



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 220

16th AUGUST 2024

GREETINGS:

Women's Month started with several bangs... Gwamanda resigns – Oh Joy! Oh Rapture!... So what?... Rogues' gallery: Former CEOs of state-owned enterprises implicated in fraud and corruption may be headed to Parliament (see Transnet story)... Who will rid us of this troublesome madala? Eskom doesn't want you to like them... 'Tainted' SAA executive still in job despite Airlink saga... Motsoaledi (of all people!) tries to rescue NHI... Where to next for the NHI?... Exercise in hypocrisy: Miss SA a playing field for cheap xenophobic exploits and ugly spectacles... Lifestyle estates are booming in South Africa... shopping malls remain a prime hunting ground for criminals... Bushman's Nek Drakensberg resort gutted in destructive veldfire... Good on ya, Sheila: Aussies shine in Olympic breakdancing but ancestral spirits fail Wallabies miserably as Boks give them a rugby hiding of note... Why is my dog acting so aggressive?

"Ukraine has just humiliated Putin. Long may it last"... 900 days of war: Russia spends \$211 billion, loses 500 000 troops... New wars, old wars, famine, panic everywhere. So much for a quiet August... UK riots expose double standards on far-right and Islamist violence... Starmer and Meloni plot overhaul of police force... Archbishop of Canterbury warns Christians against membership of churches (oops! Of far-right groups)... Starmer's popularity slumps after criticism of riots response... Labour's raid on pensioners will end in tears... What's the state of Britain after years of political mayhem, government incompetence and austerity?... Musk's interview with Trump marred by 'massive' cyber attack... Hezbollah undeterred as Lebanon braces for war with Israel... US topped the medals table at the Paris Olympics... Sir, are you pregnant?'

RAF LOSSIEMOUTH: MISSION ACCOMPLISHED:



Its mission accomplished in Moray as the 6-year and £350 million project to upgrade RAF Lossiemouth has been completed.

RAF's only main operating base in Scotland required the upgrade to prepare for the arrival of an additional squadron of Typhoons, the new P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft, and a US Navy detachment.

The upgrade included resurfacing the runway, new accommodation,

facilities for the US Navy, a new Crash, Fire and Rescue building for the station's firefighters, drainage and utilities upgrades and more.

RAF Lossiemouth has served as the northern base for the nation's Quick Reaction Alert since 2014, and the station's Typhoon crews are on 24/7 alert to rapidly respond to potential threats in the northern portion of the UK's airspace. *(RAF News)*

RAF TO POLICE NATO'S SKIES IN ICELAND:

RAF F-35B jets from RAF Marham have deployed to Iceland to take part in a NATO air policing mission. This is the first time that British F-35s will have conducted a NATO air policing mission.



This follows the recent completion of a similar four-month mission by Typhoon aircraft in Romania. The F-35Bs from 617 Squadron will defend NATO airspace in the Arctic Region. NATO air policing is a permanent peacetime mission, that preserves the security of Allied skies. It is a collective task and involves the continuous presence of fighter aircraft and crews, which are ready to react quickly to possible airspace violations. This latest mission comes as the Prime Minister underlined the UK's cast iron commitment to NATO at its Summit in Washington last month, as he emphasised his determination to safeguard the future of the Alliance and face down global threats to Britain and its western allies. "The UK is unshakeable in its commitment to NATO. With threats increasing and

growing Russian aggression, it is vital that we stand shoulder to shoulder with our allies. This latest air policing mission in Iceland displays the UK's ability to operate and deter our adversaries across the alliance's airspace." Luke Pollard, Minister for the Armed Forces, (*RAF News*)

INDIAN SUMMER:

A RAF detachment has joined Exercise Tarang Shakti 2024, the first ever multinational air exercise organised by the Indian Air Force.



The RAF detachment, consisting of six Typhoons from RAF Coningsby based XI (Fighter) Squadron have arrived at the Indian Air Force base at Sullur Air Force Station in Tamil Nadu, Southern India. They will be supported by two Voyager aircraft and an Atlas aircraft from the RAF's Air Mobility Force based at RAF Brize Norton. Exercise Tarang Shakti is designed to give the opportunity to RAF and the other European countries the opportunity to fly with the Indian Air Force in a complex air environment to deliver a variety of air missions. The exercise also demonstrates the growing relationship between the RAF and the Indian Air Force and follows the Indian Air Force's participation last year on the RAF led exercise Cobra Warrior. Wing Commander Robertson, the Officer Commanding XI (F) Squadron said: "This exercise is another good opportunity to fly with other nations and develop our interoperability skills. It builds on the work we have done, firstly to get to Australia, flying with the French Air and Space Force on Exercise Griffin Strike, and then the three weeks we spent flying in Australia with both regional friends and allies, together with our European Allies." (*RAF News*)

B-2 STEALTH BOMBER DEMOS "QUICKSINK"

The US Air Force has demonstrated how a ship can be sunk using a low-cost Joint Direct Attack Munition. Working with the US Navy, a B-2 Spirit stealth bomber dropped a Quicksink precision-guided bomb to sink a decommissioned cargo ship in the Gulf of Mexico near Eglin Air Force Base.



Munitions Directorate Director Colonel Matthew Caspers, from the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), said: "The development of this technology helps deliver technological superiority to ensure the United States can defend our interests, maintain freedom of action and seize the initiative over large maritime areas."

"The men and women of the Munitions Directorate consistently

find ways to solve our nation's greatest challenges. Quicksink is an answer to an urgent need to neutralise maritime threats to freedom around the world. This programme is unique in that it can provide capabilities to modify existing and future Department of Defence weapons systems, giving combatant commanders and our national leaders new ways to defend against maritime threats." The B-2 was shown to be able to counter the threat of surface vessels, similar to those currently being faced in the Red Sea. The US Air Force said: "The collaboration between the AFRL, US Navy and industry partners represents a significant step forward in the US Air Force's naval warfare capabilities. This capability is an answer to an urgent need to quickly neutralise maritime threats over massive expanses of ocean around the world." (*ForcesNet*)

TRANSNET NEEDS R12 BILLION FOR COAL TURNAROUND:

The horror story - or k*kstorie, as they say in the classics - continues: South Africa's state-owned rail company needs R12.2 billion and five years to upgrade equipment to revive the performance of its main export coal line, according to an internal report. Coal shipments plunged to a more than three-decade low of 48 million tons last year because of inefficiencies at Transnet, which blamed a lack of locomotives and spare parts for its woes. The two other major factors limiting the amount of the fuel shipped to the coast for export are infrastructure faults and issues with signaling systems, according to a final executive summary report seen by Bloomberg. (What about action against the former board members who were clearly delinquent? It takes a special class of sheer incompetence to trash an infrastructure that set world records for heavy-haul on the Cape-gauge railway... Ed) Transnet needs R12 billion for coal turnaround – *Daily Investor*

STURGEON MOON:

The next full moon, on Monday 19 August, is a supermoon, a blue moon; the sturgeon moon; the red, corn, green corn, barley, herb, grain, or dog moon; Raksha Bandhan or Rakhi Purnima; and Tu B'Av, depending on where you are in the world, or how you look at it, as the actress said to the Bishop...

NOG 'N KAKAMAS STORIE...



There is a single piece of public tarmac located in the Northern Cape where cars can be driven at speeds of up to 250km/h, though not anyone is allowed to do it. The stretch of road between the small towns of Kakamas and Pofadder, which is part of the N14 freeway, is used as a testing ground for carmakers assessing the performance of new models in hot weather conditions.

The “250km/h” highway, as it is often referred to, is ideal for vehicle testing as it is a remote area in a desert province with few inhabitants.

The road itself is also flat and straight, letting new performance cars reach their full potential in a controlled environment before hitting the showrooms.

It’s hard to miss the speeding section, too, as the route is clearly marked with large yellow signs demarcating the area for “High Speed Test Vehicles Approved by Government.”

Manufacturers must get approval from the local authorities before doing their trials, but everyone else is required to treat it as a normal commute with a speed limit of 120km/h.

I know someone who managed to get their Mercedes 230 Kompressor up to an indicated 230 km/h on this stretch before it ran out of wind...

“Seriaas” CHEERS FOR NOW:

In 1958 Nikita Khrushchev said “It is the most serious moment in the world’s history” My RRAF senior colleagues were being deployed to assist the RAF in “peacekeeping” ops in Cyprus, Aden, Yemen and the Radfan. As tensions mount yet again in the Middle East, we can say that not much has changed in the last 7 decades...

Back in 1956, at the Cuban missile crisis, Life magazine interviewed former U.S. secretary of state John Foster Dulles, in which he claimed that, in diplomacy, “The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art...if you are scared to go to the brink, you are lost.”...thus the term “brinkmanship” was coined, and used repeatedly during the Cold War, a period characterized by tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Brinkmanship appears to be alive and well in the tense current middle East situation

An Era comes to an end as Dr Cleve Robertson steps down after 10 years at the helm of NSRI – See tribute at end of this edition.

In September we look forward to the Warsaw Flights Commemoration Service on Saturday 7 September, and then the Battle of Britain Ladies Lunch at Wanderers on the Second Friday, 13 September. (Closest to Battle of Britain Day on Sunday 15 September) We will have Colonel Conor

O'Hara OBE, the British Defence Attache at the British High Commission as our Guest and Speaker, accompanied by two staff members in his department, subject as always to the "Exigencies of the Service."

At 13h00 sharp the traditional "Missing Man" formation will be flown by the Flying Lions. Please reserve the date in your diaries now, book, and plan to get to Wanderers in good time to view the Fly-past. Book now for you and your guests at bookings@rafoc.org and please indicate your guests names as we will have allocated tables. Cost is R300 pp which should be paid into our bank account.

TAILPIECE:

The Lie said to the Truth, "Let's take a bath together, the well water is very nice.

The Truth, still suspicious, tested the water and found out it really was nice. So they got naked and bathed.

But suddenly, the Lie leapt out of the water and fled, wearing the clothes of the Truth.

The Truth, furious, climbed out of the well to get her clothes back.

But the World, upon seeing the naked Truth, looked away, with anger and contempt.

Poor Truth returned to the well and disappeared forever, hiding her shame.

Since then, the Lie runs around the world, dressed as the Truth, and society is very happy.... because the world has no desire to know the naked Truth.

We remain "Anonymous"

Chicken Run:

A city boy driving through the country passes a chicken farm and he is doing 55 mph. A chicken runs by and passes him inside of his fenced-in field.

He thinks, wow, that is amazing!

He stops and pulls into the barnyard where he sees the farmer. He said to the farmer:

"I was driving along the road out there and one of your chickens passed me in my car."

The farmer replies,

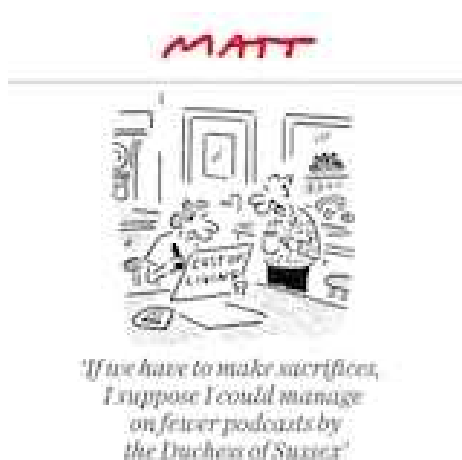
"I know, I raise chickens and never seem to have enough chicken legs for the poultry plant, so I have genetically produced a chicken with three legs."

The city boy replies, "Wow, that is fantastic, you ought to be rich now. How do they taste?"

The farmer replies

"Don't know, never been able to catch one!"

Apology: "SANParks fines driver who bumped a lioness in Kruger Park". The offender should also have to apologise in person to the offended lioness...



We Have Reached An Age Where We Cannot Function Without Our Glasses Especially If They Are Empty ... 🍷

When you drive past your buddy's house while he's asking his wife to go fishing



Wife said, "Our new neighbors are so in love. He kisses her, strokes her hair and hugs her. Why don't you do that?" I said, "Because I don't know her that well yet"



WHEN YOU LOOK FOR RACISM EVERYWHERE EXCEPT LOOKING AT YOURSELF!!



TDF/DAILYFRIEND.G-ZA

DAVIDT0ONS



DR CLEEVE ROBERTSON NSRI:

After more than a decade at the helm, Dr. Cleeve Robertson, respected CEO of the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI), is retiring.



Under his guidance, the NSRI has grown significantly in size, scope, and financial stability, enhancing its capacity to save lives. We take a closer look at Dr. Robertson's notable achievements, including his hands-on involvement in memorable rescues, such as the Miroshga incident, and his strategic shift towards preventative measures in water safety. With a personal connection to the NSRI dating back to his own rescue in 1986, Dr. Robertson's legacy is one of dedication, innovation, and compassion.

His tenure has been a period of remarkable growth, strategic innovation, and unwavering commitment to saving lives. As he prepares to step down, Dr. Robertson reflects on his journey, the evolution of the NSRI, and the profound impact of his work on South Africa's emergency rescue landscape.

A legacy of growth

Dr. Robertson's leadership of the NSRI began in 2013, a pivotal moment for the organization. Under his leadership, the NSRI transformed from a modest operation into a formidable force in maritime rescue. When he started, the NSRI had 25 staff members and about 900 volunteers. Today, it boasts over 1,500 volunteers and 131 service locations nationwide, including seasonal lifeguarded beaches.

"The general size and scope of the NSRI have grown remarkably," says Dr. Robertson. "We've proactively expanded our bases, stations, the fleet, and the number of volunteers, which has significantly increased our capacity to save lives."

This expansion was not merely about numbers but about building a robust, efficient system that could respond to emergencies swiftly and effectively. Dr. Robertson's strategic vision ensured that the NSRI was always prepared and ready to save lives.

Financial Stewardship and Independence:

One of Dr. Robertson's most notable achievements is the financial stability he brought to the NSRI. "Our independence is crucial," Dr. Robertson explains. "It allows us to direct resources where they're most needed without external interference, ensuring we can respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies."

Memorable rescues:

Throughout his tenure, Dr. Robertson has been directly involved in numerous rescues that highlight his hands-on approach and expertise in emergency medicine. One particularly harrowing event was the Miroshga incident in 2012. Three people were trapped under an overturned catamaran off the coast of Hout Bay in freezing, turbulent waters.

"It was a complex and dangerous situation," he recalls. "But the coordination, bravery, and skill of our team turned what could have been a tragedy into a triumph."

Dr. Robertson recounts the incident vividly: "By the time I got out there, they'd been under the hull for about an hour. We knew they were there because our Bakoven crew knocked on the hull. So we sent divers in to find them. It was an incredibly tense operation. We had to dive them out because cutting a hole would sink the boat. The first diver found a leg in the water and pulled on it. The leg pulled back, so we knew they were alive.

"All three of them survived. In fact, one of the survivors who we brought out first was pregnant at the time, which we didn't know. We only found out afterwards. There was a tragedy to that because the child had a genetic neurological disease and didn't survive three months. So, from all the elation of having saved an extra person to the heartbreaking tragedy, I don't think there's ever been a rescue like that, and probably won't be for a long time."

A preventative focus:

Under Dr. Robertson's guidance, the NSRI has shifted towards a preventative approach, focusing on water safety education and survival swimming to reduce the number of rescues needed. This strategic shift has had a profound impact, potentially saving countless lives by preventing accidents before they occur.

"The fulfilment of having created something that really does save a lot of lives every year, all over South Africa, is immense," says Dr. Robertson. "Our preventative measures, such as water safety education, aim to stop people from getting into trouble in the first place."

A grateful farewell:

The NSRI community and the countless individuals whose lives have been touched by Dr. Robertson's work extend heartfelt gratitude for his service. His leadership, dedication, and vision have saved lives and built an enduring legacy that will continue to protect and serve South Africans for generations to come.

Dr. Robertson's story is one of resilience, innovation, and compassion. As he transitions into the next chapter of his life, the impact of his contributions to NSRI and emergency services remains a beacon of inspiration and hope.

- Herman Eloff