



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 189

17th NOVEMBER 2023

GREETINGS:

Last week weekend was busy with multiple Remembrance Day Services around Johannesburg as well as in many other towns and villages around the country and the world... R197m Gauteng roads project, which ballooned by R30m, lies 'abandoned'... Heavy rain, thunderstorms to persist in parts of Gauteng, Mpumalanga... Eskom increases load-shedding (Again) after power station repair delays... "Powerless" electricity minister costing South Africa millions... Court crushes disgraced SSA boss Thulani Dlomo's bid to be a spook again... Home Affairs Minister Aaron Motsoaledi has twice disregarded Constitutional Court rulings... SAPS says man accused of planting explosive at Loftus was a pyrotechnics installer... 'Heroic' send-off for alleged Eastern Cape Cash In Transit heist robbers highlights the problem... The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) on Monday did not enroll a case against three men accused of public violence after an Israel-Palestine confrontation in Cape Town... Joburg teacher's family hire private investigator to look into her death... Google Maps will dodge South Africa's crime hotspots. (Keep death off the roads?)... Sun City R25 scam doing the rounds in SA... Transit robbery shocks Bloemfontein in the early hours... SA job growth cold comfort for millions of unemployed youth left behind... Ramaphosa 'changed his mind' about Russian invasion of Ukraine, says Zelensky... Former Pretoria Rugby Club chairperson Jaco Basson shot dead in Winterveld, Pretoria... Bavuma completes full training session...

Sunak living dangerously... Cleverley replaces Braverman as Sunak shuffles the deckchairs... and surprise move that has shocked Westminster as Lord David Cameron appointed Foreign Secretary... Braverman's Bombshell resignation letter a withering attack – says Sunak "manifestly and repeatedly failed" to help her deliver her policies... Sunak met his target to halve inflation... faces first Prime Minister's Questions since dramatic Cabinet reshuffle... Crunch moment for Sunak as Supreme Court decides on legality of Rwanda policy... Starmer prepares to fire Hamas supporters... Jeremy Corbyn refuses to call Hamas terrorists - still Hamas's useful idiot... Ukraine drone chases Russian soldier on motorbike – drone wins... 300 000 Russian soldiers killed or wounded, also many mercenaries, tens of thousands desert in Ukraine campaign... Israel carries out a "precise and targeted operation against Hamas" - 'cuts Gaza in two', disagreements with the UN & Gaza's collapsing hospitals on the brink... 'humanitarian pause' in Gaza will just prolong our suffering... Duke of Cornwall attends Sir Bobby Charlton's funeral... Prince William dethrones Van Diesel as the

world's sexiest bald man... Thai retailer seizes control of Selfridges... Female pool player refuses to play transgender opponent... maybe British women should be more 'French'... Rory McIlroy relives "red mist" moment with US caddies... WRU's 'toxic' culture of discrimination lambasted by independent panel... India face New Zealand with a billion hearts set on victory...

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2023:



On Sunday morning, at 11am, The King stood alongside 10,000 veterans at The Cenotaph on Whitehall to remember members of the Armed Forces who have died serving their country.

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget - lest we forget!"
(Rudyard Kipling)

The King led a two-minute silence and laid a wreath in front of the Cenotaph, the Prince of Wales was among senior royals standing behind him and also laid a wreath. The Queen and Princess of Wales watched on from an overlooking balcony. A major policing operation remained in place overnight and into Sunday after far-right violence on Saturday saw a group try to reach the Cenotaph an hour before the two minute silence for Armistice Day was observed. Wearing the uniform of the Marshal of the Royal Air Force with greatcoat, poppy and sword, the King laid a wreath similar to the one produced for King George VI. The wreath featured 41 open style poppy petals made from bonded fabric. It was mounted on an arrangement of black leaves – traditional for sovereign's wreaths – of 27-inch diameter ribbon and bow using the colours from the King's racing silk – scarlet, purple and gold. Senior politicians assembled near the Cenotaph, among them and carrying wreaths were Rishi Sunak, Sir Keir Starmer, Sir Ed Davey, James Cleverly and Suella Braverman. The Prince of Wales also laid a wreath, as did the Duke of Edinburgh, the Princess Royal, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and other senior politicians. Major Ollie Plunket of The Rifles, equerry to Camilla, laid a wreath on behalf of the Queen, who was watching from a balcony with the Princess of Wales. Buckingham Palace said the Queen's wreath closely resembled the one produced for the Queen Mother. Almost 10,000 veterans and 800 Armed Forces personnel from all three services took part in a march-past. They were be joined by thousands of members of the public who lined Whitehall to watch the service on Sunday. Nine D-day veterans participated in the Remembrance Day service. The oldest is Joe Randall, 100, who marched with the Spirit of Normandy Trust. The large crowd of onlookers watching the Remembrance Day ceremony in Whitehall sang God Save The King. Among

those marching were nuclear test veterans, who for the first time wore a medal acknowledging their contribution. After 70 years of waiting for recognition, those exposed to the effects of nuclear bombs during the UK's testing programme were given a medal – depicting an atom surrounded by olive branches – for the Remembrance Sunday service. (RAF News)

RAF TAKES PART IN NATIONAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE:



RAF personnel joined the Royal Family, the Prime Minister and thousands of veterans at the Cenotaph today for the National Service of Remembrance.

More than 800 Armed Forces personnel took part in the annual Remembrance Sunday ceremonies in central London, with over 100 serving in the RAF. This year, Remembrance Sunday ends a year of anniversaries including the 70th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice Agreement, the 80th anniversary of the Dambuster Raid and the 20th anniversary of the start of British military operations in Iraq. The Chief of the Air Staff, alongside the Chief of the Defence Staff and service chiefs of the Royal Navy and British Army laid a wreath on behalf of the Armed Forces. The RAF was represented on parade predominately by personnel from King's Colour Squadron, RAF Regiment and the Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service. Following the service, eight trumpeters of the Royal Air Force sounded the "Rouse" before the massed bands performed the national anthem. The Band of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth and The Central Band of the Royal Air Force joined The Massed Bands of the Household Division to play music as around 10,000 veterans marched past the Cenotaph. Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, Chief of the Defence Staff, said: "At the Cenotaph, around the country and on operations overseas, members of the Armed Forces will pause to remember all those who have died in service of their country. The legacy of the fallen lives on in the dedication and duty of today's Armed Forces." (RAF News)

WWII LANCASTER BOMBER RAISED FROM SEA FLOOR:



An aerial view of the cofferdam built for the recovery of British Lancaster bomber ED603
[Courtesy: Royal Air Force]

The remains of Avro Lancaster ED603 and several of its crewmembers have been recovered from the sea floor, eight decades after the British heavy bomber was shot down during World War II while returning to the U.K. following an air raid over Germany, the Royal Air Force has announced. The recovery mission was conducted by the RAF's Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transport Squadron (JARTS) and Dutch Air Force counterparts. It is part of a 15 million euros (\$16.026 million) Dutch aircraft recovery project to locate aircraft and crew downed across Holland. Weeks after the British bomber was shot down over Lake IJsselmeer, an inland bay in northern Netherlands, on June 13, 1943, the bodies of Flight Lieutenant Eric Tilbury (pilot), Pilot Officer Harold E. Howsam (navigator), Pilot Officer Gordon Fletcher (bomb aimer), and Flying Officer Gordon R. Sugar (air gunner) washed up on shore. Three crewmembers, however, remained unaccounted for: Pilot Officer Arthur Smart (flight engineer), Pilot Officer Charles Sprack (mid-upper gunner), and Flight Sergeant Raymond Moore (wireless operator). "The aim of the recovery was to find the missing crew members and to provide closure for their families," the RAF said Thursday. "Human remains were found, and painstaking work is ongoing to confirm the details and identities of those recovered." At the onset of the five-week salvage operation, the recovery team built a cofferdam around the aircraft, allowing for water to be pumped out. The delicate recovery also entailed leaving the remains of the bomber exposed on the sea floor while aircraft parts were located, washed, and sorted. By September, the first skeletal remains were located, according to Captain Geert Jonker, the commanding officer of the recovery and identification unit in the Royal Netherlands Army, *The Guardian* reported. "It's [in the] early days...but there is no doubt that the remains we have found come from one of the missing airmen." Participating in the recovery mission was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and a privilege and honour of all involved, according to JARTS. "The site was an impressive feat of engineering and the hospitality from all of our Dutch friends and colleagues was unequivocal," JARTS said. "It was important to recover the aircraft and remains of the aircrew so that closure could be provided to their respective families. It was a sobering and tasteful reminder of those that fought and lost for our futures in the war and provided an opportunity to pay our respects." (*Flyingmag.com*)

WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE REMEMBRANCE MATCH:



ON Remembrance Sunday, a Royal Air Force Physical Training Instructor, Corporal Lauren Impey, refereed a Women's Super League fixture.

Corporal Impey is one of four members of the Armed Forces that took charge of Sunday's Barclays Women's Super League fixture between Everton Women and Chelsea Women. She led a quartet of Armed Forces officials, which includes assistant referees Levi Gray and Gareth Dunn (both Army) and fourth official Adewunmi Soneye (*Ex-Navy*). Corporal Impey became a B2 level referee in June 2023, which enables her to take control of matches in the National League North/South. She also has an MSc in Adapted Physical Activity, a qualification that enables her to help people with physical

impairments exercise to the best of their ability. "This opportunity highlights how our people can develop through sport, to the highest level. For the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force to be represented at this match on Remembrance Sunday is particularly special." Air Commodore Richard Fogden, Director of RAF Sports. "We're thrilled that we've been able to represent the hardworking servicewomen and men of our country on such a poignant weekend. Everybody at The Football Association wishes them well for the game." Andy Ambler, The FA's Director of Professional Game Relations. *(RAF News)*

B-21 RAIDER TAKES FIRST FLIGHT:



Northrop Grumman built the first B-21 test article with production representative processes, materials and tooling, a key to the overall program execution strategy. [Courtesy: Northrop Grumman]

The U.S. Air Force's top-secret B-21 Raider stealth bomber has conducted its first flight. Air Force officials confirmed the bomber is in flight testing. The stealth bomber, which was unveiled to the public by Northrop Grumman in December and confirmed by the service to be undergoing taxi testing last month, had long been projected to make its first flight by the end of the year. That met deadline was confirmed Friday when freelance journalist Matt Hartman posted a video of an aloft B-21 on X, formerly known as Twitter. "Flight testing is a critical step in the test campaign managed by the Air Force Test Center and 412th Test Wing's B-21 Combined Test Force to provide survivable, long-range, penetrating strike capabilities to deter aggression and strategic attacks against the United States, allies, and partners," Ann Stefanek, Air Force spokesperson, said in a statement. Northrop Grumman is manufacturing six test aircraft, according to the service. Edwards Air Force Base, California, will lead testing and evaluation of the B-21. That includes ground testing, taxiing, and flight operations, the Air Force said. Designed to carry out long-range conventional and nuclear missions, the B-21 is set to eventually replace aging B-1 Lancer and B-2 Spirit fleets. It is scheduled to hit full operational status in the mid-2020s. Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota, has been designated the first main operating base for the B-21 and the B-21 formal training unit. Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri, and Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, are both slated to receive aircraft as they become available, pending environmental approval. Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, will coordinate B-21 maintenance and sustainment. *(Northrop Grumman)*

RUSSIA'S GROWING LIST OF NAVAL LOSSES:



Rostov-on-Don



Askold corvette undergoes sea trials in October 2022.

On November 4, the Karakurt-class Askold corvette, which had yet to enter service with the Russian Navy, was struck by an apparent cruise missile. Ukraine later announced the ship's "destruction." Russia's Defense Ministry described it as "damaged." Karakurt corvettes are capable of launching up to eight cruise missiles and are equipped with a version of the Pantsir anti-aircraft missile system. In September 2023, several missiles struck a shipyard in the Sevastopol naval base in Russian-occupied Crimea. According to Britain's Defense Ministry, the Minsk was almost certainly "functionally destroyed" in the strike. Photos of the aftermath showed the ship smouldering and severely damaged. The Minsk was built in Poland in 1983 and designed with a pop-open bow that could disgorge as many as 25 armoured personnel carriers onto a beachhead. The Rostov-on-Don, which was launched in 2014, was also struck in the September 2023 strike on the Sevastopol naval base. The sub was severely damaged and will either be out of service for an extended period or scrapped. The sub was filmed in December 2015 firing a barrage of Kalibr cruise missiles at what the Russian military described as Islamic State targets in Syria. In August 2023, videos released show a marine drone impacting the landing craft in the Russian port of Novorossiisk. The ship suffered "severe damage" in the attack, according to the British Defense Ministry, and videos later emerged showing the vessel listing heavily under tow. The Polish-made vessel is from the same Ropucha class as the Minsk that was apparently destroyed in September. A Serna was hit with a missile fired from a Bayraktar drone while docking on Snake Island in May 2022. Serna landing craft are made to carry armoured vehicles into "over-the-beach" assault landings and transport cargo. The block-shaped vessels use a unique "air-cavity" design that pumps air under the ship's hull to reduce drag. The Russian flagship was famously sunk in April 2022 off the Ukrainian coast, south of Odesa. Ukraine claims the ship sank after being struck by two domestically produced Neptune anti-ship missiles. Russia said the Moskva foundered after an unspecified "fire," which detonated ammunition on board. It was the largest Russian warship to be sunk since World War II. The cruiser carried some 500 sailors and wielded a formidable array of weapons, including 16 large cruise missiles. In March 2022, the Saratov was hit by a Tochka-U ballistic missile and sunk in the port of Berdyansk, Ukraine. Video of the aftermath of the strike showed other Russian vessels escaping the port as the Saratov burned. The charred remains of the vessel were later hauled back to the surface of the port using a dock crane. At least two of the high-speed patrol boats were destroyed by a Ukrainian Bayraktar drone off Snake Island in March 2022. Raptors are fitted with a remotely controlled weapon, armour, and bullet-resistant glass. They first entered service with the Russian Navy in 2015. (Seawaves)

A MULTI-GENERATIONAL LEAP IN PILOT TRAINING:



First Red Hawk flight by a USAF Pilot

The Boeing-SAAB T-7A Red Hawk is the only digital, next-generation trainer on the market that possesses military certification and meets modern training, low-cost needs. Its digital design enables the cost-effective integration of advanced training capabilities that will drastically improve pilot training for the next generation of fighter and bomber pilots. The T-7A enhances warfighter training through: Improved pilot readiness: The all-new advanced pilot training system uses high resolution ground-based training systems and simulators to deliver robust and realistic integrated live, virtual and constructive training capabilities. Safety: Model-based engineering enabled testing throughout the aircraft's design and build help ensure safety before the first flight. The T-7A's cockpit egress system is the safest of any trainer. Flexibility for any mission: With an Open Mission Systems architecture and digital fly-by-wire controls, the T-7A supports training for a wide variety of fighter and bomber pilots and can evolve as technologies, threats and training needs change. "The T-38 is a true workhorse training Air Force fighter and bomber pilots for Air Education and Training Command, but the T-7A Red Hawk is a game changer, providing advanced mission systems, a glass touchscreen cockpit, stadium seating, and embedded training capability." – Col. Kirt Cassell, U.S. Air Force T-7A program manager. The T-7A represents the cornerstone of the complete Advanced Pilot Training System, which includes state-of-the-art ground-based training, the most advanced visual display systems ever fielded in a simulator and Integrated-Live, Virtual and Constructive (I-LVC) and Embedded training. The system is designed so that it can operate without a ground station or for untethered operations, which:

Allows multiple aircraft to fly cooperatively or fly against one another,
 Allows aircraft to fly against ground simulators,

- Allows multiple pre-programmed mission scenarios which can be selected on the fly from the cockpit or controlled from the ground by a mission coordinator,
 Students flying in the T-7A Red Hawk benefit from enhanced situational awareness, improved decision making, realistic preparation, improved safety and increased confidence compared to other training solutions. (Boeing)

SUSTAINABLE FISHING:



It's 05:00 on a Monday morning in Largs Boat Harbour on the west coast of Scotland.

The sun has yet to rise and the rain is getting heavier. But Ian Wightman is already out on the water, because over the next 12 hours, every minute counts. He is going out for his daily catch of langoustines - something he has been doing for almost 40 years. A faulty net, unwanted sea life in the catch, or a change in water conditions could delay deliveries to customers, and that could mean lost income for Mr Wightman. As the sun rises, he steers his boat through the waters of the Firth of Clyde. The next step for him is to position his boat and prepare the net. But before the net goes overboard, he attaches lights, cameras and sensors to it. Mr Wightman is trialling devices from SafetyNet Technologies, designed to help fishermen understand what's happening underwater and reduce what's known as bycatch. According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), bycatch is when fish and other animals such as dolphins and sea turtles become entangled in fishing gear. Often bycatch is thrown back into the sea, but the creatures are usually dead or dying. "It can significantly reduce ocean health and resilience, and this reduces the ability of ecosystems to respond to adverse conditions," says Alison Cross, director of fishery sustainability at the WWF. Later, sorting through his catch, Mr Wightman is pleased with the morning's work. "You can see how little bycatch there is," says the fisherman, as he clears away only three unwanted fish from among the langoustines. We are not wasting fuel, time, effort - everything is being done as efficiently as possible," he says.

Full article at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-67093211>

MEMBERS WRITE:

Jesper Scheelke writes from Denmark: Dear RAFOC, As you may know our family has relocated to Denmark and we have settled on a little island, Thurø, in the southern part of the country. I am enjoying your ramblings. In the churchyard in the village Landet, on the island of Tåsinge, I found this in memory of two RAF pilots. They are buried in the same churchyard as Elvira Madigan and her lover Sixten Sparre. A film was made of their tragic life and they used part of Mozart's Concerto No. 21 Symphony in the film. Therefore the name, Elvira Madison theme. Greetings to all and all the best for the Club. Kind regards, Jesper Scheelke



CHEERS FOR NOW:

The Club commemorated Remembrance Day last Friday 10 November, with a Wreath Laying at the Wanderers Wall of Remembrance. Wreaths were laid for the Wanderers Club, SAAFA, RAFOC and Special Forces. Lunch followed in the Millennium Room. Mains of Grilled Chicken on Sweet Potato Mash were followed by White Chocolate Tiramisu, and drew approving comment. After lunch, the Chairman spoke briefly on South Africa's part in Remembrance Day observances, notably the Two Minute Silence and the Comrades Marathon, which has now for over a century fulfilled Vic Clapham's 1921 vision of a "Living Memorial". His talk was followed by two videos on the Unknown Soldier and the Menin Gate Last Post Ceremony.

Our final event this year will be the **Ladies Christmas Lunch on Friday 2 December 2023, 12h30 for 13h00**. Our guest speaker is scheduled to be Rob Hersov, who could not join us earlier in the year. His topic will be very interesting. He has it in his diary. 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. Bring your Ladies and guests along to mark Remembrance Day in convivial company. Look forward to seeing as many of you as possible as we are now on Short Finals for the end of the year...

TAILPIECE:

MATT

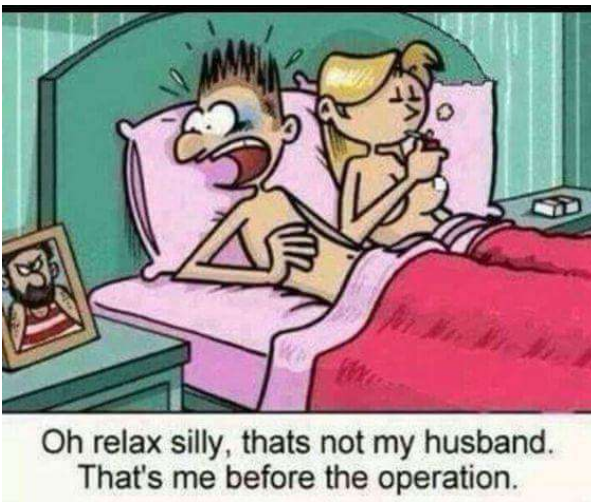


*"Suella Braverman
described it as a
'hate reshuffle'"*

MATT



*'Life was so much simpler
when we could blame
everything on
Matt Hancock'*





REMEMBRANCE DAY 2023

The address delivered by the guest speaker, the Second Master, Mr John Illsley.

“Good morning Mr Hassenkamp, guests, staff and boys of Pretoria Boys High.

Thank you for the honour of being invited to address you this morning.

This ceremony began at the traditional time of 11am with a flypast. In 1945 at Monza race track in northern Italy the victory parade of the South African forces took place. The South African Air Force flypast that day saw all the SAAF squadrons and the men of the South Africa 6th Armoured Division paraded to celebrate the conclusion of South Africa’s contribution to the war and the fact that we were part of the victorious Allied forces in Europe. South Africa had played a small but significant part in helping to defeat the threat that had been posed by the aggression of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. The country had undoubtedly fought on the right side and for a just cause, but the victory celebrated that day at Monza, had come at a price. The total losses suffered by the country totalled 6498, men and women of all races and creeds who had volunteered for service.

Among those war dead were 95 men who had attended this school or taught here. Collectively they represent the largest contingent of Boys High war dead from any conflict in the twentieth century. Their names would be added to a roll of honour that had, of course, begun with the First World War, a sacrifice that changed the façade of the building behind me in the 1920s with the addition of the memorial, the eternal flame, the clock and the bells in the east tower.

It wasn’t until May 1953, seventy years ago this year, that the World War Two memorial at Boys High was added in the foyer of the Main Building. It was unveiled by Mr Daniel Duff Matheson, the headmaster who had held office throughout the war years. One can only imagine the emotions experienced by him that day as the names of boys, many of whom he had known, were read out and appeared in the newly-unveiled memorial plaque. He spoke about several of them, not in terms of their achievements but simply as he recalled them, schoolboys who had gone off to war, and not returned.

In his address, Mr Matheson tried to offer some consolation to those whose loved ones were commemorated and he also provided reasons why a school should remember, in perpetuity, those who had perished in the war. It is worth quoting some of what he said on that day in 1953:

“With us in our gathering today are some of the parents and relatives of the boys who fell. For every boy who died part of the light of life went from the heart of a parent. Such a grief has a unique and lonely quality. No-one can share the ineffable heartbreak. But when, by the merciful dispensation of the Providence, the first sharpness of shock and sorrow has been blurred, some place may be found for solace and comfort and pride in the knowledge that their boys are remembered in their old school. Here their memory will be kept undimmed. A boy’s stay in this school is short – five or six years – and then he must make room for his successors. But these boys are not called upon to make room. Wherever their bodies rest, in marked or unmarked spot, in South Africa, in far-off lands, or in the deep waters, their place is here of right, for the manner of their death has fixed them in eternal youth and their memory in this school will defy the years.

They are indeed the select; the representatives- ordained thereto by death – of all our boys who went to war, of those who survived and came back, some broken in body, some maimed in mind, some wounded in spirit, and of those many who came back to take up tardily, and it may be haltingly, the broken threads of their civil careers.”

I think you would agree that Mr Matheson provided an eloquent justification for not only the war memorial but the act of remembrance that today’s ceremony represents. As generations pass so the significance of those names may have less personal significance, although we still have guests whose parents or grandparents are on the roll of honour. One gentleman who attends this service every year comes to pay homage to his father who he never knew because his father was in the forces when he was born and then died in the war.

Many today might view the roll of honour as a list of names with no significance to them. But behind every name is a story. Too many to relate them all here, but linked by a common thread: old boys and staff of this school serving and fighting for a just cause. Among them were:

Jack Falkson – The old boy serving in the Royal Air Force who died when the aircraft carrier, HMS Glorious, was sunk off Norway.

Ted Gebhardt – the old boy who dived his slow and lightly-armed reconnaissance aircraft into a formation of Italian fighters in East Africa.

Ivo van Uitvanck – the old boy, of Dutch extraction, who parachuted into the Netherlands as a resistance fighter only to be captured and later shot by the SS in Mauthausen concentration camp.

Tommy Allen and Denis Cullingworth –

The two old boys who died on the flights to drop supplies to the Polish resistance in Warsaw, a valiant, if ultimately futile attempt by two South African squadrons.

Bruce Neser – the talented schoolboy cricketer who died fighting with the Kimberley Regiment in Italy in 1944.

The places where the war dead of Boys High lie, or are commemorated on other memorials, paints a map of where South Africans served in World War Two. From towns across South Africa and Zimbabwe where some died while still in training; to Ethiopia where the first South African campaign of the war was fought to liberate Abyssinia; to the cemetery at El Alamein where lie many of those who perished in the Western Desert; to the cemetery at Castiglioni di Pepoli in Italy, the country where the South African 6th Division fought in the closing stages of the war. There are even old boys buried or commemorated in the Far East, casualties of Commonwealth forces fighting Japan in that hemisphere. As Theodore O’Hara wrote:

“Nor shall your story be forgot
While Fame her record keeps,
Or Honour points the hallowed spot
Where Valour proudly sleeps”

It would, of course, be wonderful to be remembering those who perished in war knowing that war itself was a thing of the past, a historical phenomenon that has no place in the modern world. Unfortunately that ideal seems as far removed from reality today as it did throughout the last century. That is a sad reflection on humankind and on nations. Thousands of years evolving to our present state of civilization has not seen the achievement of world peace and parallel to that is the continuing refinement of weapons, the means of killing and maiming others. As current events in Ukraine, the

Middle East and parts of Africa grimly remind us, unresolved disputes over territory, religion and ideology, some of them with origins going back centuries, continue to provide the basis for armed conflict today. There are currently over fifty armed conflicts of various types across the globe. If one were to try and characterize the cause of most in one word, it would probably be intolerance.

Which is why, in the context of a school and all that it teaches, the pursuit of a better world where nations and groups don't resort to violence, remains a noble ideal. If we don't strive to do that, we betray the legacy of those who died in past conflicts; we adopt a fatalist view of the future and we help perpetuate the pattern of international strife that has characterised modern world history.

The World War Two memorial and its roll of honour would not be the last erected at Boys High as the Korean War and the Border War added further names. One has to pray that they will be the last.

Perhaps it is fitting to conclude with the last words of Mr Matheson's 1953 address that remind us why this occasion is one that is always sad, but also one undertaken with pride. He said:

"Dead and yet they live, for the inspiration of their example, and all the things they stood for, freedom, happiness, decency, good fellowship, fun and courage unto death – these gifts, it is certain, they have well and truly laid in the spiritual foundations of their old school." Thank you".