



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 53 – 9th APRIL 2021

GREETINGS:

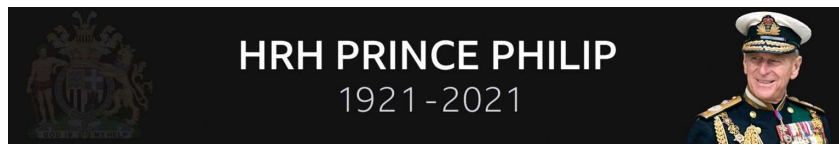
Day 386 and counting ... Well, some of the real costs are starting to emerge from the Covid fog ... Alcohol ban costs Pick n Pay billions ... Jacob Zuma has effectively dared the Constitutional Court to send him to prison for contempt ... Bheki Cele says SAPS dealing with big fish 'and maybe some sharks' ... South Africa suspends rollout of Johnson & Johnson Covid vaccine ... Eugene Watson, the former head of the Road Accident Fund, accused of R23-million in debt payments fraud ... How Prasa was looted and left for scrap ... Western Cape seeks control of its rail systems ... Duduzane Zuma lives high in Dubai - on our money ... A baboon spotted roaming Johannesburg's northern suburbs has been relocated to living high on the mountains in Polokwane.

"Green Shoot": South African mining output rises in February after 12 consecutive months of contraction (but not at Blyvooruitsig...) SADC summit calls for 'immediate technical deployment' to troubled Mozambique ... Yoh! In UK, it has officially been the coldest start to April for eight years ... Indoors, outdoors, all around the town ... Older drinkers without smartphones 'risk discrimination'.... "We're being enslaved by phones that once liberated us" ... David Cameron hung out to dry on the Greensill ... London "surge testing" thrown into chaos ... Sturgeon 'should thank PM' over EU jab scheme ... Belfast on fire: Police use water cannon on rioters in unrest ... In USA, Bernie Madoff, who orchestrated the world's largest "Ponzi" scheme dies in prison aged 82 ... Biden asks Putin for ceasefire in Ukraine, offers summit in return ... Joe Biden has also decided to end America's longest war and conduct an unconditional troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in the face of a resurgent Taliban. Good call, Joe ... Saarland University in Germany has developed a webcam that looks like an eye, moves around and blinks. It's called, wait for it, Eyecam. Too bad that all the people who know how to run the country are busy driving taxicabs and cutting hair." George Burns.

HER MAJESTY BACK AT WORK, GOD BLESS HER!

The Queen has returned to royal duties just four days after the death of her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh. The 94-year-old monarch hosted yesterday her first in-person event since Philip's passing on Friday to mark the retirement of her household's most senior official, former Lord Chamberlain Earl Peel. It comes as the Queen faces the prospect of having to sit on her own during the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral because of strict Covid rules. The law states that anyone attending a funeral must stay at least two meters apart from anyone who is not part of their household, meaning all

members of the Royal family will have to spread out in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle. What a lady! What an example!



THE ROCK IN THE QUEEN'S LIFE:



PRINCE PHILIP TRIBUTES AND FUNERAL:

The UK Media has been dominated by tributes to and articles on HRH Prince Philip, and anticipation of his funeral this Saturday 17 April. The Queen has said that the death of her beloved husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, has "left a huge void in her life". In the monarch's first reported comments on Prince Philip's death, she was also said to have described her husband's passing as a "miracle". The Queen's words were relayed by the Duke of York, as he left a church service in Windsor, in his first public comments since he stood down in November 2019 following a disastrous Newsnight interview. This comes as: It was confirmed the Cambridges' children will not attend the funeral The street to Windsor Castle was blocked off as mourners swelled The BBC pulled its Panorama investigation into its Diana interview. It emerged work began on the Duke's hearse after he left hospital MPs could finance a permanent memorial to Prince Philip.

CAS TRIBUTE to HRH PRINCE PHILIP:

"It is with overwhelming sadness that the Royal Air Force mourns the death of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh. Throughout his great life, His Royal Highness has been the embodiment of service and respect; a constant example to us all, across all ranks and ages, our families and the wider Royal Air Force community. His Royal Highness served with distinction in the Royal Navy during the Second World War, fighting for our freedom. He was of that generation whose courage and resilience inspires us to this day. He has been deeply connected to the armed forces and to our cadet organisations ever since, holding the rank of Marshal of the Royal Air Force and until recently Air Commodore-in-Chief of the Air Training Corps. He was a talented, gifted pilot; earning his Royal Air Force wings in 1953; qualifying on 59 different aeroplanes and helicopters and with nearly 6000 hours at the controls; often flying the Royal Family himself in aircraft of the Queens Flight. We remember his dynamism, his curiosity, his passion for aviation and the technology that drives us forward. Above all, we recognise the deep sense of duty and a life that has been the

epitome of service before self. On behalf of everyone in the Royal Air Force, serving and retired, I offer our heartfelt condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and The Royal Family at their loss, and our immense gratitude for the life and inspirational service of His Royal Highness the Prince Philip".
Air Chief Marshal Sir Mike Wigston CAS

"Journalists cannot serve two masters. To the extent that they take on the task of suppressing information or biting their tongue for the sake of some political agenda, they are betraying the trust of the public and corrupting their own profession." Thomas Sowell

"WHAT IS TRUTH? asked doubting Pilate – and never waited for an answer"....

We have all become painfully aware of the flood of misinformation and outright propaganda spreading fear, uncertainty and doubt related to the Coronavirus. This is a "hearts and minds" battle of epic proportions. The World Health Organization said on Monday that the course of the coronavirus pandemic is now "growing exponentially," as more than 4.4 million new cases globally have been reported in the last week. This comes as countries around the world begin to ease lockdown restrictions. Now, what are we to make of that? As one of our more astute commentators said this week:

"Politics is going to get dirtier and rougher, and voters will have to become more and more cynical. We may soon no longer be able to believe our eyes and ears and will have to disregard anything that is not a live transmission". (Stephen Grootes in Daily Maverick)

STORM SHADOW...



In an operation lasting 10 days during March 2021, the Iraqi Security Forces ground troops cleared Daesh terrorists from the Makhmur Mountain region, south-west from Erbil, while RAF and other coalition aircraft carried out a major air offensive in support. The operation began when Daesh extremists were confirmed to be based in a network of caves in the Makhmur mountains and concluded on 22 March. Since the caves were assessed to be a particularly challenging target, three Typhoon FGR4s were tasked to conduct an attack using Storm Shadow missiles, the remote area having first been checked to ensure that no civilians would be placed at risk. The strike on the Daesh targets was assessed by subsequent surveillance to have been a success. Throughout the 10 day operation, the RAF used 42 Paveway IV bombs and 10 Storm Shadow

cruise missiles have been used during the multiple strikes throughout the operation. The operation builds on the success of recent years and represents a significant increase in activity from previous months. This was the first operational use of the Storm Shadow cruise missile from a Typhoon FGR4 aircraft. (RAF News)

TRIBUTE TO JONATHAN BALL:

“Hello Mark. It’s Jonathan Ball.” Who else could it be, with that affable nicotine growl? Still, always, the surname. Old school. And then the inevitable question: “Are you private?” This would indicate that my interlocutor had a matter of great import to impart, not to be overheard. Perhaps he had heard something about Thabo Mbeki — he had commissioned “The Dream Deferred” from me — or about matters of state that he wished to test. Perhaps an idea had come to him for a project he would like to involve me in, or another book he would like me to write, or a plan to save South African publishing, or an insight into global politics. One way or the other, it was urgent and necessary we speak, and always worth setting aside my work for. We would quickly move on from the stated reason for the call to a free-ranging “confab” — a favourite word — that took in world history, the economics of publishing, the future of South Africa, our wellbeing and that of our spouses, the state of Johannesburg’s restaurants and streets, and any number of books we had both recently read, usually of a historical or political nature. He always grumbled that his bedside table was overlaid; there was not enough time. There was not: Jonathan died last week, too early, of cancer. He was 69. (*Mark Gevisser, Daily Maverick.*)

THE LAST HORNS OF AFRICA:

RAFOC has had presentations in the past about the plight of the rhino, notably from Drs John Ledger and John Hanks. Here is a message which is appearing on social media and is repeated here as it apparently is substantially true: “SANParks management are about to move Regional Ranger Don English out of Kruger’s IPZ - intense protection zone for rhinos - and faraway up north where there are few rhinos. As soon as this happens the poaching syndicates will infiltrate and smash the IPZ, and a lot of rhinos will be shot and slaughtered. To put this into perspective, when Don was suspended for two months October to December 2019 - on trumped up charges by rangers caught poaching - during those two months poaching more than doubled. Don English is the most critical rhino ranger on earth, because he is at the helm of protecting the largest population, and most importantly he is Kruger’s master of intelligence. He handles the informers - information - and warns his ranger teams of incoming incursions so that they can set up ambushes. Kruger is the size of a small country - most often poachers are caught because of intel. I am sharing with you the trailer to an upcoming documentary ‘The Last Horns of Africa’ and you can reserve your free ticket at EarthxFilm.org - premiering April 17th. By some small miracle the director was given access to Don English before SANParks management became toxic. This is the best rhino documentary I have ever watched, because it is character driven, it is authentic with unparalleled access, and it takes you into the world few people know - the underworld of organized crime driven by the kingpins. In many ways, this sets up the stage for the Blood Rhino Blacklist documentary currently in the works, which will lift the veil on corruption in South Africa. In ‘The Last Horns of Africa’ documentary there is an interview with Don’s daughter that nearly broke me, because it is the reality that few people know. Every time he pursues poachers, and every time he leaves the park to meet with informers, his family never know if he is going to make it back alive. But the rhinos will die without him, and we are down to the last. I am so sorry to Don’s family for all their suffering, mostly because of the awful way that he has been treated by senior members of SANParks management, and I know it would be a lot less heartbreak to just walk away. But his family were raised with the wild, just like my family, and the risks is something we all have to live with, or die with, because the only thing worse is doing nothing at all. Don English is one of a kind. Please, stand with us. **Keep Don in the IPZ**”.

AH SO – IT’S ALL HOT AIR:

A bit of seaweed in cattle feed could reduce methane emissions from beef cattle as much as 82 percent, according to new findings from researchers at the University of California, Davis. The results, published in the journal PLOS ONE, could pave the way for the sustainable production of livestock throughout the world. “We now have sound evidence that seaweed in cattle diet is effective at reducing greenhouse gases and that the efficacy does not diminish over time,” said Ermias Kebreab, professor and Sesnon Endowed Chair of the Department of Animal Science and director of the World Food Centre. Kebreab conducted the study along with his Ph.D. graduate student Breanna Roque. “This could help farmers sustainably produce the beef and dairy products we need to feed the world,” Roque added. Over the course of five months last (US) summer, Kebreab and Roque added scant amounts of seaweed to the diet of 21 beef cattle and tracked their weight gain and methane emissions. Cattle that consumed doses of about 80 grams of seaweed gained as much weight as their herd mates while emitting out 82 percent less methane into the atmosphere. Kebreab and Roque are building on their earlier work with dairy cattle, which was the world’s first experiment reported that used seaweed in cattle. Greenhouse gases are a major cause of climate change, and methane is a potent greenhouse gas. Agriculture is responsible for 10 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S., and half of those come from cows and other ruminant animals that belch methane and other gases throughout the day as they digest forages like grass and hay. Since cattle are the top agricultural source of greenhouse gases, many have suggested people eat less meat to help address climate change. Kebreab looks to cattle nutrition instead. *Cape Business News (Sent in by Jon Adams)*

LAST OF THE LEGEND:



The very last C-47 Skytrain was a C-47B serial # 45-1139 which was handed over to the US Army on 23 November 1945, nearly three months after WWII had already ended. The C-47B sub-model, which had two-speed superchargers on the engines, was one of the most common types and its production totaled about a third of all DC-3s / C-47s of all styles ever built. This one particular plane is the one featured here, which would end up having such a strange life in Zaire, in addition to being the last made during WWII. On 31 May 1963, President John F. Kennedy hosted Mobutu in Washington DC. During the meeting, Mobutu expressed a wish that the US Air Force might provide him with a modest jet to fly around his country. All things considered this wasn't an outrageous request and JFK agreed, and said that a jet (phrased "command plane" in State Department archives) would duly be provided. However, this did not happen. When the instructions to provide a plane got passed down the chain of command, a USAF colonel (apparently on his own accord) decided to downgrade the type to a VC-47. By a strange twist of

fate, the particular VC-47 provided had originally been a C-47B, serial # 45-1139, the last one built during WWII. This was coincidence and the colonel may have not even known about it. Mistrustful of his own airmen, in 1964 Mobutu requested an aircrew from the United States for the plane. The nine-man team was led by USAF Maj. Jay Meester, a veteran pilot of WWII and the Korean War. Maj. Meester returned to other duties by the decade's end so it is fairly safe to assume the VC-47 was no longer being used by Mobutu by then. On 30 April 1984, Mobutu sold the VC-47 - and just pocketed the money. The new owner was Lukim Air Service aka LUKAS and the registry was changed to DC-3, 9Q-KAM. A ragamuffin airline, but inside, it was still decked out to Mobutu's specifications and LUKAS planned on using it for the city's wealthy elite. This did not pan out, as Kinshasa's small elite could afford much better air travel while the majority of the city could not afford air travel at all. LUKAS went bankrupt in 1988. At the time, the DC-3 was parked at Goma in Zaire's extreme east. This would end up being its final resting place. On 30 November 1991, rights to the parked WWII plane were acquired by Virunga Air Charter. The 9Q-KAM registration was retained. The plane was apparently a fairly popular charter in Zaire's Great Lakes region, retaining its opulent interior. Full story:

https://www.iiaworld.com/2021/04/03/fate-of-the-last-skytrain-built/?fbclid=IwAR0cT5QUJAAMpOz7toUT5cf3M_hFylYXfAKpb533AR5ZgQv3MIJ7z4b80uY

PRAVIN'S PEP TALK:

"Transnet must ensure greater efficiency of rail transport and must "massively increase" the productivity of the ports to ensure that it meets the market requirements." These were the words of Pravin Gordhan, Minister of Public Enterprises, when he addressed the Federation of Trade Unions of South Africa (Fedusa) 2021 Leadership and Collective Bargaining Conference with the theme, "Unity in action during Covid-19." The United National Transport Union (UNTU) is affiliated to Fedusa. Gordhan used Transnet as an example when he explained the role of state-owned enterprises (SOE's) in stimulating economic growth after the devastating impact of the pandemic on the South African economy. According to the Minister, all SOE's must match and beat the service levels of competitors to ensure that the country is the preferred service provider. "If the Port of Durban fails to match the crane moves per hour of other ports in the rest of the world or ensure that the laytime of vessels are non-existent, then South Africa won't attract more customers. "But if the Port of Maputo in Mozambique or the Port of Mombasa in Kenya develop to deliver a better service than Durban, then those ports will get more business. It is crucial that our SOE's match the requirements of its customers," says Gordhan.

MEANWHILE: HOW PRASA WAS LOOTED

The link between corruption and lived experience is nowhere more obvious than the erosion of passenger train services in South Africa. Prasa's service has declined so dramatically over the past decade that the majority of working-class South Africans who once relied on the affordable service have had to turn to more expensive modes of public transport. The recent National Household Travel Survey estimated that 80% of South African train users — about 550,000 people — have abandoned their use of rail since 2013. At the root of this decline is a series of exorbitantly expensive and corrupt contracts that siphoned billions of rands out of the Passenger Rail Agency of SA (Prasa) into the hands of politicians and businessmen from 2009-2015.

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-04-13-how-prasa-was-looted-and-left-for-scrap/>

BLYVOOR BEBLIKSEMED:



The fuse linked to the Blyvoor mine's powder keg is getting shorter. The gold mine in western Gauteng remains shut amid a standoff between Blyvoor Gold management and the National Union of Mineworkers, amid new but unverifiable reports of violence. Both sides have appealed to the government to intervene, but the State seems to be on mute. Blyvoor is in the process of being rebuilt – with an injection of more than R1-billion in foreign investment – after a violent wildcat strike in 2012 forced its closure and subsequent liquidation. The asset was then stripped of much of its infrastructure by criminal elements in an area notorious for illegal miners known as Zama-Zamas. Regardless of who is to blame, a renewed mining project built on foreign capital is in danger of being derailed by labour ructions. This hardly bodes well for efforts to attract outside investment to South Africa's mining sector. Maybe Pravin needs to go there and give NUM a pep talk as well? Blyvoor has been in the headlines in past years; mine and village was the setting for a SABC TV soap opera filmed in the 1970s called "The Villagers". It also hit the headlines in 1964 when the Oosthuizen family were swallowed by a sinkhole... The highest point in the village is a hill called "Isidingo", which is where the mine manager's house was built. The current soap opera "Isidingo" derives its name from it.






WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE...BUT...



Communities living within sight of Lesotho's two biggest dams endure a daily struggle to get safe water because the "white gold" they can see but cannot reach is destined for neighbouring South Africa. The landlocked country has earned a total of 11.2-billion Maloti (\$746-million) for selling 16,401.3 million cubic metres of clean water to its bigger, much wealthier neighbour from 1996 to 2020, according to the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA), the project's implementing agency. In 2020 alone, Lesotho earned 1.03-billion Maloti (about \$69-million) when it sold about 780 million cubic metres of water to South Africa, according to the LHDA. Despite being touted as a successful example of regional cooperation, the villages that border on these dams have not seen the government's earnings channeled back into their communities. In Thabaneng, a village of several hundred people near Katse Dam, 69-year-old Mammofeng Sejanamane and her

fellow villagers complain that they have not benefited from the massive water project. "We are an abandoned village," said Sejanamane. "Instead, the project has changed our lives for the worse." Prior to the construction of the dam, Sejanamane says, she had unlimited access to clean water and other natural resources such as medicinal plants and wood for cooking. But now the area's water is contaminated and the natural resources she depended on have become submerged under water from the dam.

MORE MEDALS FROM THE ADAMS FAMILY COLLECTION

<p>PLAYER'S CIGARETTES</p>  <p>ORDER OF THE BATH, (C.B.), GT. BRITAIN.</p>	<p>PLAYER'S CIGARETTES</p>  <p>ORDER OF ST MICHAEL & ST GEORGE, (C.M.G.), GT. BRITAIN.</p>	<p>PLAYER'S CIGARETTES</p>  <p>ORDER OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE, (C.I.E.), GT. BRITAIN.</p>	<p>PLAYER'S CIGARETTES.</p>  <p>ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, (C.B.E.).</p>	<p>PLAYER'S CIGARETTES</p>  <p>DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER, GT. BRITAIN.</p>
<p>WAR DECORATIONS & MEDALS A SERIES OF 90.</p> <p>2</p> <p>The Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Great Britain, was instituted by Henry IV in 1399, and, after falling into disuse, was revived by King George I. in 1725, as an Order for the reward of military merit. It originally consisted of one class only, but in 1815 it was enlarged, and is now composed of Civil and Military Divisions, with three classes in each. No officer can be nominated to the third class, Military Division, unless his services have been marked by the special mention of his name as having distinguished himself in action against the enemy.</p> <p>ISSUED BY ©</p> <p>JOHN PLAYER & SONS BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO CO. (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LTD.</p>	<p>WAR DECORATIONS & MEDALS A SERIES OF 90.</p> <p>5</p> <p>The Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George was founded by King George IV, when Prince Regent, in 1815. It was originally intended for award for diplomatic services only, but has been enlarged on several occasions and is now open to such persons as may have held, or shall hold, high and confidential offices within H.M. Colonial possessions; to persons rendering good service to the Crown in relation to the Foreign Affairs of the British Empire, and for distinguished military services. The Order is divided into three classes.</p> <p>ISSUED BY ©</p> <p>JOHN PLAYER & SONS BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO CO. (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LTD.</p>	<p>WAR DECORATIONS & MEDALS A SERIES OF 90.</p> <p>4</p> <p>The Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, instituted by Queen Victoria in 1877, to commemorate the assumption of the title of Empress of India, and enlarged on several occasions since, is for award to those persons who by their services, official or other, have merited the Royal favour. The Order is awarded for service in India, or in connection with the Indian Empire. It is divided into three classes. The highest class has been conferred upon many of the Ruling Chiefs. Military and naval officers have also been granted the Order for war services, &c.</p> <p>ISSUED BY ©</p> <p>JOHN PLAYER & SONS BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO CO. (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LTD.</p>	<p>WAR DECORATIONS & MEDALS A SERIES OF 90.</p> <p>5</p> <p>The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire was established by H. M. King George V in 1917, and is conferred for important services rendered to the Empire at home, in India, and in the Dominions and Colonies. His Majesty created a Military Division of the Order in 1918. The Order, Military Division, can be conferred upon officers of the Army and Navy for services which do not qualify them for the purely fighting Orders, such as the Order of the Bath, Military Division, etc. The C.B.E. is worn on the breast by ladies, and round the neck by gentlemen.</p> <p>ISSUED BY ©</p> <p>JOHN PLAYER & SONS BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO CO. (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LTD.</p>	<p>WAR DECORATIONS & MEDALS A SERIES OF 90.</p> <p>6</p> <p>The Distinguished Service Order was established by Queen Victoria in 1886, for rewarding individual instances of meritorious or distinguished service. No person is eligible who does not hold a commission in the Army, R. Navy, R. Marines, or the R. Air Force, nor can any person be nominated unless his services have been marked by the special mention of his name by the Commander-in-Chief of the forces in the field, or by the Admiral or Senior Naval Officer commanding a squadron or detached naval force, in despatches, for meritorious or distinguished service in the field.</p> <p>ISSUED BY ©</p> <p>JOHN PLAYER & SONS BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO CO. (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LTD.</p>

PRISCILLA HENWOOD

Service(s) in Which Served	Royal Air Force WAAF	Name	Henwood
Service Number(s)	21397 A/W. 2618 (Officer)	Forename(s)	Priscilla Margaret
Date(s) of Entry / Discharge\Transfer	August 1939 September 1945	Date of Birth	3 October 1921
Rank(s)	Air Woman Flight Lieutenant	Place of Birth	RAF, Farnborough England
Decorations / Honours:	Unknown	Nationality	English South African

Commands in Which Served:

Pre-War Training at Chelsea Barracks; Bomber Command; Fighter Command; Training at Air Ministry War Room.

Geographic Service Areas:

United Kingdom: Hooton Park; Loughborough; Tangmere; Biggin Hill; Montford Bridge.

Training & Specialisation:

Corporals' Training Course; Officers' Training Course; Adjutants' Training Course twice.

Famous, or infamous, people met or known:

Air Vice-Marshal "Bomber" Harris; Air Vice-Marshal Tedder; "Sailor" Malan; Al Deere; Peter Hugo.

**World War II War Cabinet Centre****Map Room**

TRIBUTE: FLIGHT LIEUTENANT PRISCILLA HENWOOD RAF

Flight Lieutenant Priscilla Henwood, who has passed away aged 99, was one of the very few surviving WW2 veterans. She would have celebrated her 100th birthday in October this year. She was born in Farnborough, attested into the WAAF at 18 and served continuously from August 1939 through to September 1945. Joining as an Airwoman, she trained at Chelsea Barracks and was selected for Officer training and commissioned in the later part of her service. During the Battle of Britain she served in the Air Ministry War Rooms in Whitehall and later, in Fighter Command, as a plotter and then controller in the 'Filter Room' at Biggin Hill in 1943 when Group Captain Sailor Malan was in Commanding Officer. During her service she met of was in the presence of many famous figures, including Winston Churchill himself, Air Marshals Bomber Harris and Tedder, Al Deere, and South Africans Sailor Malan, and Dutch Hugo. An extract of her Record of Service from the RAFOC Biographies is attached at the end of this Tribute.

She met her husband Paul when he was serving in the Royal Navy as a Gunnery Officer. They emigrated to SA after the war and she joined RAFOC in the 1970's. They were both regulars at RAFOC functions while living in Johannesburg. Her husband Paul predeceased her and she moved to Helderberg in the Cape in 1994, but maintained regular contact with us by correspondence. In fact, she is probably one of the best correspondents the Club has seen, and wrote in regularly on a wide variety of topics and contributed to Newsletters. In her later years she was assisted by her faithful companion and scribe, Julia. So it is fitting to record some of her story in her own words:

"Yes I enjoy receiving and reading the newsletters, particularly the Obituaries with fine stories of gallant people. It is good to be reminded of our heritage. I wonder if there were any responses to my 'snippet' about the Air Ministry War Room in 1940". Strangely after I wrote that piece a friend read to me (my sight is no longer good for reading) from Winston Churchill's "Their Finest Hour" Chapter 16 describing the Battle of Britain and those perilous days in 1940. I recognise the understatement of the crisis of which Churchill wrote, and that is how it was in the Air Ministry War Room in 1940. The calm and determination of those recording the battle, which seemed hopeless, but was in fact, an incredible victory. We were indeed all strongly influenced by Churchill's courageous approach and optimism in those days".

On the news that Biggin Hill had been saved from developers: "Yes thank God for Biggin Hill Airport and its director Will Curtis for their wisdom, loyalty and vision. This is wonderful news, especially for me as I was stationed at Biggin in 1943 as an assistant Adjutant when Sailor Malan was the CO. I had the honour of going to the celebration of the shooting down of the thousandth bomber - A great occasion at the Dorchester Hotel in London. Yes it was a great Station, abounding with heroes, as the article said "In the air, engineering and most important, ground air maintenance crew. Never to be forgotten and blessed by Winston Churchill, as it is by God".

On the death of Col Charles Huyghe: "His story wakened all the memories of those Dunkirk days. Such incredible bravery and tenacity so that he escaped after imprisonment, making his way to England to become an Air Gunner in the RAF. His leadership in the Congo must have been an inspiration in those very difficult days. Belgium must be truly proud of Charles" (The Belgian Ambassador and Consuls were regular guests of Charles at the Club functions).

On the death of Andre Romanowicz: "Andrzej' death brings back many memories of working with Polish Air Force Flying Officers and Airmen in the war, reminding me of their courage and intense determination to defeat the Nazis so that they could return to their beloved Poland, as extra quickly as possible!! So my condolences and respect and admiration go to Krystyna and her family".

On the RAF Centenary Celebrations and flying displays: "Would also have liked to have been at the RAF celebration at Farnborough. My twin brother and I were born there in 1921 when my father was Adjutant. Remember my twin brother was killed flying night fighter Mosquitoes in November 1943".

On the Centenary of the RAF: "I am still in touch with the RAF Club and have enjoyed reading of their festivities for the RAF Centenary this year. With very best wishes"

Some of you may remember that we were able to fly Priscilla and her daughter, Sarah, up for the Annual Dinner in 2019. It was a privilege to have her attend and it certainly made the occasion very special. She wrote: "Your generous invitation to me and Sarah brought back memories of when I first had the privilege to become a member of the RAFOC Johannesburg, in the 1970's, when Ken Romaine introduced me. I had been in the WAAF before and throughout the war. I came with my husband Paul, who served in the Royal Navy in destroyers as a gunnery officer, so the members made him welcome! So I have long and happy memories of those days, until I left Johannesburg in 1994.

The, as always, active Committee kept in touch with me at Helderberg Village, Somerset West. by kindly sending me the monthly Newsletters from the Committee which have never ceased to inspire me, and invitations to the lunches. The exciting part to me has been to enjoy the consistent standard of RAFOC set by those early members who had served in the RAF during the war, especially arranging fly pasts of Battle of Britain aircraft over Wanderers Club with a Memorial Service at St Margaret's Church, Bedfordview.

All of these memorials, as do the Obituaries, fill my heart with pride, knowing they will indeed be sustained up till 2118 – for what is 100 years?! My Grandson Caleb, aged 15, is a member of the Australian Junior Air Force with the intention of becoming a flying doctor. So maybe he will be 'dropping in' to our Club one day!

So with a very full heart I thank you, Bruce and Jon for your kind, amazing generosity in bringing me to the Club, as well as being able to stay at the Protea Hotel. On Saturday I enjoyed a breakfast party with my family in Johannesburg and then on Sunday, to be able to go to our old church, St Martin's in the Veld – where there is a memorial for my husband and family. Thank you for making all this possible. God Bless you all now and in the future, Priscilla"

Priscilla's Funeral Service was held at All Saints Church, Somerset West at 10 a.m. on Monday 12th April, 2021. Due to Covid restrictions attendance was limited and by invitation only. We sent the following Tribute to the family in time for the Service:

"On behalf of the Royal Air Force Officers Club and the Royal Air Forces Association, may I offer our heartfelt condolences to all Priscilla's extended family on the loss of their mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Her love for you all shone through her correspondence, her last Christmas Letter, and her booklet appropriately titled: "Priscilla Henwood Remembers: A Life Filled with Caring Love." With Priscilla's passing we lose another of the veterans of World War 2, to whom the world owes such a debt of gratitude. As a Fighter Controller she was at the heart of the Battle of Britain, which 80 years ago stopped the Nazis in their tracks and prevented the planned invasion of Britain from the continent. She was in the company of the great and good of her generation and "We shall not look upon their like again." It seems almost fitting that she has been called to Higher Service in the same week and at the same age as HRH Prince Philip, the epitome in many ways of that generation, who consistently put service before self. Priscilla outlived most of her generation, had no unfinished business and knew where she was going. She lived in the Faith and she died in the Faith. Now she is at home and at peace in the presence of her Lord and Master and reunited with her loved ones who have gone before. Free of earthly constraints and as the Scriptures say "absent from the body, present with the Lord, which is much better."

We are grateful that we were able to honour Priscilla and Sarah as our Honoured Guests at the Battle of Britain Lunch in 2019, our last such before the Covid threat turned everything upside down. May we also pay tribute to Julia, her faithful companion and scribe. And so we celebrate her life and offer our tributes to a life well lived today. We salute her memory, and "We Will Remember Her".

We shall be grateful if this Tribute can be read with others at the appropriate point in the Service, today, 12 April 2021, in the Service at All Saints Church, Somerset West.

With our very best wishes to you all,

Yours sincerely,
 Bruce Harrison
 Chairman
 Royal Air Force Officers' Club"

We salute the memory of a very gallant lady, and We Will Remember Her!

CHEERS! FOR TODAY:

Now 379 days since the start of the great pandemic, this is the fifty-fourth weekly Newssheet - "Members News, Reminiscences and Ramblings" - items of Air Force interest, or greetings to the Club or any other happenings of interest (preferably not on the antics of Ministers (various) or NCCC!) that will help us all to keep in contact and entertained through the lockdown.

We're back to five-day working weeks after the Easter break, and the Masters has been won by a Japanese golfer – whatever is the world coming to? Good news: the upcoming payday is fast approaching! Bad news: past payday is now nothing more than a tiny blip on the horizon in the rear-view mirror of life, and any contribution it may have had to your bank account is now (probably) well and truly used up. Please plan to visit the SAA Museum (after payday) at the end of the month – now the only operational part of SAA! They need our support - See last week's flyer for details - And please continue to take care – we've made it so far – continue to keep safe in these incredibly troubled times: wash your hands, cover your face, make space, avoid gatherings (do not give the ungodly reason to persecute you further) and remember that all this, too, shall pass..... We'll keep you posted on resuming lunches when we can, and further developments at Wanderers as they progressively resume services.

So, let's hear from you...Please continue to send your suggestions or contributions to:

bookings@rafoc.org

TAILPIECE:

UK Newspaper Reports: (Sent in by Jon Adams)

Commenting on a complaint from a Mr Arthur Purdey about a large gas bill, a spokesman for North West Gas said, 'We agree it was rather high for the time of year. It's possible Mr. Purdey has been charged for the gas used up during the explosion that destroyed his house.'(The Daily Telegraph)
 Irish police are being handicapped in a search for a stolen van because they cannot issue a description. It's a Special Branch vehicle and they don't want the public to know what it looks like.
(The Guardian)

A young girl who was blown out to sea on a set of inflatable teeth was rescued by a man on an inflatable lobster. A coast guard spokesman commented, 'This sort of thing is all too common'.
(The Times)

At the height of the gale, the harbourmaster radioed a coast guard and asked him to estimate the wind speed. He replied he was sorry, but he didn't have a gauge. However, if it was any help, the wind had just blown his Land Rover off the cliff.
(Aberdeen Evening Express)

Mrs Irene Graham of Thorpe Avenue, Boscombe, delighted the audience with her reminiscence of the German prisoner of war who was sent each week to do her garden. He was repatriated at the end of 1945, she recalled – 'He'd always seemed a nice friendly chap, but when the crocuses came up in the middle of our lawn in February 1946, they spelt out 'Heil Hitler.'
(Bournemouth Evening Echo)

When a woman laughs during an argument, please know that the psycho part of her brain has been activated....Eject, Eject!!

How's the diet going? Not good – I had eggs for breakfast. Scrambled? No, Cadbury's...

Five SANDF Second Lieutenants are reported still missing – after getting lost during an Easter Egg hunt...

With dagga legalised and petrol so expensive, you can now stay at home and still go on a trip...

A Pastor, giving a children's' talk on vestments, asked, "Why do you think I wear this collar? One kid answered: "Because it kills ticks and fleas up to 30 days?"

I wondered at the man who used the accelerator,
And how he always arrived so much later,
Then it occurred to me,
Just how it could be,

I realised that he thought he was in the simulator. (*The Sherriff of Nottingham Road*)

A man was dining alone in a fancy restaurant and there was a gorgeous redhead sitting at the next table. He had been checking her out since he sat down but lacked the nerve to talk with her. Suddenly she sneezed, and her glass eye came flying out of its socket towards the man. He reflexively reached out, grabbed it out of the air, and handed it back. 'Oh my, I am so sorry,' the woman said, as she popped her eye back in place. 'Let me buy your dinner to make it up to you.' They enjoyed a wonderful dinner together, and afterwards they went to the theatre followed by drinks... They talked, they laughed, she shared her deepest dreams and he shared his. She listened to him with interest. After paying for everything, she asked him if he would like to come to her place for a nightcap and stay for breakfast. They had a wonderful, wonderful time. The next morning, she cooked a gourmet meal with all the trimmings. The guy was amazed. Everything had been so incredible! 'You know,' he said, 'you are the perfect woman. Are you this nice to every guy you meet?' 'No,' she replies. "You're just the first man who happened to catch my eye."



MATT

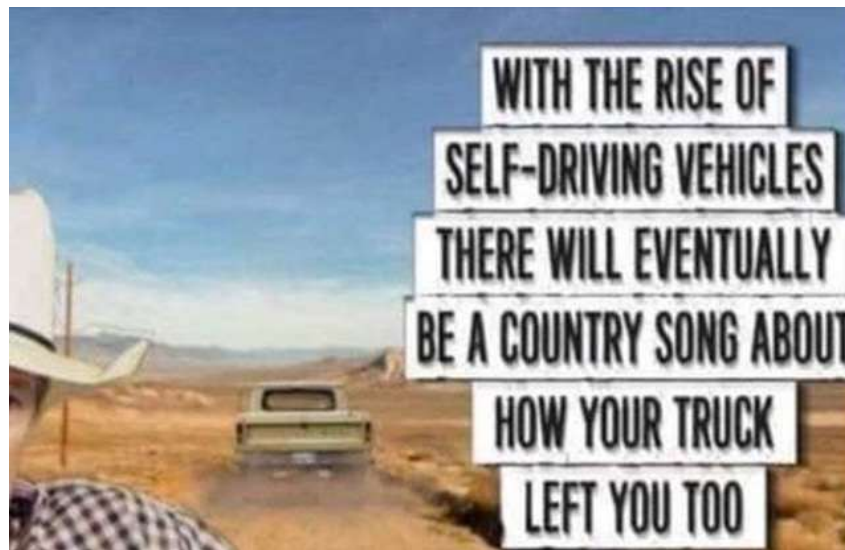


'My hairdressers can't fit me in. Do you think David Cameron would ring them for me?'

MATT



'It's Greensill Capital for you...'



In 1993 , residents of the Japanese village of Inakadate, Aomori Prefecture, invented the decoration of ordinary rice fields to attract tourists. Every April, before planting rice, they choose

an artistic image and embody it on the field using varieties of rice of different colours. Residents meet and decide what to plant this year. This is not a Mickey Mouse undertaking....

