



Military Despatches

Vol 82 April 2024

Operation Magic Fire

Germany's GSG9 go into action in Africa

Avro Lancaster

The workhorse of RAF Bomber Command



Roza Shanina

The unseen terror of East Prussia

The Last Post

Military Despatches coming to an end

For the military enthusiast



Military Despatches YouTube Channel



Click on any video below to view



Paratrooper Wings Quiz

Most military paratroopers are awarded their jump wings after they have qualified.

In this quiz we show you 15 different wings and you tell us where they are from.



Military Firearms Quiz

This quiz is all about military firearms. We show you 15 firearms, you tell us what they are.

Army Speak 101

The SADF had their own language. A mixture of English, Afrikaans, slang and techno-speak that few outside the military could hope to understand.

Most armies around the world also had their own slang terms. In this video we look at some of them.



New videos each week

We will be uploading new videos to our YouTube channel each week.

So remember to bookmark the channel and keep an eye out for new content.



Elite Military Units Quiz

Most military forces have an elite unit or regiment or a special forces component.

In this quiz we show you 15 and you tell us who they are and where they are from.



Who said that?

Throughout history military leaders and politicians have had some interesting things to say about war.

We give you 15 quotes, you tell us who made them.

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Please remember to subscribe to our channel.

Feel free to leave a comment, and share this video.



Editor's Sitrep

I'm reminded of the words to a song that would go on to become Frank Sinatra's theme song - My Way.

I'm reminded of the line "And now the end is near, And so I face the final curtain."

And I'm not referring to myself here, but rather to Military Despatches. After giving it considerable thought, I have decided to stop publishing Military Despatches. The June 2024 issue will be the final issue of the magazine.

There are a number of reasons why I have come to this decision. The June issue will make it seven years since Military Despatches began, and I feel that it's as good a time as any to call it a day.

Believe it or not, it takes a good amount of time and effort to bring out a magazine every month. So it is understandable that one can become a bit jaded eventually.

During the past seven years I've tried reaching out to our readers. Many of our readers served in the military. So I think it would be interesting to hear some of their stories. I've appealed to our readers, asking them to send in a story or two. The response - nothing.

I've asked readers to please subscribe to our YouTube Chan-

nel. It costs nothing, all you have to do is click a button. In two years we've have two readers subscribe. That's an awe inspiring one person a year.

Someone that reads the magazine every month suggested that I bring out the magazine quarterly instead of monthly. I thought about it but came to the conclusion that I either do something properly or not at all.

So, only two more editions of Military Despatches and that's all folks.

In a way I feel a bit sad. After all, Military Despatches has been a big part of my life for seven years. Yet I do feel happy that I won't have to worry about deadlines at the end of every month. I can go away without worrying that I will have to be back at a certain time. So that is something to look forward too.

Until next time, stay safe and stay healthy.

Matt

Hipe!

media

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Top Ten WWI Fighter Aces

The ten top fighter aces of World War I.

On 17 December 1903, Orville Wright completed the first powered flight of a heavier-than-air aircraft. It was at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina and lasted a mere 12 seconds.

Eleven years later, in 1914, the world was at war and the use of aircraft became widespread.

Yet World War I, or the 'Great War' as it was known then, was not the first time that aircraft had been used in combat.

The first use of airplanes in an actual war occurred in the 1911 Italo-Turkish War with Italian Army Air Corps Blériot XI and Nieuport IV monoplanes bombing a Turkish camp at Ain Zara in Libya.

In the First Balkan War (1912) the Bulgarian Air Force bombed Turkish positions at Adrianople, while the Greek Aviation performed, over the Dardanelles, the first naval/air co-operation mission in history.

Even so, by 1914 there were no established air forces and pilot training was rudimentary to say the least. The aircraft were temperamental and the fact that they were constructed out of wood and canvas made them highly flammable.

Even though parachutes has been invented, they were not issued to pilots. The machine guns mounted to aircraft were often inaccurate and prone to jamming. All in all, being a pi-

lot during World War I was by no means a barrel of laughs.

To become an 'ace' fighter pilot you were required to shoot down five enemy aircraft. The mere act of taking off, flying from Point A to Point B and back before landing was an accomplishment in itself.

So the act of shooting down an enemy aircraft, let alone five of them was something to be lauded.

In this month's Top Ten we take a look at the 10 World War I aces with the most kills.



Donald Roderick MacLaren
Canada
54 kills

Wing Commander Donald Roderick MacLaren DSO MC DFC (28 May 1893 – 4 July 1988) was a Canadian World War I flying ace.

He was credited with 54 victories and, after the war, helped

found the Royal Canadian Air Force.



Erich Loewenhardt
Germany
54 kills

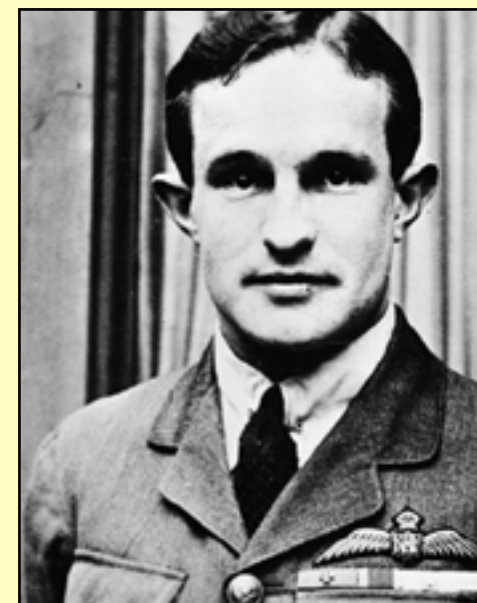
Erich Loewenhardt (7 April 1897 – 10 August 1918) was a German soldier and military aviator who fought in the First World War and became a fighter ace credited with 54 confirmed aerial victories.

Originally enlisting in an infantry regiment even though he was only 17, he fought in the Battle of Tannenberg, winning a battlefield commission on 2 October 1914.

He would serve in the Carpathians and on the Italian Front before being medically discharged in mid-1915. Following a five month recuperation, Loewenhardt joined the Imperial German Air Service in 1916.

After serving as an aerial observer and reconnaissance pilot, he underwent advanced training to become a fighter pilot with Jagdstaffel 10 in March 1917.

Between 24 March 1917 and 10 August 1918, Loewenhardt shot down 45 enemy airplanes, as well as destroying nine observation balloons. Shortly after his final victory, he was killed in a collision with another German pilot.



Andrew Beauchamp-Proctor
South Africa
54 kills

Andrew Frederick Weatherby (Anthony) Beauchamp-Proctor, VC, DSO, MC*, DFC (4 September 1894 – 21 June 1921) was a South African airman and a recipient of the Victoria Cross, the highest award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces.

He was South Africa's leading ace of the First World War, being credited with 54 aerial victories.

He was studying engineer-

ing at University of Cape Town when the European war broke out. He took leave from his studies to join the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Rifles. He served as a signaller in the German South-West Africa campaign.

In August 1915, he was demobilised with an honourable discharge. He promptly went to work with the South African Field Telegraph and re-enrolled in university.

He managed to complete his third year of college before re-enlisting, this time with the Royal Flying Corps (RFC), in March 1917.

Beauchamp-Proctor was killed on 21 June 1921 in a training accident flying a Sopwith Snipe, in preparation for an air show at the RAF Hendon.



James McCudden
United Kingdom
57 kills

James Thomas Byford McCudden, VC, DSO & Bar, MC & Bar, MM (28 March 1895 – 9 July 1918) was a British flying ace of the First World War and among the most highly deco-

rated airmen in British military history.

McCudden joined the Royal Engineers in 1910. Having an interest in mechanics he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) in 1913 at which time he first came into regular contact with aircraft. At the outbreak of war in 1914 he flew as an observer before training as a fighter pilot in 1916.



Raymond Collishaw
Canada
60 kills

Raymond Collishaw, CB, DSO & Bar, OBE, DSC, DFC (22 November 1893 – 28 September 1976) was a distinguished Canadian fighter pilot, squadron leader, and commanding officer who served in the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) and later the Royal Air Force. He was the highest scoring RNAS flying ace and the second highest scoring Canadian pilot of the First World War. He was noted as a great leader in the air, leading many of his own formations into battle. Af-

ter the Great War, he became a permanent commissioned officer in the Royal Air Force (RAF), seeing action against the Bolsheviks in 1919–20, and subsequently commanding various Air Service detachments. During the Second World War, he commanded No. 204 Group (which later became the Desert Air Force) in North Africa, achieving great success against the numerically and technologically superior Italian Air Force. He was retired in 1943.



Mick Mannock
United Kingdom
61 kills

Edward Corringham “Mick” Mannock VC, DSO & Two Bars, MC & Bar (24 May 1887 – 26 July 1918) was a British-Irish flying ace who served in the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Air Force during the First World War.

Mannock was a pioneer of fighter aircraft tactics in aerial warfare. At the time of his death he had amassed 61 aerial victories, making him the fifth

highest scoring pilot of the war. Mannock was among the most decorated men in the British Armed Forces. He was honoured with the Military Cross twice, was one of the rare three-time recipients of the Distinguished Service Order, and was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.



Ernst Udet
Germany
62 kills

Ernst Udet (26 April 1896 – 17 November 1941) was a German pilot during World War I and a Luftwaffe Colonel-General (*Generaloberst*) during World War II.

Udet joined the Imperial German Air Service in April 1915 at the age of 19, and eventually became a notable flying ace of World War I, scoring 62 confirmed victories.

The highest scoring German fighter pilot to survive that war, and the second-highest scoring after Manfred von Richthofen, his commander in the Flying Circus, Udet rose to become

a squadron commander under Richthofen, and later under Hermann Göring.

Udet spent the 1920s and early 1930s as a stunt pilot, international barnstormer, light-aircraft manufacturer, and playboy.

On 1 May 1933 Udet joined the Nazi Party. He became involved in the early development of the Luftwaffe (officially founded on 15 May 1933), where he was appointed director of research and development.

Influential in the adoption of dive-bombing techniques as well as of the Stuka dive bomber, by 1939 Udet had risen to the post of Chief of Procurement and Supply for the Luftwaffe.

The stress of the position and his distaste for administrative duties led to Udet developing alcoholism.

On 17 November 1941, Udet shot himself in the head while he was on the phone with his girlfriend, Inge Bleyle.

Udet’s suicide was concealed from the public, and at his funeral, he was lauded as a hero who had died in flight while he was testing a new weapon.



Billy Bishop
Canada
72 kills

Air Marshal William Avery Bishop, VC, CB, DSO & Bar, MC, DFC, ED (8 February 1894 – 11 September 1956) was a Canadian flying ace of the First World War.

He was officially credited with 72 victories, making him the top Canadian and British Empire ace of the war, and also received a Victoria Cross. During the Second World War, Bishop was instrumental in setting up and promoting the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.



René Fonck
France
75 kills

Colonel René Paul Fonck (27 March 1894 – 18 June 1953) was a French aviator who ended the First World War as the top Entente fighter ace and, when all succeeding aerial conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries are also considered, Fonck still holds the title of “all-time Allied Ace of Aces”.

He received confirmation for 75 victories (72 solo and three shared) out of 142 claims. Taking into account his probable claims, Fonck’s final tally could conceivably be nearer 100 or above.

He was made an Officer of the Legion of Honor in 1918 and later a Commander of the Legion of Honour after the war, and raised again to the dignity of Grand Officer.



Manfred von Richthofen
Germany
80 kills

Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen (2 May 1892 –

21 April 1918), known in English as Baron von Richthofen or the Red Baron, was a fighter pilot with the German Air Force during World War I.

He is considered the ace-of-aces of the war, being officially credited with 80 air combat victories.

Originally a cavalryman, Richthofen transferred to the Air Service in 1915, becoming one of the first members of fighter squadron Jagdstaffel 2 in 1916.

He quickly distinguished himself as a fighter pilot, and during 1917 became the leader of Jasta 11.

Later he led the larger fighter wing Jagdgeschwader I, better known as “The Flying Circus” or “Richthofen’s Circus” because of the bright colours of its aircraft, and perhaps also because of the way the unit was transferred from one area of Entente air activity to another – moving like a travelling circus, and frequently setting up in tents on improvised airfields.

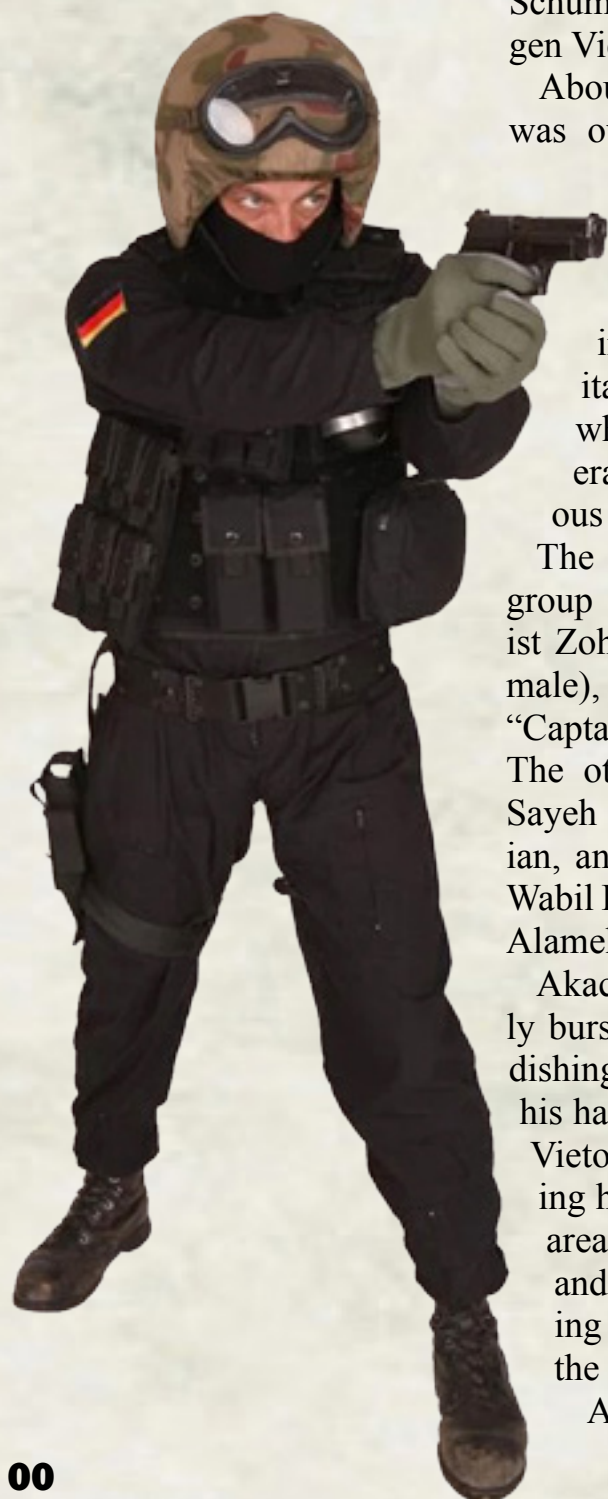
By 1918, Richthofen was regarded as a national hero in Germany, and respected by his enemies.

Richthofen was shot down and killed near Vaux-sur-Somme on 21 April 1918. There has been considerable discussion and debate regarding aspects of his career, especially the circumstances of his death.

Operation Magic Fire

When Lufthansa Flight 181 was hijacked by members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Grenzschutzgruppe 9 - an elite special forces unit of the German Federal Police - were instructed to execute a rescue mission code named Feuerzauber.

- **Date:** 13–18 October 1977
- **Location:** Mogadishu International Airport, Somalia
- **Units involved:** GSG 9; 22 Regiment SAS



At 11:00 on Thursday 13 October 1977, Lufthansa flight LH 181, a Boeing 737 named Landshut, took off from Palma de Mallorca en route to Frankfurt with 86 passengers and five crew, piloted by Captain Jürgen Schumann, with co-pilot Jürgen Vietor at the controls.

About 30 minutes later, as it was overflying Marseille, the aircraft was hijacked by four militants calling themselves “Commando Martyr Halima” in honour of fellow militant Brigitte Kuhlmann, who had been killed in Operation Entebbe the previous year.

The leader of the hijacker group was Palestinian terrorist Zohair Youssif Akache (23, male), who adopted the alias “Captain Martyr Mahmud”. The other three were Suhaila Sayeh (24, female), a Palestinian, and two Lebanese people, Wabil Harb (23, male) and Hind Alameh (22, female).

Akache (“Mahmud”) angrily burst into the cockpit, brandishing a fully loaded pistol in his hand. He forcibly removed Vietor from the cockpit, sending him to the economy class area to join the passengers and flight attendants, leaving Schumann to take over the flight controls.

As the other three hijack-

ers knocked over food trays, ordering the hostages to put their hands up, Mahmud coerced Captain Schumann to fly east to Larnaca in Cyprus, but was told that the plane had insufficient fuel and would have to land in Rome first.

The route to Mogadishu

The hijacked aircraft changed course at around 14:30, diverting eastward and landed at Fiumicino Airport in Fiumicino, Rome at 15:45 for refuelling.

The hijackers made their first demands, acting in concert with a Red Army Faction group, the Siegfried Hausner Commando, which had kidnapped West German industrialist Hanns Martin Schleyer five weeks earlier: they demanded the release of ten Red Army Faction (RAF) terrorists detained at the JVA Stuttgart-Stammheim prison, plus two Palestinian compatriots held in Turkey, as well as US\$15 million.

The Italian government wanted to rid itself of the problem altogether. The aircraft was refuelled with a full 11 tons of fuel, allowing Mahmud to order that the plane be flown to Larnaca in Cyprus.

The Landshut landed in Larnaca, Cyprus, at 20:28. After about an hour, a local PLO representative arrived at the airport and over the radio tried to persuade Mahmud to release the

hostages.

This only provoked a furious response from Mahmud, who started angrily screaming at him in Arabic until the PLO representative gave up and left. The aircraft was then refuelled and Schumann asked flight control for a routing to Beirut.

He was told that Beirut Airport was blockaded and closed to them and Mahmud suggested that they would fly to Damascus instead. The Landshut took off at 22:50, heading for Beirut, but was refused permission to land there at 23:01. After also being denied landing permission in Damascus at 23:14, Baghdad at 00:13 (14 October), and Kuwait at 00:58, they flew to Bahrain.

Schumann was told by a passing Qantas airliner that Bahrain Airport was also closed to them. Schumann radioed flight control and told them that they had insufficient fuel to fly elsewhere and despite being told again that the airport was closed, he was suddenly given an automatic landing frequency by the flight controller.

The plane finally touched down in Bahrain at 01:52 on 14 October. On arrival, the aircraft was immediately surrounded by armed troops and Mahmud radioed the tower that unless the soldiers were withdrawn, he would shoot the co-pilot.

After a stand-off with the tower, with Mahmud setting a five-minute deadline and holding a loaded pistol to Vietor’s head, the troops were withdrawn. The aircraft was then refuelled and took off for Dubai at 03:24.

Approaching Dubai, the 737 was again denied landing per-

mission. Overflying the Dubai airport in the early light of dawn, the hijackers and pilots saw the runway blocked with military jeeps, trucks and fire engines.

Running short of fuel, Schumann radioed the tower to announce that they were going to land anyway. As they made a low pass over the airport, the vehicles were finally being removed.

At 05:40 local time, the pilots made a smooth touchdown on the airport’s main runway at sunrise. The plane was parked at the parking bay around 05:51, at daybreak.

In Dubai, the terrorists instructed the control tower to send airport crew staffers to empty the toilet tanks, supply food, water, medicine, newspapers, and take away the rubbish.

Captain Schumann was able to communicate the number of hijackers on board, specifying that there were two male and two female hijackers by dropping different types of cigarettes on the tarmac from out of the cockpit window.

The aircraft remained parked on the tarmac stationed at Dubai airport all throughout Saturday 15 October, during which the jetliner experienced technical snags with the electrical generator, air conditioning and auxiliary power unit breaking down.

The hijackers demanded that engineers fix the plane. On the morning of Sunday 16 October, Mahmud threatened to start shooting hostages if the aircraft was not refuelled, and Dubai authorities eventually agreed to refuel the plane.

In the meantime, both Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, the West German minister responsible for handling the hijacking, and Colonel Ulrich Wegener, commander of elite German anti-terrorist squad GSG 9, had arrived in Dubai to try to persuade the government to agree to let GSG 9 commandos into Dubai to storm the aircraft.

However, after permission was granted for GSG 9 commandos to storm the aircraft, SAS and GSG 9 senior operatives insisted on additional combat exercises and dry-runs on an adjacent airstrip. Reports suggest up to 45 hours of training was conducted while in Dubai (over a period of 80 hours).

While Wegener was contemplating his options, the jetliner was on the move again after the hijackers fully refuelled the Landshut plane and the pilots started up the engines. At 12:19 on Sunday 16 October it took off, bound for Salalah and Masirah in Oman, where permission to land was once again denied and both airports were blockaded.

After Riyadh also closed and blockaded its airport runways at 14:50 on 16 October (three days after the hijacking began), a course was set to Aden in South Yemen, at the limit of the plane’s fuel range.

Approaching and overflying Aden, the flight was yet again denied permission to land, this time at Aden International Airport, and both main runways (including the apron) were blocked by military jeeps, tanks and other vehicles. The plane was running dangerously low on fuel, but the Aden airport

authorities adamantly refused to clear the runways, leaving co-pilot Vietor little choice but to make an emergency landing on an unpaved sand strip roughly parallel to (in-between) both runways.

The plane remained largely intact following the ground roll but when the Aden authorities told the hijackers and pilots that they needed to fly away, both pilots were concerned about the aircraft's airworthiness after its rough, hard landing on rugged, rocky and sandy terrain, deeming it unsafe to take off and fly the jetliner again until a thorough engineering inspection had been made.

After the engineers claimed that everything was all right with the airframe, Mahmud consequently allowed Schumann to check the condition of the landing gear and the engines. Both engines had ingested a copious amount of sand and dirt at maximum reverse thrust and were clogged up.

The landing gear had not collapsed, but its structure was weakened and its extension/retraction mechanism was damaged. Schumann did not immediately return to the plane after inspecting it, even after numerous calls by the hijackers threatening to detonate the aircraft because of his departure.

The reasons for his prolonged absence remained unclear for a long time. Only in 2008, as part of a television documentary, was it possible to track down the man who had met Schumann at the airport in Aden: Sheikh Ahmed Mansur, commander of a Yemeni special unit. Mansur testified that the



LANDSHUT: Flight LH 181, a Boeing 737 named Landshut, was en route from Palma de Mallorca to Frankfurt on 13 October 1977 when it was hijacked.

captain, concerned for the lives of his passengers, had demanded that the possibly damaged aircraft be prevented from continuing to fly.

Schumann subsequently boarded the plane to face the wrath of Mahmud, who furiously forced him to kneel on the passenger cabin floor before fatally shooting him in the head, without giving him a chance to explain himself.

The hijacked plane was refuelled at 01:00 on 17 October and at 02:02, flown by co-pilot Vietor, it dangerously and sluggishly took off from Aden on course for the Somali capital of Mogadishu.

On the morning of 17 October at daybreak, around 06:34 local time, the Landshut made an unannounced and textbook landing on the main runway at Mogadishu International Airport in Mogadishu.

The Somali government had initially refused the plane permission to land, but relented when the jet appeared in Soma-

li air space, for fear of endangering the passengers' lives by turning the aircraft away.

The chief hijacker leader Mahmud (Akache) told co-pilot Vietor that he was very impressed by Vietor's impressive flying skills and that consequently he was free to disembark and flee, since the crippled plane was in no state to fly elsewhere. Vietor, however, opted to remain with the 82 passengers and three other crew members on board.

After the twin-engine aircraft was parked in front of the main airport terminal, it was surrounded at a distance by armed Somali troops. Schumann's corpse (which had been stored in a coat closet on board the flight throughout the final leg of the journey) was dumped via the aircraft's right rear emergency evacuation slide onto the tarmac, and whisked away in an ambulance.

During the day, the hijackers asked for food and drugs, which were sent after the Somali gov-

ernment gave its permission; a Somali request that the hijackers release the women and children in exchange for the supplies was rejected.

The hijackers set a 16:00 deadline for the Red Army Faction prisoners to be released, at which time they threatened to blow up the aircraft. The hijackers poured the duty-free spirits over the hostages in preparation for the destruction of the aircraft, which did not eventuate.

The hijackers were then told that the West German government had agreed to release the RAF prisoners and that their transfer to Mogadishu would take several more hours, but this was a lie. The hijackers agreed to extend the deadline to 02:30 the following morning (18 October).

Operation Feuerzauber

Meanwhile, while West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt attempted to negotiate an agreement with Somali President Siad Barre, special envoy Hans-Jürgen Wischnewski and GSG 9 commander Ulrich Wegener arrived at Mogadishu airport from Jeddah in a Lufthansa 707 aircraft co-piloted by Rüdiger von Lutzu.

In West Germany, a team of 30 GSG 9 border guard commandos under deputy commander Major Klaus Blatte had assembled at Hangelar airfield near Bonn, awaiting instructions. The border guard commando force took off from Cologne-Bonn Airport on a Boeing 707 on Monday morning (17 October) en route to Djibouti, within a short flying time of Somalia, while Schmidt

negotiated with the Somalis.

While the team was flying over Ethiopia, an agreement was reached and permission given to land at Mogadishu. The aircraft landed at 20:00 local time with all its lights out to avoid detection by the hijackers.

After four hours, unloading all of their equipment and undertaking the necessary reconnaissance, Wegener and Blatte finalised the assault plan, scheduled to begin at 02:00 local time. They decided to approach from the rear of the aircraft, its blind spot, in six teams using black-painted aluminium ladders to gain access to the aircraft through the escape hatches on the bottom of the fuselage and via the overwing doors.

In the meantime, a fictitious progress report on the journey being taken by the released prisoners was being fed to Mahmud by German representatives in the airport tower. Just after 02:00, Mahmud was told that the plane carrying the prisoners had just departed from Cairo after refuelling and he was asked to provide the conditions of the prisoner/hostage exchange over the radio.

As a small force, the GSG-9 relied on their Somali counterparts to maintain ground defence around the aircraft as well as deception operations.

Several minutes before the rescue, Somali soldiers set off an explosion 60 metres in front of the jet as a diversionary tactic, prompting Akache and two of the other three hijackers to rush to the cockpit to observe what was going on, isolating them from the hos-



Colonel Ulrich Wegener

Federal Border Protection (Bundesgrenzschutz) officer who had served as liaison officer with the West German Interior Ministry at the time of the Munich massacre by the PLO during the 1972 Olympic Games. He was subsequently appointed by the West German government to establish and lead an elite anti-terrorist squad.

Wegener was trained by both the British SAS and the Israeli Sayeret Matkal, which were the only known established anti-terrorist units in the world at the time. He also participated in the rescue of Israeli hostages in Operation Entebbe in 1976.

After his retirement from GSG 9, Wegener worked as a consultant to help establish counter-terrorism units in various foreign countries. He also served on the security advisory council of KÖTTER GmbH & Co. KG Verwaltungsdienstleistungen, a major German provider of security and facility management services. He died on 28 December 2017.

tages in the cabin.

At 02:07 local time, the GSG 9 men silently climbed up their ladders and opened the emergency doors using explosive charges. Wegener, at the head of one group, opened the forward door, and two other groups, led by Sergeant-Major Dieter Fox and Sergeant Joachim Huemmer, stormed the aircraft using ladders to climb up onto the wings and open both overwing emergency doors at the same time.

Shouting in German for the passengers and crew to get on the floor, the men shot all four terrorists, killing Wabil Harb and Hind Alameh and wounding Zohair Akache and Suhaila Sayeh. Akache died of his injuries hours later.

One GSG 9 member was wounded by return fire from the terrorists. Three passengers and a flight attendant were slightly wounded in the crossfire. An American passenger aboard the plane described the rescue: “I saw the door open and a man appears. His face was painted black and he starts shouting in German ‘We’re here to rescue you, get down!’ [*Wir sind hier, um euch zu retten, runter!*] and they started shooting.”

The emergency escape chutes were deployed, and passengers and crew were ordered to quickly evacuate the aircraft. At 02:12 local time, just five minutes after the assault had commenced, the border guard commandos radioed: “Frühlingszeit! Frühlingszeit!” (“Springtime! Springtime!”), which was the code word for the successful completion of the operation.



A few moments later, a radio signal was sent to Chancellor Schmidt in Bonn: “Four opponents down – hostages free – four hostages slightly wounded – one border guard commando slightly wounded”.

The rescuers escorted all 86 passengers to safety, and a few hours later they were all flown to Cologne-Bonn Airport, landing in the early afternoon of Tuesday 18 October and given a hero’s welcome.

Aftermath

News of the rescue of the hostages was followed by the deaths (and alleged suicides) of RAF (Red Army Faction) members Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin and Jan-Carl Raspe at JVA Stuttgart-Stammheim Prison.

RAF member Irmgard Möller also attempted suicide but survived her injuries. On Wednesday 19 October, the body of Hanns-Martin Schleyer, who had been kidnapped by the RAF some five weeks prior to the hijacking, was found in the trunk of a car on a side street in Mulhouse; the RAF had shot him dead upon hearing about the deaths of their imprisoned comrades.

They contacted French newspaper Libération to announce his ‘execution’; a subsequent post-mortem examination indicated that he had been killed the previous day.

After the Landshut crisis, the German government stated it would never again negotiate with terrorists (as it previously had with Lufthansa Flight 649 and 615 hijackers). Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was widely praised among western countries for his decision to storm the aircraft to rescue the hostages, although some criticized the risky action.

West German-Somali relations received a significant boost after the successful operation. Lufthansa henceforth serviced all Somali Airlines planes in West Germany, while Frankfurt became Somali Airlines’ new gateway to Europe.

The West German government, as a sign of gratitude, issued two multi-million dollar loans to the Somali government to assist in the development of the country’s fisheries, agriculture and other sectors.



Bush War Books has probably one of the finest collections of military titles available. Especially on the South African Border War.

Click [here](#) to visit their website.

“War does not determine who is right - only who is left”

Where we stand

Military Despatches began on 1 July 2017 - six years and eight months ago. Since then we have produced 82 monthly editions of the magazine. Yet the time has come to reevaluate the magazine and make a decision on its future.

I've always had a love of history for as long as I could remember. I could never understand why some people dislike history and call it "a dead subject".

One aspect of history that has always fascinated me is military history. My late father taught history and was very passionate about the subject.

As a young boy growing up in Ireland I would often travel with my father across to Europe where we would spend hours visiting museums and famous battle sites.

After we moved to South Africa in the mid 1970's, I joined the South African Defence Force where I spent eight years in the South African Army.

After leaving the SADF I spent more than three decades as a conflict journalist. I had the fortune, or maybe it was misfortune, to experience a lot of wars and conflicts up close and personal. All of this only reinforced my interest in military history.

I am always trying to expand my knowledge of military history and basically anything to do with the military.

I read anything I can lay my hands on and have a vast personal library at home. I also watch any documentaries I can lay my hands on.

Having been a member of the SADF I obviously have always

had a keen interest in South African military history - especially anything related to the 'Border War'.

While it is possible to find a number of publications relating to this period it still feels as if there are large gaps in this part of history.

Many publications tend to focus on specialised units within the SADF. At the other end of the spectrum there are more than enough publications that portray the SADF, and especially conscription, in a negative light.

I always felt that the story of the average troopie was never properly told. While it is always interesting to read about elite soldiers and high-risk military operations, very few people ever got to serve in these units.

I've also read a number of publications that focus on anything and everything negative about the SADF and conscription. Books on how unpopular it was, the negative impact it had on those that underwent conscription, how national service was an apartheid plot, and how people were left suffering from post traumatic stress disorder because a corporal once shouted at them.

I wanted to read the stories that are seldom, if ever, told. Such as the young national service members of the SA Corps of Signals that ran the comcen

at Grootfontein. They handled all the telex messages for the entire operational area. And, more over, they worked a 90 hour week - seven days a week.

Or the story of the troop that spent his time guarding a huge ammo dump in the middle of nowhere. A lot of national servicemen performed duties and tasks that were not glamorous, but that were vital.

In the end I decided to write a book telling the stories of average, and a few not so average, people that had served in the SADF.

It took me just over a year to research and write. I spoke to more than 300 people that had served in the old SADF.

A few of them had served in the permanent force, but the majority were those that had done one or two years of national service.

The book was titled 'Service Rendered'. It was just over 400 pages long, with more than 200 photographs. Naturally I couldn't get anyone to publish it.

It wasn't a book about an elite unit or well known military operation. So that door remained closed. For other publishing houses the book did not portray the SADF in a negative enough light.

Eventually I produced an e-book copy of 'Service Rendered' and have given it away



SERVICE RENDERED: The book that took me more than a year to research and write.

free to anyone that was interested.

Then back in 2017 I had a crazy idea. At one stage I had been lecturing journalism. One of the problems I found was that students battled to get published.

So in 2007 I decided to start a monthly online magazine. The articles in the magazine would be written by students. I was told that I was being stupid because an online magazine would never work.

Five years later, with rising printing and distribution costs, many well established magazines had decided to go the 'online' route.

When I stopped lecturing in 2009 I continued to run the online magazine for another year.

Then in 2017 I had the idea of doing an on-line military magazine. It would be a monthly electronic publication, it would be free to download, read, and distribute. It would consist of a maximum of 48 pages.

In July 2017 the first edition

of Military Despatches went on-line. It consisted of 52 pages and I was hoping that at least 50 people would download and read it.

I was surprised at just how many people were downloading the magazine. By the third issue of the magazine it was being downloaded over 1,000 times.

Within six months it was being downloaded more than 10,000 times and from 42 different countries.

One of the things I hoped to achieve with the magazine was to raise money.

I personally know a number of veterans that are battling. Many of them need medicine that they cannot afford. Some of them do not even get enough to eat. That is the reason why I wanted to raise funds. Imagine being in a position where we could actually help people.

I joined an organisation called Patreon. They are an Internet based organisation that promotes people that are trying to raise money. They promote a project and people can then become patrons of a project.

Patrons can donate anywhere between \$1.00 and \$500 a month to a project. Now I didn't expect anyone to donate \$500 a month. But I was sure that there were a lot of people out there that could afford \$1.00 a month. At the time it worked out to R13, less than the price of a cup of coffee. Even now, it would only cost R20 a month.

In the nearly seven years since the number of readers that have become patrons stands at exactly zero. Not a single person.

Two years ago I started a 'Military Despatches' YouTube Channel. The intent was to upload interesting articles and the odd quiz or two onto the channel.

I promoted the channel in Military Despatches and asked readers to please subscribe to the channel.

Once 1,000 people have subscribed to your channel, YouTube will then place adverts on your videos and you can earn something from them.

With the number of readers that we have, I thought it wouldn't take long to get 1,000 subscribers. After all, it doesn't cost a cent to subscribe, all you have to do is click on the subscribe button. In turn you receive a notification every time a new video is uploaded to the channel.

I uploaded six videos to the channel to begin with and then waited for the subscriptions to stream in.

In two years a grand total of 58 people have subscribed to the channel. Of these subscribers, only two of them are actual readers of Military Despatches. The other 56 are people that happened to view the site, watch a video or two, and then subscribe.

At the current rate of subscription it would only take another 34 years to get to 1,000 subscribers and be able to earn something from the work. I would be 99 then and probably in no condition to do anything but drool.

Most of the readers of Military Despatches served in the military - either the SADF or other armed forces. Over the

years I have asked readers to submit articles to the magazine.

First of all it is interesting to other readers, including myself. Secondly it makes things easier for me, as it means that I will have one fewer article to research and write.

Apart from my regular writers, less than 10 people have ever bothered to submit an article to the magazine.

While on that topic, during the past nearly seven years I have done my utmost to try and promote other military organisations and events - all free of charge. The majority of them have not even had the common courtesy of thanking us, or even acknowledging us.

Then again, I shouldn't be surprised. Fewer than 20 readers have ever bothered to contact us or comment about the magazine.

There are a few people that send an email every month acknowledging receipt of the magazine, or thanking us. One or two people actually comment on the magazine.

Yet from the vast majority there is nothing but silence. If it wasn't for the fact that I know how many times the magazine is downloaded every month, I would swear that no-one actually reads it.

The thing is that it takes quite a bit of time and effort to put the magazine together each month and ensure that it is available on the 1st day of the month. In fact in 81 issues, only one edition did not go out on the 1st of the month. Due to a computer malfunction, the magazine only went out on the 2nd of that month.

The smallest edition of the magazine was the first issue, and that was 52 pages.

The largest issue was Volume 51 in September 2021. That issue was 114 pages. A total of 12 issues have been more than 100 pages in size.

Now I know that Military Despatches is not the best on-line military publication available. But it is consistent and it is free.

I've long since given up on any hope of Military Despatches ever raising any funds. What has kept me going is my passion for military history and my enthusiasm in trying to bring out an on-line military magazine each month,

But passion and enthusiasm can only take you so far. I've reached the stage where I am asking myself what am I doing, why am I doing it, and what am I hoping to achieve?

For nearly seven years my life has revolved around Military Despatches. Making sure that it is ready by the first of each month. Planning what articles will be going in the magazine every month. Having to research and write most of those articles myself. Having to do the physical lay-out of the magazine.

I have often turned down assignments that would have paid me decent money, because it would mean that I would be away and be unable to bring out military despatches by deadline.

There comes a time when one has to face up to reality. I suspect that if I stopped doing Military Despatches each month, the vast majority of those that



FIRST EDITION: The cover of the first edition of Military Despatches back in 2017.

receive the magazine would even realise that it is no longer there.

Over the years we've published a few articles that I have been proud of. In fact we published an article saying that Russia would invade Ukraine - two weeks before it actually happened.

I do feel, however, that it is time for me to wake up and smell the coffee. The thing about beating your head against a wall is that it feels so damn good when you stop.

To that end I will be bringing out this issue of Military Despatches (Vol 82), and will do an issue in May. The June 2024 issue of Military Despatches (Vol 84) will be the final issue. It will then make it seven years that Military Despatches was published.

I think it would be the right time to sound the Last Post.



Military Acronyms

Do you know your HALO from your HAHO? Were you GV enough to stay out of DB? And did you prefer an FN to an AK? This month we're looking at military acronyms. See how many of these you get right. Answers on page 80.

1. What does NATO stand for?
2. The AK-47 is one of the most popular weapons of all time. What does the AK stand for?
3. In the SADF the term 'GV' was used to describe someone who was very enthusiastic. What did 'GV' stand for?
4. The Casspir was an armoured personnel carrier originally developed for and used by the South African Police and later used by the SADF. What did Casspir stand for?
5. In parachuting terms, what does HALO stand for?
6. The MP 40 was a submachine gun used by the Germans in World War II. What did the MP stand for?
7. PLAN was the military wing of SWAPO. What did PLAN stand for?
8. During the Cold War, the main security agency for the Soviet Union was the KGB. What did KGB stand for?
9. The South African R1 rifle was designed on the Belgian FN rifle. What did FN stand for?
10. The national intelligence agency of Israel is the Mossad. What does Mossad stand for?
11. The *Waffen SS* was the armed wing of the Nazi SS organisation. What did SS stand for?
12. In the SADF, DB was not a place where you wanted to spend any time. What did 'DB' stand for?
13. During World War II the ME 109 fighter aircraft that was the backbone of the Luftwaffe's fighter force. What did 'ME' stand for?
14. The PIAT Mk I was a British man-portable anti-tank weapon developed during the Second World War. What did PIAT stand for?
15. The RPG-7 is a Russian shoulder-launched anti-tank weapon. What does RPG stand for?
16. The M1918 BAR was an American weapon that saw action from World War I to the Vietnam War. What did BAR stand for?
17. With its distinctive sound and high rate of fire, the RPD was a popular Russian light machine gun. What did RPD stand for?
18. Flak is a common term for anti-aircraft fire. Where does the word Flak come from?
19. The 7.5 cm Pak 40 was a German 75 millimetre anti-tank gun used in World War II. What did Pak stand for?
20. In the SADF what did PF and CF stand for?



Meet and Greet

Imagine arriving on your first day in the military. You don't know anybody, everything seems strange or even hostile, and you know that it probably won't get any better any time soon. It's time to start meeting the people you're going to be spending time with.

No matter where you reported for national service most conscripts followed a similar procedure.

The train trip may have been exciting or apprehensive, depending on your frame of mind, but the fun really started when you arrived at the station at the end of the trip.

Vehicles would be waiting to transport you to the camp and few people don't have memories of that first ride in a military vehicle.

Glynn (18) was called up to 1 SAI in Bloemfontein and he can still recall that first trip.

We arrived at Bloemfontein station at about seven in the morning. There was a line of Bedford trucks waiting to take us to the camp.

The trucks were driven by national servicemen just like us, but with one major exception. These guys were 'ou manne'.

In other words they had already completed nearly three-quarters of their national service.

We were piled into the back of the Bedfords and the drivers then set off to camp. It seemed that our driver had two objectives.

First of all was to see how quickly he could get back to the camp, and secondly to see how many of our bones he could break.

When he pulled away, he

would stand on both the clutch and the accelerator at the same time. Then he would take his foot of the clutch, causing the truck to jerk violently forward.

When he had to stop, and there were numerous traffic lights and stop streets along the way, he would wait until the last second before slamming on the brakes.

All of this caused much amusement to the driver and even more discomfort to those of us in the back of the truck. We were thrown all over the show.

It was so bad that some of the suitcases actually popped open and the contents were scattered all over the back of the truck. By the time we arrived at the camp it looked as if someone had filled the back of the truck with people, clothes and baggage and then stirred it all up.

I thought that our driver was a lunatic but I later learnt that all of the drivers had given their passengers the same treatment.

It was known as a 'rofie ride' and it was something of a tradition.

Much later on I also became a driver and when I went to pick up the next intake at the station, I made sure that they received the same treatment as I had.

Meet the corporals

On arrival at the camp the recruits would make their first real acquaintance with the SADF.

Of course they would also meet their corporals for the first time.

Most of the basic training of recruits was carried out by corporals. While some of the corporals were permanent force members, the vast majority were national servicemen.

They had completed their basic training and advanced individual training. Then they had gone through a Junior Leaders course and finally a Drill and Musketry Instructor's course.

For the next nine weeks of basic training the corporal would become the recruit's mother and father. He would be with them from morning to night.

Allan (18) did his national service at 4 South African Infantry Battalion in Middelburg. This is what he had to say about the corporals.

With the exception of a few PF guys, all of the corporals that took us for basics were national servicemen, just like us. Yet most of them were real bastards.

They made our lives a misery and some of them seemed to take great delight in doing so. The only difference between them and us was the fact that they had been in the army longer. Some of them had been in our position not that long ago.

People who never did national service have no idea of just how much power a corporal

had. We were divided up into squads and each squad, or section, had a corporal in charge.

A number of squads made up a platoon and each platoon had a platoon commander and a platoon sergeant. A number of platoons made up a company and each company had a company commander and a company sergeant major.

Yet we had little contact with platoon sergeants, company sergeant majors or company commanders.

The corporal was the person we dealt with every day. They would be there when we opened our eyes in the morning and would often be there when we finally went to sleep at night. It was the corporal who had the power to chase you around or give you punishment.

It was that same corporal who had the power to give you a weekend pass or cancel it. You didn't get on the wrong side of your corporal. If he took a dislike to you then you were deep in the shit. These corporals were usually only a year older than us, if that, but when they said jump you just asked how high.

I don't know about the other guys in my squad, but our corporal scared the shit out of me. I know that many of the guys would mutter and mumble about how they would like to meet the corporal on a dark night when they were out of base. Yet most of it was just big talk. I reckon that they were just as scared of the corporal as I was.

Sometimes your corporal could even turn out to be someone you were at school with.

This was the case with Mike (18) when he was called up.

When I started high school we had this bloke in our class by the name of Guy. He was this skinny little kid that never stood up for himself. So naturally everyone bullied the crap out of him. I must confess that I was one of the worst culprits.

From standard six to standard eight I made his life at school sheer hell. I would push him around, tease him, call him names and often slap him around just for the fun of it.

His mom used to give him money every day to buy something from the tuck shop. I would make him buy me something with the money in return for me not beating him up.

At the end of standard eight he left school to join the permanent force and that was the last I saw of Guy. Until I was called up, that is.

I did my national service at 5 SAI in Ladysmith. Imagine my surprise and horror when I was put into a squad only to discover that Guy was my basic training corporal. And to make matters worse, Guy was no longer this skinny little kid.

When Guy had joined the army he had started doing body building and two years later he was built like the proverbial brick shit house. I was hoping that maybe he wouldn't remember me. Fat chance of that. He came straight up to me stuck his face right up against mine.

"Hi Mike," he said with an evil smile. "Remember me?"

That was more than 40 years ago and I can still remember how scared I felt. For three

years I had bullied him and now the shoe was on the other foot.

That first night in camp I seriously considered going AWOL, hitching home, and demanding that my parents send me overseas where the army couldn't get at me.

The strange thing is that Guy turned out to be a hell of a decent person. He was tough on us, make no mistake about that. But he was tough on everyone, not just me. On my second day there he took me one side and spoke to me.

"Listen Mike," he told me, "at high school you were a real prick. But the past is the past and I have no hard feelings. So just keep your nose clean and you'll get no shit from me."

If I learnt one thing in the army it was that whatever you do in life will come back to you at some stage. If Guy had been vindictive he could have made my life a living hell.

The corporals did have a lot of power and there is no denying that. They were responsible for their section or squad and it was their job to ensure that their troops came up to the required standards.

Here is a story I heard from a few different sources, so it's probably another urban legend. I decided to include it because it shows just how much power a corporal had and how much fear they invoked.

A base was expecting a visit from one of the generals. Naturally they wanted to make a good impression on the general and the officer commanding had told the guard commander, a corporal, that he was to be in-

formed the minute the general arrived at the main gate.

The corporal made numerous visits to the gate and kept asking the guard, a national serviceman, if the general had arrived.

"You radio through to the guard room the minute the general arrives," the corporal told him, more than once. The corporal was clearly agitated about the matter.

Finally a vehicle arrived at the gate and the troop marched up to it and was promptly informed by the driver that the general was in the car. The troop stuck his head in the window, fixed the general with a glare and said; "You're in deep shit pal, the corporal has been looking for you."

Officially a corporal had command of his section from after breakfast in the morning until after supper in the evening. After that the corporal was supposed to leave his troops alone.

Of course this was the official policy but it seldom happened in reality. Pedro (19) was a rifleman at 6 South African Infantry Battalion in Grahamstown. He could testify to the fact that corporals would seldom leave their troops alone.

Our corporal was a PF guy and he was a real piss cat. Unless we had night training, we were supposed to be left alone after supper. We were supposed to use this time to prepare for inspection the following morning.

On most nights we would work until midnight getting the bungalow and our personal kit

ready for inspection. We would have to wash our clothes, iron them, polish boots, and clean our rifles and equipment.

Then we had to make sure that the bungalow was clean. This included cleaning the toilets and showers, sweeping and polishing the floors, and a lot of other crap.

As if this wasn't enough, our corporal would go out drinking with his mates in the evening. He would roll back in at about 2am in the morning and he would be in fine form. He would wake us up and tell us that he was going to do a pre-inspection.

Then he would proceed to totally destroy our clean bungalow. He would tip beds over, throw clothes on the floor and grind his boots on them. One night he even pissed on a guy's bed. I'm not joking, he actually stood next to the guy's bed and pissed all over it. Then he would stagger off to bed and pass out.

It would take us about two hours to get everything clean and ready for inspection. How we hated him. Yet the one positive thing about it was that it made all of us in the section stand together. We had a common purpose, our hate for the corporal.

Looking back at it now I sometimes wonder if that wasn't why he did it. I somehow doubt it though. I think he was just a piss cat and couldn't help himself.

It is an old adage that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. This was unfortunately the case with many of the corporals that were

involved in training conscripts.

Some of them were particularly brutal in their methods and it is a sad fact that more than one recruit died during basic training as a direct result of physical abuse from the instructors.

While the instructors were not officially permitted to physically or mentally abuse the troops, those in authority often looked the other way. This was particularly the case during the '70s and early '80s. Towards the mid-1980s the SADF became far stricter with this and instructors who abused troops would find themselves in trouble.

Kim (18) was a recruit at 2 Special Services Battalion in Zeerust in 1975. He told me that his basic training corporal was a large fellow who was quick with his hands.

During our first week in camp our corporal made us stand at attention on our trommels. These were situated at the foot of each bed. The corporal walked up to the first guy in the row.

"Are you tough?" asked the corporal. The guy nodded his head and the corporal punched him in the stomach. The guy collapsed into a heap. "Well you don't look so tough to me," said the corporal.

He then walked to the next bed.

"Are you tough?" he asked again. This poor guy took one look at the bloke groaning on the bed next to him.

"No corporal," he stammered, "I'm not tough."

"Well, I'll have to toughen you up then," smiled the corporal, punching him in the stom-

ach. Each one of us received a good punch in the guts that night.

Recently I was telling my 17-year old nephew and some of his friends about my experiences in the army. He told me that there was no way he would have allowed any corporal to punch him.

"I would have punched him back," my nephew told me. "There is no way I would have let him push me around like that."

I just smiled at my nephew and said nothing. For the first time in my life I realised that I'm getting old and that my nephew is from another generation.

The youngsters of today don't even get disciplined at school anymore. When I was at school even the teachers were allowed to cane you. When we went into the army most of us already had that culture of respect for those in authority.

My corporal scared the shit out of me and I know that the rest of the guys in my platoon felt the same way. No matter how tough they thought they were. A corporal was second only to God, and even that was debatable.

The youngsters of today who don't have to do national service have no idea of what it was like. A corporal had so much power over your life and the last thing you wanted to do was get on the wrong side of him.

Dave (18) did his national service at the Army Gymnasium in Heidelberg during the mid-70's. He remembers an incident where a national service-

man died as a result of basic training.

One afternoon about half-way through basic some guy's from another company were getting an opfok from the corporals. There was this wooded area between the parade ground and the shooting ranges and we often used to get lectures there. It was also a favourite spot for the corporals to take you for an oppie

The next thing we see this army ambulance come screaming across the parade ground towards this wooded area. Later on we heard that a troop had died.

To this day I still do not know what actually happened. There were all sorts of rumours flying around. One story was that some troops were being given punishment drill and this guy collapsed because of heat exhaustion and later died.

Another story was that four corporals had beaten this guy to death. All I knew for sure was that a young man, he was 18, had died a senseless death.

Four corporals, one PF and three national servicemen, were arrested pending a board of inquiry. I can't even remember what happened to those four corporals. I'm not sure if they were given a court martial or if it even went that far.

Now meet your squad mates

Having made the acquaintance of your corporal, it was now time to cast your eyes around at the other members of your section or squad.

It was unlikely that you would know anyone in your section

and more often than not they were total strangers. Yet for at least the next nine weeks these would be the people that you would be spending every minute of your day and night with.

It was also likely that the members of your section would come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Paul (19) was a corporal with 3 South African Infantry Battalion and he took an intake for basic training.

I remember a song that my dad would sometimes sing. It was called 'Bless Them All' and one of the lines went 'the long and the short and the tall.'

Well as a basic training instructor I saw the long and the short and the tall. I also saw the fat and the thin and the downright ugly.

On one of the intakes we had a guy who was just over seven feet tall. And he was only 18. Not only was this guy tall, he was also huge. Most tall guys that I have seen are normally fairly thin. This guy was almost as wide as he was tall, and none of it was fat.

He took a size 14 or 15 boot and we had to order footwear especially for him. His hands were massive. If he made a fist and held it in front of your face, it would cover your entire face. He was also exceptionally strong, hell he was strong.

Yet he was also soft-spoken and gentle. I never once saw him get angry or lose his temper. I think that he realised that with his strength and size he just couldn't afford to lose his rag.

I also remember these two guys that were in another squad.

One of them, and if I recall his name was Watson, was the largest guy I have ever seen. If you had painted him blue he would have looked like a beach ball.

I'm serious man, he was completely round. He weighed over 200 kilograms. We couldn't find any uniforms to fit him and for the first two weeks of basics he had to dress in his civvie clothes while they made some uniforms for him.

There was another guy in the same squad who looked like a human skeleton. I once saw this movie about the concentration camps in World War Two and this guy looked exactly like that. This guy was just skin and bones. If he stood sideways and stuck out his tongue he looked like a zip.

Our company sergeant major was a bit of a wag and he had this really dark sense of humour. He gave these two guys a hell of a time.

"You," he would say to the thin guy. "You look like you've been through a famine." Then he would point to Watson and say, "And you look like you caused it."

I also remember this one chap named Mike. When I saw him getting off the train at the station I thought that someone's little brother had climbed on the train by mistake. He looked no older than twelve.

He was a short little guy with a baby face and if you had dressed him in a primary school uniform no one would have given him a second glance. Our company sergeant major took one look at him and shook his head.

"Does your mother know

where you are sonny?" the sergeant major asked. Yet this guy was 18 years old.

The best that I remember though was a guy who was given the nickname 'Beast'. Jeez but he was ugly. He was about five feet four, had a huge forehead that stuck out, a small flat nose, and he was almost completely covered in hair.

Our sergeant major was beside himself when he saw 'Beast' for the first time.

"Corporal," he said to me, pointing at Beast, "has anyone heard that thing speak yet? We must contact National Geographic, I think we've discovered the missing link."

Yet Beast turned out to be quite an intelligent and likeable character. I definitely saw the long and the short and the tall during my national service."

Tony (18) was called up to 4 South African Infantry Battalion in Middelburg. He also saw some odd characters on his first day in the SADF.

You used to get some real characters arriving for national service. From boys straight from the farm to street-wise shysters from the big cities, you would get them all.

One of the guys in my section was from a farm in the Eastern Transvaal somewhere. I can't remember his surname, but his first name was Jannie.

When he was issued with his army boots they were the first pair of shoes that he had ever owned. Even when he arrived for his national service he was barefoot.

He was a hell of a likeable

bloke though, very well mannered and respectful. No matter what the corporals did to him he would never complain or get upset.

He was a bit slow when it came to learning new things, but once he picked it up, it stuck in his head. Everything went fine until we were six weeks into basic training.

Our corporal arrived the one morning to do inspection in the bungalow and found Jannie sitting on his bed with his bags all neatly packed.

"And now?" the corporal blasted him. "What the hell do you thing is going on now?" Jannie, as usual, was very polite about it.

"No corporal," he explained in Afrikaans, "my pa will come and fetch me today."

"What crap are you talking now? What do you mean your pa will come and fetch you? Are you mad?"

You could see that the corporal was not in the least bit amused. Jannie explained that it was now some special time on the farm. I can't remember if it was time to harvest or to plough, but he was adamant that his father was going to come and fetch him that day because he had to help on the farm.

I really thought that he had gone a bit mad, but sure enough that morning his father arrived from the farm in his bakkie (pick-up truck).

I later heard from one of the guys who worked as a clerk in the adjutant's office that there was a hell of a scene between the adjutant and this guy's father.

The adj was quite nice about

it at first. He invited Jannie's father into his office and gave him some coffee. Then he tried to explain that unfortunately his son couldn't go anywhere just yet because he still had about 22 months of his national service to do.

The father was upset at first, and later became very angry. He told the adj that he hadn't minded letting his boy go when the army sent him his papers because he wasn't busy on the farm at the time. But now it was time for work on the farm and his son must come back with him.

Eventually the adj had to have him thrown out of his office. The father stormed off muttering and cursing, telling the adj that when the army sent papers for his two younger sons, there was no way he was allowing them to even come. As I said, you got all types in national service."

I'm coming out

For Martin (18) national service was also a life-changing experience. But for different reasons.

I knew from the time I was about 14 years old that I was different to the other guys. Yet it was only when I was in matric that I finally admitted, to myself, that I was gay.

There was no way I was going to tell my parents or anyone else about it. I must also confess that I didn't feel guilty or bad about it in the least. I was gay and I accepted it. I was a bit worried about how others would take to the news.

I was called up in January

1978 to Personnel Service School in Pretoria. I was in a bungalow with about 23 other guys and on the first night everyone was introducing themselves and saying where they were from. I still don't know what possessed me but I decided that this was the perfect opportunity to come out.

"Hi, my name is Martin, I'm from Cape Town and I may as well let you all know up front that I'm gay," I said.

"Yeah, and I'm Tony from Jo'Burg and I'm also gay," another guy in the group said.

I was both pleased and surprised to find another sister in our group. Most of the guys took it well, but I could see that one or two of them were not all that happy.

"I didn't know they allowed bloody moffies in the army," one guy said.

Then this large Afrikaans guy stood up. And when I say large, I mean huge. He was about six foot two and all muscle. His name was Hannes and he had played first team lock for his school.

"I'm also a bloody moffie," he said in a deep voice. "Do any of you have a problem with that?"

Naturally no-one had the slightest problem. Hannes' size made sure of that.

Hannes, Tony and I became the best of friends. After basics and training we were all posted to Defence Headquarters where we worked in the registry office. We had a total ball during our two years.

That was 40 odd years ago. Since then Hannes moved to Australia, I still live in Cape

Town and Tony is still in Jo'Burg. The three of us get together in Cape Town for a week once a year and we've never missed a year.

Harry was 18 when he reported for national service. He was from Durban and did his basic training at the Army Gymnasium in Heidelberg - 600km from where he lived.

When I arrived in Heidelberg I knew no-one. I was the only person in my squad that was from Durban.

I soon made friends with a guy named Robert. He was from Johannesburg. When we had visitors day, his parents drove through from Jo'burg. My own parents didn't make the trip. It was too far to travel 600km there and 600km back just for the day.

Rob invited me to join him. His parents had packed a picnic basket. Rob's parents were really nice, but the person that really caught my attention was his 16 year old sister, Kate.

On our first weekend pass Rob asked if I wanted to come and spend the weekend at his place. Of course I said yes. I really wanted to meet his sister again.

A year after I finished my national service I was the best man at Rob's wedding. A year later Rob returned the favour and was the best man at my wedding when I married his younger sister.

If it wasn't for national service I would never have met Rob, we would never have become friends, and I would never have married his sister.

Tank Destroyers (Part Three)

Last month we looked at American tank destroyers of World War II. In this third part we will examine the tank destroyers of the British Army.

In the first part of this article, we looked at German tank destroyers. Last month we looked at the Americans. This month we will be looking at the British.

The strange thing is that the British never claimed to have a tank destroyer. What they did have, however, was self-pro-

pelled artillery. They were self-propelled guns, usually based on a tank chassis, which were normally used for long-range indirect bombardment support on the battlefield.

These self-propelled guns were even operated by the Royal Artillery and not by the Armoured Corps.

In contrast to American doctrine, mobile anti-tank weapons were also considered self-propelled guns and were similarly operated by the Royal Artillery.

The three main SP guns used by the British were the Bishop, the Deacon, and the Archer.

Bishop

The Bishop, formal designation Ordnance QF 25-pdr on Carrier Valentine 25-pdr Mk 1, was a British self-propelled gun vehicle based on the Valentine tank and armed with the QF 25-pounder gun-howitzer, which could fire an 87.6 mm 11.5 kg HE shell or an armour-piercing shell.

A result of a rushed attempt to create a self-propelled gun, the vehicle had numerous problems, was produced in limited numbers and was soon replaced by better designs.

The vehicle was based on the Valentine II hull, with the turret replaced by a fixed boxy superstructure with large rear doors. It was nicknamed the Bishop for its high mitre-like superstructure.

The Bishop first saw action during the Second Battle of El Alamein in North Africa and remained in service during the early part of the Italian Campaign. Due to its limitations and the Valentine's characteristic slow speed, the Bishop was poorly

received. The Bishop was replaced by the M7 Priest (105 mm) and Sexton (25-pounder) when those became available in sufficient numbers and surviving Bishops were diverted for training in self-propelled gun tactics.

Specifications

- Weight: 17.5 t
- Length: 5.64 metres
- Width: 2.27 metres
- Height: 3.0 metres
- Crew: 4 (Commander, gun-

- ner, loader, driver)
- Armour: 8–60 mm
- Main armament: QF 25 pounder gun-howitzer
- Secondary armament: Bren light machine gun
- Engine: AEC A190 diesel
- 131 hp (98 kW)
- Operational range: 145 km
- Maximum speed: 24 km/h



Deacon

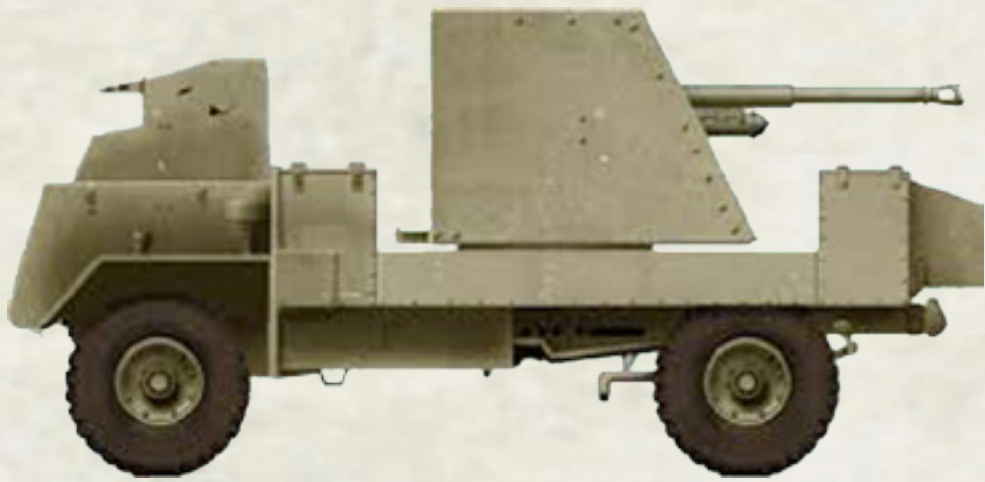
The AEC Mk I Gun Carrier, known as Deacon, was a British armoured fighting vehicle of the Second World War.

It was an attempt to make the QF 6 pounder anti-tank gun into a self-propelled artillery piece. It was employed only during the North African Campaign from 1942 to 1943.

The Deacon was developed in 1942 to provide British Army units in North Africa with a mobile anti-tank weapon.

The Deacon was used against German armoured vehicles in North Africa, an environment in which wheeled vehicles were as manoeuvrable as tanks.

They are credited with action at El Hamma, where the 76th (Royal Welch Fusiliers) An-



ti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery, was the victor in a battle against a German force that included Panzer III tanks.

Specifications

- Weight: 11,986 kg
- Length: 6.39 metres
- Width: 2.36 metres
- Height: 3.82 metres
- Crew: 5

- Armour: 6–20 mm
- Main armament: QF 6 pounder (57 mm)
- Secondary armament: None
- Engine: AEC A173 7.7L 6-cyl diesel 95 hp (71 kW)
- Operational range: 280 km
- Maximum speed: 30 km/h

Archer

The Self Propelled 17pdr, Valentine, Mk I, Archer was a British tank destroyer of the Second World War based on the Valentine infantry tank chassis fitted with an Ordnance QF 17 pounder gun.

Designed and manufactured by Vickers-Armstrongs, 655 were produced between March 1943 and May 1945. It was used in north-west Europe and Italy during the war; post-war, it served with the Egyptian Army. This vehicle was unusual in that its gun faced the rear of the chassis instead of the front. Under military doctrines prevalent in Commonwealth armies at the time, vehicles such as the Archer were “self-propelled anti-tank guns”



Specifications

- Weight: 15 tonnes
- Length: 6.7 metres
- Width: 2.76 metres
- Height: 2.25 metres
- Crew: 4 (Commander, gunner, loader, driver)
- Armour: 14–60 mm
- Main armament: QF 6

- pounder (57 mm)
- Secondary armament: Bren light machine gun
- Engine: GMC 6-71 6-cylinder diesel
- 192 bhp
- Operational range: 230 km
- Maximum speed: 32 km/h

Surrender! Forget about it.

On given an ultimatum to surrender, some responses have been rather surprising to say the least. In this article we look at some of them.

When I was in my late teens, many years ago, I had a tee-shirt with a slogan on it that I really enjoyed.

It featured an eagle swooping down on a mouse. The mouse was sitting on its hind legs with its right paw in the air with the middle finger extended. The slogan read, "The last great act of defiance."

When faced with overwhelming odds and greatly outnumbered and given the ultimatum to surrender, the logical thing to do would be exactly that - surrender.

The following people, however, did not follow the rules. When given an ultimatum to surrender, they had other ideas.

The Spartans

Many people will have seen the film *300* where a mere 300 Spartans, wearing little more than tight little Speedo swimsuits, held out against hordes of invading Persians.

While the movie was a bit over the top, it was based on a real battle - the Battle of Thermopylae.

The battle took place during the Greco-Persian Wars, which were ultimately little more than a grudge match between the ancient Greeks and the kings of the Persian Empire.

The Persian kings were Xerxes the Great, and his subsequent successor Artaxerxes I. I always wonder if Artaxerxes I was also known as Artaxerxes the not as

great?

During the First Greco-Persian War the Greek victory at the Battle of Marathon put a spoke in the Persian's wheels and brought the war to a close.

King Xerxes I was not all that impressed with the defeat and vowed to overthrow and destroy Greece. He amassed an invasion force which, according to the 'Father of History', Herodotus, was the largest ever to have walked the earth. He estimated the Persian army to measure well over one million men.

In order to buy the Greek army some time, a contingent of 300 Spartan troops gathered in the narrow coastal path of Thermopylae (The Hot Gates).

The Persian generals ordered them to lay down their arms. The Spartans' reply was "Come and take them!"

And make no mistake, the Persian army did exactly that. The thing is that it took them more than three days to achieve. The Spartans achieved their objective of buying time for the Greek army.

The Spartans were destroyed to the last man. A commemorative epitaph engraved on a plaque marks the spot where the last of the Spartans perished; it reads "Go tell the Spartans, thou who passest by, that here, obedient to their laws, we lie..."

Inspired by the courage of the Spartans, the Greeks united and successfully drove the Persians

out of the nation, winning the second Greco-Persian War in one of the greatest military upsets of all time.

Yet while "Come and take them" was a great response to a demand to surrender, the Spartans really outdid themselves over a century later.

Once again the Spartans found themselves threatened and imposed upon by the expansion of empire. This was in the mid 300s B.C. when the Macedonian Kingdom under Phillip II, predecessor of Alexander the Great, approached the heavily defended city of Lacedaemonia.

The Macedonian's warned that if the Laconians chose to resist, all inhabitants of the city would be slain if the Spartans were defeated.

The Spartan's replied with a single word: "If...."

Commander John Paul Jones

Often referred to as the "Father of the United States Navy",



DEFIANCE: The slogan on a tee-shirt that inspired this article.

John Paul Jones is perhaps best remembered for his actions during a scrap between the Continental Navy and the British Royal Navy during the American Revolutionary War.

Jones was a mere 13 years old when he began his career at sea. He served on private merchant vessels before volunteering for the Continental Navy in 1775.

Jones distinguished himself in maritime military service and, as a result, was awarded command of the USS Bonhomme Richard, a rebuilt French merchant cargo ship gifted to the Continental Navy by Jacques Donatien LeRay.

On 23 September 1779, Jones ran into two escorts of the Baltic merchant fleet, the HMS Serapis and the Countess of Scarborough.

Logic dictates that the wise thing for Jones do have done was cut and run. Instead he decided to engage both British vessels.

HMS Serapis was armed with 44 guns, while the Countess of Scarborough had 22 guns. The USS Bonhomme Richard had 42 guns.

Not long after the battle began, the USS Bonhomme Richard was badly damaged. The captain of the HMS Serapis instructed Jones to surrender. Jones replied, "I have not yet begun to fight!"

And then, true to his word, Jones did begin to fight. Mounting a furious counterattack, the listing and heavily damaged USS Bonhomme Richard defeated and captured both enemy vessels in a surprising victory.

The USS Bonhomme Richard sank the following day, and

Jones took command of the captured HMS Serapis. The victory not only enhanced Jones' reputation, it stunned the British Royal Navy.

Ioannis Metaxas

To say that Ioannis Metaxas was a controversial figure in Greek political history would be putting it mildly.

His tenure as Prime Minister of Greece was marred with authoritarianism and elements of a fascist, strongman regime.

A former soldier, Metaxas was elected Prime Minister in 1936. For the first four months he toed the line and complied with Greek Constitutional Law.

It didn't last long and he soon began to abuse his power as he observed the rise of fascism in both Italy and Germany. Whatever Adolf and Benito could do, he could do just as well.

Yet his most famous moment came during the early years of World War II, towards the very end of his career.

As the German Wehrmacht blitzkrieged their way across Europe, it soon became clear that the Nazi war machine was unstoppable.

The Germans had already taken Luxembourg, France, Holland, and most of Belgium by the time Italian forces under the command of Benito Mussolini, ally of the German state, arrived on the doorstep of Greece.

On 28 October, 1940, Italian ambassador to Greece Emanuele Grazzi demanded unconditional Greek surrender and total cooperation with Axis occupation. Metaxas gave a clear and simple answer - "No!"

The Italians crossed the bor-

der and attacked Greece. This initiated the Greco-Italian War and Greece's brief participation in World War II.

That same day Greek citizens poured into the streets shouting *Ohi* (No), in open defiance of the Italian invasion.

It all ended with a decisive Axis victory, with Athens being captured on 27 April, 1941, and the Battle of Greece ending on 30 April, 1941.

To this day 28 October is observed in Greece as *Epeteios tou "Ohi"* ("No" Day).

Maor Digby Tatham-Warter

The following incident may or may not have taken place. But it's worth a look at.

In a scene from the epic film *A Bridge Too Far* Lt Col John Frost and Major Harry Carlyle of the British Parachute Regiment watch as an SS *panzer* officer approaches their position during a lull in the Battle of Arnhem. The SS officer is under a white flag.

"Rather interesting development, sir," says Major Carlyle to Lt Col Frost. He then addressed the German. "That's far enough! We can hear you from there!"

"My general says there is no point in continuing this fighting! He wishes to discuss terms of a surrender!" shouts the SS officer.

"Shall I answer him, sir?" Carlyle asks Frost.

"Tell him to go to hell," says Frost.

"We haven't the proper facilities to take you all prisoner! Sorry!" Carlyle shouts to the SS officer.

"What?" says the SS officer,

looking very confused.

“We’d like to, but we can’t accept your surrender! Was there anything else?” shouts Carlyle.

The German walks off shaking his head.

“Well, that’s that,” says Frost.

The German officers returns to General Wilhelm Bittrich, commander of the 2nd SS Panzer Corps.

“They rejected our surrender offer. What are your orders, Herr General?” he tells the general.

“Flatten Arnhem,” General Bittrich says.

Now while this makes a great scene for the movie, there is debate as to whether this incident really occurred as it was portrayed in the film.

It is a fact that General Bittrich did give the British an ultimatum to surrender at Arnhem.

What makes the dialogue above seem authentic was that the character in the film, Major Harry Carlyle, was based on the real life Major Allison Digby Tatham-Warter.

Better known as Digby Tatham-Warter, or simply Digby, he was a legendary figure in the Parachute Regiment.

He always had an umbrella with him which he carried into battle. When asked why, he said that he had trouble remembering passwords and felt that anyone who saw him with it would think that “only a bloody fool of an Englishman” would carry an umbrella into battle.

During Operation Market Garden he was part of A Company of the British Parachute Regiment. They were dropped kilometres away from Arn-

hem Bridge, their intended drop zone. To reach the bridge they had to go through Arnhem where the streets were blocked by German forces.

Digby led his men through back gardens of nearby houses, avoiding the Germans. They travelled nearly 13 kilometres in seven hours while also taking 150 German soldiers, including members of the SS, prisoner.

During the battle, Digby wore his red beret instead of a helmet and waved his umbrella while walking about the defences despite heavy mortar fire.

When the Germans started using tanks to cross the bridge, Digby led a bayonet charge against them wearing a bowler hat. He later disabled a German armoured car with his umbrella, incapacitating the driver by shoving the umbrella through the car’s observational slit and poking the driver in the eye.

When the Regiment Padre was pinned down by enemy fire, Digby walked over, opened the umbrella as if to give him cover from the fire, and calmly escorted the padre to safety.

Injured by shrapnel during the Battle of Arnhem, Digby was captured. Because of his injury, Digby was sent to St. Elizabeth’s Hospital but escaped out of a window with his second in command Captain Tony Frank.

Having made contact with the Dutch Resistance, Digby was given a bicycle and a fake Dutch identity card that allowed him to pose as Peter Jensen, a deaf-mute son of a lawyer.

Digby used the bicycle to visit fellow soldiers in hiding. At one stage during his travels he helped push a German staff car



LEGEND: Major Allison Digby Tatham-Warter, British Parachute Regiment.

out of a ditch.

He managed to gather 150 escaped British soldiers and led them towards the front line. Once there he used a torch to flash a V for Victory sign.

Members of XXX Corps then ferried them across the river. Upon return to the United Kingdom, Digby was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

So considering the type of character that Digby Tatham-Warter was, it would not have been unusual for him to give the type of answer depicted in the film.

Brigadier General Anthony Clement McAuliffe

During the winter of late 1944 things were not looking too promising for the Germans.

Since the D-Day landings in June 1944 in Normandy, the Allies had advanced across the Rhine River and into Germany. At the same time on the East-



NUTS: Brigadier General Anthony Clement McAuliffe (middle) poses with some of his officers at Bastogne.

ern Front, the Russians were pushing forward. It became clear that they would have to do something drastic if they were not going to lose the war.

The plan was *Unternehmen Wacht am Rhein* (Operation Watch on the Rhine). The Germans would launch an offensive through the densely forested Ardennes region of Wallonia in eastern Belgium, northeast France, and Luxembourg.

The offensive was intended to stop Allied use of the Belgian port of Antwerp and to split the Allied lines, allowing the Germans to encircle and destroy four Allied armies and force the Western Allies to negotiate a peace treaty in the Axis powers’ favour.

Once that was accomplished, Hitler believed he could fully concentrate on the Soviets on the Eastern Front. The offensive was planned by the German forces with utmost secrecy, with minimal radio traffic and movements of troops and equip-

ment under cover of darkness. Intercepted German communications indicating a substantial German offensive preparation were not acted upon by the Allies.

The Germans launched their attack on the morning of 16 December 1944. The Allies were overconfident and preoccupied with their own offensive plans, so the Germans achieved total surprise.

The Americans retreated in disarray, causing a massive bulge in their defences.

The US 101st Airborne, the “Screaming Eagles”, retreated as far as the Belgian town of Bastogne. It was here that the commander of the 101st, Brigadier General Anthony Clement McAuliffe, decided to make a stand.

While the Allies held overwhelming air superiority, the dense overcast weather meant that they were effectively grounded. The 101st were surrounded and outnumbered by 5 to

1. The Germans demanded that McAuliffe surrender. Like the Spartans and Ioannis Metaxas before him, McAuliffe’s replied with a single word - “Nuts!”

The demand to surrender had been typed out and delivered by two German officers under a white flag. McAuliffe’s response had also been typed out. When it was given to the two German officers they obviously did not understand American slang and asked if “nuts” was an affirmative or negative response to their demand.

PFC Ernest Premetz, a German-speaking medic, told the German officers, “Du kannst zum Teufel gehen.” (You can go to hell.”). That they did understand and they stormed off to take the reply back to their commanding officer.

Against all odds, despite being surrounded, outnumbered and outgunned, the 101st held Bastogne for a remarkable one month.

Then the weather cleared and the Allies were able to launch a counter-offensive. Bastogne was relieved by General George S. Patton and the US 3rd Army.

While officially known as the Ardennes Counteroffensive, it was also known as the Battle of the Bulge.

Patton rallied the American troops, and, in a brilliant counter thrust offensive, broke through the German line and pushed the German military back across the border.

The Germans never recovered, and continued retreating back towards Berlin for the remainder of the war.

If you want to change the world

In 2014 former US Navy SEAL Admiral William H. McRaven gave a speech to the graduating class at the University of Texas. It was a speech that everyone should hear.

William Harry McRaven is a retired United States Navy four-star admiral who served as the ninth commander of the United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM) from August 8, 2011 to August 28, 2014.

McRaven previously served from June 13, 2008, to August 2011 as commander of Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC)[1] and from June 2006 to March 2008 as commander of Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR).

In addition to his duties as COMSOCEUR, he was designated as the first director of the NATO Special Operations Forces Coordination Centre (NSCC), where he was charged with enhancing the capabilities and inter-operability of all NATO Special Operations Forces.

McRaven retired from the U.S. Navy on August 28, 2014, after more than 37 years of service.

In 2014 McRaven was asked to give the Commencement Address to the 2014 graduating class at the University of Texas. McRaven was a former graduate from the University.

His address was probably one of the best motivational speeches I have every heard.

What starts here changes the world. I have a few suggestions that may help you on your way to a better world, and while

these lessons were learned during my time in the military, I can assure you that it matters not whether you ever served a day in uniform.

It matters not your gender, your ethnic or religious background, your orientation or your social status.

Our struggles in this world are similar and the lessons to overcome those struggles and to move forward, changing ourselves and changing the world around us, will apply equally to all.

So here are the ten lessons I learned from basic SEAL training that hopefully will be of value to you as you move forward in life.

Every morning in SEAL training my instructors, who at the time were all Vietnam veterans, would show up in my barracks room, and the first thing they'd do is inspect my bed.

If you did it right the corners would be square, the covers would be pulled tight, the pillows centred just under the headboard and the extra blanket folded neatly at the foot of the rack.

It was a simple task, mundane at best, but every morning we were required to make our bed to perfection. It seemed a little ridiculous at the time, particularly light of the fact that we were aspiring to be real warriors, tough battle-hardened SEALs.

But the wisdom of this sim-

ple act has been proven to me many times over. If you make your bed every morning you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride and it will encourage you to do another task and another and another, and by the end of the day that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed.

Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that the little things in life matter. If you can't do the little things right you'll never be able to do the big things right. And if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made. That you made. And a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better.

So if you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.

1. Start the day with a task completed

During SEAL training the students are all broken down into boat crews. Each crew is seven students, three on each side of a small rubber boat and one coxswain to help guide the dinghy.

Every day your boat crew forms up on the beach and is instructed to get through the surf zone and paddle several miles down the coast.

In winter the surf off San Die-



Admiral William H McRaven

go can get to be eight to ten feet high and it is exceedingly difficult to paddle hook through the plunging surf unless everyone digs in. Every paddle must be synchronized to the stroke count of the coxswain. Everyone must exert equal effort or the boat will turn against the wave and be unceremoniously dumped back on the beach.

For the boat to make it to its destination everyone must paddle. You can't change the world alone. You will need some help and to truly get from your starting point to your destination takes friends, colleagues, the good will of strangers, and a strong coxswain to guide you.

If you want to change the world, find someone to help you paddle.

2. Find someone to help you through life

Over a few weeks of difficult training my SEAL class, which started with 150 men, was down to just 42. There were now six

boat crews of seven men each.

I was in the boat with the tall guys. But the best boat crew we had was made up of little guys. The Munchkin crew we called them. No one was over five foot five.

The Munchkin boat crew had one American-Indian, one African-American, one Polish-American, one Greek-American, one Italian-American, and two tough kids from the Midwest. They out paddled, out ran, and out swam all the other boat crews.

The big men and the other boat crews would always make good-natured fun of the tiny little flippers the Munchkins put on their tiny little feet prior to every swim.

But somehow these little guys from every corner of the nation in the world always had the last laugh, swimming faster than everyone and reaching the shore long before the rest of us.

SEAL training was a great equalizer. Nothing mattered but your will to succeed. Not your colour. Not your ethnic background. Not your education. Not your social status.

If you want to change the world, measure a person by the size of their heart, not by the size of their flippers.

3. Respect everyone

Several times a week the instructors would line up the class and do a uniform inspection. It was exceptionally thorough.

Your hat had to be perfectly starched, your uniform immaculately pressed, your belt buckle shiny and void of any smudges.

But it seemed that no matter how much effort you put into starching your hat or pressing your uniform or polishing your belt buckle, it just wasn't good enough. The instructors would find something wrong.

For failing uniform inspection the student had to run fully clothed into the surf zone. Then, wet from head to toe, roll around on the beach until every part of your body was covered with sand. The effect was known as 'sugar cookie'.

You stayed in the uniform the rest of the day, cold, wet and sandy. There were many a student who just couldn't accept the fact that all their efforts were in vain, that no matter how hard they tried to get the uniform right, it went unappreciated. Those students didn't make it through training.

Those students didn't understand the purpose of the drill. You were never going to succeed. You were never going to have a perfect uniform. The instructors weren't going to allow it.

Sometimes no matter how well you prepare, or how well you perform, you still end up as a sugar cookie. It's just the way life is sometimes.

If you want to change the world, get over being a sugar cookie and keep moving forward.

4. Life is not always fair, move forward

Every day during training you were challenged with multiple physical events – long runs, long swims, obstacle courses, hours of callisthenics – some-

thing to test your mettle.

Every event had standards. Times you had to meet. If you failed to meet those times – those standards – your name was posted on a list and at the end of the day those on the list were invited to a circus.

A circus was two hours of additional callisthenics designed to wear you down. To break your spirit. To force you to quit. No one wanted a circus.

A circus meant that for that day you didn't measure up. A circus meant more fatigue and more fatigue meant that the following day would be more difficult and more circuses were likely.

But at some time during SEAL training everyone, everyone made the circus list. But an interesting thing happened to those who were constantly on the list.

Over time those students who did two hours of extra callisthenics got stronger and stronger. The pain of the circuses built inner strength and physical resiliency.

Life is filled with circuses. You will fail. You will likely fail often. It will be painful. It will be discouraging. At times it will test you to your very core.

But if you want to change the world, don't be afraid of the circuses.

5. Don't be afraid to fail often

At least twice a week the trainees were required to run the obstacle course. The obstacle course contained 25 obstacles, including the 10 foot wall, a 30 foot cargo net, a barbed

wire crawl to name a few. But the most challenging obstacle was the slide for life.

It had a three level 30 foot tower at one end and a one level tower at the other. In between was a 200 foot long rope. You had to climb the three tiered tower and once at the top you grabbed the rope, swung underneath the rope and pulled yourself hand over hand until you got to the other end.

The record for the obstacle course had stood for years when my class began in 1977. The record seemed unbeatable. Until one day a student decided to go down the slide for life head first.

Instead of swinging his body underneath the rope and inching his way down, he bravely mounted the top of the rope and thrust himself forward.

It was a dangerous move. Seemingly foolish and fraught with risk. Failure could be an injury and being dropped from the course. Without hesitation the student slid down the rope perilously fast. Instead of several minutes it only took him half that time and by the end of the course he had broken the record.

If you want to change the world sometimes you have to slide down the obstacles head first.

6. Take risks

During the land warfare phase of training the students are flown out to San Clement Island which lies off the coast of San Diego. The waters off San Clement are a breeding ground for the great white sharks.

To pass SEAL training there are a series of long swims that must be completed. One is the night swim.

Before the swim the instructors joyfully brief the students on all the species of sharks that inhabit the waters off San Clement. They assure you however that no student has ever been eaten by a shark. At least not that they can remember.

But you are also taught that if a shark begins to circle your position, stand your ground. Do not swim away. Do not act afraid. And if the shark, hungry for a midnight snack, darts towards you then summon up all your strength and punch him in the snout and he will turn and swim away.

There are a lot of sharks in the world. If you hope to complete the swim you will have to deal with them.

So if you want to change the world, don't back down from the sharks.

7. Face down the bullies

As Navy SEALs one of our jobs is to conduct underwater attacks against the enemy's shipping. We practice this technique extensively during training.

The ship attack mission is where a pair of SEAL divers is dropped off outside an enemy harbour and then swims well over two miles underwater, using nothing but a depth gauge and compass to get to the target.

During the entire swim, even well below the surface, there is some light that comes through. It is comforting to know that there is open water above you.

But as you approach the ship which is tied to a pier the light begins to fade.

The steel structure of the ship blocks the moonlight. It blocks the surrounding street lamps. It blocks all ambient light.

To be successful in your mission you have to swim under the ship and find the keel, the centreline, and the deepest part of the ship. This is your objective.

But the keel is also the darkest part of the show, where you cannot see your hand in front of your face. Where the noise from the ship's machinery is deafening and where it gets to be easily disoriented and you can fail.

Every SEAL knows that under the keel, at that darkest moment of the mission, is a time when you need to be calm. When you must be calm. When you must be composed. When all your tactical skills, your physical power and your inner strength must be brought to bear.

If you want to change the world, you must be your very best in the darkest moments.

8. Step up when times are toughest

The ninth week of training is referred to as 'Hell Week'. It is six days of no sleep, constant physical and mental harassment, and one special day at the mud flats.

The mud flats are an area between San Diego and Tijuana where the water runs off and creates the Tijuana sloughs. A swampy patch of terrain where the mud will engulf you.

It is on Wednesday of Hell

Week that you paddle down in the mud flats and spend the next 15 hours trying to survive this freezing cold, the howling wind and the incessant pressure to quit from your instructors.

As the sun began to set that Wednesday evening my training class, having committed some egregious infraction of the rules, was ordered into the mud. The mud consumed each man till there was nothing visible but our heads.

The instructors told us we could leave the mud if only five men would quit. Only five men, just five men and we could get out of the oppressive cold. Looking around the mud flat it was apparent that some students were about to give up.

It was still over eight hours till the sun came up. Eight more hours of bone-chilling cold. The chattering teeth and the shivering moans of the trainees were so loud it was hard to hear anything.

And then one voice began to echo through the night, one voice raised in song. The song was terribly out of tune, but sung with great enthusiasm. One voice became two and two became three and before long everyone in the class was singing.

The instructors threatened us with more time in the mud. If we kept up the singing, but the singing persisted and somehow the mud seemed a little warmer and the wind a little tamer and the dawn not so far away.

If I have learned anything in my time traveling the world it is the power of hope. The power of one person. The Washington, a Lincoln, King, Mande-

la, and even a young girl from Pakistan – Malala. One person can change the world by giving people hope.

So if you want to change the world start singing when you're up to your neck in mud.

9. Lift up the downtrodden

Finally, in SEAL training there is a bell. A brass bell that hangs in the centre of the compound for all the students to see. All you have to do to quit is ring the bell.

Ring the bell and you no longer have to wake up at 5 o'clock. Ring the bell and you no longer have to be in the freezing cold swims. Ring the bell and you no longer have to do the runs, the obstacle course, the PT, and you no longer have to endure the hardships of training. All you have to do is ring the bell to get out.

If you want to change the world don't ever, ever ring the bell.

10. Never give up

Life is a struggle and the potential for failure is ever present, but those who live in fear of failure, or hardship, or embarrassment will never achieve their potential. Without pushing your limits, without occasionally sliding down the rope head first, without daring greatly, you will never know what is truly possible in your life.

From 2015 to 2018 Admiral William H. McRaven served as the Chancellor of The University of Texas.

Toughest Military Training

One of the things I enjoy when I get together with my mates, most of whom did military service, is to listen to everyone boast about how tough their training was. No matter where they did their training, or with whatever unit, it was tougher than anywhere else. Let's be honest, military training can often be tough. Especially if you're training to get into some special unit.

This month we looking at military training that goes beyond just be tough and, in many cases, borders on the insane. We'll let you be the judges on which you think is the most brutal.

Taiwanese Marine Corps

If you're one of those that whine and complain when you have to walk barefoot along a gravel path, spare a thought for those that do their training in the Taiwanese Marine Corps. They have to walk the Road to Heaven, or rather I should say crawl it.

During their tenth and final week at Kaohsiung Military Base each recruit has to tackle the Road to Heaven. This is a 50 metre path covered with sharp fist-sized stones and coral.

Wearing nothing but a pair of shorts they have to crawl, belly down, along, the path without using their arms. And just to make it more fun the instructors stop them halfway and force them to do calisthenics. By the end their bodies are a bloody, torn mess. If they fail they are forced to do it all over again.



North Korea Storm Corps



According to the North Korean Army, every Storm Corpsman must be able to kill 10 armed men with his bare hands.

To prepare for this they wake at 05h00 every morning, go to trees wrapped in heavy ropes, and punch it 5,000 times until their hands are oozing blood and pus.

Then they punch jagged tins cans before punching a pile of salt. This last part must be really fun.

What North Korea lacks in technological advancement they make up for in sheer insanity.

Russian Spetsnaz

Spetsnaz, the Russian Special Forces Group, believe that you should not only be able to dish out pain, you should be able to take it as well.

They undergo 'pain management' drills that are extreme to say the very least. This includes swimming through pools lined with barbed wire, getting tied to chairs and beaten with baseball bats, and being dragged behind trucks.

The purpose of these exercises is to train them to ignore injuries and continue with their mission.



Philippines Special Operations Group



Most of us know how difficult it can be to accomplish even the most simple tasks when you're drunk. Now imagine completing a range of military drills while being absolutely smashed. Troops of the Philippines Special Operations Group do just that. They get totally wasted and then undergo a series of drills aimed at weeding out trainees who don't have the right personality.

Now before you start thinking "How cool is that and where do I enlist", stop and think about it. How about doing a 29 kilometre swim, shooting exercises, and a 10 kilometre run would be when you're plastered. How about doing it with a hangover?

South Korean Special Forces

Although the Cold War has been over for more than 20 years, the South Korean Army give the term a whole new meaning. That's because they often conduct training in the snow. And we're not talking about a snowball fight here.

These troops have to carry out exercises in sub-zero temperatures wearing nothing but a pair of pants. Try doing pole PT when the temperature is -30°C .



People's Liberation Army of China



Want to build trust and team work with your fellow troops? Then the PLA has just the thing for you. Groups of several soldiers stand in a circle around a pit. They then take a hefty chunk of explosives, someone lights the fuse, and they proceed to pass the explosive around.

Some of you have probably played the game 'Hot Potato' at some stage, but this is not the way to do it. After counting down, the last soldier to get the explosive throws it into the pit and everyone dives away before it explodes. Hope they can all count well.

US Marine Corps Sniper

Being a sniper requires a steady hand, great reflexes and a lot of patience. Apparently it also requires a deadened sense of smell. That's because US Marine snipers must prepare themselves and their camouflaged suits, known as ghillie suits, by soaking in a giant pond of stagnant water and rotting vegetation repeatedly.

Once you're nice and wet, you then get to roll around in the dirt, over and over again. All of this is necessary to 'season' the ghillie suit and also acts as great psychological training for the sniper.



US Navy Seals



By all accounts, getting into the US Navy Seals is not that easy. The selection process pushes recruits to their limits, seeing just how much strength and endurance they actually have. One especially demanding part of selection is drown-proofing in a pool. This involves having your hands and feet tied while performing various tasks in the water.

The drill teaches breathing control as well as forcing potential Seals to learn to control fear and panic. And just to throw in a little extra, instructors will also attack trainees in the water.

Belarus Red Berets

Want to join Belarus' Red Berets? Then be prepared to run the obstacle course. And, yes, I know we've all run obstacle courses before, but not like this.

Picture all the usual walls, beams, tires, rope swings and obstacles found on a usual course. Now set most of them on fire. Add a lot of smoke and gunfire and you're good to go. Oh, and just for good measure, the instructors will be trying to knock you off every obstacle.



Indonesian Army



On the surface it all sounds pretty standard. Recruits run around an obstacle course and crawl through mud while instructors fire weapons. There is, however, a small catch.

The instructors fire their assault rifles at the ground, centimetres away from the recruits head. And they use live ammunition. Okay, so it gets the recruits used to having live rounds fired near them. But the slightest slip up by an instructor can turn things deadly.

Russian Special Forces

There's an old military saying, "Train hard, fight easy." Yet the Russian Special Forces take this to the extreme. Recruits, wearing body armour, are intentionally shot in the chest by their instructor.

The drill is meant to prepare recruits for potentially being shot, and teach them how to react.

And here I thought that the whole purpose of training is not to get shot. As General George S. Patton once said, "The purpose is not to die for you country, but to make the other poor bastard die for his country."



Roza Shanina

Described by a Canadian newspaper in 1944 as “the unseen terror of East Prussia”, she became the first servicewoman of the 3rd Belorussian Front to receive the Order of Glory. A Soviet sniper, she was credited with 59 confirmed kills. Her name was Roza Shanina.

On Sunday 22 June 1941 Nazi Germany launched Operation Barbarossa (Red Beard), its invasion of the Soviet Union. The invasion took Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin by surprise.

After all, the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact had been signed in Moscow on 23 August 1939 by German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov.

It was officially known as the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Its clauses provided a written guarantee of peace by each party towards the other and a commitment that declared that neither government would ally itself to or aid an enemy of the other. Stalin refused to believe that Hitler had broken the pact.

It wasn't long before Russia was fighting for its very existence. Every Soviet citizen was expected to do their duty in protecting the Motherland. And this included women.

Around a million women fought in various branches of the Soviet military. Some nursed and supported, as in other countries, but others drove tanks, operated machine guns, and flew fighter planes. 2,484 of them became snipers. Of those, only around 500 would survive

the war.

Some female snipers would go on to become legends. This included women such as Nina Lobkovskaya and Lyudmila Pavlichenko.

Lobkovskaya would be credited with 89 confirmed kills and not only did she survive the war, in March this year she celebrated her 96th birthday.

Lyudmila Pavlichenko was credited with 309 confirmed kills, making her the most successful female sniper in recorded history.

Pavlichenko was nicknamed “Lady Death” for her incredible ability with a sniper rifle. She survived the war and passed away in October 1974 at the

age of 58.

Another Soviet sniper that achieved great success was Roza Shanina.

Early life

Roza Georgiyevna Shanina was born on 3 April 1924 in the Russian village of Edma in Arkhangelsk Oblast to Anna Alexeyevna Shanina, a kolkhoz milkmaid, and Georgiy (Yegor) Mikhailovich Shanin, a logger who had been disabled by a wound received during World War I.



Roza was reportedly named after the Marxist revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg and had six siblings: one sister Yuliya and five brothers. The Shanins also raised three orphans.

Roza was above average height, with light brown hair and blue eyes, and spoke in a Northern Russian dialect.

After finishing four classes of elementary school in Yedma, Shanina continued her education in the village of Bereznik. As there was no school transport at the time, when she was in grades five through seven Roza had to walk 13 kilometres to Bereznik to attend middle school. On Saturdays, Shanina again went to Bereznik to take care of her ill aunt Agnia Borisova.

At the age of fourteen, Shanina, against her parents' wishes, walked 200 kilometres across the taiga to the rail station and travelled to Arkhangelsk to study at the college there.

Shanina left home with little money and almost no possessions; and before moving to the college dormitory she lived with her elder brother Fyodor.

In 1938, Shanina became a member of the Soviet youth movement Komsomol. Two years later, Soviet secondary education institutes introduced tuition fees, and the scholarship fund was cut.

Shanina received little financial support from home and on 11 September 1941, she took a job at a kindergarten, with which she was offered a free apartment.

She studied in the evenings and worked in the kindergarten during the daytime. Shanina graduated from college in the 1941–42 academic year, when the Soviet Union was in the grip of World War II.

Tour of duty

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Arkhangelsk was bombed by the Luftwaffe, and Shanina and other townspeople were involved in fire-fighting and mounted voluntary vigils on rooftops to protect the kindergarten.

Shanina's two elder brothers had volunteered for the military. In December 1941, a death notification was received for her 19 year-old brother Mikhail, who had died during the siege of Leningrad.

In response, Shanina went to the military commissariat to ask for permission to serve. Two more of Shanina's brothers died in the war.

At that time the Soviet Union had begun deploying female snipers because they had flexible limbs, and it was believed that they were patient, careful and cunning.

In February 1942, Soviet women between the ages of 16 and 45 became eligible for the military draft, but Shanina was not drafted that month, as the local military commissariat wanted to spare her from the draft.

She first learned to shoot at a shooting range. On 22 June 1943, while still living in the

dormitory, Shanina was accepted into the Vsevobuch program for universal military training.

After Shanina's several applications, the military commissariat finally allowed her to enroll in the Central Women's Sniper Training School, where she met Aleksandra “Sasha” Yekimova and Kaleriya “Kalya” Petrova, who became her closest friends, with Shanina calling them “the vagrant three”.

Honed to a fine point, Shanina scored highly in training and graduated from the academy with honours.

She was asked to stay as an instructor there, but refused due to a call of duty. In 1941–1945 a total of 2,484 Soviet female snipers were deployed for the war and their combined tally of kills is estimated to be at least 11,280.

After the momentous victory in the Battle of Stalingrad, the Soviets mounted nationwide counter-offensives and Shanina on 2 April 1944 joined the 184th Rifle Division, where a separate female sniper platoon had been formed. Shanina was appointed a commander of that platoon.

For her actions in the battle for the village of Kozyi Gory (Smolensk Oblast), Shanina was awarded her first military decoration, the Order of Glory 3rd Class, on 18 April 1944. She became the first servicewoman of the 3rd Belorussian Front to receive that order.

According to the report of Major Degtyarev (the commander of the 1138th Rifle Reg-



iment), she received the award for the corresponding commendation list, between 6 and 11 April Shanina killed 13 enemy soldiers while subjected to artillery and machine gun fire.

By May 1944, her sniper tally increased to 17 confirmed enemy kills, and Shanina was praised as a precise and brave soldier. The same year, on 9 June, Shanina's portrait was featured on the front page of the Soviet newspaper *Unichtozhim Vraga*.

When Operation Bagration commenced in the Vitebsk region on 22 June 1944, it was decided that female snipers would be withdrawn. They voluntarily continued to support the advancing infantry anyway, and despite the Soviet policy of sparing snipers, Shanina asked to be sent to the front line. Although her request was refused, she went anyway.

Shanina was later sanctioned for going to the front line without permission, but did not face a court martial. She wanted to be attached to a battalion or a reconnaissance company, turning to the commander of the 5th Army, Nikolai Krylov. Shanina also wrote twice to Joseph Stalin with the same request.

From 26 to 28 June 1944,

Shanina participated in the elimination of the encircled German troops near Vitebsk during the Vitebsk–Orsha Offensive.

As the Soviet army advanced further westward, from 8 to 13 July of the same year, Shanina and her sisters-in-arms took part in the battle for Vilnius, which had been under German occupation since 24 June 1941.

The Germans were finally driven out from Vilnius on 13 July 1944. During the Soviet summer offensives of that year Shanina managed to capture three Germans.

From her time at the military academy, Shanina became known for her ability to score doublets (two target hits made in quick succession).

During one period she crawled through a muddy communications trench each day at dawn to a specially camouflaged pit which overlooked German-controlled territory.

Shanina successfully used counter-sniper tactics against a German cuckoo sniper hidden in a tree, by waiting until dusk when the space between the tree branches would be backlit by sunlight and the sniper's nest became visible. On one occasion, Shanina also made use of selective fire from a submachine gun.

East Prussia

In August 1944, advancing Soviet troops had reached the Soviet border with East Prussia and by 31 August of that year Shanina's battle count reached 42 kills.

The following month the Šešupė River was crossed. Shanina's 184th Rifle Division became the first Soviet unit to enter East Prussia. At that time, two Canadian newspapers, the *Ottawa Citizen* and *Leader-Post*, reported that according to an official dispatch from the Šešupė River front, Shanina killed five Germans in one day as she crouched in a sniper hideout.

Later in September, her sniper tally had reached 46 kills, of which 15 were made on German soil and seven during an offensive. On 17 September, *Unichtozhim Vraga* credited Shanina with 51 hits.

In the third quarter of 1944, Shanina was given a short furlough and visited Arkhangelsk. She returned to the front on 17 October for one day, and later received an honourable certificate from the Central Committee of Komsomol.

On 16 September 1944, Shanina was awarded her second military distinction, the Order of Glory 2nd Class for intrepidity and bravery displayed in various battles against the Germans in that year.

On 26 October 1944 Shanina became eligible for the Order of Glory 1st Class for her actions in a battle near Schlossberg (now Dobrovolsk), but ultimately received the Medal for Courage instead. She was among the first female snipers to receive the Medal for Courage.

Shanina was awarded the medal on 27 December for the

gallant posture displayed during a German counter-offensive on 26 October. There Shanina fought together with Captain Igor Aseyev, a Hero of the Soviet Union, and witnessed his death on 26 October.

Shanina, who served as an assistant platoon commander, was ordered to commit the female snipers to combat. Schlossberg was finally retaken from Germans by the troops of the 3rd Belorussian Front on 16 January 1945 during the Insterburg–Königsberg Operation.

On 12 December 1944, an enemy sniper shot Shanina in her right shoulder. She wrote in her diary that she had not felt the pain, "the shoulder was just scalded with something hot."

Although the injury, which Shanina described as "two small holes", seemed minor to her, she needed an operation and was incapacitated for several days. She reported in her diary that the previous day she had a prophetic dream in which she was wounded in exactly the same place.

On 8 January 1945, Nikolai Krylov formally allowed Shanina to participate in front-line combat, albeit with great reluctance: previously Shanina was denied that permission by the commander of the 184th Rifle Division and the military council of the 5th Army as well.

Five days later, the Soviets launched the East Prussian Offensive, which prompted heavy fighting in East Prussia. By 15 January, travelling with divisional logistics, Shanina

reached the East Prussian town of Eydtkuhnen (now Chernyshevskoye), where she used white military camouflage.

Several days later, she experienced friendly fire from a Katyusha rocket launcher and wrote in her diary, "Now I understand why the Germans are so afraid of Katyushas. What a fire!"

At the border of East Prussia, Shanina killed 26 enemy soldiers. The last unit she served in was the 144th Rifle Division. According to the online Book of Memory of Arkhangelsk Oblast, Shanina served in the 205th Special Motorized Rifle Battalion of that division. Shanina had hoped to go to university after the war, or if that was not possible, to raise orphans.

In the course of her tour of duty Shanina was mentioned in despatches several times. Her final sniper tally reached fifty-nine confirmed kills, including twelve kills during the Battle of Vilnius, with sixty-two enemies knocked out of action.

Domestically, her achievements were acknowledged particularly by the war correspondent Ilya Ehrenburg and in the newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda*, which said that Shanina was one of the best snipers in her unit and that even veteran soldiers were inferior to her in shooting accuracy.

Shanina's exploits were also reported in the Western press, particularly in Canadian newspapers, where she was called "the unseen terror of East Prussia". She paid no special atten-

tion to the achieved renown, and once wrote that she had been overrated.

On 16 January 1945, Shanina wrote in her combat diary: "What I've actually done? No more than I have to as a Soviet person, having stood up to defend the motherland."

She also wrote, "The essence of my happiness is fighting for the happiness of others. It's strange, why is it that in grammar, the word "happiness" can only be singular? That is counter to its meaning, after all. ... If it turns necessary to die for the common happiness, then I'm braced to."

Death

In the face of the East Prussian Offensive, the Germans tried to strengthen the localities they controlled against great odds. In a diary entry dated 16 January 1945, Shanina wrote that despite her wish to be in a safer place, some unknown force was drawing her to the front line.

In the same entry, she wrote that she had no fear and that she had even agreed to go "to a melee combat." The next day, Shanina wrote in a letter that she might be on the verge of being killed because her battalion had lost 72 out of 78 people.

Her last diary entry reports that German fire had become so intense that the Soviet troops, including herself, had sheltered inside self-propelled guns.

On 27 January, Shanina was severely wounded and was later found by two soldiers disem-



FINAL RESTING PLACE: The grave of Rosa Shanina stands near the settlement of Westhlau. She was only 20 years old when she died.

bowelled, with her chest torn open by a shell fragment.

Despite attempts to save her, Shanina died the following day near the Richau estate (later a Soviet settlement of Telmanovka), three kilometres northwest of the East Prussian village of Ilmsdorf.

Nurse Yekaterina Radkina remembered Shanina telling her that she regretted having done so little. By the day of Shanina's death, the Soviets had overtaken several major East Prussian localities, including Tilsit, Insterburg and Pillau, and approached Königsberg.

Recalling the moment Shanina's mother received notification of her daughter's death, her brother Marat wrote: "I clearly remembered mother's eyes.

They weren't teary anymore. ... 'That's all, that's all' - she repeated".

Shanina was buried under a spreading pear tree on the shore of the Alle River - now called the Lava - and was later reinterred in the settlement of Wehlau.

Diary

Shanina started writing a combat diary; although diaries were strictly prohibited in the Soviet military.

After Shanina's death, the diary, consisting of three thick notebooks, was kept by the war correspondent Pyotr Molchanov for twenty years in Kiev.

Several of Shanina's letters and some data from her sniper log have also been published.

Female snipers of the Soviet Union

Nearly 2,500 female snipers were used by the Soviet Union during World War II. Many of them were to become Hero's of the Soviet Union and they were feared by the Germans. Here are just some of them.



Lyudmila Pavlichenko

Lyudmila Mikhailovna Pavlichenko was a Soviet sniper in the Red Army during World War II, who was credited with 309 confirmed kills, making her the most successful female sniper in recorded history.

Pavlichenko was nicknamed "Lady Death" for her incredible ability with a sniper rifle.



Natalya Kovshova

Natalya Kovshova was a Soviet female sniper who fought in World War II.

She was posthumously awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union's highest award for bravery, on 14 February 1943.



Mariya Polivanova

Mariya Semyonovna Polivanova was a Soviet sniper during World War II.

Polivanova worked as a team with Natalya Kovshova, often acting as her spotter. Together they were credited with more than 300 kills.

Awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union.



Marie Lastovecká

Marie Ljalková-Lastovecká was a Czechoslovak sniper, military medic and member of the Czechoslovak Army in exile fighting alongside Soviet Army during World War II.

Credited with 30 confirmed kills.



Tatyana Baramzina

Tatyana Nikolayevna Baramzina was a Soviet sniper and telephone operator in World War II who was posthumously awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union on 24 March 1945 for her attempts to defend wounded Red Army soldiers.



Nina Lobkovskaya

Nina Alexeyevna Lobkovskaya served as a sniper for the Red Army and attained the rank of Lieutenant in a separate sniper unit of the 3rd Shock Army during World War II.

She reached 89 confirmed kills.

The Lanc

Avro Lancaster Bomber

It first saw service with RAF Bomber Command in 1942 and as the strategic bombing offensive over Europe gathered momentum, it was the main aircraft for the night-time bombing campaigns that followed. The Avro Lancaster heavy bomber was forged in battle.

World War I had shown that not only were bombers necessary, they were becoming vital.

In the 1930s, the Royal Air Force (RAF) was primarily interested in twin-engine bombers. These designs put limited demands on engine production and maintenance, both of which were already stretched with the introduction of so many new types into service.

Power limitations were so serious that the British invested heavily in the development of huge engines in the 2,000 horsepower (1,500 kW) class in order to improve performance.

During the late 1930s, none of these was ready for production.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union were pursuing the development of bombers powered by arrangements of four smaller engines, the results of these projects proved to possess favourable characteristics such as excellent range and fair lifting capacity.

Accordingly, in 1936, the RAF also decided to investigate the feasibility of the four-engined bomber.

The origins of the Lancaster stem from a twin-engined bomber design that had been submitted in response to Specification P.13/36, which had been formulated and released by the British Air Ministry during the mid 1930s.

This specification had sought a new generation of twin-engined medium bombers suitable for “worldwide use”.

Further requirements of the specification included the use of a mid-mounted cantilever monoplane wing, all-metal construction; the adoption of the in-development Rolls-Royce Vulture engine was also encouraged”.

Various candidates were submitted for the specification by such manufacturers as Fairey, Boulton Paul, Handley Page and Shorts; all submissions were designed around two-engine configurations, using the Rolls-Royce Vulture, Napier Sabre, Fairey P.24 or Bristol Hercules engines.

In response, British aviation company Avro decided to submit their own design, designat-

ed the Avro 679, to meet Specification P.13/36.

In February 1937, following consideration of the designs by the Air Ministry, Avro’s design submission was selected along with Handley Page’s bid being chosen as “second string”.

Accordingly, during April 1937, a pair of prototypes of both designs were ordered. The resulting aircraft, named the Manchester, entered RAF service in November 1940.

Although considered to be a capable aircraft in most areas, the Manchester proved to be underpowered and troubled by the unreliability of the Vulture engine. As a result, only 200 Manchesters were constructed and the type was quickly withdrawn from service in 1942.

Enter the Lancaster

As early as mid-1940, Avro’s chief design engineer, Roy Chadwick, had been working on an improved Manchester design.

This redesign was powered by four of the more reliable but less powerful Rolls-Royce Mer-

lin engines, specifically adopted the form of the Merlin “Power Plant” installations which had been developed by Rolls-Royce for the earlier Beaufighter II, installed on a larger wing.

Initially, the improved aircraft was designated as the Type 683 Manchester III, it was subsequently renamed as the Lancaster. The prototype aircraft, serial number BT308, was assembled by the Avro experimental flight department at Ringway Airport, Manchester; the prototype was constructed from a production Manchester airframe, which was combined with a new centre section designed to accommodate the additional engines.

On 9 January 1941, test pilot H. A. “Sam” Brown performed the prototype’s maiden flight at RAF Ringway, Cheshire.

Flight testing of the new aircraft quickly proved it to be a substantial improvement on its predecessor, aviation author Jim Winchester referred to the Lancaster as being “one of the few war-



planes in history to be ‘right’ from the start.”

The first prototype was initially outfitted with a three-finned tail layout, a result of the design having been adapted from the Manchester I; this was quickly revised on the second prototype, DG595, and subsequent production Lancasters to the familiar larger elliptical twin-finned tail unit that had also been adopted for the later-built Manchesters, discarding the stubby central third tail fin.

The adoption of the enlarged twin fins not only increased stability but also provided for a greater field of fire from the dorsal gun turret position. The second prototype was also outfitted with more powerful Merlin XX engine.

Based upon its performance, a decision was taken early on to re-equip twin-engine bomber squadrons with the Lancaster as quickly as possible. In October 1941, the first production Lancaster, L7527, powered by Merlin XX engines, conducted its first flight.

Overview

The typical aircraft was powered by an arrangement of four wing-mounted Rolls-Royce Merlin piston engines, each of which drove a set of four metre diameter de Havilland Hydromatic three-bladed propellers. While not optimal, the Lancaster was capable of flying the return journey home on only two operational engines, along with very limited distances on a single running engine.

It is claimed that experienced Lancaster pilots were often able



HOT SEAT: The cockpit of a Lancaster bomber. The pilot's seat is on the left.

to out-manoeuvre Luftwaffe fighters. It possessed largely favourable flying characteristics. Aviation authors Brian Goulding and M. Garbett described the Lancaster as being: “a near-perfect flying machine, fast for its size and very smooth...such a delightfully easy aeroplane to fly...there are instances of Lancasters having been looped and barrel-rolled, both intentionally and otherwise”.

The Lancaster benefited from a structure that possessed considerable strength and durability, which had been intentionally designed to maximise structural strength-per-weight; this resulted in the Lancaster being capable of withstanding some levels of damage resulting from attacks by hostile interceptor aircraft and ground-based anti-aircraft batteries.

Compared with other contemporary aircraft, the Lancaster was not an easy aircraft to escape from; in a Halifax, 25 per cent of downed aircrew bailed out successfully, and in Ameri-

can bombers (albeit in daylight raids) it was as high as a 50 per cent success rate while only 15 per cent of the Lancaster crew were able to bail out.

The Lancaster was equipped with a retractable main undercarriage and fixed tail wheel; the hydraulically-actuated main landing gear raised rearwards into recesses within the inner engine nacelles.

The distinctive tail unit of the aircraft was outfitted with a large twin elliptical fins and rudder arrangement.

Crew

The standard crew for a Lancaster consisted of seven men, stationed in various positions in the fuselage.

Starting at the nose, the bomb aimer had two positions to man. His primary location was lying prone on the floor of the nose of the aircraft, with access to the bombsight controls facing forward, with the bombsight computer on his left and bomb release selectors on the right. He also used his view out of the

Avro Lancaster B Mk 1

1. FN5 turret with two .303 Vickers machine guns.

2. Nose blister.

3. Bomb aimer's chest support.

4. Front of bomb bay doors.

5. Oil tank.

6. Rolls-Royce Merlin XX engine.

7. Oil cooler radiator.

8. Right navigation light (green).

9. Right formation light (green).

10. Aileron.

11. Aileron balance tab.

12. Aileron trim tab.

13. Flap.

14. Flap operating hydraulic jack.

15. Ammunition boxes.

16. Cartridge belt to rear turret.

17. H25 (radar bombing) ventral antenna fairing.

18. Vertical stabilizer.

19. Rudder balance weight.

20. Rudder trim tab.

21. Elevator trim tab.

22. FN50 dorsal turret with four .303 machine guns.

23. Elevator.

24. Door and rear gunner's parachute exit.

25. FN20 turret with two .303 Vickers machine guns.

26. Wing fuel tanks.

27. Flame damper.

28. Three-bladed DeHavilland constant speed propeller.

29. Astrodome.

30. AD/F loop.

31. Cockpit canopy emergency escape hatch.

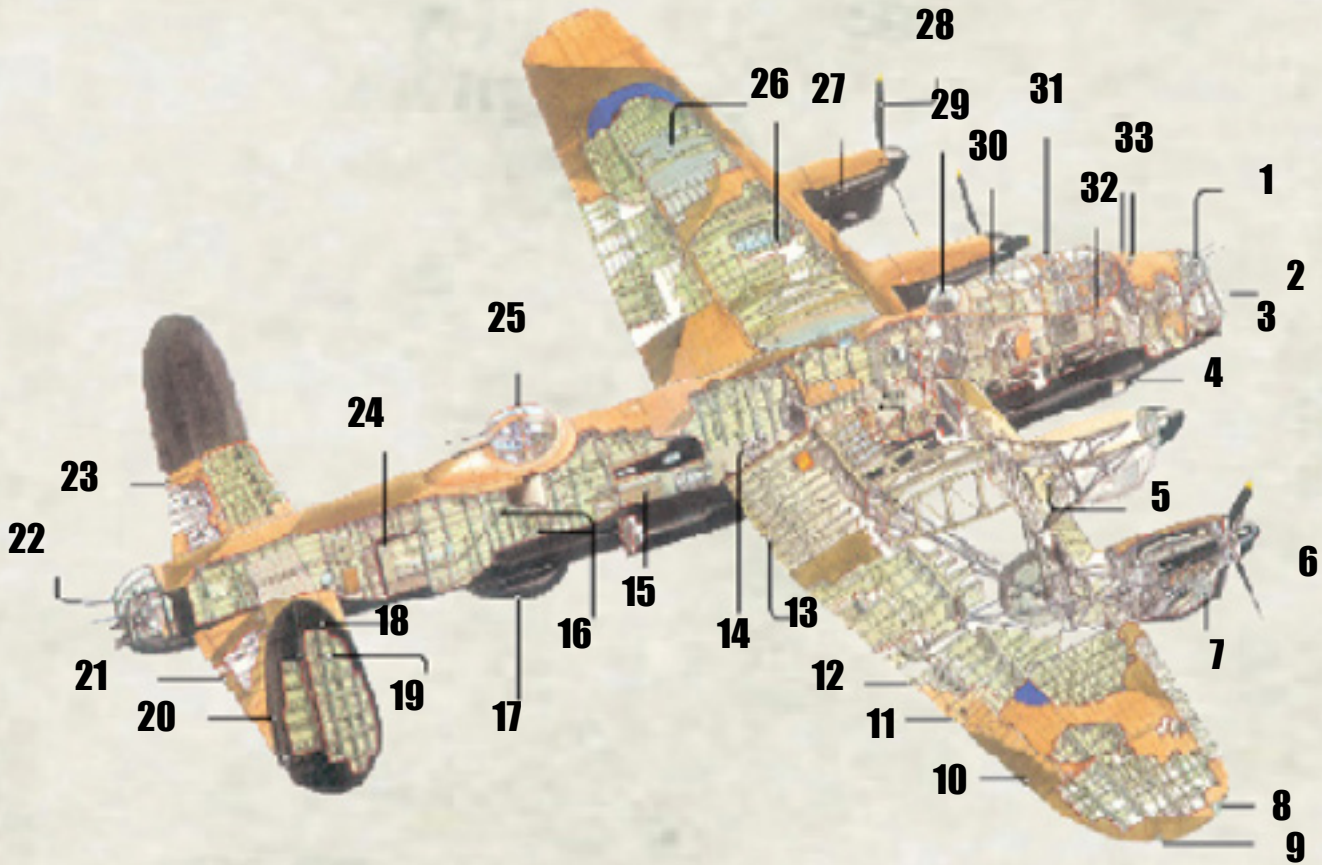
32. Pilot's seat.

33. Windscreen sprays.

large transparent perspex nose cupola to assist the navigator with map reading.

On the roof of the bomb bay the pilot and flight engineer sat side by side under the expansive canopy, with the pilot sitting on the left on a raised portion of the floor (almost all British bombers, and most German bombers, had only a single pilot seat as opposed to American practice of carrying two pilots, or at least having controls for two pilots installed).

The flight engineer sat on a collapsible seat (known as a “second dicky seat”) to the pilot's right, with the fuel selectors and gauges on a panel behind him and to his right. The pilot and other crew members could use the panel above the cockpit as an auxiliary emergency exit while the mid-upper gunner was expected to use the rear entrance door to leave the aircraft.



The tail gunner escaped by rotating his turret to the rear, opening the door in the back of the turret, passing into the fuselage, and clipping on a parachute that was hung on the side wall. He could then exit through the rear entrance door.

Behind the pilot and flight engineer, and behind a curtain fitted to allow him to use light to work, sat the navigator. His position faced to port with a chart table in front of him. An instrument panel showing the airspeed, altitude, and other information required for navigation was mounted on the side of the fuselage above the chart table. The wireless operator's radios were mounted on the left-hand end of the chart table, facing the rear of the aircraft. Behind these and facing forwards the wireless operator sat on a seat at the front of the main spar. On his left was a window, and above him was the astrodome, used for visual signalling and by the navigator for celestial navigation.

Behind the wireless operator were the two spars for the wing, which created a major obstacle for crew members moving down the fuselage even on the ground. On reaching the end of the bomb bay the floor dropped down to the bottom of the fuselage, and the mid-upper gunner's turret was reached. His position allowed a 360° view over the top of the aircraft, with two Browning .303 Mark IIs to protect the aircraft from above and to the side. The mid-upper gunner sat on a rectangle of canvas that was slung beneath the turret and would stay in position throughout the flight.

Ammunition for the turret was 1,000 rounds per gun.

To the rear of the turret was the side crew door, on the starboard side of the fuselage. This was the main entrance to the aircraft, and also could be used as an emergency exit.

The Elsan chemical toilet, a type of aircraft lavatory, was located near the spars for the tailplane. At the extreme tail-end of the fuselage, the rear gunner sat in his exposed position in the tail turret, which was entered through a small hatch in the rear of the fuselage. Depending on the size of the rear gunner, the area was so cramped that the gunner would often hang his parachute on a hook inside the fuselage, near the turret doors. Neither the mid-upper nor the rear gunner's position was heated, and the gunners had to wear electrically heated suits to prevent hypothermia and frostbite.

Hard hitting

An important feature of the Lancaster was its unobstructed 10 metre long bomb bay. At first, the heaviest bomb carried was the 1,800 kg high capacity HC "Cookie". Bulged doors were added to 30 per cent of B Is to allow the aircraft to carry 3,600 kg and later 5,400 kg "Cookies".

The Lancaster also carried a variety of smaller weapons, including the Small Bomb Container (SBC) which held 236 x 1.8 kg or 24 x 14 kg incendiary and explosive incendiary bomblets; 500 x 230 kg and 450 kg General Purpose High Explosive (GP/HE) bombs (these came in a variety of designs); 840 kg parachute deployed

magnetic or acoustic mines, or 910 kg armour-piercing (AP) bombs; 110 kg Semi-Armour-Piercing (SAP) bombs, used up to 1942 against submarines; post 1942: 110 kg or 230 kg anti-submarine depth charges.

In 1943, 617 Squadron was created to carry out Operation Chastise, the raid against the Ruhr dams. This unit was equipped with B.III (Specials), officially designated the "Type 464 (Provisioning)", modified to carry the 9,250 lb (4,200 kg) "Upkeep" bouncing bomb.

Towards the end of the war, attacking special and hardened targets, other variants of B.I Specials were modified to carry the 6.4 metre long 5,400 kg "Tallboy" or 7.8 metre long 10,000 kg "Grand Slam" "earthquake" bombs. Aircraft intended to carry the "Grand Slam" required extensive modifications.

Proud history

The Lancaster conducted a total of 156,000 sorties and dropped 618,378 tonnes of bombs between 1942 and 1945.

Only 35 Lancasters completed more than 100 successful operations each, and 3,249 were lost in action. The most successful survivor completed 139 operations, and was ultimately retired from service and scrapped in 1947.

From 1942 onwards, the Lancaster became the mainstay of the British heavy bomber fleet; by the end of the war in Europe, there were roughly 50 squadrons equipped with the Lancaster, the majority of these being the Lancaster B I model.

From its entry into service,

the original model of the Lancaster was operated in almost every major bombing raid of the European conflict.

Adolf Galland (commander of the Luftwaffe fighters) considered the Lancaster to be "the best night bomber of the war", as did his adversary, Arthur "Bomber" Harris, who referred to it as the RAF Bomber Command's "shining sword".

Goulding and Garbett wrote that: "The achievements of the Lancaster and the men who flew it have been widely acclaimed, and the aircraft has been described as the greatest single factor in winning WWII, an exaggeration but a pardonable one".

Throughout July 1943, large numbers of Lancasters participated in the devastating round-the-clock raids on the city of Hamburg during Air Chief Marshal Harris's "Operation Gomorrah".

A particularly famous mission performed by the Lancaster was the mission flown 16- 17 May 1943, codenamed Operation Chastise, to destroy the dams of the Ruhr Valley. The operation was carried out by 617 Squadron in modified Mk IIIs carrying special drum-shaped bouncing bombs, which had been designed by British engineer Barnes Wallis. The story of the operation was later made into a film, *The Dam Busters*.

During the latter half of 1944, a series of high-profile bombing missions were performed by the Lancaster against the German battleship Tirpitz.

Executed by Nos. 617 and 9 Sqs, a combination of Lancas-

ter B I and B III bombers were armed with 5,400 kg 'Tallboy' bombs and were adapted with enlarged bomb bay doors in order to accommodate their special payloads and additional fuel tanks to provide the necessary endurance.

A total of three attacks, individually codenamed Operation Paravane, Operation Obviate and Operation Catechism, were conducted against Tirpitz, which was anchored in a fjord in Occupied Norway.

The first of these attacks disabled the vessel while the third mission was responsible for sinking the ship. As a result of actions such as Operation Chastise and the sinking of Tirpitz, No. 617 Sq was perhaps the most famous of all Lancaster squadrons.

During early 1945, a total of 33 Lancaster B Is were modified so that they could deploy the 10,000 kg Grand Slam bomb; the Grand Slam, considered to be the ultimate conventional bomb to be used during the conflict, was so heavy that the bomb and the Lancaster itself weighed roughly the same.

On 13 March 1945, the first operational use of the Grand Slam was performed by a Lancaster of No. 617 Sqn against the Schildesche viaduct at Bielefeld, North Rhine-Westphalia. Amongst the final war-time operations performed by the Lancaster was the destruction of Eagle's Nest, the extensive holiday home complex used by German leader Adolf Hitler.

The Avro Lancaster bomber was an aircraft forged in battle.

Victoria Cross

Many Lancaster crew members were highly decorated for actions while flying the aircraft.

Ten Lancaster pilots or crew members were awarded the Victoria Cross.

These included Wing Commander Guy Gibson, Group Captain Leonard Cheshire, and Captain (acting Major) Edwin Swales.

Specifications

- **Crew:** Seven - pilot, flight engineer, navigator, bomb aimer/nose gunner, wireless operator, mid-upper and rear gunners
- **Length:** 21.11 m
- **Wingspan:** 31.09 m
- **Height:** 6.25 m
- **Empty weight:** 16,738 kg
- **Loaded weight:** 24,948 kg
- **Powerplant:** 4 × Rolls-Royce Merlin XX liquid-cooled V12 engines, 1,280 hp (954 kW) each
- **Maximum speed:** 454 km/h at 29,000 kg) and 4,000 m) altitude
- **Cruise speed:** 322 km/h
- **Range:** 4,073 km
- **Service ceiling:** 6,500 m at 29,000 kg
- **Guns:** Two 0.303 inch (7.62 mm) Browning Mark II machine guns in nose turret, two 0.303 inch Browning Mark II machine guns in upper turret, and four 0.303 inch Browning Mark II machine guns in the rear turret.
- **Bombs:** Maximum normal bomb load of 6,400 kg of bombs or single 10,000 kg Grand Slam (with modifications to bomb bay)

During the negotiations of 1953 in the Korean War, hill battles became a test of wills. Every hill won by the communists made them more stubborn. This meant that Pork Chop Hill assumed a wider political significance than purely military.

On 23 June 1951 the Soviet Union suggested truce talks in Korean and many in the West thought that the war would soon be over.

Yet it took two years of argument, threat and counter-threat and more re-creation before the armistice was finally signed.

In the intervening two years the Chinese and the UN forces were considerably enhanced and their front line positions became fortified where World War I veterans would have felt at home. Yet battles were initiated by both sides.

These battles had the aim of weakening the resolve of the enemy, seizing ground in order to improve the local tactical situation or acquiring a bargaining counter to be used in the cease-fire talks.

One particular piece of ground became the centre of much attention and strenuous efforts by both sides. Pork Chop Hill (so named because of its shape) assumed an importance in tactical, political and even strategic terms that far outweighed its geographical significance.

The hill stood in no-man's land on 1 US Corps front and quite close to a boundary with IX Corps. It was approximately 1.5 km forward of the American positions on the Main Line of Resistance (MLR) itself, and about 80 km north of Seoul.

The communists occupied a hill roughly level with Pork Chop and to its west some 1.3 km. From this hill (known as Old Baldy) the Chinese could observe the American supply route from the MLR to Pork Chop Hill.

Background

The 300 meters-high hill was first seized by the US 8th Cavalry Regiment in October 1951. It was taken again in May 1952 by I Company of the US 180th Infantry Regiment. The 1st Battalion of the 21st Thai Regiment attached to the US 2nd Infantry Division defended the position in November 1952.

From 29 December 1952, it became part of the US 7th Infantry Division's defensive sector. Pork Chop Hill was among several exposed hill outposts along the UN Main line of resistance (MLR) that were defended by a single company or platoon positioned in sand-bagged bunkers connected with trenches.

Opposing the 7th Infantry Division were two divisions of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA): the 141st Division of the 47th Army and the 67th Division of the 23rd Army. These were veteran, well-trained units expert in night infantry assaults, patrolling, ambushes, and mountain warfare.

Both armies (Corps-equivalent units) were part of the 13th Field Army commanded by General Deng Hua, who was also deputy commander of PVA forces in Korea.

The opposing forces in this sector were roughly equal in size, the 7th Division (Major General Arthur Trudeau, commanding) totalling 11 infantry battalions (including attached battalions from Colombia and Ethiopia), a battalion of armour, and 6 battalions of artillery, while the PVA forces totalled 12 infantry, 10 artillery, and the equivalent of one tank battalion.

Both the UN and the PVA had used

military operations to gain leverage or make political statements relevant to the armistice negotiations since early 1952.

The first battle on Pork Chop Hill occurred near Operation Little Switch, the exchange of ill and injured prisoners-of-war scheduled for 20 April.

The PVA command authorized the April attack to demonstrate that agreement in contentious negotiations did not equal unwillingness to continue fighting, if necessary.

First battle 16–18 April

In a surprise night attack on 23 March 1953, a battalion of the PVA 423rd Regiment, 141st Division seized Old Baldy (Hill 266) an outpost near Pork Chop Hill and quickly overwhelmed B Company of the 31st Infantry's Colombian Battalion, commanded by Lt. Colonel Alberto Ruiz Novoa, during its relief in the Fifth Battle for Old Baldy.

The regimental commander, Colonel William B. Kern, had ordered C Company of the Colombian Battalion to relieve B Company despite the Colombian commander's protest. The attack caught both companies amidst the rotation.

Two days of stiff resistance by the maimed and battered B and C Companies failed in retaking the hill due to the failure of the 31st Regiment Command to send reinforcements, causing the UN to order its abandonment. This preliminary fight exposed Pork Chop to three-sided attack, and, for the next three weeks, PVA patrols probed it nightly.

On the night of 16 April Com-

pany E, 31st Infantry (1st Lt. Thomas U. Harrold) manned Pork Chop Hill. Shortly before midnight, an artillery barrage foreshadowed a sudden infantry assault by a battalion of the PVA 201st Regiment; Pork Chop Hill was quickly overrun, although pockets of US soldiers defended isolated bunkers. Elsewhere in the sector, other positions were attacked, pressuring the entire 7th Division.

31st Infantry counter-attack

Company K (1st Lt. Joseph G. Clemons) and Company L (1st Lt. Forrest J. Crittendon), 31st Infantry, in reserve behind the MLR, were ordered to counter-attack and began their attack at 04h30 on 17 April.

By dawn they reached the main trenches on top of the hill but suffered almost 50% casualties, and half of Company L's troops had not been able to leave the trenches of an adjacent outpost, Hill 200.

Lt. Clemons, in tactical command of the assault, requested reinforcement. 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment was already attached to the 31st Infantry and its Company G (1st Lt. Walter B. Russell Jr., who was Clemons's brother-in-law) was immediately sent forward, linking up with Company K at 08h30.

All three companies were subjected to almost continuous shelling by PVA artillery as they cleared bunkers and dug in again.

Through a series of radiocommunications between command echelons, Division headquarters ordered Russell's company to withdraw at 15h00 after they

too had suffered heavy losses, and did not realize the extent of casualties among the other two companies.

By the time the situation was clarified the companies of the 31st Infantry were down to a combined 25 survivors. Maj. Gen. Trudeau, by then on scene, authorized Col. Kern to send in a fresh company to relieve all elements on Hill 255 and placed him in tactical command with both the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 17th Infantry attached and at his direction.

17th Infantry counter-attack

Kern sent forward Company F, 17th Infantry (Captain Monroe D. King), which started up the hill at 21h30 under heavy artillery fire but reached the trenches at 22h00, suffering 19 killed in the process. Kern at 23h00 then ordered Company E, 17th Infantry (1st Lt. Gorman C. Smith), to move up to reinforce Company F. Smith, to avoid the bulk of the artillery fire, moved around the right flank of the hill and up the side facing the PVA positions.

Company K, 31st Infantry had incurred 125 casualties, including 18 killed, of its original 135 men. After twenty hours of steady combat the remaining seven members started off the hill singly just after midnight of 17/18 April and withdrew without further losses. Several of Company L's survivors remained with the relief troops to familiarize them with the layout of the hill defences.

During the early morning of 18 April, the PVA 201st Regiment renewed its attack at 01h30 and again inflicted heavy

losses on the defenders, nearly overrunning Company F in battalion strength. The timely counter-attack by Company E, 17th Infantry caught the PVA by surprise on their flank and ended the organized assault. The 141st Division renewed attacks in company strength at 03h20 and 04h20, but did not gain further ground.

At dawn on 18 April, an additional US rifle company (Company A, 17th Infantry) climbed the hill to reinforce the 2nd Battalion companies. Together the three companies spent the bulk of the day clearing the trenches and bunkers of all hiding PVA and securing the hilltop. The battle ended that afternoon.

UN artillery had fired over 77,000 rounds in support of the three outposts attacked, including nearly 40,000 on Pork Chop Hill alone on 18 April; the PVA expended a similar amount.

Tactics and losses

Both the PVA and US infantry assaulted the hill initially under cover of a moonless night. Each used a heavy preparatory artillery barrage to force the defenders to take cover in bunkers and to screen the approach of the attacking troops.

PVA forces used rapid movement and infiltration tactics to close quickly on the trenches and surprise the defenders, while the US forces used grazing fire to limit defensive small arms fire, then manoeuvred systematically up the hillsides under shellfire. Neither side employed supporting fire from tanks or armoured personnel carriers (APC) to protect attacking troops.



WAITING FOR THE ATTACK: US troops strengthen their defences while awaiting another Chinese attack.

Once inside the trench line, troops of both forces were forced to eliminate bunkers individually, using hand grenades, explosive charges and occasionally flame throwers, resulting in heavy casualties to the attackers. For the UN forces, infiltration of cleared bunkers by bypassed PVA was a problem throughout the battle and hand-to-hand combat was a frequent occurrence.

Evacuation of casualties was made hazardous by almost continuous artillery fires from both sides. The 7th Division made extensive use of tracked M-39 APCs to evacuate casualties and to protect troops involved in the resupply of water, rations, and ammunition, losing one during the battle.

In addition the UN forces employed on-call, pre-registered defensive fires called flash fire to defend its outposts, in which artillery laid down an almost continuous box barrage in a horseshoe-shaped pattern

around the outpost to cover all approaches from the PVA side of the main line of resistance.

US losses were 104 dead, including 63 in the 31st Infantry with only seven survivors, 31 in the 17th Infantry and 10 among engineers and artillery observers, and 373 wounded. PVA losses were unknown.

Second battle 6–11 July

The 7th Division rebuilt its defences on Pork Chop Hill in May and June 1953, during a lull in major combat. Final agreements for an armistice were being hammered out and the UN continued its defensive posture all along the MLR, anticipating a ceasefire in place.

On the night of 6 July, using tactics identical to those in the April assault, the PVA again attacked Pork Chop. The hill was now held by Company A, 17th Infantry, under the temporary command of 1st Lt. Alton Jr. McElfresh, its executive officer.

Company B of the same reg-

iment, in ready reserve behind the adjacent Hill 200, was immediately ordered to assist, but within an hour, Company A reported hand-to-hand combat in the trenches. A major battle was brewing and division headquarters ordered a third company to move up.

The battle was fought in a persistent monsoon rain for the first three days, making both resupply and evacuation of casualties difficult. The battle is notable for its extensive use of APCs in both these missions.

On the second night, the PVA made a new push to take the hill, forcing the 7th Division to again reinforce. Parts of four companies defended Pork Chop under a storm of artillery fire from both sides. At dawn of 8 July, the rain temporarily ended and the initial defenders were

withdrawn. A fresh battalion, the 2nd Battalion of the 17th, counter-attacked and re-took the hill, setting up a night defensive perimeter.

7th Division counter-attacks

On both 9 and 10 July, the two sides attacked and counter-attacked. A large part of both PVA divisions were committed to the battle, and ultimately five battalions of the 17th and 32nd Infantry Regiments were engaged, making nine counter-attacks over four days. On the morning of 11 July, the commander of US I Corps decided to abandon Pork Chop Hill to the PVA and the 7th Division withdrew under fire.

Results and losses

Four of the thirteen US company commanders were killed.

Total US casualties were 243 killed, 916 wounded, and 9 captured. 163 of the dead were never recovered.

Of the Republic of Korea Army KATUSA troops attached to the 7th, approximately 15 were killed and 120 wounded. PVA casualties were estimated at 1,500 dead and 4,000 wounded.

According to Chinese sources, 6,800 soldiers of 67th division were involved in 1953 summer battles for five days, among them 533 were killed and 1,242 were wounded.

Less than three weeks after the Battle of Pork Chop Hill, the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed by the UN, PVA and North Korean Korean People's Army, ending the hostilities.





The cold war has just turned hot, and Regimental Commander Matt “Chaos and Confusion” O’Brien is about to break the temperature gauge.

Over the past few months I’ve spent quite a bit of time playing ‘War-game: Red Dragon’.

While I’ve found it to be a good game, it does have a pretty steep learning curve. It also tends to have a good deal of micro-management.

My main problem with this is that it can get a bit confusing when you’re trying to control too many units. You’re busy trying to sort out a situation in one sector, only to find that you’ve been overrun in four other sectors.

Then on 16 August MicroProse released ‘Regiments’, a new Real-Time Tactics game that has been developed by Bird’s Eye Games.

And so far I must confess that I’m really enjoying the game. It’s fairly similar to Wargame, but with a lot less micro-management. In my opinion it makes the game a lot easier to control.

The game is set in 1989 and the Warsaw Pact has invaded West Germany. World War III is about to kick off.

Currently it is a single-player game and I’m not sure whether multi-player or co-op game play will be introduced in the future.

It features a plot-focused campaign of several operations

that tells a complex story of warfare around the Inner German border from multiple perspectives.

You can play either as the Warsaw Pact forces or the NATO forces.

There are seven diverse operations, each encompassing up to several days of fighting. You will need to fight tactical battles, manage limited resources in the lulls between combat, make operational decision, and lead your regiment to victory. Trust me that this is a lot easier said than done.

If you play as the NATO forces you will start out with West German regiments, brigades and task forces. Later on you will get access to American, Belgium and United Kingdom forces.

The Warsaw Pact forces comprise of the Soviet Union and East Germany.

When you start the game you are allocated a number of command points. You then use these to set up, or ‘buy’ your initial forces.

You can choose from various unit types such as mechanised infantry, armour, engineers, scouts, anti-aircraft, artillery, support vehicles and, later on, aircraft. Each of these has tasks that they are good at.

Scouts are vital to your force-

es. They are able to travel much faster than other vehicles and can use the terrain to remain hidden.

They are excellent for going ahead of your main force and spotting enemy units. They can also call in artillery and air strikes.

The disadvantage of scout units is that they are not well protected. If they are discovered they can be destroyed very quickly.

Infantry can be dismounted from their vehicles, but they are not able to split up or move too far away from the vehicle. They are good at taking on other infantry units and, if armed with anti-tank weapons, they can cause havoc against armour.

Engineers are also very useful. They can set up defences such as sandbags, tank barriers and barbed wire. They are also essential for repairing vehicles that have been damaged.

Troops and vehicles use ammo, and vehicles use fuel. A troop or vehicle without ammo is little more than an ornament, and a vehicle without fuel is going nowhere and becomes little more than a target.

To resupply units with ammo and fuel, you will need a supply vehicle. You will need to move troops and vehicles close enough to a supply vehicle. The



other option is to bring your supply vehicle to them. Always take into account that your supply vehicles have little protection and are extremely vulnerable to attack.

Another important asset is a command vehicle. These are used to coordinate and rally units. Some of them are combat vehicles and can take part in the firefight, others are unarmed headquarters platforms.

Aircraft are part of the Air Force and do not fall under your direct control. You can, however, request an air strike. Every faction in the game has access to aircraft. The Warsaw Pact has the Su-22, the Soviets have the Su-25, the USA the A-10 Warthog, West Germany the Alpha Jet, the UK the Harrier GR.3, and Belgium the Mirage 5BA.

Helicopters are potent weapons when they are available. Most of them are armed with rockets or ATGM (Anti-tank Guided Missiles) and some carry both.

The United Kingdom does not have access to any helicopters for some reason. While the USA has the heavily armed AH-64A Apache and AH-1F Cobra, they also have the OH-58D Kiowa. This is not armed, but has good speed and manoeuvrability. They are excellent at finding the enemy and calling in artillery strikes.

Regiments is a pretty good game and so far I am enjoying it. If you want to be victorious in a campaign or battle, you will have to use the right tactics.

There is a tutorial and I strongly suggest you play through this first. It shows you the basics of how to control your forces and give them orders.

Another useful feature is the Skirmish Mode. Here you can set up individual battles and it’s another good way to learn the ropes before tackling the full campaign.

There is also something that they call the ‘Regipedia’. This shows you call the vehicles and troops that each force can use,

and it also gives you a load of information on each.

The graphics are decent, the terrain looks good, and there is a day/night cycle.

All in all this is a game that I can recommend and is great for those just starting out with Real Time Tactics games.



Publisher - MicroProse Software

Genre - Real Time Tactics

Score - 8/10

Price - R175 (on Steam)



Movie Review

The Cockleshell Heroes

Released: 1955
Running time: 97 minutes
Directed by: José Ferrer

Produced in 1955, just ten years after World War II had ended, this British film is a fictionalised account of Operation Frankton.

Using folding kayaks, a group of Royal Marine Commandos infiltrate Bordeaux Harbour in France to blow up shipping.

The film was produced by Cubby Broccoli, who would later go on to produce the James Bond franchise.

José Ferrer plays newly promoted Major Stringer of the Royal Marines, who comes up with a novel idea for a raid.

By using collapsible canoes, he believes it is possible for commandos to reach an enemy-held harbour undetected and blow up ships with limpet mines. He is given command of a small group of volunteers.

However, he clashes with his veteran second-in-command, cynical, by-the-book Captain Hugh Thompson (Trevor Howard).

The two officers represent the clash of cultures in the Royal Marines in the Second World War and postwar. Stringer is the enthusiastic promoter of commando operations requiring daring and initiative, but has no experience leading men or operations.

Thompson represents the old guard of traditional ship's detachments. Sergeant Craig (Victor Maddern) trains the men

following Stringer's directions, but Thompson strongly disapproves of his commander's lax methods. When a test mission ends disastrously, Stringer admits his mistake and turns to Thompson, who soon whips the marines into shape.

Part of their training involves the men being dressed in German uniform and parachuted into Scotland. They then have to make their way back to their base. Some of the methods they employ are really fun to watch.

The raid is launched soon afterwards by submarine in HMS Tuna under the Command of Lieutenant-Commander Dick Raikes DSO (Christopher Lee).

The commandos are inserted into sea close to the mouth of the Gironde river in their collapsible klepper canoes as Raikes resubmerges and HMS Tuna disappears.

As the swimmer canoeists arrive off the Gironde estuary a depth charge attack by a passing German patrol boat knocks out Ruddock's partner.

Thompson, who was not supposed to go on the raid, volunteers to take his place.

The raiders then disembark and begin their attack. Following hard routine they now face seventy miles of arduous paddling upriver in their Cockle Mk II canoes.

After moving by night and hiding by day, only four crews

reach the target, where they plant limpet mines on a number of German cargo ships. All this during harsh December weather.

The raid is successful, but only Stringer and Clarke manage to escape. Four (including Thompson and Ruddock) are captured while the other four are killed on the way to the docks.

When Thompson and the other prisoners refuse to divulge what their mission was, they are shot by firing squad, but not before hearing the mines explode.

While its not that easy to get hold of a copy of this movie, it's well worth watch it if you can find it.



Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

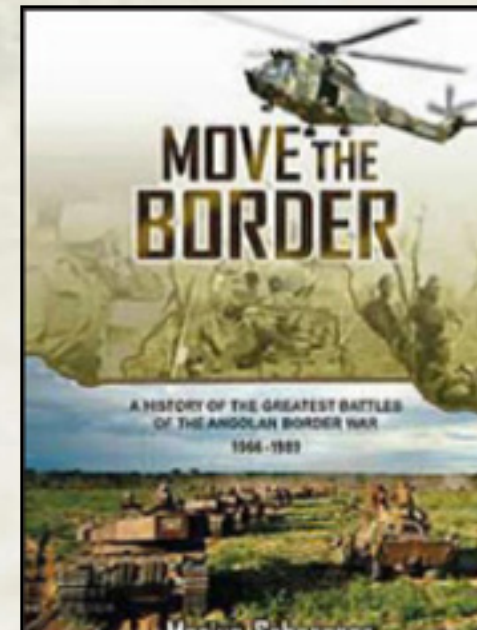
Move the Border

An account which strives to place the war which South Africa fought in Angola in a historically meaningful perspective. Although the conflict initially centered on the opposing agendas of the SADF and People's Liberation Army of Namibia of SWAPO, it was to escalate and take on an international Cold War character as Angolan, Cuban, and Soviet protagonists appeared on the stage of the unfolding drama.

Apart from the political resolution which was subsequently achieved in South Africa, the war represented the last African liberation struggle for independence from colonial rule.

The aim of this book is to present a concise history of the Angolan Border War from 1966 to

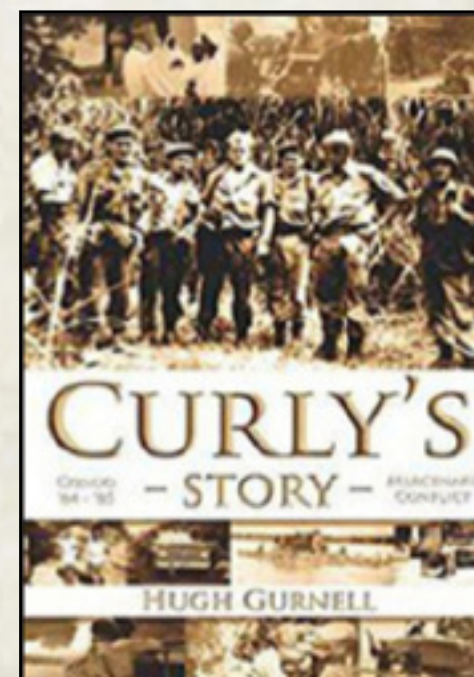
1989. It supplements previous books which have covered periods of the war by breaking the entire duration of the conflict down into six distinctive phases and meticulously reconstructing twenty specific military operations in Angola which changed the course of the war. The perspective which the strategy affords should enable readers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the individual phases of the war and the context which they provide for its final outcome. Two highly significant events of the war, the battles of Cuvelai (1983/84) and the battle at Indungo (1987), are subjected to particular scrutiny in the overall narrative. The battle at Indungo has been relatively neglected by writers and historians prior to



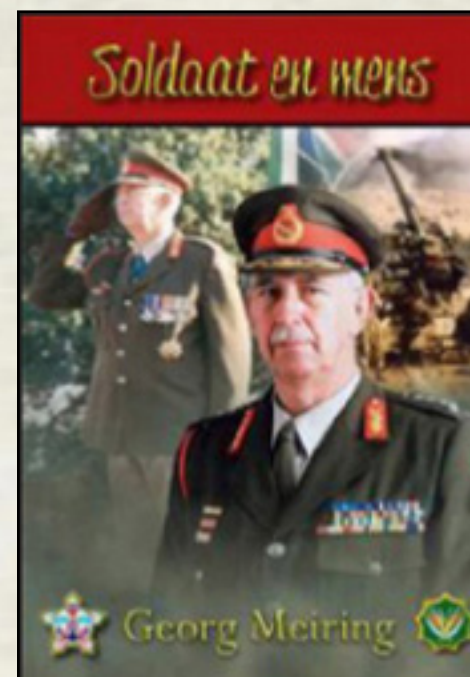
the publication of this book.

The information included in some six chapters of this book forms part of a dissertation for the degree M SocSci at the University of Pretoria.

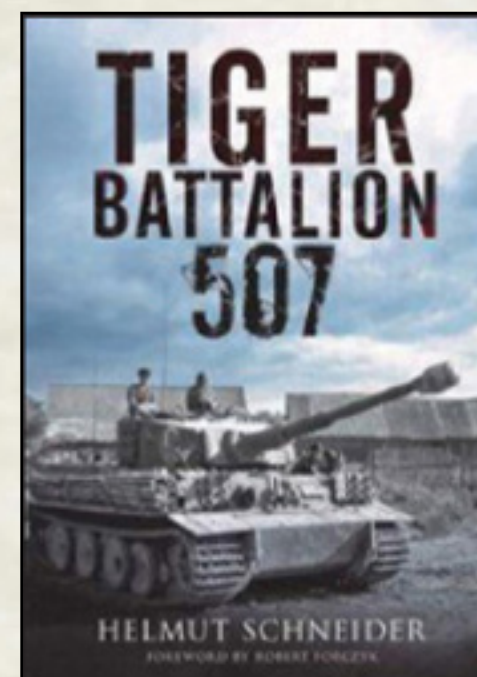
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Some of the significant military events that happened in April. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of April.

1 April

- **1865** - During the American Civil War, Confederate troops of General George Pickett were defeated and cut off at Five Forks, Virginia. This sealed the fate of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's armies at Petersburg and Richmond and hastened the end of the war.
- **1893** - USN establishes the rate of Chief Petty Officer.
- **1913** - South African Police (SAP) is founded.
- **1922** - The South African Naval Service is founded. With the ships the Protea, Sonneblom and Immortelle it formed the nucleus of a South African navy.
- **1933** - Heinrich Himmler becomes Police Commander of Germany.
- **1943** - Japanese aircraft attack the Russell Islands.
- **1945** - Okinawa: 60,000 U.S. soldiers and Marines land, on Easter Sunday.
- **1945** - US First & Ninth Armies meet to form the Ruhr pocket.
- **1954** - The US Army forms its first helicopter battalion at Fort Bragg.
- **1955** - The Greek nationalist EOKA movement makes several bomb attacks against British facilities in Cyprus.
- **1960** - France detonates her second atom bomb, in the Sahara.
- **1967** - JARIC, voted best support unit of the SA Air Force 2003, is established as a section of the Central Phototechnical Establishment (CPE), initially based at AFB Swartkop.
- **1977** - An unsuccessful military coup is staged in Chad.
- **1985** - Rifleman Daniel Aupini from 201 Battalion SWATF was killed when struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 22.
- **1985** - Rifleman D. Haupindi from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 21.
- **1986** - Special Constable Andrek Mwandinovanhu from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.
- **1989** - South Africa reports major clashes with guerrillas in Namibia on eve of ceasefire.
- **1989** - Five members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action. The casualties were: Special Constable George Dawid (24). Special Constable Mathais Lukas (29). Special Constable Uutafehe Rjipo-

sa (27). Special Constable Daniel Sakaria (28). Special Constable Zaako Uaapulatena (25).

- **1994** - Soldiers roll into Natal to quell unrest threatening the national election.
- **1997** - The strike crafts SAS Kobie Coetzee, P.W. Botha and Frederic Creswell are renamed SAS Job Maseko, SAS Shaka and SAS Adam Kok on the occasion of the Navy's 75th anniversary.
- **2002** - The South African Navy (SAN) is 80 years old.
- **2003** - USMC Task Force Tarawa secures An Nasiriyah in Iraq after a hot week-long fight.

2 April

- **1879** - Relief of British garrison besieged by Zulus at Eshowe.
- **1879** - The battle of Gingindlovu during the Anglo-Zulu War takes place. The British defeat Cetshwayo and the kraal is destroyed.
- **1904** - Herero tribesmen near Okaharui, German West Africa (now Namibia) defeat German forces under Major Von Glasenapp.
- **1916** - German Zeppelins bomb a distillery in Rosyth, causing a flood of fine whiskey.
- **1917** - US President Wilson asks Congress to declare war against Germany.
- **1941** - German Afrika Korps, commanded by General

Erwin Rommel, take Agedabia and Zuetania, Libya.

- **1941** - Nazi occupiers disband the Dutch Boy Scouts.
- **1943** - Allied air raid on Tunis causes considerable damage just before Axis troops start their final withdrawal from Tunisia.
- **1952** - The United States posthumously awards SA Cheetah Squadron pilot, Lieutenant R.M. du Plooy, with the Silver Star for "gallantry in action". Du Plooy was killed the previous year in the Korean War.
- **1957** - The Union Jack is lowered and British occupation of Simon's Town comes to an end after 143 years. South Africa takes formal possession of the historic base.
- **1978** - Rifleman Carvalho Esals from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in Southern Angola during a contact with enemy forces near Omalappapa. He was 26.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Ean Andrew Chapman Pettit from H Company, 1 Parachute Battalion was accidentally killed after he and his section were extracted from a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. Their Buffel Troop carrier overturned while travelling at high speed and he was thrown out and crushed by the vehicle when it rolled onto him. He was 19.
- **1982** - The beginning of the Falkland Islands War as troops from Argentina invaded and occupied the British colony located near the tip of South America. The British retaliated and defeated the Argentineans on June 15, 1982, after ten weeks of combat, with about 1,000 lives lost.
- **1983** - Gunner Lodewyk Jozef Engelbrecht from 4 Artillery Regiment attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion during operations against SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in the Tsumeb area. He was 19.
- **1984** - Gunner Alfred Lokington Tomes from 17 Field Regiment was critically wounded during a contact with the enemy forces in Southern Angola on 29 Mar 1984. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria where he succumbed to his wounds on 2 April 1984. He was 27.
- **1984** - Four South Africans and a British national charged with illegally ex-

porting military equipment to South Africa.

- **1987** - A US State Department report says Israel, France and Italy have continued to maintain and upgrade a major weapons systems for South Africa since the 1977 UN arms embargo was imposed.
- **1987** - Rifleman Domingos Cassela from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in a contact with enemy forces near Evale in Southern Angola during Operation Kakebeen. He was 27.
- **1987** - Rifleman N. Ngombe from 102 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 23.
- **1988** - 2nd Lieutenant Jacobus Hendrick Diedericks from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 24.
- **1988** - Two members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Sergeant Kandjunga Tenaseu (27). Special Sergeant Usebiu Ndemwimba (29).
- **1989** - Rifleman Marius van der Merwe from 32 Battalion was Reported Missing while on patrol near Buffalo. He went for a swim amongst the



Erwin Rommel

reeds and it is thought that he was taken by a crocodile. He remains unaccounted for and has no known grave. He was 21.

- 1989 - Ten members of the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) Units were killed during a number of contacts with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. The casualties were: Special Warrant Officer Leonard Benjamin (34) Sergeant Sarel Hercules van Tonder (25). Special Sergeant Daniel Teteiko (25). Constable Johannes Jacobus Badenhorst (24). Constable Leon Thorne (21). Special Constable Nambahu Abiatal (27). Special Constable Joseph Andreas (29). Special Constable Thomas Johannes (26). Special Constable Filippus Joseph (24). Special Constable Muyunga Kakonyi (28). Special Constable Fernando Tyipoya (25). Special Constable Aktofel Silvanus (26).

3 April

- 1865 - The Confederate capital of Richmond surrendered to Union forces after the withdrawal of General Robert E. Lee's troops.
- 1900 - The battle of Mostertshoek, near Reddersburg, takes place. The beginning of a two-day battle between General De Wet's forces (400 men, no artillery) and British encamped behind stone breastworks on the

heights of Mostertshoek. De Wet sends a note to the British demanding their surrender and claims to have three Krupp guns and reinforcements on the way.

- 1900 - General P.A. Cronje and his wife, with Colonel Adorf Schiel and about 1,000 Republican prisoners of war, sails from Cape Town for St Helena.
- 1941 - The British forces evacuate Benghazi, major seaport of north-eastern Libya, in the face of the German advance. Date given as 7 April 1941 in another source.
- 1942 - Bataan: Japanese launch a major offensive.
- 1944 - British bombers attack the German battleship 'Tirpitz' in Norwegian waters.
- 1945 - USSR renounces April '41 non-aggression pact with Japan.
- 1974 - Ordinary Seaman Leonard Arthur Farmer from SAS Saldanha was accidentally killed during basic training while doing pole PT. He had to hold the pole behind his head and do press-ups. The pole slipped and fell on his head, severely injuring him. He died a short while later. He was 18.
- 1977 - Rifleman Carel Hendrik Kotze from the South Coast Commando was accidentally killed during training manoeuvres at Umtentweni. He was 32.
- 1978 - Rifleman Steven Dennis Oscar Pearson from 5 SAI Died of Wounds re-

ceived when his patrol was ambushed by SWAPO/PLAN insurgents.

- 1981 - Rifleman Hendrik Kasper Jordaan from SWA SPES Unit SWATF was Killed in Action while attached to 53 Battalion out on a patrol north of Etale. When returning to base, the patrol crossed Oom Willie se pad and one of the horses detonated an Anti-Tank mine, killing him instantly. He was 20.
- 1982 - Rifleman Lourens Maritz Bieldt from Infantry School was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned approximately 20 km outside Oshakati. He was 21.
- 1982 - Captain Michael Norman Amos Giani from Army Intelligence, attached to 72 Motorised Brigade, was killed in a military vehicle accident at Muldersdrift. He was 30.
- 1982 - Security Council demands Argentina withdraw from the Falkland Islands.
- 1985 - Rifleman Heilia Mikael from 101 Battalion SWATF was accidentally killed in Southern Angola when a Casspir Armoured Vehicle drove over him while he was sleeping. He was 19.
- 1985 - Special Constable Johannes Tjiposa from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.

- 1986 - Lance Corporal Jan Hendrik Labuschagne from the Technical Service Corps was killed when struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 23.
- 1989 - Constable Daniel Johannes Jacobus Fourie from Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was killed in action. He was 25.

4 April

- 1884 - Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto was born in Nagaoko, Honshu.
- 1900 - The battles of Reddersburg, where the Boers under Gen. De Wet defeat the Royal Irish Rifles, and Mostertshoek, take place. British surrender at Mostert's Hoek. Boer forces capture nearly 500 Lee-Metford rifles.
- 1902 - Second Anglo-Boer War. The siege of Okiep in Namaqualand starts as Gen. Smuts demands the surrender of the town but is curtly rejected by Col. W.A.D.



Isoroku Yamamoto

Shelton, commander of the British forces.

- 1940 - Katyn Forest: The Soviets begin mass executions of Polish military officers, police officials, and intellectuals, about 20,000 die over several weeks.
- 1941 - Rommel takes Benghazi.
- 1943 - The US 4th Marine Division is established at San Diego.
- 1945 - Heavy fighting begins in southern Okinawa.
- 1945 - Hungary liberated from Nazi occupation.
- 1949 - Twelve nations signed the treaty creating NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The nations united for common military defense against the threat of expansion by Soviet Russia into Western Europe.
- 1961 - UN troops defending an airfield in Katanga province, Congo (now Democratic Republic of Congo), are attacked by 'mobs'.
- 1978 - Barend Hendrik Janse van Rensburg (Ben) (80), founder of the War Museum in Bloemfontein, dies.
- 1978 - Two members of SWA SPES accidentally drowned in the Olifants River near Doornkop. They were: Rifleman Wayne Darrell Norman Meyers (18). Rifleman Marius van Zyl (20).
- 1980 - ANC insurgents launch a rifle, rocket and grenade attack on Booyens Po-

lice Station, Johannesburg. Pamphlets are scattered demanding the release of Walter Sisulu from Robben Island.

- 1986 - Second Lieutenant Izak Johan Lourens from 911 Battalion SWATF died in the Opuwa Hospital after contracting Meningitis & Malaria. He was 19.
- 1986 - Corporal Alfonso Alberto from 32 Battalion died from causes unknown. He was 27.
- 1987 - Corporal Fernandez Andre from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces near Evale in Southern Angola during Operation Kakebeen. He was 26.
- 1988 - SADF Gaborone raid kills four.
- 1989 - Corporal Hermann Carstens from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during fierce fighting with a numerically superior force of heavily armed SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Eenhana. He was 20.
- 1989 - Three members from 101 Battalion Romeo Mike, SWATF were Killed in Action during fierce fighting in Northern Owamboland as 101 Battalion Romeo Mike and Koevoet elements continued to intercept and engage large groups of very heavily armed SWAPO/PLAN insurgents crossing into Owamboland from Southern Angola. The casualties in this contact were: Rifleman E. Anunyela. (26).

- Rifleman J. Mandume (24). Rifleman N. Kapentse (23).
- **1989** - Lieutenant Christiaan Phillipus Els from 1 Special Service Battalion Died in Hospital at Ruacana from Wounds sustained during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Ongandjera on 03 April 1989. He was 20.

5 April

- **1900** - Combat-General Georges-Henri Anne Marie Victor Compte de Villebois-Mareuil, a former commander in the French Foreign Legion, makes a valiant last stand against the British at Boshof and is killed. He tried to attack the nearby railway with a force of 75 foreign volunteers (mostly French and Dutch) and eleven burghers but was trapped by General Lord Methuen and a force of over 750, assisted by four field-guns. De Villebois-Mareuil's men attempt to escape whilst he makes his stand but are captured.
- **1916** - Battle of El Hanna: Unsuccessful British attempt to break the Turkish siege of Kut.
- **1939** - Germany: "Aryan" youth ordered to join the *Hitlerjugend*.
- **1942** - Eighty-six South Africans survive a Japanese attack on the HMS Cornwall near the coast of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).
- **1948** - As riots rage around Cairo, the Egyptian army kills twenty-five civilians.
- **1964** - Douglas MacArthur dies at the age of 84.
- **1979** - Special Constable Wilino Shamoketa from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 28.
- **1979** - Captain Martin Charles Silberbauer from 85 Combat Flying School was killed during a training exercise at the Roodewal Bombing Range near Pietersburg when his Dassault Mirage IID2Z struck the ground while trying to recover after carrying out a practice rocket attack. He was 28.
- **1983** - Private Patrick Cornelius Engel from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed when his Withings recovery vehicle collided into the rear of a stationary vehicle at Oshivello. He was 19.
- **1984** - Rifleman Joseph Sindimba from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 23.
- **1986** - A bomb exploded at a popular discotheque frequented by American military personnel in West Berlin, killing two U.S. soldiers and a Turkish woman. American intelligence analysts attributed the attack to Muammar Qaddafi of Libya. Nine days later, President Ronald Reagan ordered a retaliatory

- air strike against Libya.
- **1988** - Special Constable Uakandjangu Tjiumbu from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.
- **1996** - Heavy fighting in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia, leaves seventeen dead.

6 April

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Lord Methuen buries Combat-General De Villebois-Mareuil with full military honours. 1500 men of the Loyal North Lancshires form the Guard of Honour.
- **1916** - German parliament approves unrestricted submarine warfare
- **1917** - Following a vote by Congress approving a declaration of war, the U.S. entered World War I in Europe.
- **1939** - Great Britain & Poland sign military pact.
- **1941** - The SA Brigade enters Addis Ababa during World War II.
- **1941** - Germans bomb Belgrad, 17,000 reportedly die.
- **1943** - The British and US armies link up in Africa.
- **1944** - The Supreme Allied Commander cancels all further military leaves throughout the British Isles, in preparation for D-Day.
- **1977** - Rifleman S. Henrique

- from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 29.
- **1981** - Rifleman Petrus Jacobus Venter from SWA SPES Unit SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut Line. He was 23.
- **1982** - Rifleman Hymje Landsman from 8 SAI was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident in Eastern Kavan-goland. He was 19.
- **1983** - Corporal I.S. Kamunoko from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 23.
- **1984** - The elite republican guard mounts an unsuccessful coup against President Paul Biya of Cameroon.
- **1987** - Private Russell Joseph Brissett from 1 Medical Battalion Group was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident in Mamelodi during Operation Xenon. He was 23.



Paul Biya

- **1996** - Thousands of Liberians flee their homes amid fierce fighting between government troops and members of an ethnic faction.
- ## 7 April
- **1917** - US Navy takes over all wireless stations for the duration of World War I.
 - **1945** - The Japanese battleship Yamato is sunk by American carrier-based bombers and torpedo bombers with the loss of most of her crew.
 - **1966** - US recovers lost H-bomb from sea off Palomares, Spain.
 - **1984** - Rifleman Daniel Stephanus Venter from 1 Parachute Battalion was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion during anti-insurgent operations just north of the Cut-line. He was 22.
 - **1985** - Special Sergeant Sakaria Naholo from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 32.
 - **1985** - Rifleman Willem Jacobus Du Randt from 3 SAI Oscar Company (Mortars) was Reported Missing after being attacked by a crocodile approximately 1km below the Epupa Falls where he and others in his

section were swimming. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 20.

- **1989** - Soviet submarine 'K-278 Komsomolets' sinks after a fire in the Norwegian Sea, 42 die.
- **1994** - Rampaging troops kill Rwanda's acting premier and eleven Belgian UN soldiers and civil war erupts in Rwanda, a day after a mysterious plane crash claimed the lives of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi.
- **1997** - Government soldiers in Lubumbashi, Zaire's second largest city lay down their arms and join the cause of rebels advancing on the city.

8 April

- **1940** - Royal Navy destroyer HMS Glowworm is sunk after a gallant fight with the German heavy cruiser Admiral Hipper.
- **1945** - Okinawa: Marines probe Japanese lines on the Motobu Peninsula.
- **1950** - Unarmed US Navy patrol plane is shot down over the Baltic Sea by Soviet aircraft.
- **1958** - Corporal Francois Willem Bornman from 4th Field Regiment died from injuries received in a collision between a car and a train at the Meyer Street level crossing at Potchefstroom. He was 22.
- **1980** - Lieutenant Christo Stephan Grundling from 2 Field Engineer Regiment

was killed in a military vehicle accident at Impala Base. He was 20.

- **1980** - Rifleman Lesley Andrew Scholtz from 3 SAI was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Kavangoland. He was 20.
- **1981** - Omar Bradley, the "Soldier's General," last US 5-star officer, dies at the age of 88.
- **1986** - Two members from 101 Battalion were Killed in Action during a Contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. They were: Corporal Noag Kavari (23). Rifleman Joao Domingos (26).
- **1988** - Staff Sergeant Marius Horn from 5 SAI was killed while returning in a convoy from Eshowe. He was 27.
- **1988** - Lance Corporal Carlos Thomas Moon from the South African Cape Corps was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 21.
- **1997** - Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko declares a nationwide state of emergency in response to rebel advances.

9 April

- **1868** - After over 500,000 American deaths, the Civil War effectively ended as General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant in the village of Appomattox Court House. The surrender occurred in the

home of Wilmer McLean. Terms of the surrender, written by General Grant, allowed Confederates to keep their horses and return home. Officers were allowed to keep their swords and side arms.

- **1917** - After a massive mine explosion, Canadian troops storm Vimy Ridge, initiating the Battle of Arras.
- **1940** - Germany invades Denmark, which promptly surrenders.
- **1940** - Germany invades Norway.
- **1944** - Japan offers to mediate peace between Germany and Russia.
- **1945** - RAF sinks Pocket Battleship Admiral Scheer in port.
- **1945** - Wilhelm Canaris, German admiral and chief of the *Abwehr*, the German military intelligence service, was executed in Flossenbürg concentration camp for high treason on the orders of Adolf Hitler.
- **1965** - Lance Corporal Johannes Burger from the South African Corps of Military Police was killed at Fochville when his motorcycle was involved in a collision with a vehicle while he was doing military convoy duty. He was 33.
- **1969** - Candidate Officer Marthinus Jacobus Hendrik Krugel from 4 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed near Leslie during a routine training flight. He was 22.

- **1976** - Corporal Michael Barnett from 2nd Battalion, Regiment Bloemspruit was killed when the bus he was driving was involved in a head-on collision with a civilian vehicle approximately 100km from Grootfontein. He was transporting school children from Grootfontein back to Rundu at the time of the accident. He was 22.
- **1977** - Rifleman Graham Werner Hempstead from 8 SAI was killed in a non-operational military vehicle accident in Northern Owamboland. He was 20.
- **1978** - Candidate Officer Fred Johan Forster from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was accidentally shot and killed at Katima Mulilo while participating in a "live fire" shooting exercise. He was 20.
- **1981** - Private Jacob Johannes Kotze from 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Tsumeb. He was 19.
- **1984** - Trooper Jacobus Francois Engels from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 19.
- **1987** - Corporal Charles Pierre Du Plessis from Walvis Bay Command was accidentally killed when he was crushed between two vehicles at Walvis Bay. He was 27.
- **1997** - Rebels in Zaire conquer Lubumbashi, second

largest city in the country.

- **1999** - Members of his own Presidential Guard gun down Niger's president, Ibrahim Bare Mainassara.
- **2003** - Corporal Edward Chin, US Marine Corps, plants the US and Free Iraq flags on the statue of Saddam Hussein in Firdos Square, Baghdad, which is then pulled down.

10 April

- **1918** - Near Toul, in eastern France, the 104th Infantry begins four days determined defense against a German assault, to become the first American regiment to be awarded the *Croix de guerre*.
- **1940** - First Battle of Narvik: Royal Navy destroyers defeat German destroyers, two of which are lost.
- **1942** - During World War II in the Pacific, the Bataan Death March began as American and Filipino prisoners were forced on a six-day march from an airfield on Bataan to a camp near Cabanatuan. Some 76,000 Allied POWs including 12,000 Americans



Omar Bradley

were forced to walk 60 miles under a blazing sun without food or water to the POW camp, resulting in over 5,000 American deaths.

- **1945** - The Nazi concentration camp at Buchenwald was liberated by U.S. troops.
- **1972** - The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxic Weapons and their Destruction, to which SA is a party, is signed in Moscow, London and Washington.
- **1975** - Sergeant Nicolaas Johannes Steyn from the Technical Service Corps, attached to the Rundu Military Base was killed instantly while travelling between Rundu and Katima Mulilo when, approximately 20km from Rundu, the rear tyre on his vehicle burst, causing the vehicle to leave the road and overturn. He was 27.
- **1978** - Rifleman S.M. Chicono from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 27.
- **1982** - Major Helmuth Adolf Kessler from 1 South West Africa Air Command Squadron SWATF was Killed in Action during Operation Yahoo while flying in support of Koevoet anti-insurgent operations in the Elundu area. He was 52.
- **1982** - Special Constable

Shitelgipo Hamukwaya from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.

- **1983** - Rifleman John Korneels Samson from the South African Cape Corps died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained. He was 19.
- **1985** - Rifleman Douw Gerbrand Du Plessis from 4 Reconnaissance Regiment accidentally drowned during a training exercise. He was 19.
- **1986** - Petty Officer Desmond John Pekeur from SAS Wingfield was killed near Schmidtsdrift when the rear tyre of his Landrover burst causing the vehicle to overturn. He was 29.
- **1991** - Though the government refused to comply with the ANC ultimatum issued on 5 April, defence minister Magnus Malan offers to resign if it is in the interests of SA or the SADF. He also announces the firing of Civilian Co-operation Bureau (CCB) head, Joe Verster and twenty-seven other members of the CCB.
- **1993** - Chris Hani, the leader of the South African Communist Party and chief of staff of *uMkhonto we Sizwe*, the armed wing of the African National Congress, is gunned down as he steps out of his car in the driveway of

his Boksburg home.

11 April

- **1838** - Zulu warriors ambush Petrus Lafras (Piet) Uys and his men at Italeini. Uys, his son Dirkie and seven of his followers are killed in battle.
- **1898** - US President McKinley asks for Declaration of War against Spain.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Kemp, in charge of the Lemmer, Du Toit, Liebenberg, Celliers, and Potgieter commandos (approximately 2,600 burghers), suffers a defeat at Roodewal, Transvaal, after attacking a British force of 11,000 men. Cmdt Potgieter and fifty burghers are killed.
- **1942** - Burma: Japanese begin a major offensive against the British.
- **1956** - France sends 200,000 reservists to Algeria.
- **1961** - Trial of Adolf Eichman begins in Israel.
- **1979** - Signaller Gerhardus Johannes Jacobus Senekal from Grootfontein Headquarters Signal Unit, attached to 52 Battalion was critically wounded while sitting on his bed at the Unit. He was 19.
- **1980** - Rifleman John Edward McEwan from 5 SAI was Killed after suffering a gunshot wound accidentally inflicted while attached to Alpha Company, 5 SAI. He was 18.
- **1982** - Sapper Brian Robert Gibbs from 2 Field Engineer Regiment attached to

the Army Battle School was killed instantly at Olifantshoek after receiving multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental rifle grenade explosion. He was 19.

- **1982** - Special Constable Pedro Sakaria from the SWA Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO Insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 28.
- **1986** - Special Constable Matias Vilho from the SWA Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO Insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.
- **1990** - Angolan Government agrees to begin peace talks with rebel group Unita in Portugal.
- **1991** - Major Robert Michael Turner from 85 Combat Flying School was killed after his Atlas MB326KM Impala Mk II suffered engine failure while on final approach to land at AFB Pietersburg. He ejected from the aircraft too late and directly into trees that killed him instantly. He was 34.

12 April

- **1861** - The American Civil War began as Confederate troops under the command of General Pierre Beauregard opened fire at 04:30 on Fort Sumter in Charleston,

South Carolina.

- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Peace negotiations commence in Pretoria between delegations of the Boer Republics and General Lord Kitchener and Alfred Milner. An initial request by the Boers to retain their independence is met with incredulity.
- **1945** - Okinawa: 150 kamikaze attack the Allied fleet, sinking one destroyer.
- **1966** - First B-52 raids on North Vietnam.
- **1972** - Private Willem Ockert van den Heever from North West Command Headquarters was killed in a military vehicle accident at Kroonstad. He was 19.
- **1972** - Sergeant Martin Christoffel Klue from the Army Service Corps, attached 4 Artillery Regiment Headquarters was killed after being knocked down by a civilian vehicle while standing by the roadside when their convoy stopped for a rest break while travelling between Bloemfontein and Potchefstroom. He was 46.
- **1975** - Atlas Corporation completes deliveries to the South African Air Force (SAAF) of a first series of Impala MK-2 jet fighters.
- **1978** - Gunner William Arthur Wienand from 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment was killed when his Unimog vehicle overturned in Kavanogoland. He was 18.
- **1979** - Corporal Willem Johannes de Beer from 3 SAI,

attached to 2 Special Service Battalion was accidentally killed in Zeerust after being knocked down by a civilian bus while on a weekend pass. He was 19.

- **1979** - Prime Minister P.W. Botha announces that three members of the staff of the United States Embassy in South Africa have been given a week to leave the country. They have photographed sensitive military installations by a secret camera installed in a diplomatic aircraft.
- **1986** - Rifleman Kefas Kalenga Dala from 32 Battalion died from Meningitis in the hospital at Buffalo. He was 24.

13 April

- **1846** - Xhosa tribesmen attack British forces at Burn's Hill in the Amatola, in the War of the Axe.
- **1868** - British forces under Robert Napier capture Magdala in Ethiopia.
- **1906** - Battle of Oviumbo: The Herero defeat the Germans.
- **1940** - Second Battle of Narvik: Royal Navy battleship

Warspite and accompanying destroyers sink eight German destroyers.

- **1941** - Heavy German attack on Tobruk.
- **1942** - Burma: the British Burma Corps breaks.
- **1943** - Katyn: Nazis find graves of 13,000 Polish officers killed by Soviets.
- **1945** - Soviets capture Vienna.
- **1950** - The Arab League signs a mutual defence treaty in Cairo.
- **1960** - France becomes fourth nuclear power, with an atomic bomb test in the Sahara.
- **1974** - Two members of 11 Squadron SAAF were Killed when their Cessna 185D crashed shortly after take-off from Mpalela Island in Eastern Caprivi during a ration re-supply flight for the South African Police. The casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant (Pilot) Jacobus Hendrik Louw Bonthuys (23). Private Johan Hugo Human (19).
- **1975** - A military coup in Chad overthrows President Ngarta Tombaloaye, who is killed. Felix Malloum takes over at the head of a seven-member junta.
- **1976** - Corporal Anton Leon Broodryk from 1 Parachute Battalion Died of Wounds received in a landmine explosion in Southern Angola while on patrol near the Cutline. He was 20.

• **1976** - Captain Granville Duvenhage from Benoni Commando suffered a fatal heart attack while on duty at Leydsdorp and died shortly afterwards. He was 26.

- **1976** - Rifleman Eugene Medhurst from 5 SAI was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 19.
- **1979** - Corporal Rian Rix from 11 Commando Regiment was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Okatope Base south of Ondangwa. This was his last patrol before going home from the Border. He was 18.
- **1979** - An attempt is made by Rhodesian forces to kill guerrilla leader Joshua Nkomo.
- **1982** - Rifleman Eugene James Ashford from 8 SAI was accidentally shot dead during live firing exercises at Riemvasmaak. He was 18.
- **1983** - A Defence Amendment Bill provides for an alternative form of national service for conscientious objectors, who oppose military service on religious grounds. The offer is not extended to objectors motivated by political values.
- **1987** - Private Frederick Wayne Childsmith from the Provost School was killed while standing in a "Ride Safe" zone on his way back from Weekend pass after completion of Basic Training when he was run over by an South African Police ve-



PW Botha

hicle driven by an underage scholar (the Senior Police Superintendent's son) who was not authorised to drive the vehicle. He was 18.

- 1988 - Captain H Pienaar from the South African Infantry Corps, attached to Group 70 Headquarters at Katima Mulilo was killed instantly after suffering fatal head injuries while driving to Windhoek to attend an Information/Intelligence Conference. He was 25.

14 April

- 1900 - Second Anglo-Boer War: The first Boer prisoners of war arrive at St Helena, on board of the Milwaukee.
- 1902 - Second Anglo-Boer War: Cmdt Jan H. Theron, Danie Theron's successor as commander of Theron's Scouts, dies of gastric fever in the Calvinia district, Namaqualand.
- 1914 - The first air attack on a warship: Mexican revolutionary pilot Gustavo Adolfo Salinas Camiña bombs the Federalista gunboat 'Guerro', at Topolobampo, Mexico, causing slight damage.
- 1940 - British and French troops land in Norway to help fight Germans.
- 1943 - The German Fifth Panzer Army under General Gustav von Vaerst begins to evacuate from Tunis. Rommel departed on 9 March.
- 1945 - Tokyo fire bomb raids: B-29s damage Imperial Palace.
- 1953 - Viet Minh offensive

in Laos.

- 1983 - Rifleman Barend Christoffel Dippenaar from the Infantry School was killed in a private vehicle accident on the Clocolan - Ladybrand road. He was 21.
- 1986 - U.S. warplanes, on orders from President Ronald Reagan, bombed the Libyan cities of Tripoli and Benghazi in retaliation for the April 5th terrorist bombing of a discotheque in West Berlin in which two American soldiers were killed.
- 1994 - Dissident soldiers shoot dead Lesotho's deputy prime minister and seize four cabinet ministers in a mutiny over a planned government probe into the army.

15 April

- 1936 - Italian forces occupy the Abyssinian town of Dessye, having advanced 201 kilometres in five days.
- 1942 - George VI awards the George Cross to the people of Malta.
- 1943 - US code breakers discover Admiral Yamamoto will visit the Solomon Islands.
- 1945 - British Army liberates Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.
- 1952 - First test flight of a prototype B-52.
- 1982 - Rifleman Brian Richard Buttland from the South African Cape Corps, attached to the Army Catering Corps died in hospital after contracting malaria in the Operational Area. He was

25.

- 1982 - Eight SADF and SWATF members attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group were Killed in Action when their Ratel was ambushed and knocked out by RPG-7 anti-tank rockets near Tsintsabis by a group of heavily armed SWAPO/PLAN insurgents during Ops Yahoo. The casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant Daniele Rudolf van der Westhuizen (49). Corporal Maartin Jacobus van Jaarsveld (20). Lance Corporal Johannes Jacobus van den Berg (20). Rifleman Leonard Patrick Hough (20). Rifleman Marius Petersen (19). Rifleman Johan Hendrik Potgieter (30). Rifleman Barend Jacobus Wolfaardt (19). Rifleman Jan Kouswab (40).
- 1983 - Nine recruits from 202 Battalion SWATF were murdered by SWAPO/PLAN Special Forces Typhoon Unit members in a Kraal in Northern Owamboland. The casualties were: Rifleman T. Sikwaya (18). Rifleman A. Mushambe (19). Rifleman V. Muyota (19). Rifleman T.K. Mukwambi (20). Rifleman M. Matamu (19). Rifleman V. Tobias (21). Rifleman L. Sindere (20). Rifleman F. Shikusho (20). Rifleman J. Muyevu (19).
- 1985 - South Africa's Foreign Minister announces that South African troop withdrawal from Angola is to be completed within a week.
- 1986 - US attempts an air

strike at Colonel Muammar Kadhafi's home in Libya in the biggest US air strike since the Vietnam War. Libya claims forty people have been killed. The US says the raids are in response to an explosion at a Berlin discotheque in which two Americans were killed on 5 April.

- 1990 - Rifleman Stoney van Wyk from the Cape Regiment was Killed in Action after being shot dead by persons unknown while on foot patrol during anti-riot operations in a township in Mpu-mulanga. He was 24.

16 April

- 1916 - The French Army forms the *Escadrille Americaine*.
- 1938 - Britain recognizes the Italian annexation of Abyssinia.
- 1944 - US begins planning "Operation Olympic" - the invasion of Japan.
- 1945 - US troops enter Nuremberg.
- 1947 - Rudolf Höss, 45, German SS commandant of Auschwitz, is hanged in Poland.



Ronald Reagan

- 1971 - Major Jan Wilhelm Arnhem Loubser from 1 Maintenance Unit was accidentally killed in a train accident at Kimberley. He was 42.
- 1981 - Two members from Infantry School were killed in a private vehicle accident on the National Highway near Richmond while on weekend pass. The casualties were: Corporal Cornelius Johannes Potgieter (19). Rifleman Jacobus Albertus Cilliers (18).
- 1982 - Rifleman Jan Daniels Gerhardus Du Toit from 1 SAI, attached to 61 Mech Battalion was Killed in Action during Ops Yahoo when he detonated a landmine during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 18.
- 1998 - The military commander of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Khalil al-Wazir, is assassinated in Tunisia. Israeli gunmen are blamed.

17 April

- 1838 - Zulu warriors near the Tugela River overwhelm Robert Biggar, leader of a force of about seventeen Englishmen, twenty Khoi with guns and about fifteen hundred Africans from around Port Natal. Thirteen of the English and most of their African followers are killed.

- 1916 - General Jan Christiaan Smuts, in charge of British, South African and Indian troops in Kenya, finally has the Germans on the run. Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck's troops (3,000 Europeans and 11,000 Askari) had heavily outnumbered the British East African Rifles.
- 1941 - Yugoslavia surrenders to the Germans.
- 1942 - Germans begin to destroy the Sobibor Concentration Camp.
- 1945 - Mussolini flees from Salo, heading for Milan.
- 1961 - A U.S.-backed attempt to overthrow Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba failed disastrously in what became known as the Bay of Pigs fiasco.
- 1975 - Khmer Rouge capture Phnom Penh, initiating a reign of terror.
- 1980 - Sergeant Carel Petrus Greyling HC from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident in the Eastern Caprivi. He was 33.
- 1981 - Corporal Clive Fisher from the Infantry School was killed in a private vehicle accident on the National road near Mossel Bay. He was 21.
- 1982 - Rifleman Derek Jurgens Deysel from 5 SAI was accidentally killed at the Jozini Training Base when he was struck by a bullet resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 20.
- 1983 - General Mark W

Clark, dies at the age of 87.

- **1984** - Rifleman Johann Christiaan Rheeder from the Infantry School was killed in a private vehicle accident on the Beaufort West - Richmond road. He was 19.
- **1984** - Two members from 7 SAI were killed at Nehone in Southern Angola after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental rifle grenade explosion. The casualties were: Corporal Phillipus Botha (20). Rifleman Cecil Rhodes Dippenaar (19).
- **1994** - Lance Corporal W.Z. Matwa from 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was accidentally killed during operations connected with Operation Jumbo. He was 22.

18 April

- **1934** - The U.S. Army ends use of sabers as a combat weapon for the cavalry.
- **1942** - The first air raid on mainland Japan during World War II occurred as General James Doolittle led a squadron of B-25 bombers taking off from the carrier Hornet to bomb Tokyo and three other cities. Damage was minimal, but the raid boosted Allied morale following years of unchecked Japanese military advances.
- **1983** - Two members from the SWA Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owam-

boland. They were: Special Sergeant Jacob Saulo (34). Special Constable Thimotheus Maritina (25).

- **1988** - Lance Corporal Piet-er Gerhardus Viljoen Du Toit from the South African Medical Corps, attached to 201 Battalion SWATF was killed in action. He was 19.
- **1988** - Major Lucas Frederick Lotter, the 53 Battalion SWATF Intelligence Officer, was Killed in Action in Southern Angola just north of Alpha Tower early / mid-evening while following enemy spoor. He was 29.
- **1988** - Rifleman Alberto Nunes Dinu from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 29.
- **1989** - Lance Corporal Bernardus Lambertus Saayman from 110 Air Commando Squadron SAAF was killed while participating in a 2-day Commando Camp when his Cessna 182 flew into high ground in the Montague Mountains east of Robertson. He was 39.

19 April

- **1775** - At dawn in Massachusetts, about 70 armed militiamen stood face to face on Lexington Green with a British advance guard unit. An unordered 'shot heard around the world' began the American Revolution. A volley of British rifle fire was followed by a charge with bayonets leaving eight Americans dead and ten

wounded.

- **1906** - Bambatha Rebellion: Over 7,000 British troops are called out to quell Zulu aggression in Natal.
- **1915** - World War I: West Africa. Combined Anglo-French forces take Mandera, Cameroon.
- **1919** - Britain sends more troops to Egypt to help quell nationalistic unrest.
- **1941** - US Marines begin construction of an airfield on Wake Island.
- **1943** - Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto staged an armed revolt against Nazi SS troops attempting to forcibly deport them to death camps.
- **1960** - The South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) is founded in Windhoek with Sam Nujoma as leader.
- **1961** - Portuguese forces are reinforced for continuing conflict against the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA, Popular Liberation Movement of Angola) based near Luanda.
- **1976** - Guerrillas launch two separate raids in the far south of Rhodesia near the Transvaal border, killing three Easter holidaymakers from South Africa and blowing up a Rhodesian Railways train and part of the track on the Rutenga link to Beit Bridge.
- **1980** - Rifleman Jacobus Petrus Koekemoer from 7 SAI was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in a mortar bomb explosion during a live firing exercise

in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.

- **1981** - Rifleman Karel Johan Cronje from 5 SAI was based at Okalongo and had been feeling ill for approximately two weeks. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital after being diagnosed with cerebral malaria. He succumbed not long after admission. He was 19.
- **1984** - Rifleman Frank Corrie from the South African Cape Corps was killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from the accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 21.
- **1985** - Special Warrant Officer Alfons Kumulo from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 37.
- **1988** - Corporal Edward Clive Yeo from the South African Engineer Corps was attached to 101 Battalion SWATF. He was Killed in Action while disarming an

enemy anti-tank mine that was booby-trapped with an anti-lifting device. He was 20.

- **1990** - Truce ends the Nicaraguan Civil War.

20 April

- **1889** - Adolf Hitler was born in Braunau am Inn, Austria on this day.
- **1934** - Heinrich Himmler becomes head of the Prussian secret police.
- **1941** - German bombers raid Athens.
- **1945** - Okinawa: U.S. forces capture Motobu Heights, in the north.
- **1947** - Peleliu: 27 Japanese troops surrender, 18 months after World War II ended.
- **1976** - Two members from Regiment President Steyn and one member of the South African Police were killed when their Eland Armoured Car was involved in a head-on collision with a South African Police vehicle at Ruacana. They were: Staff Sergeant Leon Blaauw (21). Trooper Denis Aden Naude (22). SAP Constable Coenraad Hermanus Dreyer (21).
- **1979** - Lieutenant Commander Dennis Mallalieu from the Simonstown Naval Base died after suffering a fatal heart attack while at the Base. He was 57.
- **1980** - Rifleman Simon Stumbo from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed

in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 18.

- **1981** - Leading Seaman Peter James Henderson from SAS Inkonkoni accidentally drowned in Durban during a naval training exercise. He was 22.
- **1982** - Rifleman Gerhardus Petrus Cornelius Hattingh from 1 SAI, attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was killed at Tsumeb when a Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle accidentally drove over him. He was 20.
- **1982** - Sergeant Frederick Albertus Francois Claasen from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) Died of Wounds received on 10 April 1982 during Operation Yahoo. He was 25.
- **1987** - Rifleman Wilson Adams from the South African Cape Corps was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier while he was standing guard at the Van Der Stel Shooting Range. He was 17.

21 April

- **1836** - The Battle of San Jacinto between Texans led by Sam Houston and Mexican forces led by Santa Anna took place near present day Houston. The Texans decisively defeated the Mexican forces thereby achieving independence.
- **1918** - During World War I, the Red Baron (Manfred von Richthofen) was shot down



Adolf Hitler

and killed during the Battle of the Somme. He was credited with 80 kills in less than two years, flying a red Fokker triplane. British pilots recovered his body and buried him with full military honours.

- **1941** - Greece surrenders to Nazi Germany.
- **1945** - Red Army reaches the outskirts of Berlin.
- **1956** - A military pact between Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Yemen is finalised.
- **1966** - Two members of 17 Squadron and three passengers were drowned when their Alouette III, Serial No. 65 suffered engine failure and crashed into the sea off Terrace Bay, South West Africa. They Air Force casualties were: Lieutenant Tobias Johannes Winterbach (22). Air Corporal Henry George Morton (21).
- **1967** - Military coup in Greece.
- **1977** - Corporal Heinrich Rudolph Bigalke from 3 SAI was killed when his military vehicle overturned 20km from Rundu. He was 19.
- **1978** - Private Barry Craig Rieder from SWA SPES Unit SWATF was accidentally killed at Oshivello during a night practice ambush. He was 20.
- **1983** - Glen Joseph Fleischer from 3 SAI was found dead at Potchefstroom with a gunshot wound to the head, apparently self-inflicted as no foul play was suspected. He was 18.

- **1987** - Two members of the SADF were killed when their military vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with a civilian vehicle at Rundu. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Clifton David Kilroe (21). Rifleman Hans Harold Scheepers (25).
- **1992** - Three members of the South African Medical Corps Training Centre were killed in a Military Vehicle Accident on the Potchefstroom to Westonaria Road. They were: Lance Corporal Efstratios Kladis (18). Private Bradley John Gordon (19). Private Roelof Frederick Malan (19).

22 April

- **1915** - Second Battle of Ypres: Germany introduces poison gas.
- **1941** - World War II: Tripoli comes under bombardment by British warships.
- **1944** - Hitler & Mussolini confer at Berchtesgarden.
- **1945** - Soviet and Polish troops liberate the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, near Oranienburg in Brandenburg, which held many political leaders from Captive Nations and special military prisoners.
- **1961** - French army rebels seize Algiers.
- **1976** - Three members from the Regiment Christiaan Beyers were Killed in Action when their patrol was ambushed by a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents while they

were escorting a work team, busy on the Ruacana to Ovamboland pipeline, back to Etale Base. The casualties were: Lieutenant Douglas Gerald Hinds (20). Rifleman Johannes Roelof Fouche (26). Rifleman Jozua Francois Naude (21).

- **1983** - Corporal Jan de Klerk Botha from 5 SAI was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-Line. He was 20.
- **1988** - Lance Corporal Steven Charles Trollip from the 2nd Battalion Regiment De La Rey drowned after falling into a crocodile infested river near Skukuza in the Kruger National Park while on patrol. He was 26.
- **1990** - Nigeria's ruling generals crushed a six-hour rebellion by junior officers.

23 April

- **1873** - Ashanti War breaks out in Africa.
- **1911** - French, Algerian, and Senegalese troops are to be sent to help put down the tribesmen revolt in Morocco. However, Germany has protested that France will be breaking the terms of the 1906 Algerias accords on Moroccan independence.
- **1918** - The Zeebrugge Raid: At heavy cost the Royal Navy & Royal Marines earn eight Victoria Crosses blocking the harbour exit
- **1925** - Rebel leader Abdel Krim's troops enter French Morocco.

- **1945** - Allies in Italy reach the Po River.
- **1979** - Rifleman Alfredo Manuel Tchizondo from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 26.
- **1980** - Soviet sub catches fire off Japan, nine die.
- **1982** - Rifleman Noe Vasco from 32 Battalion was killed when he was accidentally run over by a military vehicle at Buffalo Base. He was 32.
- **1984** - Rifleman Johannes Kankara from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1987** - Rifleman Kobus Christopher Du Preez from the South African Cape Corps was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident on the Ben Rossouw Highway at Kuilsriver. He was 18.
- **1988** - Three members of 102 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action in Southern Angola, South West of Tchi-

pa when their Romeo Mike Teams were ambushed by a superior force of SWAPO/PLAN and FAPLA troops. The casualties were: Lance Corporal I. Handura (23). Rifleman K. Kapulke (19). Rifleman U. Mbinge (20).

24 April

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A dynamite factory, which forms part of the Begbie Engineering Workshop, Johannesburg, is destroyed in an explosion. The destruction is blamed on British sabotage.
- **1916** - The Irish "Easter Rebellion" begins.
- **1942** - Japanese troops advance on all fronts in Burma.
- **1954** - Security forces round up more than 10,000 men in the biggest anti-Mau Mau operation since the state of emergency was declared in Kenya eighteen months ago.
- **1969** - US B-52s drop 3,000 tons of bombs on VC positions inside Cambodia.
- **1975** - Under an amendment to the Defence Act the definition of superior officer is changed with the effect that White and Black members

of the Defence Force will have equal status.

- **1980** - "Desert One": US operation to save 52 hostages in Iran, fails, eight die.
- **1982** - One member from 5 SAI and one member from 101 Battalion SWATF were killed when the Buffel Troop carrier in which they were traveling overturned near Eenhana in Northern Owamboland. The Casualties were: Rifleman Glen Bjorn Du Plooy (21). Rifleman Ronald Andreas (26).

25 April

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Relief of Jammersberg Drift: The relief columns under Generals Hart and Barbazon arrive at Wepener. General De Wet returns to his primary goal of disrupting British supply lines.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Jan Christiaan Smuts surrenders to the British under a flag of truce. Deneys Reitz who agrees to act as Smuts' orderly joins him. However, on discovering that orderlies are not treated as officers, Reitz is instantly promoted to chief-of-staff.
- **1915** - Gallipoli Campaign: 78,000 British & ANZAC troops undertake an amphibious landing
- **1941** - General Erwin Rommel's Deutsches Afrika Korps forces the British out of Halfaya Pass, just south-east of Sollum, and back to the Buq Buq-Sofafi line in



Manfred von Richtofen

- Egypt.
 - **1945** - The Red Army completely surrounds Berlin.
 - **1945** - US & Soviet forces meet at Torgau on the Elbe River.
 - **1961** - Fourth nuclear bomb test by France in the Sahara.
 - **1977** - The Chief of Staff (Operations) says that the development of South Africa's defence has made the country completely self-sufficient from an arms point of view.
 - **1978** - Private Alan David Dixon from 16 Maintenance Unit at Grootfontein was killed just outside the town of Rundu when his Magirus Deutz truck, loaded with supplies for the 32 Battalion element stationed at Nkurenkuru, overturned when the vehicles front tyre suffered a blow-out, causing him to lose control of the vehicle. He was 19.
 - **1980** - Lieutenant Peter Henry Hollis from 8 Squadron was Reported Missing in Action over Southern Angola while flying an Impala Mk II. His body was later recovered. He was 25.
 - **1980** - Sapper Adeo Marais from the School of Engineers was killed instantly in an accidental explosion at the Units ammunition store. He was 17.
 - **1981** - Corporal Barend Frederick Burger from the South African Catering Corps was killed in a military vehicle Accident at Elandsfontein. He was 20.
- 26 April**
- **1679** - The Castle of Good Hope, oldest and most historic building in SA, is completed.
 - **1936** - Italian troops assemble for an attack on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
 - **1937** - During the Spanish Civil War, the ancient town of Guernica was attacked by German warplanes. After destroying the town in a three hour bombing raid, the planes machine-gunned fleeing civilians.
 - **1941** - East Africa: The Abyssinian fortress of Dessie, roughly half-way between Addis Ababa and Amba Alagi, is captured by General Alan Cunningham's South African divisions.
 - **1941** - North Africa: Following the fall of the Halfaya Pass, three columns of Rommel's Deutsches Afrika Korps have crossed the border from Libya to Egypt.
 - **1943** - North Africa: Access to the Tunisian plain is open to the Allies following the capture of Longstop Hill.
 - **1944** - Allied troops begin concentrating at assembly areas in Britain for D-Day.
 - **1961** - French Army rebels once again try to take power in Algeria.
 - **1966** - Lieutenant Herman Alan Day from 1 Squadron was killed when his Canadair CL13B Sabre crashed near Pilansberg during a routine training flight. He was 24.

- **1975** - Corporal John Cornelius Hanekom from 5 Military Works Unit was accidentally drowned while swimming at Rundu. He was 27.
- **1982** - Lance Corporal Gert Gotlieb Gouche from 1 Parachute Battalion was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Kombat near Grootfontein. He was 20.
- **1982** - Rifleman Dawid Lukas from SWA SPES Unit, SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop carrier overturned in Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1982** - The Falklands War: Argentine forces on South Georgia surrender to the British.
- **1983** - Rifleman Thomas Andrew Ross from 1 SWA Spes Unit, SWATF was Killed in Action in Northern Owamboland when he accidentally detonated a booby-trap in an enemy weapons cache that his patrol had located. He was 20.
- **1994** - Rifleman Shadrack Vusi Mnisi from 121 Battalion was shot dead by persons unknown while on foot patrol during anti-crime operations at Loskop in KZN. He was 33.

27 April

- **1940** - Himmler orders establishment of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp.
- **1941** - German troops occupy Athens.
- **1945** - Italian partisans

- capture Mussolini and Clara Petacci, near Lake Como.
- **1984** - Corporal Reginald Patrick Briggs from 1 SWA SPES Unit, SWATF was critically injured when his Buffel Troop Carrier was involved in a collision with civilian vehicle on the Ondangwa-Oshivello road causing the Buffel to overturn. He was 20.
- **1984** - Rifleman Glen Scott Maitland Clark from 5 SAI contracted malaria while on operations in South Eastern Angola and was admitted to the Rundu Sickbay where he unfortunately died. He was 21.
- **1987** - Special Constable Stefanus Willem Kanhende from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 28.

28 April

- **1919** - The League of Nations is established, with General Jan Smuts and Prime Minister Louis Botha as the two



Muhammad Ali

- representatives of the Union of South Africa. Smuts played an important role in the drafting of the Covenant of the League.
- **1945** - Twenty-three years of Fascist rule in Italy ended abruptly as Italian partisans shot former Dictator Benito Mussolini. Other leaders of the Fascist Party and friends of Mussolini were also killed along with his mistress, Clara Petacci. Their bodies were then hung upside down and pelted with stones by jeering crowds in Milan.
- **1956** - The French leave Vietnam.
- **1966** - Seven guerrillas are killed in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) at Sinoya in the first engagement of the bush war.
- **1967** - Muhammad Ali refuses induction into the US Army.
- **1971** - Samuel Lee Gravely, Jr., is promoted to rear admiral; the first black admiral in the US Navy.
- **1975** - Signaler Josef Jacobus Mare' from 2 Signal Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 18.
- **1982** - Corporal Marcus Anthony Harris-Dewey from 701 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 20.
- **1984** - Rifleman Phillip Fou-

- rie van Vuuren from 4 SAI was accidentally killed outside Amsterdam when Ratel 22C drove into the rear of Ratel 22B in conditions of extremely poor visibility during a sandstorm. He was 19.
- **1998** - Nigeria's former deputy leader, General Oladipyo Diya, and five others are sentenced to death by firing squad for plotting to overthrow military leader General Sani Abacha.

29 April

- **1781** - French fleet under Admiral Suffren prevents Britain from seizing Cape of Good Hope.
- **1916** - The Irish "Easter Rebellion" ends.
- **1918** - Germany's main offensive on the Western Front in World War I ends.
- **1945** - German representatives in Italy surrender during World War II.
- **1945** - The SA 6th Division crosses Brenta River and is then redirected to Milan in Italy in World War II.
- **1945** - US troops liberate the Nazi concentration camp at Dachau.
- **1946** - Tokyo: 28 former Japanese leaders indicted as war criminals.
- **1970** - US & South Vietnamese troops invade Cambodia.
- **1975** - Last US personnel pull out of Vietnam.
- **1978** - Two members from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were accidentally killed at Fort Rev, the Special Forces

base at Air Force Base Ondangwa, when an explosive device they were preparing for an external operation, detonated prematurely. The casualties were: Warrant Officer Class 1 Johannes Lambertus Conradie HC VRM (34). Corporal Cecil James Eayrs (23).

- **1980** - Rifleman S.D. Ernesto from 5 Recce Regiment was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces while on operations in Southern Angola. He was 25.
- **1980** - Rifleman Albertus Johannes Oosthuizen from 1 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident in Bloemfontein. He was 19.
- **1983** - Rifleman Tjaart Jacobs from 6 SAI was accidentally killed when a bunker wall collapsed on top of him. He was 20.
- **1984** - Rifleman Antonio Paulus from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 26.
- **1987** - Lance Corporal Paul Douglas Elliot Hayes from the South African Medical Services College, was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 20.

War: The ZAR's fourth and last Creusot 'Long Tom' is dynamited before falling into British hands, only 200 metres from the charging enemy.

- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: An official report states that British columns have completely or partially destroyed 158 farms and an unknown number of Black villages.
- **1936** - The Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, is lost to the Italians.
- **1942** - British troops evacuate Mandalay in Burma.
- **1943** - Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp for Jews established.
- **1945** - Red Army liberates the Ravensbruck concentration camp.
- **1945** - The Red Banner is raised over the Reichstag Building in Berlin.
- **1945** - Adolf Hitler (56) commits suicide in his bunker.
- **1979** - Private Martinus Johannes Schroeder from the Technical Service Corps was critically injured in a private vehicle accident between

Vrede and Standerton on 09 March 1979. He succumbed to his injuries in 1 Mil Hospital on 30 April 1979. He was 19.

- **1980** - Terrorists seize the Iranian Embassy in London.
- **1982** - Rifleman Eddie James Barnard from 4 SAI was critically wounded by a fellow soldier while on duty in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1983** - Sergeant B. Mukosho from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 27.
- **1987** - Three members from 5 Maintenance Unit were killed in a military vehicle accident at Ondangwa. The casualties were: Private Booijulies (21). Private Nicolaas Koopman (18). Private Esau Oosthuizen (19).
- **1991** - A military coup is executed in Lesotho.
- **1996** - In Liberia, shells and gunfire rip through central Monrovia and a diplomatic enclave. US Marines shoot and kill three Liberians firing toward the US Embassy.



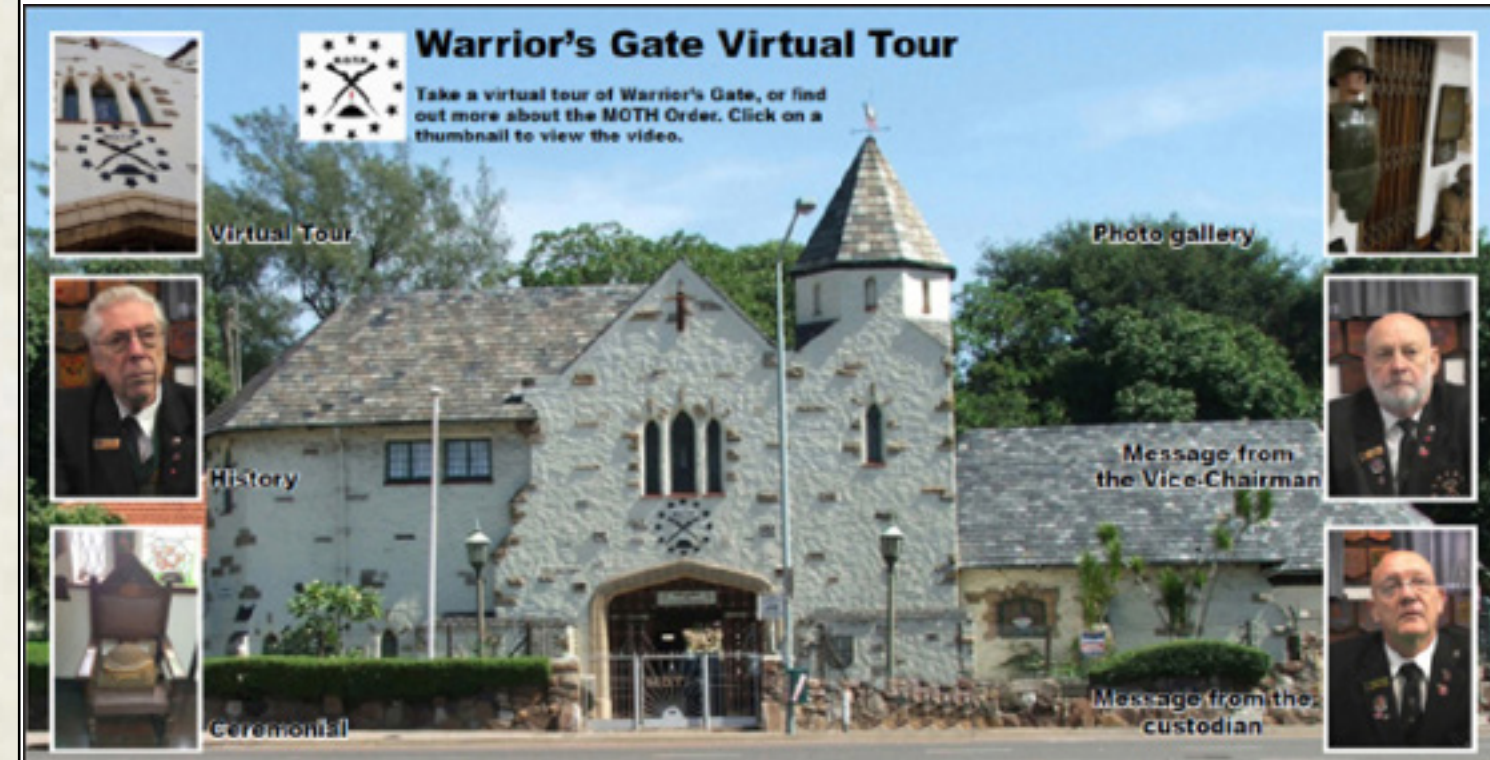
30 April

- **1881** - France invades Tunisia from Algeria on a pretext, and later establishes a protectorate.
- **1828** - King Shaka is murdered by his brothers.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer



Memorable Order of Tin Hats

Click on the photograph below to take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate and find out more about the MOTH Order.



Springbok



The SA Legion is a national organisation, part of a world-wide family that addresses the needs of ex-service personnel and their dependents by way of housing, pensions, employment and general welfare. It is apolitical, non-sectarian, non-racial, non-sexist and non-partisan.

Click on the logo to the left to visit the SA Legion website.



QUIZ

Military Acronyms

1. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
2. *Avtomat Kalashnikova*.
3. *Grens Vegter* (Afrikaans for 'border fighter').
4. The word Casspir is taken from the joint designers of the vehicle - The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the South African Police (SAP).
5. High Altitude, Low Opening.
6. *Maschinenpistole*.
7. People's Liberation Army of Namibia.
8. *Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* (Committee for State Security).
9. *Fabriek Nasionale*.
10. *HaMossad leModi'in ule-Tafkidim Meyuhadim* (Institute for Intelligence and Special Operations).
11. *Schutzstaffel* (Protection Squadron).
12. Detention Barracks.
13. Messerschmitt. They were the manufacturers.
14. Projector, Infantry, Anti Tank.
15. *Ruchnoy Protivotankoviy Granatomyot*, but we'll also accept Rocket Propelled Grenade.
16. Browning Automatic Rifle.
17. *Ruchnoy Pulemyot Degtyaryova* (Degtyaryov hand-held machine gun).
18. From the German *Fliegerabwehrkanone* (aircraft defence cannon).
19. *Panzerabwehrkanone*.
20. Permanent Force and Citizen Force.



Useful links

Every month we feature a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and online magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.



Military Despatches Website



"Things don't have to change the world to be important."

Steve Jobs



Our aim is to make the Military Despatches website easy to use. Even more important to us, we want to make the website informative and interesting. The latest edition of the magazine will be available, as will all the previous editions. More over, there will be links to videos, websites, and articles that our readers may find interesting. So check out the website, bookmark it, and pass the URL on to everyone that you think may be interested.



Have you checked out the bookshelf on the website? Here you can gain access to individual articles.

You will find articles on numerous different topics that have been published over the past five years as well as video clips and documentaries.

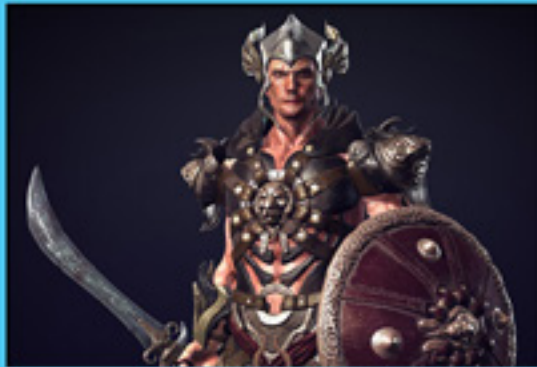
Hipe! media

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