barkly Pass on way to Morgan Bay, Paradise Beach and Mossel Bay. Enjoyed the generous hospitality of Rob and Sandra Tannahill in Hermanus (who send greetings to all at RAFOC) and now staying in Hout Bay with a long-time colleague. Will be seeing Derrick and Heather Page whilst here as well as assorted cousins and then on up the West Coast to see the flowers which are already appearing, thanks to the early rains... great trip so far and greatly chuffed to hear yesterday that Putin will NOT be coming to SA to attend the BRICS summit this weekend. Next lunch is back to a normal members lunch on 4 August at the Wanderers Club. 12:30 for 13:00. Put it into your diaries or book now at bookings@rafoc.org.

TAILPIECE:

