



## ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

Johannesburg

P.O. Box 69726

BRYANSTON 2021

[info@rafoc.org](mailto:info@rafoc.org)

[www.rafoc.org](http://www.rafoc.org)

President:	David MacKinnon-Little
Vice Presidents:	Basil Hersov, Geoff Quick, David Lake
Chairman:	Bruce Harrison <a href="mailto:bruce@jbharrison.co.za">bruce@jbharrison.co.za</a> Tel: 011 673 0291 Cell: 083 325 0025
Vice Chairman:	Jon Adams <a href="mailto:vice-chairman@rafoc.org">vice-chairman@rafoc.org</a> Tel: 011 678 7702 Cell: 082 450 0616
Hon. Secretary:	Colin Ackroyd Tel: 012 942 1111 Cell: 082 800 5845
Hon. Treasurer:	Jeff Earle Tel: 011 616 3189 Cell: 083 652 1002
Committee Members:	Russell Swanborough Tel: 011 884 2611 Cell: 083 263 2740 Karl Jensen Tel: 011 234 0598 Cell: 082 331 4652 Jean-Michel Girard Cell: 083 659 1067 Geoff Fish Tel: 012 667 2759 Cell: 083 660 9697
Web Master:	Hanke Fourie Tel: 082 553 0210
Bank Account:	Nedbank - Melrose Arch Br: 19 66 05 Account 19 66 278 063

## RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 82 29<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2021

### GREETINGS:

Day 582 "Unhelpful, unskilled and uncaring": your ward councilors – (Media24 poll)... Truckers' protest causes backed up traffic on N3 highway in Harrismith... SA cricket plunged into World Cup crisis... Quinton de Kock standing up about kneeling down... kidnappings on the increase in SA ... SAA's partner Harith has links to Kelvin Power station... Joburg buying power from Kelvin – or are they?... 'Heaps of ash, years of neglect': Eskom reveals 'shocking state' of some plants... Eskom just needs R500bn... Loadshedding crisis – charge all the delinquent Directors??... Zuma bid on Downer fails and puts him in corner... UPL refuses to disclose a raft of regulatory and safety documentation... Springbok coach Jacques Nienaber says that it's all about consistency in his starting XV's to face Wales, Scotland and England in November.

Poor Old Joe Biden blundered over US policy on Taiwan... (yes, that as well) and criticises Beijing... Cyclone-like storms hit Sicily... Sudan leaders defiant as world condemns coup... Max Verstappen's US GP victory... Emma Raducanu secures her first win since her US Open triumph... Namibia halts use of Sputnik jabs after South Africa HIV fears... Carbon Neutral Scotch Whisky... Test & Trace criticised as 'eyewatering' waste of cash... What is the NHS doing with our billions?... Gas prices have risen to as high as 11 times normal levels as demand surges... Cop26 fiasco threatens to leave UK humiliated... Queen will not travel to Glasgow to speak at the Cop26 summit... Sunak's new green bonds are taking savers for fools... Deadline for Prince Andrew to answer questions about sexual assault allegations...

### WITH MILITARY HONOURS:



On Wednesday 20th October, on what would have been his 100th birthday, Sergeant Peter Twiddy, RAF Volunteer Reserve, was finally laid to rest with military honours by members of the Queen's Colour Squadron during a service that was organised by the Ministry of Defence's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre,

also known as the 'MOD War Detectives.' The ceremony took place for 22 year old Sergeant Twiddy at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Tirana Park Memorial 4'Cemetery, Albania and was conducted by the Reverend (Squadron Leader) Chrissy Lacey, Chaplain RAF High Wycombe. On the night of 19th October 1943, a Halifax HR674 aircraft was allocated to carry out a secret operation code-named 'Sapling 7.' Sergeant Twiddy along with six other crewmen from No.148 Squadron accompanied two passengers, Captain A. Careless and Signalmen D.W. Rockingham, who were attached to the Special Operations Executive. The purpose of the mission was to drop supplies and the two Special Operations Executive personnel. The drop zone was high in the mountains above the village of Tragjas, Albania. The aircraft took off from Tocra, Libya on 19th October 1943 at 2325 hours local time and did not return. Peter Twiddy was born on 20th October 1921 in Stockwell, Surrey, to Albert Arthur Twiddy and Elsie Edith Ward. Peter had one older sister who died as an infant and a younger brother, Eric, who died in 2013 aged 89. Throughout his career Peter's character was always described as very good. Peter was killed on his 22nd birthday.

## **MEMBERS WRITE:**

Sorting truth from fiction: Dr John Ledger, who is knowledgeable in these matters, wrote in last week: "I picked up your comment from the Daily Maverick: "radiation levels in old Krugersdorp mine dumps similar to that found at Chernobyl: National Nuclear Regulator has failed..." In my experience, the Daily Maverick is frequently guilty of spreading lies and exaggeration about the environment and the climate. And so it is with this particular report about radiation, which has been well debunked here: <https://dailyfriend.co.za/2021/10/22/krugernobyl-exaggeration-about-radiation-in-daily-maverick/> (an article by Ivo Vegter which makes very interesting reading). We live in a strange world where the mainstream media seem to have no shame in spreading misinformation and fake news. Most people have no means of judging the veracity or otherwise of what they hear and read in the media. Looking forward to a RAFOC lunch one of these days soon."

Dave Evans writes: "It looks as though the RAF, with Agile Combat Deployment and the Blue Dragon operation have just discovered what we knew as FAFs, more than 40 years ago"...We were certainly using pillow tanks a la ALARS.

Ernie Todd writes from UK: Thank you for the news of Sid's final departure. Ah well, yet another good one gone. And Sid was much more than a "very good one." I used to know him well, we took "The Shilling" together at South Cerney on 10 January 1960. Our paths diverged after the four months of basic training, but we kept in desultory contact from time to time. Apart from his sterling PQs, Sid justly enjoyed a the highest reputation as a pilot. Perhaps I may offer a small correction about his Air Force Cross ? In those far-off days, some AFCs were awarded, quite often, at the end of the year, roughly on the lines of "Buggins' turn." Certainly I never heard of another u/t pilot sporting an AFC. Early in his training, on a solo sortie from Lindholme, or, maybe it was Syerston. "Something" suddenly gave way and his cockpit was suddenly full of JP1 fumes, or the equivalent and his feet were submerged in the highly combustible fluid, a fuel line had burst. He decided the best plan was to return to base "exercising great caution", where he made a safe and uneventful landing. During our last get-together, he told an amusing story: One clever cadet suggested it would have been far better to have ejected, to remove himself from a "highly dangerous zone." Sid, ever the gentleman, gently pointed out either of the two MB cartridges might easily have set the whole aeroplane on fire. (There's one on every squadron). Many thought an even higher award should have made, but their Lords and Masters were aghast at the idea a mere PO/APO could merit such a quality gong. Rest in Eternal Peace Sid."

## **WAR ON WORDS:**

DEFENCE CHIEFS have issued a Forces language guide in a bid to stamp out words and phrases that could cause offence. The publication follows a report by Chief of the Air Staff, ACM Sir Mike Wigston highlighting the need to stamp out offensive behaviour and promote diversity. The guide,

produced by the MOD's Diversity and Inclusion Directorate, suggests using words such as 'colleague' as alternatives to 'girl' or 'boy' and urges personnel to avoid terms such as 'chav' or 'common.' The document also encourages non-binary or transgender personnel to include their preferred pronouns in email signatures and online profiles. The Chair of the Civilian LGBT+ Network SHOUT said: "Those within the LGBT+ community are really not offended if you genuinely stumble, we all do from time to time, so it's okay to correct yourself and not be embarrassed by it. (RAF News – see "I used to be Normal" at the end of this issue)

## ALARS:



Specialist teams from two RAF units have been developing the capability of the Atlas transport aircraft to refuel fast jets by conducting a first-time trial of a new fuelling system. Personnel from the Fuels Support Team, part of No 1 Expeditionary Logistics Squadron based at RAF Wittering, deployed to RAF Brize Norton to develop the Air Landed Aircraft Refuelling System capability used by the A400M 'Atlas'. The team take fuel from a large multi-engine aircraft like the Atlas and transfer it into a tactical refuelling facility to provide support to aircraft forward deployed from their Main Operating Bases to more austere locations. The Fuel Support Teams at No 1 Expeditionary Logistics Squadron are specialists in providing tactical refuelling solutions for all fixed wing aircraft in all environments. They can provide a range of refuelling solutions to the RAF ranging from a Tactical Refuelling Area to a Primary Bulk Fuel Installation that can store up to 525k litres of fuel, enough to fully refuel eight A400M aircraft, or 525 Typhoon.

## OP HERRICK: 20 YEARS ON:

THE ATTACK on New York's Twin Towers on September 11, 2001 not only slaughtered 2,996 people – 67 of them British – but led to a 20-year campaign that transformed the RAF. And with 150,000 British military personnel serving in the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan since 2001, the war touched countless families across the UK – most of all the relatives of the 457 servicemen and women killed there. While the abiding TV image of the conflict for the public was probably the repatriation processions from Brize Norton through Wootton Bassett – a town later dubbed 'Royal' for honouring the fallen – over the battlefield itself the Air Force gathered a very different but vitally important picture. When allied air strikes on Taliban and Al-Qaeda targets began on October 7, 2001, first in action were the Cold War era Nimrod MR2, hunting Al Qaeda terrorists trying to flee across the Arabian Sea in small boats, and the AWACS E-3D. Operating from Oman, the Sentries monitored patrol communications calling in US Navy fast jets to protect invading Coalition troops facing a fanatical well dug-in enemy. Officer Commanding 8 Sqn Wg Cdr Victoria Williams said: "Only the rapid coordination of US close air support jets by the mission crew saved individuals who would sometimes be calling as they literally fought for their lives." Eventually, they would be joined

by almost every aircraft type at the RAF's disposal; from the Tri-Stars, C-17s and Voyagers that transported troops to theatre, to the Hercules transports and Chinook and Puma helicopters that ferried them to and from the frontline. Old technology was updated to cope with the unique challenges of the campaign and new capabilities were introduced, notably the Reaper Force. ISTAR Force Commander Air Cdre Nick Hay said: "Reaper was the major technological development that changed the way we were able to operate a REAPER WAS the weapon of choice in Afghanistan, firing more strikes than the Harrier and Tornado combined. Operations continued throughout the war with RAF personnel operating a 'taxi-rank' system with their USAF colleagues from Kandahar. Its synthetic aperture radar meant Reapers could scan ahead of routes and identify potential roadside bomb placements. After three years in action without a break XIII Sqn handed over to its US-based sister unit 39 Sqn to allow its crews some badly needed R&R. 39 Sqn initially saw action over Afghanistan flying the Canberra PR9 before being re-equipped with the MQ-9A. Reformed at Creech Air Force Base, it operated an initial six aircraft from Kandahar with five more procured in 2012 as XIII Sqn reformed for operations from Waddington.

## **ROYAL BRITISH LEGION:**

TO COMMEMORATE the centenary of the Royal British Legion this year, AVI-8 has just launched two eye-catching new timepieces – the Flyboy Royal British Legion Founder's Chronograph Limited Edition and the Flyboy Royal British Legion Chairman's Meca-Quartz Limited Edition. One thousand of each of the new models has been produced and every one sold will help the RBL continue their vital work supporting those who serve and have served in the British Armed Forces and their families. The two new watches have been inspired by the charity's first chairman, Sir Thomas Frederick Lister, and its first president, Field Marshal Earl Haig. The RBL was formed by Lister and Haig in the aftermath of World War I. The RBL's Assistant Director of High Value Giving, Louise Ajdukiewicz, said: "In the RBL's centenary year, we remain dedicated to our mission of creating better futures for all those who serve and have served with the British Armed Forces. The funds raised from these limited edition timepieces will ensure we can continue this work in the years to come." The Flyboy Royal British Legion Founder's Chronograph Limited Edition retails for £225. For your chance to win one of these top timepieces tell us: What was the name of the two men who founded the Royal British Legion? Email your answer, marked RBL Limited Edition watch competition, to: [competitions@rafnews.co.uk](mailto:competitions@rafnews.co.uk) or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by November 5.

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## **OBITUARY:**

### **SIR JOHN CHARNLEY CB, MENG., FRENG., FRIN, FRAES:**

He has died aged 99 and was an Aeronautical engineer and chief scientist to the RAF whose work at the RAE (Royal Aircraft Establishment) enabled smooth landings in poor weather.



John Charnley felt nervous as he strapped his passenger in to the right hand seat of the Canberra bomber. The Duke of Edinburgh was an experienced aviator but the automatic landing technology that Charnley had helped to develop was in its infancy and he was well aware that the aircraft had no back-up safety feature should the system fail. To his relief, the autopilot worked impeccably for the demonstration at Thurleigh airfield, near Bedford, on December 4, 1959.

Prince Philip was thrilled as he and the pilot, Alfie Camp, made three hands-off, fully automatic, landings at speeds of between 110mph and 120mph in a 15-20mph crosswind. All the same, Charnley winced inwardly when the Duke exclaimed: "That was incredible! Can we go round again?" In October 1958, with more experience and added confidence in a complete system, a series of automatic landing demonstrations had been arranged for the Air Staff, airline operators, CAA, Industry and of course the Press. The Varsity was the aircraft used most and a headline article of the week featured test pilot Pinkie Stark and his 'Look no hands' routine. Charnley recalled: "In due course, the other consequence of the publicity was a request from the Palace for HRH the Duke of Edinburgh to 'have a ride'. Not surprisingly the protocol was daunting. Rather than use the 'old hack' Varsity, the Canberra was thought to be more appropriate but when the time came I felt somewhat nervous, since the aircraft equipment fit was a single 'lane' military system with no redundancy back up. Nevertheless, on 4th December 1959, with the RAE Director watching, I helped strap HRH into the right-hand seat of Canberra WJ992 and waved him off. Fortunately all went well and after several fully automatic, accurate landings HRH returned, beaming with a delighted grin of achievement." Sir John Charnley began his career as an aeronautical scientist/engineer in the Flight Test Division of the Aerodynamics Department (Aero Flight) of the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) at Farnborough in January 1943. In 1955 he was appointed Superintendent of the Blind Landing Experimental Unit (BLEU) at Martlesham Heath in East Anglia. In 1963 Sir John moved back to Farnborough to head the Instrument and Electrical Engineering Department and then in 1965 moved again to head the Weapons Department. In 1968 he transferred to the Ministry of Technology in London, to be concerned with the planning of R&D across all sectors of manufacturing industry. In 1972 he was appointed Controller of Guided Weapons and Electronics in the Ministry of Defence, responsible for all defence procurement in this rapidly moving field. A posting to Chief Scientist, Royal Air Force, was followed in 1977 by a move to be Controller of the twelve UK defence R&D establishments and professional head of defence scientists. Although formally retired in 1982, he worked with the Civil Airworthiness Authority on R&D concerned with future Air Traffic Management and assisted companies in the aerospace and manufacturing industries. In 1987 he was appointed a Trustee of the Richard Ormonde Shuttleworth Remembrance Trust with responsibility for the preservation and display of its historic aircraft and vehicles. In 1960 Sir John received, on behalf of the BLEU team, the Bronze medal of the Royal Institute of Navigation, followed in 1964 by the Cumberbatch Trophy of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators. Later he was awarded the Royal Aeronautical Society's Silver and Gold medals and, in 1980, delivered the Society's Wilbur Wright Memorial Lecture. He was elected an Honorary Fellow of the Society in 1992. He was also a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, a past President of the Royal Institute of Navigation and a winner of their Gold Medal. He was elected a Companion of the Bath in 1973 and knighted in 1981. *(Sent in by David Nevil via Jon Adams)*

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## GE GOES (VERY) BIG...



Ever wondered what the size of the largest jet engine to be in service soon is and what it looks like? These are destined for the Boeing 777X. It is rated at 110 000 lb thrust [490 kN] which is 5 000 lb [20 kN] less than its predecessor [which has already undergone its tests, the GE90-115 at 115 000 lb thrust [510 kN] also destined for the 777. Ostriches won't stand a snowball's hope in a bird strike, but then they don't fly ...

*(Sent in by Bruce Prescott)*

## **HIS MASTERS VOICE:**

The South African Post Office has called on qualifying households to apply for a free set-top box as the country prepares to migrate to digital broadcasting by 31 March 2022. The SAPO said that homes that apply before 1 November, will receive a decoder before the analogue television signal is switched off. "Qualifying households should visit their local post office as soon as possible to apply for a free government-subsidised decoder – also called a set-top box. Qualifying households do not have to pay anything for the set-top box – it is free," it said. All South African households with an income of R3,500 per month or less and a working television set qualify for a government-subsidised set-top box. During the 2021 State of the Nation Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that South Africa must complete the migration to digital broadcast by 31st March 2022. The analogue television signal will be switched off and only digital television transmissions will be broadcast. Analogue television sets will then only work if they are connected to a decoder.

## **FIRE DOWN BELOW:**

Investigations are underway and a Board of Inquiry is being set up to determine the cause of fires that broke out at two of Transnet SOC Ltd (Transnet) port terminals over the past two weeks – namely, the Richards Bay Multi-Purpose Terminal and more recently Durban's Grain Export Terminal at the Maydon Wharf precinct. A technical team has also been deployed to assess the extent of the damage with fire investigators working to establish the root cause. No injuries were reported and both ports remain operational. Transnet National Ports Authority has issued Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) with letters of notice for TPT to ensure that all affected areas are safe before any operations can resume. The fires were contained and extinguished. Business Continuity Plans (BCP) have been invoked and Transnet continues to work with all impacted stakeholders to minimize disruptions and ensure that repairs are concluded as quickly as possible. In Richards Bay, significant progress has been made in restoring operations - five of the seven conveyor belts have been fully restored and are back in operation. With the remainder of the conveyor belts, the Port has deployed manual handling to ensure continuity of operations. At the Port of Durban's Maydon Wharf Precinct, there are currently two (2) conveyor belts, one handling grain and the other woodchip. The grain conveyor belt was affected by the fire after it had completed loading a grain vessel. The terminal is working around the clock to ensure that the belt is restored and back in operation by the time the next grain vessel arrives at the Port on 26 October 2021.

## **OUT OF ORDER:**

As South Africa prepares for the municipal election next week, the Out of Order index, calculated from a set of data painstakingly collated over the last two months by a News24 team, suggests that the crisis in the frontline of service delivery is likely to deepen. The News24 Out of Order Index suggests a further 43 municipalities are deep in the danger zone of collapse. The 43 are municipalities which have not already been named in other officially published lists from the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) department or the Auditor-General as being delinquent or under administration. The index allocates each of the more than 200 local municipalities and eight Metros a score on a scale from 0-100, where 0 is a failure and 100 is perfectly performing.

[https://outoforder.news24.com/?utm\\_source=24.com&utm\\_medium=email\\_sub\\_promo&utm\\_campaign=are\\_you\\_missing\\_out\\_24\\_october\\_2021&utm\\_term=https%3A%2F%2Foutoforder.news24.com](https://outoforder.news24.com/?utm_source=24.com&utm_medium=email_sub_promo&utm_campaign=are_you_missing_out_24_october_2021&utm_term=https%3A%2F%2Foutoforder.news24.com)

## **CHEERS! FOR TODAY:**

Now 582 days since the start of the great lockdown, this is the eighty-second weekly Newsheet - "Members News, Reminiscences and Ramblings" - items of Air Force interest, or greetings to the Club or any other happenings of interest, that will help us all to keep in contact and entertained through the lockdown...the Covid clouds are lifting, and we are relieved! Thanks for the contributions! We'll use them in successive editions...

Please continue to take care – Support where you can. Don't spread alarm and despondency on social media (as and when Facebook and WhatsApp and Messenger are available) – and remember to “take the knee” when you have to , to avoid a Federal case.... Remember that all this, too, shall pass...

We are looking at having an Armistice Day Lunch on Friday 12 November – details to follow...

## TAILPIECE:

I know this man who always took the knee,  
 And it was very plain for all to see,  
 Now don't be too critical,  
 'Twas nothing political,  
 This aviator was checking the creep on his tyres explicitly  
*(The Sherriff of Nottingham Road)*

Quinton out with knee problems...

Breaking: Cricket SA have reportedly asked all players to kiss before the start of the next game in order to adopt a united stance against homophobia...

You don't get a body like mine overnight. It takes years of moderate alcoholism, neglect, and numerous damaging behaviours...

My friend came home from work, washed himself up and sat down for dinner. After the first bite he scolded his wife that food was tasteless. His wife got up, called the COVID hotline and told them that her husband doesn't have the sense of taste any more. Metro ambulance came and took him away and now he is in 14 days quarantine... This is a warning to all men who find their wife's cooking tasteless...

A majority of archaeologists are women due to their natural ability to dig up the past...

Falling in love makes you do stupid things... One time I even got married...

Electrogasm: That excited feeling when your electricity comes on after loadshedding...

One day out on the golf course, a golfer accidentally overturned his golf cart. A very attractive woman, who lived in a villa on the golf course, heard the noise, came out onto her balcony and called out to him, "Hey, are you OK?" "I'm fine, thanks," he replied. "You look frazzled, the woman said. "Come up to my villa for a drink and I will help you get the cart up afterwards." "That's mighty nice of you," he answered, "But I don't think my wife would like that." "Oh, come on," the woman, a gorgeous blond in a sexy bikini, insisted. "I can see you've cut your head. It could be serious. Let me take care of that right away. I'm a nurse." She was very persuasive....and he was weak. "Well OK," he agreed, but added, "But my wife won't like it." After she bandaged his wound, she gave him a most welcome brandy. They talked a little about golf and he discovered she was an avid golfer with a four handicap. When he confessed to a weakness in his putting, she gave him a putting lesson holding him close and intimately as she did so. Finally he confessed, "I feel a lot better now, but I had better get going. I know my wife is going to be really upset with me being here with you." "Don't be silly! the woman said with a smile. "She won't know anything. By the way, where is she?" "Under the cart," he replied

MATT



*'Usually we have a village bonfire, but this year he's going on top of a low carbon heat exchange pump'*

MATT



*'If the Government publicly denied there were shortages of booster jobs, there'd be queues round the block...'*



OXYMORON



**“I used to be "normal" but...**

I used to think I was pretty much just an ordinary person, but I was born white, into a two-parent household, which now, whether I like it or not, makes me “privileged”, a racist and responsible for slavery.

I am a fiscal and moral conservative, which by today’s standards, makes me a fascist and bloated capitalist, because I plan, budget and support myself.

I went to High School and have always held a job. But I now find out that I am not here because I earned it, but because I was “advantaged”.

I am a white, heterosexual male, which according to the LGBTQA+ community, makes me a cis-gender homophobe.

I am not a Muslim, which now labels me as an infidel.

I am older than 70, making me a useless consumer, who doesn’t understand Facebook, Instagram, TicToc, or Snapchat.

I think and I reason, and I doubt much of what the “mainstream” media tell me, which makes me a “right-wing conspiracy nut”.

I am proud of my heritage and our traditional English South African culture, making me a xenophobe and a bigot.

I believe in hard work, fair play, and fair compensation according to each individual’s merits, which today makes me anti-progressive.

I believe that our system guarantees freedom of effort - not freedom of outcome, or subsidies, which must make me a borderline sociopath.

I am proud of the Union Flag, what it stands for and the many who died to let it fly, so I stand (do not take the knee) during our National Anthem – that also makes me a racist.

Please help me to come to terms with all this crap because I'm just not sure who I am anymore!

Funny - it has all taken place over the last seven or eight years! If all this nonsense were not enough to deal with, now I don't even know which toilets to use ... and I have to go more frequently.....” *(Sent in by Brian Stableford)*