



Military Despatches

Vol 25 July 2019

Operation Barras

A mission nicknamed 'Operation Certain Death'

Broken Warriors

What happens when the shooting stops?

Forged in Battle

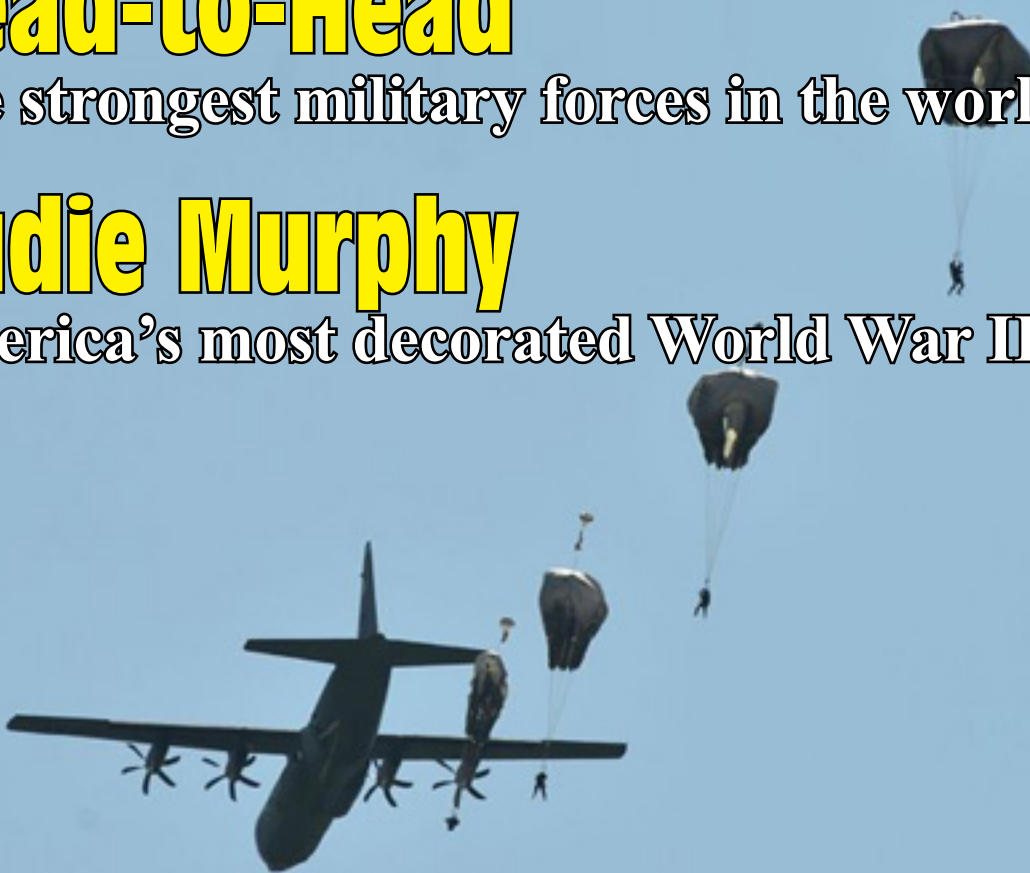
World War II's Tiger tank

Head-to-Head

The strongest military forces in the world

Audie Murphy

America's most decorated World War II hero



For the military enthusiast



Click on any video below to view



How much do you know about movie theme songs? Take our quiz and find out.



Hipe's Wouter de Goede interviews former 28's gang boss David Williams.



The old South African Defence Force used a mixture of English, Afrikaans, slang and techno-speak that few outside the military could hope to understand. Some of the terms were humorous, some were clever, while others were downright crude.



Part of Hipe's "On the couch" series, this is an interview with one of author Herman Charles Bosman's most famous characters, Oom Schalk Lourens.



A taxi driver was shot dead in an ongoing war between rival taxi organisations.



Hipe spent time in Hanover Park, an area plagued with gang violence, to view first-hand how Project Ceasefire is dealing with the situation.

Hipe TV brings you videos ranging from actuality to humour and everything in between. Interviews, mini-documentaries and much more.

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On 6th June 1944 a number of South Africans took part in D-Day.

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Editor's Sitrep

Officially we're in the second half of the year. It's cold in Cape Town and really starting to feel like winter.

So last month was the second anniversary of Military Despatches. I must confess that I had a glass or two of Bushmill's Whisky to celebrate. Then I had another few glasses when I realised that it was time to start the next issue.

Besides doing Military Despatches every month, I also do a few other projects. I edit three other magazines (two monthly and one quarterly) and maintain five websites. I am also a member of the Memorable Order of Tin Hats (MOTH), a veteran's organisation. And let's not forget my membership of the Cape Welsh Choir (Deputy Editor John Verster is also a member of the choir as well as being a MOTH). As you can imagine, this all takes up a bit of my time.

My wife sees so little of me that she has taken to calling me darling, sweetie and love - mainly because she can't remember my name.

So I thought what I really needed was to tackle another

big project. From July I have taken over administration of the MOTH Cyber Shellhole.

The Cyber Shellhole is for people that want to become members of the Moths but are unable to attend meetings because they live in an area where there are no Moth Shellholes. Currently there are members in Ireland, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the DRC and other countries and areas.

Next month I plan on doing an article explaining more about what the Cyber Shellhole is, who qualifies to join, and how to go about joining.

Another project that I am tackling is our website. It's a bit bland at the moment and I have some ideas on how to improve it. I also welcome any suggestions that you may have, and I promise that I will listen to them.

That

Top Ten Inventions of the Roman Army

Throughout the centuries, the Roman army came up with various weapons that helped it gain supremacy on the battlefield, and here are the top 10 military inventions of the Roman army.

When it came to supremacy on the battlefield, the Roman's were no slouches.

In its day Rome managed to conquer half of their known world. This would not have been possible without the skills of the mighty Roman Army.

Throughout the centuries, the Roman army came up with various weapons and tactics that not only revolutionised warfare, but also helped them gain supremacy.

Here are the Top Ten military inventions of the Roman Army. Many of their tactics are still in use today.

10. Carroballista

The *ballista* was an ancient missile weapon that launched a large projectile at a distant target. It most more than likely created by the Ancient Greeks.

But it was the Romans that upgraded the system and perfected it on the battlefield.

First they came up with the *manuballista*, which was often deemed one of the most advanced siege engines in the Roman military. The *manuballista* was a hand-held version of the *ballista*.

But the real game-changer was the *carroballista*, a *ballista* mounted on a cart.

A *carroballista* was pulled by mules, and required ten soldiers to operate it. Each Roman

legion had 55 *carroballista* in their ranks.

It could fire a heavy arrow or bolt up to 460 metres from a target and was easy to move around during a battle.

9. Pilum

While the long spear and the javelin had been around for some time, the Roman *pilum* proved very effective in battle.

About two metres in length, the *pilum* had a pyramid-like point made from hardened metal. The rest of the spear consisted of a long, narrow shaft of weaker metal. The shaft and point were attached to a fairly heavy wooden haft.

Because of this the *pilum* had incredible penetrating power. When thrown at enemy shields the pyramidal head would penetrate through the shield. The shape of the head meant it was extremely difficult to pull it out.

The weight of the haft would also pull the shield down, meaning that the bearer of the shield would often have drop the shield and fight without it.

The advantage of the thin metal shaft meant that it would bend and, even if the enemy could remove it from their shield, it would be impossible to throw back.



Pilum

8. Plumbata

One of the most common tactics in early warfare was for archers to be positioned behind ranks of infantry.

The archers would fire a volley of arrows at the enemy and then the infantry would charge.

From the 4th century AD onwards the Roman Army began to use the *plumbata*. Basically, it was a throwing dart, with a lead weight attached to it.

Plumbata

Empire were mainly used for besieging forts or settlements.

They would often be armed with large stones that could be covered with a combustible substance and set alight.

5. Castrum

In the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire, the Latin word *castrum* (plural *castra*) was a building, or plot of land, used as a fortified military camp. In English, the terms Roman fort, Roman camp and Roman fortress are commonly used for *castrum*.

However, scholastic convention tends toward the use of the words fort, camp, marching camp and fortress as a translation of *castrum*.

Castrum was the term used for different sizes of camps including a large legionary fortress, smaller forts for Cohorts or Auxiliaries, temporary encampments, and “marching” forts.

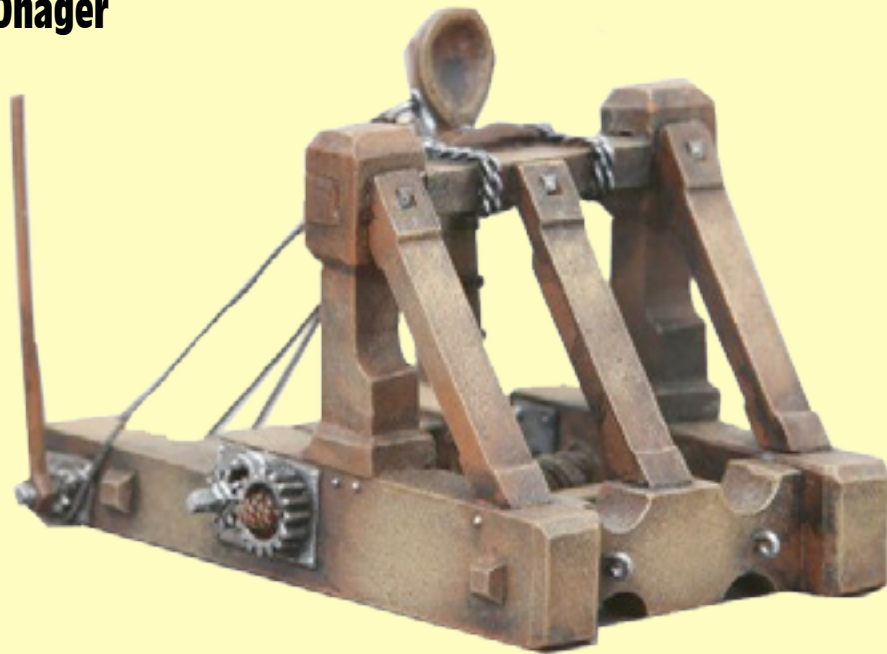
The diminutive form *castellum* was used for fortlets, typically occupied by a detachment of a cohort or a century.

A *castrum* was designed to house and protect the soldiers, their equipment and supplies when they were not fighting or marching.

A marching column ported the equipment needed to build and stock the camp in a baggage train of wagons and on the backs of the soldiers.

Camps were the responsibility of engineering units to which specialists of many types belonged, officered by *architecti*,

Onager



“chief engineers”, who requisitioned manual labour from the soldiers at large as required. They could throw up a camp under enemy attack in as little as a few hours.

More permanent camps were *castra stativa* (standing camps). The least permanent of these were *castra aestiva* or *aestivalia*, “summer camps”, in which the soldiers were housed sub *pellibus* or sub *tentoriis*, “under tents”. Summer was the campaign season.

For the winter the soldiers retired to *castra hiberna* containing barracks and other buildings of more solid materials, with timber construction gradually being replaced by stone.

The camp allowed the Romans to keep a rested and supplied army in the field. Neither the Celtic nor Germanic armies had this capability: they found it necessary to disperse after only a few days.

The largest *castra* were legionary fortresses built as bases

for one or more entire legions.

From the most ancient times Roman camps were constructed according to a certain ideal pattern. The *castrum*’s special structure also defended from attacks.

The base was placed entirely within the *vallum* (“wall”), which could be constructed under the protection of the legion in battle formation if necessary.

The *vallum* was quadrangular aligned on the cardinal points of the compass. The construction crews dug a *fossa* (trench), throwing the excavated material inward, to be formed into the *agger* (rampart).

On top of this a palisade of *sudes* or *valli* (stakes) was erected. The soldiers had to carry these stakes on the march.

Over the course of time, the palisade might be replaced by a fine brick or stone wall, and the ditch serve also as a moat.

A legion-sized camp always placed *vigilarium* (watchtowers) at intervals along the wall



with positions between for the division artillery.

4. Pontoon Bridge

Although the Romans didn’t invent the pontoon bridge, they made excellent use of it during their military campaigns.

It was used extensively and helped the Roman Army win many battles of strategic importance.

Julius Caesar was a commander that loved using the pontoon bridge, shocking the enemy by using it to cross rivers that the enemy believed protected them from attack.

TOP TEN

2. Battlefield surgery

In order to be successful on the battlefield the Roman Army had to take good care of its soldiers.

An important part of the Roman military structure were the *immunes*, soldiers who were “immune” from combat duty and fatigues through having a more specialist role within the army.

Immunes included architects, engineers, but also doctors and members of the medical staff. Because it had doctors who were also part of the army, the Romans were able to keep the army up and running even in the midst of the biggest bloodshed.

Roman doctors and their staff used medical innovations such as haemostatic tourniquets and arterial clamps which helped prevent blood loss and saved hundreds of thousands of lives.

Another important aspect of the Roman battlefield surgery was the administration of antiseptic measure before an operation. All instruments were disinfected with hot water and thereby made usable for the next patient in line.

For its time this was quite revolutionary and proved to be highly effective.

1. Roads and highways

At the height of its power the Roman Empire encompassed an enormous territory.

Stretching from the island of Great Britain to present-day Turkey, including the whole of the Mediterranean and North

Africa, it would have been impossible to control such a vast territory without a stable network of roads and highways.

Roads were built to boost trade and commerce through various parts of the territory and enable easier travel. But that wasn't the main reason.

Roads and highways were primarily built to speed up the movement of the military.

If there was an uprising at the far end of the empire the army could reach that area much quicker on roads built of stone, bricks and

Special Forces - Egypt

Part Five of a series that takes a look at Special Forces units around the world. This month we look at Egypt.

The Egyptian Armed Forces are the state military organisation responsible for the defence of Egypt. They consist of the Egyptian Army, Egyptian Navy, Egyptian Air Force and Egyptian Air Defence Command.

In addition, Egypt maintains 397,000 paramilitary troops. The Central Security Forces comes under the control of the Ministry of Interior. The Border Guard Forces falls under the control of the Ministry of Defence.

The modern Egyptian armed forces have been involved in numerous crises and wars since independence, from the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, Egyptian Revolution of 1952, Suez Crisis, North Yemen Civil War, Six-Day War, Nigerian Civil War, War of Attrition, Yom Kippur War, Egyptian bread riots, 1986 Egyptian conscripts riot, Libyan–Egyptian War, Gulf War, War on Terror, Egyptian Crisis, Second Libyan Civil

War, War on ISIL and the Sinai insurgency.

Sa'ka

The Egyptian Army has two organisations that operate under the Administration of Special Units - the Paratroopers and *Sa'ka* (Thunderbolt).

The Sa'ka Forces were established in the 1950s by Major General Galal Haredi after the experiences of Egyptian Officers with the United States Army Rangers.

They were created to fulfil a number of specialised roles that required small, agile, and resilient units. Infiltration behind enemy lines, ambushing supply lines, assaulting command posts, and anti-armour to name a few.

The Sa'ka consists of eight Special Forces Regiments/Groups (Brigade level) (117th, 123rd, 129th, 135th, 141st, 147th, 153rd, 159th) (1 H.Q.) (of which three are Lightning/Saaqa regiments and three Commandos regiments, the remaining two are the Marine Commandos and the Infiltration Anti-terror units).

- <

Ready, aim, fire!

Most military courts have the power to impose the death sentence, usually carried out by a firing squad. Yet did this really happen?

In any civilian occupation, refusal to carry out an order, walking out on your job or falling asleep at your post could result in you being fired.

Yet try and pull those same stunts while serving in the military and the consequences could be far more serious. The word “fire” could take on a whole new meaning.

From time immemorial the military has always marched to the beat of a different drum. There were no hard and fast rules or regulations for the treatment of wounded enemy, prisoners of war, or the civilian population. After a battle it was not uncommon for captured or wounded enemy to be put to death.

Some armies were notorious for their treatment of the enemy - both military and civilian. Certain armies in history were noted for their tactics. If an enemy village or town was captured the men would be killed, the women raped and taken into slavery, and the village or town pillaged.

Over time nations and cultures began to define and adopt rules and laws. Certain acts or behaviour were deemed to be crimes and, therefore, anyone committing those crimes could be punished.

Some crimes were deemed to be ‘capital offences’ and anyone committing such a crime could face capital punishment.

Capital punishment, also known as the death penalty, is a government-sanctioned practice whereby a person is killed by the state as a punishment for a crime.

The sentence that someone be punished in such a manner is referred to as a death sentence, whereas the act of carrying out the sentence is known as an execution.

Capital crimes varied from culture to culture. In ancient Egypt, for example, killing a cat, even if by accident, was deemed a capital crime and those found guilty would be executed. In most cultures murder was, and still is, deemed a capital crime.

Yet when it came to the military laws were often pretty hazy. If, for example, a soldier killed an enemy soldier during war it was not regarded as murder.

Turning back the clock

Last month Jock Hutton parachuted into a field in Normandy, France. This was 75 years after he jumped into the same field on 6 June 1944. By Paul Els.

In 1939 Jock Hutton joined the 'Black Watch' in the United Kingdom, just shy of his 15th birthday, and soon found himself in the middle of World War II. In 1943 he joined the British Parachute Regiment. In the early hours of 6 June 1944 he parachute into a field on the outskirts of Ranville, Normandy. His battalion had the important job of seizing and holding vital bridges before the D-Day landings.

On 22 June 1944 he was wounded and sent back to the United Kingdom. He later returned to his unit and deployed to the Ardennes where he was captured by the Germans. He escaped and in 1945 he parachuted into Germany for further battles.

He remained in the British Army until 1955 when he went to Northern Rhodesia and took part in the first selection course for the Rhodesian SAS (Special Air Service). He passed the course and, in 1967, became the SAS Squadron Sergeant Major.

In 1981 he moved to South Africa and served from 1981 to 1985 in the elite 5 Reconnaissance Regiment in Phalaborwa.

In June this year, Jock turned back the clock by jumping into the very same field at Ranville that he had jumped into 75 years before. And this at the age of 95. It was part of the events to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings.

Jock Hutton said it was "no



NICE TO MEET YOU: Sergeant Major Jock Hutton, along with his tandem jump partner Sergeant Billy Blanchard, meet with Prince Charles.

PHOTO: CHRIS JACKSON/GETTY IMAGES

SADF casualty figures

According to official records, 2,573 members of the SADF died while on active service. Yet less than a third of them were killed in action. How did the rest die?

In 1957 the New Defence Act, Act No.44 of 1957 was passed, merging the former Union Defence Force (including Reserves), the Citizen Force, Commandos and South African Permanent Force into the South African Defence Force (SADF), headquartered in Pretoria.

The SADF consisted of a permanent Force, a Citizen Force and Commandos. The three arms of the SADF were the Army, Air Force and the Navy. Later a fourth arm, the South

African Medical Services, was formed.

In 1968 conscription was introduced when it was decided that all white South African males would be required to do a period of compulsory military service.

Note carefully the use of the word compulsory. It was not a request, it was an instruction and it was backed up by an act of parliament.

Every white male who was a South Africa citizen or had permanent residence was required to register with the South African Defence Force in the year that he turned sixteen.

Conscription was better known as 'National Service'. At first it was for a period of nine months and was then extended to a period of 12 months. In 1978 national service was increased to 24 months. In 1989 national service was reduced back to one year.

The SADF was disbanded in 1994 and absorbed into the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF).

While the SADF was never involved in any

declared war, they were involved in combat in South West Africa (now Namibia), Angola, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Mozambique, and Zambia.

The undeclared war in South West Africa and Angola became known as the 'Border War'. It lasted from 26 August 1966 to 21 March 1990. A total of 23 years, six months, three weeks and two days. The SADF took part in no fewer than 52 major operations.

In the 37 years that it existed, a total of 2,573 members of the SADF died while on active service.

Considering the fact that the SADF was involved in a 'war' for 23 years, this is not a high figure. Especially when you compare it to the American casualty figures during the Vietnam War, another undeclared war.

The Americans were involved in Vietnam for 20 years. During that time they suffered 58,318 dead and more than 300,000 wounded. The US had more soldiers killed in action (KIA) in a single year than the SADF had in 23

years.

Even a short war such as the 1982 Falklands War between the United Kingdom and Argentine resulted in the death of 255 British troops and 633 Argentinian troops. And this was in a war that lasted just over two months.

Yet the figure of 2,573 SADF deaths is a misleading one. It would be easy to assume that these people died during the Border War. This, however, is not the case.

Rank Structure - Egypt

Over the next few months we will be running a series of articles looking at the rank structure of various armed forces. This month we look at the Egyptian Armed Forces.

The Egyptian Armed Forces' consists of the Egyptian Army, Egyptian Air Force, Egyptian Navy and Egyptian Air Defence Forces.

Their inventory includes equipment from different countries around the world. Equipment from the Soviet Union is being progressively replaced by more modern U.S., French, and British equipment, a significant portion of which is built under license in Egypt, such as the M1 Abrams tank.

Egyptian Army

Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officers



Jondi
(Private)



'arif
(Corporal)



Raqib
(Sergeant)



Raqib awwal
(Staff Sergeant)



Mosa'id
(WO II)



Mosa'id awwal
(WO I)

Egypt is a participant in NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue forum. Egypt is one of the few countries in the Middle East, and the only Arab state, with a reconnaissance satellite and has launched another one EgyptSat 1 in 2007.

The Armed Forces enjoy considerable power and independence within the Egyptian state. They are also influential in business, engaging in road and housing construction, consumer goods, resort management, and vast tracts of real estate.

Much military information is not made publicly available, including budget information, the names of the general officers and the military's size (which is considered a state secret).

Senior members of the military can convene for the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, so during the course of the Egyptian Revolution of 2011, when Mubarak resigned and transferred power to this body on 11 February 2011.

Officers



Raqib awwal
(Flight Sergeant)



Mosa'id
(Warrant Officer)



Mosa'id awwal
(Chief Warrant Officer)

Officers



Pilot Officer



Flying Officer



Flight Lieutenant



Squadron Leader



Wing Commander



Group Captain



Air Commodore



Air Vice Marshal



Air Marshal



Chief Air Marshal

Egyptian Navy

Non-commissioned Officers (NCO) and Warrant Officers

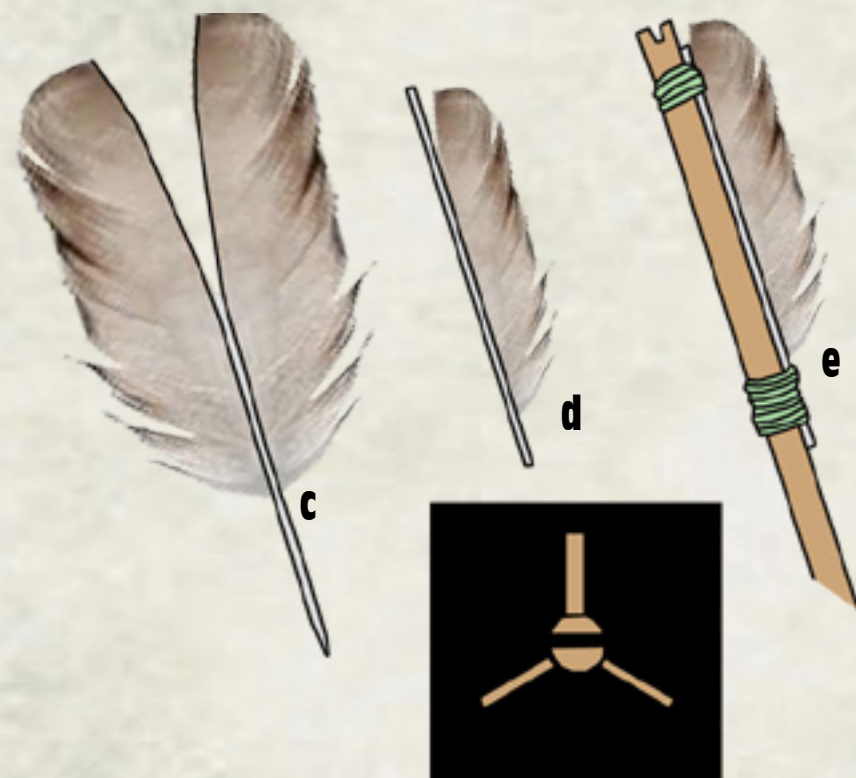


Jondi
(Able Seaman)



'arif
(Leading Seaman)





just below the arrow, extending the arm forwards.

Keep the bow arm locked and draw the string smoothly back across the front of your body, with the arrow at eye level and lined up with the target.

Release the string - just let go, do not snatch at it as you do so.

Learning how to make and use an improvised bow is not something that you want to do if you suddenly find yourself in a survival situation.

Practice making a bow and arrows, then spend a bit of time improving your accuracy. Then, if you ever find yourself in a real survival situation, you will be better prepared.

In the next issue we will look at how to make a sling, a catapult, a bola, and spears.

We will also look at how to make a spear thrower to increase the distance of a thrown spear.

Arrow heads

At the business end of the arrow a sharp point is needed. The arrow itself can be sharpened and hardened in a fire, but a firm tip is better.

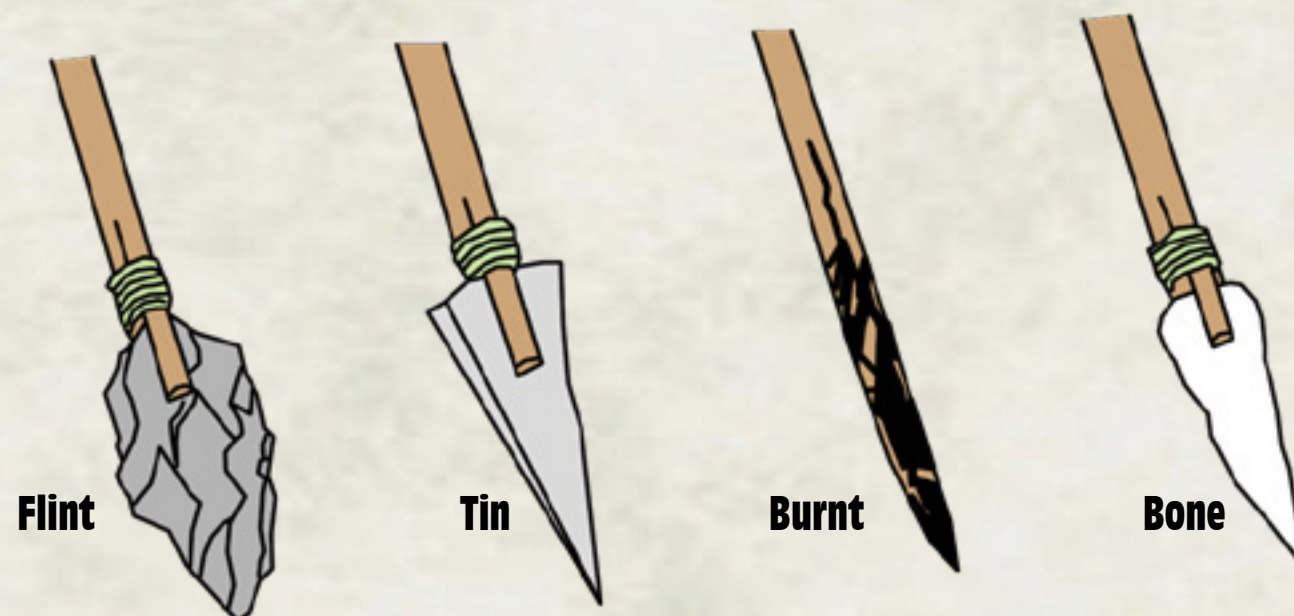
Tin is excellent or flint can be shaped into a really sharp arrowhead.

With patience even bone can be made into a good tip.

Split the end of the shaft, insert the arrow head and bind it tightly. Sinews are good for binding. Apply wet and this will harden, securing the head firmly.

Archery technique

Fit an arrow into the bowstring and raise the centre of the bow to eye-level. Hold the bow



Armoured Warfare Studies Group



You are hereby cordially invited to attend the meetings of the Armoured Warfare Studies Group. The aim of the AWSG is to provide in-depth technical presentations for both layman and expert alike, as well as discussions on all aspects of Armoured Warfare, from Ancient Times to the Present. Topics will include technical discussions on the history and development of the use of

Military Strength

In the first of a series of articles, the ten strongest current military forces go head-to-head.

Ever wondered which country currently has the strongest military force? Or how about the ten countries with the strongest military forces. To determine this a number of factors must be taken into consideration. These include total military personnel, land forces, naval forces and air forces. we will take a closer look at the weapons and equipment of these ten countries, allowing them to go head-to-head. South Africa, by the way, ranks at No. 32.



10. Germany
Annual Defence Budget - \$49,100,000,000

The Bundeswehr (Federal Defence) is the unified armed forces of Germany and their civil administration and procurement authorities. The Bundeswehr is divided into a military part (armed forces or Streitkräfte) and a civil part with the armed forces administration (Wehrverwaltung). The military part of the federal defence force consists of the Heer (Army), the Marine (Navy), the Luftwaffe (Air Force), the Streitkräftebasis (Joint Support Service), the Zentraler Sanitätsdienst der Bundeswehr (Joint Medical Service), and the Cyber- und Informationsraum (Cyber and Information Space Command).

Naval Forces
• Total ships – 81
• Aircraft carriers – 0
• Frigates – 10
• Destroyers – 0
• Corvettes – 5
• Submarines – 6
• Patrol vessels – 0
• Mine warfare vessels – 12
Air Force
• Total aircraft – 613
• Fighters – 122
• Attack aircraft – 178
• Transports – 72
• Trainers – 75
• Total helicopters – 313
• Attack helicopters - 65
Manpower
• Active military personnel - 182,055
• Reserve personnel - 28,250
• Total military personnel – 210,305
Land Forces
• Combat tanks – 900
• Armoured Fighting Vehicles – 8,389
• Self-propelled artillery – 209
• Towed artillery – 0
• Rocket launchers – 38

9. Turkey
Annual Defence Budget - \$8,600,000,000



7. Republic of Korea

Annual Defence Budget - \$38,300,000,000

The *Daehanminguk Gukgun* (Republic of Korea Armed Forces, also known as the ROK Armed Forces), are the armed forces of South Korea.

Created in 1948 following the division of Korea, the ROK Armed Forces is one of the largest standing armed forces in the world.

South Korea's military forces are responsible for maintaining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state, but often engage in humanitarian and disaster-relief efforts nationwide.

It consists of the *Daehanminguk Yukgun* (ROK Army), *Daehanminguk Haegun* (ROK Navy), *Daehanminguk Haebyeongdae* (ROK Marines

Corps), *Daehanminguk Gonggun* (ROK Air Force), *Daehanminguk Yebigun* (ROK Reserve Forces), and *Daehanminguk Minbangwidae* (ROK Civil Defence Corps).

Manpower

- Total military personnel – 3,699,000
- Active military personnel – 599,000
- Reserve personnel – 3,100,000

Land Forces

- Combat tanks – 2,654
- Armoured Fighting Vehicles – 2,870
- Self-propelled artillery – 2,140

- Towed artillery – 3

mander of the Indian Armed Forces.

Manpower

- Total military personnel – 2,598,921
- Active military personnel – 1,443,921
- Reserve personnel – 1,155,000

Land Forces

- Combat tanks – 4,184

- Armoured Fighting Vehicles – 2,815
- Self-propelled artillery – 200
- Towed artillery – 4,060
- Rocket launchers – 266
- Submarines – 16
- Patrol vessels – 139
- Mine warfare vessels – 1

Air Force

- Total aircraft – 2,082
- Fighters – 520
- Attack aircraft – 694
- Transports – 248
- Trainers – 364
- Total helicopters – 692
- Attack helicopters – 17

Naval Forces

- Total ships – 295
- Aircraft carriers – 1
- Frigates – 13
- Destroyers – 11
- Corvettes – 22



3. China

Hipe!

media

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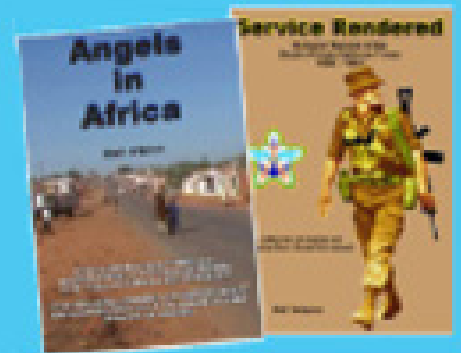
Online Magazines

Flip book magazines with pages that can be turned.



E-books

Produced in any electronic format required.



2D & 3D Animation

Produced in any video format.



Video Production

Scripting, storyboard, filming and editing done to any video format required. We also do aerial and underwater video and stills.



Still Photography

If you're thinking digital media then think Hipe Media.