



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 212 21st JUNE 2024

GREETINGS:

This week saw the inauguration of President Ramaphosa, and the establishment of the new order – Coalition Nation... Ramaforceful or Ramaflop?... let's hope GNU doesn't turn out to be a wildebees... all eyes on Union Buildings bunfight... Free rides for public to inauguration (and that's the last you'll ever get)... MK and AMT legal challenge to election results, boycott inauguration... Past SAA Chair Dudu Myeni dies... spate of crime in KZN... Juju grandstanding in court on weapon charge... George building collapse: Engineer suspended... another cold front... Trooping the Colour the focus in UK... Princess Kate makes first public appearance since cancer diagnosis... Euro 2024 fever grips Europe... Russia pulls combat forces from Africa for Ukraine... Putin sacks 5 Generals... Putin's plan to flood Holland... visits North Korea... even Farage has fallen prey to fantasy economics... Tax raid fear: Starmer says savers are 'not working people'... Post Office campaigner Bates knighted in birthday honours list... Surge in 'vanishing' UK pubs: 80 locations close per month... US Surgeon General calls for social media "warning label"... Popular Kintra tea pulled from shelves - found to contain insects... Microplastic discovery in penises raises ED questions...

KINGS BIRTHDAY FLYPAST:



The Royal Air Force had the honour of parading a wide range of RAF aircraft for His Majesty King Charles III to celebrate His Official Birthday.

34 RAF aircraft took to the skies above the crowds on The Mall and over Buckingham Palace watched on by Their Majesties' The King and Queen, alongside other members of The Royal Family.

The aircraft were from eight different RAF stations, and 15 Squadrons participated, with two thirds of the Squadrons involved in D-Day 80 years ago. The aircraft highlighted the wide range used by the RAF to secure our skies and protect our people both at home and abroad. This included helicopters, training, air transport, air-to-air refuelling, maritime, ISTAR, and fast jet combat aircraft. At the front of the flypast were three Chinook

helicopters and the event culminated in a spectacular show of red, white and blue from the pilots of the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows. Leading and co-ordinating the whole flypast, the Mission Commander for all the aircraft, was Typhoon pilot and Officer Commanding 29 Squadron, Wing Commander Andy Shaw. Today marks the culmination of months of planning that he has orchestrated and led, with a team of other very experienced aviators. He said "It is an honour to be involved in delivering an airborne spectacle worthy of His Majesty the King's Birthday. I am grateful to have had the chance to work with so many outstanding aviators to make today safe and fit for the King." (*RAF News*)

ROYAL NAVY TO THE RESCUE:



Aircrew with Czech veterans Charles Strasser and Jiri Pavel Kafka in front of 845 NAS Merlins (Picture: Royal Navy)

A pair of D-Day veterans became stranded on their way to France to attend the 80th memorial event in Normandy - but help was at hand in the shape of the Royal Navy. Merlins from 845 Naval Air Squadron flew Czech veterans Charles Strasser and Jiri Pavel Kafka from the Channel Islands when the pair became stuck in Jersey. Mr Strasser served as a dispatch rider with the Czech Independent Armoured Brigade which went on to liberate his homeland in 1945. Fellow veteran Mr Kafka, aged 100, was rescued from occupied Czechoslovakia and later served as a radio operator and gunner with the Royal Air Force.

Lieutenant Commander Bob Powell, the aircraft commander of Navy 751, said: "We owe their generation so much and it not only meant so much to us to be a part of it, but also to our friends and colleagues who have thanked us since then for doing it.

"It was an entire team effort by the eight-aircrew involved as well as the support provided by our two higher headquarters to get permissions quickly in place," Lt Cdr Powell said. "It was an absolute honour to be able to support the veterans get to Normandy for the 80th anniversary of D-Day and to be a part of the international commemorations. As a Junglie, it was an incredibly rewarding, albeit unexpected, sortie to be involved in. (*ForcesNet*)

COLONEL JAN DIRK BREYTENBACH DVR SD SM MMM:



It is with deep sadness that the Breytenbach family confirms the death of Colonel (Ret) Jan Dirk Breytenbach on 16 June 2024. He passed on peacefully in the company of his family at 12h30 at the George Mediclinic.

Colonel Jan Dirk Breytenbach DVR SD SM MMM, a retired South African Special Forces officer was best known as the first Commander of 1 Reconnaissance Commando, South Africa's first Special-Forces unit; as well as the first Commander of 32 Battalion and of 44 Parachute Brigade. He attended the Army Gymnasium in 1950 and was awarded the Sword of Honour in 1953. After having served in the Armoured Corps, he joined the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm in 1956. He rejoined the South African Defence Force

(SADF) in 1961 and in 1970 founded the SA Special Forces. During 1976 he was instrumental in establishing 32 Battalion. He attended Staff College in 1977 and was promoted to Colonel and became the Senior Staff Officer Operations at Northern Transvaal Command.

Col Breytenbach commanded 44 Parachute Brigade from 24 September 1980 to 31 December 1982 and founded the SADF Guerilla School which he commanded until his retirement.

He retired from the military in 1987 and has written several military and nature conservation books since then. His career is testimony to his unrelenting commitment to the military. Blue skies always. Col Breytenbach is not only revered as an icon by many in South Africa but also in the international Special Operations world.

The Breytenbach family understand and appreciate the widespread interest and sympathy for the demise of our dearly departed husband, father, brother and grandfather; and wish to bid him farewell in a dignified manner. Details regarding the funeral arrangements and Memorial Service, will be communicated in due course. For now, the family is being well supported by close friends and Military Veterans organisations, and request that we be allowed the space to mourn and to finalise all arrangements.

Colonel Breytenbach is survived by his wife Rosalind, his son, Richard, daughter, Angela, and his grandchildren Christopher and Matthew.

Issued by: Richard Breytenbach (Son) on behalf of the Breytenbach Family

RAPTORS RAMPANT:

On June 17, Lockheed Martin announced that the USAF's F-22 Raptors had reached the remarkable landmark of 500,000 flight hours. As the US and Lockheed celebrate the Raptor's continued success, EurAsian Times recollects an incident when the F-22 scored 108 kills against zero losses against powerful fighters like F-15, F-16, and F-18.



The F-16 Fighting Falcon, F-15 Eagle, and F/A-18 Hornet stand as formidable fighter jets, each with its own legacy of excellence. However, one aircraft surpasses them all in aerial combat prowess: the F-22 Raptor. The F-22 stealth fighter jet is known as one of the world's most advanced and capable fighter jets. It is designed to achieve air superiority with unparalleled precision.

Its advanced capabilities make it one of the most expensive fighter aircraft ever produced, with each unit costing \$150 million, excluding research and development costs. Its standout features are its low radar

profile and a powerful array of weaponry, though many aspects of its avionics remain classified, adding to its mystique and lethality. The F-22 has proven its superiority in various exercises and simulations. One notable instance is the Exercise Northern Edge 2006, where the F-22 demonstrated its prowess against as many as 40 “enemy aircraft” during simulated battles. Raptor pilots achieved an astounding 108-to-zero “kill” ratio against the best F-15, F-16, and F/A-18 jets, showcasing their dominance in the sky. In addition to its aerial combat capabilities, the stealthy F-22A has shown its ability to evade and destroy enemy surface-to-air missiles, boasting an impressive 97 percent mission capability rate.

The F-22's extraordinary performance at Northern Edge earned the aircraft team the 2006 Robert J. Collier Trophy from the National Aeronautic Association (NAA). This prestigious award considered America's highest honor for aeronautical and space development, was presented to the Lockheed Martin Corp.-led F-22 Raptor team for their exceptional work in designing, testing, and operating the aircraft. The team included industry giants such as Boeing, Pratt & Whitney, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, and BAE Systems. Described as “the most efficient and effective fighter in history,” the F-22 Raptor stands out for its exceptional performance and outstanding safety features. F-22's unmatched capabilities and innovative design have set a new standard in aerial combat, ensuring it remains the apex predator in the skies. (*Eurasian Times*)

SAAF MEMORIAL SECURITY:



The SA Air Force (SAAF) is “investigating security options” for the Bays Hill memorial it has joint ownership of with the SAAF Association (SAAFA). The memorial was vandalised last November, provoking stern comment from SAAFA National President Mike Louw who called it “desecration”. The unfortunate event cast a shadow over the premises being able to host the annual SAAF Memorial Service. As it turned out there was no need to make use of the Air Force Mobile Deployment Wing (AF MDW – formerly Air Force Base Swartkop) number five hangar for last month's memorial service, with generator power used at the memorial.

In response to a defenceWeb inquiry, the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Directorate Corporate Communication (DCC) said sensors,

alarms as well as permanent guards and sentries are among options under investigation to secure the memorial.

"In the interim," the response reads in part, "the protection squadron will conduct the site in their nightly and early morning rounds". This presumably refers to 104 Squadron.

"In the medium term, the Acting Officer Commanding AF MDW will erect double fencing around the inner perimeter of the Memorial Site and place K-9 units between the two fences at night," the response continues, adding costs and lead time investigations are underway and "will be confirmed once a contractor has been selected".

SAAFA representatives met with senior SAAF officers to discuss prevention of similar unwanted events in future. Speaking to a DefenceWeb correspondent at the memorial service, Louw noted the Bays Hill memorial was "sacred ground" to the SAAF and the SAAF Association. The desecration was confined to the Wall of Remembrance on the historically important Bays Hill site where some niches were seemingly willfully damaged. "Fortunately none containing service members' ashes were damaged," Louw said. (*DefenceWeb*)

BEAR- FACED THREATS:



Threats from Russia aren't anything new: we've previously heard nuclear threats from both Russian President Vladimir Putin and various Kremlin officials, but this latest suggestion from a Russian MP escalates the situation even further. Andrey Gurulyov, a Russian MP and military veteran, recently revealed a plan to wipe out Europe's energy facilities during an interview on the Russia 1 program 'Evening With Vladimir Solovyov.' As reported by

Newsweek, Lt. Gen Andry Gurulyov, a hardline member of parliament in Putin's United Russia political party, brought up the idea of striking the Netherlands with a nuclear bomb while speaking to Vladimir Solovyov on his television program. The goal would be to damage Europe's energy facilities by sending a nuke to the Netherlands, which would cause massive flooding in the country through the destruction of its numerous dams and dykes. You might wonder how an attack on the Netherlands would affect Europe's energy facilities. Could it really affect all of Europe? According to The Daily Mail, Gurulyov said that between 50 and 60 percent of Europe's hydrocarbon supply can be found in the Netherlands, which, if true, means such a strike would be devastating on multiple levels. Newsweek's Brendan Cole wrote that while it was unclear where Gurulyov got his data from, it is true that "Rotterdam is a hydrocarbon gateway that 13 percent of all energy in Europe comes through." Per the Daily Mail, Gurulyov told Vladimir Solovyov, "Somewhere between 50 to 60 percent of Europe's hydrocarbon supply is in Holland. Imagine, in Holland, on the coast. The military calls this a fat target...." Gurulyov made it clear that Russia knows just what to do to crush Europe saying, "We understand perfectly well how to inflict critically unacceptable damage to bring Europe to its knees." There is no doubt that such a strike would be catastrophic for the Netherlands, a point that Gurulyov was adamant about making clear in his discourse on Russian television. By now, we are all used to Russia's fear tactics, and these threats against the Netherlands are clearly related to the Netherlands' recent decision to allow the Ukrainian air force to use its 24 F-16 fighter jets to conduct air strikes on Russia. However, such detailed plans to destroy a peaceful nation and "bring Europe to its knees" is still petrifying and we can only hope that the Kremlin never makes good on these threats. (*Daily Digest*)

PTARMIGAN: FORERUNNER OF CELLPHONES:

A group of former members of the Royal Signals have spoken to Forces News about their efforts to keep together one of the world's most unique collections of Cold War-era vehicles. The Ramsdell



Collection shines a light on a little-known part of British Military history - preserving and telling the story of command and control on the battlefield during the 1980s and 90s. As well as maintaining the vehicles, the team of volunteers display the collection across the country. Central to the collection is an FV439 Armoured Radio Relay vehicle, which contains what is thought to be the world's only working example of the Ptarmigan communication system. Ptarmigan was the British Army's first digital comms system which came into

service in the mid-80s and formed the basis for the civilian mobile phone network used today. Almost all the Ptarmigan equipment was lost after it was decommissioned in the early 2000s, which makes the group's working example particularly rare. But growing running costs have raised questions about the future of the vehicles, leading to fears the collection could be sold and broken up, losing its historical significance forever. So Ian Foulkes is now leading the team's efforts to get the collection charity status to preserve it for the future. "If we can turn the collection into a charity then we can get better funding, which a collection like this desperately needs," said Mr Foulkes, who also served in the Royal Signals. "Most civilians who go to these displays and see these vehicles moving around don't think about 'the funnies', vehicles that were specifically allocated, for example, to the Royal Signals, the Royal Engineers or the REME. (*ForcesNet*)

DH 108 SWALLOW: TRAGIC PIONEER:



The de Havilland DH 108 "Swallow" was a British experimental aircraft designed by John Carver Meadows Frost in 1945. The DH 108 featured a tailless, swept wing with a single vertical stabilizer. Initially designed to evaluate swept wing handling characteristics at low and high subsonic speeds for the proposed early tailless design of the Comet airliner, three examples of the DH 108 were built. With the adoption of a conventional tail for the Comet, the aircraft were used instead to investigate swept wing handling up to supersonic speeds.

The first DH 108 prototype, serial number TG283, utilising the Vampire fuselage and a 43° swept wing, flew on 15 May 1946. Designed to investigate low-speed handling, it was capable of only 280 mph. The second, high-speed prototype, TG306, with a 45° swept wing incorporating automatic leading-edge Handley Page slats and powered by a de Havilland Goblin 3 turbojet, flew soon after in June 1946. Modifications to the design included a more streamlined, longer nose and a smaller canopy. While being used to evaluate handling characteristics at high-speed, on 27th September 1946 TG306 suffered a catastrophic structural failure that occurred in a dive from 10,000 ft. at Mach 0.9 and crashed in the Thames Estuary. The pilot, Geoffrey de Havilland Jr., was killed. After the loss of the second prototype, VW120 became the third and final prototype based on the newer Vampire F.5 fighter built at Hatfield. It differed from the first test aircraft in that it featured an even more streamlined pointed nose and smaller reinforced canopy. Power-assisted elevators had been specified as a means to control the pitch oscillations at the root of the earlier disaster. A more powerful Goblin 4 had the potential to push the DH 108 into the supersonic range. VW120 first flew on 24 July 1947 flown by John Cunningham, the famous wartime nightfighter ace.

VW120 established a new World Air Speed Record of 604.98 mph on a 62 mile circuit. VW120 was the first British aircraft to break the sound barrier on 6th September 1948 piloted by John Derry. VW 120 was only the third aircraft ever to fly at Mach 1. It was destroyed on 15 February 1950 in a fatal crash near Brickhill, Buckinghamshire, killing its test pilot, Squadron Leader Stuart Muller-Rowland. Accident investigation pointed to a faulty oxygen system that incapacitated the pilot.



©Gerald
de Havilland DH108 Swallow.

Finally, on 1 May 1950 during low-speed sideslip and stall tests the first prototype, TG283, was lost in a crash at Hartley Wintney killing the pilot Sqn Ldr George E.C. Genders AFC DFM, when, after abandoning the aircraft at low altitude in an inverted spin, his parachute failed to open in time. In all, 480 flights had been made by the three Swallows. Although the DH 108 had a brief and tragic history it provided vital information that eventually led to the birth of such aircraft as Concorde. The painting depicts VW120 the final version of Swallow. *(Sent in by Andrew Muttitt)*

JANICE BROWN: TEST PILOT:



Born on 7 June 1948, Janice Brown, a charter pilot with commercial, instrument and glider ratings who weighed slightly less than 100 lb (45 kg) was selected as the test pilot for Paul McCready's solar powered aircraft Gossamer Penguin. She flew the Penguin approximately 40 times before a 1.95 mi (3.14 km) public demonstration at NASA's Dryden Flight Research Centre on 7 August 1980.

On the 25th July 1909 Louis Blériot became the first person to fly across the channel. Piloted by Brown the Solar Challenger was the first solar powered aircraft to cross the English Channel in 1981. In 2019 she was honoured by The International Organization of Women Pilots (the "Ninety Nines") for being the first woman to cross it in a solar powered aircraft.

The Penguin was a 3/4 scale version of the Gossamer Albatross II and had a 71 ft. (21.64 meter) wingspan and a weight, without pilot, of 68 lb (31 kg). The powerplant was an AstroFlight Astro-40 electric motor, driven by a 541-watt solar panel consisting of 3920 solar cells.

Initial test flights were performed using a 28 cell NiCad battery pack instead of a panel. The test pilot for these flights was MacCready's 13-year-old son Marshall, who weighed 80 lb (36 kg)

VANISHING PUBS: TAXED TO DEATH:

Two pubs a day have disappeared in England and Wales in the first half of the year, according to government statistics. Figures showed that 230 pubs vanished in the three months to 30 June - an increase over the previous quarter when the doors to 153 pubs shuttered. It means 383 pubs were demolished or converted for other uses between January and June.

Campaigners have called for planning laws to change to protect pubs. It comes after The Crooked House pub in the West Midlands - once dubbed the UK's "wonkiest" public house - was gutted in a fire and then demolished without full permission in August, provoking outrage in the community and beyond.

The overall number of pubs in England and Wales, including those vacant and being offered to let, fell to 39,404 at the end of June, according to the data, which was compiled by commercial real estate specialists Altus Group.

Wales lost the greatest number of pubs in the first half of the year, with 52 disappearing, while London and the North West lost 46 each. A total of 386 pubs disappeared throughout the whole of 2022.

Chris Miles owns the Fleece in Richmond, North Yorkshire, and a few months ago decided to sell up: "I just thought 'I can't solve this problem'," he told BBC News.

The 13-bedroom hotel, pub and restaurant business was popular with locals and tourists in the Dales market town.

"It's a three-way squeeze," he said - citing staffing, running costs and taxation as the causes. "VAT is the single biggest problem, a fifth of the money we generate we have to pay to HMRC. My last bill was £26,000 - and that's for a business that's never made a profit," Mr Miles explained. "We don't want hand-outs or grants; we just want to keep more of the money we generate."

Alex Probyn, president of property tax at Altus Group, called on Chancellor Jeremy Hunt to take action in his autumn statement in November, including by easing the pressure of business rates on the sector. (BBC)

CHEERS FOR NOW:

This week sees the Winter Solstice and the shortest day in the Southern Hemisphere. The Stonehenge monument, at which the Summer Solstice is celebrated in UK, was sprayed orange in UK climate protest. Also the 18th June was Waterloo Day, which saw the end of Napoleon Bonaparte and his Imperial ambitions... if only NATO had the collective will to bring Putin to his Waterloo the world would be a better, safer place!

The full strawberry moon (below) will be the last full moon of the winter, as it coincides with the winter solstice. The days will steadily begin to lengthen from now on, and the weather will begin to warm up...

Our next function is the **July Ladies Lunch Friday 5 July 12h30 for 13h00 at Wanderers**. Colonel Thornton "TC" Schultz, retired USAF F111 pilot and former US Defense Attaché to SA, will talk to us on the topic of Ladies in the USAF. Be sure it again will be a 'not to be missed' lunch. Look forward to seeing you and your ladies! You can book and pay at any time before the lunch, [R300pp. booking@rafoc.org](mailto:booking@rafoc.org)



STRAWBERRY MOON...

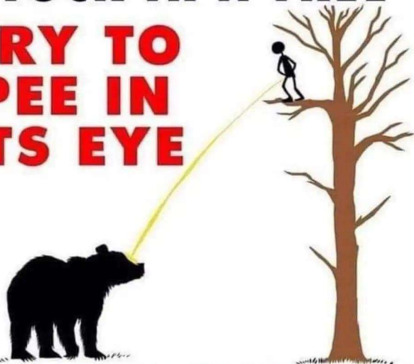
TAILPIECE:

"The two enemies of the people are criminals and government, so let us tie the second down with the chains of the Constitution so the second will not become the legalised version of the first." (Thomas Jefferson, with acknowledgement to African Pilot)



IF A BEAR HAS YOU STUCK IN A TREE

TRY TO PEE IN ITS EYE



THIS TAKES PRACTICE BECAUSE BEARS HAVE TINY EYES BUT IF YOU PULL IT OFF YOU CAN SAY YOU DID SOMETHING IMPRESSIVE BEFORE YOU DIED

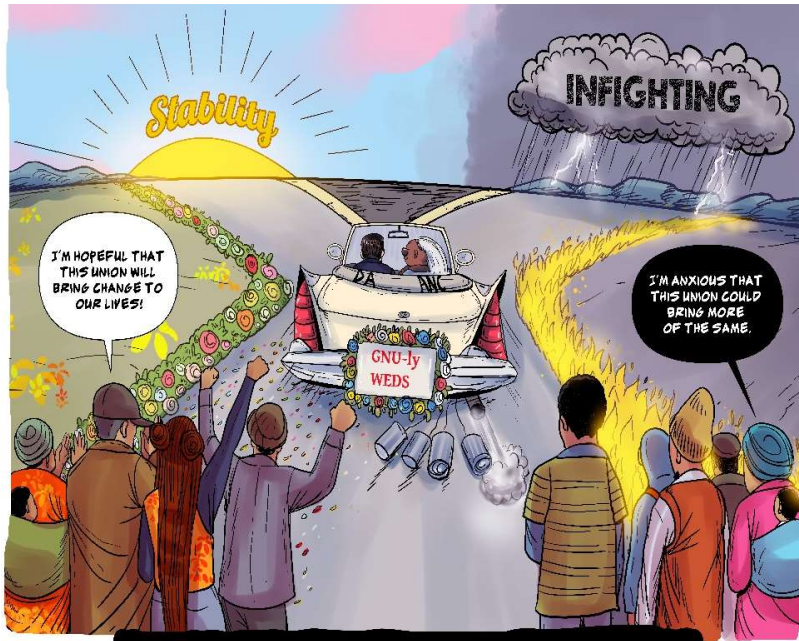
Handing over my ID at Home Affairs, the clerk says, "You've aged quite a bit since this photo was taken." "Yes," I replied, "I had it taken just before I joined this queue"..

When it's sunny I think, "Beer garden"
When it rains I usually go to the pub for a while.
When it's snowing I like to sit in front of the TV with a case of Beer.
I'm starting to think I have a problem with the weather.



...LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN: YOU'D WORK WITH HIM BUT NOT WITH THEM.... THEY'D WORK WITH US BUT NOT WITH HER.....

ZAP!RO[©]
DAILY MAVERICK
14-6-24



MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE