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**2005 - Winner of the Government Communicator of the Year Award (GCIS).**
**2005 - Winner of the National Ubungcweti Award (GCIS).**
1 Parachute Regiment members paying tribute to SA National Defence Force members who died while serving under the United Nations (UN) Flag on International UN Peacekeepers Day. (Photo by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole)

36th Commemorative Jackie Mekler Race

Military race-walker won two gold medals at the SA Masters Athletics Championships

A decade of South Africa Forces professional cricket celebrated

Three vital Decisions

Change your attitude

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FRONT COVER: The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula (middle) with her two guests at the Budget Vote, who are currently on deployment in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lt Col Constance Tlhaole, Officer Commanding of the RSA Engineer Squadron (right), and Sgt Eunice Ghambe, Field Section Leader of the RSA Engineer Squadron. (Photo by Mr Paul Mpangalala)
This month I felt it necessary to raise a critical issue which requires to be communicated as widely as possible, namely the Defence Act outlaws the wearing of the camouflage uniform of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) by civilians. This is a serious offence which can lead to imprisonment for a period of five years.

During the 2017 Armed Forces Day celebrations and other recent military events across the country there were numerous incidents where civilians were spotted wearing the SANDF camouflage uniform. This is a matter that is of great concern since criminals tend to abuse our official uniform to commit heinous crimes while posing as soldiers.

The attention of members is drawn to the fact that the camouflage uniform worn by the country’s armed forces, the SANDF, forms part of a list of controlled items which only soldiers are authorised to wear while on active duty and should not be worn by civilians. Anyone found wearing the camouflage uniform of the SANDF or its distinctive marks and crests is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years.

In many instances, vigilant members of the SANDF have alerted ransgessing members to this fact and at times the assistance of South African Police Service officers was requested to apprehend the members and confiscate the SANDF camouflage items.

The Defence Act 42 of 2002, section 104 (5) and (6) stipulates that: “Any person who, without authority, possesses or wears prescribed uniforms or their distinctive marks or crests, or performs any prohibited act while wearing such uniform or with such uniform, distinctive marks or crests, is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years”.

It further states that: “Any person who, without authority, uses or is responsible for the use of any name, title or any other symbol of the Department, where such use is calculated or likely to lead people to infer that it has been authorised under this Act, is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years.”

Care should also be taken by members of the SANDF to ensure that their loved ones, friends and relatives do not possess or wear the camouflage uniform of the country’s armed forces. In addition, it is the responsibility of uniform maintenance sections of the various units of the SANDF to ensure that deceased members’ next-of-kin return all uniform items to the organisation to help eradicate the rampant misuse of our uniform. (Source: Department of Defence Bulletin 01/2017)

*For further enquiries contact Brig Gen M.P.M. Mgobozi, Director Defence Corporate Communication, on 012 355 6302.

On a lighter note: One of SA Soldier’s team members, Able Seaman Samuel Ramonyai, and his beautiful young wife, Goitsimang, now Mrs Ramonyai, got married over the weekend of 22 and 23 April. May the newlyweds be blessed with a long and prosperous married life.

**From the Editor’s Desk**

Goitsimang, now Mrs Ramonyai, got married over the weekend. Seaman Samuel Ramonyai, and his beautiful young wife, Goitsimang, got married over the weekend of 22 and 23 April. May the newlyweds be blessed with a long and prosperous married life.

**Van die Redakteurs Sessemble**

Andeesmaand het ek dit nodig geag om ‘n kwessie van kritieke belang te belig. Dit moet so wyd as moontlik gekommunikeer word dat die Verdedigingswet die dra van kamoefleeruniform van die SA Nasionale Weermag (SANW) deur civiele mense verbyd. Dit is ‘n ernstige oortreding wat kan lei tot troustraf vir ‘n periode van vyf jaar!

Gedurende die 2017 Gewapende Magte Dag-vieringe en ander onlangse militêre gebeurtenises regoor die land was daar menig insident waar civiele mense gesien is wat die SANW-kamoefleeruniform dra. Hierdie aangeleendheid is baie kommerwekkend omdat kriminelle daarvan hou om ons amptelike uniform te dra terwyl hulle weersinwekkende misdade pleeg terwyl hulle as soldaat voorhou.

Lede se aandag word daarop gevestig dat die kamoefleeruniform wat deur dié land se gewapende magte gedra word, dus die SANW, op ‘n lys van gekontroleerde items verskyn en slegs soldate is gemagtig om dit te dra terwyl hulle op aktiewe diens is, en civiele mense mag dit nie dra nie. Enigeen wat gevind word wat die SANW-kamoefleeruniform dra, of die kenmerkende simbole of range daarvan, is skuldig aan ‘n misdryf en by skuldigbevinding kan sodanige person ‘n boete opgelê word of gevangenisstraf vir ‘n periode van nie meer as vyf jaar nie.

In baie gevalle het oplettende SANW-lede oortredende lede oor hierdie feit ingelig en soms was die hulp van die Suid-Afrikaanse Polisiëdienis-offisiere ingeroep om lede te arrester en die SANW-kamoefleeritems te konfiskeer.

Verdedigingswet 42 van 2002, Artikel 104 (5) en (6) stipleur: “Enige person wie, sonder magtiging, in besit is van of voorgeskrewe uniform dra of die kenmerkende simbole of range daarvan, of enige verbode dade uitvoer terwyl sodanige uniform gedra word of met sodanige uniform se kenmerkende simbole of range, is skuldig aan ‘n misdryf en by skuldigbevinding kan sodanige person ‘n boete opgelê word of gevangenisstraf vir ‘n periode van nie meer as vyf jaar nie.”

Verder stipleur dit: “Enige person wie, sonder magtiging, gebruik maak van of verantwoordelijk is vir die gebruik van enige naam, titel of enige ander simbool van die Departement, waar sodanige gebruik gekontroleer word of mense te mislei is dat dit waarskynlik gemagtig is onder die Wet, is skuldig aan ‘n misdryf en by skuldigbevinding kan sodanige person ‘n boete opgelê word of gevangenisstraf vir ‘n periode van nie meer as vyf jaar nie.”

SANW-lede moet voorsoor tref om te versker dat hul geliefdes, vriende en familie nie die kamoefleeruniform van dié land se gewapende magte besit of dra nie. Hier bykomend, is dit die verantwoordelikheid van die uniformstandhoudingssekseis van die onderskeie SANW-eenhede om te versker dat afgestorne lede se naasbestaande alles uniformitems aan die organisasie terugbесorg om die verregaande misbruik van ons uniform te help uitroe. (Bron: Departement van Verdedigingsbulletin 03/2017)

*Vir verdere navrae kontakte Brig-gen M.P.M. Mgobozi, Direkteur Verdedigingskorporatiewe- kommunikasie, by 012 355 6302.

CRIME-LINE TOLL-FREE NUMBER FOR MILITARY POLICE DIVISION TO REPORT ANY CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES.

0800 222 091
PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST

This is specifically for brothers in the Military Skills Development System (MSDS), it is brotherly advice. I have seen, experienced and have learned. Put first things first then everything will find its proper place. What do I mean by that? We all have dreams of buying houses, owning at least a car and one day marrying that one person and starting a family.

Now the reality is that us, young men, lose focus. You are still young and fresh from school when suddenly you are earning a salary and have a right to buy whatever you want and have freedom away from parents. Mistakes can easily happen when you have what I would call “instant” money. There are two routes when you are young and employed. You can either build your future by saving a portion of your salary and using it for valuable things that will benefit you greatly, or you can spend your salary extravagantly and create unnecessary debts for yourself.

The mistake that any young man can make is to spend money on things such as alcohol and women. I mean, to not create a monster that will haunt me for years I must start today, and create a bright future that will benefit me. It is best if you put heads together legally as your family, rather than cohabiting, making a child, and then complaining about your salary.

Put first things first young men, and the rest of your life will flourish: avoid debt, drinking sprees and cohabiting. Just enjoy your youth responsibly, buy valuable things like houses, invest, you will not be young for ever. L Cpl David Tshivhula, 1 Parachute Battalion

DEFENCE COLLEGE LEADS THE REVOLUTION TO A MORE EFFICIENT EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Nashua Communications and Unify donated Samsung tablets fitted with CIRCUIT application to the Security Defence Studies Programme 03/17 (SDSP) members at the SA National Defence College (SANDC) in Thaba Tshwane recently. According to the Commandant of the SANDC, Brig Gen Peter Sereko, the College is leading the revolution to create a better teaching and more efficient educational system that will provide Directing Staff, educators and members on course with the ability to collaborate and communicate as one. The SANDC is the premier institution of the SA National Defence Force, which caters for the needs of senior leadership from various segments of society, both domestic and international. It assists them with regard to security issues and policy/strategy formulation. The College is a centre of excellence in the academic and research fields. Its diversified disciplines provide for considered inputs at the national security and strategic level. The Defence College impacts higher education in policy and strategy formulation with the emphasis on national security and defence, and acts as a national think-tank. The National Security Course presented at SANDC covers essentials of both the National Defence Course and the Armed Forces War Course. These courses combine the rich experience of participants from divergent backgrounds and add value to the process of learning, in addition to creating increased interaction and understanding. During the handing-over ceremony, members on course also received training in the new application (App), CIRCUIT, which was created by Unify, a company that aims to use information communication and technology to empower the SANDC. Introducing CIRCUIT, the Vice President of Unify Middle East and Africa, Mr Feras Zeidan, said that CIRCUIT was a team communication and collaboration tool that had been released on 28 October 2014.

Mr Zeidan said that CIRCUIT improved teamwork by bringing voice, video, chat, screen share, file sharing and storage into one application. He said: “CIRCUIT provides a better way to work one that is far more efficient and effective at providing for collaboration. It is one tool with all the capabilities you need to meet with your teams, have a guide call, exchange ideas and share information. CIRCUIT travels with you. You can collaborate and access files wherever you want, when you want and how you want. With CIRCUIT, mobility is fundamental: no silos and securing data in the CIRCUIT cloud.”

In thanking the sponsors, Brig Gen Musa Mazibuko, the Regal of the Security Defence Studies Programme 03/17 (left) receiving his Samsung tablet from the Chief Executive Officer of Nashua Communications, Mr Freddie Potgieter. (Photo by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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. All letters must include the writer’s full name, address and home telephone number. The opinions expressed in letters are not necessarily the views of the Department of Defence/ SA National Defence Force. The volume of letters we receive make 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 concerning the Department of Defence. Regrettably, anonymous letters cannot be published - Editor.
Greetings to everyone who might read this letter and receive a blessing in the most wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Amen! In spite of a hopeless situation God, the Saints, soldiers and civilians of South Africa I have gone from nowhere to somewhere. I was praying to become a soldier; I did not even know where to start, bearing in mind that applying does not guarantee a job. When I saw someone wearing a uniform I would look at him and say in my heart: one day I will be wearing that special Transkei Defence Force uniform. It was a blessing for my soul and made me want to serve my country. It was my dream and I did not bury it. For many years it did not happen, but I said as long as I lived I would be a soldier. To those with dreams, do not bury your dream while you are still alive. Everyday wake up and work on your dream like Joseph in the Bible who never buried his dream - Genesis 41:43. As a Private I wrote a number of letters to Salut magazine (the predecessor of SA Soldier). I quote from one: “Do not quit, but soldier on”. As a Lance Corporal I wrote another letter that said: “Nothing is impossible to God” - Luke 1:37 and Matthew 19:26. As a Corporal I wrote a winning letter in 2009. Its theme was our destination. In heaven we must not allow ourselves to stagnate before obstacles: we must jump them and continue for our prize. Now, as a Sergeant, I am honouring God. Challenges are not there to break us, but to build us for our future, like Joseph. He went through challenges before he become a king. Sometimes you must thank God for things that you do not see with your physical eyes. As a man of faith, I thank God for my Degree in Theology (BTh). I also thank God for His Word. I thank God that the people of South Africa and the whole world will honour God now and forever. Amen! I noticed that some people honoured God until 57 years of age and waited for the next two years to reach 60 years of age so that they could go on pension and start working hard again. While on pension you cannot work or run. At the end of the race you will be honouring God like Tata Madiba who went beyond 80 serving the country and inspiring other countries. Honour God until Jesus Christ comes or until you die or judgement comes. God bless you all in Jesus’ Mighty Name.

Sgt Mbingeleli Lubuzo, Army Support Base Bloemfontein

Women have always used their voices as a means towards progress and equality and to express and expand their dreams and hopes for the future. They have used their voices to share their stories to encourage understanding and build communities. Members of Defence Foreign Relations, together with the Spouses Forum chaired by Maj Rebecca Yam, spouse of Lt Gen Lindile Yam, the Chief of the SA Army, on behalf of Ms Charlotte Shoke, Chairperson of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Spouses Forum and spouse of Gen Solly Shoke, the Chief of the SANDF, took the spouses of the Military Attaché and Advisory Corps (MAAC) recently on an excursion to the Lion and Safari Park in Krugersdorp. The social visit provided them with an opportunity to interact with each other in a relaxed atmosphere to strengthen ties of goodwill and rekindle friendships. The visit included a guided game drive and lion cub interaction.

Welcoming the MAAC spouses and the Forum members, Maj Yam said: “There are no better moments than coming together as women”. Thereafter Maj Yam and Ms Sihem Deroual, spouse of the Air Attaché of the Embassy of Algeria, exchanged gifts. In concluding the programme of the day Ms Sihem said: “I thank Maj Yam and her team on behalf of all MAAC women for arranging such a wonderful excursion, and for always arranging different programmes and trips for us”.

Ms Nthabiseng Lebajoa and Ms Lesego Moropane, Pretoria

Many times we sit and wait for things to happen in our lives, in our work place, personal growth and many areas in our lives. No action is an Action. By sitting and lazing around is never an answer or solution to lot of things. We often complain about the things we do not have and cannot change and we neglect the less and precious that we have, and that we can preserve, as we all know as the members of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) we have less budget each year and there are certain things that we do not have at the present moment or they are “US” or just about to be declared “US” yet we sit and do nothing to ensure that we save whatever that we have to secure a better and productive SANDF. No action is an action, yes it is indeed if we continue talking about how big the problems of the SANDF and our country are rather than to see to it that we change our approach and how we talk, then we will talk the language of saying More Action is an Action … Let us talk less and do more. Cpl Dimakatso Davhana, Army Support Base Johannesburg

Spouses of the Military Attaché and Advisory Corps interacting with lion cubs during their visit to the Lion and Safari Park. (Photo by Mr Witney Rasaka)
The Armed Forces are the constitutional embodiment of the responsibility that a legitimate government has to protect its citizens from foreign acts of aggression that can endanger life and property. This requires that governments ensure that their armed forces are capable of effectively responding to aggression and that these responses conform to the laws of war.

These requirements can only be achieved through military training. Militaries have to be ready to develop and maintain equipment and personnel capable of rapid and effective responses to threats. Equally important is that militaries need to develop and maintain the professional skills necessary for combat. Military training is therefore a necessary and essential component of maintaining a standing military.

It is against this background that students at the Military Academy are presented a War Simulation Exercise annually as part of their undergraduate development.

SADF VISITS BEST PERFORMING SCHOOL IN MANGAUNG

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) recently participated at the Bloemfontein Show where it won first prize with its exhibition. During the show, the SANDF took the opportunity to visit the Tsolelelo Secondary School in Mangaung to inform the learners about the various career opportunities in the SANDF. Tsolelelo Secondary School is one of the best performing schools in the Mangaung district. Speaking to the learners, the Principal of the school said that over the years the school has set the bar higher and have sent a profound message to all other schools and learners that personal circumstances must not condemn anyone to poverty and underachievement. He further said that some of the learners who are top learners are children who come from extreme poverty, who against all odds push themselves to the limit. He also took the opportunity to thank the SANDF for holding a career exhibition at their school. Speaking to the learners, the officials from the SANDF said that the SANDF was in the process of rejuvenating itself by recruiting young people from different backgrounds throughout the country. The SANDF particularly needs educated and skilled young South Africans to serve in a modern and technologically advanced National Defence Force. The SANDF visit at the school included a briefing on the various

Services and Divisions of the SANDF, including an exhibition showcasing the capabilities and expertise of the SANDF and various career opportunities in the SANDF to motivate the youth in poor communities as a means for them to become resilient and self-reliant. The exhibition provided an opportunity to enhance the corporate image of the SANDF and to focus on the social responsibility programmes in support of government developmental outcomes. The event also provided the SANDF with an opportunity to promote its image and highlight its role in a democratic society. The learners interacted with members of the SANDF to gain more knowledge and insight in terms of career opportunities in the SANDF. The SA Army Band Kroonstad played a few items for the learners and teachers during the visit.

S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole, email

WAR SIMULATION: Capt Kheseng Khome and Lt Moesfika Moses in action. (Photo by Capt Swipey Lourens)
With the above-mentioned requirements of a standing military and the importance of simulated training in mind, the objective was to introduce these third year students to the world of War Simulation within the broader SANDF.

The exercise commenced with the introduction of the simulation event by presenters from the Centre of Conflict Simulation and SAAB members. The first day was practically a set-up, for the testing of all systems and simulators for the exercise. MA17 (Third Year students) actively encounter these type of training for the first time.

The second and third day of the exercise saw the actual aim of the exercise unfolding. The students were introduced to the simulators and the opportunity to “play” around with it and test the capabilities and abilities of the system. They were also introduced to the R4 Gamer Man Pack system in the form of “war gaming”. This was met with much anticipation and excitement by the students as well as the instructors.

During the one afternoon, MA17 and the Centre of Conflict Simulation jointly presented the capabilities in the form of a practical demonstration to an invited group of members from the Saldanha Bay Municipality and the surrounding SANDF units. The members were excited to see what the Centre of Conflict Simulation could offer as an aid in training and developing their members. The success of this demonstration raised the possibility of a more intensive demonstration in the future when more state departments within the West Coast region might showcase the possibilities that simulation training can offer in the training and development, efficiency and effectiveness of these departments.

The following day, the students were treated to a capability tour of Naval Base Simon’s Town. Now it was the turn of the SA Navy to showcase their training simulators (Combat Officer Training at SAS SIMONSBURG). The students learned the different uses and purposes and the importance of these simulators and their importance in training our naval combat officers. For the Navy students of MA17, it was an introduction to what training they would be undergoing in the near future (2018) as combat officers of the SA Navy. The students of the other Services found it equally amazing and are surely now looking at their naval counterparts through other lenses.

On the last day of the exercise the students assisted the Centre to pack up their equipment. They were next debriefed on the exercise to ascertain whether the purpose and objectives were reached. Both the students and the instructors said that the objectives had indeed been met. “This exercise can only improve in future if both the units continue to provide support for this endeavour and students are willing to learn and apply what was presented” were some of the comments from SAAB and ConSim members.

This was truly a great experience for the students and something worthwhile to take up further in their respective careers in the SANDF. The Deputy Mayor of Saldanha said: “I must really applaud the men and women in uniform for the work they are doing” and indeed it is in everyone’s shoes to do the work of a soldier! Capt Swipye Lourens, email  

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**COMMUNICATION IS KEY**

I, a tanker from 1 SA Tank Regiment in Tempe, Bloemfontein, would like to share my thoughts regarding the communication, or lack thereof, among soldiers and Public Service Act Personnel (PSAP) working side by side in operational areas when duty calls.

To make a long story short, I was raised in Port Elizabeth grew up and went to school with only coloured people. Matriculated in 2003 and joined the SA Army in 2005. I thank God for the opportunity as I was still young and inexperienced. I was struggling to communicate with my colleagues in their home languages and found myself making mistakes pronouncing words in Sesotho and Zulu alike.

My wish is that the SA National Defence Force teaches members like I a third language, for an example in the Free State, soldiers with my background have a need to acquire Sesotho as an additional language. I am sure that I do not only speak for myself when I say that we have a challenge communicating with the local population and indigenous colleagues alike. The same principle should then be applied in the other provinces too. It was our previous Commander-in-Chief, the late President Nelson Mandela who said: “Speaking someone’s language allows one to speak to that person’s soul.”

I would have loved to ask this personally from the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, I know however that this will remain a dream. That is why I decided to put pen to paper and try this avenue to vent the idea. Who knows maybe our Minister is also an avid reader of this magazine.

Thank you, SA Soldier for great content and keep up the good work. Tpr Virgil Commando, 1 SA Tank Regiment
Engineers reaching out to vulnerable children in the Congo

By Lt Col Constance Tlhaole, Officer Commanding Engineer Squadron, deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Republic of South Africa (RSA) Engineer Squadron (currently deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo) was recently visited by a delegation from New York and the team was impressed with the manner that the Squadron was interacting with the local community in Goma. The outreach project of the RSA Engineer Squadron was selected as the Best Practice Project by the New York delegation.

The RSA Engineer Squadron received a letter on arrival in the mission area from the Nyiragongo Red Cross Head Office requesting assistance for the drop in centre at Munigi area. The centre has 126 children ranging between 11 months and 15 years old who are lacking nutritional food, clothing, education and medical treatment.

Members of the RSA Engineer Squadron teamed up with Nyiragongo Red Cross, United Nations Chief Directorate Transformation for a quick impact project to assist the local community. The project team of the Squadron is committed to bettering the lives of the less fortunate and vulnerable children.

The RSA Engineer Squadron members responded positively towards the request and supported and maintained the project by organising various events at the base, such as movie nights, beauty contests, pizza sales and church offerings. With the money raised at these events, the Squadron managed to purchase 120 plates, 120 cups, 120 spoons, a 50l water container for clean water, a 10 000l Jojo tank and food. In addition, our artisans (welders) built a coal stove for the centre.

On a monthly basis the RSA Engineer Squadron is providing maize meal, beans, sugar, powder milk and vegetables to the centre. The Squadron has started a vegetable garden in the base to sustain the supply while the community and the caregivers are busy preparing their own garden.

This project is inspired by the words of the late President Nelson Mandela who said: “It is in your hands to create a better world for all who live in it.” These words reminded everyone where they came from and where they are going.
The Gunners’ Association of South Africa held its 65th annual Memorial Service recently at its Memorial Site in Potchefstroom to commemorate fallen Gunners who made the ultimate sacrifice while on duty. They dedicated their lives to serving and protecting our nation diligently and wholeheartedly during their time and left a sign of good hope for future generations to strive to.

Among those to be specially remembered was Gnr Katleho Andrew Rantjanyana whose name was added to the Roll of Honour to immortalise our memory of him by inscribing his name on a plaque on the Gunners’ Memorial. Gnr Rantjanyana lost his life on the 19 March 2017 during Operation CORONA while protecting our country’s borders. He lived his life to make a difference in this world, and he died as he lived, while safeguarding our nation, defending our freedom and preserving our liberty.

The Gunners’ Association of South Africa as we know it today was officially constituted on 2 July 1943. Beforehand there were various Gunner Associations formed out of the former SA Heavy Artillery and SA Field Artillery. The organisation’s main objectives are to maintain an Association of those persons who are or become members of the Association; actively encourage Gunners to become members of the Association and participate in its activities in order to ensure the continuity of the Association. Furthermore, the organisation encourages the continuation of the traditions and fosters the heritage of Gunners; assists members in obtaining any right or privilege to which they are or should be entitled by reason of the member’s military service; assists members in obtaining employment; sponsors and assists the formation of Branches in suitable centres under the auspices of the Association; affiliates with any organisation having objects similar in part, or in whole, to those of the Association, and whether within or outside the Republic of South Africa; and renders support to members and their defendants.

The National President of the Gunners’ Association of South Africa, Lt Gen (Ret) Philip du Preez, said that every year they gather around the Memorial to pay tribute to fallen gunners and honour all South African servicemen and women who died in the service of our country. He also paid special tribute to our compatriots who were aboard the troopship, the SS Mendi, who succumbed in the icy waters when their ship was accidentally rammed by SS Darro on 21 February 1917.

Gen (Ret) Du Preez gave thanks to all gunners present and to those who will serve the guns in the future. He said: “The presence of those attending symbolises their commitment in remembering the sacrifices made by all Gunners of different races in pursuit of freedom during different operations. “Today we are gathered here as one people that share a history and as friends who share a human story. We recall that history, and we keep it clear in our consciousness, and we pass it on to our future generations. We have come to know how our fallen Gunner heroes and heroines paid the ultimate price with their blood by laying down their lives.”
The 2nd Republic of South Africa – Vietnam Policy Dialogue Meeting

Guided by the provisions of the MOU, the meeting covered three critical areas for further collaboration by both countries, namely exchange programmes/consultants and high-level visits, education, training and development, military technology and defence industrial cooperation.

During the opening of the meeting Dr Gulube and Sr Lt Gen Nguyen Chi Vinh, expressed their appreciation for the traditional friendly relations between Vietnam and South Africa, as well as defence cooperation between the two sides over the past years and stressed the importance of the Defence Policy Dialogue mechanism.

The two sides deliberated on the three afore-mentioned areas and the challenges that they were facing. The South African side agreed with Vietnam on pilot training and offered basic training from one to one and a half years.

In terms of education, the SA Army highlighted 43 learning programmes for the Vietnamese as well as an English language training course, including Special Force jungle warfare and survival training. The Military Police extended an invitation to Vietnam to make use of the available training slots.

In terms of logistics, Vietnam agreed to help South Africa to produce its own vegetables and fruit as well as SA National Defence Force (SANDF) uniforms. An invitation was also extended to South Africa to send members on the Senior Officers Course facilitated in Vietnam.

At the close of the meeting, Dr Gulube expressed his appreciation for the exchange of ideas on aerospace and logistics. He encouraged the two countries to keep on developing further ties of friendship and cooperation between the two armed forces.

By AB Samuel Ramonyai
Photo by Pte Paul Mpangala

The Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube (right) and the Vietnamese Deputy Minister of National Defence, Sr Lt Gen Nguyen Chi Vinh, exchanging gifts.
A very fruitful long Mid-term Review Meeting between the South African and Nigerian delegations was hosted by the South African Department of Defence and Military Veterans recently in Sandton. The South African delegation was led by the Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube, while the Nigerian delegation was led by the Permanent Secretary of the Nigerian Ministry of Defence, Ambassador Danjuma Nanpon Sheni.

The meeting followed the decision taken during the Nigerian and South African Defence Committee Meeting in Abuja in July last year. The 2016 Meeting in Abuja was aimed at the Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Defence Cooperation between both countries, signed on 7 May 2013.

Guided by the provisions of the MOU, the meeting covered critical areas in terms of further collaboration by both countries concerning specialised military training, acquisition, transfer and maintenance of military equipment, capacity building in space technology, civil military relations, collaboration in military medical services and intelligence sharing and exchange, as well as research and development. Addressing the members at the meeting, Dr Gulube stated that the 2017 Mid-term Meeting was to review the seven critical areas of collaboration mentioned above to see if there was a progress regarding the goals agreed on.

The review was undertaken by officials in group sessions who deliberated on each of the seven areas of collaboration arising from the Defence Committee in 2016.

The seven areas of collaboration were condensed into three groups discussing specialised military training, military cooperation and exchange programmes as well as military cooperation and collaboration in the acquisition and maintenance of equipment.

At the end of the day-long Review meeting, the three groups that deliberated produced a report on the review. The report showed that the two countries had agreed on determinations, commitments and efforts to see progress in almost all of the seven areas.

According to the review, there has been satisfactory progress in five areas, except for capacity building in space technology and collaboration in the military medical services.

Despite the fact that progress was not satisfactory in two areas, the leaders of the South African and Nigerian delegations were pleased by the results achieved in the five areas since from the last meeting. It was evident to both leaders that there was the determination, commitment and effort to ensure the success of the MOU on Defence Cooperation.

The meeting was concluded by appreciation expressed of the strong relationship between the two countries by the leaders of both delegations and an exchange of gifts followed by refreshments.
Celebrating 23 years of freedom and democracy

By Sgt Ally Rakoma

27 April 1994 ushered in a new era of governance, a democratic order and the birth of our rainbow nation under an inclusive Constitution. South Africans of all races celebrated the democratic turnaround in which equal rights became paramount.

This year on Freedom Day the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) in support of the Department of Arts and Culture, joined South Africans in celebrating 23 years of freedom and democracy at Mhlabuyalingana at Manguzi in the far north of KwaZulu-Natal near Kosi Bay. The theme for this year’s celebration was: “The year of Oliver Tambo: Together deepening democracy and building safer and crime-free communities”.

The President of the Republic of South Africa and the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, Mr Jacob Zuma, in his keynote address to the nation highlighted the progress made by South Africa in many fields during the past 23 years. He said that in that time we had achieved a lot and built a democratic state founded on human rights and the rule of law.

President Zuma expressed his gratitude for the efforts of countless patriots who fought tirelessly to secure our freedom and democracy. He said: “We pay tribute to Mr Oliver Tambo and all the ordinary men and women of our country who contributed in various ways to the attainment of freedom and helped move our country forward towards a free and democratic South Africa.”

The President added that the theme for Freedom Month 2017 was focussed on building safer and crime-free communities. He added: “We want to see an end to the vicious attacks on women and children, the house break-ins, cash in transit heists, car hijackings, stock theft and other crimes that make life difficult for our people in many communities.”

Concluding his address Mr Zuma mentioned that during May the country would mark Africa Month. He said that Africa Month would provide an opportunity to deepen our warm relations with sister nations on the continent and promote African culture, economic development and progress in various fields.

The Minister of Defence and...
Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, speaking during an interview with SABC News stated that a quest for unity and cohesion was fundamental to social stability. She stressed that when communities did not feel safe their well-being was also affected which hindered their ability to prosper.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula highlighted that Government’s efforts to build an inclusive economy were encouraging leaders in industry and the public and private sectors to promote entrepreneurial participation to boost the economy with the inclusion of small, medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs), which positively contribute towards the country’s growth.

Ms Mapisa-Nqakula mentioned that through the Inter-ministerial Committee and the Presidential Siyahlola Monitoring Programme, President Zuma was briefed about cross-border and other crimes crippling the area and the livelihood of the people of Mhlabuyalingana.

The SANDF’s participation included a military band display, a guard of honour by the National Ceremonial Guard, the National Salute, and a 21-round gun salute. The SA Air Force performed a salute flight with three Agusta A109 Light Utility Helicopters from 15 Squadron (Air Force Base Durban), 17 Squadron (Air Force Base Swartkop) and 19 Squadron (Air Force Base Hoedspruit) which displayed two National Flags and the SANDF Flag. The Silver Falcons consisting of five Pilatus PC-7 aircraft from the Central Flying School performed an aerobatics display followed by spectacular high-speed aerial manoeuvring by a Hawk and two Gripens from Air Force Base Makhado.

Local residents shared their thoughts with SA Soldier on celebrating Freedom Day. Mr Enoch Mathenjwa (43) from Manguzi said: “1994 was a turning point in our history that gave birth to our freedom. After 23 years there is much to celebrate, but Government must address economic inequalities so that all people stand to benefit.”

Ms Maria Vilakazi (32) from Nkathwini said: “We celebrate our historical milestone. The living conditions for many South Africans have improved.”

Ms Duduzile Ngubane (52) from Nkathwini said: “Voting for the first time for a government of our choice after decades of oppression was a historic moment. I had goose bumps as I felt the winds of change blowing. Let us not undervalue our freedom; many people surrendered their lives for its attainment.”
The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, presented the Defence Budget Vote in the National Assembly in Parliament on 25 May 2017. Her 2017 speech was delivered in line with her previous year’s speech in which she said: “There is no doubt that it is in our national interest to have a National Defence Force capable of supporting our national security imperatives, foreign policy objectives and country’s economic interest. It must have the capacity to defend and safeguard the sovereignty of the Republic, keep and enforce peace outside its borders, and have an offensive capability to deter potential aggressors”. It was against this backdrop that Minister Mapisa-Nqakula introduced her two guests to Parliament, Col Monwabisi Dyakopu, the National Contingent Commander, and Lt Col Constance Tlhaole, Officer Commanding of the RSA Engineer Squadron. They are currently serving under the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The 25th May being Africa Day, a day that we as Africans commemorate liberation from colonisers and the formation of the Organisation of the African Unity (OAU). It was befitting that the Defence Minister acknowledged the works of leaders such as Mr Oliver Tambo, who contributed greatly to the regeneration of Africa by leading for many years the masses of our country in the struggle to liberate our country and her people.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said: “It is also with great humility and pride for me to recognise two leaders who worked under Tambo as the African National Congress (ANC) led the forces of revolution to topple the apartheid regime, to bring about the freedom that we enjoy today. The first person I want to recognise is a woman who was a mother to many of us, a teacher and a protector, a woman whose valour in the struggle earned her the highest honour: Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe, Mme Gertie Shope, who also was awarded the OR Tambo Lifetime Achievement. We also want to recognise a veteran of our struggle, Ntate Isaac Makopo, a trailblazer in the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe. He served the country and its people with distinction and was honoured with the Order of Luthuli by our government.”

By Mr Lufuno Netshirembe
Photos by Pte Paul Mpangala

The pre-budget vote speech panellist, fltr: Acting Director General of the Department of Military Veterans, Mr Max Ozinsky, the Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube, the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Mr Kebby Maphatsoe, and the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, answering questions from the media.
The budget allocation for the entire vote in the financial year 2017/18 is R48 billion which is approximately 1% of our country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) allocations indicate that for financial year 2018/19 the Defence Budget will decline to less than 0.98% of the GDP. These figures indicate a persistent decline of the budget.

While the Minister by and large was concerned about the waning allocation of the Defence Budget, she indicated that her Department has started implementing Milestone One of the Defence Review 2015, intended to mitigate the decline of the capabilities of the SANDF.

The Minister highlighted that a closer relationship between the Department of Defence (DOD) and the National Treasury was required to take the implementation of the Defence Review forward. The Defence Minister said: “To this end, the Minister of Finance and I agreed that an inter-departmental Budget Task Team should be established.”

Indicating the effects of the budgetary constraints on SANDF rejuvenation, the Minister said: “The new Human Resources (HR) strategy has been completed and maps out the rejuvenation of the SANDF. However, due to the reduced HR budget allocation the new recruits’ intake is expected to decrease in size thus is negatively affecting force-rejuvenation.”

Notwithstanding the declining budget allocation, the Defence Minister said that her Department will continue executing its constitutional mandate and carry out all its duties in prevention, management and resolution of conflict through no-violent means, ward off any security threats and peace enforcement but is ready if the need arise for the use of force, or the threat of the use of force, as a legitimate measure of last resort when political and other interventions have been exhausted in the continent and all areas where there is a requirement.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula announced that despite the financial quagmire her department faces, a compensation policy in respect of those members who lose their lives, in line with the United Nations policy has been instituted. This policy is set to show appreciation of the commitment and sacrifices by soldiers deployed in operations.

The Minister congratulated the Military Ombud Office for appointing the first Deputy Military Ombud, Ms Rendani Masutha.

In conclusion of her budget presentation to Parliament, Minister Mapisa-Nqakula enthusiastically indicated that despite the challenges she had outlined, her department was geared up to succeed.
The SA National Defence Force honours its heroes on International United Nations Peacekeepers Day

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) marked the International United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers Day recently by honouring and paying tribute to the 39 members of the SANDF who have died in Africa since 2003 while serving under the auspices of the United Nations and underscored the sacrifices made by our soldiers who have given their lives in the service of peace.

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, accompanied by members of the Plenary Defence Staff Council presided over a ceremony and laid a wreath in honour of all the SANDF peacekeepers who

The names of the 39 members of the SA National Defence Force who have died since 2003 while serving under the auspices of the United Nations on the continent. It underscores the sacrifices made by our soldiers who have given their lives in the service of peace. They were honoured during the ceremony.

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, laying a wreath in honour of the SA National Defence Force peacekeepers who died in the line of duty.

The SANDF’s peacekeepers in their blue helmets work in hazardous conditions and put their lives at risk for the greater good of humanity. Theirs is a life of duty to preserve lives and property and they have helped to build relations in many troubled parts of the continent in support of the government’s foreign policy. Admittedly some of the soldiers could not return home as they fell in the line of duty while contributing to international conflict resolution. Such is the tale of the SANDF’s UN and African Union (AU) peacekeeping operations.

Their sacrifices have strengthened the commitment of the United Nations to protecting civilians in harm’s way, promoting...
human rights and the rule of law, advancing negotiations and securing a better future in the places where they are deployed. Peacekeeping is one of the international community’s most effective investments in support of peace, security and prosperity.

During an International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers commemorative event held at the UN Headquarters in New York, the Secretary General of the UN, Mr Antonio Guterres, posthumously awarded the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal to two SANDF members, namely Cpl Edward Mnyipikai (who was deployed with the UN African Mission in Darfur [UNAMID] in the Sudan) and Pte Moalosi Mokhothu (who served with MONUSCO in the DRC).

Addressing the media after the wreath-laying ceremony, Minister Mapisa-Nqakula expressed her deepest sorrow and greatest appreciation to the men and women of the SANDF who continue to put their lives at risk for the sake of peace on the continent. She said that the greatest tribute we can pay to those who died is to re dedicate ourselves to building and maintaining peace.

The Defence Minister said South Africa’s intervention in other African countries has been worth it: “In my budget vote speech, I outlined what it has yielded. Firstly, in order for us to go into other African states, even for investment purposes, you have to make sure that there is peace and security. Even for those countries, for them to prosper, there has to be peace and stability. As South Africans we are playing our small part towards peace on the continent”.

Later that day Ms Mapisa-Nqakula and her entourage visited members of 5 SA Infantry Battalion that are about to deploy to the DRC as part of the Force Intervention Brigade currently mobilised at the DOD Mobilisation Centre where they are busy with Mission Readiness Training. In her farewell speech, the Defence Minister hammered home the importance of discipline. She said that she would not tolerate ill-discipline from SANDF members deployed abroad.

Addressing the media after the wreath-laying ceremony, Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said: “You have the names of your predecessors to live up to, many of whom gave their lives trying to bring security to vulnerable people. This is a UN mission with regulations to obey, the most important being the rule against sexual exploitation and abuse. I do not want to hear of any of you starting relationships with people in your deployment area because you will be violating the rule. These people are vulnerable and look up to you as their protectors.”

Ms Masechaba Mokhothu, mother to the late Pte Moalosi Mokhothu who lost his life while serving as a member of the Force Intervention Brigade in the Democratic Republic of Congo, laying a wreath in honour of her son.
To achieve the mandate of the government’s stated objective of assisting the local defence sector to develop a footprint in the global market through the National Development Plan, the Department of Defence via the Defence Review 2015 established the National Defence Industry Council (NDIC) in March 2016, following key recommendations emanating from Chapter 15 of said Defence Review.

The first inaugural National Defence Industry Council (NDIC) ministerial workshop was recently held at Denel Land Systems in Lyttelton, Centurion.

Denel Group Acting Chief Executive Officer, Mr Zwelakhe Ntshepe, said that the state-owned defence and technology concern has a strong track record of supporting local suppliers and providing training for black-owned companies through its supplier development programme. He added that the strategy was opening up the local defence industry to women, youth and military veterans while promoting innovation in the sector.

Addressing the attendees, the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, said that the local defence industry could not exist in a vacuum or develop efficiently without adequate government support.

She acknowledged that a defence force was an expensive asset that was costly to develop and maintain. She said: “Like an insurance premium it was essential, but still remained ‘a grudge purchase’.”

The Minister pointed out that our country needed a coherent defence industry strategy which committed both government and the defence industry to key deliverables. In addition she highlighted the value of the local defence industry not only to South Africa but to the continent at large. It had contributed to the recovery of economies in, among others, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Minister Mapisa-Nqakula said: “South Africa’s peace dividend, calculated through its peace operations and related economic activity on the continent, has contributed about R73 billion to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with approximately 480 000 jobs in South Africa linked to these operations and activities on the continent.”
The Minister told delegates that the draft Defence Industry Strategy document was designed to provide guidelines for government on how it could support the defence industry, while said industry is expected to transform, procure and manufacture locally to satisfy the defence requirements of the SANDF and compete globally. She mentioned that the defence industry strategy would now be released for public comment and urged the public, analysts, academia, defence industry experts, defence industry companies and government to analyse and provide input. The document can be downloaded from the Department of Defence or Armscor websites.

Ms Mapisa-Nqakula gave details of the Defence Industry Charter that would substantially change the face of the industry as far as black economic empowerment and the utilisation of locally produced components and products are concerned. She said: “The Charter’s new targets are intended to boost support for new entrants from previously disadvantaged communities, including women, youth and military veterans”.

She informed the workshop that the Charter required the establishment of a Defence Enterprise and Supplier Development Fund.

Interacting with members of the media, the Secretary for Defence, Dr Sam Gulube, mentioned that the NDIC allowed for small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMES) to showcase their products and services as a means of boosting and profiling economic opportunities in a competitive economic environment. He added that South Africa was blessed with its high calibre of engineers, artisans and researchers.
SA Army showcases its state of combat readiness

The SA Army showcased its landward capabilities during the Chief of the SA Army Capability Demonstration recently at De Brug Training Area near Bloemfontein. This event allowed elements within the SA Army to test their state of readiness regarding conventional battle tactics coordinated at brigade level, with greater emphasis on the command element of the participating units.

The demonstration was based on fire power and battle tactics, heavily supported by helicopters and aircraft of the SA Air Force. The demonstration included the deployment of the observation post, pathfinders, reaction force, parachutes and helicopters. There was an impressive display of armoured vehicles, aircraft and infantry as part of the live-fire demonstration.

The exercise was primarily used as a force preparation exercise aimed at training and exercising the force to enhance its landward capability and

ABOVE: The concept of the demonstration was based on fire power and battle tactics, and was heavily supported by helicopters and aircraft of the SA Air Force.

LEFT: The deployment of members of 1 Parachute Regiment by parachute.
combat readiness, and to integrate the respective combined Services and Divisions of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF). The SA Army conducted the exercise in pursuit of the Government’s mandate of ensuring the safety of the citizens of South Africa.

The event was also used to maintain healthy relationships with communities and to promote the image of the SA Army. The demonstration attracted military personnel and civilians and provided a platform and an opportunity for the SA Army to interact with all stakeholders and contribute to a better understanding of the SA Army’s internal and external roles.

Speaking to the media, the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, said that the SA Army in its commitment to support the SA Government’s diplomatic initiatives requires advanced and interoperable technology to participate in peace missions on the continent. Lt Gen Yam said: “The technology acquired and currently operated by the SA Army was displayed and demonstrated with the aim of showcasing our combat readiness. We value this training as a foundation on which we can build a solid national defence force that is fully capable of defending the country’s territorial integrity and its people.”

Lt Gen Yam said training remained on the SA Army’s priority list to ensure that members were better equipped to utilise the acquired capabilities. He said this training was key for the SA Army in its quest to help eradicate conflicts in the region and on the continent.

The Chief of the SA Army’s intention is to get SA Army elements combat ready by means of training, proper command and control, and maintaining a high standard of discipline. Despite all these challenges he and his members are ready to be utilised by the Chief of the SANDF anytime and anywhere. Lt Gen Yam urged all his staff members to work together and focus on the future while adhering to the guidelines received from the Chief of the SANDF.
Women took over the reins of two SA Air Force units

By S Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela
Photos by Pte Paul Mpanga

Col Johanna Schoeman has risen to the upper echelons of the SA Air Force as the first female Officer Commanding of Air Force Base Swartkop. The SA Air Force thus made history during a parade in which a female commander took over the leadership of the Base established in 1920.

The Base members saluted the incoming Officer Commanding as they bade farewell to Brig Gen Jacobus Crous who has been appointed as Director Command and Control Systems.

After completing her matric, the incoming Officer Commanding Air Force Base Swartkop joined the SA Air Force as a permanent member on 22 April 1982. Col Schoeman served in various posts as an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Operator between the years 1982 and 1991. She completed her Officer Formative Course in 1991 and served in numerous ICT officer posts before she became the Officer Commanding of Mobile Communications Unit in April 1999.

In 2003 she completed her Joint Senior Command and Staff Course and subsequently served as a Staff Officer at Air Command until January 2012. On 1 January she was appointed as the Officer Commanding Bushveld Air Space Control Sector and completed the Executive National Security Programme in 2013.

She successfully completed all the required functional and developmental courses and participated in numerous operational deployments both internally in South Africa and externally. This included deployment as Aviation Element Commander under command of the United Nations in Burundi.

The occasion also included a triple change of command involving 17 Squadron, 500 Squadron and the SA Air Force Museum. Lt Col Bianca van Vollenstee took over the reins of Officer Commanding of 17 Squadron from Lt Col Isaac Moreetsi. The protection arm of the base, 500 Squadron, welcomed Lt Col Rapule Boshomane as the new Officer Commanding. After leading the SA Air Force Museum into the best SA Air Force Training Unit for the Year 2016, Lt Col Thor Fredericks handed over the reins to Lt Col Gavin Bruinjies.

Another notable female appointment is Lt Col Van Vollenstee as Officer Commanding 17 Squadron. She is currently an Operational Oryx Commander and holds an Instructors Rating on the PCMKII.

Lt Col Van Vollenstee has served all operational flying hours at 17 Squadron and has deployed numerous times, for example on cross-border United Nations peacekeeping operations.
SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) members witnessed the Change of Command Parade between the outgoing Officer Commanding of 7 Medical Battalion Group, Col Siphiwo Nqgukuvana, and the incoming Officer Commanding, Col Zukile Mdutywa, which was recently held at SAMHS Military Health Training Formation in Thaba Tshwane.

Col Mdutywa was born on 30 August 1978 in Ngeleni in the former Transkei.

He grew up in this small village and completed his primary schooling at Lutsheko Junior Secondary School in 1992. From there he went on to St John’s College in Mthata. He then went to MEDUNSA in 1997 and obtained his MBChB degree six years later in 2002. He worked as an intern in 2003 at the Port Elizabeth Hospital and then to UMzimkhulu in 2004 to do his community service at Rietvlei Hospital.

He joined the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) in January 2005 and did his Basic Military Training as a Captain at 5 Special Forces Regiment. He qualified as a paratrooper in September 2005, becoming the first black airborne doctor. He qualified as a Special Forces Operator in December 2006 and obtained his silver badge. He made history as the first black doctor to become a Special Forces Operator. He has been involved in different SANDF operations both internally and externally. He became the Second-in-Command of 7 Medical Battalion Group in January 2016.
“SANDF Education Trust rekindles hope” – Mr Silence Vavarirai

A SA National Defence Force Education Trust beneficiary, Mr Silence Vavarirai, is currently doing his pilot training course at the Flight Training Services in Midrand at the Grand Central Airport. (Photo by Pte Paul Mpangala)

By S Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Education Trust was established in October 2013 by the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, with the aim of providing financial assistance by means of bursaries for educational purposes to dependants of SANDF members who lost their lives or were severely injured while on duty since 27 April 1994. The Trust is funded through donations received mainly from the private sector.

Gen Shoke on occasions informed sponsors that the Trust emanated during the aftermath of what came to be termed the Battle of Bangui; where the SANDF suffered casualties while deployed in the Central African Republic in support of Operation VIMBEZELA.

The Chief of the SANDF explained that the SANDF undertakes missions which are commonly in life-threatening environments and the Central Africa Republic was a typical example of that. It was then decided after the experience that the best way to look after the dependants of the members who died in combat is to set up an educational trust.

The General said: “If you give someone education it means you empower that person for life. So this is how this Education Trust was born, it was registered around October and November 2013 and then we are able through your generous contribution to fund the education or cater for students and we could not have done that without your support.”

One of the beneficiaries of the SANDF Education Trust, Mr Silence Vavarirai, who is currently a pilot trainee at the Flight Training Services in Midrand at the Grand Central Airport gave account of how his father died. He said: “My father was WO2 Elias Vavarirai. He passed away in 2002 while we still lived in Phalaborwa. He was involved in quite a few deployments especially in Burundi. He died while they were in training and was caught by a veld fire that broke out.”

He said his dream of becoming a pilot started years ago when he was still young. Mr Silence Vavarirai said: “I made a decision to choose the right subjects: maths, science and geography and ensure that I passed well. After high school I had a problem of affording flying school training and then I had approached the SANDF Education Trust.”

Mr Vavarirai said with the help from the Trust he was able to start training although he needed assistance from other sponsors as costs were immense.
He said costs included other parts of the course which are hour-building where you have to fly from airport to airport as part of experiential training.

Ms Mokgadi Maake is another beneficiary of the SANDF Education Trust. Her father, Mr Frans Maake, passed away while on duty deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) when he was involved in a motor vehicle accident in 2004. She said at the time of her father’s death, her mother was unemployed.

She said: “I managed to pull myself together in order to succeed in my studies. I was accepted at University of Witwatersrand as a medical student after I had obtained seven distinctions during my matric year. The SANDF Education Trust pays for my tuition, residence and other university costs - I am very thankful.” (Ms Maake is currently busy with her Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery.)

The background of the SANDF Education Trust

The SANDF Education Trust was established in 2013 after the loss of lives in the Battle of Bangui in the Central African Republic.

Members of the SANDF have made the supreme sacrifice and it was found that limited insurance and funeral cover was available for such individuals and there was no provision for the ongoing education of their dependents. A decision was hence taken to establish a Trust Fund to secure the future education of the dependents of SANDF members who have since 1994 lost their lives or were severely injured and no longer have a regular income.

A task team was formed under Maj Gen Roy Andersen on 24 May 2013 to establish the Trust Fund and it was finally implemented on 31 October 2013. The Trust was registered at the Master of the High Court and registered at the Department of Social Development and the South African Revenue Services (SARS) as a Non-profit and Public Benefit Organisation.

The decision was taken that the Trust will be funded and maintained by private donations as opposed to State Funds. No State funding is utilised. The Trust is funded from donations received from the private sector and no funds are paid directly to beneficiaries but directly to the schools/institutions. Beneficiaries have to apply annually in order to monitor progress.

The Trust is an independent Trust with in future, more Trustees from “outside” than SANDF linked Trustees. Finances and paying out of bursaries are managed by an appointed financial service provider (Nedgroup Trust) and audited annually by an appointed auditing firm (KPMG). The current Trustees are Maj Gen Roy Andersen (Chairperson), Maj Gen Lungile Dlulane (Ret), Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, Mr Teddy Daka and Ms Veneta Klein.

The beneficiaries of the Trust

Sub-clause 4.1 of the Deed of Trust defines the beneficiaries as follow:

4.1.1 SANDF members killed or severely injured subsequent to 27 April 1994 while on official duty.

4.1.2 Civilian members of the Department of Defence (DOD) killed or severely injured subsequent to 27 April 1994 while deployed in operations with the SANDF.

4.1.3 Citizens of the RSA killed or injured subsequent to 27 April 1994 during the course of an operation of the SANDF, provided that such citizens were not engaged in an activity in opposition to the aims of the SANDF operation.

SA Soldier spoke to the Senior Staff Officer Reserve Force Projects, Col Elsa van Wyk, who is also the
Secretary for the SANDF Education Trust and manages the Trust in terms of the applications, collections and dispersing fund.

What part of education in particular does the Trust fund?
The Trust funds dependants at Primary School, Secondary School and Tertiary education level. The Trust funds private and government institutions. At tertiary level the Trust will only fund a learner up to the end of the first degree or when a learner ship or apprenticeship has been completed.

How many families have benefitted from the Trust?
For the financial year 2017, altogether 71 learners have been supported financially from 62 families; with a total of 95 learners that has been registered at the Trust.

Who are the most prominent sponsors of the Trust?
As mentioned before, the Trust is funded through generous donations from the private sector and other individuals. The Trust would not want to highlight specific sponsors but can mention that Pirates Football Club and also Kaizer Chiefs Football Club have been kind donors from the inception of the Trust. The Trust stands at approximately R16m in pledges of which R11m have been collected to date.

How many learners that have since the establishment of the Trust been supported by the Trust have completed their studies?
From a total 95 registered since 2014 up to 2017, four learners have completed their studies.

Is there any set plan to absorb some of these learners in the SANDF ranks, particularly in critical skills areas?
The Trust cannot offer any employment in the SANDF for any one of the beneficiaries as it is an independent institution.

On average, how much does the Trust fund learners by on an annual basis?
The Trust has paid out on average about R1,2m per year and it is expected that it might increase within the next 2 years when there will be an increase in the number of tertiary education learners as well as recent unfortunate deaths in the SANDF.

The Trustees consider an amount called a “CAP” on an annual basis for the financial support for primary, secondary school and tertiary education according to the average cost between private and public schools and institutions.

May you explain the criteria in which beneficiaries qualify?
An applicant becomes a beneficiary of the Trust if he or she can provide evidence of the following:
- That the SANDF deceased member was on duty.
- That the dependant is registered on the SANDF PERSOL database as a dependant of the deceased.
- A copy of an unabridged birth certificate that indicates that the child is indeed the child of the deceased.
- The SANDF member must have registered the child as his or her child at the Department of Home Affairs.

What are the challenges when rolling-out the SANDF Education Trust to beneficiaries?
The biggest challenge is that the caregivers or relatives of the deceased soldiers do not know about the Trust and other institutions that can render support for education. Although the Trust has been advertised in the SA Soldier, the Reserve Force Volunteer, Sawubona and other media it is still relatively unknown to the affected members of the SANDF and DOD.

The Trust utilises the Chaplaincy Service to inform the relatives of its existence and other support that is available. It has also been presented to the Command Cadre of the SANDF but there is still a large amount of affected families that do not know of the existence of the Trust.
“We believe in heroes. We keep your spirit alive”

The SANDF Education Trust


The main objective of the SANDF Education Trust is to support the education needs of the dependants of the following persons:

- SANDF members killed or severely injured subsequent to April 1994, while on official duty.
- Civilian members of the Department of Defence (DOD) killed or severely injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, while deployed during official SANDF operation.
- Citizens of the Republic of South Africa killed or injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, during official SANDF operations provided that such citizens are not engaged in activities opposing the SANDF.

The SANDF Education Trust is funded through donations and contributions received from the private sector and international business enterprises. Ongoing fund raising initiatives are in place, and the SANDF welcomes all contributions.

For more information on the SANDF Education Trust, visit www.dod.mil.za

The banking details are as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Nedgroup Trust</th>
<th>Branch:</th>
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<th>Reference:</th>
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For further enquiries and to obtain application forms please contact:

Tel: +27 (12) 355 5107  Fax: +27 (12) 355 5882
Email: sandfedutrust@gmail.com

We believe in heroes, we hope you do too.

Together we move South Africa Forward
Just recently Air Force Base (AFB) Hoedspruit held a change of command parade for three senior officers on the base. The event followed a similar one that was held at AFB Swartkop when three new officers took command.

Col Riaan van Wyk took over command of the SA Air Force Gymnasium from the newly promoted Brig Gen Kevin Moonsamy. Brig Gen Moonsamy had been in charge of the training unit from 1 January 2011.

He was born in Bellville in the Western Cape Province on 22 June 1960. Col Van Wyk says: “I matriculated at Swartland High School in Malmesbury in 1977. The following year, on completion of my schooling days, and after completing the Regimental Instructors Course in 1978, I joined the SA Air Force as a permanent member.”

Since then he has served at the SA Air Force Gymnasium (then situated in Valhalla, Centurion); at Flying Training School (now AFB Langebaanweg) as regimental instructor and assistant regimental sergeant major. In 1983 he successfully completed the Officers’ Course and was appointed training officer at the SA Air Force Gymnasium. Later on he was also the personnel finance coordinator at the then AFB Potchefstroom. He also served as a project officer and training officer in various information technology postings and was also a Senior Directing Staff at SA Air Force College. In 2001 he was a member of the final Senior Command and Staff Course and thereafter Acting Officer Commanding SA Air Force College.

Col Van Wyk said: “I am not a stranger to the post of Officer Commanding as I previously served as the Officer Commanding of SA Air Force Headquarters Unit between 2004 and 2007. I was privileged to be the first South African to graduate in the Executive Programme in Advanced Security Studies at the George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies in Germany in 2008.”

Air Force Command and Control School

Air Force Command and Control School also saw a change in leadership with Brig Gen Elma de Villiers handing over command to Col Nation Mokgwabone. This senior officer from Taung in the North West Province was born on 8 May 1979.

Col Mokgwabone said: “I completed my Grade 12 at the P.H. Moreetsi Agricultural High School in 1996 in Taung. In that year we had a visit from ‘blue uniformed people’. At first I thought they were police officers. Instead they were soldiers from the SA Air Force informing us about various career options available in their organisation. The following year, on 13 January 1997, I joined the SA Air Force.”

In 1999 Col Mokgwabone completed the Officers Formative Training. The following year he started training as an Air Traffic Controller. In 2004 Col Mokgwabone was sent to South Korea to do an Approach Control Course. Col Mokgwabone has worked as an Air Traffic Controller at AFB Waterkloof and at AFB Makhado.

“When I left AFB Makhado I was transferred to Air Force Command and Control School where I served from 2005 to 2010 as an Air Traffic Control Instructor,” says Col Mokgwabone. “I still remember the day in January 2011 when I was transferred to AFB Waterkloof as the first black Chief Air Traffic Controller in the SA Air Force.”
514 Squadron

The third and final change of command saw Lt Col Rapule August Boshomane handing over the reins of 514 Squadron to the incoming Officer Commanding, Lt Col Nico Swarts.

He was born on 25 September 1969 and completed his matric in 1987. He hails from Beaufort West in the Central Karoo. He joined the SA Army as a Voluntary Serviceman and served at 2 SA Cape Corps in 1988. On 22 March 1990 Lt Col Swarts joined the SA Air Force. Since then he has held various positions of leadership in the SA Air Force, namely VIP Protection Coordinator at Defence Headquarters, Protection Services Career Manager, Training Officer of Basic Military Training, Training Coordinator and Efficiency Coordinator at SA Air Force Gymnasium, as well as Officer Commandings of 506 Squadron (AFB Bloemspruit), 525 Squadron (AFB Overberg) and 526 Squadron (AFB Langebaanweg).

Lt Col Swarts holds a National Diploma in Human Resource Management from the University of South Africa (Unisa), and a National Diploma in Planning and Execution of Military Operations as well as the Senior Management Programme from the Tshwane University of Technology. He says: “I am currently in my final year of study for my B Law degree.”

Air Defence Artillery School inaugurates its 6th Officer Commanding

By Lt Marumo Machete, SA Army Corporate Communication

Photo by CO Dave Moreroa

The Air Defence Artillery (ADA) School in Kimberley and the neighboring 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment were a hive of activity as gunners recently put the last touches for the 6th Handing and Taking Over Parade at ADA School.

It was Col Lufuno Mafune’s turn to take over the reins of command from his predecessor, Col Leon Puckree, who has been at the helm since taking over from Brig Gen Sandile Hlongwa, now General Officer Commanding of the Formation in 2015. Col Mafune becomes the 6th Commanding Officer of ADA School since the unit’s establishment in 2000 as an entity on its own.

An hour before midday, 10 Anti-Aircraft Battery in Review and in full ceremonial, preceded by men and women from the Army Band Kroonstad, marched onto the ADA School parade ground signalling the beginning of the day’s official festivities. Commanded by the all-female team of Maj Nicolene Oosthuizen and her parade Sergeant-Major, WO2 Kelebogile Motsamai, the gunners of Kimberley proudly marched in honour of the outgoing Officer Commanding while welcoming the incoming Officer Commanding.

Addressing the parade as the main functionary, Col Puckree thanked the General Officer Commanding ADA Formation, Brig Gen Hlongwa, for entrusting him with the mammoth responsibility of leading the unit. He also poured his heart out to members of his unit and those from their sister unit, 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment, for their support throughout his stewardship.

Delivering his welcoming address at a function following the parade, Col Mafune commended his predecessor for the manner in which he handled the change of command transition. Col Mafune, a former Umkhonto we Sizwe cadre, a seasoned gunner, trainer and commander who went through the ranks as an ADA officer, pointed out the seriousness and importance of his appointment as Officer Commanding: “As I accept this mammoth responsibility, I do so with a great sense of humility and commitment to serve. I recognise that my appointment here is not meant for personal gratification,
SA National Defence Force (SANDF) recently participated at the Bloemfontein Show and took first prize with its exhibitions and displays. The SANDF utilised the platform to enhance and promote the image of the SANDF and to inform the public about the organisation, its roles and functions and career opportunities.

The Bloemfontein Show is the signature event in Bloemfontein and brings together people from diverse backgrounds in an effort to promote greater levels of social cohesion. It has a track record of 133 years, an average of 450 outdoor and indoor exhibitors in the commercial section, representatives of small, medium and large companies nationally and internationally and had more than 100 000 visitors from all over the country.

The SA Army contributed by exhibiting their military equipment with units such as 1 Special Service Battalion, 1 SA Tank Regiment, commercial section, representatives of small, medium and large companies nationally and internationally and had more than 100 000 visitors from all over the country.

The pomp and ceremony was followed at the after-parade function by the Tswelopele Correctional Services Entertainment Band that played contemporary local hits as well as taking guests down memory lane with offerings from their extensive music catalogue. ADA School is tasked with the force preparation of a ground-based air defence capability in the SA Army. It conducts 25 accredited learning programmes as part of its mandate to train a credible and cohesive joint air defence artillery capability for the SA Army.

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1 SA Infantry Battalion, 1 Parachute Regiment, Free State Regiment and the SA Armour Museum. The SA Navy displayed a variety of interesting exhibitions, which included Navy boats, and a variety of instruments used in hydrographic, for mine countermeasures and there was an interactive display where the public were taught to make several knots used by sailors in the SA Navy.

Numerous weapons were also on display such as torpedoes, undersea mines and other weapons found in the SA Navy. The SA Military Health Service showcased seven disciplines: dental, biokinetics, social work, nursing and dieticians together with ambulances and a mobile clinic. The SA Air Force exhibited technical hardware, survival equipment, aircraft engines, the fire fighter section, weapons and basic military training. The SANDF also held a fun-filled music festival and Arena programmes that kept residents entertained.

Whereas the core responsibility of the SANDF is to protect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and people of South Africa, its role goes beyond that. It has an inherent capability to contribute to the nation’s economic development and to the upliftment of communities such as that of Bloemfontein.
Improved infrastructural development and expansion has been identified as one of the key pillars for improving the living conditions of SA National Defence Force (SANDF) members. Following the commitment by the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, and the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, to turn the tide against poor military infrastructure, this matter was taken up in the Department of Defence (DOD) through Defence Works Formation under the leadership of Maj Gen Joseph Ledwaba, the General Officer Commanding of Defence Works Formation. Defence Works Formation is moving with speed to change the complexion of military infrastructure for the better.

Maj Gen Ledwaba took the SA Soldier team on a visit to project sites to see the on-going improved facilities and maintenance activities. During an interview SA Soldier asked if Defence Works Formation serves the purpose for which it was initially orchestrated.

In-house artisans portray various skills, such as carpentry.

The General Officer Commanding of Defence Works Formation, Maj Gen Joseph Ledwaba, urging Defence Works capabilities to change the complexion of Department of Defence infrastructure for the better.

The Officer Commanding of Regional Works Unit Gauteng, Col Buzani Madikane (left) showing the newly revamped bathroom facilities at Regional Works Unit Gauteng.

refurbishment projects for office blocks and officers’ residential buildings at the Personnel Service School and Regional Works Unit Gauteng, including the communication hall, conference room, ablutions facilities, social entertainment facility and lapa area. He pointed out that in every case there is a detailed project plan with time lines to ensure that proper measures to address maintenance, activities are taken.

During an interview SA Soldier asked if Defence Works Formation serves the purpose for which it was initially orchestrated.
Maj Gen Ledwaba spoke with conviction and pointed out that the capacity of Defence Works Formation and its Regional Works Units throughout the country to deliver on infrastructure was key and fundamental. He said that this good story began in 2009 when the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans instructed the DOD to establish Defence Works capabilities to address the poor state of Defence facilities, inclusive of repairs, maintenance and construction capabilities. Maj Gen Ledwaba said: “We are mandated to execute various tasks for example facility management, real estate management, facility maintenance, construction and repair, military integrated environmental management, general support services and skills development, he said for SANDF members.

He said: “We would like to extend a word of appreciation to the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans and the Chief of the SANDF for entrusting Defence Works Formation with the responsibility to provide the DOD with infrastructure that drives service delivery into a new trajectory.” Maj Gen Ledwaba added that they speedily took action to change the complexion of Defence infrastructures for the better. He said: “We have embarked on a journey and the wheels are rolling.”

What is Defence Works Formation doing to reskill and support older members who are reaching their career plateau?

He explained that the DOD is also guided by the National Development Plan’s vision of developing skills and empowering its members, which is a key government policy strategy. He added that some older members were no longer agile and could not engage in physically demanding duties, such as jumping out of planes as paratroopers. These are trained instead to be artisans in different trades such as plumbing, landscaping, bricklaying, plastering, tiling, carpentry, painting, construction, welding, electrical work, project management, architecture and quantity surveying.

Maj Gen Ledwaba mentioned that Defence Works Formation engaged and benchmarked with large construction sectors and companies registered with professional bodies on the DOD Central Database as strategic partners in ensuring a transfer of skills concerning job training, mentoring, further research, development, innovation technologies, systems support and sharing experiences.

He said: “We are happy to report that we also enrol some of the members at Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges to enhance their acquired skills. Their training is progressing very well and they are indeed gaining valuable experience working on actual projects, so they no longer have a sense of disempowerment. Upon successful completion of their training programmes some of these members become site supervisors, inspectors, quantity surveyors, architects, etc.”

Maj Gen Ledwaba added that those exiting the DOD would have the skills for labour-intensive work and could establish businesses in the construction industry and compete as entrepreneurs. We seek to increase their capacity to earn an income once they exit the DOD.

Through this skills projects can we say hope is being restored to our members?

He indicated that hope was being restored to our members through skills opportunities coupled with training in construction methods. He explained that refurbishment and construction of Defence facilities or infrastructure is undertaken by our own skilled and capable in-house teams. The in-house capacity approach has resulted in financial savings for the Department and continues to create work opportunities in areas where construction is taking place. He pointed out that the elements of training and skills development were critical for all Regional Works Units and in Gauteng a total of 109 members (men and women) are involved on sites and in Gauteng a total of 109 members (men and women) are involved on sites and in Gauteng a total of 109 members (men and women) are involved on sites.

Do you have future initiatives to expand Defence Works Formation’s capabilities?

Maj Gen Ledwaba said that Defence Works Formation was looking at, among others, to expand its footprint with a project to develop solar energy. He added that solar energy would become increasingly significant in the DOD as it played a critical role in making energy supply more secure and affordable and we can therefore take advantage of solar power and save costs. He believed that it would make a big difference in deployment areas, in the field and at military installations.
SA Army enriching the careers of military officers

The SA Army took the military law training of its officers to unprecedented heights with a pilot programme that enrolled a record 112 learners at 10 SA Infantry Battalion (10 SAI Bn) in Mahikeng. In what is seen as a ground breaking intervention supported by the SANDF’s military law custodian, Defence Legal Service’s School of Military Justice, over 112 SA Army officers attended military law training at 10 SAI Bn.

The ten-week programme, planned and spearheaded by Chief Directorate SA Army Force Preparation under Maj Gen Nontobeko Mpaxa, came to being on the instruction of the Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, who was concerned about a lack of knowledge and the application of military law staff work by some officers.

Lt Gen Yam called for an urgent intervention to help address this gap and empower officers to deal efficiently with their responsibilities better.

Maj Gen Mpaxa said: “The SANDF has lost cases and investigations have failed because the legal satellite office (Legsato) was unable to use the legal documents submitted by many of our officers due to poor staff work and procedural flaws that could not withstand the test of admissibility in a court of law.” She also decried the fact that military law was discontinued as a promotional course which resulted in a number of officers disassociating themselves from it. Maj Gen Mpaxa added: “The discontinuation of this mandatory promotional requirement has cost us dearly and we are now sitting with officers, some very senior, who do not have the ability to prosecute military law aspects correctly.”

The Chief Director Army Force Preparation was, however, hopeful that the pilot programme had exposed them to the correct principles and procedures dictated by military law.

Speaking to learners and guests at the certificate ceremony on completion of the course in Mahikeng, Maj Gen Mpaxa lamented the state of affairs faced by the SA Army regarding the prosecution of military law cases and said a lot needed to be done to empower officers to execute the administration of boards of enquiry, officer commanding investigations, arraignment of members and other related law aspects that would improve adherence to the Military Disciplinary Code and the Military Disciplinary Supplementary Measurements Act.

The feat achieved by the SA Army through this intervention was unprecedented because it was the first military law programme to enrol a huge number of learners at one go. Ordinarily, the School of Military Justice sees 30 learners trained during each ten-week programme which takes place three times a year, bringing the total to 90 learners per annum. However, this course pushed the boundaries and surpassed the year’s training turnover for the School of Military Justice in a period spanning only two and a half months.

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The Chief Director Army Force Preparation was, however, hopeful that the pilot programme had exposed them to the correct principles and procedures dictated by military law. Maj Gen Mpaxa said: “I am certain that the time you spent here equates to resources well invested because we

Jubilant learners on the Military Law programme spoke on the immense value the course adds to the careers of military officers. Fltr: CO Thandiwe Mpoba, Lt Col Jackie Sindimba, Maj Nadine Meintjies, Maj Mpho Mosweu, Maj Desiree Brink, Maj Wayne van der Plank and the Course Chairperson, Maj Vuyo Booyisen.
expect a return on investment regarding your legal staff work when you return to your fields of operation.” She added that many other programmes would follow this pilot project in order to address the huge backlog of officers who still need to complete the military law course.

Lt Col Rikus Slabbert, Acting Officer in Charge at the School of Military Justice, said the pilot project was an intervention to assist the SA Army to deal with its military law backlog. He highlighted that since 1999 a number of military law qualified officers had taken a proverbial nose dive since they did not do the course as a promotional course but just as an empowerment course, meaning they had opted out of it which resulting in the lack of capacity with which we are currently faced. He said: “There has also been a perception that the course is difficult so most people saw no need to complete it.” However, despite the huge numbers that his staff now had to deal with as a result of this pilot project, he was satisfied with the level of comprehension that the members on course displayed.

Lt Col Slabbert indicated that the Defence Act required that the Department of Defence establish a departmental course in law and that it informs its members that the programme was intended to empower officers with the necessary technical ability to conduct their work in a legally acceptable way. He added: “Law follows us everywhere we go. It does not matter if you are working with artillery, housing or supply chain management. Everywhere there is law and the basic principles you learn once you have completed this course will stand you in good stead throughout your career.”

Having to accommodate, feed and manage 113 officers in an operational unit is obviously a mammoth task that comes with logistical challenges and it took dedicated men and women with commitment to prosecute successfully. Maj Francois Sass, the Acting Officer Commanding 10 SAI Bn, led a team of soldiers that ensured that the logistical necessities for this training were in place.

Maj Sass said: “When the assignment to host a course of this magnitude came, I was naturally shaken by daunting logistical challenges that go with hosting 120 officers at a unit like ours. We had to realign our priorities and took up the challenge to satisfy the wish of the Chief of the SA Army. As a commander, regardless of the daunting task ahead, I had to make it work.”

Capt Charles Gregory, the Course’s Logistical Coordinator, speaks highly of the commitment of his fatigue team and the leadership provided by his Officer Commanding. Capt Gregory said: “The Acting Officer Commanding, Maj Sass, told us about the task, which looked insurmountable, but it rallied us to make it happen. He really motivated us and his leadership came through”. Capt Gregory pointed to his team of soldiers who worked around the clock to ensure that the unit achieved its mandate to host over 100 learners on course. “I am very proud of my guys. They are a fatigue team that made it all happen. Everything achieved here was partly as a result of the effort made by this team. What the unit did here is testament to what is possible when the members are committed to work.”

Maj Sass highlighted that it was not only 10 SAI Bn that should take the credit for the successful hosting of the course, but also other units that contributed, such as 21 Infantry Battalion, 2 SAI Bn, the School of Intelligence, Army Support Base Potchefstroom, Joint Tactical Headquarters North West, 4 SAI Bn, 8 SAI Bn and 1 SAI Bn.

The completion of this pilot programme in military law and other similar courses in the pipeline aimed at empowering as many officers as possible and thus addressing the huge backlog the SA Army is facing, is without doubt work in progress in heeding the call by Chief of the SA Army to ensure that all officers successfully complete the military law course.

The learners had the following to say about their experiences on course:

Maj Desiree Brink from the Northern Cape Signal Unit said: “The course helps reinforce our confidence in performing our duties as officers. Commanders at all levels need to undergo the course to make their lives easier.”

Maj Nadine Meintjies from the MOD Signal Unit said: “The programme helps commanders in decision making and enhances how we apply ourselves in different situations. The knowledge we take away from here will surely come in handy when we are faced with difficult legal situations in future.”

Lt Col Jackie Sindimba from the School of Intelligence in Potchefstroom said: “The course is empowering and I suggest a refresher course for all those who did the programme before the amendment to the Defence Act came into force. We now have the necessary legal background to deal with various scenarios in the workplace because the course exposed us among other things to operational law and related aspects. I feel I should have done the course earlier in my career because it adds tremendous value to one’s professional life.”

Maj Wayne van der Plank from the SA Army Intelligence Formation said: “I am excited. The course is an eye-opener that makes one view the things we do in the military with a different and wiser eye. I found that what I learned here is applicable to all spheres of my career.”

Maj Vuyo Booysen from the School of Tactical Intelligence said: “The course empowers commanders and provides them with the tools to take great command and control decisions. An empowered commander would then ensure that he or she shares the knowledge gained here with subordinates and peers. It is a good thing that the Chief of the Army wants the course to be compulsory and taken seriously by all officers.”

Maj Mpho Mosweu from North West Signal Unit said: “This programme is crucial in the life of a commander because it prepares us to take legal decisions that would not disadvantage the organisation and put it into disrepute. I encourage as many people as possible to enrol and complete this wonderful learning experience.”

Candidate Officer Thandive Mpoba from 16 Maintenance said: “Military Law for officers is an important programme. I am very lucky to have done it at this early stage of my career. I will take it upon myself to influence positively the way military law related issues are handled in the environments in which I work. I will surely use what I have learnt to empower others with the little knowledge that I have.”
Meet the new Deputy Military Ombud

By Mr Lufuno Netshirembe
Photo by Pte Paul Mpangala

“Don’t limit yourself. Many people limit themselves to what they think they can do. You can go as far as your mind lets you. What you believe, remember, you can achieve.” These words of Mary Kay Ash seem to be the mantra that Adv Rendani Marivate (formerly Masutha) lives by.

Adv Marivate, the first black naval officer post 1994, has recently been sworn in as the first Deputy Military Ombud.

The Military Ombud Office is an institution that was established in terms of the Military Ombud Act, Act 4 of 2012 to investigate complaints lodged in writing by serving members and former members of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) regarding their conditions of service. The Office also investigates complaints brought by members of the public against SANDF members’ personal conduct in public.

Adv Marivate was born in unpretentious circumstances at the village of Hamutsha in Venda, Limpopo Province. Her schooling took place at Hamutsha Lower Primary and Tsianda Senior Primary School. She received her Secondary Education at Tshipetane Junior Secondary School and Lwamondo Secondary School where she matriculated. After matriculating she went on to study law at university level prior to joining the SA Navy in 1995.

Adv Marivate has several short course qualifications to her credit, ranging from Law at Sea obtained from the SA Naval Staff College in 1997 to the Executive National Security Studies from the SA National Defence College in 2010.

Not only is Adv Marivate academically highly qualified but her work experience is just as impressive. In 1994 she was a Junior Lecturer in Law at the University of Venda. In the SANDF she served in various capacities. From 1995 to 1999 she was a Military Law Officer. From 1999 to 2001 she served as Military Prosecution Counsel. From 2001 to 2004 she served as a Senior Review Counsel. As a Senior Military Judge from 2005 to 2011 she received a Certificate in Advanced Labour Law and Arbitration from Unisa in 2005.

In March 2011 she was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral (JG) until her appointment as the new Deputy Military Ombud. During her tenure in the rank of Rear Admiral (JG) she held the post of Director Military Defence Counsel, in which she was responsible for an affordable, fully integrated, credible, sustainable, effective and efficient Military Defence Counsel Service for members of the SANDF.

There have been many milestones in Adv Marivate’s academic, career and personal life. She is indeed the rightful person in charge of the Deputy Military Ombud Office.

She quotes Marianne Williamson: “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous?’ Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. You playing small do not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It’s not just in some of us; it’s in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

Adv Marivate seems to have personally embraced the sentiments of Marianne Williamson, and indeed she is an inspiration to all. “To all women out there, especially young girls, about whose progress I am passionate, I advise that they should not let stereotypes about women hinder their progress because their success does not lie in the fact that they are female but is entirely dependent on their zeal and zest in achieving their goals because success is a decision,” said Adv Marivate in her plea urging women never to underestimate their strength.
Whether it’s a vacation, baecation or a short left with your friends, as a package member you have been enjoying the benefits of our savings packages for a small monthly payment.

WE WISH TO INFORM ALL SAVING MEMBERS THAT THE MONTHLY FEES WILL SEE A 10% INCREASE FROM 1 APRIL 2017.

- Silver membership will increase from R100 to R110 in monthly membership fees
- Gold membership will increase from R150 to R165 in monthly membership fees
- Premium membership will increase from R250 to R275 in monthly membership fees

Club 60 and Pay As You Use membership remains unchanged as these are not savings packages.

For more information call. 0126759415/13/19.
World War I history prevails – World War I 7.7 cm German field gun is restored

By Mr Lufuno Netshirembe
Photos by Sgt Niko Malatji

History is the only way that we can understand our past and pass it on to the next generation. History teaches us about the past and, as part of our life’s experience, influences our daily thinking and decision-making processes.

This is the correct way to approach the National Heritage Resources Act No 25 of 1999, which states: “This legislation aims to promote good management of the national estate, and to enable and encourage communities to nurture and conserve their legacy so that it may be bequeathed to future generations. Our heritage is unique and precious and it cannot be renewed. It helps us to define our cultural identity and therefore lies at the heart of our spiritual well-being and has the power to build our nation. It has the potential to affirm our diverse cultures, and in so doing shape our national character. Our heritage celebrates our achievements and contributes to redressing past inequities. It educates, it deepens our understanding of society and encourages us to empathise with the experience of others. It facilitates healing, material and symbolic restitution and it promotes new and previously neglected research into our rich oral traditions and customs.

Weapons (arms and ammunition) form a vital part of any nation’s history and heritage. Weapons may be put into their correct context by history; this explains who used them and for what purpose. Their design is indicative of the state of technological development of the people of the time and the offensive or defensive demands of the time.

The Gunners Association of South Africa, in conjunction with Ditsong SA National Museum of Military History Building and Development Trust, with the financial support of Rheinmetall Denel Munition, refurbished a World War I 7.7cm German field gun. The newly refurbished gun was recently unveiled at the Johannesburg Ditsong National Museum of Military History.

Gunner Niel Wiid, Johannesburg Branch Chairperson, welcomed the esteemed guests that included Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, Chief of Staff of the
Standing next to the World War I 7.7cm German field gun, fltr: Capt (German Navy) Gerald Koch, Germany Defence Attaché to South Africa, Mr Gyfford Fitchat, Rheinmetall Denel Munitions Executive Manager: Mortar, Naval and Aircraft New Business Development and Sales, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, Chief of Staff of the SANDF and Patron of the Ditsong SA National Museum of Military History Building and Development Trust, and Maj Gen Roy Andersen, Chief of Defence Reserves and Chairperson of the Ditsong SA National Museum of Military History Building and Development Trust.

SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and Patron of the Ditsong SA National Museum of Military History Building and Development Trust, Maj Gen Roy Andersen, Chief of Defence Reserves and Chairperson of the Ditsong SA National Museum of Military History Building and Development Trust, Capt (German Navy) Gerald Koch, Germany Defence Attaché to South Africa, and his wife Ms Gabriele Müller, Mr Gyfford Fitchat, Rheinmetall Denel Munitions Executive Manager: Mortar, Naval and Aircraft New Business Development and Sales, Gnr Dominic Hoole, National Chairperson of the Gunners Association, Mr Godfrey Giles, President of the South African Legion, Col Jacques Baird, then Chief of Staff SA Army Air Defence Artillery Formation, Mr Spencer Blackbeard, Chairperson of GEM Homes and HLVPs of the Gunners Association, Mr Frank Louw, Mr Tiaan Steyn, Mr Brand van Rhyn, and Mr Ivor Rimmer.

Mr Allan Sinclair, Curator and Administrator of the Ditsong SA National Museum of Military History, revealed the reason why this specific gun was chosen for restoration. He said: “As you all know we are still currently in the centenary period of World War I and the museum’s plan was to restore all World War I exhibits.” He thanked Rheinmetall Denel Munitions and the Ditsong SA National Museum of Military History Building and Development Trust for the financial aid for museum projects.

Mr Sinclair said: “Being a government entity it is very difficult for us to get things done owing to budget constraints and procurement processes that often need to take place, therefore for us to have the support of the Building and Development Trust is very important and it is also significant to have organisations, such as Rheinmetall Denel Munitions that are prepared to assist us with projects.”

Mr Steve Tegner, a workshop technician, elaborated on the technical and physical side of restoring the 7.7cm German field gun and Mr Hamish Paterson, Artillery Curator, gave a brief history of the 7.7cm German field gun during the war.

After the unveiling, the invited guests were ushered to the gun park where they had an opportunity to appreciate some of the guns on display.

To restore the World War I 7.7cm German field gun, the Gunners’ Association of South Africa, in conjunction with Ditsong SA National Museum of Military History Building and Development Trust, were guided by the National Heritage Resources Act No 25 of 1999 which was established to “introduce an integrated and interactive system for the management of the national heritage resources; to promote good governance at all levels, and empower civil society to nurture and conserve their heritage resources so that they may be bequeathed to future generations; to lay down general principles for governing national resources management throughout the Republic; to introduce an integrated system for the identification, assessment and management of the heritage resources of South Africa; to establish the SA Heritage Resources Agency together with its Council to co-ordinate and promote the management of heritage resources at national level; to set norms and maintain essential national standards for the management of heritage resources in the Republic and to protect heritage resources of national significance; to control the export of nationally significant heritage objects and the import into the Republic of cultural property illegally exported from foreign countries; to enable the provinces to establish heritage authorities which must adopt powers to protect and manage certain categories of heritage resources; to provide for the protection and management of conservation-worthy places and areas by local authorities; and to provide for matters connected therewith”.

The Pretoria Military Marathon Club (PMMC) has the opportunity to host two official road running races on an annual basis, the Jackie Mekler in May and the Spirit of Flight in September. The PMMC recently hosted the 36th annual Commemorative Jackie Mekler Road Race, which was identified by Athletics Gauteng North (AGN) as a league race for the month of May.

The event, which was presented at the Pretoria Military Sports Club in Thaba Tshwane, comprised a 25km and a 10km road race, and a 5km fun run for both road runners and walkers.

Athletics Gauteng North league races normally draw a large number of athletes from both the Gauteng North and Central Gauteng regions. This year the number of participants in both the 25km and 10km races has grown to a phenomenal total of 2760 in comparison to 2016 with total of 2359 participants.

The race is presented in honour of Jackie Mekler who was born on 4 March 1932, a former South African long-distance runner. The race pays tribute to one of the oldest living Comrades Marathon winners, namely Mr Jackie Mekler. He is one of five athletes who has won the Comrades Marathon five times. Twice he finished second and came third twice. He has won 10 gold, one silver and a bronze medal during the period 1958 to 1969.

Every year Mr Mekler is invited to present the prizes at the ceremony after the Jackie Mekler Race. During the prize-giving ceremony Mr Mekler mentioned that it was a great privilege to see young and even old people of his age still running and he encouraged them to keep it up. He added that he has been attending the race as a guest of honour for the past 36 years and he greatly appreciated the organisation's efforts to increase the number of road running clinics in the different regions.

He concluded by encouraging the athletes who did not win to just try harder next time.

The following are the results for the 10km race for civilian runners:
- 1st Men overall: Mr Jacob Tseko (Tuks) 31:49 min
- 1st Ladies overall: Ms Leshan Curlewis (Waterkloof High School) 38:00 min

The 25km race for civilian runners:
- 1st Men overall: Mr Tiisetso Ramkheseng (Colossus) 01:21:08 min
- 1st Ladies overall: Ms Kim Laxton (Rand Athletic Club) 01:41:00 min

The results for the 10km race for civilian walkers:
- 1st Men overall: Mr Tumisang Pule (Tuks) 46:34 min
- 1st Ladies overall: Ms Conita van Rensburg (Run and Walk For Life) 01:09:53 min

The results for the 25 km race for civilian walkers:
- 1st Men overall: Mr Tumisang Pule (Tuks) 46:34 min
- 1st Ladies overall: Ms Conita van Rensburg (Run and Walk For Life) 01:09:53 min

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The Pretoria Military Marathon Club 10km Workers’ Race: 1st Overall Woman, Lt Col Thérèse Doman, and Mr Jackie Mekler, the Guest of Honour. (Photo by Mr Richard Hammill)
working teams for the event were given the opportunity to participate in the 10km workers’ race on the previous day before they commenced with preparations for the official race the next day.

The following are the results for the PMMC workers’ 10km race for runners:

**Men:**
- 1st Men overall: Sgt Aubrey Nthako (1 Air Servicing Unit) 36:54 min
- 2nd Men overall: Capt Israel Legoete (Military Health Training Formation Headquarters) 37:10 min
- 3rd Men overall: Sgt Enrico Flusk (Air Force Base Zwartkop Mobile Deployment Wing) 38:10 min

**Ladies:**
- 1st Ladies overall: Lt Col Thérèse Doman (Defence Corporate Communication) 49:44 min
- 2nd Ladies overall: Maj Nditsheni Siganagana (Logistical Division) 51:50 min
- 3rd Ladies overall: Capt Keabetswe Molusi (Military Police School) 51:59 min

The results for the PMMC workers’ 10km race for walkers:

**Men:**
- 1st Men overall: Cpl Isaac Dithuge (101 Air Supply Unit) 59:43 min
- 2nd Men overall: Sgt Johannes Seloekela (1 Air Servicing Unit) 1:03:40 min
- 3rd Men overall: Lt Col Jacques Niemand (1 Air Servicing Unit) 1:07:03 min

**Ladies:**
- 1st Ladies overall: Lt Col Annalise Swart (DOD Logistical Support Formation) 1:05:53 min
- 2nd Ladies overall: Maj Ronel Viljoen, a Chief Oral Hygienist at the Department of Defence Headquarters Dental Department and a Pretoria Military Cycling Club member, is a keen race-walker. She obtained Provincial colours in this sporting code, and has also competed abroad.

After surgery for a sports injury, Maj Viljoen unfortunately suffered near fatal complications. After spending extensive time in hospital and going through months of intense rehabilitation and therapy, and having to leave the sport of race walking that she so clearly enjoyed, Maj Viljoen has proven that through absolute determination and perseverance at both the physical and mental level, nothing is impossible.

With only a short amount of time to prepare for the Gauteng North Masters Athletics Championships, Maj Viljoen was selected for the Gauteng North Team to compete at the SA Masters Athletics Championships recently in Cape Town. In totally different weather conditions Maj Viljoen competed in the 5000m race walking event held at the beautiful modern Greenpoint Stadium, as well as the 10km race walking event held at Youngsfield Military Base. Maj Viljoen managed to obtain two Gold Medals and two personal bests for both events in her age category. (Gauteng North Masters Athletics also managed to secure most medals obtained at the 2017 SA Masters Athletics Championships.)

Maj Viljoen said: “It was an absolute privilege to have competed in such a well-organised SA Masters Athletics Championships, and in such a beautiful host city. I am grateful for these achievements in such a short period, having not competed for such a long time. Through months of rehabilitation, perseverance and extreme hard work and with the assistance of an excellent medical team, it has all been worthwhile and possible. You must just believe in yourself.”

Maj Ronel Viljoen, a Chief Oral Hygienist at the Department of Defence Headquarters Dental Department, with her two Gold Medals which she won at the 2017 SA Masters Athletics Championships in the 5000m and 10km race walking items.
Celebrating a decade of South African Forces professional cricket

Article and photo by CPO Henry Abrahams, SANDF Cricket Relations Officer

A decade of SA Forces professional cricket is celebrated by SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Cricket by honouring its Patron, Lt Gen Morris Moadira, who retires after SA Forces National Cricket is crowned the 2017 Champions.

The SANDF Cricket Association forms part of the SA Forces Cricket Association, the SA Police Services Cricket and the Department of Correctional Services Cricket Board. The three departments form the core of the SA Forces Cricket Association and enjoy ancillary membership status in Cricket South Africa (CSA) as the main custodian for cricket development in South Africa.

The SA Forces Cricket Association was founded in October 2007, and is currently at the highest level of Senior Level Cricket, where serving members of the Security Cluster Departments are presented with an alternative cricket development path (in tandem with club cricket) to compete and come into contention for higher level cricket.

The 2017 National Championship marked a milestone as it celebrated a decade of professional cricket among the three entities under the auspices of CSA. The competition was recently hosted by the Department of Correctional Services under the auspices of the Boland Cricket Board in Paarl. The CSA provides limited funding annually to the SA Forces Cricket Association to realise its goal of hosting tournaments. The SA Forces Cricket Association is currently under the leadership of Lt Col Randall Williams, a passionate, dedicated, proactive, creative, dynamic and professional Senior Officer whom loves the game.

The three entities normally complete their interdepartmental cricket development programmes, after which they compete in a National Tournament against each other to determine the cricket champion of the Security Cluster.

The secondary aim is to promote and foster healthy beneficial relationships among the sister departments that serve, protect and defend the country.

This wonderful initiative carries the approval of the respective command structures in order to embrace the legacy of the late former President Nelson Mandela who said: “Sport has the ability to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to the youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there only was despair”.

Members of SANDF Cricket paid tribute to Lt Gen Morris Moadira, the Patron of SANDF Cricket, on the 10th anniversary of the SA Forces Cricket National Championship. He was a humble and faithful servant to cricket for the past 12 years. SANDF Cricket salutes the contributions and efforts of its Patron who was instrumental in paving the way for cricket to have its rightful place as a sporting code in the SANDF.

Arriving on the cricket scene in 2005, his vision, passion, development strategy and the contributions as the Patron changed the mind-set of the SANDF community and its stakeholders. Lt Gen Moadira is known and will be remembered for his vision in allowing the Executive to explore various initiatives to find the best course(s) of action. He was supported by a vibrant Chairperson and Executive who absolutely loved the sport and set out to be known as the best administrated and performing sporting code in the SANDF.

This goal was realised when SANDF Cricket was acknowledged as the best sporting code in 2012. Since then it has never looked back.

SANDF Cricket has twice been on national television, and was showcased on Supersport for its superb efforts and programmes. It also has an excellent relationship with CSA, and is currently spearheading all development initiatives for SA Forces Cricket on the national stage. The contributions, impact and support of Lt Gen Moadira will be sorely missed. Cricket was the only sport to have had a Brigadier General, Major General and Lieutenant General as a Patron, namely Lt Gen Morris Moadira.

SANDF Cricket has delivered serious talent for the past 10 years, and has in the process registered various records and achievements. It celebrates the contributions of its star performers, such as Cpl Reginald Steenkamp from Director Operational Legal Support who has become renowned as a valiant all-rounder holding the record for the highest total ever in a match, viz 244*.
How wonderful would it be to see the different Services giving each other a go, something that is possible, and these are some options that can be explored. The SANDF Cricket Championship is planned for a coastal town this year, and the Executive will be approaching the General Officer Commanding SA Army Infantry Formation shortly to look at 6 SA Infantry Battalion as a prospective host, and South Eastern Cape Regional Military Sport Council being requested to host this spectacle.

The SANDF is also the host for the 2018 SA Forces National Cricket Championship, and will be planning for it as from July 2017 on the West Coast. The venue for the competition will only be announced in July 2017 by CSA.

It is clear that amidst the trying and volatile economic climate in the Department of Defence, cricket still wants to perform a role by being a catalyst in the Force Preparation and Force Employment Strategy of the SANDF. There is no better way to keep soldiers motivated and fit, than by allowing them to do what they do best and enjoy. As we bid farewell to one of the greatest of SANDF Cricket, namely Lt Gen Moadira, we hope to welcome a new era of hope, inspiration, dedication and investment in the future of cricket in the SANDF. We can only do that by continuing with credible and professional development programmes.

The SANDF Cricket Executive and Head Committee are committed to keeping the flag flying high, and ensuring that the future generation benefits from the history, legacy and hard work of all involved. Cricket is not played for recognition, benefit or favour but for the love of the sport and so serving our nation. Cricket remains a source of hope for those in less favourable circumstances. Congratulations to our champions, and we trust that this winning feeling will resonate long after the retirement of our Patron. The SANDF Cricket Association is proud of its record but remains humble and committed to cricket development in the SANDF. We seek to embrace and live our slogan: “All Round Commitment through Professionalism” to enhance the beautiful game of cricket.
Do you want to live well and be blessed? What are the bottom line decisions everyone must make to thrive? I saw a book entitled “Master, Mission, Mate” by Ken Graves, and the title spoke to me. These three aspects are central to what will improve our lives tremendously, I think. Of course, there may be arguments for issues such as dealing with your past, embracing self and others, where you choose to live and so on, but let us consider these three decisions.

Who will be your Master?

There are a number of options; you may choose your SELF (“He is a self-made man, and he worships his Maker”). Or you may choose money, pursuing riches to be your master; careful though, for the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Tim 6:10). Some may pick the spouse to be their master, or the children (strict children and obedient parents).

I suggest we rather choose the living God to be our Master. Consider His CV: He is willing, able and ready to guide and provide for us. Ps 103:8 says: “The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.” Ps 23 says that he will lead us to green pastures and peaceful streams, not into the desert and weeds, although we often end up in the wilderness because of poor decisions. Choose God, young man, young lady!

What will be your mission?

Make a careful exploration of who you are, based on your skills, knowledge, talent and passion. Skills and knowledge can increase and be honed close to perfection. Talent and passion though, is something we get in our genes.

You either have it, or you don’t. Unfortunately, what’s been left out cannot be put back in. For instance, my dear wife cannot sing, although this lack of talent doesn’t deter her from singing! She just goes ahead and says: “Lord, You gave me this voice, so You will just have to bear it while I worship”. She hopefully will not cut a CD though.

But I digress. Look at these four aspects of competence, and try to combine it in a role which could be your mission in life. Be the best you can be. Invest money, time and energy into becoming the change agent you would like to be. What a tragedy it will be when we enter the pearly gates only to find out we have misspent our lives by not reaching half of what our Creator intended us to become. Consider your task carefully, my friend, then you won’t have to work for money ever. I

Finally, who will be your mate?

Some prefer to live alone, and there may be merit in their decision. But if we do choose a partnership, I suggest we take sufficient time to identify the person we regard as a soul mate, the person with whom we intend to spend the rest of our lives, and the one we consider we cannot live without.

Often, people choose a partner without really thinking about it properly. Rushed, emotional decisions about a spouse often lead to disaster, and many make this mistake repeatedly. (There was an actress who married eight times, if I remember correctly.) Eight times, with six different mothers-in-law, ouch! I suggest we follow the advice of our grandparents - take time, eat a bag of salt together before you make such a critical decision. There can be few things worse than waking up in the morning with a shock when you face your roommate.

The choice of a soul mate and deciding on your personal mission in life are of utmost importance if you want to live well and blessed. But I am convinced that to choose God as your Master is the first and fundamental decision that we must make.

I thank God that I chose Him as Lord and Saviour as a youngster - my life and ministry have been extremely fulfilling and blessed.

It’s up to you. You are not a tree. May you make proper decisions about the future and quality of your own life.

Be blessed.
Change your attitude

By AB Samuel Ramonyai
Photos by Mr Witney Rasaka

The Scripture: “But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we were healed (Isaiah 53:5)” epitomised the Chief of SA National Defence (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke’s Easter Service that was held recently at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria.

This service was held to remind SANDF members of the significance of Easter and that on this day, Christians celebrate Jesus Christ’s resurrection from the dead three days after His suffering and death by crucifixion.

The Chaplain General, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, who delivered the sermon, began his message by urging people to adopt the attitude of Christ. He said Christ died for our iniquities and He humbled Himself to die for everybody on the face of the earth.

He titled the sermon: “Your attitude should be like that of Christ”. He said we cannot be like Christ because Christ is of the spirit. We can only strive to change our attitude to that of Christ because we are of flesh and blood. He added that if we do so, then we please God himself who allowed His Lamb to become sin for the glory of salvation and He was prepared to sacrifice his life for all humanity on the cross. The Apostle Paul, who contributed many letters to the Bible, spoke about the doctrines about Jesus and said: “He gave up His heavenly prerogatives, He emptied Himself, He humbled Himself and took upon Himself the form of servant-hood”. Hence our attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ.

The Chaplain General climaxed his sermon by introducing Jesus to the congregation, Him alone and nobody else. He said: “His name is above every name and every name shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord.”

Brig Gen (Rev) Jamangile said: “If I may introduce Jesus more and more, I am talking about Jesus, the Redeemer above every captivity, Jesus the liberator above every oppression, Jesus the Healer above every sickness, Jesus the life-giver above every dead thing, Jesus the Saviour above every sin, Jesus the Captain above every storm, Jesus the truth above every error, Jesus the way above every wilderness, Jesus the meaning above every mess, Jesus the solution above every problem.”

He added: “Jesus the fulfilment above every need, Jesus the sufficiency above every deficiency, Jesus the grace above every depravity, Jesus the power above every weakness, Jesus the joy above every sadness, fullness above every emptiness, love above every frustration and hope above every hell.”

He concluded his sermon by saying that we must go home and experience Good Friday. When we come back we must tell the good news from the grave and then shift from Good Friday to Easter (The Resurrection) and we will then experience what we call power unlimited.

The SA Air Force Choir and the Vosloorus Old Age Home, sponsored by the Chief of the SANDF, kept the service going with their melodious voices.

At the end of the service there was an overflow of joy and happiness upon the faces of the members who attended. When I conducted an interview with some members of the SANDF and asked if they understood the significance of Easter after the sermon, all gave the common answer: “The Chaplain General has made it clear to us.”
Medicinal myths and a lack of care for our natural environment will be the forces behind the extinction of this magnificent animal.