



ROYAL AIR FORCE OFFICERS' CLUB

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BRYANSTON 2021

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RAFOC REMINISCENCES AND RAMBLINGS - WEEK 55 - 23rd APRIL 2021

GREETINGS:

Day 393. What an unbelievable week this has been - "pyrocene" start to the week with the fires at Charlotte Maxeke and UCT- here are more of the real costs of cadre deployment and criminal ineptitude emerging from the Covid fog... "Apocalyptic" fire reaps day of unforgiving destruction in Mother City - and the ANC continues to fiddle while South Africa burns.... Break-in at offices of Zondo Commission is sign of panic as final deadline looms: Strange, we've seen this thing before: Zondo won't be intimidated.... Pay back the money! Zuma ordered to pay legal costs as his disgraceful track record continues... Mabuza Attorneys drops Zuma... Jacob Zuma was a tragedy. Ace Magashule is a farce... (Yonela Diko, ewn) Denel Land Systems unable to pay April salaries... NUM demands 15% pay hike from Eskom and a doubling of housing allowance.... Tokyo Sexwale scammed by "White Spiritual Boy Trust"....You just couldn't make this stuff up!. "State of Disaster" indeed... President Mnangagwa buys an USD 18 million helicopter to celebrate 41 years of independence. Viva!

In UK, the weekend was dominated by the funeral service of the Duke of Edinburgh. It turns out that sneering and sniping at our country, its flag, and monarch doesn't go down well with the British people. A prominent pollster has found that a political party that commits to axing the BBC's telly tax would find a majority of voters supporting that position! Boris has more delusions of greatness – sends gunboats to the Bosphorus... The Russians must be quaking in their boots... Football's civil war... The Duke of Cambridge has intervened in the row engulfing football - European Super League collapses... Brexit to blame!!

Sabre rattling in the Ukraine... Brinkmanship in the Bosphorus... Putin warns West but Russians voice Navalny support.... US wants out of the "longest war" in Afghanistan... Joe Biden does the bidding of his puppetmasters... the multi-million dollar orgasm cult endorsed by Hollywood... Tearful testimony and defence's own goal: key moments in the Chauvin trial well, well...

BRITAIN MOURNS:



SIR – One could not see pictures of the Queen on her own at the funeral of Prince Philip without feeling profound sadness at what we as a country have inflicted on those grieving at funerals. When we can go to pubs, gyms and shops, and have widespread testing, it is inhuman that a grieving widow can't have anyone to comfort and support her, be it a queen or anyone else. Norman Inniss London SE9 (*Letters to the Telegraph*)

The Queen has thanked the public for the "support and kindness" shown since the Duke of Edinburgh's death, saying the flood of messages had served as a reminder of the "extraordinary impact" her husband had on people's lives. Her Majesty released a statement marking her 95th birthday in which she acknowledged that the family was "in a period of great sadness." It came as the Duke of Sussex returned home to California to be reunited with his wife and son. Prince Philip planned the funeral with military precision. Following the Order of Service that he had planned, the naval call "Action Stations" sounded as the Duke of Edinburgh's body was lowered into the Royal Vault. His final journey was made on a custom-built Land Rover Defender, which he had been quietly modifying since 2003, making the final adjustments in 2019. Some of the Duke's regalia was displayed on the altar in the chapel, again personally chosen by him and including nods to his Danish and Greek heritage. His titles and decorations were read out. His musical choices were performed by a reduced choir of four singers. The pared back funeral showed a modest man whose military values shone through his life of service to his Queen and Country. Prince Philip's death forces a complete royal review. After the Duke of Edinburgh's death, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge will hold a summit to decide the future of the monarchy over the next two generations. In consultation with the Queen, Britain's next two kings will decide how many full-time working members the family should have, who they should be and what they should do. It comes as the Queen is set to turn to the Countess of Wessex to fill the gap left by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex in carrying out royal duties. Read how Prince Harry spent an hour talking to his family after Saturday's funeral.

ROYAL AIR FORCE CADETS PAY TRIBUTE:



The Royal Air Force Air Cadets were deeply saddened to hear that the former Royal Patron, His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, passed away this month. Prince Philip was the Air Training Corps' Honorary Air Commodore-in-Chief for 63 years. Throughout his Royal Patronage, Prince Philip frequently met with cadets and took a keen interest in their activities and achievements. Always smiling and quick-witted, he was undoubtedly the 'Grandfather of the RAF Air Cadets' and brought great fun to the role. His Royal Highness assumed his appointment following the founding Patron's death, His Majesty King George VI. Patronage was entrusted to Her Royal

Highness The Duchess of Cambridge in December 2015, only the third Patron in RAF Air Cadets' 80 years. The Duke of Edinburgh Award's mission is simple - 'to inspire, guide and support young people in their self-development, and recognise their achievements'. Qualities and attributes that resonate with the Cadets. His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh has been an integral part of the Royal Air Force Air Cadets' fortitude and history. Our admiration and deepest condolences to Her Majesty The Queen and The Royal Family. *(RAF News)*

MEMBERS WRITE:

Julia Clegg, Priscilla Henwood's faithful companion, writes: "To the Committee, I am sure you will be hearing from the Henwood family to thank you for the wonderful tribute you have given Priscilla Henwood in the Reminiscences and Ramblings of week 54. However, not as a family member, but as a friend, companion and scribe to her for over 20 years, I would like to thank you all so very much for the tribute. Priscilla would have been very happy, but also very humbled, with it. I have learnt so much from Priscilla over the years. Contrary to the normal trend as one grows older, her memory was quite incredible as she aged. I would remark to her, especially in these latter years, that the body might be frail but her brain ticked over at 110%! I thank you again for all the wonderful and

interesting articles that you put together each week, relevant to the RAF – and other matters as well. Yours sincerely Julia.

HEARTBREAKING:



Andre Mostert (82) says he was christened at Mostert's Mill where he would often visit his grandparents. The 82-year-old says his family is devastated by the news that the historic mill was gutted by the Table Mountain fires. He says he hopes that the mill will be able to rise from the ashes once again. It had recently been restored. "Myself and my whole family are devastated. We never thought that anything like that would ever happen. The millwright was brought out from Holland and was actually the same firm that restored it the first time. It's devastating. I can remember as a youngster visiting my grandparents at the mill. My brother and I - we're both 82 - were actually christened at the mill". It's been an appalling 24 hours for all Capetonians, but for us who in the heritage sector and who love and value these wonderful buildings and their collections, it's devastating. *(Laura Robinson, Consultant - Cape Town Heritage Trust)*

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND:

Survival training has been overhauled to ensure British military personnel downed behind enemy lines can be rescued from anywhere in the world. And Air Force specialists at St Mawgan are spearheading the changes ahead of the UK Carrier Strike Group's first deployment with F-35 jets to the Far East. "The iconic photos of a ground extraction force or a combat search and rescue helicopter picking up downed aircrew is about the limit of many people's knowledge when it comes to the recovery of an isolated person on operations," said station spokesman Flt Lt Jon Lord. "Coupled with films like *Behind Enemy Lines*, the traditional thought has always been that someone, somewhere, will know what to do if, and when, a person on Ops becomes isolated," he said. But after the Coalition air war against Col Gaddafi's regime in Libya 10 years ago – which saw horrific images of a Jordanian Pilot captured by ISIS broadcast on the internet – Britain realised it needed a review of how to rescue downed aircrew if it wasn't to be totally reliant on its Allies. And now a dedicated team of experts at St Mawgan's Defence SERE Training Organisation has overhauled survival training which is integrated into planning at the highest levels and exercised on a routine basis. *(RAF News)*

SAAF TO THE RESCUE:



A 60-year-old hiker with head injuries was rescued from a precarious site in the Drakensberg thanks to the efforts of the provincial nature conservation agency, the Mountain Club of SA, Westline Aviation and the SA Air Force (SAAF).

Part one of the rescue started on Friday 9 April when the Mountain Club's mountain rescue team was on the receiving end of a distress call. According to Gavin Raubenheimer, the club's KZN search and rescue convener, the hiker fell and sustained head injuries after taking a wrong route when descending Gray's Pass in the Monk's Cowl area. A joint operation started with two experienced rangers, one a paramedic, airlifted to the top of Gray's Pass.

Descending by torchlight they could not reach the injured hiker and stopped, starting the descent again at first light. On reaching the patient immediate medical assistance was given while waiting for a 15 Squadron Oryx. High winds delayed the arrival of the twin-engined workhorse with four technical rescuers aboard. Nifty flying skills saw rescuers winched down, the patient secured and brought aboard for a mercy flight to a nearby hospital. SAAF Oryx are regularly used for search and rescue activities, including lifting injured or sick seafarers from vessels off the coast, searching for missing fishermen and rescuing hikers. An Oryx was last in action in the Drakensberg in June 2020 when one of 15 Squadron's helicopters evacuated an injured soldier from Leslie's Pass in the Injasuthi area with assistance from the Mountain Club of South Africa.

RUSSIAN BORDER BALLET:

The Ukrainian-Russian standoff continues to be troublesome, especially with the injection of thousands of Russian troops for exercises right at the border. Meanwhile, Americans find other diplomatic issues occupy their attention. This is good business for diplomats looking for work to do.

There is a familiar joke from Eastern Europe where a reporter asks an old man where he's from and the elderly bearded fellow replies: "As a very young man I lived in Austro-Hungary, then I lived in Czechoslovakia, for a while in the German lands, then the Soviet Union, and now I'm living in Ukraine." "Wow," responds the young reporter. "You've really moved around." "No, not at all" replies the old man. "I've never moved from this village, this very house behind me. The armies came and went, the borders changed, it was magic."

And so it had been for the entire 20th century in that part of the world. Before that, of course, that very same village might have been Polish, or part of the Lithuanian Commonwealth, the khanate of the Golden Horde and, possibly, way, way back, a settlement in Kievan Rus' as well.

BORIS BRINKMANSHIP:



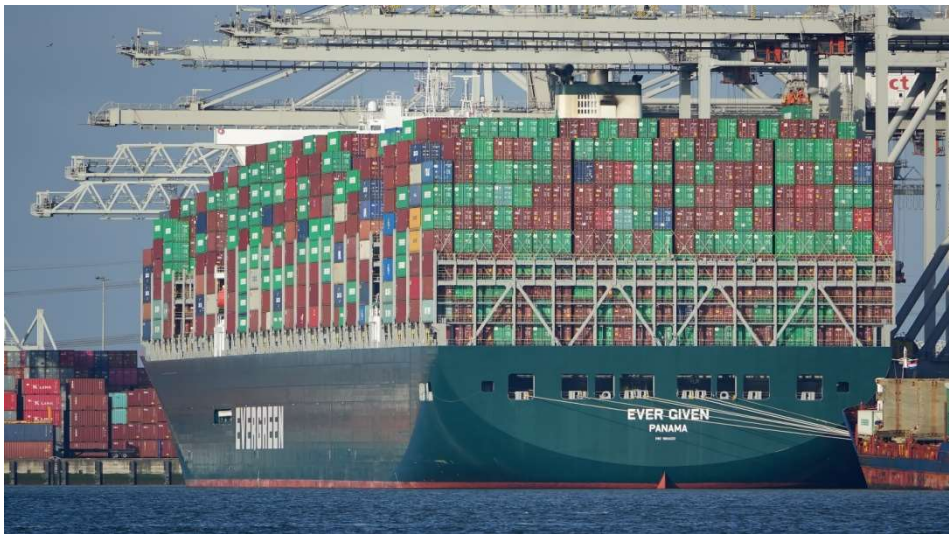
Royal Navy warships will sail for the Black Sea next month amid rising tensions between Ukraine and Russia, The Sunday Times has reported. Citing senior naval sources, the newspaper said the deployment was intended to show solidarity with Kiev and NATO allies. One Type 45 destroyer (HMS Dragon pictured) armed with anti-aircraft missiles and an anti-submarine Type 23 frigate will leave the Royal Navy's carrier task group in the Mediterranean and head through the Bosphorus into the Black Sea, according to the report.

RAF F-35B Lightning stealth jets and Merlin submarine-hunting helicopters will stand ready on the task group's flag ship, the carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, to support the warships in the Black Sea. The news comes after Joe Biden cancelled the deployment of two ships to the Black Sea, Turkish diplomatic sources told Reuters. However, US officials said the deployment was never confirmed. Tensions have been rising between Russia and Ukraine since Moscow ordered a troop build-up near Ukraine's eastern border late last month. A spokesperson from the Ministry of Defence said the UK was "unwavering" in its support for Ukraine's "sovereignty and territorial integrity." The spokesperson said: "We are working closely with Ukraine to monitor the current situation and continue to call on Russia to de-escalate."

MINISTER, MINISTER!

Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula lost three month's pay and the ruling party paid what it was told to for unauthorised use of government property in the form of an air force bizjet trip across the border but the "Zimbabwe flight," as it is colloquially known, is not going away. This is due to the fox terrier-like efforts of the Democratic Alliance (DA) shadow minister for Mapisa-Nqakula's department, Kobus Marais. "I was never happy with the costs given and this response by Minister Mapisa-Nqakula confirms there were additional costs to the tune of at least R89 876. "Add that to the hundreds of thousands declared and there is definite abuse of state funds for party purposes," Marais said adding "it is disgraceful when defence funding is wasted." "It's not surprising National Treasury will not allocate more funding to the Department of Defence (DoD). Austerity should be the watchword in the current difficult financial situation South Africa is in but the Minister seemingly shows zero sensitivity and responsibility to redirect and re-prioritise funding to non-negotiable defence essentials," he told *defenceWeb*.

EVER GIVEN UP:



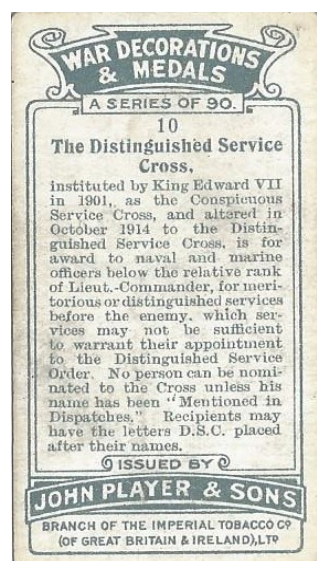
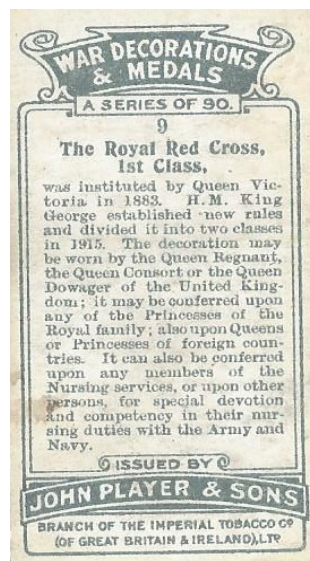
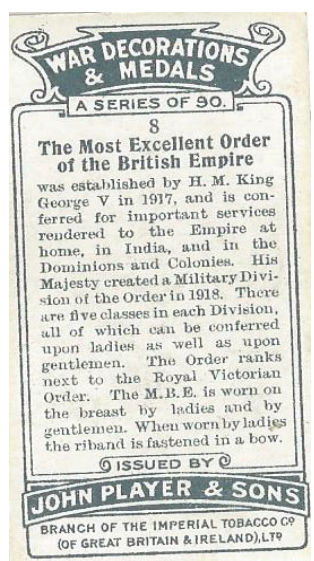
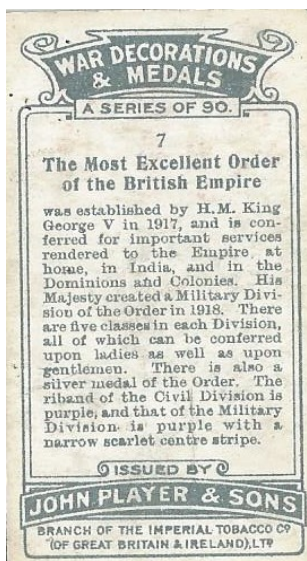
The Ever Given, the ship that Blocked the Suez Canal for almost a week, has been seized by Egyptian authorities. It is estimated that they are seeking \$900-million in compensation from its Japanese owner. The operators of the Ever Given ship, registered in Panama, are exploring the possibility of transferring its 18,000 cargo-filled containers to other vessels as it remains stuck in legal limbo, according to a report by the Wall Street Journal. The 224,000-ton cargo ship, which ran aground in the Suez Canal on March 23 and was freed 6 days later, still hasn't been able to leave the Suez Canal after Egyptian authorities announced it must first pay \$1 billion in damages. But the ship's operator, Taiwanese company Evergreen Marine Corp., is facing increasing pressure to deliver its thousands of containers - filled with everything from toilet paper to coffee and furniture - to its frustrated customers. (*Business Insider*)

JAGUAR HERITAGE:

When covid-19 restrictions are lifted on May 17, the British Motor Museum plans to reopen with a new E-type Evolution Exhibition from the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust (JDHT) to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the E-type's launch. Running until the end of June, the exhibition tells the story of the evolution of the E-type from the racing C and D-types of the 1950s, the E2A Prototype and its launch at Geneva on March 15, 1961. It finishes with a couple of very successful Racing V12 E-types from the 1970s. The exhibition starts with a summary of the story of the launch of the E-type at the Parc des Eaux Vives in Geneva, which has become a Jaguar legend, said a museum spokeswoman. Jaguar PR man Bob Berry drove the fixed head coupé 9600 HP to act as the press car but there was so much demand for press drives that 'Mr Jaguar' Sir William Lyons instructed test driver Norman Dewis to drive the E-type Roadster 77 RW from Coventry to Geneva, to arrive before 10am the next day. Especially for this exhibition JDHT has colour enhanced the famous image of Sir William with 9600 HP in Geneva which greets visitors as they arrive at the museum's Mezzanine Gallery. And there's a video of Norman Dewis telling visitors the story of what has become known as his 'Mad Dash to Geneva.'

Go to: <https://www.jaguarheritage.com/event/etypeevolution-exhibition>

MEDAL SERIES # 3



CHEERS! FOR TODAY:

Now 393 days since the start of the great pandemic, this is the fifty-fifth 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.

Please plan to visit the SAA Museum (after May payday) at the end of next month - 29 May – now the only operational part of SAA! They need our support - See previous 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:

"If you are sure you understand everything that is going on, you are hopelessly confused."
(Walter F. Mondale)

One day, the Churchill couple walked through a posh neighborhood in London. People greeted and exchanged words with the Prime Minister. A street sweeper, on the other hand, greeted Mrs. Churchill in particular, and the two stayed aside for a while in a familiar conversation. Churchill then asked his wife what she had had to discuss with a street sweeper for so long. "Ah... he was in love with me a long time ago," she said. Churchill smiled and said, "You see, if you had married him, you would be the wife of a street sweeper today." Mrs. Churchill looked at her husband in amazement and said the legendary words: "But no Darling, if I had married him, he would be Prime Minister" (via Karl Jensen)

One wonders if the Premier League will be marking the death of Prince Philip with a moment of reflection before every single game for over a year, as they have done for that other great British hero George Floyd...

There was a young prince named Harry,
Who found a divorced actress to marry,
Well Oprah fell foul,
Of many who prowl,
Now Harry's future is certainly hairy?
(The Sherriff of Nottingham Road)





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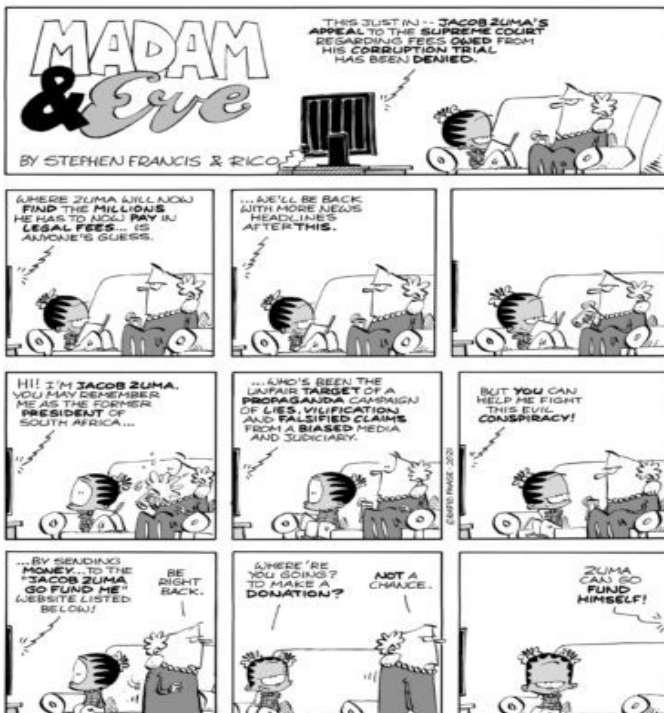
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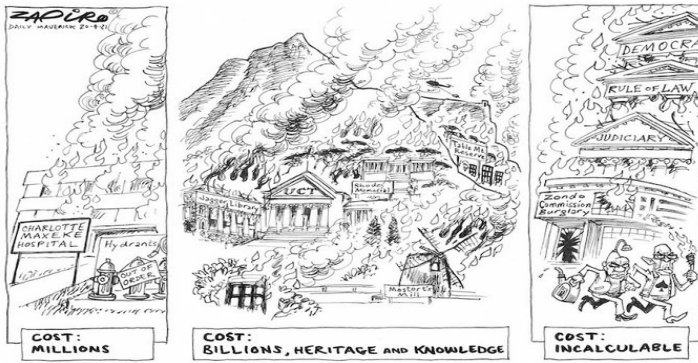


'Please take my daughter's hand in marriage. With all the restrictions on weddings it will hardly cost me anything'



'No military uniforms? I didn't get the memo'





BANKING FRAUD: DONT BE A VICTIM !!!!!!!

The Ombudsman for Banking Services (OBS) says it continues to receive complaints on a daily basis from consumers who were deceived into providing confidential banking information to fraudsters.

“Just a couple of years ago, the most common scam was the phishing emails, said banking Ombud Reana Steyn. “In just these past few months, the OBS recorded more than 640 new fraud complaints that were received despite the daily warnings about these scams.” Steyn explained how the scam works: A bank customer will receive a phone call from someone who says they are from the customer’s bank. The customer is informed that funds have been fraudulently taken from their account or that they (the bank representative) is helping the customer to claim from a rewards program that is offered by the bank. For this to take place, the customer needs to confirm their details so that the funds can be credited to their account. Alternatively, customers are told that they need to act quickly and urgently, as fraudsters “are about to take funds out of their account, but this can be stopped, if they act quickly and co-operate.” The fraudster already has the customer’s phone number (he/she is calling the customer) and may have a host of other personal information at his/her fingertips. This includes addresses, ID numbers, other contact details, email addresses, employment details, or NB even a customer’s bank card number. The customer is asked to update or verify their details, possibly on their cell phone. The customer is then requested to provide everything required to access their bank account, such as card details, the cards pin number, transaction OTPs, and mobile or internet banking passwords. The fraudster says that this is necessary for them to assist the customer, to redeem the rewards, to do a transaction, stop a fraudulent payment, or recover the stolen money. Once the customer has provided the requested details, their accounts are emptied. While all South Africans are being targeted, Steyn said that the devastation caused by these scams to elderly citizens and pensioners is particularly heart-breaking.

(I had one of these calls on Thursday with an Indian voice on the other end, as soon as I asked them for the banking details they had, the call was ended – by them. Jon Adams)