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SOUTH AFRICAN SOLDIER

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Department: Defence:
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
The official monthly magazine of the SA Department of Defence

From the Editor’s desk

Letters: feedback from our readers

Emails from abroad

Defence Attaché Conference

Naval power vital in the SADC

The 90th SS Mendi commemoration

SA Gunners shoot for the Queen

Launch of the SADC BRIGADE

Female General in charge of mobilisation parade

Brazil honours SANDF members for meritorious service

Sergeant Major of SA Army officially visited USA

Empowering women for gender equity

Aim to turn the pyramid into a diamond

Dealing with security issues

Learner’s job shadowing week at Navy Office

First DOD HIV and AIDS International Conference

Infantrymen gearing up for deployment to the Sudan

Guns roar in Potchefstroom

Air Force cares for people with disabilities

526 Squadron does IsiXhosa

SANDF operations communication workshop

Hosting the SA Post Office

2007 SANDF Rugby Week

SA Sea Cadets active for more than a century

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Text Editor: Mr Eugene Muller
Translation Consultant: Directorate Language Services
Photo Processing: 5 ASU Photo Section
Distribution: Mr Jim Tshabalala
Tel: 012 355 6341
Layout & Design: Mr Werner v/d Westhuizen

CONTRIBUTIONS:
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FRONT COVER: The front cover is enough to make one's heart melt: An adorable child in camouflage "driving" the impressive GV5 - 155 mm gun howitzer - Luiperd at the Artillery Open Day. Read more about this special day on pages 34 and 35. (Photo: Cpl Elias Mahuma)

For the latest news on defence matters in South Africa, visit our website at: www.sasoldier.mil.za
Hooray it’s spring again! May this wonderful season also be the beginning of a new season in your life. Enjoy the rays of our African sun! … Sit back, relax and enjoy this edition packed with a variety of interesting articles to stir your imagination.

The front cover is enough to make one’s heart melt: The adorable child in camouflage “driving” the impressive GV5 - 155 mm gun howitzer - Luiperd. Witness on pages 34 and 35 how the guns roasted and fired “in great anger” in Potchefstroom.

We kick off with news from our soldiers deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi (see pages 10 and 11).

We discuss and explore aspects of SADC naval co-operation on pages 14 and 15, focusing on, inter alia, curbing piracy, instability, poaching and drug trafficking on the high seas …

Then you can read how the SA Navy Band wowed spectators at Trafalgar Square with their tjembe drumming. Londoners were thrilled by the African sounds at the 90th SS Mendi commemoration at Trafalgar Square. Read pages 16 to 18 to experience all that happened at the commemoration that took place at Hollybrook cemetery in Southampton on 21 July 2007 - for those with no known grave but the sea.

17 August is a day to remember. On this day the SADC BRIGADE was launched in Lusaka, Zambia. This brigade forms part of the African Standby Force, signifying that the troops are to be deployed on the continent when needed. Read all about this momentous day on pages 20 and 21.

2 Lt Phetogo Molawa (21) broke the gender divide and exhibited a sense of ownership on the occasion.

Do you also want to save lives? Then follow the example of the Reserve Force colonels who have between them made over 340 life-saving blood donations (see page 39). Blood donors of all types are always desperately needed.

Blood donors of all types are always desperately needed. The Blood Transfusion Service can be contacted on 080 011 9031 for further information.

Until next month!

Nelda Pienaar
Editor
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A JOB WELL DONE

I would like to thank the SANDF team that was based at Osindisweni Hospital in Verulam (KZN) during the recent Public Service strike for their assistance in the maternity (labour) ward.

My sister had given birth to a baby girl on 26 June 2007 and the team that was present really did a great job. They were fast and efficient and were kind to each and every patient, including the visitors - no matter what race the people were. They were very friendly to all.

I really did feel very sorry for them as they really worked hard to serve and protect the citizens in the Verulam area. I had previously visited the above hospital and never received the same treatment that was rendered by the SANDF. Therefore I would really like to thank the SANDF members for their assistance. With people like you, this country will be a better and safer place to live in.

Thanks a million. A job well done!

Dhanesh Deonarain Dwarkia,
Verulam, KZN

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to you, the South African National Defence Force and the South African Government for affording our son, Gideon Adriaan (Riaan) Channing, the opportunity to be employed in the SA Air Force as a Cadet Pilot/Navigator.

It is indeed an honour afforded to both Riaan and us as his family members. He will at all times perform to the best of his ability for his country and its people. He is an extremely proud citizen of this wonderful country. It is wonderful to be able to retain our intelligent youngsters in this country for training and eventually have them apply their skills and knowledge to the benefit of all.

Thank you for the vote of confidence bestowed on our son with this appointment and the opportunity it offers him to follow a career in the SA Air Force.

Percy and Linda Channing,
Aston Manor

DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF MARRIAGES

Even though I am not a marriage counselor, I have to discuss different categories of marriages. It took me a long time to write this letter, because I wanted to write about something that was real. I believe that we need to advise each other if we want to be a better nation and if we realise that we as people involve ourselves in relationships. I decided to open the eyes of colleagues.

Why are we committing ourselves to relationships that we did not intend. Most of the people get married to someone because he/she has a lot of money. Do you love money or that particular person? Money can’t buy love - I was shocked when someone I know said that he regretted the relationship he was involved in, because parents were in favour of his spouse. Gone are the days that parents take decisions for their children, eg parents forcing their children to marry people that they (parents) like. Who is going to live with that particular person for the rest of his/her life? The end result of this is unfaithfulness, cheating, divorce, an abusive relationship, a disorganised family and an unhealthy lifestyle for the children.

Status, materialistic and conditional love are things causing this trouble. In most cases you will find that someone is involved with someone because he/she is one of the respected guys in the community. Do you love that particular someone or his status? The pre-marriage counselling is very important. We need to understand marriage clearly. Some people evaluate and consider the family background first and whether their spouse comes from a rich or poor family. Actually who is rich? Why is our first concern whether or not they are from a rich family? Let us drop this attitude of making a choice according to wealth. Everyone must work for himself/herself.

Happiness is very important in our daily lives. Do you want your parents to be happy or yourself? Get married to someone you are really sure that you love.

Let us know exactly what we want in life. Life is all about making good decisions and making the right choices.

Get married to someone that you will love and trust for the rest of your life. Let us have unconditional love and remember that marriage is a lifelong commitment. Sgt Mlangeni Paulos,
17 Squadron, Pretoria

REAL LEADERS

As a member of the National Defence Force, I am proud to state that the current Officer Commanding and RSM, Lt Col M. Hlalele and WO1 W. Frye, are the best leaders with all their leadership qualities. I have worked under the RSM’s leadership in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He does not fear to voice what is true. He leads according to our Code of Conduct. Lt Col M. Hlalele is always encouraging other leaders to follow suit. He sends more than twenty people on courses within a year and promotes them. Lt Col Hlalele is trying his best. I’m not writing this letter to impress, but to encourage other leaders. L Cpl N.G. Mlahlwa, Lohathla

SA SOLDIER welcomes letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters may be edited for reasons of style, accuracy or space limitations. Letters should preferably be typewritten and double-spaced. All letters must include the writer’s full name, address and home telephone number. The volume of letters we receive makes individual acknowledgement impossible. Please send your letters to: The Editor, SA SOLDIER Letters, Private Bag X158, Pretoria, 0001. Letters may also be faxed to (012) 355-6399 or sent via email to sasoldier@mil.za. We would like to hear your comments or ideas, particularly about matters affecting members of the Department of Defence. Regrettably, anonymous letters cannot be answered officially or published - Editor.
SOLDIER ON DEPLOYMENT IN CONGO

A man will never be free as long as someone is still in possession of what he needs, and Africa only needs peace and development.

It is a great pleasure for us at 15 SAI Bn to be deployed here in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where we have come to do our part in planting the tree of peace and reconciliation. Great honour deserves to be given to our South African Government for the stand it has taken in relation to deployments. Truly, our African people cannot continue to live like this. In troubled areas like Kanyola here in the DRC people are sleeping in forests at night, having run away from these spoilers.

Sgt E.B. Mphakama from 15 SAI Bn is currently on deployment in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The challenge lies with the recruitment of the Military Veterans. The strategy used by this regional office is to involve the Military Veterans’ associations, municipal leaders from Councillors to Mayors and various stakeholders in all regions of KwaZulu-Natal in order to research employment opportunities for clients and this has proved to be successful.

Another interesting activity in this unit is the facilitation of the reskilling of MEM members and the redeployment of SANDF members to the SAPS.

The unit participated in the donation of toys to the East Coast Radio Toy Story 2006 Campaign and donated toiletries and toys to babies and children kept with their inmate mothers at Westville Prison. Unit members have been selected to participate in the SANDF Netball Championships in Bloemfontein in June 2007.

Mrs Sandy Clements, Service Corps Regional Office Durban

THE SERVICE CORPS IN SERVICE OF THE NATION

The Service Corps Regional Office Durban is situated in the heart of the CBD of the Ethekwini Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal. This Regional Office has a vast area of responsibility, given the fact that it is the most populated province in the country. The Officer Commanding, Lt Col N.M. Nthunya, assumed duty at the beginning of 2006, and since then the unit has gone from strength to strength.

The main focus of the unit has been the reskilling and upliftment of the Military Veterans. The Military Veterans are being reskilled in several directions for a variety of industries from Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) to Business Management. Operation VUSELELA has been running for several years and currently 33 clients are employed in the eradication of alien vegetation at the military base on the Bluff.

The unit staff members are actively involved in team building exercises, thanks to a hard working social committee. “Big Teas” are held once a month, where Section Heads and unit members are acknowledged for their work performance.

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Mrs Sandy Clements, Service Corps Regional Office Durban

The Moths of our local M.O.T.H. Shellhole are delighted to be receiving The Moths of our local M.O.T.H. magazine, which I pass on to them in time for their monthly meetings.

Despite being way beyond their active service “sell-by date”, these old veterans enjoy keeping up with developments in the SANDF.

Many of the Moths here worked in one way or another in the printing and publishing industries after they returned from the war in Italy and they look at the magazine from a more technical point of view than normal readers might. One criticism of SA Soldier magazine which constantly comes up is that the choice of photographs for the cover does not always excite the reader. I think we would all like to see more “military” cover pictures. By that I mean more military hardware, more smoke, more fire, more dust and sweat!

You have the perfect subject matter at your fingertips for some truly dramatic images, and we’d love to see more of it! I hope you will accept that this is meant as constructive criticism from readers who thoroughly enjoy your publication.

Keep it up! ‘Moth’ J. Swanepoel,
Mpalalanga Shellhole

* Thank you for your keen Moth interest in SA Soldier. I hope you enjoy the front cover as much as I do. Please indulge in the military hardware pictures (on page 35) of the recent military demonstration held by 4 Artillery Regiment - Ed.
GOSSIP IS THE ENEMY OF LOVE
There is always a solution to every problem, and usually the solution is simple and does not involve anything drastic, unlike gossip. Try to see the other person in a good light, approach him in a polite, problem-solving way to work things out. Every person in the world, no matter how much you dislike him or her, is worthy of respect and decent treatment.

Do not gossip about a problem or bad-mouth a person behind his/her back, even if you feel they hurt you. Treating them badly will hurt you more, because it will dent your self-respect and you will feel ashamed. It is worth it because not only will you find peace of mind, you might even feel proud of yourself.

It is not possible to be truly present and available in a new relationship until you heal the hurt and upsets of the past.

There is no future in gossiping. After all, we are grown-ups and proud soldiers in our environment. And it is obvious that you have an abundance of experience in dealing with disciplinary matters. Sgt N.S. Monyamane, AMHU Limpopo HQ

SERGEANT OF STEEL * Translation done by Mr Eugene Muller - Ed:
Altogether 45 members (44 men and 1 woman) reported for the machine-gun course at the Infantry School from 7 May to 13 July 2007. One of the women was Sgt Melissa van Rooyen. We all wondered if she was an instructor or a student, and to our surprise she was a senior course to senior men, but she did it. Die lede van die masjiengeweer kursus 2007/01 wil die sersant bekroon omdat sy ‘n goeie mens, soldaat en mede-kollega is. Sy is wonderlik. Al is sy sterker as ‘n man het sy bewys dat sy ‘n soldaat is met vroulikheid.

Sersant van Staal
Altesaam 45 lede (44 mans en 1 vrou) het vir die masjiengeweer kursus by Infanterieskool van 7 Mei tot 13 Julie 2007 aangemeld. Die dame was sers Melissa van Rooyen. Ons het almal verwonder of sy ‘n instrukteur of ‘n student was en tot ons verbazing was sy ‘n student.

Van dag een tot die laaste dag, insluitend "Ofening NYATHI", was sy daar en sy het alles gedaan, trouens meer as al die ander. Sy het aan haarself en ons mans bewys sy kon dit doen.

Iets het my gepla: ek het die sersant al ‘êrens gesien. (Ons hoor altyd van iemand wat presteer.) Sy was van die eerste vroue wat infanterie-opleiding gekry het by die skool en toe noodgevange daarna by Tenkafweer gaan werk het. Ja, almal sal kpl M. Booysen (haar nooiensvan) onthou wat ‘n 106 mm kanon kon dra soos geen ander man kon nie.

Die mans was skepties, want hoe kan ‘n vrou ‘n man se werk doen en boonop vir senior mans klas gee op ‘n seniorkursus, maar sy het dit gedoen.

Dis waarom ons die briefie stuur sodat almal moet weet: Sers Mel jy het dit in jou. Hou so aan!

Sy is van Augustusmaand weer by die wapenopleidingsvleuel waar sy ‘n instrukteur is. Sy is al vir jare Infanterieskool se fiksheids- en sweminstrukteer. Sy het ook al talle sportprestasies behaal en was al ‘n paar keer die eenheid se Sportvrou van die Jaar gewees.

Die lede van die masjiengeweer kursus 2007/01 wil die sersant bedank omdat sy ‘n waardevolle mens, soldaat en mede-kollega is. Sy is wonderlik. Al is sy sterker as ‘n man het sy bewys dat sy ‘n soldaat is met vroulikheid.

Infanterieskool

I SALUTE YOU
The SA National Defence Force Pays tribute to protect South Africa To its crime fighters Their lives were taken Because they protect ours.

We owe them these tributes For they have laid down their lives To make South Africa a safe country for us all. Heroes and warriors who create

Liberty and peace Rest in peace We have recognised your sacrifice. I salute you!

Mr Amos Mokholoane, Mpumalanga

SERGEANT OF STEEL
Altogether 45 members (44 men and 1 woman) reported for the machine-gun course at the Infantry School from 7 May to 13 July 2007. One of the women was Sgt Melissa van Rooyen. We all wondered if she was an instructor or a student, and to our surprise she was a senior course to senior men, but she did it. Die lede van die masjiengeweer kursus 2007/01 wil die sersant bekroon omdat sy ‘n goeie mens, soldaat en mede-kollega is. Sy is wonderlik. Al is sy sterker as ‘n man het sy bewys dat sy ‘n soldaat is met vroulikheid.

Masiengeweer kursus-groete.

Infanterieskool

As from August she will be at the weapon training wing again as an instructor. For years she has been the fitness and swimming instructor of Infantry School. She has also had many sporting achievements to her credit and has a few times been the unit’s Sportswoman of the Year.

The members of the 2007/01 machine-gun course wish to thank the Sergeant for being a good person, soldier and colleague. She is a fantastic person. Even if he is stronger than many men, she has proved that she is a soldier with all the feminine qualities associated with being a woman.

Machine-gun greetings.

Infantry School
The honour of introducing my colleagues was bestowed upon me and I wish to draw your attention to the fact that I use the phrase ‘honour’ not frivolously, but that I regard this as an opportunity to express my intention to boast about their uniqueness and yes, to blow our trumpet. The primary responsibility of the Defence Diplomacy Section (DDS) at Defence Foreign Relations (DFR) is to provide an efficient defence diplomacy service to the Department of Defence (DOD). The tasks emanating from this important mission entail the provision of a protocol, consular and specialist foreign visits service rendered to all members within the DOD. Can you imagine that only sixteen members render these extraordinary services to the entire DOD, bearing in mind that these efforts will probably go unnoticed, but that the members still continue to do it with implausible poise and professionalism despite personal sacrifices. To function in this milieu, challenged by its transnational cultures and traditional diversities, requires a sense of loyalty and respect, which only friendship can offer. Finally, I invite you to visit DDS and meet my amazing friends who, regardless of the difficulties and limitations forced upon them by circumstances, ensure that the image of the DOD in the international defence community is efficient and commendable.

KEEP ON TRYING
I have written this poem to encourage all those soldiers who are unable to work on account of medical conditions, including those given light duties by their doctors. I know most are under pressure from their section heads. They are seen to be unwilling to work, and may include those who are HIV positive, those who have been on courses, but have never been promoted, those who never went on courses, but are capable of passing them.

This is not me
Who am I? I am not what I am
Not what I plan to be
All my dreams have failed
I’m not in the position I plan to be
I dreamed of being in a right position
But circumstances forced me to fail
My dreams were right, My plans were good
I was filled with optimism
What can I do now?
Will things be like this forever?
Can my dignity be recovered?
If that is the case, by whom, by me?
Yes even by me, I say yes
That time will come
Time for fulfillment of dreams
I will reach the oasis of privilege
Rfn S. Ngumama, 14 SAI Bn

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DEFENCE DIPLOMACY SERVICES 2007

Front Row : Maj J. Kwadi; Col J. Malan; Col J.C. Mothupi; Maj C. Pyper.
Back Row : Ms W. Bredenhann; Ms J. Walker; Maj A. Nikodem, Lt Col C. du Plessis; Lt Cdr M. Ntleko; Maj N. Ditabe; Sgt M. Diedericks; Sgt E. Matshobane. Insert : WO I S. Ludick; Maj A. Matloa; WO I R van Schalkwyk.

PS: Photo taken during the absence of Maj J. Mabula.

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SA SOLDIER SEPTEMBER 2007
Establishing healthy relations in the Congo

On 24 January 2007 a group of 13 very eager and dedicated SANDF members left South Africa for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to participate in Operation TEUTON-IC. The group was also referred to as the South African Detachment Assisting with Integration and Training (SADAIT) in the DRC, and they were to be there for a period of 12 months.

The group consisted of eight members for the SADAIT HQ and five members of the SAMHS. The SAMHS members were psychologists and social workers. They were joined on 6 February by another four members for the SADAIT HQ. The Officer Commanding, Col X.G. Mabanga, joined SADAIT on 14 February.

SADAIT is a diplomatic mission, hence all the members of SADAIT have diplomatic status. The mission’s mandate derives from agreements between the South African, the DRC governments and the involvement of other countries. The mission is responsible for assisting the integration of the armed forces of the DRC, also referred to as the FARDC. A professional group of psychologists and social workers from SAMHS also assist in the process by means of team-building programmes at the different Centre de Brassage Recyclage (CBRs), hence they are referred to as team builders.

The integration process has progressed very well since it started in 2005. SADAIT works closely with its Congolese counterparts at the Structure Militaire D’Integration (SMI). SADAIT and SMI share offices in the same building.

Apart from their primary tasks, the members of SADAIT also try to enhance the image of the SANDF and build healthy relationships with the Congolese. This relationship is, however, not only restricted to the armed forces but to Congo as a whole. Currently there is a very good understanding and friendship between SADAIT and SMI.

Sappers' achievements in Burundi

It is said that history repeats itself. One could argue against the statement, however. The retired Sappers, the fallen heroes and heroines of the South African Engineer Corp (SAEC), irrespective of race, cultural background or ethnic association, fought shoulder to shoulder and contributed immensely to battles, skirmishes, wars and peacekeeping missions to ensure that sustainable peace and development, particularly in Africa and the rest of the world, would someday become a reality. The legacy that was left by our predecessors, and the lessons learnt, enabled the Sappers in Burundi to remain focused and to strive to be the best during their tour of duty.

The Engineers consisted of 26 personnel. The members made a great impact in ensuring that water purification and the provision of water was achieved at Modderfontein Base. The Engineers were also conducting base maintenance, which entailed construction related aspects such as road maintenance, plumbing, carpentry, welding, electrical work, bricklaying, painting and ad hoc tasks. The tactical mission was conducted successfully.

The main effort was water provision, an essential service, to the rest of the contingent. The water was used for cooking, drinking and in various ablation blocks (Task Force HQ, Medical Task Force Group (MTG), the Mess, Infantry Battalion, Maintenance, VIPs, LWT, MP and maintenance platoon. The Sappers proved against all odds that with determination, hard work, perseverance and undivided focus, nothing was insurmountable.

The Engineers in Operation CURRICULUM 1 were remarkable. They rendered an effective and efficient service to the stakeholders that were deployed in the mission area at Modderfontein Base in Bujumbura, which meant customer satisfaction. The successes of the Sappers in Operation CURRICULUM 1 were remarkable.

As an Engineer Squadron Commander who was privileged to lead these gallant soldiers from the ranks of unsung heroes, I have to mention Lt Z.P. Malgas, my Second-in-Command from 2 Field Engineer Regiment, who contributed enormously to Operation CURRICULUM 1. I can proudly say that he and other soldiers made history, consciously or unconsciously, and the experience gained from this deployment will someday be cherished by future generations.

My sincere appreciation is extended to the families of the Engineers in Burundi for their support throughout the deployment period (29 January 2007 to 31 July 2007) - sometimes it was a daunting
SADAIT deemed it necessary and important to socialise with the Congolese with whom it has been working now for almost six months. A volleyball match was arranged on 5 July 2007 at the logistical base of the FARDC between SADAIT and SMI. The match attracted a lot of interest among the local community and was played in a very good spirit.

Unfortunately SMI was too strong for our SADAIT team and won the match 3-2. The players were all exhausted, but thoroughly enjoyed themselves, as did the spectators. Afterwards both teams and some of the spectators enjoyed drinks at one of the local restaurants. It was really an enjoyable day. The intention is to make it a weekly event, and at a later stage a combined SADAIT and SMI team will play against other military and civilian teams.

This was a real stepping stone to many more matches and other events to come and to enhance the image of our beautiful country, South Africa. It is not always easy to make the sacrifice of deploying for 6 to 12 months. Deployments to foreign countries can cause a lot of strain and low morale for deployed members, hence maintaining esprit de corps among our own members helps to alleviate these difficulties.

SADAIT is committed to enhancing relations between the SANDF and the FARDC. We see the Congolese as our African brothers and sisters. The “new” SADAIT team created their own slogan: “Together we can make a difference” according to which they intend to do everything in their ability to make their mission a great success. Viva SADAIT! Viva FARDC!

Maj C. Krieger,
SO2 Log SADAIT HQ

challenge to be separated for six months from their loved ones. Indeed your support kept the Sappers in Operation CURRICULUM 1 going, inspired them and meant a lot to my subordinates. The Engineer soldiers made an enormous impact on this operation, which was echoed and attested to by the Task Force Commander, Col H.G. Visser, Brig Gen J.J. Hougaard and Brig Gen I.R. Johnson from Joint Operations HQ during their verification visit to Operation CURRICULUM 1.

The Sappers knew that in order to accomplish our mission and reach our objectives they had to be optimistic and not succumb to any situation, and to make the best of the limited resources that were at their disposal. When socio-economic, cultural and political stability prevails in Burundi, the Sappers will be able to say proudly that they had been there and had done what they were mandated to do, and that they had overcome all the odds.

Farewell Sappers, I will remember your contribution!
Capt T. Willie, Engineer Squadron Commander in Burundi

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Date : 7 December 2007
Venue: The Castle, Kyalami (Midrand)
The Chief of Defence Foreign Relations, Maj Gen Dan Mofokeng, hosted the biennial Defence Attaché Conference in Centurion from 25 to 29 June 2007. The theme of the conference was “Evaluating Defence Foreign Relations Capacity”.

The primary objectives in hosting the conference were to foster an understanding of the growing importance of defence diplomacy and defence foreign relations, to understand the link between national foreign policy and the conduct of defence foreign relations, to promote interaction between Department of Defence (DOD) role players involved in defence foreign relations and to stimulate debate and discussion concerning the future of Defence Foreign Relations.

The Minister of Defence, Mr Mosiuoa Lekota, officially opened the conference. He said that it was important to understand the theme because it spoke of the impact of Defence Foreign Relations, not of the attachés per se. “As you all know, Defence Foreign Relations is responsible for liaison with foreign military establishments, co-ordination of visits, good relationships, promoting customer care, etc.”

Minister Lekota added that the work of the DOD was to support the political and diplomatic initiatives of Government, led by the Department of Foreign Affairs. He emphasised that the task of any person deployed by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to a foreign country as a defence attaché was to cultivate good relations, and that from such good relations between defence forces stemmed peace and stability, which might be expressed in a memorandum of understanding (MOU), in exchange training, or in joint exercises. In conclusion he urged the attachés and advisers to represent their country well in a foreign country.

During his welcoming address the Chief of Defence Foreign Relations told defence attachés and advisers that it was expected of them to represent and liaise on behalf of the Minister and Deputy Minister of Defence, the Secretary for Defence, the Chief of the SANDF and the Service Chiefs. He emphasised that they were to enhance...
South Africa and Guinea Bissau sign Agreement

By Ann Ally Rakoma
Photo: Cpl Elias Mahuma

A meeting between the South African Minister of Defence, Mr Mosiuoa Lekota, and his counterpart, the Minister of Defence of Guinea Bissau, Mr Marciano Silva Barbeiro, and senior officers and officials of both delegations, took place at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria for the signing of an agreement on defence relations between the two countries on 8 August 2007.

The signing of the agreement was aimed at consolidating the relationship between the two countries. Minister Lekota welcomed the Guinea Bissau delegation and said that the collective participation in the signing of this agreement marked an important milestone in the formalisation of defence relations between the two countries. "In signing this agreement, we affirm and demonstrate our mutual commitment to the formation and development of our defence relationship," said Mr Lekota.

In his response, Minister Barbeiro said that the two countries have had a long diplomatic relationship and that since 1994 South Africa and Guinea Bissau have exchanged diplomatic visits that have culminated in the exchange of dialogue and consultations. "We are continuing the walk of O.R. Tambo and Amilcar Cabral during their struggle for freedom and liberation from colonialism," said Minister Barbeiro.

The scope of the agreement signed entails, inter alia, training of military personnel, exchange of trainees, instructors and observers, exchange of military information, defence industrial co-operation, military health services, etc that will contribute to the promotion of peace and stability on our continent.
Naval power vital in the SADC

By Nomonde Vuthela
Photos: Cpl Elias Mahuma

The Standing Maritime Committee of the Southern African Development Community’s Maritime Conference for 2007 was held in Simon’s Town from 12 to 14 June 2007.

The Institute for Maritime Technology (IMT) assisted the SA Navy to make this conference a reality. The aim of the conference, entitled “Emerging Maritime Concepts in Southern Africa”, was to discuss and explore aspects of SADC naval co-operation.

The first day of the conference took the form of a sea trip on board the SAS SPIOENKOP, which gave the representatives just a little taste of the capabilities of the frigates. Elaborating on how all was well aboard, and in demonstration of the great significance of the moment, the SA Minister of Defence, Mr Mosiuoa Lekota, held a media briefing on board the sailing frigate.

Minister Lekota, the Chief of the SA Navy, V Adm Refiloe Mudimu, the Chairperson of the SADC Standing Maritime Committee (SMC) and the Tanzanian Navy Commander, Brig Gen S.S. Omar, addressed the media about the importance of the SADC Maritime Conference and its significance to the whole region and the African continent.

On the second day of the SADC Conference, the SA Minister of Defence officially opened the conference. Mr Lekota said, among other things: “Maritime and naval power have become increasingly important, both in the region and on the continent.” He said that the most critical issues were those of working together against piracy and the poaching of marine resources and bringing stability to the shores of the continent. “We need to direct special attention to the sea, for history has demonstrated that most large conflicts which have occupied landward forces have come by way of the sea.”

“Much can be achieved if we commit ourselves to ensuring the effective functioning of the SADC as a whole, with each component influenced by, and influencing others; and supported by, and supporting other components.”

High on the agenda was peace in Africa. To this end the conference promoted a platform for working towards solutions to the emerging maritime
Delegates to the conference experience the "crush-stop" on board the SAS SPIOENKOP - another capability of the frigate.

threats currently faced by the SADC region. The conference focussed on four critical areas:
- The formation of a maritime component of the SADC Brigade.
- The creation of a centre of excellence for naval training in the SADC region.
- Naval co-ordination and guidance for shipping.
- Addressing the future requirements of sea-lift capabilities required for peace support operations in Africa.

These themes were of pivotal importance to the vision of the SADC, namely to promote peace and prosperity in the region through maritime co-operation.

Later in the evening the Chief of the SA Navy hosted a welcoming function at Naval Base Simon’s Town, where he addressed the delegates. V Adm Mudimu said the SMC had achieved a number of successes since its establishment 13 years ago. He said: “The SADC maritime nations, landlocked countries and countries with large water bodies have participated in naval and maritime training at all levels.

"Also, safer navigation of our seas has been achieved through hydrographic co-operation and SADC littoral countries are taking positive charge of the high seas as entrusted to them by the international community via the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)."

"Despite the success, many challenges still remain for the SADC SMC," said V Adm Mudimu, "Firstly, the challenges involve Africa's most critical threat, namely the endemic poverty of our people. Secondly, there remains a very high level of ignorance about the maritime issues and benefits that investment in the seas and associated resources can bring to the nations of the continent and our region in the Southern Africa." He also emphasised that these factors were reflected in the meagre resources available to maritime and marine or naval forces in the region: "This inhibits the pace at which the SMC would like to see its work implemented."

After many deliberations and several speeches the conference was concluded with new resolutions being adopted by delegates. These entailed, inter alia:
- That a Standing Maritime Committee (SMC) Maritime Training Task Team be created, with members from each participating country, to implement the Naval Training Co-operation Action Plan. It should be chaired by (and have a secretariat in) South Africa.
- Centre of Excellence for Maritime Training Paper Language Resolution: It is reaffirmed that English should be the maritime operational language of the SADC.
- Resolution on Youth Maritime Training: That Simon’s Town School be used as a model for the education and training of aspirant maritime personnel aged between 15 and 20.
- Sea-lift Hardware Resolution: The acquisition of large landing ships and a helicopter dock for the combined use of the SADC multi-national forces.
- Resolution on Naval Training Co-operation: Contribution of Industry: to enhance the contribution of industry to the creation of one advanced centre of excellence for SADC naval training in South Africa.
- Human Software Resolution: The maritime components and the basing of the sea-lift part of the African Standby Force be rapidly reviewed.
The 90th SS Mendi commemoration

Article and photos by F Sgt David Nomtshongwana

Londoners were thrilled by the African sounds of Marimba and tjembe drums of the SA Navy at the 90th SS Mendi commemoration at Trafalgar Square on 19 July 2007.

The Marimba Section of the SA Navy Band entertained Londoners and tourists before performing at the commemorative dinner at South Africa House. The Band did not play only conventional military music well, but also played other genres, such as light classics, big band music, traditional songs, African tjembe drumming, solo features and jazz ... Each style of music accommodated the varied cultural diversity.

THE COMMEMORATIVE DINNER

The various delegates in their formal military dress attended the evening dinner held at South Africa House. Among the people who attended the commemorative dinner were Dr Zola Skweyiya, the SA Minister of Social Development, Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, the First Sea Lord, Adm Sir Jonathan Band and Lady Sarah Band, V Adm Refiloe Mudimu, the Chief of the SA Navy, and his wife, Ms Yvonne Mudimu, members of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, High Commissioners, Ambassadors, military advisers, sponsors, members of the Defence Staff and learners from South Africa.

On behalf of President Thabo Mbeki, Dr Lindiwe Mabuza, the South African High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, welcomed all the guests. "As part of the process of reconciliation in South Africa, we have begun to take steps at last to properly recognise and honour the memory of those who gave their lives at home and on foreign soil," said Dr Mabuza in her welcoming address.

She said that the sinking of the SS Mendi was the greatest tragedy in the military history of South Africa and one of the worst maritime disasters of...
African military history. In his conclusion he recited a poem written by S.E. Mqhayi, who also co-wrote our National Anthem. The IsiXhosa poem was translated into English and read as follows:

Awu! Here come the strong men of Africa!
The load was too much for the ship, it sank,
Heroes and the king’s soldiers perished,
Whose blood mattered to the king of kings.
Whose deaths will bear fruit and leave a legacy.
I wish to be counted with them at the resurrection,
To be counted among those who sacrificed,
And shine bright like a brighter tomorrow.
Together let us build a brighter tomorrow!
Let us do so, Proud of the efforts made by these and many sons of Africa.

BACKGROUND ON THE SS MENDI

Although black people were prohibited from carrying weapons during World War I, they were essential to their masters who used them as labourers to dig trenches and perform hard labour. The SS Mendi was chartered by the British government as a troopship and sailed from Cape Town to transport troops to France. It was a steamship of the Elder Dempster Line.

She left Cape Town carrying the last contingent of the South African Native Labour Corps (SANLC) comprising 805 black privates, 5 white officers, 17 non-commissioned officers and 33 crew members. After a month and five days the troopship arrived at Plymouth, from where she proceeded to Le Havre in France. The 370 foot long ship with a beam of 46 ft, carried the last contingent of the 5th Battalion of the SANLC.

On a foggy morning on 21 February 1917, the SS Mendi (the 4 230 ton) was struck on the starboard side by the SS Darro (100 000 ton) which was travelling at full speed and had emitted no warning signal. The SS Mendi sank within 25 minutes. The men sang and stamped their feet in the death dance as the SS Mendi sank, taking with her all on board. The many who had leapt into the icy waters also perished (607 black troops
along with 9 of their fellow white countrymen and all 33 crew members).

There are many stories of the bravery of the men as the ship went down. One of these involved the Reverend Isaac Wauchope Dyobha. He raised his voice and said: "Be quiet and calm, my countrymen, for what is taking place is exactly what you came to do. You are going to die, but that is what you came to do. Brothers, we are drilling the death drill. I, a Xhosa, say you are my brothers. Zulus, Swazis, Pondos, Basothos and all the others, let us die like warriors. We are the sons of Africa. Raise your war cries my brothers, for though they made us leave our assegais back in the kraals, our voices are left with our bodies…"

FOURTH AT THE SPOT

"It is a very sad reality that we have had to wait for more than eight decades until South Africa won the struggle for its freedom to properly acknowledge and honour the role of these courageous men who paid the supreme sacrifice in support of the British Empire," said Dr Mabuza.

On 21 July 2007 the commemoration took place at Hollybrook cemetery in Southampton. The SA Army formed the guard of honour. Dr Mabuza was elated by the fact that the nearly forgotten tragedy was properly recognised at last. She said that the extraordinary contribution made by all South Africans during the two world wars was slowly but surely emerging in the writing of a new people's history. South Africans are to be found in the watery graves of the English Channel, in France, Belgium, Holland and various countries across Africa. She concluded by reading a poem dedicated to a valiant son of Africa (SS Mendi A Lament).

Mr Mosiuoa Lekota, the SA Minister of Defence, said in his address that collective histories had been forged across the centuries by such acts of sacrifice, bravery and valour, acts inspired by visions and dreams of a better life for all, and underscored by a deep and abiding commitment to those values that are so integral to democracy, ie justice and humanity for all. He continued that it was with the fundamental belief in the importance of always advancing the development of and contributing to the well-being of society and the environment that we have sought to engage those within and beyond our borders.

"The acts of valour and bravery, which characterise the sinking of the SS Mendi, serve to remind us that we share a collective responsibility authored by young men who sacrificed their lives so that a legacy might be left for those who were to come after. This is a legacy that speaks of the community that binds nations of societies where democratic freedom is enjoyed by all; where hope abounds in a society where standards of living and liberty are constantly expanding and where the dreams of our forebears may see their realisation," concluded Mr Lekota.

The names of those who suffered the SS Mendi tragedy are on the Hollybrook memorial in Southampton. There is a bronze at the Delville Wood Memorial in France and numerous SS Mendi memorials in South Africa. There is the Mendi Memorial in Mendi Road, New Brighton, Port Elizabeth; at Gamothaga Resort in Atteridgeville and the one at Avalon Cemetery in Soweto.

The wreath-laying ceremony at Hollybrook was a significant recognition of the fallen heroes. After the Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Marius Cornelissen, conducted the blessing the South African High Commissioner to the United Kingdom laid a wreath on behalf of the Republic of South Africa. The High Commissioner of the United Kingdom to South Africa, Mr Paul Boateng, laid the wreath on behalf of the United Kingdom, followed by the SA Minister of Defence, who laid a wreath on behalf of the SA Department of Defence. The Chief of the SA Navy laid a wreath on behalf of the SA Navy. The First Sea Lord laid a wreath on behalf of the Royal Navy. The Mayor of Southampton laid a wreath on behalf of the Southampton community and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The 90th SS Mendi commemoration was concluded in SA Navy style. The SAS AMATOLA ferried the guests approximately 18 km off St Catherine’s Point on the Isle off Wight where the SS Mendi sank. It was quite an emotional affair for the guests to be on the spot where 90 years ago so many sons of South Africa perished.

"For those with no known grave but the sea," reads one of the memorials.

The guard of honour standing to attention during the 90th SS Mendi commemoration at Hollybrook cemetery.
He Honorary Colonel of the Transvaal Horse Artillery, Maj Gen Roy Andersen, hosted a send-off dinner for the members of the Transvaal Horse Artillery (THA), under the leadership of Col Andy Oelofse, Chief of Staff Artillery Formation, at the Rand Club in Johannesburg on 29 May 2007. (The THA is a volunteer SANDF Reserve Force regiment under the SA Army Artillery Formation.)

The South African Gunners have made history by becoming the first foreign military contingent to fire an official gun salute in honour of a British royal.

Twelve gunners from the THA, alongside their British counterparts, fired 62 rounds from the saluting battery at the Tower of London on 11 June 2007.

The THA was officially invited to take part in the 470th anniversary celebrations of the Honourable Artillery Company (HAC) in London. The THA has been affiliated with them since August 1937.

The HAC performs all ceremonial duties within the City of London. They provide guards of honour for visiting heads of state. They also perform ceremonial gun salute duties at the Tower of London on all state occasions, including the official birthday of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. The THA performs the same duties for the Chief of the SANDF in the Gauteng region where they fire their guns on state occasions.

In London on 11 June 2007 the THA participated in a ceremonial gun salute in honour of the official birthday of His Royal Highness Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh and husband of Queen Elizabeth II. They also paid a visit to the Artillery Centre at Larkhill and watched RA Batteries training on Salisbury Plain, and paid visits to various other British Army Force Structure Elements (FSEs), such as the King’s Troop Royal Horse Artillery and the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst.

This was a momentous occasion as no South African National Defence Force Gunner had ever been part of a ceremonial gun crew for any monarch or other head of state on foreign soil, and no other nation’s troops have performed ceremonial gun salute duties for the British royalty on their own soil.

Brig Gen Lindile Yam, Army and Naval Adviser (front, 5th from left), with members of the Signal Squadron of the Honourable Artillery Company in whose presence the Transvaal Horse Artillery members fired the Royal Gun Salute in honour of the birthday of HRH Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

SA Gunners shoot for the Queen

Article and photos courtesy Transvaal Horse Artillery

Members of the Transvaal Horse Artillery firing the Royal Gun Salute.
The recent SADC Summit was held in Lusaka, Zambia, from 15 to 17 August 2007. The highlight during the Summit was the launch of the SADC BRIGADE.

The SADC BRIGADE was officially launched by the President of Zambia, Mr Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, in Lusaka on 17 August. This brigade forms part of the African Standby Force.

The deterioration of security in Africa led to the formation of the African Standby Force. African heads of state realised that the scourge of conflicts in Africa constitutes a major impediment to the socio-economic development of the continent and that they needed to promote peace, security and stability as a prerequisite for Africa’s development and integration.

Brig Gen Lancaster Bottoman, Chief of Staff SADC BRIGADE, handing over the SADC flag.

The President of Zambia, Mr Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, inspecting the parade.
the establishment of the African Standby Force was approved by the African heads of state in Addis Ababa in July 2004.

The launch of the SADC BRIGADE signified that the troops were to be deployed on the continent when needed. The brigade is made up of resources pledged by SADC member states according to a standby arrangement and comprises the military, the police and a civilian component. The only permanent structure SADC has is the Planning Element (PLANELM), which is located at the SADC Headquarters in Gaborone and consists of the military, the police and a civilian component. The PLANELM receives its guidance from the SADC Chiefs of Defence Staff Committee and the Committee of SADC Police Chiefs.

In his speech at the ceremony President Mwanawasa, who is also the SADC Chairperson, said: "I wish to commend the hard and laborious work done by the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation for the realisation of this historic occasion today". He awarded medals to officers who have served in the PLANELM for more than three months. This historic parade was attended by the SA Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Mluleki George, and the Acting Chief of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), Lt Gen Solly Shoke, and other senior officials. Director Joint Operations (SANDF), R Adm (JG) Edward Ratala, was one of the officers who received a medal as he has served on the PLANELM since its inception. A plaque with the flags of all the SADC member states was also unveiled at the parade.

As the SADC flag was being hoisted, the troops on parade sang the SADC anthem to a gun salute and a fighter-jet fly-past in the background. It was a spectacular display and a perfect way to say the SADC BRIGADE was ready.

The SADC Summit and the parade were attended by all African heads of state. The President of South Africa, Mr Thabo Mbeki, said at the Summit that he was really touched to see the different forces joined together.

In his speech at the ceremony President Mwanawasa, who is also the SADC Chairperson, said: "I wish to commend the hard and laborious work done by the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation for the realisation of this historic occasion today". He awarded medals to officers who have served in the PLANELM for more than three months. This historic parade was attended by the SA Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Mluleki George, and the Acting Chief of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), Lt Gen Solly Shoke, and other senior officials. Director Joint Operations (SANDF), R Adm (JG) Edward Ratala, was one of the officers who received a medal as he has served on the PLANELM since its inception.

The President of Zambia, Mr Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, handing over a medal to Director Joint Operations (SANDF), R Adm (JG) Edward Ratala. (He was one of the officers who received a medal as he has served on the PLANELM since its inception.)
Women are continuing to make their mark in the SANDF. One such woman is the newly appointed Chief of Staff, Brig Gen Winnie Zini-Bobelo, at the Operational Headquarters.

On 27 July 2007 history was made in the SANDF as, for the first time ever, a female Brigadier General - Brig Gen Zini-Bobelo - was the chief functionary during the Mobilisation Parade for the contingent that was leaving for Burundi under the African Union mission. The OPERATION CURRICULUM parade was held at the Mobilisation Centre at De Brug near Bloemfontein. WO1 Sheron Scheepers, the first appointed female Divisional Warrant Officer of Joint Operations Division, accompanied the General.

SANDF involvement in Burundi dates back to 2001, when the South African Protection and Support Detachment (SAPSD) members were deployed in Bujumbura following the signing of the Arusha Agreement, which made a provision that a transitional government would protect the political leaders who returned from exile.

Taking part in OPERATION CURRICULUM are 781 members, of which 140 are women and 90% are from 5 SA Infantry Battalion (5 SAI Bn). Addressing the parade Brig Gen Zini-Bobelo said: "The previous contingents set a very high standard that you will have to maintain. We cannot afford to appear less professional or efficient than other forces. Therefore the maintaining of discipline and high morale will be required from you". She added: "You must demonstrate the true South African spirit of ubuntu. Let this spirit also develop among the people of Burundi in order for them to prosper and find the peace they long for."

Rfn Joseph Selokela and Rfn Goodness Mncwabe from 5 SAI Bn were looking forward to rekindling this spirit of ubuntu with the people of Burundi as they were going back for the second time to play their part in the development of that country. "The first time when I arrived in Burundi it was very interesting and challenging in terms of the language barrier, but after a few weeks I was already speaking their language (Swahili). Burundians are very friendly people," said Rfn Selokela.

"I also want to remind you of the fact that you should be seen as an impartial force that respects the local customs and traditions. Respect for the local people should at all times be in the forefront of your minds. Remember: we are the guests in Burundi and not the hosts," concluded Brig Gen Zini-Bobelo.
Brazil honours SANDF members for meritorious service

Article and photos by Capt (SAN) Lisa Hendricks, Naval PR

The Chief of the SA Navy, V Adm Refiloe Mudimu, and Acting Director Performance Audit at the Defence Inspectorate Division, Col Antonio André, were both recognised for meritorious service to Brazil at a medal awards ceremony held at the Brazilian Embassy in Pretoria on 25 July 2007.

The Chief of the SA Navy was awarded the Naval Order of Merit Medal, which was created by a decree on 11 July 1934. The purpose in awarding this particular medal is to recognise members who have distinguished themselves professionally and exceptionally in national or foreign military and civilian institutions, to their flags or coat of arms and to Brazilian or foreign military or civilian personalities, who have contributed towards important services to the Brazilian Navy.

Col André was awarded the "Marechal Cordeiro de Farias" Medal, which was created on 20 June 1983 by the Commander and Director of Education at the Senior War College in Rio de Janeiro. The purpose of this medal is to honour and distinguish the students of the Senior War College for competence and knowledge displayed. Col André, who was nominated as the "best overall achiever" on course, was also recognised for the valuable guidance provided in the interests of improving the War College's curriculum. Of note is the fact that this is the first time a member of the SANDF has been awarded this particular medal.

On completion of the ceremony, Mr Lucio Amorim, the Brazilian Ambassador, awards V Adm Refiloe Mudimu, Chief of the SA Navy, with the Naval Order of Merit Medal.

V Adm Mudimu thanked the Brazilian Ambassador, Mr Lucio Piers De Amorim, for presenting him with the award. He emphasised the long-standing relationship shared by the South African and Brazilian Navies and assured the Brazilian Ambassador of the SA Navy’s continued commitment to ensuring that this relationship flourishes. He concluded by saying: “...our greatest challenge is to navigate safely and survive the might of the sea. This in itself bonds us as brothers and sisters ... through cooperation we can collectively counter such challenges.”

And to emphasise this bond, the SAS MENDI, one of the SA Navy’s four MEKO Valour Class frigates, is scheduled to participate in the Brazilian Navy’s bicentennial celebrations in September this year.
Sergeant Major of SA Army officially visited the USA

Article and photo by WO1 Charles Laubscher, SA Army WO Dress

The Sergeant Major of the SA Army, WO1 Mothusi Kgaladi, was invited to visit the United States Army during June 2007. He was accompanied by WO1 Charles Laubscher. The visit was executed in three distinct phases, beginning with a visit to the United States Army Europe (USAEUR), based in Germany, followed by a visit to Fort Bliss and the Pentagon in the USA.

Germany

The Command Sergeant Major of USAEUR hosted the first annual conference of European armies for Non-Commissioned Officers at his headquarters in Grafenwoehr, Germany. This conference was attended by the Sergeant Majors of the Army of 40 countries, mainly from Europe and environs, as well as from Afghanistan, Canada and South Africa.

The theme of the conference was "Coalition Networks for Developing Professional Non-Commissioned Officers" and speakers from different countries addressed various topics under this heading. Insight and understanding with regard to how the European land forces could more effectively and efficiently train and develop a professional NCOs corps was gained, while WO1 Kgaladi had the opportunity to establish a rapport with senior Warrant Officers of the various armies represented.

The conference was opened by Lt Gen D. Speer, Deputy Commanding General US Army Europe, at a dinner on 20 June. Presentations and discussions during the conference included the following subjects:

- NCO roles, responsibilities and authority in the joint/coalition environment.
- Institutional development of NCOs.
- Building a professional NCO corps.
- NCO roles in combat and nation building in their respective theatres.

The discussions were augmented by a visit to the USAEUR NCO Academy at Grafenwoehr where delegates were able to view the training presented during the Warrior Leader Course at first hand and were also given a tour of the Academy facilities.

This was followed by a demonstration on the Grafenwoehr range, where the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment presented a live firing demonstration of convoy movement (ambush drills). The regiment was in the pre-deployment training phase for deployment to Afghanistan.
Presentation of gifts by WO1 Mothusi Kgaladi, Sergeant Major of the SA Army (left), to the Battalion Commander of the Warrant Officer Course at the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA), SGM ZaGarra, at the “Chevrons” in the inner circle of USASMA.

Visit to the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy

From here the Sergeant Majors flew to Fort Bliss at El Paso in Texas for a visit to the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA). The visit to USASMA began with a detailed briefing on the training presented at the Academy, followed by a tour of the Academy facilities. At the same time WO1 Kgaladi had the opportunity to meet with WO1 Maggie Mawela, the SA Army student who is attending the course at the Academy until the middle of 2008.

USASMA both presents and has a role to play in a range of courses for the United States Army NCOs and Sergeant Majors. Interesting is the fact that it also presents training for the wives of members on two of the more senior courses, which is aimed at empowering the wives of Sergeant Majors with the knowledge and ability to support the families of other members when deployed.

Washington

The contingent then moved to Washington DC for a visit to the Sergeant Major of the US Army, SGM Preston. Owing to time constraints a courtesy call on the Chief Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff had to be cancelled at the last minute.

SGM Preston hosted the SA contingent at a breakfast in the Army HQ at the Pentagon. During the breakfast the two Sergeant Majors discussed items of mutual interest. A visit to the US Army operations room followed, after which the contingent was treated to a guided tour of the Pentagon, the highlight of which was the memorial site where the plane hit the Pentagon on 9/11.

The visiting group, accompanied by the SA Assistant Attaché to Washington, Col S. van Heerden, were then taken to Arlington Cemetery and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. WO1 Kgaladi was invited to lay a wreath at this tomb. This was important because this was only the second occasion in the long history of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier that a Warrant Officer was invited to lay a wreath, as this honour is normally reserved for senior and general officers. The ceremony was professionally executed and touched all the soldiers present. After the wreath laying ceremony the group observed the changing of the guard at the tomb, which is guarded by the 3rd Infantry Regiment, “The Old Guard”, 24 hours a day.

On the night of the arrival of the SA contingent in Washington we attended a Sunset Ceremony (similar to our Retreat Ceremony) presented by the US Marines at the site of the Iwo Jima memorial. The quality of their brass band, in particular, made this a memorable occasion. Most of the “free” time in Washington was dedicated to visiting as many war memorial sites as possible in the area. The popularity of these memorials was obvious, as at all these memorials there were large numbers of civilian visitors. The effort put into maintaining these memorials and the surrounding areas together with the fact that at all the memorials fresh wreaths and other objects of remembrance were visible in abundance, emphasised the pride of a nation in their military.

The SA contingent was highly impressed by the professional manner in which they were received and hosted throughout the visit, which spanned ten days. The visit was a learning experience in both the military and private spheres. It is hoped that the good relations between these two proud armies will continue into the future.
Empowering women for gender equity

By Nomonde Vuthela
Photos: Cpl Elias Mahuma

h, yes! Women in Defence are flying high, soaring way up in the sky in pursuit of self-fulfilment and heightened professionalism. Introducing the first black female helicopter pilot to the public, the media and a hall filled with women delegates attended the 3rd National Conference on Women in Defence at the Saint Georges Hotel outside Pretoria on 14 August 2007.

2 Lt Phetogo Molawa of the SA Air Force (SAAF) made her début public appearance by landing an Oryx helicopter at the conference. She is the first black SAAF female helicopter pilot. She then proceeded to join the other women at the conference dressed in her pilot’s gear and walked casually into the conference room to resounding applause. 2 Lt Molawa at 21 years broke the gender divide and signalled the need for all to take a long and hard look at the role of women in combat and peacekeeping missions. Things have definitely changed.

This was the emotionally charged conference with participants clearly exhibiting a sense of ownership towards the occasion. Women in Defence have positively embraced the theme: “Empowering Women for Gender Equity”. The Deputy Minister of Defence, Mr Mluleki George, pronounced after meeting 2 Lt Molawa, “We need to take women achievers into our rural areas and show young women what women can do”. The Deputy Minister also pointed out that although there has been progress in matters of gender equity, it has been slow and, “We are not there yet”.

Having previously established through past conferences the objectives of gender equity and mainstreaming in the Department of Defence (DOD), this year’s conference moved further in laying down the way forward and building consensus on how to maximise the utilisation of women in combat. Considering that the DOD is a peculiar environment, the four-day long dialogue for women needed to establish realistic gender targets.
Most significant in the conference’s detailed programme were the break-away sessions where participants were divided into eight commissions, each consisting of 30 members. The attendees were then requested to become conscious collaborators in promoting the gender discourse by engaging, investigating and discussing the following topics:

- The acceleration of the role of women in peacekeeping and peace-building processes.
- Achieving gender equity targets on for a yearly basis at all levels.
- Leadership development programmes.
- The strengthening of Services and Divisions’ Equity Committees.

When the different commissions presented the plan of action to the house, the issue of equity committees stood out the most. It was generally found that there was a need for many managers and subordinates to be educated and to inform them of ideas emanating from the equity committee. There was also a call for this critical body to be established in all the various areas deployment.

Without a doubt the presence of women in peacekeeping missions and processes brought added advantages to all levels of the mission. However, the concern that the mission areas were still to be made “women friendly” remained. The lack of suitable infrastructure including cultural attitudes, however, was one of the problems mentioned.

Emphasis was also placed on the importance of adequate training of women for improved job performance so that a list of qualified women from which to choose would be readily available at all times. The matter of the annual recruitment of youngsters into the DOD was also raised, with suggestions that the means of reaching the desired gender figures ought to result from the quota of young women recruited into the DOD to fill specific roles. The commission recommendations were to be forwarded to the Office of the Minister of Defence for his consideration.

Breaking down what it meant for the DOD to have reached the 30% representation mark, a senior researcher on Peace and Security, Dr Monica Juma, said that since 1994 there had been an almost reluctant acceptance of women into the force, paralleled by the non-existence of career paths. She indicated what the 30% progress made really looked like: “2.7% is the pool available in terms of combat”. She stressed that to send the right message concerning equity the SANDF had to improve on the pool of women available for deployment.

Giving feedback on the 2006 DOD Mainstreaming Action Plan, the highest ranking female officer in the SANDF who heads the Chief Directorate Transformation Management Office, Maj Gen Ntsiki Motumi, said everybody needed to be taken on board. “We have already drafted a strategy and it is ready,” she said. She indicated that the challenge now lay with women to develop a deeper interest in equity issues in order to believe in the statement - “Nothing for us without us”.

Also in attendance were Members of Parliament who sat on the Joint Standing Committee on Defence. They too gave an assurance that the committee would play an active role in ensuring gender equity in the DOD.
South African women of all ages, races, cultures, creeds and professions met at the South African Women In Dialogue Conference (SAWID) 2007, held at the University of Pretoria from 2 to 6 July 2007.

SAWID is not an organization, but merely a platform where women can meet to address and find solutions to issues that affect them personally and in society at large. The theme for this year’s dialogue was: “From Dialogue to Development: Women Uniting to Eradicate Poverty”. The theme was the result of the 2003 and 2005 dialogues, where women agreed that poverty was keeping many women from participating fully in the new democratic dispensation in South Africa, especially in the rural areas and informal settlements within urban areas.

Throughout the week various speakers from government departments, the private sector, youth structures, faith-based and other organisations addressed different topics that affected women. Although very cold, no weather condition could prevent these women from completing the task at hand. Blankets were provided every day to keep them warm, thus ensuring high concentration levels. And of course there was an abundance of coffee.

In her speech, the Executive Mayor of Tshwane, Dr Gwen Ramokgopa, said how proud she was that the City of Tshwane was hosting SAWID 2007. She urged the women to continue fighting and working tirelessly to keep this dialogue going among women and, indeed, to take our country from dialogue to development.

The Deputy President of South Africa, Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, applauded all the participants for attending the forum, especially those who came from afar. Interestingly, she introduced the “Turning a Pyramid into a Diamond” concept, saying: “Imagine a pyramid; currently poor people are trapped at the bottom of the pyramid. The top of the pyramid has the extremely rich people. An ideal society for us is diamond shaped with few rich people at the top, the majority of people in the middle of the diamond and a few very poor people at the bottom of the diamond that depend on the State. Our efforts in the fight against poverty must be about turning the pyramid into a diamond”.

On 3 and 5 July 2007 poverty alleviation workshops were held where groups discussed the different ways of combating poverty. Our team, which consisted of members of the SA Navy, SA Army, SA Air Force and SA Military Health Service discussed on both days how we, as the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), could assist and contribute towards the eradication of poverty. All material compiled during the poverty alleviation workshops will form part of SAWID’s action plan for the eradication of poverty in South Africa.

We are extremely proud and honoured to have been part of a course of this magnitude. It also gave us an opportunity to portray the SANDF as a force working for its people.
Sustain defence foreign relations

By Lebohang Letaoana
Photo: Cpl Elias Mahuma

The Chief of Defence Foreign Relations, Maj Gen Dan Mofokeng, welcomed the newly appointed military attachés to South Africa at an accreditation and de-accreditation ceremony held at the SA Army College in Pretoria on 17 July 2007.

He welcomed Col Antonio Carlos Faillace (Brazil), Col (GS) Marc van Laethem (Belgium), Col Gabriel Ondo Nguema (Gabon), Cmdr Hans Uwe Mergener (Germany), Group Capt Ashan Muhammad Khan (Pakistan) and Capt (N) Patricia Anne Jackson (USA).

“Gentlemen, your hard work and professional attitude made it a pleasure to work with you. Thank you for doing a sterling job. You have set a high standard for your successors and on behalf of Defence Foreign Relations I want to wish you all of the best with your personal lives and military careers; have a safe journey home”, said Maj Gen Mofokeng when he bade farewell to Col Lauro Pires da Silva (Brazil), Col Biyoghe-Be-Nze (Gabon) and Capt (N) Josef Demetris Hola (Germany) during his speech at the ceremony.

Dealing with security issues

By Lebohang Letaoana
Photo: Cpl Elias Mahuma

“This programme presents an opportunity of a lifetime: during the next twenty weeks you will have the opportunity to develop yourselves at the highest level the SANDF has to offer,” said the Chief of Human Resources, Lt Gen Temba Matanzima. This was at the opening of the Executive National Security Programme (ENSP) 16/07 at the SA National Defence College on 17 July 2007.

This programme, which has been running for the past seven years, deals with security issues.

Members of the SANDF, international members and other government departments, such as Correctional Services, the Department of Intelligence and the Department of Justice, as well as SITA and Armscor are attending it.

It is heart-warming to see everybody playing his or her part in this programme, as national security is not only for the military but for everyone.
Learner's job shadowing week at Navy Office

Sixteen-year-old Nandi Ganda from Wynberg Girl's High School in Cape Town visited the Navy Office from 26 to 29 June 2007. She is currently in Grade 11 and, as part of her life orientation syllabus she has to shadow an interesting career for a period of four days to get a realistic perspective on that career.

One of Nandi’s family friends is the Chief of the SA Navy, V Adm Refiloe Mudimu. She said the Navy photos in his house always fascinated her. She also loves discipline, order and presentation, things that also intrigued her. “When I asked him if I could shadow him, it was merely to understand and appreciate the work that he did. Now, having spent a day with ‘Uncle Refiloe’ as the Chief of the SA Navy, I realise the influence and power that he has and the value of his work,” she said.

On her expectations of the Navy Office she said: “I thought I would be going to this serious environment with the people stern and conservative”. Her verdict and impression after her first day was: “It was totally different from my expectations. I found the people friendly, welcoming and eager to help”, she said.

Because of prior engagements, the Chief of the SA Navy asked all the different directorates in the Navy Office and departments of SAS IMMORTELLE to orientate Nandi regarding their different specialities. When asked which department she would like to work at, she said: “I would definitely love to be the master-at-arms of SAS IMMORTELLE, as it is a hands-on job and involves interaction with people and helps and solve problems. I also see myself in the position of the Chief of the SA Navy, where I can make decisions that will effect positive change”.

Nandi had the privilege of attending the Navy Staff Command Council. She said that because of the uniform and level of seniority she initially felt intimidated. But once everything was explained to her she realised that the order and proceedings were similar to what they had been at school, where it was called the Representative Council of Learners. “It was impressive to see the co-operation, efficiency and passion of the members of the council,” she said.

Nandi’s words of gratitude to the SA Navy were: “I am grateful to have been given such an opportunity to shadow not one, but fourteen people. From where I am standing the SA Navy is doing a great job. I am now more insightful about the SA Navy and truly appreciate their work. I can also see why the SA Navy is called the People’s Navy”.

We wish her success in her studies, and who knows? Maybe one day she will join the SA Navy and finally get to wear the “ice cream suit” (SA Navy dress No 1AW), which is her favourite Navy uniform …
The Surgeon General is to host the first DOD HIV and AIDS International Conference in Pretoria from 12 to 14 November 2007. The theme will be: “The Impact of HIV and AIDS on Combat Readiness”.

South Africa, as a member of the SADC region, is interlinked in terms of socio-economics, infectious disease management and military operational activities that necessitate the sharing of experience and the exchange of knowledge in the region. In keeping with national recommendations it is important that infectious diseases, including HIV and AIDS, are managed regionally.

One of the objectives of this conference is to inform participants and delegates attending the conference of ongoing research and developmental activities in the military milieu and also to provide an opportunity to contribute to the debate on how research findings can impact on health care, and in particular, on the combat readiness of our soldiers. Such debates are expected to strengthen the foundation for multidisciplinary, multifaceted group research programmes in military health, and to identify funding priorities upon which such programmes would be based.

This conference thus also serves as a unique opportunity for DOD HIV and AIDS managers of the SADC countries to network with their counterparts. The exchange of knowledge that will take place during the conference between academics, SADC representatives, operational leaders and policy makers will greatly benefit the DOD HIV and AIDS Programme.

The conference will be attended by the DOD HIV and AIDS managers from the SADC countries and is also open to members of the DOD that are involved or associated with HIV and AIDS in the Department. Any member who wishes to attend the conference should contact the Conference Secretariat at Lotus Notes: DirectorateHIVAIDS/SAMHS/DOD(g).DOD.

For updated information on the conference and to view the requirements for the first call for abstracts please refer to the SAMHS intranet site (hms.mil.za) and the DOD internet site (http://www.mhs.mil.za).
mission training

Infantrymen gearing up for deployment to the Sudan

By Amn Ally Rakoma
Photos: F Sgt David Nomshongwana

The South African Government has officially declared its commitment to playing a meaningful role in Africa and the rest of the international community, particularly in the war-ravaged countries. The White Paper also declares that it is in the South African national interest to assist people who suffer from famine, political repression, natural disasters and the scourge of violent and armed conflict.

On 1 and 2 August 2007 SA Soldier visited 7 SA Infantry Battalion (7 SAI Bn) in Ba-Phalaborwa in the Limpopo Province to observe the retraining Force preparation exercise. The purpose of the exercise was to prepare our soldiers for deployment to the Sudan. The retraining exercise and pre-deployment training phase, which included combat-readiness evaluations, were conducted at the General Ben Viljoen Training Area, outside Ba-Phalaborwa.

Lt Col Khathutshelo Nethononda, Officer Commanding of 7 SAI Bn, 2Lt Ndlovhuvo Makhado, Communication Officer of 7 SAI Bn, and other senior members of the unit welcomed the SA Soldier team and wished us a wonderful and pleasant outdoor stay in the bush. In the evening the tranquility of the bush was shattered by the powerful roar of R4 rifles, LMGs, RPGs, light thunders, smoke grenades and combat vehicle movements.

Lt Col Nethononda briefed us on the aim and objectives of the retraining exercise, while WO1 Ronald Mugari, the Combat Readiness Warrant
Officer, informed us about the night defensive fire plan of a battalion in a defensive position.

The comprehensive retraining exercise included section battle drills, section attacks, platoon attacks, base protection, vehicle control points, foot and vehicle patrols, counter-ambush, mine drills, firing movements (day and night), combat life-saving procedures, map reading, convoy and escorts. Members also received training in driving and maintenance in Upington in the Northern Cape to enable them to drive Mambas in the Kalahari sand in order to prepare them to drive in the sandy desert of the Sudan.

The scenarios and approach of the retraining exercise was closely based on the real situation in the Sudan. Part of the contingents training and evaluation was meant to show how members would react if an incident occurred, and to forward all the necessary information to the relevant personnel. Scenarios were demonstrated where contingents of Alpha, Bravo and Charlie Companies practised crowd management, negotiations skills, escorts, evacuation of personnel, diplomatic staff and other foreign nationals caught up in local hostilities, which are very real in the world and could be possible incidents and scenarios.

Women demonstrated bravely their high level of operational preparedness on their journey to the unknown. Speaking to SA Soldier, 2Lt Makhado said: “Each member of the unit is geared and prepared to go to the Sudan to answer this important international demand as peace ambassadors”.

During counter-ambush and live firing movements Maj Mahlomola Motsitsi, Charlie Company Commander, explained every action that would take place and why it was necessary.

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Soldiers dismounting from a 4X4 Mamba vehicle during attack.

The deploying contingent of 7 SAI Bn went through the Chaplains Support Programme for the Deployment and Project Resilience presented by the chaplains and social workers of the Unit. It was apparent that the contingent was positive, high spirited, committed, enthusiastic and operationally combat ready. The exercise demonstrated the firepower of the attacking force against an opposing force.

7 SAI Bn is a motorised infantry battalion in the SA Army that forms part of the rapid deployment force. Its headquarters are near the Kruger National Park gate and situated a few kilometres to Ba-Phalaborwa.

Of special note were the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Mopani district town of Ba-Phalaborwa on 31 July 2007. The celebrations culminated in the awarding of the Freedom of Entry to the town to 7 SAI Bn, which caused much excitement for the locals.
The SA Army Artillery Formation held an open day at 4 Artillery Regiment in Potchefstroom to demonstrate its artillery capabilities to the public on 28 July 2007. This demo also formed the culmination of the Artillery Course Support One exercise.

On a chilly winters day the event was opened with a bang! Parachutists landed right in front of the VIP stand to the excitement of the crowd. Then three helicopters did a fly-past while dropping weapons. Everyone was excited and looking forward to see more …

Brig Gen Abe Notshweleka, the GOC of the SA Army Artillery Formation, heartily welcomed everyone present to the annual Artillery Open Day. "Ladies and gentlemen, what you will see today, in a few minutes, will instil in you the confidence that your security and that of our neighbours is guaranteed in the hands of the SA Army and the SA National Defence Force. With the firepower demonstration that you will see now, you will witness the capabilities that you have as the guns roar and fire in great anger to ensure deterrence against any potential aggressor," said Brig Gen Notshweleka.

"Today's demonstration is just that, a demo under peaceful conditions, but after witnessing what our men and women will display today, you will surely agree that success on the battlefield cannot be assured without gunners and their guns.

"... All of you present here today will experience the performance of proud gunners and we believe that this will inspire present and future generations of young men and women to have the desire to serve the guns and to be part of this wonderful family around you!"

He concluded by inviting the guests: "... Sit back, relax and enjoy this special day with the SA Army Artillery Formation."
Maj Gen Roy Andersen, Chief of Defence Reserves, salutes while the GV5 - 155 mm gun howitzer - Luiperd passes by during the Artillery Open Day parade.

... They were not disappointed. Many weapons were fired during the day: platoon weapons such as R4 assault rifles, Ap-65 rifle grenades, multiple grenade launchers - 40 mm, light machine guns, the Patmor - 60 mm patrol mortars, as well as artillery systems, such as the M5 - 120 mm mortar, the GV5 - 155 mm gun howitzer - Luiperd, the GV6 - 155 mm self-propelled gun howitzer - Renoster and the multiple rocket launcher - Bateleur.

During the day platoon weapons and artillery systems manned by artillerymen and women were on display for the curious, while the tent of the Gunners Association attracted inquisitive visitors. To combat the cold, hot beverages, curry and rice, and much more could be bought from the many food stalls.

You are all invited to the next Open Day in 2008!
The SA Air Force Fund Benevolent Affairs (SAAF FBA) was established to consolidate and prioritise donations and assistance from industry in order to fund certain activities, functions and events associated with SAAF image building and the preservation of the heritage of the SAAF.

The Chief of the SAAF, however, was concerned that the limited funds utilised for benevolent activities compared to the other applications of the fund. From this concern came the idea to establish a project in which financial assistance could be made available from the fund to help serving members whose children had some form of disability. The aim is to provide for their needs where the military medical services are not able to do so. Initially this assistance would only be available to serving members who are also members of the SAAF Fund. Depending on available funds and the needs analysis the assistance would be extended at a later stage.

The name of the project is SINOTHANDO, which is a Zulu word referring to love in the family and caring about each other. It explains what the project is about. The SAAF has always taken pride in caring for its people and this is just another way of showing it. Fourteen parents have already been assisted through the project. It provides assistance not only of a monetary nature, but also provides information, assistance, etc that can improve the quality of life for the parents or the children. Some of the disabilities that are dealt with are cerebral palsy, children with brain injuries, epilepsy, Tourettes Syndrome, physical disabilities, muscular dystrophy and even children with special learning impairments. Assistance has also been provided in one of only five known cases of micro-syndrome in the world.

Since the budget for the first cycle of the project made provision for it, an application was made to the steering committee of the project to donate the funds to establish a Braille media centre at the DOD disability nodal point. Although it would not be wise to purchase a Jaws Braille printer package for any specific person or any specific member, the DOD Disability Equity Section is in the process of establishing a Braille media centre for the utilisation of all blind personnel employed by the DOD. Members are often required to attend meetings and obtain written agendas, minutes and other documentation, and since the DOD does not have a single Braille printer the members are required to take the relevant documents to the National Council for the Blind for interpretation and printing.

The printer package mentioned is costly, but will enable several members to participate as equals in the workplace. The package translates written, typed and electronic media, allows documents to be scanned and is able to print, read and store documentation in Braille.

The Chief Directorate for Transformation Management will supply the Braille Media Centre with a large enough computer to support the system and purchase the applicable software.

Mr M.J. Swart, Deputy Director DOD Disability Equity (Chief Directorate Transformation Management), received the donation at the Chief of the SA Air Force Benevolent Golf Day Gala Function on 11 May 2007. This Golf Day was held in cooperation with all the donors to the SAAF FBA and has become part of a proud tradition. Without the participation and support of the members of the Air Force Fund, the Fellows of the Air Force Fund and many true friends of the SAAF this project would not be able to make a difference to the lives of many serving members and their children.
A

n IsiXhosa language course was presented at 526 Squadron at Air Force Base Langebaanweg from 4 to 22 June 2007. Twelve students (abafundi in IsiXhosa) were present of which nine were members of 526 Squadron. The Squadron Officer Commanding, Lt Col N. Swarts, set the example to his squadron members by attending the course with them. The teacher, (titshala in IsiXhosa) Chief Petty Officer M.S. (Sydney) Mrabalala, is from the Language Section at Naval Base Simon’s Town.

The aim during the first week of the course was to take the students from the known English to the unknown IsiXhosa. As students on this course we wondered if we would ever survive the full duration of the course, as this language seemed so difficult. However, it was possible to say: "Uvavanyo lwethu lokukala silubhale kwiveki yokuqala kwanye bonke abafundi baphumelela emagqabini kwiziphumo," meaning: "Our first examination also took place in week one and all the students achieved outstanding results."

The second week went a bit better as we were now pronouncing words, phrases, building sentences and all the students started to feel more at ease with the language. We also started reading small passages that later had to be translated into English. The English language has many more words, while the IsiXhosa language tends to combine words to make full sentences. It is for this reason that a sentence in IsiXhosa as we see it can sometimes consist of only one word. An example of this is "Ndiyasebenza" which actually means: "I am working" when translated into English. The homework we had to do was meant to ensure that everyone was on the same level and that all the students had understood the work. Although this was only a Level 1 course for this specific language, it was something that all the students had to get accustomed to. There were many laughs as everyone tried to pronounce the words and phrases as correctly as possible. Sydney was pleased with the progress we had made and he was always there to assist when problems regarding the pronunciation of the words were encountered.

The third and final week was when all the evaluations took place. "Uvavanyo lokugqibela nolubhalwayo, uvavanyo ngokuncokola notitshala kwakuncokola nokufunda kwenzeka kwiveki yokugqibela kwezizifundo. Utitshala uye wazifumana, zazelesekiswa iminingo yakhe, ukubeni esithathe wasisa kwivanga ebesingayazi, kodwa saphumelela kuba yonke into ibisenzi ngesi Xhosa, means: "A final written examination, an oral conversation with the instructor and a reading exercise took place during the final week of this course. The instructor had achieved his goal of taking us from the known to the unknown and back again as these evaluations were all in IsiXhosa."

The results were excellent with Lt Col Swarts setting the example once again to his squadron members. He achieved an overall of 99%. The course as a whole achieved an average of 95%. The instructor was really impressed by this achievement and recommended that these specific course members nominate themselves for the Level 2 course, which will take place in 2008.

The course ended in true West Coast style with the squadron members taking the instructor and the visiting SA Air Force students from other units on a tour along the West Coast. It all ended with a "snoek braai" at the squadron before everyone parted for the weekend. We would like to thank Chief Petty Officer Mrabalala for presenting the course to us in such a professional manner. We would also like to thank our fellow SA Air Force members from Air Force Base Bloemspruit and Ysterplaat for attending the course with us in true 526 Squadron style.

"Amazwi wokugqibela ndifuna ukuthi "Nihambe Kakuhle" kuwo wonke umuntu obebukanye nathi kwesizifundo nakubo bonke abafundi besicatshulwa, means: "On a final note I would like to say: "Hamba kakule" which means "Good bye, go well". This to everyone who attended the course and to the readers."

By F Sgt M.A. Rensburg, Kennel Master 526 Squadron
The Directorate Corporate Communication (DCC) held an operations communication workshop at the SA Army Engineering Formation in Pretoria from 23 to 27 July 2007. Ten communication officers from the four Services attended the workshop.

Col Marthie Visser officially opened the workshop in her capacity as Acting Director Corporate Communication on 23 July 2007. In her opening remarks Col Visser said: "Corporate Communication officers are not always included in the decision-making processes in the Department. This prevents the communication officers from providing advice to their Officers Commanding (OCs) on the communication implications of such decisions taken."

She highlighted some of the activities that the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) was involved in, eg peace missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Comoros, Burundi and the Sudan. She also mentioned that South Africa did not exist in isolation, but was part of Africa and the global community. Hence it had to take part in stabilising the continent and the world.

Different communication experts within the Department of Defence (DOD) were invited to present and share their experiences. In every presentation the phrase "organisational image" was the focal point. Col Daan Boshoff from Chief Joint Operations gave a lecture on the role of the communication officers during operations. "You are the advisers to your OC; you must have a communication plan in the operational area, which you must present to the OC for approval," he said. He also emphasised the importance of close contact between corporate communication officers and OCs on a daily basis during operations. He added that the communication officers were not to take the Unit activities lightly.

The participants showed special interest in the presentations by the Media Liaison Section of DCC headed by Col Petrus Motlhabane, assisted by his experienced staff members, Maj Niko Allie and Maj Ronald Maseko. This subject was made more interesting by the various challenging practical scenarios that were presented to the participants. These scenarios were simulated to put the members in a "real" situation of dealing with the media at media conferences and during crises.

Col Motlhabane emphasised the importance of adhering to the Ministerial Instruction 1/2000, which dealt with the unauthorised release of information. He elaborated on how best to apply this instruction in order to communicate or speak with one voice. It was agreed that the best way of building a good relationship with the media was to keep to the deadlines and arrange media conferences so that information could be given to the media before they started hunting for it. They were reminded that the image of the SANDF and the DOD was a priority in all their communication with the media.

Although the workshop was very interesting and informative, all the participants agreed that there were still many challenges facing the communication officers on the ground, especially at unit level, because OCs often did not understand the role and importance of the communication officers. Col Louis Kirstein from SAMHS presented the Crisis Communication Plan and reassured the communication officers that they were playing a fundamental role in the organisation. He advised them to have their Crisis Communication Plans in place at all times and always to make themselves indispensable to the Unit and OC.

The participants were also exposed to the subject of protocol, particularly where it related to visits and invitations of senior people to units and deployment areas. The specialist in the field of protocol, Col J. Mothupi from Defence Foreign Relations, presented procedures and regulations that were to be adhered to when inviting senior or foreign guests to deployment areas.

On 27 July Brig Gen Kwena Mangope, Director Corporate Communication, declared the workshop closed. In his closing remarks, he said: "We are still not doing enough to profile the role of the SANDF in support of government's diplomatic initiatives, ie to be a partner in bringing about peace and stability on the continent." He emphasised the need for the creation of public awareness and appreciation of South Africa's international relations at home and abroad.

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Front, fltr: Capt H. Mathekga, Lt Col M.F. Dlali (convener of the workshop), Brig Gen K.D. Mangope (Director Corporate Communication), Lt Col S.E. Matomane and Cdr Z. Sithole. Back, fltr: Capt L. Gaga, Lt F. Goodheart, S Lt S. Khasuli, Lt Cdr P.G. van der Berg, Lt Col V. Dlamini, Ms N. de Ru and S Lt R. Khumalo.
Reserve Force Colonels save lives

By Col Peter Boulle, SSO Reserves, Engineer Formation

Col Pat Acutt, SSO KZN Regional Reserve Office, Col Derek Moe, Honorary Colonel 19 Field Engineer Regiment, and Col Peter Boulle, SSO Reserves, SA Army Engineer Formation, have between them made over 340 life-saving blood donations.

Col Acutt is a platelet donor. After platelets are collected from the donor’s blood and processed through a cell separator they are removed and preserved. The remaining blood components are returned to the donor.

Platelets are used to control bleeding and to enable blood clotting. They are given to children and adults suffering from cancer or leukemia who have received chemotherapy and radiation treatment, transplant patients, patients suffering from various anaemias and to prevent severe blood loss during surgery.

Honorary Colonel Moe has blood type O Rh Negative. Such donors are known as “universal donors”. Blood from these donors may be given to a patient belonging to any other blood group. In cases of extreme emergency such transfusions are administered without any prior testing. In addition, Col Moe has other blood group factors present and his blood may also be used for laboratory purposes to help find compatible blood for patients for whom it is difficult to find suitable blood.

Col Boulle, on the other hand, has been immunised against rabies and his immune system has responded by building up a high level of rabies antibodies in his plasma. These antibodies may be harvested in the same way as platelets, using a cell separator, after which they are further processed into a vial containing rabies immunoglobulin. This is given to patients who have been exposed to or bitten by a suspect rabid animal to offer them immediate protection from contracting rabies, which is a fatal disease. Post-exposure treatment includes wound cleaning and the administration of the immunoglobulin after which a course of rabies vaccine is given.

South Africa is at present experiencing its worst outbreak of rabies in 30 years. KwaZulu-Natal, the worst affected area, reported deaths from the disease.

The three Colonels all donate for different reasons, but no donor is more special than another. Blood donors of all types are always desperately needed. Anyone prepared to follow the example of the three Colonels is urged to contact the Blood Transfusion Service on 080 011 9031 for further information.

It’s in your hands, you may help save many lives.

Ftr: Col Pat Acutt, SSO KZN Regional Reserve Office, Col Derek Moe, Honorary Colonel 19 Field Engineer Regiment, and Col Peter Boulle, SSO Reserves, Engineer Formation.
Hosting the South African Post Office

By Col L.A. Nilsen, SSO Corp Com
CMIS Reserve Force

Signal Regiment hosted senior Post Office officials at a function in the passenger terminal at Air Force Base Waterkloof on 30 March 2007. Project SHIELD sponsored the occasion. Guests were welcomed by Col Sam Madumane, Acting General Officer Commanding Air Force Base Waterkloof, and Brig Gen Charles Menze, General Officer Commanding Command and Management Information Systems (CMIS) Operations Formation.

The function was arranged to provide the Post Office with more information on the Reserve Force, especially the critical role played by the Reserve Force in supporting the SANDF during deployments in peacekeeping operations. The occasion also provided an opportunity to thank Post Office officials for their unconditional support over many years to 11 Field Postal Unit, a Reserve Force unit that handles all mail to and from deployed SANDF members in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi and the Sudan.

Brig Gen Dennis Jelliman, Director CMIS Reserve Force, briefed the guests on all aspects regarding the Reserve Force and its utilisation. He specifically referred to the vital role the South African Post Office and its senior personnel have played to date, and stressed that without their continued support and goodwill it would not be possible to render an efficient postal service to the SANDF and its members.

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The South African Post Office has been supporting the Reserve Force for some time. It is one of a few organisations that allows its members to be deployed for up to three months so as to provide an uninterrupted postal service to deployed SANDF members and their families at home. These members are not penalised in any way for the time spent in the Reserve Force and maintain their seniority and all other benefits that would accrue to them had they been at their normal work. The South African Post Office is the only company supporting the SANDF in this fashion and is definitely setting a trend which it is hoped that industry will follow.

Guests were taken on a trip to the Hartbeespoort Dam in an Oryx helicopter by 21 Squadron, and experienced a scenic tour of the dam and developments along its banks and the Pretoria CBD from the air. The experience of the flight in a helicopter was a first for some and was clearly noticeable when the chopper did some tight turns to show off the view on one side or the other. Those sitting close to the doors had to hang on very tightly.

On landing the guests were shown the new postal facility, Field Post Office 3, at the main entrance to Air Force Base Waterkloof. This building had just been renovated in a very short time due to the efforts of Lt Col Rudi van Heerden, Maj Johnny Botha and Maj Oscar van den Berg from the Engineering Corps who was the project leader.

With the assistance and support offered by the South African Post Office this facility is shortly to be upgraded to a fully-fledged post office that will provide all post office services to personnel at the Air Force Base and civilians in the surrounding areas.

The day was a huge success as Post Office officials supporting 11 Field Postal Unit have for the first time been given insight into the role and function of the Reserve Force and the specific role they play in supporting the Government in bringing about peace and stability on the African continent. The support of the South African Post Office in this regard is not to be underestimated.
You can achieve your goals

Have you ever wondered how some people seem to get ahead in life with the minimum amount of effort, while others appear to make little progress? It’s probably no secret that they have a plan for their life, says Rosie Wilson, market development manager for Old Mutual.

Contrary to popular belief, financial planning is not only for the wealthy, but for any person with dreams. “Few people realise that achieving one’s goals in life requires nothing more than a certain level of commitment and a good financial plan,” Wilson continued.

Design your own blueprint for life

It all starts with having a plan supported by sound financial advice. Once you have an idea of what you want to achieve, you need to take action by getting help from an authorised financial adviser or broker.

He or she will draw up a flexible plan that takes into account your goals, your level of affordability and risk profile, and recommend the steps that will get you to where you want to be. And if your life’s circumstances should change, you can update your plan at any time to accommodate your changing needs.

Leave it to the people who know best

Just as you wouldn’t visit a dentist to get your blood pressure checked, you wouldn’t leave your financial future in the hands of someone not qualified. An experienced financial adviser or broker has the right qualifications to help you create a well-balanced financial portfolio that takes into account your own unique needs, while making provision for your goals, and protecting you and your family from life’s uncertainties.

Your financial plan will help you to:

- Achieve your goals and tackle life’s challenges.
- Get out of debt and take control of your financial future.
- Provide financial security for you and your family in the event of unforeseen circumstances.
- Retire financially independent in the lifestyle you are accustomed to.

Says Wilson: “Your best line of defence in life is a financial plan. Without a map to help you navigate your life in a certain direction, you can never hope to realise your goals.”

Don’t simply let life happen. Go out and make it happen! For advice that suits your lifestyle, your needs, and your pocket, contact your Old Mutual personal financial adviser or broker and go and make those dreams come true!

ROSIE WILSON
Market Development Manager
The Department of Defence is sensitive to issues of disability, and has once more demonstrated to our military community its commitment to raising awareness about people with disabilities by conducting a sign language course at the Naval Mess in Pretoria in July 2007.

The course was presented by Mr Peter Gouws, the main facilitator, and Mr Arios Bokaba, the assistant facilitator from the Tshwane Sign Language Centre. It was a great opportunity for the members from the different Services who attended to bridge the existing communication problems with hearing impaired clients.

SA Soldier conversed with Mr Gouws who said that the plight of hearing impaired people was very close to his heart.

He highlighted sensitive issues facing people with disabilities and encouraged members of the DOD to support and respect them. Ms Khensani Teffu, a Senior State Accountant at the Division Financial Control Services, said that the sign language course had been an eye-opener and that she had learned many signs. "It is our responsibility to make our working environments accessible to people with disabilities," concluded Ms Teffu.

This is a clear indication that the DOD has accepted people with disabilities and has made their working environment more suitable for them and raised awareness about their needs, contributions and potential.
The launch of Programme Phakamisa

By Lebohang Letaoana
Photo: Cpl Elias Mahuma

The Surgeon General, Lt Gen Vejaynand Ramlakan, embarked on a programme to improve the fitness level in the Department of Defence (DOD) after witnessing the levels of high obesity and low physical fitness in the DOD. Programme Phakamisa, the official SAMHS physical training programme, was launched at the Thaba Tshwane sports grounds on 1 June 2007. (Phakamisa means lift up or pull up.)

A large number of SAMHS members from different units assembled at the sports grounds to participate in this initiative. In his speech the Surgeon General said: "Given how inherent physical unfitness is to our business in the military, we have been deliberate in calling this physical training initiative a programme as opposed to a project. A project, the way it is understood in Defence, is time-bound and ends in the achievement of the required outputs. Physical fitness is a prime requirement and an inherent one for us in the military. This initiative to revive physical training cannot therefore be called a project, but is a programme".

He added that for this initiative to succeed the physical training sessions had to be conducted during working hours and not left to individuals training after hours, and that a minimum of three hours a week should be dedicated to physical training.

"Physical fitness may be one of the criteria used to determine a member’s eligibility for the proposed salary dispensation for health care workers,” concluded Lt Gen Ramlakan.

Cultivating the culture of learning

By Amn Ally Rakoma
Photo: F Sgt David Nomtshongwana

As enshrined in the Constitution of the RSA, our Bill of Rights states that everyone has the right to have access to basic education and further education and training opportunities irrespective of gender, race, colour, sex or creed.

This was evident on 28 June 2007 at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria at the Armscor Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) certificate ceremony to honour 21 ABET learners from the Department of Defence (DOD), Armscor, Molly Mop and Cold Control.

This day was also set aside to give credit to Ms Nonto Seemela, an ABET facilitator, Mr Xolani Magojo, General Manager Human Resources from Armscor, and Capt Dorcus Masemola from JSB MOD Hospitality Services, for the significant role they played in developing these learners. Ms Yvonne Mudimu, an ABET Assessor (wife of the Chief of the SA Navy), extended warm congratulations to the recipients of the certificates.

Mr Xolani Magojo, General Manager Human Resource: Armscor, congratulates Ms Agnes Mahlobo from the SANDF who completed ABET Level 2 Communication. (In the background Ms Nonto Seemela, an ABET facilitator (left), presents Ms Anastacia Maponyane from Armscor, who completed ABET Level 2 Communication, with a certificate.)

SA Soldier asked Ms Rosemary Pholose, an ABET Level 4 learner from the DOD, about her future plans in the DOD. She replied that she was optimistic about her future in the DOD and would like to see herself occupying a skilled higher position. "Many of us have never had this chance before, but for now everyone of us is at liberty to learn for free through ABET. Come out of the darkness, upgrade your status, express yourselves, take a step ahead and have a dream," said Ms Pholose.

To the recipients: SA Soldier hopes you reach beyond the ordinary. One who believes that life has no meaning experiences a feeling of hopelessness. Do not limit your knowledge. There is no substitute for knowledge. Never be afraid to try something new. Continue to read further and use every moment in life to be the person you always wanted to be. It is never too late to be what you might have been. Congratulations!
The annual SA National Defence Force Rugby Association’s (SANDFRA) Rugby Week, one of the prestigious events on the SANDF sport calendar, took place at Army Support Base (ASB) Potchefstroom in June 2007.

Sixteen teams participated in this year’s Rugby Week, in two leagues:

**SANDF Senior League**
- North West (NW)
- Free State (FS) A
- Northern Cape (NC) A
- Gauteng (GT) A
- South Eastern Cape (SEC) A
- Western Province (WP) A
- Boland (Bol)
- Botswana

**President’s League**
- KwaZulu-Natal (KZN)
- Free State (FS) B
- Northern Cape (NC) B
- Gauteng (GT) B
- South Eastern Cape (SEC) B
- Western Province (WP) B
- Limpopo/Mpumalanga (Lim Pumas)
- Potchefstroom Town Invitation XV (Potch XV)

Botswana once again participated in this year’s Rugby Week, while Zambia declined the invitation at a late stage. An invitation team from the Potchefstroom Town Rugby Club also participated this year.

The opening ceremony of the event took place on 25 June at the Johann du Randt Sports Stadium at ASB Potchefstroom. Mr Jannie Prinsloo, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the South African Rugby Union (SARU), was the main functionary at this event.

Matches were played on 25, 27 and 29 June 2007. The overall winners of the 2007 SANDFRA Rugby Week were as follows:

- **Winner of the Senior League:** Boland.
- **Winner of the President’s League:** Free State B.
- **Player of the Week of the Senior League:** L. Hanekom (Boland).
- **Player of the Week of the President’s League:** D. Mahona (Free State).
- **Referee of the Week:** Petri Bosch. A 7-a-side demonstration match between a Gauteng and a Free State team took place on 26 June 2007 before the development clinics commenced. The aim was to introduce and promote this form of rugby, specifically in preparation for an envisaged international 7-a-side tournament to be hosted by the SANDFRA in 2008.

Development clinics for previously disadvantaged players in the Ikageng and Promosa townships of Potchefstroom took place on 26 and 28 June 2007 and went down very well.

A rugby team manager course was also presented during the week.

A social function was hosted on 27 June 2007 to express the SANDF Rugby Association’s gratitude and appreciation to the organisers, supporters and sponsors of SA Rugby. The main sponsor of SANDF Rugby for 2007 was also announced at this function, viz MANITOU Southern Africa. Mr Lindsay Shankland, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MANITOU, presented a cheque to the value of R150 000.00 to Col (Rev) Pieter Oberholzer, President of the SANDFRA. The main functionary at this event.
The SANDF's Reserve Force Shooting Team recently returned from a successful tour to Bisley in the United Kingdom. They competed in the Territorial Army (TARA) competition against the best of the British Army's reserve forces and the Falkland Islands.

Lt Bekker and Lt Botha attained Top Fifty status, while the SA Reserve Force team was awarded the Bronze Medal in the international match. The British Army was awarded Gold and Falkland Islands Silver.

Carbineer Dolly Mncwabe came fourth in the women's competition, missing the Bronze Medal by a single point. She joined the Reserve Force in 2001. In 2003 she attended regular shooting practices and training with the Natal Carbineers. In 2005 she was chosen for the SA Combat Rifle Association Championships in the Western Cape, where she earned her Natal Team Colours.

Mr Lindsay Shankland, CEO of MANITOU Southern Africa (right), presents a cheque to the value of R150,000 to Col Pieter Oberholzer, President of SANDFR.

The team relaxing between shoots during a rare moment of sunshine, fltr: Maj Braam Korff, Lt Piet Spies, Rfn Dolly Mncwabe, Maj John Hall (Manager), Rfn Ngamela Dambuza, Rfn Bruce Mahlangu, L Cpl Rudi Mentor, Lt Piet Bekker and Lt Eben Botha.
**SA Sea Cadets active for more than a century**

By Capt (SCC) W.M. Bartie

The South African Sea Cadets, a Section 21 Company, recognises and subscribes to the challenge of the Government's initiatives in respect of youth training.

The response of the Sea Cadets has been to introduce new and dynamic training for its cadets.

This training will result in the cadets qualifying for the Personal Safety and Survival at Sea South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Unit Standard 114923, and for the internationally recognised Standard of Training Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Able Seaman. These qualifications will provide the boys and girls with a creditable qualification that will help them to seek employment in the maritime sector of the South African economy when they complete their schooling.

But who are the South African Sea Cadets? The organisation was founded in Cape Town on 8 June 1905 and is the second oldest maritime youth training organisation in the world and the oldest such organisation on the African continent. It caters for boys and girls from the year in which they start Grade 6 at school, until they finally leave school at the end of Grade 12.

The organisation is not a school in itself as all its training is purely extramural and voluntary. It is staffed by volunteer instructors who give their time freely and have a great dedication to training young people. The organisation has 14 active training establishments and 500 cadets throughout South Africa and has a demographic profile of over 85% who come from the formerly disadvantaged and poor communities. Altogether 47% were girls, not bad for gender representivity!

The cadets wear a uniform and are subject to naval style discipline. Yet the training is not only about the maritime world; in all cases, whatever the actual skill being imparted, the less tangible values such as discipline, self-respect, self-esteem, self-worth, self-confidence, self-identity, resilience, attitude, successful teamwork, leadership and citizenship underlie the training. These values are at the core of the Sea Cadets’ ethos, and will translate into whatever field of endeavour the Cadets progress to on reaching adulthood.

The SA Navy recognises and supports the endeavours of the Sea Cadets, which are regarded as one of their corporate social investment initiatives. The SA Navy runs courses at the end of the year at their training facility, SAS SIMONSBERG, where cadets are introduced to various training programmes not available at their own training bases.

The Sea Cadet movement in South Africa is grateful for the financial support it receives from the private sector and individuals, while local training establishment support is funded by the initiatives and efforts of the South African Sea Cadet Association. The Sea Cadets runs on a tight annual budget estimated at R2M per year.

For more information, readers may contact Captain (SCC) W.M. Bartie on 083 400 5831 or via email on sasc@telkomsa.net or on the website www.seacadets.za.org.

The young Sea Cadets who were part of the initial project held in Port Elizabeth earlier this year.
Love until it hurts

By Cpln Melanie Smit, Chaplain AFB Waterkloof

If you love me, you will do …” How many times have you heard these words from a loved one? How many times have you spoken these words to the person that you love?

We tend to measure people’s love for us by the decisions they make. If his decisions are made according to my expectations and are what I want - then he obviously loves me. But if he chooses to do something that I did not want or wish for, even though it is to my benefit, then I start doubting his love for me.

As the women of South Africa and the women of the SANDF - what motivates our decisions that we make regarding our families, our organisation and our country? Do we feel loved only when our loved ones, organisation or country makes decisions that benefit us? Is it self-love, or better described as selfishness, that influences my decisions about these parties? Or am I prepared to love my family, my organisation and my country without expecting anything in return?

Let us dream for a moment of a world where we love each other with a sacrificial love. What happens in a relationship where I am prepared to put the other person’s needs before my own? How does my love for that person influence my decisions? Take for instance the relationship between a mother and child. If she loves her child with a sacrificial love, that child will never go hungry, but she will also always feel loved and protected.

How can we as the women of South Africa make a difference in our country? This reminds me of the story of Sophia …

Sophia was a lady of 75 that lived alone in a very humble house in Ga Rankua. All her family had died a long time ago, leaving her to provide for her
grow, but she will also always feel loved and protected.

self. Sophia was very poor, but she still worked very hard. She mended clothing from early morning until late at night.

Because Sophia had to work so hard just to survive, she did not have time to visit other people. Her only companion was God. She would talk to Him the whole day and tell Him what she was thinking and feeling. One day Sophia was very lonely and she asked God if He would visit her. God said that she must look out for Him; He would visit her the following day. Sophia was so excited that she nearly worked straight through the night to prepare a meal for her Guest with the little she had.

The next morning Sophia didn’t work. She waited for God to visit her. At mid-morning a woman came to her house. She was badly beaten and explained that she was running away from her husband who was abusing her. She asked if she could have some water and maybe something to eat. Sophia was waiting for her Guest, but she could not allow this frightened woman to leave hungry. So she gave her some of the food that she prepared for God and they talked. When the woman left Sophia had a new friend.

At lunchtime a young boy came crying to Sophia. He was looking after his younger sister because both their parents were dead. He had not been able to feed his sister for two days and now she was very ill. Sophia thought about her Guest that might arrive at any moment, but then she could not send the boy away empty-handed. She gave him enough food for himself and his sister and also the last medicine she had in her house. Before he left she told him a few stories that he could share with his sister to make her feel better.

By supertime Sophia was still waiting for her Guest when a man asked her if she could spare some food for him. He had been mugged and stabbed on the train. Sophia knew that she only had enough food left for one person. If she gave the food to this man, she would not have anything to give to God. But she could not send him away. She cleaned and dressed his wound and then she gave him the last of the food she had prepared for God.

When the man left it was nearly time for bed and Sophia knew that it was too late for anyone to visit her now. She took her Bible and it fell open at Matthew 25:34-40: “… Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you …?’ The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me’.”

Are you prepared to love your family, your organisation and your country with a selfless and sacrificial love? It will hurt, but the outcome will be something out of this world!
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