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FRONT COVER: Chaplain General of the SANDF, Brig Gen (Rev) Marius Cornelissen (left), presented a Holy Bible, New International Version, to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, the former Chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, at the first International Military Chief of Chaplains Conference held in Cape Town in February 2009. Read all about this international spiritual intervention on pages 18 to 20. (Photo: Sgt Elias Mahuma)

For the latest news on defence matters in South Africa, visit our website at: www.sasoldier.mil.za

Above: Corporal Arlene Heather Titus became the first female SANDF drum major to lead a band and Guard of Honour on parade for the official Opening of Parliament on 6 February 2009. (Photo: Pte L.M. Mothasedi)
From the Editor's desk

hou shalt love thy neighbour.” This is such a noble belief which every person should strive towards achieving. Just recently an international spiritual intervention was held which encouraged forgiveness - a belief that goes hand-in-hand with the statement. This first International Military Chief of Chaplains Conference was held in Cape Town with the theme: “The Role of the Chaplain in Reconciliation and Healing in Post-conflict Reconstruction”. Please read about this spiritual revival on pages 18 to 20.

As part of shaping the nation’s historical consciousness, members of the Defence Staff Council and Defence Corporate Communication recently visited the Freedom Park. Heritage is viewed as the key tool for Africa’s transformation. It has the potential and ability to raise the consciousness of people. Our heritage is indeed the foundation on which we as a nation are working to rebuild our society. We may come from a divided past, but our history serves to reinforce the importance of yesterday to all of us today. Please read page 17 to be enchanted by the Freedom Park.


A memorial service, held at Fort Klapperkop, was in remembrance of all Infanteers who paid the ultimate price for the country. During the memorial service the General Officer Commanding of the SA Army Infantry Formation, Maj Gen T.M. Nkabinde, honoured all Infanteers who fell in the service of their country, and said that their loved ones might forever rejoice in the knowledge that they served their country with pride and dignity. “They are the nation’s heroes.” Read about this event on page 21.

You can also be a hero. The Senior Chief Warrant Officer of the SA Army has recently instituted an informal award for good service in the form of a medallion. The medallion can be awarded to any member of the SANDF or civilian who has rendered a service that is deemed to be worthy. Strive to be awarded such a medallion for excellence. Read more about the medallions for excellence on page 23.

Keep in mind that we should be kind to one another and be part of building a better place for all.

Nelda Pienaar
Editor

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SECURITY IS A COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY

We often hear, as it is often said, that security is a command responsibility. There is every reason to believe that all commanders in the SANDF, especially senior officers (ie Majors and above) KNOW THIS. However, as you are well aware, there is a difference between knowing something and understanding it. While one has confidence that all senior officers know that security is a command responsibility, it is not clear whether all senior officers have a clear understanding of what this means. One can only hope they do, for it would be a sad day if it is discovered that all of them or the majority of them do not understand or the majority of them do, but do not care.

It has been the observation of Defence Intelligence over the years that this seems to have been easily said by various officers in various forums and for various reasons. Unfortunately, easy as this has been said, the reality on the ground does not really match the rhetoric.

The extent of damage and loss through theft in our units, and the extent of violation of security policies and the lack of pursuit of these policies by commanders at various levels of command in the SANDF indicate that members do not take ownership of the property of the DOD. This has resulted from a variety of factors that have manifested themselves over the years, such as disgruntlement with the new dispensation, laissez-faire type leadership often driven by lack of confidence among some newly appointed officers, ill-discipline among senior officers, and many other related issues.

Members who report crimes sometimes get demoralised as nothing seems to happen to the perpetrators of crime. In some instances, those who report these crimes have found themselves being victimised in one way or another. Certainly this state of affairs does not inspire confidence among the rank and file of the organisation. Even worse, left unattended this situation is slowly but surely going to result in the withering away of discipline in the organisation.

Talking about violation of policies, let’s take a look at the provisions of the Defence Act as far as the appointment of members to the SANDF. It is expected that members serving in the DOD should have a valid security clearance. Now the question is, how many members in various units can say with confidence that they have a valid security clearance. In fact in some units members even have the audacity to tell the Unit Military Security Officer (UMSO) that they will not fill in the security clearance forms, and then nothing happens to them. What a nice place to be in. But maybe this is not a problem as it is not the member’s responsibility to find out about the validity of his or her clearance and it is not the member’s responsibility to enforce compliance in this regard. Remember, security is a command responsibility.

So in essence it is the responsibility of the Officer Commanding of the unit to ensure that all members in his or her unit are in possession of a valid security clearance. So once again, in essence, if in any unit there are members who are employed without a valid security clearance, the responsible Officer Commanding may be held liable for not adhering to the prescripts of policy. But perhaps this is also not a problem as, although one may be held liable for non-adherence to policy, nothing happens to one.

Once again this raises the question of what happens when a person manifestly violates security policy and nothing happens to him or her. Can the person guilty of violating policy be blamed for the inactivity of those above him? After all, security is a command responsibility and therefore such person cannot be expected to charge and arrest himself or herself. Someone above him or her has to do that.

So, where exactly is the problem with ensuring security in the DOD? Is the problem with those manifestly ill-disciplined members of the DOD who have left their homes to join the SANDF in order to pursue their criminal tendencies? Is the problem with those members of the DOD who, in their endeavour to secure their jobs, would prefer to see a crime being committed and still keep quiet about it, and in so doing become accomplices themselves? Is this the problem with those in command who with all the evidence in front of them that suggests that something is not right in their companies, units, commands, formations, divisions or services continue to behave as if all is well in the organisation? After all security is a command responsibility.

It is not for me to answer this question. At least it is not for me alone to answer this question, for this is not just my organisation. No ways! It is yours too and you must also take responsibility for being the eyes and the ears of this organisation. Be bold, report crime. Take responsibility for stamping out ill-discipline in the organisation. After all, it is your organisation too. Brig Gen B. Ngcobo, Director CI Processing.

R200-00 prize for the best letter

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.
Soliciting Male Colleagues’ Support for Gender Equality

The Department of Defence (DOD), like all military institutions, is predominately male. As a result, women do not serve in the decision-making structures of the organisation. Taking this point into consideration it therefore becomes of paramount importance that the men who serve in the various levels of leadership understand and support the notion of gender equality. Constitutional imperatives and the Government and DOD policy alone cannot improve the status of women within the organisation, hence the theme of the DOD’s 2008 gender conference was soliciting male colleagues’ support for gender equality within the DOD.

In pursuance of the Gender Equality agenda, the Chief Directorate Transformation Management will be rolling out various intervention programmes in the course of the year. As the world commemorates International Women’s Day, the DOD will host its celebration at the Peace Mission Training Centre on 6 March 2009. On this occasion the gains achieved since the democratisation of the country will be reflected upon, and particular attention will also be given to how women have performed upon entering the traditionally male dominated SANDF corps, including their roles as peacekeepers.

Furthermore, as we celebrate this historic occasion we will again be mindful of the fact that women alone cannot advance this agenda, but need their male colleagues’ support in pursuance thereof. As the Chief Directorate, we are also hopeful that the commitment shown by the members of the Plenary Defence Staff Council, the Portfolio Committee on Defence, Officers Commanding and DOD Planners will by their attendance of the 2008 DOD’s Gender Conference help take the matter to the next level, where each Service and Division will provide their progress reports for this year’s dialogue. There is no doubt that women and men must continuously work together at all levels to advance the Gender Equality agenda within the DOD.

Gerhard Claassens, email

* Any of our readers who can assist
Gerhard.Claassens@sasol.com - Ed.

INFO NEEDED ON REGIMENT CHRISTIAAN BEYERS

I hope that you can help me. I am looking for any information and history regarding Regiment Christiaan Beyers in Polokwane (Pietersburg).

I was in the Regiment from 1986 to 1994, but have not been able to get any information on it.

Any help would be appreciated.

Gerhard Claassens, email

BAD, GOOD AND BETTER TIMES

Life is full of surprises. You will discover that times are changing in our daily lives.

You may feel down and out, but however uncomfortable your situation is, life does not end there, as it often consists of bad, good and better times.

It means walking through deep valleys and climbing high mountains.

There will always be a light at the end of the tunnel, whatever the circumstances are. Before you begin counting all the things you do not have, count the endless small things that you already have. And from hurt and pain, a divine inner beauty is born and therefore you must accept yourself the way you are.

The last person you must ever take away is yourself. Be proud of who you are and the way you are because the Almighty has given you life to survive and you must use that opportunity to the best of your ability in a proper way. Let us remember that “Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away”. Rfn P.H. Damente, 6 SAI Bn

Marie van Zyl, Pretoria

As dit moontlik is, probeer my help om haar op te spoor. En Ria, as jy die advertensie lees, kontak my asseblief by (012) 355 3837 of 076 792 4534. Marie van Zyl, Pretoria

Marie van Zyl, Pretoria

* Any of our readers who can assist
Gerhard.Claassens@sasol.com - Ed.

TRACING A FRIEND OF MANY YEARS

I am looking for Sister Ria Fourie who worked for years at the family sickbay in Waterkloof. She and I became very good friends (my husband Louis van Zyl was an WO1 at SAAFTC at the time). She had two children - a boy and a girl. Ria later bought a house from Shantelle. I understand that she later got married, but I don’t know her new surname.

If anyone can help me trace her, I should be very grateful. And Ria, if you read the advertisement, please contact me on (012) 355 3837 or 076 792 4534.

Marie van Zyl, Pretoria

Ek is op soek na Suster Ria Fourie, wat jare lank by die familiesiekteboeg op Waterkloof gewerk het. Ek en sy het baie goeie vriende gevoord (my man Louis van Zyl was daardie tyd ’n AO1 op SAAFTC). Sy het twee kinders gehad - ’n seun en ’n dogter. Ria het later ’n huis by Chantelle gekoop. Ek het verstaan dat sy later getrou is, maar ken nie haar nuwe van nie.

As dit moontlik is, probeer my help om haar op te spoor. En Ria, as jy die advertensie lees, kontak my asseblief by (012) 355 3837 of 076 792 4534. Marie van Zyl, Pretoria
The Kelvin Grove Club in Newlands, Cape Town, has, for the past nine years, played host to the annual formal military dinner.

The tradition was begun over 30 years ago when the Chairman of the City Club, then in Queen Victoria Street, hosted a dinner to honour military units, full and part time, that had been granted the Freedom of the City of Cape Town.

Over the years those invited grew to include all units within the SANDF. With the closing of the Cape Town Club in 1997 and its moving to smaller premises the new club was unfortunately unable to accommodate the annual function.

As the annual dinner has proved to be a popular event on the military calendar a small committee comprising Col Les Masterson, former Officer Commanding and currently the Honorary Colonel of the Cape Town Rifles (Dukes), Col Lionel Crook, SA Legion, the former Officer Commanding of the Cape Field Artillery, and Capt Bruce Risien, Cape Garrison Artillery, approached the Kelvin Grove Club Committee in 2000, which agreed to host the dinner.

While the Cape Town Rifles (Dukes) Band provided the music for the 2008 dinner the hundred odd officers and non-commissioned officers of the various SANDF Reserve units rubbed shoulders in their colourful uniforms.

After a scrumptious dinner Robin Jackman, the well-known SuperSport Commentator and former England cricketer, entertained those present with several sporting stories.

The annual formal military dinner is an opportunity for officers and non-commissioned officers of the many Cape Town Reserve units from all four Services to interact and maintain esprit de corps.

Any Reserve officer or non-commissioned officer who would like further information or would like to attend the 10th annual Military Dinner in Cape Town in 2009 is requested to contact either Capt Bruce Risien on 082 493 6048 or Col Lionel Crooke, SA Legion, on (021) 689 9771. Lt (SAN) Glenn von Zeil, SA Naval Reserve.

Scripture reading - Psalm 81:8-15 - "Listen, my people to my warning, Israel, how I wish you would listen to me! You must never worship another god. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth, I will feed you. But my people would not listen to me, Israel would not obey me. So let them go their stubborn ways and do whatever they wanted. How I wish my people would listen to me! I would quickly defeat their enemies and conquer all their foes. Those who hate me would bow in fear before me, their punishment would last forever."

A PRAYER. Our Heavenly Father, we know that no country can remain peaceful and free unless it is prepared to defend peace and freedom. Today, therefore, we lift up our hearts and pray for the great organisation which we call our National Defence Force. We pray for all who have authority and ask that you will give them wisdom and knowledge so that they may direct us in Godly humility and with strong faith in you. Make us loyal and true. Amen! Rfn V. Reuben Makakaba

EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

For Military Skills Development System (MSDS) members whose contracts were not renewed, it is not the end of the world. The SANDF afforded you an opportunity to acquire military experience coupled with learning the dynamics of a working environment. The SANDF, in particular, has become a very competitive organisation. Therefore skilled members are needed, and you should be encouraged by the fact that unlike many of your peers you completed Grade 12. They were not absorbed by the MSDS you got the chance. Unfortunately not everyone can be absorbed in the Regular Force.

You should now go back to school and study very hard. You might return to the SANDF better equipped than you are currently. When you are an MSDS member be disciplined. It is a period in which one should prepare for adulthood and shape up your career.

The disadvantaged background of most of the MSDS members should motivate and encourage you to work harder and stay focused. The MSDS is very noble and you as an MSDS member are an ambassador of your family.

It is undoubtedly true that education is the foremost tool to empower oneself. Without it success is not guaranteed. Whether your contract has been renewed or not, go and study. Your mind is fresh and you can study and work at the same time.

I wish to quote Dr Fred Alan Wolf: "If you thought you were insignificant and had no power in this world, think again. Your mind is actually shaping the world around you", and Lisa Nichols: "Thank God that there is a time delay in all of your thoughts do not come instantly. We’d be in trouble if they did. The element of time delay serves you. It allows you to reassess, to think about what you want, and to make a new choice". I urge veteran MSDS and new MSDS members to use their time to study and invest in education. Avoid the allure of nightlife and a fake life full of materialism and temporary fame. The two years of service in the MSDS is a gratifying period where members can enter a unique military environment where they ought to be disciplined and walk the straight and narrow road. Restrained behaviour will pay dividends for you, especially when you have to be assessed for a contract renewal. Capt C.G. Kganyago, Lyttleton.
KEEPING UP WITH MILITARY TRADITIONS

The SA Army Combat Training Centre (SA Army CTC) held an officer’s formal dinner for the first time in seven years on 20 November 2008. This was the first officer’s formal dinner since 2001.

Following the change of command on 25 January 2008, members employed in the Lohatlha military area experienced many highlights under the command of Brig Gen Nontobeko Mpaxa. It is military tradition to have events such as formal dinners, and in keeping with this proud military tradition Brig Gen Mpaxa deemed it necessary to end the year on a high note by inviting all the officers of the Lohatlha military to a formal dinner. Despite her busy schedule the Commandant SA Army Combat Training Centre found time to ensure that all officers from the units in the military area came together to be introduced to military tradition, to get to know each other and to enhance military culture. This was also the first step in building esprit de corps with the amalgamation of the SA Army CTC and ASB Lohatlha in mind. More than 100 officers gathered on this evening. The Commandant encouraged members during her speech to improve their education and said that the reality was that education was the only weapon that could change the world. For many of the young officers this was their first experience of a formal dinner - a long-standing tradition. For older members, it was an opportunity to take out their “mess dress” and tunics from the back of their cupboards, dust them off and dress for the occasion. For some it was necessary to sew on new buttons, lengthen the shorter chains (these suits shrink when they hang in your cupboard) and get the miniatures and medals ready. Some uniforms were too small, which forced members to borrow others.

The younger officers had to be briefed on the special traditions and the “do’s and don’ts” of the formal dinner. Some of the older members also had to brush up because one tends to forget. On the evening of 20 November it was time to dress for the occasion and look very smart. The staff of the Joe Slovo Mess rose to the occasion and presented a delightful menu.

Everyone had a wonderful time and the evening was an enormous success. The officers were given the opportunity to socialise and had a wonderful experience together. Owing to the importance of the event the colours of the unit were also displayed. In future this will definitely be an annual event for all the units in Lohatlha.

Hanna Coetzer, SA Army Combat Training Centre

UMAMA WASE AFRIKA

Ngakhele nokukhulisa abantu, nokuthi konke kuhamba kahle
Kumele kudliwe lapha elhaya abantu abantu be esikoleni
Abone ukuthi konke kuhamba kahle lazyikhaya
Futhi kwesinye isikhathi uzizwa enomunyu ngenxa yolokho
okwenzakala kuye
Abuye afumane ukuthi umuayeni oyesifazane
Futhi ufuna ukwakha ikusasa
Uqaqonda ukuthi umsebenzi wakhe awenzayo ungumusa
kaNkulunkulu

Usebenza ngokazimisela, unobudlelwane nabaanye
Aphinde afumane ukuthi umuayeni oyesifazane
Uletha izinkinga zakhhe enkosini
Uphokophele ukuya phambili
Ugazazi ukuthi umuayeni

Yonke into ayenzayo yencike kuye hayi komunye
Uyazithanda, uzezinhle, futhi uzinakile, impumelelo ibhalwe
kuyena.

M.P. Zungu (Masango), 121 Battalion

* Translated into English and edited by Boni Zungu - Ed.

AFRICAN MOTHER

Sometimes she finds herself alone, faced with many tasks.

She is faced with the responsibility of raising children and ensuring that everything is fine at home.

Putting food on the table, ensuring that the children go to school and taking care of the household are some of her responsibilities.

Though this may seem physically and emotionally draining, she carries out her duties as a mother with great enthusiasm and pride because she realises that she is of course a woman and someone who desires to build a future for her family.

She understands that the work that she is doing is a manifestation of God’s mercy.

She works diligently and relates to others. She also realises that she is of course a woman.

She brings her problems to the Lord, and is determined to progress. She knows that she is a conqueror, and everything that she does is her responsibility and nobody else’s.

She loves herself, she has self-confidence and she is taking care of herself. She is destined for success. M.P. Zungu (Masango), 121 Battalion

* Translated into English and edited by Boni Zungu - Ed.
news from abroad

10 SAI BN IN THE SUDAN

It was an evening event on 17 November 2008, organised by the United Nations Civilian Police (UN CIVPOL) as a farewell to the 10 SA Infantry Battalion (10 SAI Bn) Commander, Col Tshugulu, and his command staff who had been deployed in Darfur for six months, and to welcome the new Battalion Commander of 15 SAI Bn, Lt Col Singo. The night was blessed by the presence of honourable guests that were invited. To mention but a few, Mr Yakub A. Yakub (Kutum District Chief Judge), King Adam Mohammed Nur (Chairman Kutum District Traditional Council), Dr Hafiz (Kutum District Medical Director) and the Commanders of the district security agents. Maj D. Hammed, representing the Government of the Sudan, and Military Commander in the Kutum District, delivered a speech in which he expressed his gratitude for the good operational relationship he had with Col Tshugulu and his team. He ended by mentioning that the task our soldiers were performing in Darfur was highly appreciated by the locals and that he hoped that in future a function like this would celebrate a liberated Darfur region. When Col Tshugulu stood up to give his speech, the audience roared: "Igwee, Igwee, Igwee" - this is a local term referring to a traditional chief. This was how the locals recognised the Colonel. He acknowledged the presence of the honourable guests and blessed the event. That was a sign of a job well done by his battalion. He encouraged his predecessor, Lt Col Singo, to take up the challenge and make his mark. 10 SAI Bn had had great achievements in terms of carrying out the supporting tasks and confidence building operations in the southern Darfur. These are not easy tasks for peacekeepers who always have to remain "cool and calm" in a region characterised by the scorching sun and high-explosive mortar bombs and tracer bullets from small calibre weapons used by groups or factions. This is a remote desert area where only the tough, the fit and the smart survive to carry out operations. All three Company Commanders, Maj Titus of Charlie Company in Malha, Maj Mellit of Bravo Company in Kutum and Capt Likhari of Bravo Company in Mellit had demonstrated those qualities in dealing with different situations to ensure the success of their movements, in escorts and on patrol. To negotiate your way through all the different checkpoints on a daily basis guarded by different fighting groups to convince them why it is necessary for you to pass is not child’s play: you have to be smart.

There have been unfortunate incidents that have taken three lives. These incidents never stop the operations or demoralise a battalion with Military Skills Development System (MSDS) troops, but are recognised as incidents that happen in operations, whether conventional or peacekeeping. Now Col Tshugulu has taken a new post at Joint Operational Headquarters as SSO Planning at Director Peace Support Operations. Capt M.S. Tom, SQ3 External Pers Ops Joint Ops HQ.

AFRICAN UNION (AU)

African Union was born.
Growing from strength to strength.
Stretching from the Cape to Cairo.
Embracing the whole of the African continent.

All eyes are looking at you.
To give them hope and peace of mind.
Here you are South African National Defence Force.

Join hands with other African forces.
To restore peace in Africa.

Warriors of the far South.
Why are you outside your borders?
Why are you away from your beautiful country?
Why are you away from you beloved ones?
To execute the mission and mandate of the African Union.
Africa where did you go wrong?

When everything is falling apart.
When your leadership is in tug-of-war.
When economy is below freezing point.
When your people are starving.
When women and children are abused.

AU! Solution is within your hands.
Peace is upon your shoulders.
Not too late to mend.
Peace! AU Peace!! And Peace.
Maj Dance Matamela

A LOVE LETTER TO OUR SPOUSES BACK HOME

You are a special creation of the Almighty God who has given us the unique power of giving life to a living being. No one can repay the debt of a spouse back home, but we can certainly honour you, and hope to bring a smile to your face by giving you the necessary spiritual and social support. In our spouses’ arms there’s love that has no measure; shelter from the harms, we could live forever. In our spouses’ arms, there’s long-term understanding, sharing all charms, and we know our safe haven is in their hands. If we could say what our spouses mean to us, we are sure it would take eternity. Our spouses back home showed us how to cross the river. Our spouses’ gentle caring eases our pains, they can explain the mysteries of life, give us wisdom to come in and out of the rain and warm our hearts. We will be grateful eternally for the life and breath they gave us; we will forever stay in our spouses’ relationships - in good and bad times. Thanks for being the glue that holds our family together forever. Their arms are always wide open when we need a hug; their hearts understand when we need a helping hand! Their strength and love guide us and give us wings to fly, and they mean more to us than when we entered our relationship. God told us that an angel was going to guide us and he or she will be called a beloved spouse! They protect us from all perceivable dangers; we want them always next to us, to take us out we hold them by the hand, to kiss away wounds we run to them. They put those they love first in their lives and they do a great job for us as always, even in our absence, and they do us proud by being present when we need them most. May our Almighty God abide with them, now and forever more. Amen.

S Sgt (Pastor) T.D. Makiti, currently deployed in the Sudan.

S A S O L D I E R  •  M A R C H  2 0 0 9
Some, call me “The Devil’s Fool”
Some, call me “God’s punishment”
And some call me “The killer”
But for those who know me, call me AIDS
“THE KILLER DISEASE”

Yes, I am the killer
I kill rapidly with no remorse
I consider no colour, for I am colour blind
I punish all races, for I am not a racist
I pay no attention to beauty. For I kill all

I’m glad that people don’t consider me, but
One thing I hate most is an object
Called “CONDOM”

For my purpose is to obstruct me
But I’m glad that he has no success
For people hate him also.
I’m glad again that, I don’t know,
Where I come from and who my creator is
And for that, as long as people ignore me,
There shall be no end of me

Yes, I am the killer, because
I take along with me,
“Statesmen, Popes, Kings and Queens
And fellow countrymen.
For I don’t consider the importance of
a person
And the most important thing that I take

from a man - Is “LIFE”

FOR I AM THE REAL “KILLING MACHINE”

FOR THAT WE SAY TO YOU:
“ABSTAIN AND CONDOMISE”, AND
LET US FIGHT HIV AND AIDS TOGETHER. Together we can win.

AND PLEASE: DON’T LEAVE THE LEGACY OF “HIV AND AIDS” TO THE UPCOMING GENERATION.

Spr M.R Mamabolo, 2 Field Engineer Regiment, currently deployed in Burundi.

I AM THE WOLRD’S WORST ENEMEY

SA NAVAL RESERVE MEMBERS ASSIST MOZAMBIAN NAVY

Three well-qualified technical members of the SA Naval Reserves, WO2 Gan Govender, CPO Leon Dingwall and PO Quinton Langeveld, under the guidance of Capt (SAN) Joe Coetzer and with the assistance of WO1 Johan Posthumus (SAAF), visited various units of the Mozambican Navy in order to provide technical assistance.

The small team visited units in Maputo, Metangula on Lake Niassa and Pemba where an assessment was conducted on small craft, buildings and facilities. The assessment will serve as a basis for decisions on future co-operation between the Mozambican and SA navies. Throughout the visit the team shared their expertise and knowledge with the technical staff of the Mozambican Navy, while practical assistance was rendered wherever possible. The team was thanked at Metangula and Pemba by the respective Officers Commanding of the units.

Three well-qualified technical members of the SA Naval Reserves, fltr: PO Quinton Langeveld, WO2 Gan Govender and CPO Leon Dingwall in Simon’s Town. (Photo: Lt (SAN) Glenn von Zeil)

Govender said: “I was proud to be selected to assist another African navy”.

CPO Dingwall was “inspired to see how another African navy functioned and I enjoyed the natural beauty of Africa. PO Langeveld indicated that he would be “happy to go back to assist and train members of the Mozambican Navy”.

Upon leaving Mozambique the team’s liaison officer, Capt Dzonzi, praised the teams esprit de corps and indicated how well the group, whose members had not known each other prior to this deployment, worked to complement each other. Lt (SAN) Glenn von Zeil, SA Naval Reserves.

PO Quinton Langeveld and CPO Leon Dingwall with Mozambican colleagues at a function in their honour at Metangula. (Photo: Capt (SAN) Joe Coetzer)

Working on a South African donated Vredenburger in Maputo. (Photo: Capt (SAN) Joe Coetzer)
Words cannot describe the excitement that comes with the thought of being part of 15 SA Infantry Battalion (15 SAI Bn), a contingent of such experienced soldiers on external and internal deployments.

I have been watching from a distance with patience previous contingents on their peacekeeping missions in the Sudan, and I definitely cannot wait to make history by taking part for the very first time in the Sudan. I know how challenging the assignment is, but given a golden opportunity to deploy externally, I will treat everything like the very first time in the Sudan. I know I cannot wait to make history by taking part for the very first time in the Sudan, and I definitely cannot distance with patience previous continuations.

But unfortunately it is hard to witness that nowadays, which is why soldiering does not appeal anymore! We expect a blessed deployment, as we have been working very hard from 15 SAI Bn to De Brug in preparation for this historic adventure.

So, let’s do our best and try to give our best to the people we serve. Much more to go, much more to achieve. Let’s do it! Let’s do our best!

I will try my level best even though I do not know what to expect. I am not going to promise anything special, except to start everything by the prayer: "so help me God" for my fearful trip to be done! For me to be selected to deploy externally, was such a wonderful privilege and honour, so I look forward to proving myself worthy to help maintain nothing else, but peace and stability in the war-torn areas.

I am up for any challenges that come with being part of history in the making in the Sudan for six months long. Our country is a winning brand, and I also have a winning mentality because peace in the Sudan is our main concern. Winning will give us bragging rights, but also bring us a lot of pressure because our country, the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) expect nothing less than peace being achieved. Our contingent’s brilliance and performance will be the order of the day, where simple discipline and the commitment of a soldier will make a huge difference.

But unfortunately it is hard to witness that nowadays, which is why soldiering does not appeal anymore! We expect a blessed deployment, as we have been working very hard from 15 SAI Bn to De Brug in preparation for this historic adventure.

S Sgt (Pastor) T.D. Makiti, currently deployed in the Sudan

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BIRTHDAY KING AND QUEENS IN BURUNDI

Maj H.M. Mavuso, Lt M.R. (Sunshine) Mokonyane and Ms P.T. Thulo were announced as the birthday king and queens in Burundi on 8 December 2008. The announcement was made by Master Chief Warrant Officer of the SANDF, MCWO Johan Scheepers, at Bujumbura International Airport, while he waited to fly for Bungai (Republic of Central Africa). He was part of the Goodwill Parcel Team that came to deliver parcels to deployed soldiers in the mission areas.

Burundi was the point of departure for countries where they delivered the goodwill parcels to South African soldiers deployed there. According to Lt Col Zietsman and Lt Col Potgieter, Burundi was chosen as the best place to keep the goodwill parcels and accommodate the sponsors of the parcels.

CURRICULUM IV wished the king and two queens a happy birthday and many more years to come.

Ms N.M. Masilela was also in the visiting group that celebrated their birthdays away from their families, friends and colleagues. Hers was on 10 December 2008.

I asked Lt Mokonyane how she felt about her birthday in Burundi - "ah! ke tla reng mara …. ke mosebetsi …!" (oh, what shall I say …, it is work …!) she said.

The 10th December 2008 was the day on which the CURRICULUM IV members received their goodwill parcels in Burundi.

The contingent, choir and paratroopers entertained the guests with cultural events. Everybody was overwhelmed by it! After the activities in the Rubb Hall, the sponsors of the goodwill parcels had leisure time to interact with the members of CURRICULUM IV.

The following day the guests were to leave for Kinshasa and present the parcels to RSA contingent members. It was hoped they enjoyed their stay with the Burundians. "Bon Voyage" and "Call Again Please". Capt Davis Thathani, Modderfontein Military Base, Burundi

BACK TO SCHOOL FOR OUR KIDS BACK HOME

As schools reopened, we, the peacekeepers here in the Sudan humbly wish all of the learners and educators the best of luck and success on their educational journey. We all have dreams and plans, but some of us do not achieve our goals simply because nowadays learners destroy their education and their future. They end up doing disgusting and pathetic things at school, which lead to their failure, dropping out and expulsion!

What do we think our country will be like being led by someone whose academic status is not kosher and a criminal record? Let our children put aside their big egos and pass-one-pass-all mentality, and look for the way forward and bring back the dignity of the school! It is up to our children to stop misusing their time and parents’ money while they are supposed to be studying for their own future! Our learners must remember that they are not at school for parents or educators, but for their own good - for the future is in their hands. They’d also better know that everyone is responsible for his or her own actions, and that crime and socialising do not foot the bill!

It is now high time that we as parents stand up for what we believe in and bring back the value of the school. We wish all parents and educators the best of luck for 2009; and we thank them very much for their unselfish support and for standing by our children when others are full of criticism! S Sgt (Pastor) T.D. Makiti, currently deployed in the Sudan
AFRICAN UNION PAYS OUT DEATH CLAIMS

By Capt (SAN) Sonica van Rooyen, SSO Opcom

After several months of protracted negotiations, the African Union (AU) has finally paid out the death claims of members who passed away while on operational duty in Burundi during Operation FIBRE.

Operation FIBRE was the contribution of South Africa in support of the implementation of the Arusha Agreement in Burundi. The primary function of the South African force deployed was VIP protection required for the returning leaders who participated in the Burundi Transitional Government. The deployment started on 1 November 2001 and was known as the South African Protection and Support Detachment (SAPSD).

On 1 May 2003 the newly established AU became involved in Burundi and the mission became known as the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB). The South African contingent increased in size and composition to include all four Services. Following a United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution, the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) was established on 1 June 2004, with Maj Gen Mgwebi from South Africa as the ONUB Force Commander. The South African Forces played a major role in the transition from AMIB (AU) to ONUB (UN). ONUB then took over the task of bringing peace and national reconciliation to the country.

After the successful general election in 2005, ONUB started to reduce forces. The contributing nations withdrew throughout 2006 and the SA Infantry Battalion, which was the first to enter Burundi, was the last to leave in December 2006. This marked the end of Operation FIBRE.

However, as required by the regional peace facilitators and mandated by the AU, South Africa continued to provide VIP protection services to returning leaders once ONUB was terminated. South African ONUB forces remained in Burundi from December 2006 as part of the African Union Special Task Force (AUSTF). This operation, termed Operation CURRICULUM from 1 January 2007, is still ongoing, and entails similar tasks to that of the initially deployed SAPSD.

According to standard operating procedures and agreements between the AU and its troop contributing countries, claims may be instituted for members who die in the mission area during deployment. These claims were duly submitted and the AU finally paid out the amounts due to the bereaved next of kin. The seven members of the South African contingent to lose their lives during the deployment are:

- WO2 J. Reeves, who passed away on 20 January 2004, as a result of a fatal motor vehicle accident.
- Cpl M.J. Moeti lost his life in a freak accident when a tree fell on him on 5 May 2004.
- Sgt M.M. Mfene tragically died of a heart attack on 5 June 2004.
- Gnr E.M. Hendricks was fatally wounded on 17 November 2004 during a shooting incident.
- Spr O.N. Masindi died of his injuries on 17 December 2005 after a motor vehicle accident.
- Rfn M. Ngantweni passed away in 1 Military Hospital on 20 May 2007 after a shooting incident.

After intensive negotiations between the SANDF and the AU, the next of kin of these members have now each received an amount of $35000. The SANDF remains committed to the well-being of deployed members and their families and will continue to negotiate with organisations such as the AU and UN to ensure that claims instituted on behalf of the next of kin are paid out when due.

World AIDS Day in Burundi

By Lt Col Greta Bath, Contingent Psychologist, OP CURRICULUM IV

World AIDS Day was commemorated at Modderfontein Base in Bujumbura, Burundi, during a solemn and dignified ceremony on 1 December 2008. The arrangements were a joint effort of the multi-professional team and the Corporate Communications Officer, Capt Davis Thathana. The programme was opened by Battalion Chaplain J. Moleele with a prayer that set the atmosphere for the rest of the proceedings.

Lt Col Greta Bath, Contingent Psychologist, OP CURRICULUM IV, explained the devastating effects of stigmatisation of HIV and AIDS and the resulting alienation of sufferers from the dreaded condition. She emphasised the importance of compassionate support by family, colleagues and society in creating hope and maintaining emotional and physical well-being, which was dependent on optimal emotional health - a critical component in resisting the debilitating effects of HIV and AIDS. She concluded by emphasising that people were the silent killers of hope among HIV and AIDS sufferers because they forced them to keep their condition a secret for fear of rejection.
The Medical Officer, Capt Tusi, gave a user-friendly explanation to members of different aspects of the process of diagnosis and how the presence of HIV and AIDS in patients was confirmed. He also discussed different treatment regimes, and gave particular attention to anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment. He emphasised the importance of compliance with the treatment regime, as patients developed resistance to specific drugs and combinations thereof if they failed to take them as prescribed. Such failure allows the virus to mutate, which renders the medicine ineffective. One again, the importance of support by loved ones, friends and colleagues was emphasised in supporting patients through bad patches and unpleasant side effects. These people also had to remind them to take their medication regularly and as prescribed. He concluded by reassuring members about the proven benefits of ARVs and their life-prolonging effects if used correctly.

Padre Koliti, Contingent Chaplain, made a passionate plea for responsible sexual practices, with emphasis on the God-given joy of sexual expression within the marital bond. The importance of responsible sexual practices, not only in practising safe sex, but also out of respect for spouses or sexual partners was presented from a spiritual and religious perspective. Chaplain Koliti then proceeded with touching prayers for the sufferers of HIV and AIDS and those who had passed away owing to the disease. He then led members with song and prayer to the highlight of the ceremony - a joint candle lighting ceremony by the Acting NCC, Lt Col F.G. Mndze, and the MTG Commander, Lt Col N.S. Tshifularo. This symbolised hope to sufferers as well as the joint effort needed by the community, including the SANDF, in fighting HIV and AIDS.

The ceremony was enhanced by beautiful song and dance by the AUSTF choir. Apart from presenting a touching medley of spiritual songs, they also provided background harmonies to the prayers and candle lighting ceremony. Spr Mamabolo’s item, a poem written for the occasion, further expressed the need for co-operation in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

The hall at Modderfontein Military Base was decorated with banners made by members and sections of OP CURRICULUM. These formed part of an enthusiastically supported Banner Contest, initiated by the SWO. The Engineering Section added an interesting piece of installation art to their banner, while the Technical Support Office contributed a huge red ribbon to decorate the table in the hall. The participation and support of all members were extremely rewarding for the organisers and Command Staff of OP CURRICULUM IV. Their heartfelt enthusiasm was the motivation for the ceremony, which was meant to increase compassion for HIV and AIDS sufferers and to emphasise the importance of support for patients and their loved ones by the Military Family and the greater community to which we all belong.

A beautiful and noisy African thunderstorm concluded the ceremony, a heavenly blessing on a morning spent in memory of those who have succumbed to HIV and AIDS, in support of those living with HIV and in celebration of the privilege of the healthy life the members of OP CURRICULUM IV have.
Defence Minister welcomes youngsters into the SANDF

By L Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photo: F Sgt David Nomtshongwana

The moment finally arrived for nearly 300 selected new recruits to the SANDF who reported for Basic Military Training at the SA Air Force Gymnasium in Valhalla, Pretoria, on 8 January 2009. These young Military Skills Development System (MSDS) members will be transported to the newly relocated training facilities in Hoedspruit in Limpopo Province. This was certainly a sight to bring joy to the SA Government, the Department of Defence, the Department of Labour and the National Youth Commission.

The Minister of Defence, Mr Charles Nqakula, accompanied by Lt Gen Vejaynand Ramlakan, the Surgeon General, came to welcome and wish well the new MSDS members to the SANDF. Mr Nqakula in his address to the recruits praised them for volunteering to be part of the shield of the SA nation by enlisting in the SA Air Force. "As young cadres, you are championing the gains of our freedom, by venturing into the SANDF you have shown courage by challenging the unknown and you are going to receive training in various disciplines and highly specialised occupational fields. We need you, be confident and concentrate on what lies ahead of you as soldiers," he said.

This is a true testimony that the DOD/SANDF is alive with possibilities and makes countless dreams become a reality. SA Soldier interacted with the new MSDS members, some of whom knew that Basic Military Training would be tough and hard. They had this to say:

Reineth Mathabathe (22) from Marapyane in Mpumalanga holds a Certificate in Management Sciences from the Tshwane University of Technology. She said: "It's not going to be a walk in the park. I look forward to it and after completion I'm going to the Military Police or Defence Intelligence."

Margret Mahlo (21) from Ga-Molepo Village in Limpopo said: "Some of us we come from previously disadvantaged and underserved communities and this is a life changing opportunity for me. I am going to acquire military skills and life skills required in the world of work, which will put what I am going to be taught to good use. My mustering is catering."
“Knowing is not enough, we must apply. Willing is not enough, we must do," Johan Wolfgang von Goethe.

“You share a general responsibility for all humanity, apply your minds to the desires of this institution, the Department of Defence (DOD) and external institutions. As DOD members, international members and representatives from other state departments posit yourselves in a positive way as the onus of success lies with you.” This was the message from Lt Gen Derick Mgwebi, the Chief of Human Resources, to members attending the Executive National Security Programme (ENSP) 19/09 at the SA National Defence College in Thaba Tshwane on 19 January 2009. (This is the most senior course in the DOD.)

Officially opening the programme Lt Gen Mgwebi called upon the members to influence each other positively, to foster harmonising co-operation, enhance commonality and be willing to play their part. "In today’s world of security threats and challenges, as allied nations we need an integrated approach to national security that will also signal socio-economic development and the upliftment of mankind,” declared Lt Gen Mgwebi.

The ENSP is important because national security is the concern of everyone, not only the military as in the past.

The programme provides strategic level training in national security in the military operational field, and in non-military, political and socio-economic development and deals with key issues affecting national security and what should be done to improve national security.

Altogether 36 members attended the ENSP. Twenty-six selected members from the SA Army, the SA Air Force, the SA Navy and the SA Military Health Service, as well as representatives from the SA Police Service, the National Intelligence Agency, the Department of Foreign Affairs, SITA and Armscor, as well as a member from each of the following foreign countries, namely Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Tanzania, Senegal and Jordan attended.
ur heritage is indeed the foundation on which we as a nation are working to rebuild our society. We may come from a divided past, but our history serves to reinforce the importance of yesterday to all of us today.

As part of shaping the nation’s historical consciousness, members of the Defence Staff Council (DSC) and Defence Corporate Communication (DCC) visited the Freedom Park over the period 3 to 18 December 2008. The Freedom Park is located on the crest of Salvokop, situated to the south of Pretoria. It was built for us to reflect upon our humanity, our past, reconciliation and freedom.

The park carries the aspirations of our rainbow nation and the extraordinary triumph of the human spirit. The entourage from the Department of Defence visited Moshate, Isivivane, Uitspanplek, Mveledso, Sikhumbuto, which comprises the Wall of Names, the Amphitheatre, Eternal Flame, the Gallery of Leaders, the Sanctuary, as well as the majestic sculpture of Reeds. The delegation discovered and experienced the rich legacy of the expressive values of UBUNTU as a living entity of our rainbow culture.

During the last day of the visit, Brig Gen Kwena Mangope, the Director Corporate Communication, reiterated that heritage and history were the foundation of every nation. “As the DOD/SANDF we are establishing a relationship with the Freedom Park to build our nation together in finding a deeper understanding of reconciliation. Freedom Park represents the vision for which many of our heroes and heroines sacrificed their lives for what South Africa is today,” said Brig Gen Mangope.
The Chaplain General of the SANDF, Brig Gen (Rev) Marius Cornelissen, hosted the first International Military Chief of Chaplains Conference in Cape Town from 1 to 6 February 2009. The theme of the conference was: “The Role of the Chaplain in Reconciliation and Healing in Post-conflict Reconstruction”.

The Military Chaplains from all the corners of the globe, professionals, academics and members from different faith communities formed part of international spiritual intervention conference encourages forgiveness.

WELCOME. Dignitaries and delegates assembled at the Castle Military Museum in Cape Town.

The host Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Marius Cornelissen (left), and the RSA Minister of Defence, Mr Charles Nqakula, during the opening of the conference in Cape Town.
Reconciliation and healing and the understanding to move beyond bitter conflict to reconciliation, healing and justice”.

Welcoming the 120 delegates from the defence forces of more than 50 countries attending the conference, the Minister of Defence, Mr Charles

When one feel the absence of God, it is important to re-evaluate our relationship with the Almighty,” he said.

Declaring the conference open, the host, Brig Gen (Rev) Cornelissen, could not have said it better: “The military chaplaincy not only supports and guides their forces, but also supports the local faith communities in bringing reconciliation and healing and the understanding to move beyond bitter conflict to reconciliation, healing and justice”.

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Nqakula, said that morality was the pillar of human existence and expressed concern about the ugliness of war. He raised a thought-provoking question: “What happens after war?”. “The Chaplaincy engages with faith groups and community leaders to ensure that the concept of reconciliation and healing forms part of post-conflict reconstruction and development,” said Mr Nqakula.

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, the former Chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, who delivered the keynote address touched on the critical focus of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and mentioned that one of the extraordinary characteristics of South Africa was the patience of its citizens. "One of the fundamental conclusions of the TRC in South Africa had been that the gap between the haves and the have nots (rich and poor) should be closed, otherwise South Africa can kiss reconciliation goodbye,” he said.

Prof Charles Villa-Vicencio from the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation of South Africa was a facilitator who led the panel discussions on the debates in which various matters relating to reconciliation and healing were discussed.

The following topics were presented:

- A World Perspective on Reconciliation and Healing by Prof Miroslav Volf (the Henry B. Wright Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School, USA)
- The role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa in reconciliation and healing by Prof Charles Villa-Vicencio (Institute for Justice and Reconciliation of SA)
- African concept of UBUNTU as part of reconciliation and healing as a solution to conflicts by Prof Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town)
- Community Based Reconciliation and Healing Model by Father Michael Lapsley (Institute for Healing of Memories)
- Military Perspective, Command Expectations, the Battlefield Execution by Lt Gen Rinus Jansen van Rensburg (the Chief of Corporate Staff)

SA Soldier conversed with Chaplain (Col) David Colwell, the United States Africa Command Chaplain, who said that the role of a chaplain in reconciliation and healing was to revive morality and extend our reach by providing spiritual healing and sharpening the voice of conscience. "Whether in wartime or peacetime the military chaplains need to foster reconciliation in conflict areas through spiritual and pastoral ministry for the well-being of the world community," commented Chaplain (Col) Colwell.

Chaplain (Capt) Reuben Moatlhodi from the Botswana Defence Force had this to say: "As Africans we are capable of transcending our humanity through the concept of UBUNTU, ‘I am because we are’. We deepen our understanding of ethics, morality and our humanity by building a positive climate that encourage forgiveness and togetherness."
Infanteers remembered

By Maj Merle Meyer,
Communication Officer SA Army
Infantry Formation

On Sunday 25 January 2009 the sounds of a military band and pipers sounded on the eastern hills of Pretoria. This was in memory of all Infanteers who paid the ultimate price for their country. The memorial service was held at Fort Klapperkop in remembrance of all the heroes and heroines.

This memorial service is held on the Sunday closest to 22 January, as this was the day the South African Infantry Corps (SAIC) was established in 1954. This year is the 55th anniversary of the founding of the SAIC.

The General Officer Commanding of the SA Army Infantry Formation, Maj Gen T.M. Nkabinde, remembered the four Infanteers who died in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Sudan in 2008, and said that despite deploying in dangerous areas, the Infantry will deploy, when and where required.

He honoured all Infanteers who died in the service of their country, and said that their loved ones might forever rejoice in the knowledge that they served the country with pride and dignity. “They are the nation’s heroes.”

The event was attended by several members of Army HQ, the SA Army Infantry Formation Headquarters, Infantry unit commanders and Master Warrant Officers, attachés and representatives of several military veterans organisations who laid wreaths in honour of the Infanteers who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.
The Joint Operations Division, in conjunction with the SA Navy, hosted the Pacific and Indian Ocean Ship Working Group and Exercise BELL BUOY 2009 Final Planning Conference, which was attended by international naval forces from Australia, Canada, Chile, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, the USA, Brazil and Argentina in Pretoria from 19 to 23 January 2009.

The gathering was to establish a global network of friendly navies and discussed how they could team up in an effort to establish a common framework for a secure maritime domain, fight irregular and unrestricted activities off shore, threats to the maritime environment, piracy and secure maritime domain awareness.

What lies ahead in Exercise BELL BUOY 2009?

Speaking to SA Soldier, Capt (SAN) Gerald O’Shea, Staff Officer Maritime Trade, said the focus was on maritime activity in the area south of the equator in the Indian Ocean. “Exercise BELL BUOY 2009 is combined multinational training consisting of naval co-operation and guidance for shipping and is designed to promote regional co-operation, fulfil agreements and exercise systems that support maritime domain awareness,” he stated.

He said: “Its primary mission was to test the ability of naval co-ordination and guidance for the shipping component to provide situational awareness and near real-time data on the merchant shipping situation, and the successful completion of this mission allows for safe passage of merchant traffic and unimpeded operations of friendly naval forces.”

Commander Paul Taylor, Commander Maritime Trade Operations of Fleet Command Royal Australian Navy, told SA Soldier that maritime nations and navies were becoming involved as allies and preparing to build the required maritime security capabilities. “One major role is to develop working relationships with all sectors of the maritime industry, including ports, the shipping companies and other clusters ashore and at sea. As friendly navies we need to support each other for the attainment of maritime objectives,” said Commander Taylor.

South Africa is situated along the regional and international sea route and has become a maritime nation with maritime resources and a marine ecosystem. The country trades has total sovereignty, counterbalanced by the legal right of passage of foreign shipping.

Exercise BELL BUOY takes place annually; in 2007 and 2008 it was conducted in Canada and Hawaii respectively. South Africa will be conducting this multinational exercise this year in Cape Town and Durban from 20 April to 1 May 2009.
Strive to be awarded medallions for excellence

By WO1 Trevor (Porky) Wright, Warrant Officer SA Army Reserves

The Senior Chief Warrant Officer of the SA Army has recently instituted an informal award for good service in the form of a medallion. (The medallion is in the shape of a teardrop, which is the shape of the Badge of Rank of Warrant Officers from WO1 upwards.)

Each of the nineteen members of the Chief of the SA Army’s Senior Sergeant Major’s group (CASSM) has a medallion to hand out, while the CASSM collectively also has a medallion.

The idea is that if any CASSM member notices anyone doing a good job, that person can immediately be rewarded. A CASSM member will publicly hand the medallion to the person concerned and then make it his own responsibility to inform that person’s superior of the award.

The medallion can be awarded to any member of the SANDF or civilian who has rendered service that is deemed to be worthy of being awarded a medallion. The award is envisaged as an incentive for people to strive towards collecting all twenty medallions.

The medallion will be awarded to persons who improve the image of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), especially the SA Army, by merely doing their duty to the best of their abilities and going the extra mile.

We, the Senior Warrant Officers of the SA Army, encourage all members of the SANDF to endeavour to collect all twenty medallions. Show us you are proud to be a South African soldier.

Three medallions of the twenty medallion series.
One of the key skills taught during Peace Mission Training is that of hostage negotiations.

By Col Johan Botha
Photo courtesy SA Peace Mission Training Centre

ranked among Africa’s premier peacekeepers the SANDF military observers play a major role in peacekeeping in Africa. And not without reason! The unarmèd military observer (Milob) has to look danger square in the eye, while being the eyes and ears of the United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) on the ground. Thus the training given is vital for operating in the war torn areas of Africa and ensuring the military observer returns home safely from the year-long deployment.

As from April 2006 SANDF military observers have been deployed in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and in Nepal in Asia. Twenty-three military observers were also deployed as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) specialists to Côte d’Ivoire during 2005/6. We salute all the deployed soldiers for working in such treacherous and capricious environments away from their loved ones and their
Training Centre - Training

beloved South Africa. We appreciate their innovative skills when military support from home seems not to be enough. The South African Peace Mission Training Centre (PMTC) presented the second Milob Course in November 2008, with only SANDF directing staff and the British Peace Support Team (SA) (BPST [SA]) that led the previous Milob courses as from 2006 at the PMTC SA, in only an advisory capacity. Lt Col Dicky Danby from the BPST (SA) made the following observations at the end of the practical phase: "This course was certainly among the best in Africa, if not in the world. The best Milob Course to date was presented at the PMTC".

This was the first Milob Course presented under the command of Col Johan Botha who resumed office as the Acting Officer in Charge at the PMTC as from October 2008. The implementation of the One Force Concept by the PMTC needs mentioning as it employs for the first time a Reserve Force Officer, Maj Victor Panther, as Course Director and also allows a Reserve Force Officer to attend the Milob Course at the PMTC.

The course was significantly enhanced through the recruitment of various acclaimed lecturers who maintained the high standard throughout the theoretical phase. The need arose to restructure the course according to the UN curriculum and several experienced officers who initially developed the course in South Africa were consulted. More emphasis will be put in future on skills needed in reporting and investigating as required of military observers. The lecturing expertise of Lt Col Andre Roux and Lt Col Wouter Meiring from the Joint Operations Division formed the basis of the course. Lt Col Meiring made use of his experience in taking the lead during the vitally important practical phase. Role players from 4 SA Infantry Battalion were involved in staging realistic scenarios based on their own past deployment experience.

The next scheduled course for 2009 has been extended by an extra week to incorporate the Medical Combat Life-savers Skills Course, as well as to allow more time for practical sessions. The PMTC is also currently liaising with the Military Psychology Institute (MPI) and is planning a pre-selection phase for future courses. This will align the specific requirements for the potential candidate and the desired profile of a military observer to ensure the effective desired outcomes. Furthermore, specific operational and intelligence knowledge will be required of the candidates, apart from the fitness and driving skills which will also be part of the pre-assessment phase. These will all ultimately improve the standard of military observers trained by the SA PMTC.

In response to the planned changes Maj Panther commented that "the standard of training presented to the military observers, as the eyes and ears of the Contingent Commander is no light task and is of significance due to the impact on the ground as it often saves lives through current reporting and continuous negotiation, resulting in defusing issues before they become major problems. Currently the SA PMTC probably produces some of the best military observers deployed in Africa, but the aim is to train military observers according to the assessment of specific needs acquired through deployment of military observers in the past. This will, in itself, allow us to compete with the best in the world".

Col Botha also said: "This PMTC is dedicated to training SANDF members in all aspects of peace support operations to the highest standard of knowledge in order to contribute to the alleviation of killing and suffering on our African continent."

The SA PMTC is planning to present a variety of courses in 2009, among which are courses developed by the PMTC locally for the specific needs of the SANDF peace support operations. The first will be the Peace Mission Staff Officers’ Course to enable Staff Officers to function and contribute more effectively, as well as the Gender Advisory Course to meet the demands for transformational transparency.

* All courses presented at the SA PMTC can be found on the DOD Intranet. The new PMTC web page www.pmtc.co.za can also be browsed for new events and courses at the PMTC.
Science learners visit military installations in Bloemfontein

By L Cpl Ally Rakoma
Photos: Sgt Elias Mahuma

As part of Defence Corporate Communication’s fulfilment of its communication aims in shaping public opinion and perceptions about the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), a scheduled visit to military installations at Tempe, Bloemfontein, was planned for 45 science learners from all nine provinces of South Africa over the period 3 to 5 December 2008.

This time the visit was different as the learners were fortunate to brush shoulders with the defenders of their glorious rainbow nation and were informed about the best possible career opportunities within the SANDF and the role of the SANDF. On arrival at the various destinations, Unit Officers Commanding presented briefings and accompanied the learners on their visits. The first stop was at the Central Military Correctional Facility where the Officer Commanding, Capt Phumeza Mekuto, gave them an operational overview of the facility and the rehabilitation and treatment programmes offered to offenders to help them make the best of their incarceration and to live healthy lives.

After the visit to the Central Military Correctional Facility, the learners were taken to 3 Military Hospital where the Officer Commanding, Col Derick Matthee, welcomed them and briefed them on the hospital, which is over 100 years old. He informed them that the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) was needed a whole spectrum of professionals in highly specialised health occupations, specifically those with mathematics, physical science and biology and said that for many learners it would be a wonderful and exciting time in their lives, and would provide career satisfaction.

NEATNESS. Capt Phumeza Mekuto, the Officer Commanding of Central Military Correctional Facility (Bloemfontein), with her staff members explaining the importance of neatness in the cells to learners.
The next pit stop was 44 Parachute Regiment where the Officer Commanding, Col Andy Mhatu, described the concept of the eagle and briefed the visitors on 44 Parachute Regiment and its airborne capabilities. Then they were taken to the hangar where the unit trains its paratroopers.

On the last day of the visit the learners went to AFB Bloemspruit. They were welcomed by Maj Vicky Goaji, the Corporate Communication Officer. The Unit gave demonstrations that kept them on their toes. 87 Helicopter Flying School showed them some of their flying machines used for training helicopter pilots and flying crews.

They were also briefed by Lt Paulos Mlangeni on the Young Falcons and the Siyandisa Programme at AFB Bloemspruit, while Capt Heiden Schmidt, a pilot at 16 Squadron, gave a presentation on the Rooivalk and its role and the design philosophy and its integrated systems, weapons and sensors.

SA Soldier spoke to some learners. Chandre Houlie (18) from Gelvandale High School in Port Elizabeth said: “Thumbs up for the DOD as it contributes to poverty eradication and job creation through the youth programmes and the Military Skills Development System (MSDS). The visit has changed my thinking about soldiering and has provided me with inspiring information on career choices that one can follow. I decided to further my dream in the SA Air Force because of their aviation careers.”

Morne Coetzee (17) from Saul Damon High School in Upington said: “It has been an exciting and educational visit for the young people from previously disadvantaged communities. The DOD (SANDF) beat other State departments with their commitment to uplift the youth through their programmes that provide the best possible career opportunities.”
Any young people finishing school or college at the end of 2009 are already thinking about what to do in 2010. Should they study further? Or maybe try and find a job? Or even take a gap year? Why not serve your country for two years and get a good deal out of it as well. Matt Tennyson and Chris Snyman explain more.

The Editor of Tabloid, Matt Tennyson, is no stranger to military bases. After all, when he finished school he spent the first eight years of his working career as a professional soldier. So it was with rather mixed emotions that Matt arrived at the gates of 9 South African Infantry Battalion (9 SAI Bn) in Cape Town. Matt was accompanied by Chris Snyman. Chris had spent three years at Stellenbosch University doing a degree and then completed a one-year diploma in journalism before joining the Tabloid as a full-time journalist. It was Chris’ first visit to a military base.

They were there at the invitation of Lt Col Niko Allie of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) to observe the Military Skills Development System (MSDS) in action. The aim of the MSDS is twofold, namely to enhance the SANDF’s mission readiness through the systematic rejuvenation of its human resource composition. This is done through annual intakes of young, fit and healthy members of South Africa’s population.

Secondly, the MSDS serves as a feeder system for the Defence Reserves and seeks to provide scarce skills to the youth of the country to enable them to contribute meaningfully to the growth of its economy.

Subsequent to their Basic Military Training, deserving MSDS recruits will be afforded an opportunity to choose training in specific careers. These include pilots, air space controllers, engineers, medical practitioners, naval combat officers, technicians, divers, etc. This year a total of 5 452 young, fit and healthy South Africans volunteered for the MSDS. During the period 6 to 16 January 2009 successful recruits assembled at different points in the country before being transported to the various training institutions of the four Services (SA Army, SA Air Force, SA Navy and SA Military Health Service) of the SANDF to begin their Basic Military Training.

From this group, 130 MSDS members would do their basic training at 9 SAI Bn in Cape Town. The group consisted of 86 males and 44 females. While most of them were from Cape Town, there were also those from Bloemfontein, Kimberley and even a single recruit from Polokwane. At 9 SAI Bn they would be trained to become infantry soldiers, the backbone of the SA Army.

Matt admits that he was not quite sure what to expect. As a conflict journalist, Matt has visited military bases around the world, but the last time he was at an SA Army military base was back in 1999.

"I had heard all these horror stories about how bad the SA Army had become. How the standards had dropped and so on. So I was interested to see for myself if these stories were true,” Matt said.

On arrival Matt and Chris were

KIT ISSUE: Capt Jacques Coetzer, Company Commander of Alpha Company, checks on his new recruits. They had just been issued with some of their equipment.

IS THIS ALL MINE? Some of the equipment issued to the new recruits.
ON TOP OF THINGS: WO2 Thomas Seaka (Army HQ) goes through documentation for the new recruits.

directed to Battalion Headquarters where they were met by Maj Hermien Brand. She welcomed them to 9 SAI Bn and escorted them through to the office of Lt Col Henk Olivier, Officer Commanding 9 SAI Bn. After welcoming them to the unit the Lieutenant Colonel explained the part that 9 SAI Bn would play in the training of the new recruits.

During the first year the recruits would receive basic training and then go on to do more specialised training. In the second year they would then be deployed either internally or externally. Maj Brand then took them to meet the new recruits.

"So far I had been really impressed," said Matt. "In a strange way I felt at home. Lt Col Olivier and Maj Brand where not only friendly and helpful, they were professional."

Matt and Chris were taken to Alpha Company to meet Capt Jacques Coetzer, the company commander. Alpha Company would be responsible for the basic training of the new recruits. Most of the recruits had arrived that morning and they were going through the process of registration, medicals and being issued with kit.

"Captain Coetzer showed us around the base. We visited the sickbay, the bungalows where the new recruits would be staying, and the quartermaster’s store where they were being issued with equipment," said Matt. "I was surprised at how well organised everything seemed to be. With new recruits one would expect there to be plenty of shouting and noise. This was not the case. Everyone knew what they were supposed to be doing and got on with it."

While Matt chatted to Maj Brand and Capt Coetzer, Chris took the opportunity to speak to some of the recruits.

"With most of my military experience coming from the comic ramblings of older family members, who horribly exaggerate basic training and army food, I wasn’t certain what to expect, and so was quite surprised when I saw the excitement and optimism in the faces of the new recruits. No one looked in the least bit scared, nor was there anybody who didn’t want to be there, which was a completely different picture from the one I envisioned," said Chris. "Then again, there is a big difference in choosing to join, and being obligated to."

Nicola Hop is 22 and from Eerstevier in the Western Cape. She wants to become a medic. Raan Witbooi is also 22 years old and he is from Mossel Bay. He sees the military as a great opportunity to lift himself out of his circumstances.

Chris also spoke to 19-year-old Mpontshej Lehloaya who admitted that it had always been a dream of hers to join the SA Army.

Matt and Chris returned to 9 SAI Bn the following day. Maj Gen T.M. Nkabinde, General Officer Commanding the SA Army Infantry Formation, would be at the unit to deliver a welcoming speech on behalf of the Chief of the SA Army. Matt and Chris slipped into the back of the lecture hall to listen to the general.

After the speech they were introduced to Maj Gen Nkabinde by Lt Col Olivier. They also met with Master Warrant Officer Dan Januarie, the Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) of 9 SAI Bn. They were also given a briefing from WO2 Thomas Seaka (Army HQ). He explained exactly how the recruitment process worked and the various steps that were followed.

"One of the things that really struck me was how proud everyone was of their unit," Matt said. "Forget all the horror stories. If the rest of the SA Army is anything like 9 SAI Bn then we have nothing to worry about. I would have been proud to serve with any of the people I met during my visit."

The MSDS is an excellent programme and more young people should not only be aware of it, they should take advantage of it. In our current economic climate employment is not easy to find. By taking advantage of the MSDS young South Africans are able not only to contribute to their country in a positive manner, they can also benefit on a personal level. What better way to take a two-year gap? You’re provided with accommodation, meals, free medical, a uniform, and you’re paid every month. Furthermore you will learn self-discipline and skills that will make you employable when you complete your two-year contract. Best of all, at the end of the two years you are paid an R18 000 bonus.

* For more news offered by the Tabloid visit its website: www.thetabloid.co.za

HOME SWEET HOME: Alpha Company lines. These bungalows will be home to the recruits for the next few months.
Air Force paid mark of respect on its 89th Anniversary

By Airman Tebogo Kekana,  
*Ad Astra*  
Photos: WO2 Christo Crous, F Sgts David Nomthongwana and Lebo Vaarland

It was a wet day that seemed perfect fit for a naval exercise, but the weather was not about to deter the mission of the SA Air Force to celebrate its 89th Air Force Day at Swartkop (Valhalla) in Pretoria on 30 January 2009. True team spirit prevailed so the rain did not hinder the show from going on.

There was pride in the fact that although Plan B had been catered for, (indoors in a hangar) it would not have felt like it was the “Air Force Day” if there had been no parade or fly-past, which gave spectators an opportunity

Regardless of the bad weather the SA Air Force had its fly-past.
to watch and learn as an SA Air Force Super Lynx helicopter was displayed for the very first time in Gauteng.

The Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Carlo Gagiano, highlighted the highs and lows that were experienced in the past year. He envisaged more effort as the year 2009 would be swamped with national events, such as the FIFA Confederations Cup, the parliamentary elections and the inauguration of the President.

Lt Gen Gagiano also challenged members to commit themselves to continuous learning in order to ensure optimum improvements in the workplace. He expressed his gratitude to Brig Gen Zimpande Msimang, the Co-ordinator of Air Force Day 2009, the Air Force Band and all those who assisted in making this notable event possible.

"My congratulations go to the winners on parade, especially to 2 Air Servicing Unit, which scooped the prestige unit of the year award. I hope this will encourage other units so that next year they will also experience the rewards of hard work."

Among those who graced the event with their presence included most SA Air Force top management personnel, including the well-known Yvonne Chaka Chaka (Honorary Colonel of the Air Force Gymnasium, a business woman and music artist). She revealed to Ad Astra how honoured she was to be a part of such an amazing event and added that she was humbled by how the parade continued regardless of the weather. She congratulated the winning unit and wished all other units would sit up and take notice.

A Super Lynx helicopter preparing for a demonstration. (Above it are two Agusta A109 helicopters.)

The Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Carlo Gagiano (centre), with the proud recipients savouring victory at the Air Force Day.
The importance of career information

By Magriet Malan, Deputy Director: 
Career Services 
Directorate Career Management

Regular visitors to the Human Resources (HR) Intranet would have noticed an increase in activities regarding the placement of career related information pertaining to Public Service Act Personnel (PSAP). Activities include the placement of Department of Defence (DOD) internal vacancies, the compilation of career guides on various occupations and the creation of a new section on Career Development pertaining to Middle Management System (MMS) and Senior Management System (SMS). Links have been created to integrate the different web pages to promote user friendliness.

What and who is behind this drive or initiative?

In the world of work we are all participating in the knowledge economy. This implies that knowledge is regarded as more important than having assets ("asset-centric environment" versus a "knowledge-centric environment"). It similarly requires an adaptation in managing our careers throughout our lives. The old paradigm focused on long-term employment, while the modern paradigm is about being employable. One's security therefore no longer depends on the job or employer, but the ability (knowledge, skills and attitudes) to find and keep work. As a result different patterns of work and concepts such as lifelong learning, career-life, learning culture, personal development plan and career development have emerged.

The focus of Career Development for PSAP in the DOD, as for the broader Public Service, has shifted towards individuals managing their own careers. Although career development is recognised in the Constitution and in other policy frameworks, eg the HR Development Strategy, it is not yet fully institutionalised. An understanding is necessary of how the various educational, training and development initiatives, the appraisal systems and job advertising are designed as instruments to help with this shift.

Since careers are nowadays viewed as the property of the individual, a personally driven process with more choices and challenges and effective career management skills are becoming more and more important. Adequate career information is regarded as central to an individual's decision-making process, but it is also recognised as effective information supporting the competitiveness of labour markets and the economies of countries.

Not only do individuals have to have general information about careers as a development process, but they also require specific information about education, training and learning pathways, the labour market, industry and occupational data to assist them with career development. In other countries national guidelines have been developed and implemented for career development services and career information, thus indicating that career development is not only regarded as a practice for private use, but as good for the public.

It is in view of the above that Directorate Career Management (Sub-directorate: Career Services) has taken the responsibility for the career development of PSAP in the DOD. This drive envisages making career information more accessible to employees in the DOD. This is facilitated by the support of Mr Eddy Ryan (Webmaster of the Chief of HR) of SITA who diligently publishes information very soon after the requests are made.

It is envisaged that the information on the HR Intranet will serve to enhance users’ ability to make positive career decisions and that it will contribute to an understanding of career development as a lifelong process. Active engagement/interaction of users is also invited, not only to improve the site and to indicate what type of information users desire, but also to participate in the publishing of career related information, for example to approach and assist Directorate Career Management (DCM) in publishing more career guides on occupations. Ideally all users should be able to locate and effectively use career information.

Information has the potential to misinform or be misinterpreted, particularly if users are inadequately assisted in the use of information resources (unmediated), therefore users are invited to contact DCM (Sub-directorate: Career Services) to obtain more clarity on the information published.
Corporal Arlene Heather Titus was appointed as the first female drum major in the SANDF in 2006 while a member of the SA Army Band Limpopo. She was transferred to the National Ceremonial Guard (NCG) Band in January 2009 following her husband’s appointment there as Assistant Director of Music. She was immediately utilised as drum major by the Military Band and was afforded the opportunity to lead the band on parade for the annual Opening of Parliament on 6 February 2009.

What was supposed to be just a normal parade turned out to be one of the most historical of all time since Cpl Titus became the first female SANDF drum major to lead a band and Guard of Honour on parade for the official Opening of Parliament. As the band paraded through the streets of Cape Town, from the Castle of Good Hope to Parliament, it was all eyes on the ‘new face’ of the NCG Band.

Wearing a beautiful sash, she brought smiles of admiration to the face of every onlooker as she maneuvered the mace very professionally. Her expertise and precise drill movements, combined with the superb sound of the NCG Band, added a great deal to the splendor of what was without doubt a momentous occasion.

Cpl Titus said it all felt so normal and that rewriting the history books was the last thing on her mind. “As the band played the most beautiful rendition of the SA National Anthem that I’d ever heard, I realised that it was undeniably the biggest honour I was ever given to salute the President and it is definitely one I will treasure for the rest of my life. My heartfelt thanks and appreciation go out to my Officer Commanding, Col N.G. Thenga, my Director of Music, Maj A.C. Strugnell, and the NCG Band as a whole for their confidence in me and also for affording me the opportunity of leading them on a parade of such high calibre.”

We hope to see much more of Cpl Titus in the near future and ask that she uphold this exceptionally high standard of performance in whatever she embarks on.

If music be the food of life, play on, play on, play on.
Security Forces exhibit their careers

Article and photo by Bibi Morgets

The township of Phiritona in Heilbron, Free State, came alive on 16 January 2009 after the Ngwathe local municipality organised a career exhibition in an effort to curb unemployment and fight poverty in the community. The security forces joined hands to showcase the different careers each department has available.

The SA Police Service (SAPS), the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Emergency Services, Free State Department of Transport and Safety and the Correctional Services demonstrated their capabilities to the learners who came in large numbers to learn about career choices.

This recruitment exhibition was held to encourage the youth to join the Security Forces after completing matric and serve the country in uniform. Mr Moeketsi Moshodi, Mayor of the Ngwathe local municipality, emphasised the importance of the event saying: "Part of the municipal mandate is to develop and shape their youths' career paths".

The display stalls gave learners more information about their chosen fields. Young and old assembled to see SAPS members from the police task force demonstrate their specialised skills in arresting armed and organised criminals.

Members of the community were captivated by the different skills each govern-

ment department demonstrated. The Correctional Services showed how their dogs were trained, while the Traffic Department showed how they rescued people involved in an accident.

All these services emphasised one message, which was directed at the learners present, namely: "We need educated employees. Gone are the days when people would join these forces just for employment's sake. We need people who are driven by passion".

Brig Gen Thandi Mohale, Director Human Resources Acquisition, encouraging the youth of Phiritona to join the SANDF.
Working and studying part-time is never easy. To do this and be one of the top achievers takes self-discipline and commitment.

Ms Seipato Bodikologa from the Defence Corporate Communication (DCC) and Capt Phillip Makopo from the SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) Corporate Communication did just that in 2008 when they were among the top five students in the Professional Certificate in Government Communications and Marketing Programme presented at Wits Graduate School of Public and Development Management. When asked about her achievement Ms Bodikologa said: "Perseverance and hard work pays off, I am thankful to DCC and my husband for the support I received during my studies".

The Professional Certificate in Government Communications and Marketing (PCGCM) provides an overview of the theory and practice of public sector management, with specific focus on communications and marketing in a developing country context and is designed to bring a range of perspectives and insights to the attention of government communicators.

This five-module course is presented by Wits academics and guest lecturers who are engaged in a wide variety of communications arenas.

Some of the challenges addressed in the programme are:

- The complex environments in which governments operate (local and global) and the skills required to communicate government policies and programmes.
- The assumption of the "right to know" among all stakeholders is creating ever-increasing demands for continuous communication between governments and citizens, and the questioning of all public activities.
- Opportunities created by the power of new communications media.
- The coaching role of the professional communicator within organisational leadership teams. Participation in the programme is open to:
  - Communications and information officers working in all spheres of government who are at management entry level and in middle management positions.
  - Marketing and communications officers working in state-owned enterprises and public sector agencies.
his is the story of Rescue 911, so called because it was the first rescue of the first day of the first month in 2009. The call came at 04:57 on 1 January 2009. After a very quiet festive season and two weeks of sleeping late, I answered the phone half asleep, wandering who would call me this time of the morning.

"Colonel, this is Airman Ndawo from AFB Ysterplaat Command Post, you are called out for a search and rescue operation." It was as if the operations clerk dumped an ice-cold bucket of water over me. Now totally awake, the first call was made to the Maritime Rescue Co-ordinating Centre (MRCC), situated on Plattekloof hill in the Cape. Danny, the rescue co-ordinator on duty, informed me that two teenagers were reported lost at sea with a rubberduck in the Hermanus area. The search area was between Danger point and Hangklip up to 20 nms seaward, with Hermanus NSRI as search co-ordinator.

Arriving at 35 Squadron, AFB Ysterplaat, a quick exchange of New Year’s greetings took place before the planning started. The aircraft was in the process of being towed out to the flight line while the aircrew communicated with the search co-ordinator, Mr Henk Henn, stationed at Hermanus NSRI for any additional information. The pilots, Capt Grant Wilcock and Lt Darius le Roux, ensured that all the documentation for the flight were complete, while the navigator and myself continued to plan the route, search pattern and fuel requirements.

The flight engineer, WO1 Chris Pedlar, was in the process of executing a pre-flight inspection, and the telecom operators, WO2 Lionel Ashbury, Sgt Jakes Jacobsz and Sgt Warren Andreas, ensured that all the communication equipment, frequencies and contact details of relevant role players were in place and that the survival equipment was on board. The aerial photographer, Sgt Nathan Geduld, ensured that his photographic equipment was ready for the flight.

After a thorough briefing, the crew walked out to the aircraft. Although the Base was very quiet, our aircraft being the only one on the flight line, all essential services, such as the Command post, fire brigade, air traffic controller and duty crew, were ready to support the operation.

Rescue 053, our call sign, got airborne in very quiet airspace. "No aircraft flying today, except us" the co-pilot noted after he made a compulsory radio call on the area air traffic frequency. Operational checks outbound followed as soon as we crossed the coast over False Bay.

It was a beautiful day with a calm sea and little wind. This was all about to change soon. Passing Hangklip, the eastern boundary of False Bay, en route to Danger Point, situated 15 nms east of Hermanus, the crew sharpened their lookout for any beached
rubberduck along the coast. The weather conditions changed to broken rain clouds at about 2000 feet, with a mild wind blowing south-easterly.

After a quick circle of Dyer Island, known for its great white shark diving expeditions, we entered a creeping line ahead search pattern from Danger Point to 20 nms south. The weather continued to deteriorate as we flew into rain about 12 nms off the coast. The wind picked up to about 20 kts south-easterly. We continued the search and reduced the track spacing as visibility in the area decreased. We all knew that we were searching for a grey rubberduck. It was difficult to see it with grey skies above and in a greyish sea with poor visibility and only a weather radar at the pilot station and limited communication and navigation equipment, as this was a Dakota C47-TP transport version.

During the fifth leg of the pattern, at 09:18, the commander spotted something in the water and directed the navigator, at that stage operating the binoculars, in that direction. We had found them! "MARK MARK", survivors right 2 o'clock 1 mile! Two flame floats gone!" Like "action stations" on a battle ship, the crew continued with their survival equipment (SARAFT) drop procedure. The flame floats are used to mark the original position for use as a reference point to find the survivors again. This procedure proved to be very successful, as visual contact with the rubberduck was lost during the turn towards the flame floats.

The commander reduced height and speed and turned to fly over the survivors, while the co-pilot set up the GPS to mark their position and the experienced WO2 Ashbury was ready to drop 2 flame floats. "Standby on top, on top two one now!" "Two flame floats gone." It was evident that the two people in the rubberduck were indeed very glad to see us. A "found" message was transmitted to the Maritime Air Radio Organisation (MARO), as part of the Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape, stationed at Silvermine. The MARO relayed the message to Hermanus NSRI. The navigator plotted the position as 16 nms south-west of Hermanus.

While waiting for the rescue party, we continued to mark the survivors, as a flame float burns for approximately 10 minutes. With another 4 hours of fuel available, we calculated that it would take at least an hour before a ship-borne rescue party could reach the scene and we therefore continued to mark the survivors. However, at 09:40, only 20 minutes later, the Overberg Disaster Management Alouette III arrived on the scene to hoist the survivors. Sgt Nathan Geduld continued to capture the rescue on camera. We escorted the helicopter to ensure its safety, and after brief "Happy New Year" messages between the rescue crew, continued to Ysterplaat.

After a safe landing, debriefing and mission report, the crew realised that they had conducted a very successful search and rescue operation under very difficult circumstances. It was indeed a commendable effort on the part of the crew and all parties involved.

The SA Air Force again proved that it was ready to serve people when called upon, and that at any time and any day. It was the first day of January 2009, a day that will always be remembered by the crew of Rescue 053 and the two survivors, 16-year-old Ferzel Sheriff and 14-year-old Bradwell Europa.
Rejuvenation with drive

By Lt N. Matshinyatsimbi, Communication Officer School of Engineers

Energetic and full of life was a fresh new addition to the Sappers: 281 recruits from all corners of South Africa entered the gates of the School of Engineers on 12 January 2009 to begin their two weeks of induction and CHATSEC (Counselling HIV and AIDS Through Spiritual and Ethical Conduct) and an intense 20 weeks of Basic Military Training, which will end on 12 June 2009.

As they venture into their new-found careers as sappers some will remain at the School of Engineers to do driving and maintenance and others will be transferred to other Engineer regiments to become Engineer paratroopers, assistant artisans, assistant GIS operators, assistant printers, assistant photographers and combat engineers.

After their Basic Military Training the recruits will engage in the task of becoming field sappers, the foundation of their careers as engineers. Corps training, from 15 June to 11 September 2009, will consist of water purification, watermanship, defence works, basic field engineering, power tools and bridge building.

Run quite well, my only challenge is push-ups, but I am getting there.”

 Asked about their experiences so far, this is what some of them had to say. Recruit S.A. Grabe from Ermelo in Mpumalanga said: “I always wanted to be in the Army and I’m not disappointed at what I have found. I know it’s going to be tough from here on, but I’m going to make it.” T.G. Netshineulu, a 21-year-old recruit from Diepsloot in Johannesburg said: “This for me is routine; I enjoy exercising, so training is a breeze. I’m determined to be a general after two years”.

Recruit C.A Enslin (18) from Kimberley said: “My hobbies are singing and communicating. I joined the Army because I want to help improve my country and I feel the defence is the best way to do that. I can
The School of Artillery invests in the future of SA

Article and photos by Capt Werner Joubert, Communication Officer
School of Artillery

More than 200 recruits stayed at the School of Artillery in Potchefstroom from 11 to 24 January 2009 for a unique programme that could benefit South Africa in the future.

The School of Artillery made history when the unit became involved with Denel and the SA Police Service (SAPS) during an induction orientation programme for SAPS recruits.

The induction orientation programme was a pilot programme between the SAPS, Denel and the SA Youth Commission to uplift the police officers’ entry-level standard. During this programme the SAPS recruits were taught various life skills they would need in the SAPS environment. These skills included communication, conflict handling, teamwork and personal motivation. After completing the programme the recruits commenced with their basic SAPS training.

The School of Artillery was involved in the programme in a supportive role by providing accommodation, meals and venues. The mess, accommodation, corporate communication and ceremonial advice were made available to the programme facilitators.

The programme culminated in a passing-out parade on 24 January 2009. Among the guests were more than 200 recruits comprised of troops on parade and senior commissioners from various parts of the SAPS. Senior members from Denel and the SANDF also attended the parade. During this ceremony the recruits solemnly pronounced their values to the senior members present and also signed a code of conduct.

The recruits will be closely monitored throughout their training and initial service to determine whether the skills they have been taught are beneficial to them and the organisation. A comparison will be made with those recruits who have not gone through the programme.

We wish the recruits the best and hope that they will excel in the service of their country. We at the School of Artillery are proud to be associated with this programme because we believe that it is an investment in our future.

SA Police Service recruits on parade.

SA Police Service, Denel and SANDF guests and dignitaries.
The relocation of the Basic Military Training Wing of Air Force Gymnasium to Air Force Base Hoedspruit earlier this year has been an enormous change for the staff and the students. On 11 January 2009 the Military Skills Development System and Defence Reserves’ recruits moved to Air Force Base Hoedspruit to commence with their training at the Boston Training Facility.

Their arrival at Air Force Base Hoedspruit has been a challenge beset with teething hiccups.

Training is the core business of Air Force Gymnasium Boston, and is the mechanism used to teach the fundamentals of the SA Air Force to students. One of the challenges that students are faced with at Air Force Base Hoedspruit is that there is no sports field or parade ground at the Boston premises and course members have to practise drill moves on a tar road.

There are 92 female and 240 male students at Boston and logistics plays a huge role in their daily lives. The female students have to be transported from their living quarters, while 514 Squadron members and the male students have to be transported from their living quarters at Drakensig to Boston to attend lectures.

Some of the measures put in place to monitor the students’ well-being are the sickbay at the base that operates from 09:00 to 14:30 and the hospital in Drakensig that operates 24 hours a day. On certain days, due to high temperatures physical training is stopped to avoid sunburn and dehydration.

Cpl Khayalethu Geca, an instructor for the Candidate Officers on Basic Military Training, said that some of the challenges he faced were that the Candidate Officers were more mature and much older than the rest of the group, which demanded respect from the instructors who in most instances were much younger. Nevertheless Cpl Geca thoroughly enjoys lecturing.

The students seemed at ease sharing their sentiments with Ad Astra on how training had been for them. “The migration and morale are good. We strive to give the students what they require in terms of training and discipline. We are happy that there are fewer chances of absence without leave,” assured Cpl Peter Matabane.

“Adaptation was a major factor in the beginning. Many students fainted...
Students demonstrate drill moves on a tar road.

Candidate Officer Daylin Elliot polishes his shoes to get ready for inspection.

and we had a number of asthma attacks occurring," explained Cpl Mokgadi Phosa. Candidate Officer Daylin Elliot who studied Aeronautical Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand joined the SA Air Force for the discipline and to serve his country. He has enjoyed being on course thus far. Airman Thamsanqa Nkosi, who showed good leadership skills during the interview, shared his thoughts: "My perception of the military has changed and the training has been good."

The pass rate at Air Force Gymnasium Boston has increased tremendously and there are fewer students who rewrite exams. Caroline Pillay (39), the first Indian Chaplain lady in the SANDF, currently on Basic Military Training, said that she was looking for a challenge when she joined the SANDF. Though she had worked with different people before she believed there was a need for therapy and ministry in the SANDF.

Airman Alice Jacobs (19) said that training was hard, particularly for the women, and they were still coming to terms with the wildlife at Hoedspruit. Like many young people who join the SA Air Force, she saw a career opportunity and grabbed it.

Although the move from Air Force Gymnasium to Air Force Base Hoedspruit has been challenging, the instructors and the course leaders ought to be applauded for the wonderful work they do.

Air Force Gymnasium Boston is home away from home for the students on Basic Military Training and, judging from their positive outlook, they will undoubtedly perform well during the course, which will end in April 2009.
The SA Air Force boasts in its arsenal the mighty Hercules that serves as a tactical and strategic cargo air lifter. This popular aircraft is powered by four Allison T56 engines that can each deliver up to 3,700 kW. Although the engines are incredibly reliable they still require maintenance and in some cases a complete overhaul.

After 1 Air Servicing Unit (1 ASU) overhauls the engine it is the engine need to be tested to see if it is functional and strong enough for use on the aircraft. Some people think that the engine should be tested on the aircraft wing, but this is very dangerous since the engine could malfunction and cause considerable damage to the aircraft itself. For this reason a test bench was built to test the engine before it is installed and operated on the aircraft.

The first engine test bench was built at Thaba Tshwane for 1 AD and was used for about 10 years until one of the operators noted substantial cracks in the facility walls. Upon investigation it was found that the facility had developed a sinkhole underneath it. The area was subsequently condemned, leaving the SA Air Force without a testing facility.

With the C130 fleet still in operation and with no other testing facility in Africa the replacement of the engine test bench became a strategic requirement.

Air Force Base Waterkloof was identified as the proper location and the drafting process was initiated. At the new facility additional upgrades were also incorporated. These include the construction of two test cells there as opposed to the one in the condemned facility, the replacement of the old Data Acquisition System and
required the reinstallation of the skids that the engines were mounted on, as well as the 17 ton exhaust, reassembly and servicing of the Froude Hofmann dynamometer. This required installing 5 000 m of wiring as part of the sensor and control system and adapting the control desk to accommodate the upgrade changes.

The new systems include the National Instruments Data Acquisition Hardware and the Froude Hofmann Texcel VX100 Dynamometer Controller. These new systems provide expandable and extended capabilities as well as an increase in reliability.

One of the major milestones for the project team was the commissioning of the Dynamometer Control System. In order to commission the Controller all systems required to test engines had to be functional since the engine is operated through its full performance profile. This was completed on 19 December 2008 together with the commissioning agent from Froude Hofmann in the United Kingdom. This was the first full performance run since the previous facility was condemned and concluded the most difficult hurdle with regard to the reassembly of the engine test bench.

The project team was led by Capt Christo Versteeg, a Mechanical Engineer at 1 ASU. The reassembly was managed by SA Air Force Engineering Services and executed by members from 1 ASU and 5 ASU.

The Allison T56 engine is capable of generating 3 660 kW (230 rps * 2p * 2576 Nm Turbine Output) with the planetary gearbox reducing the speed to 16.98 rps, but increasing the torque to 34 879.04 Nm. The Froude Hoffman F63 dynamometer can absorb up to 6 700 kW and has a maximum torque rating of 50 000 Nm. This is the largest dynamometer operating in Africa and is ideal for high torque and quick response applications.

During 2009 the facility will experience further development with regard to the PT6 test cell with the installation of an overhead crane, wiring and an exhaust manifold. The presence of a T56 engine testing capability in Africa has sparked a great deal of interest from civilian companies and raises the prospect of having a local testing facility. The 1 ASU Propulsion Test Centre might quite soon not only serve the SA Air Force, but also air forces elsewhere in Africa.
Army Territorial Reservists on training

By Lt Col Marius Roos,
Officer Commanding Regiment
Noord-Transvaal
Photo: L Cpl Daniels

With one shouted command the darkness surrounding Doornkop Training Area was shattered by a blast of rifle fire. Mortars coughed, adding to the din, while LMG gunners lit up the night sky with streams of fiery tracers. Signallers communicated, logisticians transported ammunition and medical personnel stood by while a rifle company subjected the objective to sustain fire for twenty minutes.

Lt Col Marius Roos, Officer Commanding Regiment Noord-Transvaal (RNT), smiled as his 120 learners confidently demonstrated their live-fire skills. He remembered how six weeks earlier these Army Territorial Reservists arrived for ATR/ACR conversion training at Doornkop, weak in discipline and unsure of their soldier skills. The learners were not only from RNT, but also from Tshwane Regiment, Regiment Botha and Regiment Christiaan Beyers. "How far they’ve come", he observed, looking on as these new members of the Active Conventional Reserve (ACR) safely conducted a complicated night company-level battle drill under the watchful eyes of several senior SANDF officials.

This “graduation exercise” marked the successful completion of a mission that took six months to plan and carry out. From the start, Lt Col Roos envisioned a world-class training experience, one that would not only transform his ATR learners into fully-fledged ACR soldiers, but also test the capabilities of the RNT battalion staff.

Eighty RNT soldiers on continuation training were to support the ATR conversion while practising their own skills at all levels.

The plan of the Regiment Noord-Transvaal was an ambitious one. All training would occur in the field under combat conditions. Ammunition and supplies had to be moved, a transport and LWT park established, medical facilities set up and unit operations rooms manned round the clock.

Signallers were to communicate continuously from Doornkop to the RNT headquarters in Pretoria (at 180
km distance). The battalion chefs would use SA Army rations to prepare and feed over 200 learners and staff in the field. A daily training plan was developed and executed by the commanders and platoon sergeants on the ground.

At all times Lt Col Roos emphasised that safety would be the first priority.

With the RNT command and staff working as a team, the plan quickly came together. Using the “building-block” technique, learners first received instruction in the individual soldier’s tasks. During this phase heavy emphasis was placed on physical fitness, night operations and route marching. As the conversion training continued, learners practised section and platoon battle drills. They conducted patrols, and underwent urban training and helicopter drills before moving to the night live-fire exercise.

Supported by the SA Infantry Formation, 4 SA Infantry Battalion and detached members of the Signal Corps, the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants from RNT trained their soldiers to the highest SA Army standards. Company commanders and second in commands actively participated in the conversion training as well, certifying the learners’ progress while keeping morale high throughout.

During the final week of the training evaluation was done by the CYCAD, the evaluation team from the Infantry School (Oudtshoorn). They confirmed that all objectives had been met according to laid down doctrine and were well above the standard required.

The RNT chaplain even “kitted up” for ministry in the field and answered the learners’ spiritual needs while personally participating in their conversion training.

The result was an intensive six-week programme that produced over one hundred proud, confident South African Infantry soldiers, trained and ready for any mission. Also tested at Doornkop were the RNT command and staff. These “old soldiers” trained under real-world conditions right alongside the ATR learners. Even mundane tasks such as demobilisation processing were practised, demonstrating that the Regiment Noord-Transvaal “trains as it fights”.

Regiment Noord-Transvaal is a proud Mechanised Infantry Reserve Force unit, with their headquarters in Pretoria. The unit has been called upon to perform various tasks, which it has conducted successfully over the years. The role and function of the unit is expanding, and to ensure a combat ready force ready for deployment it is of the utmost importance to do continuation training regularly.

Lt Col Roos looked back on the success of this winter’s ATR/ACR Conversion and Continuation Training with the following comments: “We have proved we are ready, willing and able to do whatever our country wants us to do. Give us a task! We will not disappoint”.

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**SA Army Foundation honouring excellence**

**By Lt Col Elize Lizamore (Res F), PRO SA Army Foundation**

It has become part of the SA Army Foundation’s tradition to present an award to the best SA Army learner at the Military Academy in Saldanha. The best learner for 2008 was Lt Nicolene Wallace. Lt Wallace was the third female student in the history of the Military Academy to receive the award of honour from the Officer Commanding of the Military Academy, R Adm (JG) Derek Christian.

Lt Wallace obtained her B MIL degree with distinction. She is in the Air Defence Artillery Corps where she has distinguished herself as an excellent troop commander. Her future plans entail furthering her studies in Accountancy through Unisa to obtain an honours degree.

Mr Reggie Masokameng, representing the SA Army Foundation, attended the passing out parade and presented Lt Wallace with a pair of binoculars. The SA Army Foundation is once again proud to be associated with the Military Academy under the auspices of the University of Stellenbosch and strives to support all its members in the true spirit of Batho Pele. 

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**Mr Reggie Masokameng from the SA Army Foundation and Lt Nicolene Wallace, best SA Army learner of the Military Academy for 2008.**
2 Military Hospital was the lucky recipient of a generous contribution by the SA Navy. The Simonstown Military Sports Club planned an 8 km fun walk on 28 November 2008 to coincide with World AIDS Day. The theme of this event was to focus on wellness and how to make a difference. This event was also planned as a fund-raiser to provide 2 Military Hospital with much needed items.

The walk was held along the scenic coastal route towards Simonstown. Hundreds of SANDF members entered for the walk with enthusiasm and great spirits. Members from the Correctional Services from as far away as Malmesbury, Paarl, Worcester and Beaufort West also participated. All entries displayed an AIDS awareness ribbon. At the finishing line personnel from 2 Military Hospital and the Institute for Maritime Medicine (IMM) manned awareness tents where info was displayed on HIV and AIDS, as well as the "16 Days of Activism Against Domestic Violence". Medical support was rendered by IMM along the route just to ensure that everyone stayed in fine physical condition.

The donation was handed over by R Adm (JG) Jacobus Everhardus Louw, Flag Officer in Command Naval Base Simonstown, WO2 Nigel Frederick Riley, Warrant Officer in Charge Naval Base Simonstown, and the Physical Training Department of the SA Navy, Naval Base Simonstown during the annual Carols by Candlelight Service that took place at 2 Military Hospital on 10 December 2008. The Medical, Paediatric and Palliative Care Wards were the main beneficiaries. Much needed items were received, such as a washing machine, a tumble-dryer, desktop fan, TVs, a pram with blankets, an oil heater, a lazy boy recliner, chairs and much more.

The Officer Commanding of 2 Military Hospital, Col Ntshavheni Peter Maphaha, the respective departmental heads received the donation with humble gratitude. Col Maphaha awarded WO2 Riley a "Friend of the Unit Certificate" to show the unit’s appreciation for his loyal support and commitment towards the members of this unit on many occasions over the years.

Thank you to the SA Navy for this grand gesture - you will make a difference to the lives of many patients suffering from AIDS!
STOP HIV & AIDS

KEEP THE PROMISE

LEAD • EMPOWER • DELIVER

defence
Department: Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
CAN YOU IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT WATER?

Probably not, because you would not survive. Clean water is crucial for our daily living.

The South African National Defence Force supports the management of good water usage.