



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 86 26th NOVEMBER 2021

GREETINGS:

Day 610: Road to hell for marine life: Shell's Wild Coast seismic assessment plans – "Hell, No, Shell Must Go" public protest... Big surprises in Municipal Elections.... Black Friday is upon us... Uproar over Miss SA visit to Israel... if E Cape Amahlati municipality fails to pay annual bonuses, Samwu's Luthando Juju says there will be "war".... what price "Service Delivery"?? All hail let loose in Lydenburg storm... Floods in George - Officials assess damage in flood-stricken Garden Route... massive poaching syndicate stealing local livestock and smuggling the animals through KNP to Mozambique... who is sabotaging Eskom and why is Government not acting?... Big black holes in South Africa's Integrated Resource Plan for Electricity.... The Investigating Directorate (ID) is preparing to drag the State Security Agency (SSA) to court.... Supply chain delays hurting SA retailers... Strikes at Massmart... SABC doubles down on TV licence tax in South Africa.

Giant media market for exaggeration and fear.... Amazon and Visa at odds over card fees... No consistency from World Rugby over Erasmus ban.... Europe rocked by anti-Covid restrictions riots, demos - Police arrest 19 in Netherlands... Croatia, Austria also brewing... BoJo announces rail projects shelved – but rejoicing in Devon as Dartmoor line reopens.... Priti Patel plans Greek-style clampdown on asylum seekers... illegal immigrant tragedy unfolds in the Channel... Russia 'paying close attention' in race to salvage F-35.... Harrison (*not our Bruce*) clings to Yorkshire cricket job after repeated apologies. Royal family's fury over BBC documentary on Princes William and Harry... "Duchess Difficult" Meghan seeks a "saintly rebrand".... (She would, wouldn't she?)

STOP PRESS: Sqn Ldr Johnny Johnson, "Dambuster", celebrated his 100th Birthday!

LOST LIGHTNING:



On the morning of the 17th November, a UK-owned F-35B crashed into the sea while flying from HMS Queen Elizabeth. The pilot ejected safely but there is now a scramble to retrieve the wreckage of the aircraft. Reliable sources say that the accident occurred during take-off and the pilot was recovered very close to the carrier. The Daily Mail reported that the pilot was "*left dangling from the edge of the HMS Queen Elizabeth because the lines of his parachute became caught on edge of flight deck.*" Official sources would not confirm or deny this detail, but it would suggest the pilot was very fortunate.

Accidents on take-off are especially dangerous but whether trapped in a sinking aircraft or having ejected, naval aviators also face the serious risk of being run over by the carrier. The British-made Martin Baker US16E ejector seat that equips the F-35 includes 3 airbags that inflate in a two-stage process to protect the head and neck of the pilot, wearing the heavy helmet packed with technology. The F-35B variant has a feature that will also eject the pilot automatically if it detects that the vertical-lift fan has failed (most serious during vertical landing but the fan is also in use during rolling take off. Of course, this is not necessarily what happened in this incident and the pilot could have pulled the handle himself when experiencing mechanical problems. Despite the brilliance of modern seat design, ejection from a fast jet is always a traumatic experience due to the sudden G forces. The exact location the aircraft sank is therefore known precisely. Its position on the seabed may, however, take time to pinpoint. The Levantine Sea, in which the jet was lost, varies in depth but averages 1,500m. An airframe does not sink vertically like a stone and assuming it was mostly intact, likely 'glided' as it descended, taking it some distance from the ditching point, depending on the depth of water. The UK has asked for US assistance with the recovery effort, there would have been no hesitation as the US would be keen to protect the secrets of the F-35 and understand the cause of the accident. UK defence salvage is managed by the Salvage and Marine Operations (SALMO) team with most of the capability provided by private contractor James Fisher Defence. Much of the equipment is based at Faslane in Scotland and would take time to assemble and arrive on the scene in the eastern Mediterranean. *(NavyLookout)*

PER ASPERA...



Change is coming to the SA Air Force (SAAF) with the CAF, Lieutenant General Wiseman Mbambo, reported as saying it is resisted, but this is “a sign of unpopular progress to be welcomed.” The media invitation to the medal parade at AFB Swartkop on Thursday 25 Nov states, among others, the Chief of the SAAF will remind personnel of the “significant strides and valuable contributions they continue to make in ensuring the people of South Africa are and feel safe.”

Mbambo is expected to “to set the scene for the strategic direction the SAAF is embarking on in his tenure when 2022 ushers in.” Speaking to SAAF personnel at Swartkop last week as part of his tour of all SAAF bases and units, Mbambo is reported as saying “the organisation must gear itself for new heights with renewed vigour.” The new direction is understood to take into account responses to a force-wide survey which allowed for “proper diagnosis” of the SAAF. The new SAAF vision will be unveiled and adopted “no later than February 2022”. Military aviation watchers speculate it could be the closest Friday in the month to 1 February, accepted as the “birthday” of the air force and marked by a prestige awards function with a parade and flypast.

FREIGHTER AIRCRAFT STEAL SHOW:



Freighters rarely steal the limelight from their costly passenger counterparts but, fittingly for a widebody market turned upside down by the pandemic, new cargo developments grabbed the headlines at the industry's first major air show since COVID-19 became widespread. With new orders for twin-aisle airliners at a virtual standstill and the air freight industry at historically high levels, the focus for new product development at Airbus and Boeing has shifted in the past two years to the next generation of very large cargo aircraft.

The tangible results of this sea change were on display at the Dubai Airshow, where Airbus clinched the first orders for its newly launched A350F freighter and Boeing edged closer to defining the cargo version of the 777X. (Aviation Week)

SPIRIT OF INNOVATION:



Rolls-Royce's Spirit of Innovation has reached a top speed of 555.9km/h (345.4mph) over 3km, beating the existing record by 213.04 km/h (132mph) on 16 November 2021, according to Rolls-Royce. The aircraft is powered by a 400kW (500+hp) all-electric power train with what Rolls-Royce claims is the most power-dense battery pack ever assembled for an aircraft.

The aero engine manufacturer added that further runs at the UK Ministry of Defence's Boscombe Down experimental aircraft testing site saw the aircraft achieve 532.1km/h (330mph) over 15km – 292.8km/h (182mph) faster than the previous record – and broke the fastest time to climb to 3000m by 60 seconds with a time of 202 seconds. During its flights, Spirit of Innovation achieved a maximum speed of 623km/h (387.4mph) which according to Rolls-Royce makes the Spirit of Innovation the world's fastest all-electric vehicle. "Flying the Spirit of Innovation at these incredible speeds and believing we have broken the world record for all-electric flight is a momentous occasion," said Phill O'Dell, test pilot and Rolls-Royce director of Flight Operations. "This is the highlight of my career and is an incredible achievement for the whole team. The opportunity to be at the forefront of another pioneering chapter of Rolls-Royce's story as we look to deliver the future of aviation is what dreams are made of." The Spirit of Innovation is part of the ACCEL (Accelerating Electrification of Flight) project. Half of the project's funding is provided by the Aerospace Technology Institute (ATI), in partnership with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and Innovate UK.

AIR PROXIMITY INCIDENT:

The Situation: A flight of two Typhoons were conducting night air-to-air refuelling (AAR) training. The weather was clear below with excellent all-round visibility and broken cloud cover above with occasional light turbulence associated with forecast mountain wave. The Typhoons departed the tanker, climbing to FL170, and departed straight ahead, westwards. The Voyager maintained the same westerly track to complete after-refuelling checks prior to recovering to home base. As the tanker crew was watching the Typhoons depart ahead, one was seen to turn sharply left across the tanker's nose, well above. Shortly afterwards, TCAS gave a TA as this aircraft descended to an indicated 600ft above the Voyager. The aircraft was then seen to climb up and right before its aspect was lost. It appeared to recross the tanker's nose well above before descending directly ahead of the tanker. TCAS subsequently gave a descending RA with the Typhoon displaying about 1600ft above, descending rapidly. The TCAS manoeuvre was carried out saw SOPs, passing FL155 before the warning ceased.

Comment by "Wg Cdr Spry": Although this Airprox was specifically between the Typhoon #2 and the Voyager, it was the chain of events that transpired that are just as important. Air to Air Refuelling is a challenging discipline. Coupled with the added complexities of night flying, it is understandable that events transpired so quickly, given the pilot's limited experience and reduced capacity. In this situation, the Typhoon #2 pilot went 'heads in' and became fixated on the radar screen, denying the ability to correctly assimilate all the threats that were in the peripheral. The unnoticed overtake resulted in a Loss of Safe Separation (LoSS) with the lead Typhoon, forcing a breakout situation and a descent towards the Voyager. Due to the careful monitoring and situational awareness of the lead Typhoon (the instructor), the student was able to arrest their rate

of descent towards the Voyager. Both the crew of the Voyager and the lead Typhoon are to be commended for their careful monitoring and highlights the importance of always expecting the unexpected. Recognising when one is fixated can be a challenge; however, being disciplined in maintaining a robust scan can help prevent a situation like this from occurring. (*Air Clues: "I learnt about flying from that..."*)

CHANNEL DISASTER:

Yesterday was the day the luck ran out. After at least 27 people died off the coast of Calais while trying to reach Britain, dozens of bodies, including those of five women and a young girl, were found in the sea after the flimsy boat - likened to a "blow-up paddling pool in a garden" - sank in rough seas and cold weather. The dinghy was reportedly hit by a large ship, thought to be a cargo vessel. With intense anger among senior government figures over the lack of French action in recent weeks, the Prime Minister convened an emergency Cobra meeting and said, "now is the time for us all to step up" and "demolish" the smuggling gangs "who are literally getting away with murder." The tragedy occurred as 255 migrants reached the UK yesterday - including about 40 in a boat from Boulogne, who were allowed into the sea by a French police patrol who appeared to do nothing. (*Telegraph*)

D B COOPER 50TH ANNIVERSARY:



"D. B. Cooper" is a media epithet used to refer to an unidentified man who hijacked a Boeing 727 aircraft in United States airspace between Portland and Seattle on the afternoon of November 24, 1971. He extorted \$200,000 in ransom (equivalent to \$1,278,000 in 2020) and parachuted to an uncertain fate over south-western Washington. The man purchased his airline ticket using the alias Dan Cooper but, because of a news miscommunication, became known in popular lore as D. B. Cooper. Available evidence and a preponderance of expert opinion suggests that Cooper probably did not survive his high-risk jump, but the FBI maintained an active investigation for 45 years after the hijacking. Despite a case file that grew to over 60 volumes over that period, no definitive conclusions were reached regarding Cooper's true identity or fate.

The crime remains the only unsolved air piracy in commercial aviation history. Numerous theories of widely varying plausibility have been proposed over the years by investigators, reporters, and amateur enthusiasts. \$5,880 of the ransom was found along the banks of the Columbia River in 1980, which triggered renewed interest but ultimately only deepened the mystery. The great majority of the ransom remains unrecovered. The FBI officially suspended active investigation of the case in July 2016, but the agency continues to request that any physical evidence that might emerge related to the parachutes or the ransom money be submitted for analysis. (*Wikipedia via Gordon Dyne*)

OBITUARY:

In the light of the absolute tsunami of mis- and dis-information which assails us in the mass and social media, this classic, published in The Times some years ago, bears repeating: "Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair;
- And maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion. Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault. Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

- Common Sense was preceded in death,
- by his parents, Truth and Trust,
- by his wife, Discretion,
- by his daughter, Responsibility,
- and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers;

- I Know My Rights
- I Want It Now
- Someone Else Is to Blame
- I'm A Victim
- Pay me for Doing Nothing

Not many attended his funeral as they didn't realise he was gone...."

CHEERS! FOR TODAY:

Almost two years since the pandemic began, the world around us still seems to be in a near-constant state of flux. Now 610 days since the start of the great lockdown, this is the eighty-sixth weekly Newssheet - "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, but still threatening... Just when it appears that things are starting to come back to some kind of normality, another bogeyman appears... Thanks for the contributions! We'll use them in successive editions... And please continue to take care – Support others where you can. Don't spread alarm and despondency on social media and try to keep cool heads and perspective.

Remember that all this, too, shall pass...We are working on a venue for the Christmas Ladies Lunch on Friday 3 December – details to follow...

TAILPIECE:

The Fourth Wave is stuck in some lab, waiting for proof of Payment...

With an electricity crisis, service providers can literally turn off the power to rectify a situation, but when it comes to water and sanitation, there is no way to shed sh*t.

There was a man who tried to aim lower,
 This show-off thought he was a great goer,
 When actually one day,
 He just wanted to play,
 With this blonde who was really a fella....
 (*The Sherriff of Nottingham Road*)

An old, blind Marine wanders into an all-girl biker bar by mistake.
 He finds his way to a bar stool and orders a shot of Jack Daniels.
 After sitting there for a while, he yells to the bartender, 'Hey, you wanna hear a blonde joke?'
 The bar immediately falls absolutely silent.
 In a very deep, husky voice, the woman next to him says,
 'Before you tell that joke I think it is only fair, given that you are blind, that you should know five things:

1. The bartender is a blonde girl with a baseball bat.
2. The bouncer is a blonde girl.
3. I'm a 6-foot tall, 175-pound blonde woman with a black belt in karate.
4. The woman sitting next to me is blonde and a professional weightlifter.
5. The lady to your right is blonde and a professional wrestler.

Now, think about it seriously, do you still wanna tell that blonde joke?'

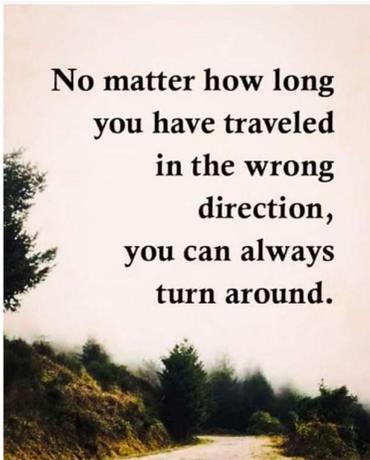
The blind Marine thinks for a second, shakes his head and mutters, 'No... not if I'm gonna have to explain it five times.'

MATT

*'Care costs of £86,000!!!
 We'll be forced to sell the
 gamekeeper's cottage'*

MATT

*'I deliver presents to children
 all over the world... well,
 I don't go as far as Leeds'*



OBITUARY TRIBUTE TO SHELAGH ANDERSON:

Good Morning Friends, we are gathered today, on this lovely Highveld morning, to celebrate and give thanks for the life of Shelagh Anderson. Shelagh was born 91 years ago in Chislehurst, Kent UK, on 03/11/1930, the only child of Basil & Lillian Ward. She was schooled privately, as was the custom of the day, not long before the Second World War burst upon Europe, and as a teenager in the latter stages, served as a WREN – Women's Royal Naval Service, the name of a small English bird, a "Jenny Wren." After the War, she did some Architectural drawing, but in the drab austerity of post-War Britain, soon succumbed to the lure of the Colonies and emigrated to the then Rhodesia under one of the immigration schemes, along with thousands of others – a "Sunshine Girl" as they were often called. She met Roy Anderson, himself a Royal Navy veteran of the war, at the home of mutual friends, got engaged quite quickly and married soon after, at the age of 33. When she met Roy, she was a member of the Saloon car racing club, and she was the only woman racing driver at their Marlborough track in Salisbury. She drove a variety of saloon cars in those halcyon days of the early 60's. Roy was a keen 16 mm cine movie hobbyist, so he made sure he filmed some of these occasions. When they married, Roy was divorced with two teenage daughters, Lesley & Rayne. Shelagh had a hard job being accepted by them as a stepmother and having no previous experience it was quite daunting. She helped Roy renovate and convert 2 stables into a tiny cottage so they could move in and start building a home together. Roy owned a

Service station and bottle store then built an owned a hotel, the Sherwood Arms, later the Feathers, where he used to put on Elizabethan feasts where Shelagh featured as one of the serving Wench.

In 1962 Orla was born, and in 1964 a son called Mark, now in the UK. Some years later, Roy & Shelagh bought a farm and started market gardening, growing vegetables for export, granadillas, and raising sheep. By that time the security situation was beginning to look ominous, and Roy & Shelagh decided to dedicate themselves to getting their Pilots licences to become active volunteer civilian pilots in BSAP PRAW, providing support services such as transport to remote areas, ferrying ministers & other visitors and Medical casevacs. As the bush war progressed, these services developed in support and liaison for the BSAP and Military, and PRAW pilots were typically attached to the Forward Airfields under Air Force control for tasking to carry out their duties. In one such instance Shelagh flew an injured soldier out of the war zone and when he eventually was able to, he looked her up and thanked her and called her Angel. From this day on she was known as "Angel" in the flying circle. Like most PRAW pilots, she survived getting shot up and many more hairy endeavours in the war areas. As the new political reality set in Zimbabwe after the "free and Fair" elections of 1980, Roy & Shelagh, along with many others, eventually sold up everything in 1983 and went on a worldwide tour with the little money they could get out of the country at that time. Roy came back to SA at the end of 1983 and started to "walk the streets" working as an estate agent. Shelagh packed up the farm and joined Roy and family in 1984. They built themselves up again and bought in Parkhurst eventually moving to their current house 34 years ago. They had various other entrepreneurial ventures, such a pub and restaurant in Ceres, which were not commercial successes. Time was marching on, and Roy had an accident which needed 2 back ops and meant he could not work, Shelagh stepped up and went to the UK care giver in England, at the age of 74 - for nearly 6 years - to save their house, which she did successfully. During her time in UK, Shelagh used to come back for short breaks and go off again. In that time, she decided to enroll as a Driving instructor in the UK and she had to write and do very difficult tests to qualify, which she did, as an Advanced Driving Instructor. Back in SA, in later years Shelagh started doing Garden design and maintenance for different clients and taught their family retainer Moffatt all she knew so that this small business could carry on. At the beginning of June this year Orla had to make the hard decision to put Shelagh in a care home in Midrand, as she required 24-hour nursing care. Shelagh, as you may imagine, was irked at the further loss of independence, although she received good care. And here she remained for 5 months until she passed away in the early hours of her 91st Birthday 03/11/21. Shelagh was a real lady, an outgoing and gregarious personality who in her later years liked nothing more than to sit and reminisce about days gone by over a Rhodesian Sundowner, as many of you would have done with her at the end of the day. She was a well known personality in her years with the BSAP and in her earlier years, she appeared in many magazines, books and documentary films. She features in "Blue and Old Gold," the history of the BSAP, and often featured in the contemporary magazines such as Illustrated Life Rhodesia, and The Outpost. Right up to the end she was concerned about all those she loved. On one such occasion about a week before her death Orla did a video call with one of her friends so she knew we were all there for her and as Orla announced that she was about to call this lady, Shelagh said "Oh I haven't got any booze for us" – a reference to obligatory sundowner!

We would like to thank all of you for being there for Shelagh and Orla in the last difficult year. Thank you for your support and love, and for being here today. It's appropriate that we have gathered today on an airfield, with the sound of aeroplanes around us, typical of the airfields on which Roy and Shelagh spent so much time as they served and flew during the valiant years of the Rhodesian Bush War, 50 years ago.

We salute her memory, and we will remember her!

(Tribute delivered at Grand Central Airport, Midrand, Sunday 14 November 2021)